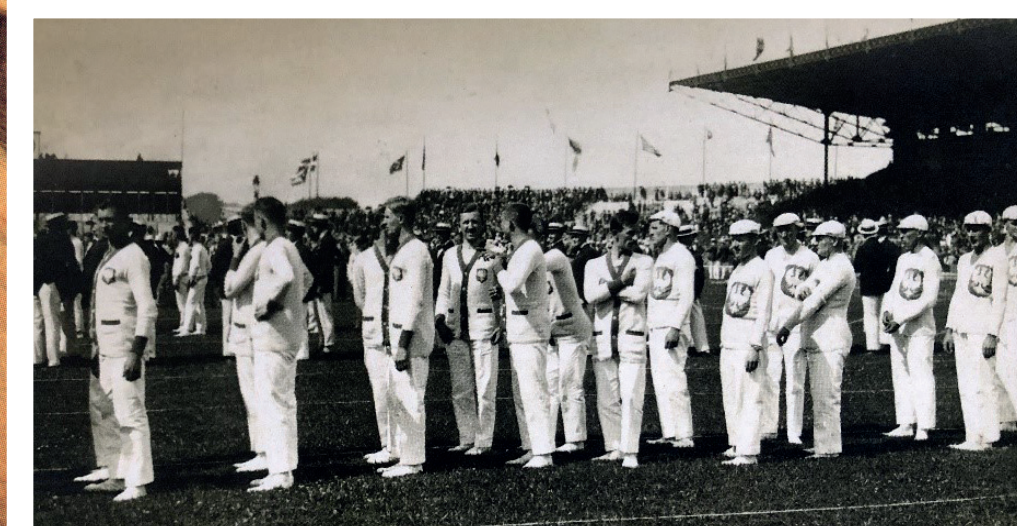




PARIS 1924

In 1918, Poland regained its independence after 123 years of partitioning by neighbouring countries, and, just six years later, entered the Olympic family, making its debut at the 8th Olympic Games in Paris 1924. It was there that the first Poles stood on the Olympic podium. On Sunday, 27 July 1924, the last day of the Games, the Polish flag flew on the Olympic winners' pole. The track cycling team consisting of Józef Lange, Jan Łazarski, Tomasz Stankiewicz and Franciszek Szymczyk won Poland's first silver medal in the 4,000-metre race covered in 5 min. 23 sec, which was an excellent result at the time. The Poles lost only to the Italians.



Polish national team at the inauguration of the Games in Paris. Source: Museum of Sport and Tourism (copy from the Parliamentary Chronicle, September 2024)

JÓZEF LANGE

(born 1897 in Warsaw and died there 1972), competitor with the Warsaw Cyclists' Association (WTC), Olympian from Paris 1924 and Amsterdam 1928, one of the most versatile Polish cyclists, soldier of the Polish Legions in World War I, participant in the Polish-Soviet War of 1920, a man of many talents, ran a tannery, bred racing pigeons and trained hunting dogs.

JAN ŁAZARSKI

(born 1892 in Krakow and died there 1968), competitor with the Krakow Cyclists and Motorcyclists Club, Olympian in Paris 1924, locksmith by trade, participant in the 1920 Polish-Soviet War, ran a mechanical workshop in Krakow, during World War II soldier of Polish Home Army and Gestapo prisoner, Cracovia activist after the war.

TOMASZ STANKIEWICZ

(born 1902 in Warsaw, executed by the Gestapo in Palmiry in 1940, together with, among others, Janusz Kusociński), WTC cyclist, 1924 Paris Olympian, merchant, between the wars an employee of the American Chrysler corporation in Warsaw, active in the underground, in the Armed Resistance.

FRANCISZEK SZYMCZYK

(born 1892 in Lviv, died 1976 in Warsaw), WTC cyclist, Olympic cyclist in Paris 1924, chemical engineer, graduate of Kyiv Polytechnic, referee (among others, the main referee in the Peace Race), author of the first cycling regulations of the Polish Federation of Cycling Associations, several cycling textbooks, editor-in-chief of the fortnightly "Polish Cyclist".

LIEUTENANT ON A VALIANT HORSE, PICADOR

Shortly afterwards, the then Polish Army lieutenant **ADAM KRÓLIKIEWICZ** on the horse named Picador won a bronze medal in the equestrian show jumping competition. He was the first Pole to win a medal individually. Picador was a legendary horse, a war veteran who fought in the American army in France during World War I and later in the Polish Army.

His talent for jumping was spotted by Adam Królikiewicz.

The presentation of the medals took place in reverse order: Adam Królikiewicz received one earlier, as the organisers forgot to decorate the Polish cyclists, rectifying this oversight later.

Królikiewicz was born in 1894 in Lviv, died in 1966 in Konstancin; during Paris 1924 Games he was a captain, later major of the 1st Cavalry Regiment Warsaw, one of the most outstanding Polish riders, creator of the Polish equestrian training system and the Polish variant of Federico Caprilli's natural school of riding. In 1939 he fought in the September campaign. After the war, he worked as a trainer and riding instructor. He published, among others, the memoirs "Jasiek, Picador and I" (Krakow 1958). He took part in film productions. He was an equestrian consultant in the 1955 film "Podhale on fire" ("Podhale w ogniu"), and as an actor he appeared in the 1958 film "Rancho Texas". He died as a result of injuries sustained after falling off a horse on the set of Andrzej Wajda's film "Ashes" („Popioły”).



Adam Królikiewicz on his horse Picador. Source: Cezary Harasimowicz. Reconstruction: PAI



Silver medallists in track cycling. Source: NAC. Reconstruction: PAI

Cup won in 1921 by Olympic medalist Franciszek Szymczyk in the 1st Polish Track Cycling Championships in the individual sprint competition after Poland regained independence (cup kept by Paweł Kaczorowski, cyclist, 1972 Olympian).



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AMSTERDAM 1928

The first Olympic gold medal for Poland was won by Halina Konopacka (born 1900 in Rawa Mazowiecka, died 1989 in Daytona Beach, Florida) in the discus throw on 31 July 1928 during the 9th Olympic Games in Amsterdam. She won the Olympic women's discus competition with a mark of 39.62 m, setting a world record at the same time..

HALINA KONOPACKA

Her nickname "Czerbieta" was short for red woman, as red was the colour of the jumper and beret she usually wore when skiing downhill in Zakopane. It was with this discipline that she began her sporting career. She was a successful all-round athlete in, among other things, javelin throw, ball thrust, high jump and long jump. She also played excellent handball and was an accomplished motorist. Until the end of her career she did not lose a single competition in the discus throw, she was truly unbeatable!

In September 1939, Halina Konopacka (primo voto Matuszewska, secundo voto Szczerbińska) accompanied her husband Ignacy Matuszewski during the evacuation of the Polish National Bank's gold reserves (38 tonnes), which he organised and supervised. She was the driver of one of the trucks on the route through Romania to France. The gold was saved, but the Olympic medal was lost together with her rucksack. In 1941 she arrived in the United States. She was socially and culturally active in the New York Polish community, including work at the Józef Piłsudski Institute of America.

She died in the USA, her ashes were laid to rest at the Bródno Cemetery in Warsaw in 1990. In November 2018, she was posthumously awarded the Order of the White Eagle.



Halina Konopacka.
Source: National Digital Archives (NDA). Reconstruction: PAI



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FIRST GAMES IN THE ANTIPODES MELBOURNE 1956

Australia hosted the Summer Olympics twice. These were the 16th Games in Melbourne in 1956 and the 27th Games in Sydney in 2000.

The first Olympic Games in the Antipodes were held from 22 November to 8 December. Due to complicated procedures regarding the quarantine of horses on entry to Australia – the equestrian events were held earlier, in Stockholm, from 10-17 June. Despite high costs associated with travel to Australia, Poland's Olympic team flew 64-strong (15 women and 49 men) competing in nine disciplines.

A gold medal was won by athlete **Elżbieta Duńska-Krzesińska** (long jump).

Silver medals were won by athlete **Janusz Sidło** (javelin throw), shooter **Adam Smelczyński** (trap), fencer **Jerzy Pawłowski** (sabre), the fencing team **Marian Kuszewski, Zygmunt Pawlas, Jerzy Pawłowski, Andrzej Piątkowski, Wojciech Zabłocki** and **Ryszard Zub** (team sabre).

Third places on the podium were taken by the team of gymnasts **Dorota Horzonek, Natalia Kot, Helena Rakoczy, Danuta Stachow, Lidia Szczerbińska** and **Barbara Ślizowska** (portable apparatus), boxers **Zbigniew Pietrzykowski** and **Henryk Niedźwiedzki** and weightlifter **Marian Zieliński**.

Poland won a total of 9 medals: 1 gold, 4 silver and 4 bronze, the most of any country in the competition to date, placing them in a high 17th place in the medal classification.

THE BRAID OF THE 'GOLDEN' ELA, OLYMPIC CHAMPION (1956) AND RUNNER-UP (1960)

Gold medallist **Elżbieta Duńska-Krzesińska**, one of Poland's most outstanding athletes and a specialist in the long jump, was a hair's breadth away from winning silver at the Helsinki Games (1952). The long, golden braid that left a mark on the sand was considered part of the body and thus the measuring point for the length of the jump from the beam, thus reducing the result by 60 cm. In the end, the Pole landed in the 12th place instead of the second.



Elżbieta Duńska-Krzesińska.
Source: NDA. Reconstruction: PAI



Duńska-Krzesińska with her husband, Andrzej Krzesiński, coach, pole vaulter, Rome 1960 Olympian.
Source: Eugeniusz Warmiński



Elżbieta Duńska-Krzesińska.
Source: Edward Ałaszewski



Janusz Sidło.
Source: NDA. Reconstruction: PAI



Janusz Sidło.
Source: Archives of Przegląd Sportowy



Sidło congratulates Danielsen on the gold medal. Source: Roma Pieńkowska

She entered the Melbourne Games with hair suitably shortened, was in great shape and impressively won the gold medal, which was presented to her by the president of the International Olympic Committee himself, Avery Brundage.

AN EXAMPLE OF FAIR-PLAY BY JANUSZ SIDŁO

Several other legends of Polish sport also won medals in Melbourne. The phenomenal javelin thrower **Janusz Sidło** won silver in amazing circumstances. He flew to Australia as a favourite for gold, having broken the world record a few months earlier with a 83.66m result. In the final

competition Sidło, leading until the last turn (79.98 metres), lent his javelin to his biggest rival Egil Danielsen. The Norwegian did poorly, but he sent the javelin borrowed from Sidło to a record distance of 85.71m. Thus, he deprived the Pole of gold, but Sidło's gesture will forever go down in Olympic history.



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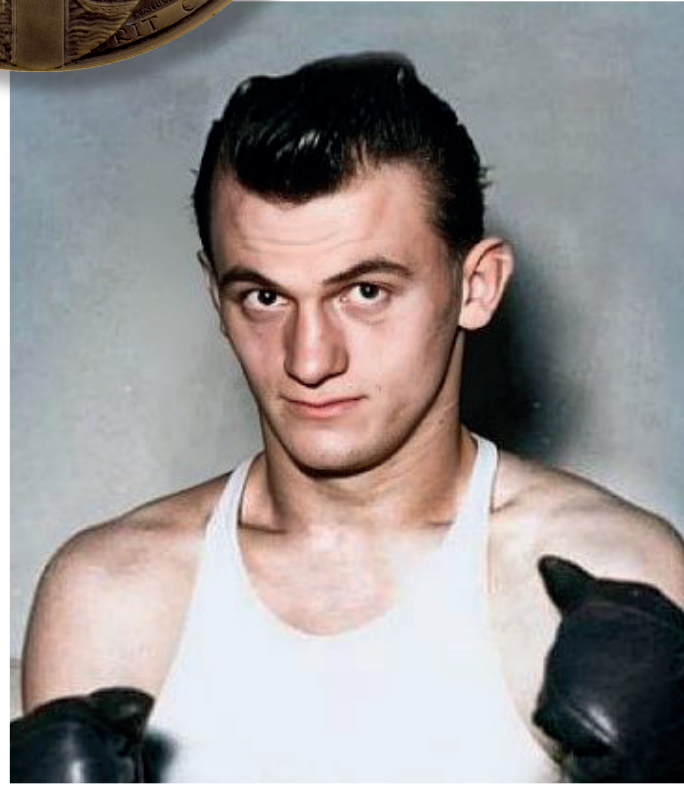


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Jerzy Pawłowski.
Source: NDA. Reconstruction: PAI



Zbigniew Pietrzykowski.
Source: NDA. Reconstruction: PAI



Adam Smelczyński.
Source: NDA. Reconstruction: PAI



Henryk Niedźwiedzki, bronze medallist in boxing.
Source: NDA. Reconstruction: PAI

MELBOURNE 1956

Australia hosted the Summer Olympics twice. These were the 16th Games in Melbourne in 1956 and the 27th Games in Sydney in 2000.

GREAT STARS ON THE PODIUM FOR THE FIRST TIME

In Melbourne, five-time Olympic medallist and all-time sabre fencer **Jerzy Pawłowski** won his first two Olympic silver medals. He later competed at the Rome 1960, Tokyo 1964 and Mexico 1968 Games, from where he returned with a gold medal at the end of his Olympic career.

Bronze was won by fighter **Zbigniew Pietrzykowski** – one of the most outstanding members of Feliks Stamm's famous team. He later competed at the Rome and Tokyo Games and brought home a medal from each Games: silver in 1960, after losing in the final to Cassius Clay, who later went down in world boxing legend as Muhammad Ali, and bronze in 1964.

A weightlifting representative also stood on the podium for the first time, winning a bronze medal. This was **Marian Zieliński**, who later achieved this feat twice more – in Tokyo and Mexico.

Adam Smelczyński, who won silver in trap shooting, competed at a total of six Olympic Games (from Melbourne 1956 to Montreal 1976 – Polish record holder), but was unable to repeat his medal success from Melbourne.



Marian Zieliński.
Source: NDA. Reconstruction: PAI



Bronze medallists in gymnastics.
Source: NDA. Reconstruction: PAI



Silver medal sabre competitors. L-R: Andrzej Piątkowski, Jerzy Pawłowski, Wojciech Zabłocki. Source: Eugeniusz Warmiński. Reconstruction: PAI



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SECOND GAMES IN THE ANTIPODES SYDNEY 2000

Australia hosted the Summer Olympics twice. These were the 16th Games in Melbourne in 1956 and the 27th Games in Sydney in 2000. Forty-four years after the Melbourne Games, Australia again hosted the Summer Olympic Games, the 27th, which took place from 15 September to 1 October in Sydney. The Polish national team comprised 187 athletes (58 women and 129 men), who performed superbly, competing in 19 disciplines.

Gold medals were won by: athletes **Robert Korzeniowski** (20 and 50 kilometre walk), **Szymon Ziółkowski** and **Kamila Skolimowska** (both hammer throw), rowers **Tomasz Kucharski** and **Robert Sycz** (men's lightweight double sculls) and shooter **Renata Mauer-Różańska** (women's 50 m rifle – 3 positions).

Silver medals were won by: weightlifters **Agata Wróbel** and **Szymon Kołecki**, white water canoeists **Krzysztof Kołomański** and **Michał Staniszewski** (men's C2 slalom), female fencing team **Sylvia Gruchała**, **Magdalena Mroczkiewicz**, **Anna Rybicka**, **Barbara Wolnicka** and canoeists **Paweł Baraszkiewicz** and **Daniel Jędraszko** (men's C2 500 m).

Bronze was won by: gymnast **Leszek Blanik** (men's vault), canoeists **Aneta Pastuszka** and **Beata Sokołowska** (women's K2 500 m), canoeists **Dariusz Białkowski**, **Grzegorz Kotowicz**, **Adam Seroczyński** and **Marek Witkowski** (men's K4 1000 m).

Poland won a total of 14 medals: six gold, five silver and three bronze. This result placed our country in a significant 14th place in the medal classification.

TWO GOLD MEDALS FOR KORZENIOWSKI

Robert Korzeniowski is the most successful Polish athlete in terms of the number of Olympic titles he has won - four-time Olympic gold medallist (1996, 2000 x2, 2004), three-time world champion (1997, 2001 and 2003), world record holder, two-time European champion (1998, 2002) and multiple Polish champion and record holder in sport walking. At the same time, he is the only Olympic champion in the 20 km and 50 km walk at the same Games.

The circumstances of Robert Korzeniowski winning gold in the 20 km walk competition at the Sydney Games are steeped in history. Korzeniowski crossed the finish line in second place. While he was giving a live interview, it was announced that his rival, Mexican Bernardo Segura, had been disqualified.

RENATA MAUER-RÓŻAŃSKA – TWICE OLYMPIC CHAMPION

Renata Mauer arrived in Sydney as the favourite, a double Olympic medallist from Atlanta, where she won gold in the 10 m air rifle shooting and bronze in 50 m rifle three-positions shooting.



Renata Mauer-Różańska. Source: Archives

In Sydney, she won another gold medal for Poland, this time in 50 m three-positions rifle shooting. In her extensive sporting career, she was, among other things, a three-time medallist at the World Championships and a six-time medallist at the European Championships. She won 65 Polish championship medals (43 gold, 12 silver and 10 bronze).

She was also victorious in the World Cup. She ended her career in 2014, but before that (2010) she became a counsellor in local government elections in the City of Wrocław (until 2018).



Robert Korzeniowski. Source: Archives



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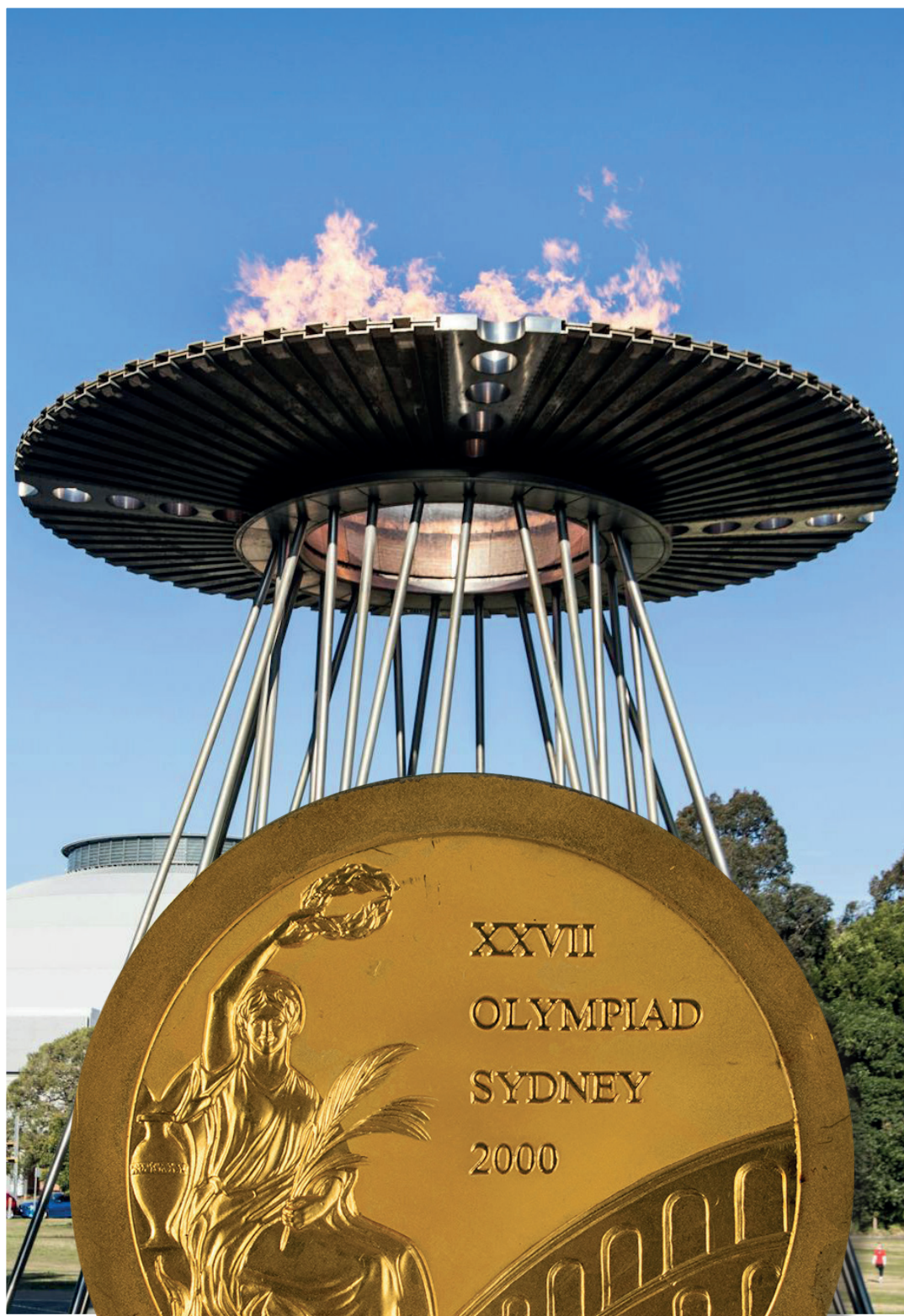


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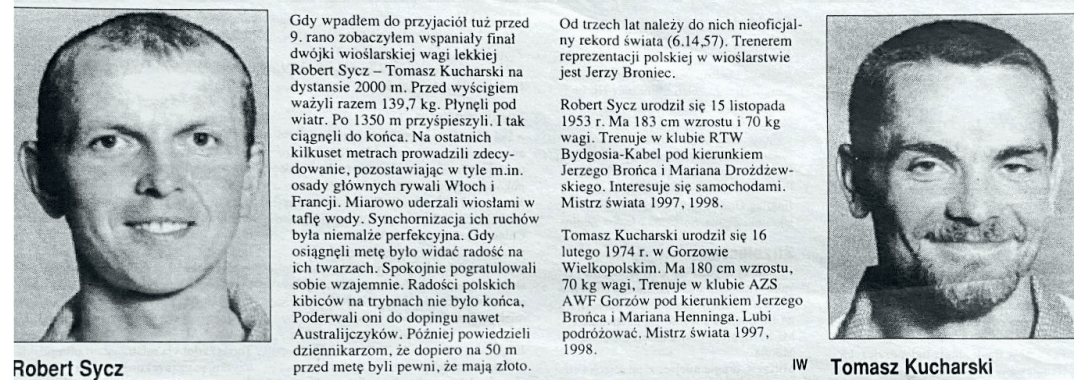
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Szymon Ziółkowski. Source: Maciej Swaczynski

Wioślarskie złoto



Robert Sycz

Tomasz Kucharski

Srebrne dziewczyny



Po niepowodzeniach szermierzy gdańskie florecistki Sylwia Gruchała, Magda Mroczkiewicz, Anna Rybicka i Barbara Wolnicka wywalczyły srebrny medal w turnieju drużynowym, ulegając jedynie najbardziej utytułowanym zawodniczkom dekad – Włoszkom. Polki zaczęły od wygranej Magdaleny Mroczkiewicz z Sabine Rau (Niemcy) 3:2. W następnej walce Gruchała pokonała Rie Kawanishi (Japonia) 5:2. Na 32 punktach Rybicka zatrzymała się, a Koenig powoli zaczęła odrywać stratę. Odrobiła 17 punktów. Na szczęście na planie wyszła 21-letnia Mroczkiewicz, która wygrała z Koenig 5:0. W kolejnej walce mistrzyni grała wynik Gruchały. Miałoby to być zwycięstwo. W finale trener Tomasz Papiński

SECOND GAMES IN THE ANTIPODES SYDNEY 2000

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GOLD ATHLETES SZYMON AND KAMILA

This was the first time Poland won two gold medals in the hammer throw at one Olympic Games event.

SZYMON ZIÓLKOWSKI

Five-time Olympian who won with a throw of 80.02 m. At the World Championships in Edmonton (2001) he also won a gold medal, setting a world record with 83.38 m. He returned from subsequent World Championships (2005, 2009, 2012) twice with silver and once with bronze. He was recognised by the Polish Association of Athletics as the best Polish hammer thrower of the century 1919-2019. He served as a Member of Parliament in the eighth term of the Polish Sejm from 2015-2019.

KAMILA SKOLIMOWSKA

Less than 18-year-old Kamila Skolimowska became the youngest Olympic champion in the hammer throw. This was the first year when women were allowed to compete in this event and Kamila set the first Olympic record with a throw of 71.16 m. In 2002 and 2006 at the European Championships, she won silver and bronze medals respectively. Her best result was in 2004 with 72.57 m. Unfortunately, her sporting career was cut short in 2008 by sudden death from a pulmonary artery embolism at a training camp in Portugal.



Kamila Skolimowska. Source: Stefan Grzegorzczak

GOLD MEDALLISTS IN ROWING AND SILVER MEDALLISTS IN FENCING

Tomasz Kucharski and **Robert Sycz** made their rowing pair debut at the 1996 Games in Atlanta but won the gold medal in the men's lightweight double sculls in Sydney. They repeated the same success four years later at the Athens 2004 Games, and together they also won the world championship twice (1997, 1998) and runner-up three times (2001, 2002, 2003). In women's team foil, the Olympic vice-champions were the talented female fencers **Sylwia Gruchała** (widely regarded as Miss World of the fencing board), **Magdalena Mroczkiewicz**, **Anna Rybicka** and **Barbara Wolnicka**. All of them have also won world and European championship medals in their careers.

Silver medallists in fencing, from left: Magdalena Mroczkiewicz, Anna Rybicka, Sylwia Gruchała and Beata Wolnicka, with coach Tadeusz Pagiński.

Source: Archives



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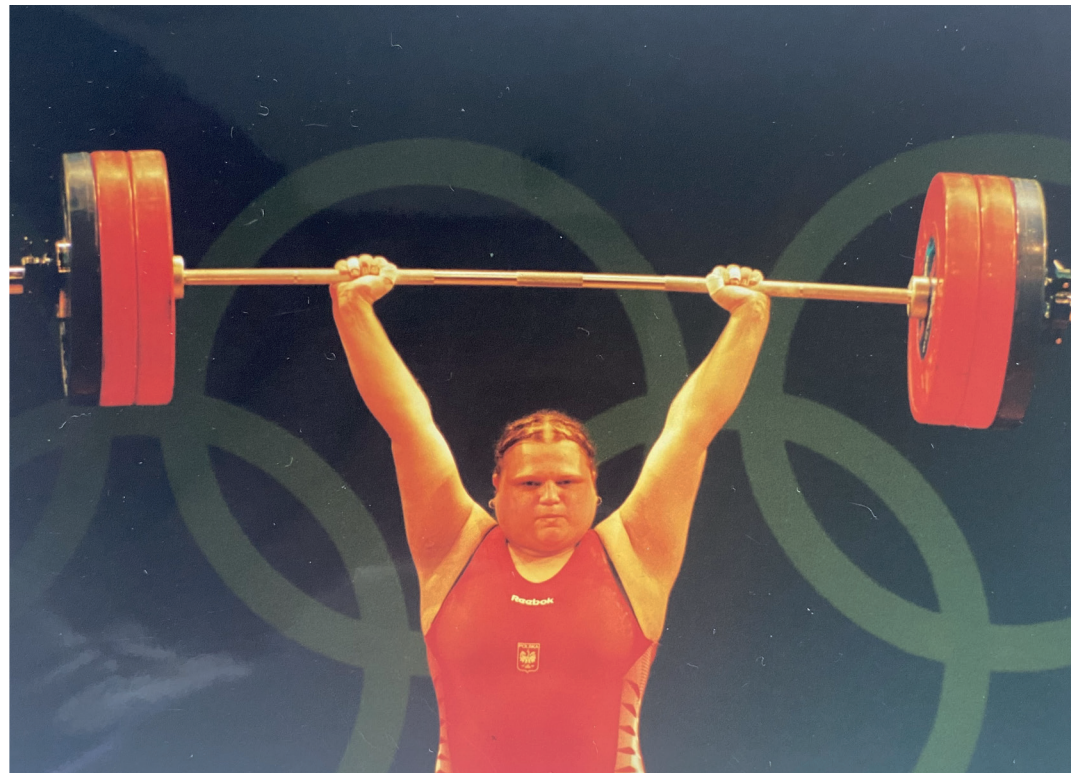
Cathy Freeman – lights the Olympic torch

SECOND GAMES IN THE ANTIPODES SYDNEY 2000

SILVER WEIGHTLIFTERS AGATA WRÓBEL AND SZYMON KOŁECKI

AGATA WRÓBEL – two-time Olympic medallist (silver 2000, bronze 2004), three-time World Championships medallist and five-time European Championships medallist.

SZYMON KOŁECKI – two-time Olympic medallist (silver 2000 and gold 2008), four-time world championships medallist and six-time European championships medallist.



Agata Wróbel wins a silver medal. Source: Tom Koprowski



Szymon KołECKI. Source: Archives PKOl

A SUCCESS STORY FROM A DREAM

LESZEK BLANIK won a bronze medal in men's vault event at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and won gold in Beijing 2008. He is also the first Polish athlete to have a gymnastics element named after him. Recorded under number 332 by the International Gymnastics Federation, the jump-flip (handspring double front vault in piked position) was named 'blanik'. Leszek Blanik was the first person in the world to perform this jump correctly. Leszek Blanik: "successes come from dreams and failures".



Otylia Jędrzejczak in Sydney.
Source: Tom Koprowski

THE BEGINNINGS OF A GREAT CAREER

OTYLIA JĘDRZEJCZAK

In Sydney, 17-year-old Otylia Jędrzejczak began her great career, although still without a medal (a memorable technical error during the 100 m butterfly turn), later Olympic champion and two-time silver medallist (Athens 2004). Coincidentally, also making his debut at the Sydney 2000 Games was the then 15-year-old American Michael Phelps, an all-time swimmer who won 28 Olympic trophies throughout his career, including 23 gold medals.



Leszek Blanik.
Source: L. Blanik's Facebook profile

THE ONLY OLYMPIC GAMES FOR POLISH WOMEN BASKETBALL PLAYERS

So far Sydney 2000 was the only Games event involving Polish women basketball players, who had prepared for the Sydney Games in the USA in a series of tournaments

involving American, Australian and Brazilian players. The team, which had excellent players, including the tallest basketball player in the world, **Małgorzatę Dydek** (213 cm tall) and other individualities of European calibre (**Sylwia Wiaźlak, Krystyna Lara, Elżbieta Nowak**), had a year earlier (1999) won the first gold medal in the history of Polish team games in the European Championships in team games, and thus qualified for the Games by taking the 8th place.



Elżbieta Trześniewska with Małgorzata and Bolesław Kwiatkowski. Source: Archives



Poland's national basketball team.
Source: Elżbieta Trześniewska



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THE CONTRIBUTION OF AUSTRALIAN POLISH COMMUNITY TO THE SYDNEY 2000 GAMES

MEDAL DESIGN

The competition to design the medals for the Sydney Olympic Games was won by Canberra-based Polish artist, sculptor, medallist and designer for the Royal Australian Mint, **Wojciech Pietranik**.

STADIUM AUSTRALIA

The most important venue of the Games, Stadium Australia, with a capacity for as many as 110,000 spectators, was built under the direction of Polish engineer **Edmund Obiała**, who also served as Olympic attaché for the Polish national team during the Games.



Olympic Stadium.
Source: Maciej Swaczyński



Wojciech Pietranik (designer of the medals).
Source: Archives



Stadium Australia. Source: Archives



Edmund Obiała.
Source: Archives Edmund Obiała



Presentation of appointment as Olympic attaché to Edmund Obiała by PKOl President Stanisław Stefan Paszczyk at PKOl headquarters. Source: Archives

POLISH-AUSTRALIAN SPORTS COUNCIL „OLIMPOL”

In 1997, on the initiative of former athletes living in Australia, Polish-Australian Sports Council „Olimpol” was established, a partner organisation of the Polish Olympic Committee (PKOl), the Ministry of Sport and the Polish Paralympic Committee. With more than 150 active members, Olimpol provided logistical assistance to Polish Olympians of all disciplines, arriving for reconnaissance competitions before the Games and for the Games themselves.



Olimpol Board of Directors at the Polish Club in Ashfield.
L-R: Maciej Swaczyński, Edmund Obiała, Jerzy Gabara, Małgorzata and Bolesław Kwiatkowski, Jerzy Maciejak, PKOl Vice President Aleksander Ronikier, Janusz Krzywicki, Paweł Otrębski. Source: Archives



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GAZETA OLIMPIJSKA

Specjalna publikacja Expressu Wieczornego, Tygodnika Polskiego i Polonijki RADI SPÓRTOWE OLIMPIJ z okazji XXVII Igrzysk Olimpijskich w Sydney

Exemplarz bezpłatny Free copy Sydney 21 września 2000 Nr 2

Nareszcie medale

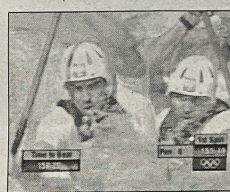


Złoto Renaty

Nareszcie mamy medal i to w dodatku złoty. Przez pięć dni czekaliśmy na tą chwilę. Podobnie jak w Atlancie pierwszy medal zdobyła Renata Mauer. Medal zdobyła Bogu, o ile rzeczy go strzelić, bo od razu zajął drugie miejsce – powiedziała przed deklamacją pani Renata. Następnego dnia natychmiast poprawiła się. Podczas finału strzelania z karabinu z 50 m w trzech pozycjach liczy się każdy strzał. Najpierw Niemka trafiła 7, potem Rosjanka kilka razy w 8. Konkurencja zaczęła się od strzelania w pozycji leżącej – 6 strzałów.

Srebro górali

Michał Staniszewski i Krzysztof Kolomoński zostali wicemistrzami olimpijskimi w kajakarstwie górskim w slalomie C-2. Po pierwszym przejeździe zajmowali szóste miejsce, drugi przejazd mieli faworyty – nie popłynął żadnego Bieda i awansowali na drugą pozycję. Mistrzami olimpijskimi zostali Słowacy Peter i David Hochsteternowie. Druga polska para startująca w finale – Andrzej Wójcik i Sławomir Mordarski – zajmowała po pierwszym przejeździe trzecie miejsce. W drugim popłynęli trzy osoby i ostatecznie ugniewili się na szóstym miejscu. Michał Staniszewski urodził się 16 września 1973 r. w Opocznie. Ma 177 cm wzrostu i 78 kg wagi. Należy do klubu AZS AWF Kraków. Jego trenerem jest Robert Korzeniowski.



kluba AZS AWF Kraków. Jego trenerem jest Robert Korzeniowski. Krzysztof Kolomoński urodził się 16 sierpnia 1973 r. w Opocznie. Ma 170 cm wzrostu i 70 kg wagi. Należy do klubu KS Giełach Dźwizga. Jego trenerem jest Robert Korzeniowski.

jako ostatnia ale za to bardzo skutecznie. Ostateczne wyniki: 1. Mauer-Różańska Renata - 684,6 pkt; 2. Goldobina Tatiana 680,9 pkt; 3. Feklistowa Maria 675,2 pkt.

Renata Mauer-Różańska urodziła się 23 kwietnia 1969 r. w Naselsku. Ma 155 cm wzrostu i 50 kg wagi. Temple w klubie Śląsk Wrocław pod kierownictwem Andrzeja Kijowskiego.

Mecz Piłkarski
pomiędzy byłymi zawodnikami Klubu Sportowego Polonia w Plumpom
24 września godz. 14
Klub Polonia Plumpom
Burgallow Road
Mecz sponsorował AlphaCall Telecommunications



Opening of the Polish Culture, Information and Promotion Centre. Source: Archives

POLISH CULTURE, INFORMATION AND PROMOTION CENTRE AT THE POLISH CLUB IN ASHFIELD

During the Games, OlimpPol set up a Polish Culture, Information and Promotion Centre at the Polish Club in Ashfield. Meetings with Polish medallists, coaches and guests were held there, and an Olympic Gazette was published, jointly by "The Polish Weekly" ("Tygodnik Polski") and "The Evening Express" ("Express Wieczorny"). Photos below were taken during meetings at the Centre.



Olympic Gazette editors Zdzisław Derwinski and Grzegorz Turski with Wojciech Zabłocki. Editor Marek Weiss absent. Source: Archives



At the meeting at the Polish Club in Ashfield. L-R: Szymon Ziółkowski, coach Cybulski and PKOl spokesman Andrzej Person. Source: Archives



Welcoming gold medallist Renata Mauer-Różańska at the Polish Club in Ashfield. Source: Wojciech Ziemniak



Gold rowers and two silver fencing medallists at the meeting with Polonia. L-R: Tomasz Kucharski, Beata Wolnicka, Wojciech Ziemniak (teacher of the group from Racot), Magdalena Mroczkiewicz, Robert Syz. Source: Archives



Meeting with Marek Łbik and Władysław Zieliński (Olympic legends), hosted by editor Krzysztof Miklas. Source: Archives



POLISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA



Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Canberra



Polish Olympic Committee

HONORARY PATRONAGE POLISH OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

POLONIA, OLYMPIANS, VISITORS, SUPPORTERS SYDNEY 2000



POLONIA FOR OLYMPIANS

Between 1997 and 2001, Polish-Australian Sports Council "Olimpol" was active in Sydney. The 150-strong Polish community supported the Polish national team during pre-Olympic reconnaissance, provided logistics, assistance, and support during competitions for over 300 Polish athletes who visited Australia at that time. Cooperation with the Polish Olympic Committee, the Ministry of Sport in Poland and the sports associations was very successful.

During the Games, Poles also volunteered at the Sydney Organising Committee of the Games (SOCOG), attended meetings with athletes, cheered on, hosted Poles from outside Australia, organised tours and took an active part in the cultural program at the Polish Culture, Information and Promotion Centre at the Polish Club in Ashfield. The Centre was officially opened on 14 September. Official guests included Dr Tadeusz Szumowski, Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Australia; Mieczysław Nowicki, Minister of Sport and Tourism; Dr Stanisław Stefan Paszczyk, President of the Polish Olympic Committee; Irena Szewińska, IOC; legendary Polish Olympians and local visitors. Poland's oldest surviving female Olympian **Maria Kwaśniewska-Maleszewska** (Berlin 1936) performed the ceremonial opening of the Centre, lighting the torch with the original torch from the 1956 Melbourne Games. Other Polish clubs (Bankstown, Plumpton, Cabramatta) also hosted athletes and accompanying persons during the Games.



At sporting event. L-R: Bolesław Kwiatkowski, Maria Maleszewska-Kwaśniewska, Irena Szewińska and Mieczysław Nowicki. Source: Tom Koprowski



Irena and Janusz Szewiński with the Rector of the Polish Catholic Mission in Australia and New Zealand, Fr. Wiesław Słowik SJ. Source: Archives



Maria Jakóbk and Stanisław Stefan Paszczyk. Source: Archives



Meeting at the Polish Culture, Information and Promotion Centre with gold medallists in rowing. Source: Wojciech Ziemiński



At the field hockey match, in the foreground Jan Werner and Marysia Nowak. Source: Archives



Stanisław Imosa presents gifts to sport legends - cyclist Mieczysław Nowicki and boxers Józef Grudzień, Leszek Drogosz and Zbigniew Pietrzykowski. Source: Archives



Olympic Legends at the Polish Club in Ashfield - Polish Culture, Information and Promotion Centre during the Olympic Games. Source: Maciej Swaczyński



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POLONIA, OLYMPIANS, VISITORS, SUPPORTERS SYDNEY 2000



LEGENDARY OLYMPIC MEDALLISTS

For the first time, the Polish Olympic Committee (PKOl) invited 15 distinguished Olympic medallists from previous Games to board a charter plane to Australia and provided them with tickets to the Olympic events. In turn, the Polish Australian community took care of their accommodation and local arrangements. Famous Olympians were invited by the Polish community members to stay in their private homes. Together with their hosts, they cheered at competitions, participated in Polish events and shared their experiences. Invited guests included boxers **Leszek Drogosz, Józef Grudzień, Zbigniew Pietrzykowski, Wiesław Rudkowski**, athletes **Maria Kwaśniewska-Maleszewska, Zdzisław Krzyszkowiak, Jan Werner** and **Kazimierz Zimny**, canoeists **Marek Łbik** and **Władysław Zieliński**, wrestler **Andrzej Supron**, fencers **Jacek Bierkowski, Marian Sypniewski** and **Wojciech Zabłocki** and cyclist **Tadeusz Mytnik**.

SUPPORTERS FROM RACOT

Since 1992, a group of young fans from the "Jantar" Club in Racot (Poznań Voivodeship) has been travelling to each Games. The originator and organiser of the Olympic journeys is club president and senator Wojciech Ziemniak. This was also the case in Sydney 2000. Thirty students, faithful supporters of the Polish national Olympic team, were received at the Polish Priests of Christ pastoral centre in Marayong. It was a beautiful, emotional time for both the young people from Poland and the priests, nuns and residents of the home for the elderly in Marayong. Fans from Racot met Polish sports fans at sports arenas and Polish clubs, enthusiastically cheering on and supporting Polish Olympic stars.



Olympic legends in Sydney. L-R: Marek Łbik, Józef Grudzień, Zbigniew Pietrzykowski, SOCOG supervisor, Leszek Drogosz, Wiesław Rudkowski and Władysław Zieliński. Source: Archives



President Aleksander Kwaśniewski with silver fencers Sylwia Gruchała and Magdalena Mroczkiewicz. Source: Archives



Mieczyśław Nowicki, Marysia Nowak, Tadeusz Wróblewski, Małgorzata Kwiatkowska and Tadeusz Mytnik. Source: Archives



Visitors from Poland with Polish community members in Sydney. Source: Archives



Representatives of Polish Olympic Committee meeting Polish community members in Sydney. Source: Archives



Fans from Racot. Source: Archives



Elżbieta Wierniuk, Otylia Jędrzejczak and her coach Maria Jakóbiak. Source: Archives



Silver white water canoeists Michał Staniszewski and Krzysztof Kołomański. Source: Archives



Irena Szewińska, seven-time Olympic medallist. Source: Archives



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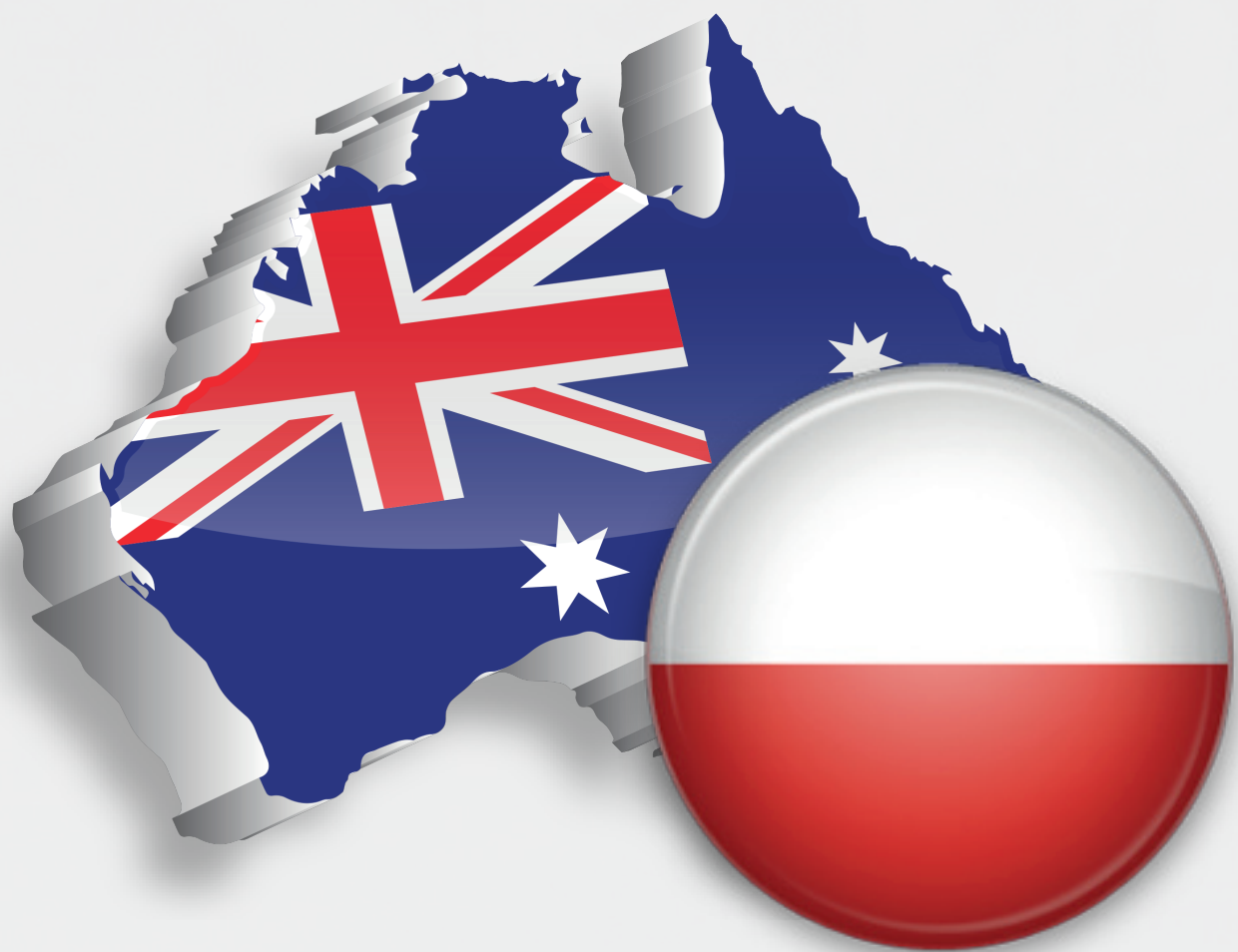


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POLISH OLYMPIANS SETTLED IN AUSTRALIA

Of over 3,700 Polish athletes participating in the Summer Olympics around the world, several started families and settled in Australia.

ROMAN KORBAN

(1927-2024)

He was born in Nadwórna in the Stanislav Voivodeship, but settled in Gdynia after the war. An athlete, a middle-distance runner, Olympian from Helsinki 1952 (he dropped out in the 800m qualifying round), a competitor of OM TUR Gdynia, Zryw Gdańsk and Spójnia Gdańsk. Three-time Polish champion: in the 800m (1951, 1952) and 1,500m (1951), four-time runner-up, two-time Polish record holder in the 1,000m and 4x400m relay, academic runner-up in the 800m World Championships in Berlin 1951 and bronze medallist in the 4x400m relay with Gerard Mach, Bogdan Lipski and Zygmunt Buhl. Graduate of Gymnasium and Secondary School for Adults in Gdynia (1952), graduate of the Academy of Physical Education in Warsaw (1956), where he earned his doctorate (1972). Coach and athletics activist, among others, Head of the Coaches Council at the Polish Athletic Association. From 1972 to 1975, he spent time in the USA, and in 1981 settled in Blacktown (Sydney district), where he became a rehabilitation specialist at the Bachelor Rehabilitation College and specialised in spinal injuries. He was interested in the Polish community. Author of several books, including "35 Years of Glory in Olympic Sport" („35 lat chwały sportu olimpijskiego”), "Sport among the American Polish community" („Sport wśród Polonii amerykańskiej”), "Welcome to Australia" („Witajcie w Australii”) and "40 Years of Polonia Sports Club – Sydney" („40 lat Klubu Sportowego Polonia – Sydney”). Roman Korban died in Sydney and his ashes were deposited at the Witomino Cemetery in Gdynia, Poland.



Roman Korban. Source: Archives. Reconstruction: PAI

LIDIA SZCZERBIŃSKA-KRÓL

(1934-2024)

Born in Warsaw, she associated her sporting career (1948-1956) with Wisła Kraków (then called Gwardia) and graduated from the Technical School of Physical Education in Gdańsk (1954). One of the best Polish gymnasts of the 1950s, she was a finalist at the World Championships in Rome in 1954 (6th place), a two-time silver medallist and medallist of the Student Youth Festival in Warsaw in 1955, participant of the 16th Olympic Games in Melbourne 1956, where she won the Olympic bronze medal in the artistic gymnastics team (portable apparatus) together with Dorota Horzonek (Jokiel), Natalia Kot (later the wife of ski jumper Piotr Wala), Helena Rakoczy, Danuta Stachow and Barbara Ślizowska (ex aequo with the USSR). Unfortunately, Lidia Szčerbińska was not presented with a medal because... the organisers ran out of medals. She only received a diploma. Irena Szewińska petitioned the IOC on behalf of the gymnast, but to no avail. During the Melbourne Games she met her future husband, hurdler Władysław Król, a graduate of London Polytechnic, living in Australia. After the Games she returned to her home country but soon married and settled with her husband in Melbourne, where she died in 2024. Professionally, she was involved in teaching gymnastics. Polish athletes coming to compete in Melbourne were always welcome to stay at her place.



Melbourne 2000. L-R: Stanisław Imosa, Józef Grudzień, Lidia Szčerbińska-Król and Wojciech Zabłocki. Source: Stanisław Imosa. Reconstruction PAI
Wojciech Zabłocki presents Lidia with her caricature by Edward Ałaszewski. Source: Stanisław Imosa. Reconstruction PAI



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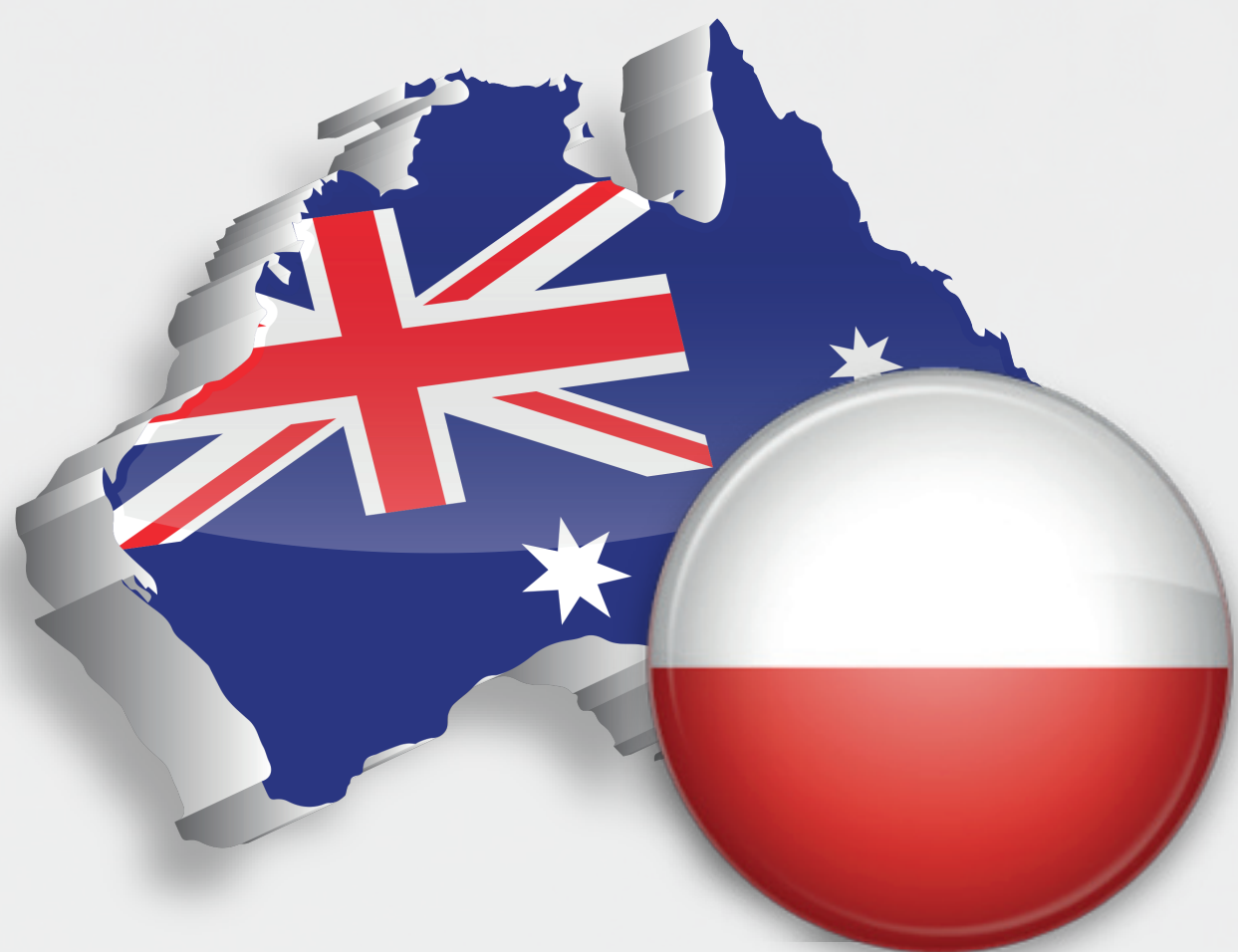


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POLISH OLYMPIANS SETTLED IN AUSTRALIA

Of over 3,700 Polish athletes participating in the Summer Olympics around the world, several started families and settled in Australia.

ANNA WOJTASZEK-PAZERA-BOCSON (ur. 1936)

Polish and later Australian javelin thrower, former world record holder, three-time Olympian. She was born in Krzanowice, in the district of Racibórz. Her talent was discovered by the coach Władysław Szczepaniak and Anna, with her parents' consent, moved with his family to Opole, which enabled her to represent the local sports club Budowlani. She was a Polish champion in the javelin throw (1956), vice-champion (1955) and bronze medallist (1954), as well as the national indoor champion in the 400m run (1954) and the 2000m interval relay (1954).

In 1955 in Wrocław she set a Polish record (47.46m). She competed for the Polish national team at the 1956 Melbourne Games (9th place) and remained in Australia after her marriage to Ted Pazera. She represented Australia at the Games in Rome 1960 (6th place) and Tokyo 1964 (did not advance to the finals). She was nominated Australian champion six times (1958, 1960, 1963, 1964, 1966 and 1967), runner-up (1968) and bronze medallist (1962). Her greatest successes came in the British Empire and Commonwealth Games, winning gold in Cardiff 1958 (with a throw that was a world record of 57.40m), silver in Kingston 1966 and bronze in Perth 1962.

She was honoured to be part of the relay that carried the Olympic flame to Sydney in 2000. She is the only currently living Polish Olympian settled in Australia; she lives in Adelaide, South Australia.



Anna Wojtaszek with Janusz Sidło.
Source: Archives. Reconstruction PAI



Anna Wojtaszek. Source: Archives. Reconstruction PAI

BOLESŁAW KWIATKOWSKI „KWIAT” (1942–2021)

He was born in Warsaw. A top basketball player, point guard and captain of the legendary team of the capital city AZS Club „Wizards of Bielany” („Czarodzieje z Bielany”) (1957-1971, Polish championship 1967, vice-championship 1962). He played with the number 13 and impressed with his ability to mobilize the team and decide the action with a long-distance shot. Later a player (1973-1974) and coach of ŁKS Łódź (1974-1981), with whom he won a bronze medal (1978). Olympian from Mexico 1968 (6th place), participant of the World Championships in Montevideo 1967 (5th place) and bronze medallist of the European Championships Helsinki 1967. He played 114 matches in the Polish national team, scoring 617 points. In 1967 he was named basketball player of the year in Poland in the “Sports Review” („Przegląd Sportowy”) ranking.

In 1981 he emigrated to Australia, settled in Sydney, where he worked as a PE teacher, later he was an entrepreneur, and in 1999-2001 he was the president of Olimpól, an organization assisting Polish athletes who arrived in Australia for pre-Olympic reconnaissance. During the Games (2000) he was a supervisor and organizer of meetings of the Olympic team with Sydney residents at the Polish Club in Ashfield.

He was supported in his community work by his wife, Małgorzata, a former Polish national basketball player from 1967-1975. Bolesław nurtured his family's sporting traditions, passing on his love for sports to both of his daughters. The older daughter, Barbara, played basketball, while the younger one, Maria, represented her parents' new homeland in the Australian Open junior category. He passed away in Sydney.



Bolesław Kwiatkowski during a game (1960's).
Source: Archives. Reconstruction PAI



Bolesław Kwiatkowski (2000's). Source: Archives



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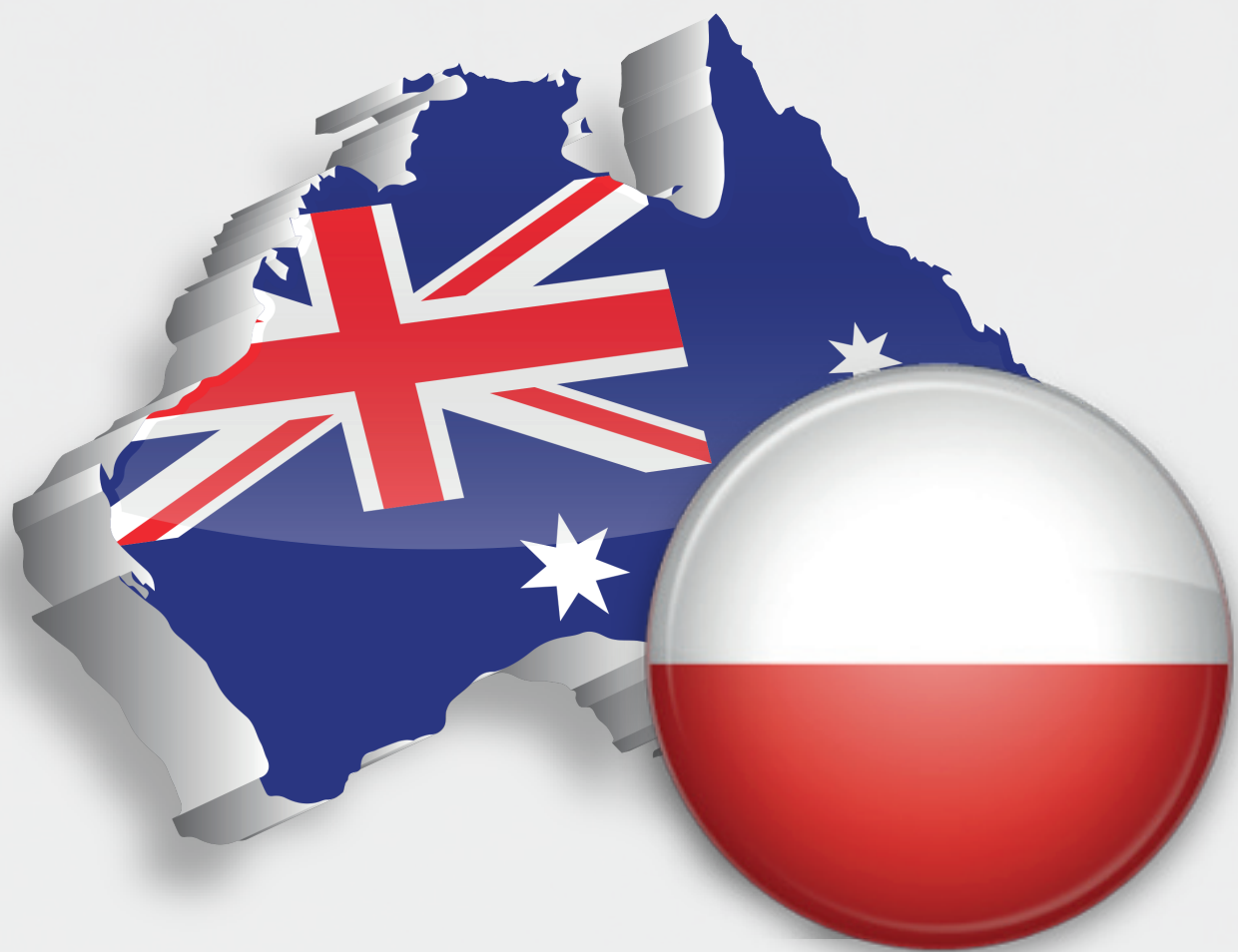


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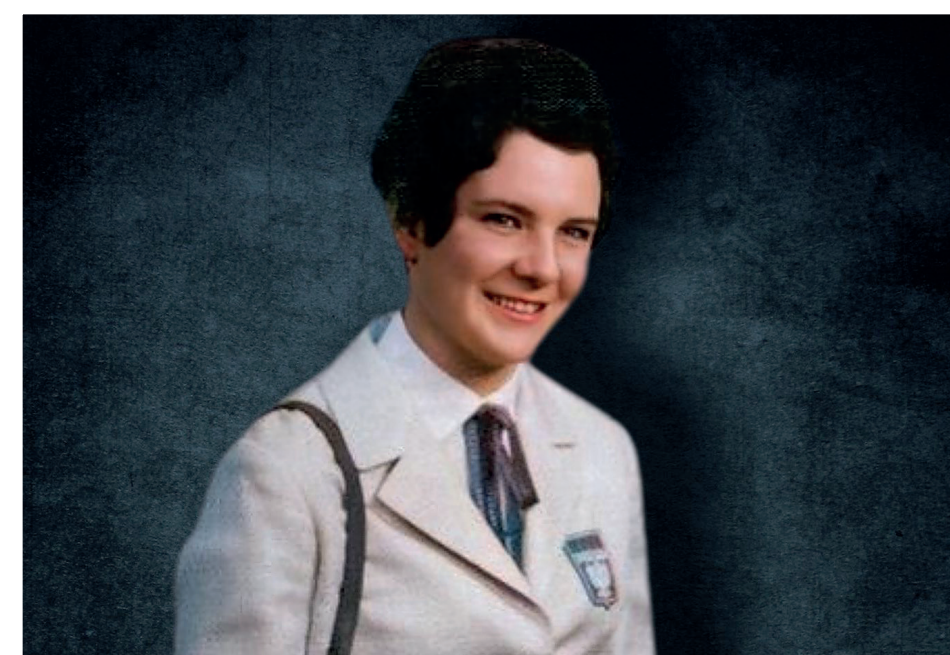
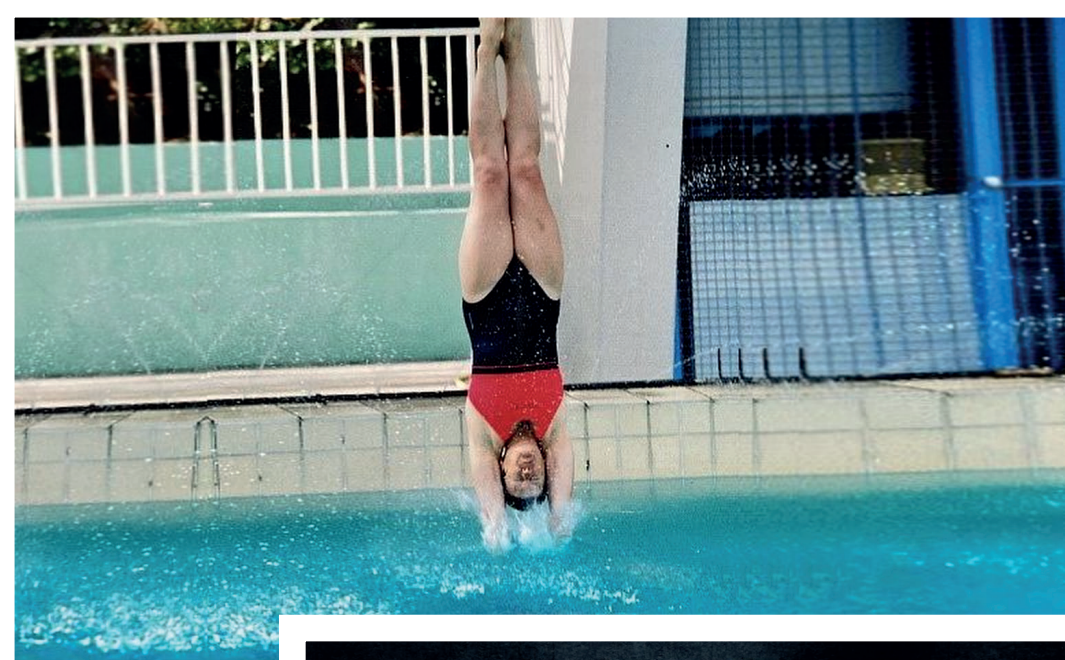
POLISH OLYMPIANS SETTLED IN AUSTRALIA

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ELŻBIETA WIERNIUK-JÓŹWIAK-MIRONOWICZ (1951–2017)

She was born in Jawor in the Lower Silesian Voivodeship, but her diving career was associated with the Warsaw Youth Palace (1960-1969) and AZS AWF Warsaw (1970-1974). She competed in the Olympic Games twice, in Mexico 1968 (11th place in diving from a 3-meter springboard and 15th place in diving from a tower) and in Munich 1972 (8th place from a 3-meter springboard and 11th place in diving from a tower). She was also a bronze medallist at the Universiade in Turin 1970 on the springboard, a finalist at the European Championships in Utrecht 1966 (8th place, springboard) and in Barcelona 1970 (8th place, springboard and 8th place, tower).

In 1987 she emigrated to Australia, where she was actively involved in the Polish community, especially during the preparations and during the Olympic Games Sydney 2000. Among other things, she took care of 17-year-old Otylia Jędrzejczak, whom she invited to her home so that she could prepare for the competition away from the Olympic Village. After the Games, she represented Australia in diving at the Masters competitions (in France, Canada, New Zealand) and was, among others, the world champion in tower diving in Christchurch 2002 and the vice-champion of Europe in Millau 2003. Until the end of her life, she served as vice-president of the Australian-Polish Association „Sports Masters”. Her brothers Andrzej and Wiktor Wierniuk also represented Poland in diving. She died in Sydney.



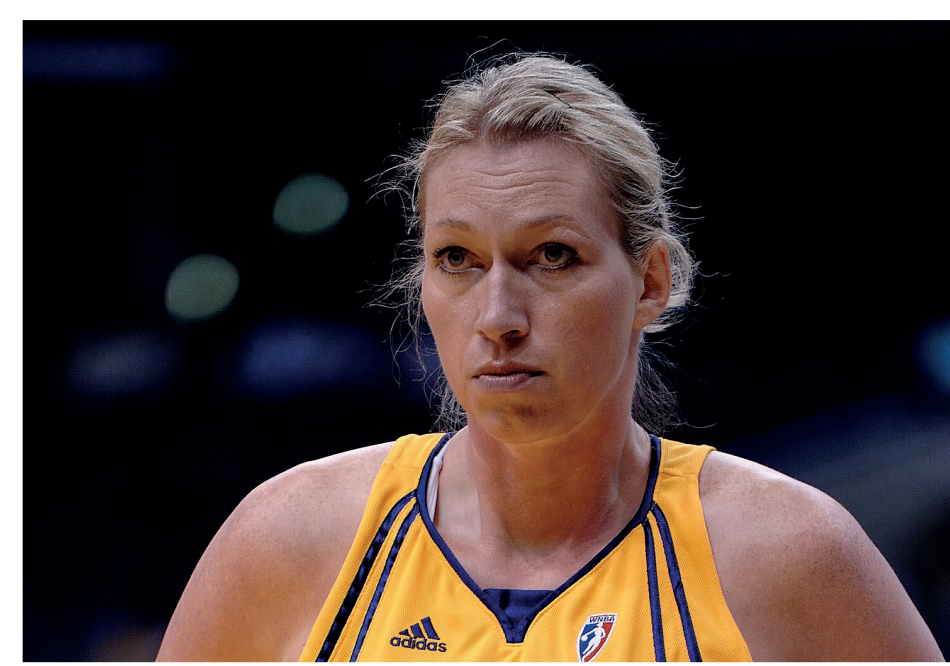
Elżbieta Wierniuk-Mironowicz during World Veterans Championships.
Source: Mieczysław Mironowicz

Elżbieta Wierniuk-Mironowicz in her olympic gear (1968).
Source: Archives. Reconstruction PAI

MAŁGORZATA DYDEK-TWIGG „PTYŚ” „MARGO” (1974–2011)

The most outstanding Polish basketball player in history, a great individuality of world basketball, participant of the XXVII Olympic Games in Sydney 2000 (8th place), European champion from Katowice 1999. Małgorzata played 132 matches in the Polish national team (1992-2003), scoring 1,783 points. She played in Huragan Wołomin (1986-1991), Olimpia Poznań (1992-1994), Valenciennes Orchies (1994-1996), Getafe Madrid (1996-1998), Lotos Gdynia (1998-2004), UMMC Yekaterinburg (2005-2006), Caseres Valencia (2006-2007), and in the WNBA (Women National Basketball Association) in: Utah Starzz (1998-2002), San Antonio Silver Stars (2003-2005), Connecticut Sun (2005-2008) and Los Angeles Sparks (2008). She was a nine-time Polish champion, two-time Spanish champion, runner-up in Russia, France and Spain. She is the all-time record holder in the Women's National Basketball Association in the number of blocks (877).

After ending her sporting career (2008), Małgorzata lived in a happy family with her husband, Englishman David Twigg. They settled in Brisbane, Queensland, where she worked as a coach at the Northside Wizards club. They had two sons, David and Aleksander. „Margo” was four months pregnant with her third child when she unexpectedly died of cardiac arrest on 27 May 2011, at the age of 37. The urn with her ashes was placed in the cemetery in Żąbki near Warsaw. “Gosia knew how to share her happiness” – commented her teammate, Elżbieta Trześniewska.



Małgorzata Dydek with colleagues. Source: Archives
Małgorzata Dydek representing Los Angeles Sparks (2008).
Source: Wikipedia Donald Barnat



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HISTORY

OF THE SUMMER OLYMPIC GAMES INVOLVING POLAND

During the 24 Olympic Games, from Paris 1924 to Paris 2024, a total of 3,794 Polish athletes competed.
Our athletes won 298 medals: 72 gold, 89 silver and 137 bronze

IO Number	Year	Organizer	Number of players	Number of Poles	Medals won by Poland			Poland's ranking	Additional information
					gold	silver	bronze		
VIII	1924	Paris France	3092	66	0	1	1	22	First medals for Poland: track cyclists – silver, Adam Królikiewicz – bronze.
IX	1928	Amsterdam Holland	2883	66	1	1	3	21	The first Polish gold medal and the first won by a woman – Halina Konopacka (discus throw).
X	1932	Los Angeles USA	1408	20	2	1	4	14	The first Polish gold medal won by a man – Janusz Kusociński (athlete).
XI	1936	Berlin Germany	4066	113	0	3	3	22	The Games in the shadow of Nazi symbolism – broadcast for the first time by Polish Radio and local German television.
XII	1940	Helsinki - Finland							Olympic Games did not take place due to World War II
XIII	1944	London - Great Britain							
XIV	1948	London Great Britain	4104	23	0	0	1	34	The only medal for Poland, Aleksy Antkiewicz (boxing, featherweight).
XV	1952	Helsinki Finland	4955	125	1	2	1	20	Strong rivalry between the West and the East – 76 medals for the USA, 71 medals for the USSR.
XVI	1956	Melbourne Australia	3314	64	1	4	4	17	The equestrian competitions were held in Stockholm, Sweden due to the horse quarantine required in Australia.
XVII	1960	Rome Italy	5338	185	4	6	11	9	Very good result for Poles. The last Games without medical anti-doping tests.
XVIII	1964	Tokyo Japan	5151	140	7	6	10	7	The first games on the Asian continent. Poles won the largest number of medals at that time.
XIX	1968	Mexico City Mexico	5516	177	5	2	11	11	The first games held in Latin America in different climatic conditions (altitude of about 2200 m above sea level). For the first time a tartan track was used (more elastic than a cinder track); and runners were timed electronically.
XX	1972	Munich Federal Repu- blic of Germa- ny	7132	290	7	5	9	7	The victory of Polish footballers led by Kazimierz Górski paved the way for further successes. Terrorist attack by the Palestinian organization „Black September” on Israeli athletes (9 killed) overshadowed the Games.
XXI	1976	Montreal Canada	6084	207	7	6	13	6	The best performance by the Polish national team in the history of the Olympic Games.
XXII	1980	Moscow Soviet Union	5217	306	3	14	15	10	The Games were held during the Cold War – after the USSR's intervention in Afghanistan, they were boycotted by over 60 countries. 32 medals won by Polish competitors – a record!
XXIII	1984	Los Angeles USA	6797	0	Poland did not participate: in revenge for the absence of US representatives at the Moscow Games, the USSR leaders forced the absence of the Eastern Bloc countries (except for Romania, which took 2nd place in the medal table).				
XXIV	1988	Seul South Korea	8391	143	2	5	9	20	Polish rhythmic gymnast Teresa Folga won the most beautiful Olympian competition.
XXV	1992	Barcelona Spain	9956	201	3	6	10	19	First Olympic Games after the fall of communism in Poland – Polish crowned White Eagle on athletes' shirts after 56 years.
XXVI	1996	Atlanta USA	10318	165	7	5	5	11	The 100th anniversary of the first modern Games was overshadowed by a terrorist attack during a concert in the Centennial Olympic Park (the perpetrator was caught in 2003).
XXVII	2000	Sydney Australia	10651	187	6	5	3	14	Spectacular success of Poles in hammer throw (Skolimowska and Ziółkowski) and triumph of Korzeniowski (two gold medals in 20 and 50 km walk).
XXVIII	2004	Athens Greece	10625	194	3	2	5	23	Otylia Jędrzejczak donated the funds raised from the auction of her gold medal in the 200 m butterfly swimming to a children's hospital in Poland.
XXIX	2008	Beijing China	11128	257	4	5	2	17	The Games opened under the sign of the number „8” (08/08/2008 at 8:08 p.m.), the lucky number of the host country – and in the medal table, China came out on top for the first time (48 gold medals).
XXX	2012	London Great Britain	10768	210	3	2	6	24	Third Games held in the United Kingdom – for the first time there were women on all national teams from all participating countries.
XXXI	2016	Rio de Janeiro Brazil	11238	234	2	3	6	33	For the first time, gold medals were won by Kosovo (judo), Jordan (taekwondo) and Fiji (rugby).
XXXII	2020	Tokyo Japan	11319	210	4	5	5	17	Masks on the podium, empty stands without spectators, but a record 9 medals for Poland in athletics.
XXXIII	2024	Paris France	10714	211	1	4	5	42	First gold medal for Poland in sport climbing (Aleksandra Mirosław).
T O T A L:			170 165	3794	72	89	137	* information on the number of competitors and the number of medals prepared on the basis of data placed on the Polish Olympic Committee website (www.olimpijski.pl)	



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CITIUS
ALTIUS
FORTIUS

LATIN, „FASTER, HIGHER, STRONGER” OR „FASTER, HIGHER, TOUGHER” – OLYMPIC MOTTO, MAXIM OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES AND THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE. THE AUTHOR OF THE MOTTO WAS AN EDUCATIONIST AND PREACHER OF THE DOMINICAN ORDER HENRI DIDON (1840-1900).

PIERRE DE COUBERTIN DURING THE OLYMPIC CONGRESS IN PARIS IN 1894 MADE THESE WORDS THE MOTTO OF THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE. THE MOTTO REFERS TO ANCIENT TRADITION AND AT THE SAME TIME EXPRESSES THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE MODERN OLYMPIC MOVEMENT.



YEAR OF POLISH OLYMPIANS

AUSTRALIA 2024

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