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## Formula

No age restriction applies to the final competition of the Women's Olympic Football Tournament.

## History

In 1900 and 1904, football was introduced as an exhibition sport and became the first team sport to be included in the Olympic Games.

Women's football was introduced at the Atlanta 1996 Olympic Games, where the final attracted a crowd of 76,489.

## General

Beijing 2008 hosted the fourth Women's Olympic Football Tournament.

The Women's Olympic Football Tournament is regarded as a "Masters" of sorts, as some continents still choose their Olympic representatives based on results at the FIFA Women's World Cup™.

The first two events stipulated that players had to be at least 16 years old, but that rule was scrapped for Athens.

The 2004 event was the first to feature 10 teams, while the 2008 version in Beijing saw a field of 12. Since 1999, 16 nations have competed for the FIFA Women's World Cup™.

A total of 16 associations have sent teams to the Women's Olympic Football Tournament, five of them qualifying for all four events: Germany, Sweden, China PR, USA and Brazil.

Nigeria are the only team to have represented Africa at a Women's Olympic Football Tournament.

The USA have claimed medals in all four Olympic Football Tournaments. The USA went on to take their third Olympic gold in 2008,

Brazil and the USA have reached the semi-finals in all four events to date, while the USA are the only team to have appeared in all four finals.

The USA is the only nation to have won medals at all FIFA Women's World Cups and Women's Olympic Football Tournaments, and they held both titles simultaneously in 1999.

No reigning world champions have claimed Olympic gold. Norway won the bronze medal in 1996, and the USA were defeated in the 2000 final. FIFA Women's World Cup™ 2003 and 2007 champions Germany won bronze in 2004 and 2008.

The record crowd for a women's Olympic football match is likely to stand for some time. The Stanford Stadium in Athens, Georgia, was packed with 76,489 fans to watch the USA defeat China in 1996. The Women's Olympic Football Tournament in Beijing 2008 was supported by 740,014 people. Beijing 2008 also set a new all-time Olympic football record of 2.14 million spectators for both the men's and women's tournaments.

## Matches, players, victories, goals

No women's team has won all its matches at a Women's Olympic Football Tournament, whereas Denmark and Japan (1996), Nigeria (2000, 2008), Greece (2004) and Argentina (2008) lost every game.

The golden goal rule has now been abolished, but two games at a Women's Olympic Football Tournament have been decided by this method, both of them featuring the USA and Norway. In the 1996 semi-final, MacMillan's golden goal saw the USA through, and four years later Dagny Mellgren sealed gold for Norway.

The highest-scoring match was Germany's 8-0 victory over China PR in 2004, also the highest goal total for a single team and simultaneously the biggest margin of victory. Second was Greece's 7-0 defeat at the hands of Brazil in 2004. This was Brazil's first FIFA final in a women's competition. Brazil won Olympic silver in 2004 and 2008, having lost two bronze medal matches in 1996 and 2000.

Birgit Prinz of Germany and Cristiane of Brazil are the leading scorers at the Women's Olympic Football Tournament, ruling the roost with a whopping total of ten goals each. Behind them with eight goals is Brazil's Pretinha, followed by another Brazilian, Marta, with six. Birgit Prinz is the only player to have scored in all four Olympic tournaments.

The Women's Olympic Football Tournament has borne witness to just three hat tricks to date, goal-getter Prinz (GER) sealed the first against China PR in Athens 2004, while Brazil's Cristiane is the only player to have scored two hat tricks: one against hosts Greece in Athens 2004 and one in 2008 against Nigeria.

The fastest Olympic goal was scored by USA's Heather O'Reilly in the 42nd second of the encounter against New Zealand in 2008.

The youngest scorer in the history of the women's OFT was China PR's Gu Yasha, who played in Beijing 2008 aged 17 years and 8 months. Sweden's Lena Videkull remains the oldest goalscorer overall when she found the net at the age of 33 years and seven months in Atlanta 1996.

Brazil's Formiga is the all-time leading women's football Olympian with 21 matches, closely followed by team-mate Tania (20 matches) and Germany's Birgit Prinz (19 matches). All of them have participated in all women's OFTs. This applies to another three players: Formiga (Brazil), Renate Lingor and Kerstin Stegemann (Germany).

The oldest player to date is Brazil's goalkeeper Meg, a 40-year-old when she took part in the third-place play-off in 1996. Fellow countrywoman Daniela is the youngest player after making her debut in 2000 aged 16 years and eight months.

The oldest medal-winner is the USA's Joy Fawcett, aged 36 years and six months in 2004, while the youngest is Cindy Parlow (also USA), at just 18 years and one month in 1996.