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## Formula

No age restrictions apply to the final competition of the women's 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

Athens 2004 hosted the third 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 must 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 sees a field of 12. Since 1999, 16 nations have competed for the FIFA Women's World Cup.

A total of 12 associations have sent teams to the Women's Olympic Football Tournament, five of them qualifying for all three events: Germany, Sweden, China PR, USA and Brazil.

Nigeria represented Africa, and Australia were Oceania's qualifier in 2000. Both repeated the achievement in 2004. Brazil are the only team to have represented South America at all three women's Olympic Football Tournaments.

Norway and the USA claimed medals in both 1996 and 2000. The USA went on to take their second Olympic gold in 2004, leaving their golden oldies (Hamm, Lilly, Foudy, Chastain) with a host of titles – two Olympic golds (1996, 2004), an Olympic silver (2000), and two FIFA World Cups (1991, 1999).

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

The USA is the only nation to have won a medal at all FIFA Women's World Cups and Women's Olympic Football Tournaments, and 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 champions Germany won bronze in 2004.

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.

## 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) and Greece (2004) lost every game.

The golden goal ruling 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, having lost two bronze medal matches in 1996 and 2000.

Birgit Prinz of Germany, the leading scorer at the FIFA Women's World Cup 2003, carried her record over to the Olympic Games, ruling the roost with a whopping total of nine goals. Behind her with eight goals is Brazil's Pretinha, followed by USA's Hamm and Milbrett, both with five goals, and Sun Wen of China PR (also with five goals) despite not having participated in the 2004 tournament.

The women's Olympic Football Tournament has borne witness to just two hat tricks to date, both scored in Athens 2004: goal-getter Prinz (GER) sealed the first one against China PR, while Brazil's Cristiane claimed the second hat trick against hosts Greece.

The fastest Olympic goal belongs to Germany's Pia Wunderlich who scored in the fourth minute of the encounter with Brazil in 1996.

The youngest scorer in the history of the women's OFT was Brazil's Martha, who played in Athens 2004 aged 18 years and 6 months. USA's Lilly was the oldest scorer in that tournament, aged 33 years and one month. But 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.

Joy Fawcett, the oldest player in Athens 2004 at 36 years of age, is the all-time leading women's football Olympian with 16 matches and 1,540 minutes played, closely followed by team-mates Kristine Lilly, Julie Foudy (also 16 matches) and Mia Hamm (15 matches, 1,366 minutes). All of them have participated in all women's OFTs. This applies to another three US players: Cindy Parlow, Brandi Chastain, Briana Scurry.

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 Norway's Heidi Störe, aged 33 years and one month in 1996, while the youngest is American Cyndi Parlow at just 18 years and one month in the same tournament.