

TRYING TO AVOID THE WHITE ELEPHANT: THE LEGACY OF OLYMPIC VENUES

By Dan Lee

Hosting a Summer Olympics is not easy. The host city must provide competitive venues for 26 different sports, including four different aquatic events, four different boating events, four different cycling events and three different equestrian events. It also must provide housing for thousands of athletes and officials and a broadcasting and media centre for all the international journalists.

No city has all the world-class facilities it needs to host an event as large as the Olympics. Therefore, it must construct brand-new facilities. That can add up to hundreds of millions of pounds.

Host cities also must consider what to do with the venues after the Olympics. Some facilities are built for sports that their citizens may never play or see again after the Olympics. Velodromes, in particular, are difficult venues for which to find users. Cities also often find it difficult to find a use for the main Olympic stadium. In recent years, International Olympic Committee leaders have spoken about the need to avoid building “white elephants”: expensive venues that remain empty or underutilized after the Games are over.

This paper will explore how other cities in the past seven Olympiads have fared with regard to the venues: what they had to build and what happened with the facilities afterward. It will include cost figures where they were available and references to English-language articles and websites as suggested reading.

It is worth noting that some host cities have built temporary venues. In the United States, the city of Long Beach hosted the 2004 U.S. Olympic swimming trials. It hired the Italian firm Myrtha Pools to install two, temporary 50-metre swimming pools on top of a parking lot. Several world records were set in the pools during the trials. Afterward, the pools were later disassembled and sent to permanent homes.

1984 – LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles already had hosted the Olympics in 1932. As home to the 1960 Democratic National Convention, several professional sports teams and major universities, it had many existing facilities that it could adapt into Olympic venues. In fact, the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee scattered the venues across several Southern California counties in an effort to economize, perhaps mindful of Montreal's fiscal debacle eight years earlier. Any new facilities were donated to schools or public use after the Games.

Venues:

- *Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum*: venue for opening and closing ceremonies and track and field events; originally built in 1921 for (American) football and baseball; used as venue for the 1932 Olympics; was designated a National Historic Landmark; current home of the University of Southern California football team; formerly home to the Los Angeles Raiders and Los Angeles Rams professional (American) football teams; publicly owned and managed by the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum Commission, a joint-powers agency of the State of California, County of Los Angeles and City of Los Angeles. Whenever businessmen talk about establishing or moving an American professional football team to Los Angeles, they typically try to avoid going to the Coliseum. The Coliseum is close to South Central Los Angeles, which is a poorer area that has a reputation – not always deserved – for crime. In addition, the Coliseum lacks luxury boxes that would bring in corporate revenue. The Coliseum Commission is reluctant to spend public money for a private enterprise.
<http://lacoliseumlive.com/joomla/>
- *Los Angeles Sports Arena*: this facility served as the boxing venue for the 1984 Games; it was built in 1959 and hosted the 1960 Democratic National Convention, where John F. Kennedy was nominated for president; it is adjacent to the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum; it is the former home of the Los Angeles Clippers professional basketball team and the University of Southern California sports teams; currently considered outdated for professional and collegiate sports; still used for concerts (Bruce Springsteen) and music festivals and for naturalization ceremonies for new citizens.
http://www.lacoliseumlive.com/joomla/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=61&Itemid=70
- *McDonald's Olympic Swim Stadium*: swimming and diving venue; built specifically for the 1984 Games; location is on the USC campus; currently owned and used by USC for intercollegiate aquatic (diving, swimming, water polo) competitions and recreational swimming; much

of the original bleacher seating was removed.

<http://www.usctrojans.com/facilities/usc-swim-stadium.html>

- *The Forum in Inglewood*: basketball venue: served as the basketball venue for the 1984 Games; former home to the Los Angeles Lakers professional basketball team and the Los Angeles Kings professional hockey team; currently considered outdated and underutilized; used for church services and for concerts. <http://thelaforum.com/>
- *Rose Bowl*: football (soccer) venue; opened in 1922; currently utilized by the UCLA (American) football team and for the annual Rose Bowl (American) football game; also previously used for the Super Bowl and the 1994 Men's World Cup and the 1999 Women's World Cup; has served as venue for concerts (U2) and soccer matches; appears to be privately owned and managed, but the city of Pasadena has representatives on the company board.
<http://www.rosebowlstadium.com/>
- *Santa Anita Park*: venue for equestrian events; held its first horse race in 1934; privately owned and managed. <http://www.santaanita.com/>
- *Pauley Pavilion*: public indoor facility for the gymnastics competition; built in 1965 on the UCLA campus for the school's basketball, gymnastics and volleyball teams.
<http://www.uclabruins.com/genrel/062200aai.html>
- *Dodger Stadium*: outdoor facility for baseball competition; built for the Los Angeles Dodgers professional baseball team and opened in 1962.
<http://losangeles.dodgers.mlb.com/la/ballpark/index.jsp>
- *Athlete housing*: LA did not build an Olympic Village; instead, it appears that athletes were housed in dorms on the many campuses in the Los Angeles area, including USC and UCLA, as a cost-savings measure.
- *Velodrome*: built on the California State University at Dominguez Hills campus for the 1984 Games with funding from Southland Corp.; it lost money after the Olympics, because velodromes rarely make money; facility no longer exists; was replaced in 2003 by the Home Depot Center, which serves as the home for the Los Angeles Galaxy and Chivas USA teams. The facility also is an official U.S. Olympic Training Site for cycling, soccer, tennis, lacrosse, volleyball, baseball, softball and other sports.
http://carson.csudh.edu/content/department/about_carson/1984olympic.asp
<http://www.homedepotcenter.com/contentright.php?section=aboutus&page=thehdc>
- *Lake Casitas Recreation Area*: site of temporary rowing and canoeing venue in Ventura County, northwest of Los Angeles.
<http://www.lakecasitas.info/>

- *Prado Recreational Area*: site of temporary shooting facility; publicly owned recreational area in San Bernardino County.
<http://www.sbcounty.gov/parks/prado/prado.aspx>
- *Raleigh Runnels Memorial Pool*: site of water polo competition; built in 1975 and privately owned by Pepperdine University.
<http://www.pepperdinesports.com/facilities/runnels-pool.html>
- *Long Beach Convention Center*: site of volleyball and fencing competitions; it's unclear if this is publicly or privately owned. It is managed by SMG World (formerly Spectacor), one of the largest entertainment and convention venue management companies in the world.
<http://www.longbeachcc.com/>

Articles:

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- Kirshenbaum, Jerry. "The 1984 Olympics." Sports Illustrated. 18 July 1984.
<http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/vault/article/magazine/MAG1122293/1/index.htm>
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<http://www.la84foundation.org/20thAnniversary.pdf>
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<http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/vault/article/magazine/MAG1121822/1/index.htm>
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1988 – SEOUL

Seoul was able to build and operate the venues without any major glitches. Despite fears about North Korean attacks or citizens protesting against the South

Korean government, the main controversies in Seoul had to do with positive drug test results, athletes and coaches behaving badly, and criticism of NBC's coverage of the Games.

South Korea spent about U.S. \$4 billion to host the 16-day event and 13,000 athletes; nearly half was spent on construction of an international airport terminal, highway renovation and subway system expansion. Some critics noted that many of the venues were never filled, and that tickets were priced beyond many residents' means in a city of 12 million. But some South Koreans said that the Games helped the country politically, giving it a chance to remake its image in the eyes of the world that it was not a "second-rate nation." This is a view that other cities and countries would express after they hosted the Olympics.

Venues:

- *Olympic Park*: included velodrome; gymnasiums for fencing, gymnastics and weightlifting; and swimming pool and tennis courts; all built specifically for the Games; however the Olympic stadium was not deemed suitable for the football World Cup; built at a cost of \$300 million.
- *Seoul Sports Complex*: includes stadium for opening and closing ceremonies, basketball, boxing, swimming, football and equestrian events; operational since 1984; built at a cost of \$180 million (indoor pools cost \$22.4 million); ground was broken before Seoul was awarded the Games.

Articles:

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<http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/vault/article/magazine/MAG1067233/index.htm>
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<http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/vault/article/magazine/MAG1068519/index.htm>
- Wilson, Bruce. "Well done, but will the end justify all the work?" The Herald Sun (Melbourne, Australia). 18 November 1988.
- Harvey, Randy. "Olympics '88: A Preview; The host city Seoul rises from ashes to become metropolitan center of distinction." Los Angeles Times. 14 September 1988. Home edition: 1.

1992 – BARCELONA

The Barcelona Games went off without a hitch. It got high marks for boosting tourism and reshaping the city's image and standing in the world. It also revived a

port that was once “clogged with decrepit factories,” but is now the third busiest in the Mediterranean Sea. But it did not come without problems, such as skyrocketing housing prices. The venues were underused after the Games. But Barcelona de Servicios Municipales (<http://www.bsmsa.cat/index.php?id=1&L=2>) , which manages several of these facilities, claims that visitors increased to more than 1.6 million in 2009.

Venues:

- *Olympic Pool (Bernat Picornell)*: venue for swimming and diving; built about 10 years prior to the Games on Montjuic Hill; I believe it is still used for competitive swimming and that it hosted the 2003 FINA World Championship; it's unclear who manages it; used as a municipal pool. <http://www.picornell.cat/>
- *Olympic stadium*: venue for opening and closing ceremonies and track and field events; currently home to the Espanyol football team, but team is leaving for a newly constructed facility, because the Olympic facility is difficult to get to; apparently hosting the 2010 European athletics championships; managed by the Barcelona de Servicios Municipales. <http://www.bsmsa.cat/index.php?id=23&L=2>
- *Badalona Stadium*: basketball venue during the Games; but used only occasionally for a pop concert as of 2006; hampered by location on city outskirts.
- *Palau Sant Jordi*: gymnastic venue; also managed by Barcelona de Servicios Municipales; as of 2006, rarely used for sport and facing an uncertain future. <http://www.bsmsa.cat/index.php?id=24&L=2>
- *Casteldefells*: site of the rowing venue; also well used; unclear who manages it.
- *Horta Velodrome*: as of 2006, had fallen into disrepair and nearly abandoned
- *Olympic Village*: built to accommodate 15,000 athletes; others also housed in cruise ships docked off shore.
- *Porto Olimpico (possibly Porto Olimpico)*: dock is one of the few venue success stories in Barcelona; is now used by a large community of yacht owners.
- *Olympic Village*: flats for 15,000 athletes that city government sold privately after the Games
- *F.C. Barcelona football stadium*: already built 25 years prior to the Games.
- *Additional facilities built*: field hockey, baseball, jai alai, canoeing, shooting, badminton, equestrian sports and volleyball.

Articles:

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- Keeley, Graham. "Olympic bosses hope to learn from Barcelona's mistakes; Chiefs to see failing legacy of 1992 Games." *The Evening Standard*. 15 November 2006. 23.
- Vincent, Donovan. "Toronto Games Bidders Learn Some Lessons From Barcelona; Watchers have applauded Legacy of port Revival." *The Toronto Star*. 4 July 1999, Edition 1.

1996 – ATLANTA

Atlanta outbid Melbourne and Athens for the Centennial Olympic Games. It sought to surpass what Los Angeles had done, using corporate sponsorships and existing facilities for the Olympics.

But the Games were forever marred when a bomb went off one night in Centennial Olympic Park, resulting in two deaths. In addition, the organising committee came under criticism for the rampant commercialism that led some to call Atlanta the "Coca-Cola Games." A slow and overtaxed public transportation system, computer glitches and security breakdowns also hampered the Olympics. International Olympic Committee members also were upset that IOC money was used to help build the main stadium, only to see it handed over to the privately owned Atlanta Braves professional baseball team after the Games. IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch pointedly refused to give Atlanta his highest appellation of "the best Games."

Locally, some criticised the organizing committee and city leaders for failing to engage the community and revitalize poorer neighbourhoods. The Games also didn't lead to an immediate post-Olympic economic boom, and little new housing was built, they said. Civic boosters insist that the Games helped spur construction of new hotels and allowed Atlanta to host other major events. Although the Atlanta committee was able to find other uses and owners for most of the new venues, it wasn't able to do so easily for all of them.

Venues:

- *Centennial Olympic Stadium*: built for the opening and closing ceremonies and track and field events at a cost of \$232 million; seating capacity of 83,100 for Olympics; retrofitted after the Games into Turner Field (named after CNN founder Ted Turner, who owned – and may still have a stake in – the Braves), home for the Atlanta Braves professional baseball team, which moved from the now-defunct

Atlanta–Fulton County Stadium nearby; the decision irked some at the IOC, because their money was used to build a stadium for a private business run by a man who organized the Goodwill Games to rival the Olympics. <http://atlanta.braves.mlb.com/atl/ballpark/history.jsp>

- *The Omni Coliseum*: venue for indoor volleyball; 15,500 capacity; built in 1972 and owned by the city of Atlanta; was home to the Atlanta Hawks professional basketball team; demolished in 1997.
- *Alexander Memorial Coliseum*: venue for boxing; capacity for 9,500 spectators; required \$12 million in renovations; built in 1956 on the Georgia Tech campus for the school's basketball team. <http://ramblinwreck.cstv.com/genrel/032102aaa.html>
- *Georgia Tech Aquatic Center*: venue for diving, swimming, synchronized swimming, water polo and modern pentathlon; 14,000–seat shaded outdoor stadium; 4,000–seat water polo arena; also featured solar panels on the roof; \$21 million investment; school took seven years to raise the money to enclose the facility for year–round use. <http://ramblinwreck.cstv.com/genrel/032102aae.html>
- *Atlanta–Fulton County Stadium*: 52,500–seat stadium served as baseball venue; previously was home to the Atlanta Braves professional baseball team and the Atlanta Falcons professional (American) football team; demolished after the Braves left for Centennial Olympic Stadium and turned into a parking lot.
- *Clark Atlanta University Stadium*: field hockey venue; artificial turf and capacity for 5,200 spectators; \$36.5 million investment; now used by the school's football team; the track for the main Olympic stadium was moved here.
- *Georgia Dome*: venue for basketball, gymnastics and team handball; indoor stadium is home to the Atlanta Falcons professional football team; was built in 1992; is managed by a public agency known as the Georgia World Congress Authority, which also manages Centennial Olympic Park and the Georgia World Congress Center. <http://gadome.com/>
- *Georgia State Sports Arena*: badminton venue; 3,700 seats; \$3 million; originally built in 1972 for Georgia State University men's and women's basketball teams. <http://www.georgiastatesports.com/ViewArticle.dbml?ATCLID=944830>
- *Georgia World Congress Center*: venue for fencing, team handball, judo, modern pentathlon, table tennis, weightlifting, wrestling; second–largest convention center in the United States; seating ranged from 2,200 to 8,000. <http://www.gwcc.com/>
- *Forbes Arena*: venue for basketball; seating for 5,700; \$12 million investment; built specifically for the Games by ACOG; now used by basketball team at Morehouse College, a private, all male school for

black students.

http://www.morehouse.edu/athletics/facilities/forbes_arena.html

- *Herndon Stadium*: field hockey venue on the Morris Brown College; capacity for 14,800; \$36.5 million investment; used by the school's football team, but financial problems forced the school to drop the sport in 2003; used by the Atlanta Beat women's soccer team in 2003, but the team was planning to its own stadium in 2010; there is no information currently available at the Morris Brown College website, which is currently still under construction.
- *Atlanta Beach*: Beach volleyball venue; renamed Clayton County International Park; capacity of 8,000; three manmade lakes; \$2.5 million in renovations; as of 2003, it was little used, and rooms beneath the stands could be used for wedding receptions and bridal showers; an outdoor stage for concerts replaced the sand; it is not advertised for volleyball as a sport, although some sand volleyball courts are seen on the website.
<http://www.claytonparks.com/InternationalPark/documents/2010BeachBrochure.pdf>
- <http://www.claytonparks.com/InternationalPark/beach/index.htm>
- *Georgia International Horse Park*: venue for equestrian, modern pentathlon, mountain cycling in Conyers, Ga.; seating ranged from 2,200 for pentathlon up to 31,000 for equestrian; \$100 million investment; opened in 1995; as of 2003, it could not rely on equestrian events to make ends meet, so it also hosts car shows, carnivals and Civil War re-enactments. <http://www.georgiahorsepark.com/>
- *Stone Mountain Park*: venue for archery, track cycling and tennis; as of 2003, the tennis center was used only for state high school championships and some local tournaments; archery center and velodrome were temporary facilities that were dismantled following Games. <http://www.stonemountainpark.com/faq/stone-mountain.aspx>
 - *Archery Center*: capacity for 5,300; 26 temporary ranges.
 - *Tennis Complex*: 20 courts slated for public use after the Games; seating capacity 26,300
 - *Velodrome*: 6,300-seat, temporary facility to be removed after Games
- *Wolf Creek Shooting Complex*: venue for shooting and modern pentathlon; 7,500 seat; \$21.7 million investment; becomes public facility after Games; Fulton County closed the complex at one point because it was a drain on the budget; renamed Tom Lowe Shooting Grounds; owned/operated by the Fulton County Park and Recreation Department. http://www.gatrap.com/Tom_Lowe_SG.htm

- *Golden Park*: softball venue in Columbus, Ga.; capacity 8,800 spectators; \$5.1 million investment; was briefly the home of the now-defunct South Georgia Waves, a minor-league baseball team.
- *Lake Lanier*: rowing, canoe/kayak sprint in Gainesville, Ga.; 1,500 permanent seats, 18,000 temporary seats (including stands on water); \$19.4 million investment; as of 2003, was the most successful sporting legacy from the Games with thriving rowing and canoeing programs; operated by two local clubs; an amphitheatre was under construction in 2003, when the world canoeing championships were scheduled to be held there. <http://www.lakelanierislands.com/about.php>
- *Ocoee Whitewater Center*: canoe/kayak slalom in Cherokee National Forest, Tenn.; 15,000 spectator capacity; \$26.4 million investment; built specifically for Games; publicly owned and utilized, but as of 2003, was only open for recreational kayaking one day a week; a 2001 World Cup race was canceled there following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. <http://www.fs.fed.us/r8/ocoe/aboutUs.shtml>
- *Sanford Stadium*: soccer venue at the University of Georgia campus; 85,000-seat capacity, making it the largest venue; originally built in 1929; serves as the stadium for the University of Georgia (American) football team. http://www.georgiadogs.com/ViewArticle.dbml?DB_OEM_ID=8800&AT_CLID=1366914
- *Stegeman Coliseum*: venue for indoor volleyball and rhythmic gymnastics on the University of Georgia campus; capacity for 10,000 spectators; required \$3.6 million in renovations; originally opened in 1964. http://www.georgiadogs.com/ViewArticle.dbml?DB_OEM_ID=8800&AT_CLID=301115
- *Wassaw Sound*: Yachting venue in Savannah, Ga.; capacity for 13,000 spectators along shore; \$10.8 million investment to build temporary day marina.

Articles:

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- "Ten Years Later: Atlanta's Olympic Legacy Still Transforming City." Asia Pulse. 29 June 2006. (Atlanta boosters say Olympic legacy has spurred \$1.8 billion in new development (hotels, office buildings, residential and entertainment venues) and visitor use of downtown. The city has hosted two Super Bowls, the PGA Championships,

NASCAR races, college (American) football bowl games, and two NCAA Final Four basketball championship games since 1994.)

- Bragg, Rick. "A Year Later, Some Atlantans are Asking: What Olympic Legacy?" *New York Times*. 20 July 1997. Late Edition (East Coast): 1.12.
- Landsberg, Mitchell. "Amid Chaos There Were Moments to Remember; First week: Technical and logistical glitches aside, there was plenty of drama on the competition side." *Los Angeles Times*. 28 July 1996. Bulldog edition: 1.

2000 – SYDNEY

One issue with Sydney was that the Olympic Park was built at Homebush Bay 19 kilometres away from the city centre. It was next to the State Brickworks and State Abattoir, and it was contaminated with toxic waste. Union Carbide also owned a site next to the Olympic Park and stored hazardous waste there, leading to demonstrations by Greenpeace against the supposedly "Green Games."

Another problem was getting there: officials had to build a rail line and create a ferry boat service to the area. The location brought complaints from some: some reporters told of shuttle bus drivers getting lost on the way to the media centre.

After the Olympics, there weren't a whole lot of people who could readily access the venues. Outgoing Olympics Minister Michael Knight urged the construction of major commercial, retail and residential developments for 20,000 to 30,000 people near the park to create a "critical mass" of daily visitors to the Olympic Park area. Although sceptics question Knight's proposals, there are apparently plans now to do what he suggested, but that will take time to develop. The Sydney Olympic Park Authority was planning a \$1 billion redevelopment effort. In the meantime, officials estimated the facilities would cost millions of dollars in ongoing maintenance.

Venues:

- *Stadium Australia (now called ANZ Stadium)*: venue for opening and closing ceremonies and track and field event; built with \$392 million in public and private funds; reportedly the largest stadium to host an Olympics at that time; converted from 110,000 seats to 80,000 seats for football at a cost of U.S. \$40 million; also hosted the rugby World Cup final in 2003, when it posted its first profit; but there were insufficient concerts, football and rugby matches to fill the stadium immediately after the Olympics.
<http://www.anzstadium.com.au/AboutUs/History.aspx>
- *Sydney International Aquatic Centre*: venue for swimming built with state funds; hosted the 2002 Commonwealth Games trials; still in use as a regional aquatics facility for recreational programs and hosts

international competitions, but still needs government subsidies.

<http://www.aquaticcentre.com.au/>

- *Athletic Centre*:
http://www.sydneyolympicpark.com.au/Visiting/venues_and_parks/athletic_centre
- *SuperDome*: 20,000-seat indoor venue for basketball, gymnastics and trampoline built with public and private funds at a cost of \$190 million (might be Australian dollars) plus another \$60 million for an adjoining car park; but went into receivership in 2004; main post-Olympic events are concerts; now known as Acer Arena.
<http://www.acerarena.com.au/default.asp?flash=1&>
- *Sydney Showground*: built for baseball games; appears to be leased/owned by government authorities; limited post-Games utilization. <http://www.sydneyshowground.com.au/home.html>
- *Archery Centre*:
http://www.sydneyolympicpark.com.au/Visiting/venues_and_parks/archery_centre
- *Sydney International Tennis Centre*: built by public-private partnership; has hosted Davis Cup matches and Australian Open warm-up tournament; initial post-Olympic operator lost money; academy established and is close to breaking even financially.
http://www.sydneyolympicpark.com.au/Visiting/venues_and_parks/tennis_centre
- *State Hockey Centre*: outdoor field hockey venue.
http://www.sydneyolympicpark.com.au/Home_of_sport/sport_venues/hockey_centre
- *State Sports Centre*: indoor/outdoor sports complex that was used for table tennis and tae kwan do; opened in 1984 and has hosted conferences, dinners and rock concerts.
http://www.sydneyolympicpark.com.au/Visiting/venues_and_parks/athletic_centre
- *Sydney International Regatta Centre*: venue for rowing and canoe built through public-private partnership; available year round for multiple activities; operating at a small loss.
<http://www.regattacentre.nsw.gov.au/>
- *Whitewater Stadium*: venue for kayaking.
http://www.penrithwhitewater.com.au/html_05/abou/abou_index.htm
- *Blacktown Olympic Park*: venue for softball and some baseball built at public expense; has become main facility for Sydney, but requires public subsidies. <http://www.blacktownolympicpark.com.au/>
- *Sydney International Equestrian Centre*: equestrian venues built at public expense at Horsley Park; owned and operated by state and

requires nearly \$1 million operating subsidy.

http://www.equestriancentre.nsw.gov.au/category.php?cat_id=1

- *Olympic Shooting Centre (Cecil Park)*: shooting venue built at public expense; managed by the state and needs the largest state subsidy, despite hosting World Cup event and two new clubs.
http://www.shootingcentre.nsw.gov.au/chapter.php?cat_id=1&chapter_id=28
- *Mountain Bike Track at Fairfield City Farm*: mountain biking venue; farm site was purchased by the State Planning Authority; Fairfield City Council took up lease in 1984; closed because there were too few post-Olympic users to justify maintenance costs; sold in 2009 to a private company, which has renamed it the Calmsley Hill City Farm.
<http://calmsleyhill.com.au/about-us>
- *Newington Athletes Village*: housed the athletes during the Games; turned into for-sale housing units after the Olympics; now fully sold out.
<http://www.newingtonvillage.com.au/>
- *Dunc Gray Olympic Velodrome, Bankstown*: Indoor Cycling venue; built with public funds and now managed for public by a local sports club; used for national and state cycling events; has sufficient maintenance costs, but is considered one of the best in the world; a tavern with bistro was built on the site, but was forced to close in May 2010.
http://www.duncgrayvelodrome.com/page/about_dunc_gray.html
- *Ryde Aquatic Leisure Centre*: water polo venue built at public expense; operated by public agency as a major regional community facility; hosts soccer, badminton, basketball, hydrotherapy, swimming and water polo programs; does NOT require state subsidy.
<http://www.ryde.nsw.gov.au/ryde/ralcprograms.htm>
- *Sydney Harbour*: sailing venue
- *Farm Cove*: triathlon venue
- *Bondi Beach*: beach volleyball site; the temporary facility was torn down after the Games; before that, it was the subject of controversy; many residents objected to the facility, saying it would restrict their access to the beach, create a safety hazard and harm the environment.
- *Sydney Football Stadium*: football venue; now used for football, rugby, concerts (George Michael, Robbie Williams, Pearl Jam); managed by a trust since 1876; trust is now known as the Sydney Cricket & Sports Ground Trust. <http://www.sydneycricketground.com.au/MM-SFS.html>
- *Moore Park*: marathon and road cycling venue; public park opened in 1869; management transferred to the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust; was a subject of political debate, because the New South Wales government wanted to transfer control of the park to the Sydney Cricket and Sports Ground Trust; some residents objected to giving the property to an organisation that wants to hold commercial sporting

events and convert the land into a car park; authorities announced they had scrapped the plan in June 2010.

http://www.centennialparklands.com.au/our_places/moore_park

- *Darling Harbour*: weightlifting, boxing, fencing, judo, wrestling were held in exhibition halls, while volleyball was held in the Entertainment Centre; originally was a bustling fishing wharf and then an industrial/cargo wharf, starting in the early 19th century; but the area declined into the mid 1970s and was rarely used; more than \$1.5 billion in public and private funds were invested in redeveloping the area for the Games; now a major entertainment and residential area with a marina. http://www.darlingharbour.com/sydney-Education-Heritage_and_History.htm

Articles

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2004 – ATHENS

Greek authorities bitterly objected when Atlanta was awarded the 1996 Games, saying Greece deserved to host the Centennial Games as the birthplace of the Olympics. Olympic authorities were concerned about Greece’s ability to host the event. But they went ahead and awarded the 2004 Games to Athens. In retrospect, their concerns about Greece seem justified.

Perhaps the Athens experience is best summed up in this 2009 quote in the London Evening Standard from Barney Spender, editor of sportinggreece.com: “The

Olympics has failed to inspire a generation of kids ... They got the Games in 1997 but then only started building three years before. They wasted three years doing nothing but arguing and nothing got done. Nobody had a plan for the legacy. There was no unified structure. It's a big mess really."

Athens was so far behind schedule on construction that then–IOC–President Juan Antonio Samaranch publicly expressed his displeasure and did not rule out moving the Games to another city and country. (Los Angeles was mentioned as a possibility, given that it had already–built facilities that could serve as Olympic venues.) Slow ticket sales and empty seats at venues also marred the Games.

Greece wound up spending more than \$15 billion on the Games, about three times more than it originally planned. An estimated \$120 million is spent annually on maintenance of the unused and inaccessible facilities, despite the fact that a state–owned company, Hellenic Olympic Properties (http://www.olympicproperties.gr/default_en.asp), was created to manage the properties. There were discussions about turning some of the venues into hotels, conference centres, coffee shops and golf courses. Reporters have written that security guards prevent them from visiting the shuttered facilities.

The Olympics did improve transportation, including new roads and a new airport and a new tram along the waterfront. Officials also said the Games boosted tourism, Greek morale and world standing. Greece was the smallest country ever to host the Games. Ironically, Athens organizing committee did wind up with a \$166.8 million operating surplus, but that didn't cover the infrastructure expenses. Some Greek sports federation officials were angered that they couldn't use the shuttered facilities.

Venues:

- *Olympic Stadium*: used by AEK Athens football team and one other club and was to host the 2007 Champions League final; also used for track and field competitions, including the 2006 World Cup; and the Acropolis Rally; the complex around the stadium hosts yoga classes and a baby gym.
http://www.oaka.com.gr/stadium_intro.asp?e_lang_id=1&m=1&e_cat_serial=001003001&e_cat_id=131
- *Olympic Aquatic Centre*: this facility was originally intended to be covered, but organizers ran out of time; the swimming competition was held outdoors for the first time since the Barcelona Games.
http://www.oaka.com.gr/stadium_intro.asp?e_lang_id=1&e_cat_serial=001003003&e_cat_id=150
- *Galatsi Olympic Indoor Hall*: 5,200–seat table tennis and gymnastics venue; now used for basketball; located 15 kilometres from city centre; one of only three venues leased by 2006; website says it will be

transformed into centre for artistic events and sports.

http://www.olympicproperties.gr/contents_en.asp?id=113

- *Olympic Tennis Centre*:
http://www.oaka.com.gr/stadium_intro.asp?e_lang_id=1&e_cat_serial=001003004&e_cat_id=158
- *Olympic Velodrome*: was abandoned; seats covered in graffiti and bird droppings.
http://www.oaka.com.gr/stadium_intro.asp?e_lang_id=1&e_cat_serial=001003005&e_cat_id=164
- *Ano Liosia Arena*: 5,700-seat venue for judo and wrestling arena: built at a cost of \$100 million; Athens still attempting to lease out; permitted uses include culture schools and academies; commercial, gathering and recreational uses; national archive for audiovisual and digital content. http://www.olympicproperties.gr/contents_en.asp?id=88
- *International Broadcast Centre*: hosted a motorcycle exhibition; a four-storey cluster of buildings; Athens was attempting to lease out in 2005; used as a ministry in 2008; one of only three venues leased as of 2006; to be used as office space, restaurants and retail; also will house the Museum of Greek Olympic Games and the International Athletics Museum. http://www.olympicproperties.gr/contents_en.asp?id=63
- *Main Press Centre*: now available for lease as office space.
http://www.olympicproperties.gr/contents_en.asp?id=68
- *Goudi Badminton Hall*: hosted the modern pentathlon and badminton competitions; staged the musical “Cats” and is now a theatre venue; one of only three venues leased by 2006.
http://www.olympicproperties.gr/contents_en.asp?id=11
- *Schinias Rowing Centre*: considered among the world’s best; but now up for sale or lease.
http://www.olympicproperties.gr/contents_en.asp?id=83
- *Nikea Arena*: Weightlifting venue: considered among the world’s best; central arena seats 5,000; has since hosted music festivals, conferences, exhibitions and TV commercial shoots; permitted uses also include shops, restaurants, offices, health services rooms, hostels and training centre.
http://www.olympicproperties.gr/contents_en.asp?id=93
- *Markopoulo Equestrian Centre*: available for use; permitted redeveloped uses include a golf course, equestrian museum, equestrian academies, equestrian-related shops; exhibitions; gathering areas; hotel; heliport; recreational horse riding; and a park capable of holding cross-country equestrian events.
http://www.olympicproperties.gr/contents_en.asp?id=78
- *Markopoulo Shooting Centre*: located 40 kilometres east of Athens; closed because of contract disputes; now up for lease; permitted uses

include cultural events, restaurants, tourist accommodation, and shops selling firearms-related merchandise.

http://www.olympicproperties.gr/contents_en.asp?id=73

- *Heraklion (Pankritio) Stadium*: 26,240-seat venue for football qualifying matches; site is on Crete and includes outdoor pitch, auxiliary field and racetrack, indoor gymnastics hall, outdoor pool, sport centre for international competitions and a regional center for entertainment and cultural activities; permitted uses include retail shops and restaurants, offices, medical stations, tourist accommodation, recreational and amusement, and exhibition with temporary buildings.
http://www.olympicproperties.gr/contents_en.asp?id=98
- *Patras Stadium*: 20,000-seat venue for football qualifying matches; site is 250 kilometers west of Athens; includes auxiliary racetrack; can host football, tennis, basketball and volleyball.
http://www.olympicproperties.gr/contents_en.asp?id=103
- *Volos Stadium*: 21,000-seat venue for football qualifying matches; located 300 kilometres north of Athens; includes football pitch, eight-lane race track; auxiliary stadium with racetrack; capable of holding tennis, handball, basketball, mini-soccer, wrestling, judo, taekwondo, boxing, weightlifting, gymnastics and swimming events.
http://www.olympicproperties.gr/contents_en.asp?id=108
- *Agios Kosmas Marina*: venue that was the starting point for the sailing competitions; capable of handling 1,000 crafts; permitted uses include leisure and tourism development.
http://www.olympicproperties.gr/contents_en.asp?id=118
- *Diving venue*: drained of water and unused.
- *Beach volleyball venue*: still used.
- *Olympic Village*: turned into housing for workers, but poorly maintained.
- *Helliniko Olympic Complex*: housed venues for baseball, basketball, handball, canoeing, fencing, hockey and softball; unused as of 2004, because Greek children don't play these sports; suffers from vandalism, graffiti and rubbish dumping.
 - *Fencing venue*: seated more than 13,600; now a derelict concrete hangar;
 - *Baseball venue*: two fields, one with capacity for 8,500 and another for 4,000; converted into a poorly fitting football pitch for a minor-league-equivalent team.
 - *Canoeing and kayak facility*: was considered the world's best; Athens attempting to lease out in 2005; as of 2006, it looks like facility was going to be turned into a commercial water fun park;
 - *Hockey centre*:
 - *Softball centre*:

- *Peace and Friendship Stadium*: host to indoor volleyball; suffers from graffiti.

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2008 – BEIJING

Beijing built a total of 31 venues, of which only eight were temporary. The huge Chinese investment in construction and infrastructure was so massive it drove up steel prices around the world. It affected major construction projects in the United States as steel prices rose, driven by the Chinese demand and scarcity of the material.

Beijing offered some of the most lavish and elegant Games the world has seen. Although many of the venues were underutilized after the Games, many Chinese believe that the Olympics' biggest legacy was showcasing the country to the world as an international power. In addition, it fostered ethnic and national pride. But some critics said that China did not fulfil its promises for greater political openness and freedom for its citizens.

Venues:

- *National Stadium "Bird's Nest"*: venue for opening and closing ceremonies and track and field competition; construction cost was

\$450 million; now used for concerts, opera, soccer and as a tourist attraction, but the number of tourists is declining as time pasts; an amusement park is put in one corner; was also used as a snow park; according to different reports, it costs \$10.3 million to \$15 million annually. Interest payments reportedly range from 80 million to 90 million yuan (\$11.8 million to \$13.3 million).

- *National Aquatics Center or "Water Cube"*: venue for swimming competition; now "as much a store as swimming pool."
- *National Indoor Stadium*: gymnastics venue; unused, but open to visitors.
- *Olympic basketball arena*: licensed to NBA China, but largely unused.
- *Olympic baseball diamond*: now a site of mall
- *Field hockey and archery*: now a dumping site for waste metal
- *Rowing/Canoeing*: now utilized for people to learn kayaking; white water section is dry
-

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