

Observing the Olympics

If any day in history was available for my viewing, which day would I chose? On April 6, 1896, in Athens Greece, excitement and fun filled the air as the first modern Olympics were about to take place. And that is the environment I would chose to indulge in for a day. I would receive a first-hand look at the culture of the era, witness amazing athletic ability, and deduce how and if the Olympics have improved since then. After the 2016 Olympics, the love for the modern games is fresh in my heart, and I would love to spectate the beginning of the tradition.

With 14 nations gathering together, I would be intrigued by the varying culture. Surrounded by spectators spewing different languages, a feeling of awe toward the uniqueness of every country would overcome me. Although I would suffer from the heat, I would adorn the frivolous attire of the era and feign being a “proper” lady. Witnessing the first edition of the Olympic Anthem, I would close my eyes and listen to 80,000 voices unite in a single moment. Along with my fellow spectators, I would cheer for the athletes until my lungs became hoarse and my hands sore from clapping. Even though the world contained numerous cultures, this one event encompassed several of them, and I would relish every second I could witness such a feat.

Obviously, I would have no motive to travel back to the first Olympics if I was uninterested in the extraordinary skill of each of the 241 athletes. For instance, James Connolly, an American, bounded his way to victory, leaping 13.71 meters in the triple jump. My heart would overflow with patriotic pride as he received his silver medal, olive branch, and diploma. In that moment, he became the first champion of an event in the modern Olympics. Using his powerful legs, he also placed in the high jump and the long jump. My patriotism would be nothing compared to the swell erupting from the 100,000 Greek spectators when their own Spyridon Louis crossed the finish line, dominating his fellow marathon-runners by more than

seven minutes. I would gape in awe at the dexterity of the multi-talented German athlete, Carl Schuhmann. He exhibited his talent in the long jump, triple jump, shot-put, weight-lifting, wrestling, and gymnastic events. I would enjoy witnessing the man who to this day is among only three athletes to compete in so many Olympic events. Conquering the competition in four events, Schuhmann shined and I would not miss a single event of his. Although the only ones remembered today are those who rose above their competition, every one of the talented athletes would be enthralling to observe.

Because of my extensive love for professional athletics, I would constantly compare the event with those of modern times. Fervently, I would wonder why women were considered incompetent and unable to compete. Inhaling a calming breath, I would remind myself how many female athletes would prove the misogynistic community wrong in the next Olympics. When James Connolly performed his historic leap in triple jump, I would notice his odd style, jumping on his right foot twice, which is outlawed in the Olympics of today. The prize of a silver medal for the victors instead of a gold one would surprise me. I would recognize all nine of the sports because they were all included in the recent 2016 summer Olympics. Simultaneously, I would be deprived of multiple sports that were added after 1896. The differences between the 1896 Olympics and the more recent Olympics are numerous, and I would immensely enjoy comparing them.

In conclusion, if I were offered the opportunity to attend the first modern Olympics, I would cherish the chance to witness such greatness. Surrounded by various cultures, watching skilled athletes, and comparing the event to those in the future, I would obtain insight that I could never receive elsewhere. If I had all of history at my fingertips, observing the Olympics would be one of my immediate choices.