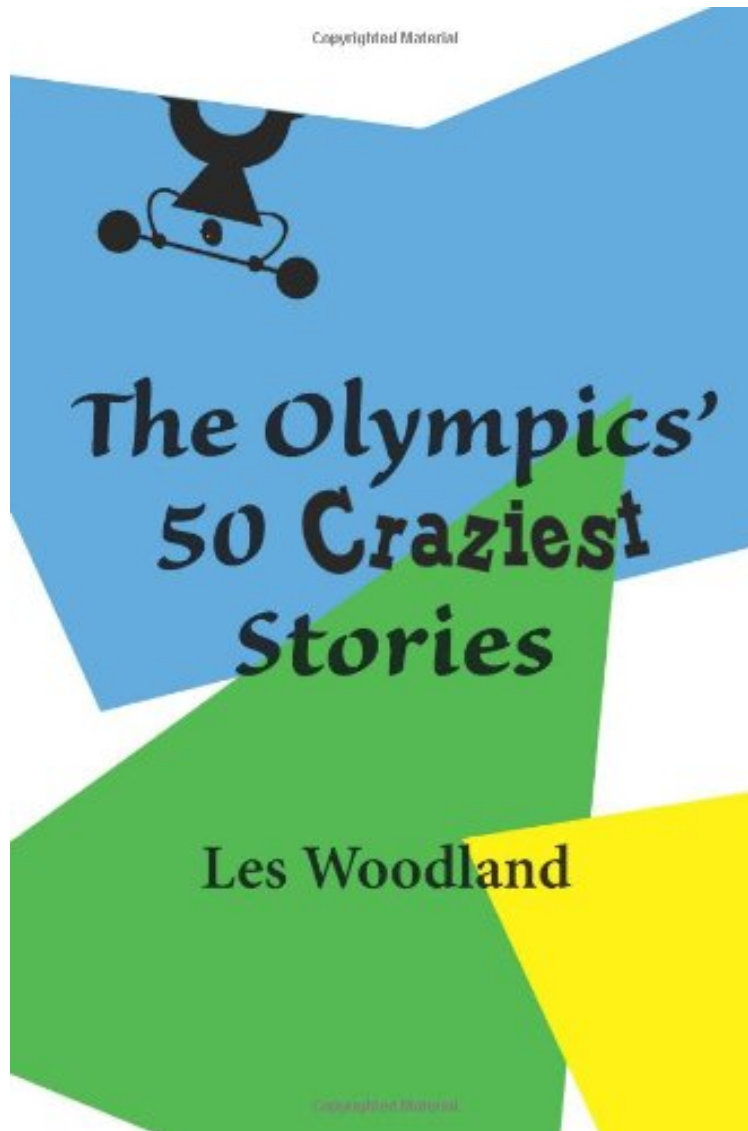


The Olympics' 50 Craziest Stories

Les Woodland

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Les Woodland : The Olympics' 50 Craziest Stories before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Olympics' 50 Craziest Stories:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A Must Read for All Sports Fans By James L. Witherell I can't begin to imagine where Les Woodland found all the information contained in this fascinating book about the Olympic games. Most of the other of his twenty or so books have generally been about cycling, but I guess that's what happens when you spend your life as a writer. It probably happens a lot; you're researching a subject and there it is, some interesting fact that doesn't have anything to do with what you're working on at the time, but you file it away in the

back of your mind. Maybe you can use it somewhere else later. I'll bet you this is exactly how Les Woodland came to write this great book that's not about cycling; he just found so many facts about the Olympics during his years of research that he just had to do it. The result is typical Woodland: a few of the stories we already know--Zola Budd and Mary Decker, or those two feuding figure skaters--but most of what's in here will be new to all but the hardest-core Olympic fans. Things like women who turn out to be men (it seems to happen a lot), or the rower who stopped for a mother duck and her ducklings--and still won his race! How about the time when competitors had to travel for weeks on a boat just to get to the games, and lost all their fitness during the trip. Is NBC aware of this book? If not, they should be. Maybe they could read a few pages to their viewers every day during the London Games, you know to put things in perspective. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Gold Medal Writing By Laurel T Les Woodland has written another charming book, filled with interesting tales from the international sports world's most vaunted stage--the Olympics! In quick order he spins one story after another---each accessible and well-written to give the reader a sense of time and place. The book is filled with familiar names, but the stories are not always familiar. The corrected version Woodland presents of Hitler's reaction to Jesse Owens' triumph is eye-opening, but it's the story he tells of Owens and his German competitor's unlikely friendship that brings a tear to the opened eye. I highly recommend this book to one and all---after reading it, you'll have the inside track on some wonderful story-telling. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. The Olympic's 50 Craziest Stories By L et L. Well, what can we say that hasn't already been said. We like the way Les Woodland writes. Very accessible and always a nice sense of humour. Obviously, an enormous amount of research has gone into this book which of course, is one of the reasons it's so interesting. Anyway, no point in repeating all that's gone before, other than, we both thoroughly recommend this book to one and all. L et L.

Citius, Altius, Fortius (Faster, Higher, Stronger) is the motto of the International Olympic Committee. After reading Les Woodland's "The Olympics' 50 Craziest Stories" the reader might wonder if the motto should be Sillier, Loonier, Crazier. There is the gentle rower who was winning his race when he stopped his scull to avoid scattering a mother duck and her ducklings--we'll let you read the book to find out how he did--and the American socialites who showed up for a golf game in Paris and accidentally ended up in the Olympic golf contest. There was so much confusion that year they never learned one of them had become Olympic champion. Oh, and the men's Olympic golf champion had actually journeyed to Paris to play tennis. Shooting live pigeons was an event in the 1900 Olympics, but there's no mention today of the competition out of embarrassment over the 300 dead and maimed birds that revulsed the spectators. We can't forget the Jamaican bobsled team nor the Russian KGB colonel who rigged the scoring in fencing and managed to create an international incident. They are all in "The Olympics' 50 Craziest Stories", along with dozens more athletes who managed to attain fame they would rather not have earned. In addition to the 50 stories of competitors behaving badly, or at least oddly, Les Woodland has sprinkled collections of interesting and sometimes improbable Olympics facts throughout, making "The Olympics' 50 Craziest Stories" fun from cover to cover. As the author of 26 books, Les Woodland knows how to tell a story and here he's in fine form. Join him in his trip to the crazy side of sports.