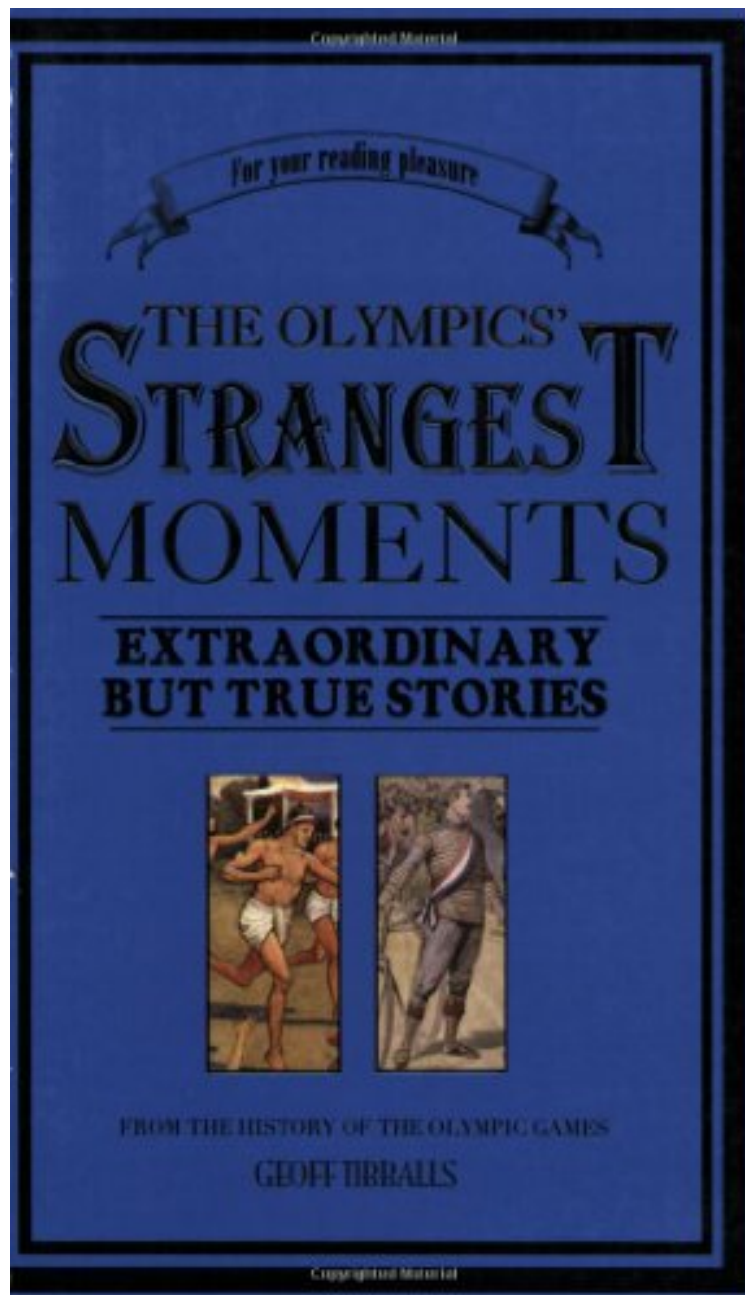


(Free) The Olympics' Strangest Moments: Extraordinary but True Stories from the History of the Olympic Games (Strangest series)

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Geoff Tibballs

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Geoff Tibballs : The Olympics' Strangest Moments: Extraordinary but True Stories from the History of the Olympic Games (Strangest series) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *The Olympics' Strangest Moments: Extraordinary but True Stories from the History of the Olympic Games (Strangest series)*:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Worthy of only a Bronze By Bob Scott There are some caveats to this book you should be aware of. 1) It covers up through the 2004 Olympics, so nothing from Beijing onward. 2) As another reviewer pointed out, the term "Strange" is used rather broadly. A better description is on the back cover: "bizarre, controversial, inept, heroic and plain unlucky moments." Underline "controversial" and "inept". Most of the stories fall into these two categories. One might hope for more stories of quaint and odd events, like the tug-of-war competition, or the "see how far you can swim underwater on one breath" event; or heroic efforts such as those by Kerri Strug and the Japanese gymnast with a broken kneecap who nevertheless landed his rings dismount so his team could win, but mostly what you get are disgraceful attempts at cheating, and inept or clearly corrupt officiating. 3) U.S. customers, be aware that the editor is a Brit who often displays his rather poor opinion of the United States, and takes the opposite side in all controversies involving the U.S., even the infamous, "the game isn't over until the Soviets win", basketball game. Overall, I found that at the end of the book, I felt pretty bummed-out about the Olympics. Rather than enjoying intriguing backstories you otherwise wouldn't have known about, it was more a collection of stories about people behaving exactly the opposite of what the Olympic spirit is supposed to be. Hence, I give it only three stars and a bronze medal. For feeling good about the Olympics, the gold medal remains with Bud Greenspan. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. A fun look at the Olympics since 1896 By Peter Durward Harris Like others in the series of books about strangest moments, this book merely offers selected episodes, making no attempt to chronicle a definitive history. Other books do that, but they aren't necessarily more enjoyable. The book includes an introduction giving a brief history of the ancient Olympics, which began in 776 BC and continued until banned in 393 AD. One wonders what might have happened had they continued unbroken to the present day. The episodes are presented in historical order, the first three being from the inaugural Olympics (in the modern era) of 1896. It seems that the very first winner (an American) was refused permission to take leave from his university, so quit his studies and spent his life savings on the trip to Greece. It's an interesting story but not exactly strange. As I've learned from other books in the series, strange is interpreted loosely, though some of the episodes really are strange, and they don't all concern the winners. Indeed, many of the best stories are about the losers. Still, it is important to point out that this book confines itself to the summer Olympics, so neither the exploits of Eddie the Eagle nor the Tonya Harding scandal find a place here. The early episodes offer a glimpse into a very different world than the one we know today. The 1896 swimming events were held in the bitterly cold and choppy waters of the Mediterranean, the winner eventually coming second in the 1924 Olympics special arts competition for architecture, although it seems that he should have won that event. Now, whatever happened to that Olympic architecture event? The 1900 Paris Olympics featured a cricket competition with only two teams entered, the winners being a British team from Devon and Somerset, with the losers being a French team made up of staff from the British embassy. The swimming events were staged in the River Seine. How things have changed since then. Fascinating as the early episodes are, I suspect that most people buying this book will do so to be reminded of more recent events that they originally saw live on TV. Mexico in 1968 earned its place in history because of the black power salutes, Bob Beamon's long jump and Dick Fosbury's new style of high jumping, which has since become the standard method of performing the high jump. Four episodes represent the 1972 Olympics, though they are remembered mainly for one of them - the terrorist outrage. The eighties are famous for Budd versus Decker in 1984 and for a nasty accident to Greg Louganis in 1988, both of which are featured here, but most of all they are remembered for the cheating that occurred in 1988. If the dubious decisions in the boxing competition constituted a scandal, Ben Johnson's 100 metres sprint performance was an even bigger scandal that still reverberates around the sporting world over twenty years later. Six pages are devoted to this episode here, though that is miniscule compared to all the coverage that it has received elsewhere. More recent episodes remind us of Derek Redmond limping up the track in Barcelona, Linford Christie's false start and disqualification in Atlanta and Eric the Eel's modest performances swimming in Sydney. He was swimming's answer to Eddie the Eagle. This book is sometimes funny, occasionally tragic, but always entertaining. You don't have to be fanatical about the Olympics to enjoy this book.

To mark the 2008 Olympics in Beijing, this book recounts the bizarre, controversial, inept, heroic and plain unlucky moments from the first modern games in 1896 to the glories of Athens 2004.

About the Author Sports writer Geoff Tibballs is the author of several bestselling titles in the Strangest... series, on a range of sports including motor-racing and the Olympics. He also wrote *Great Sporting Scandals* published by

Robson.