

# **The Epic Journey of the VIII Olympiad Paris 1924 and St Moritz 1928 - A Celebratory Tribute to the Olympic Century**

As we dive into the rich history of the Olympic Games, one particular chapter stands out as a beacon of sporting glory and international unity: the VIII Olympiad held in Paris in 1924, which served as a precursor to the monumental event that unfolded in St Moritz in 1928. These games epitomize the spirit of athleticism, camaraderie, and passion that have defined the Olympic movement throughout the 20th century.

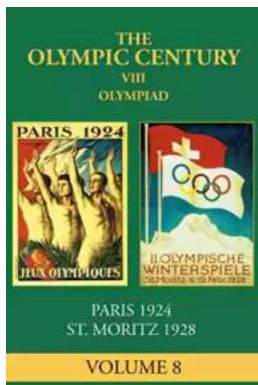
## **The Beginnings of the Olympic Centennial Celebrations**

The VIII Olympiad marks an important milestone in the history of the Olympic Games, as it commemorated the centennial anniversary of the modern Olympics. The founder of the Olympic movement, Pierre de Coubertin, envisioned a celebration that would pay homage to the games' enduring legacy and inspire generations to come. What transpired was a sporting extravaganza like no other, capturing the imagination of millions around the world.

## **The Vibrancy of Paris 1924**

Paris, known as the "City of Lights," was chosen as the host city for the VIII Olympiad. The French capital radiated with excitement as athletes and spectators from all corners of the globe flocked to witness this historic event. The city's iconic landmarks, such as the Eiffel Tower and the Arc de Triomphe, provided a majestic backdrop to the games, adding an extra touch of grandeur and spectacle.

**VIII Olympiad: Paris 1924, St. Moritz 1928 (The Olympic Century Book 8)** by Ellen Phillips (Kindle Edition)



★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English  
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Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
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The Paris Games boasted numerous groundbreaking achievements. It was the first time that the Olympic oath was taken by an athlete (Belgian fencer Victor Boin) on behalf of all the competitors, emphasizing the importance of fair play and sportsmanship. Additionally, for the first time, a closing ceremony was held, marking the end of the games and solidifying the tradition that continues to this day.

## **The Inauguration of Women's Athletics**

1924 witnessed a momentous occasion in Olympic history - the of women's athletics. Female athletes finally had the opportunity to compete on the world stage, challenging preconceived notions and breaking down barriers. The VIII Olympiad witnessed trailblazers such as British swimmer Gertrude Ederle and French tennis player Suzanne Lenglen, who continue to inspire generations of women in sports today.

## **A Winter Wonderland in St Moritz 1928**

Continuing the Olympic festivities in 1928, the VIII Winter Olympiad took place in the picturesque Swiss town of St Moritz. This was the first time that the Olympic

Games featured a separate competition dedicated solely to winter sports, paving the way for the Winter Olympics we know and love today.

St Moritz provided the perfect setting for a winter wonderland of exhilarating sporting events. The alpine town, surrounded by majestic mountains and glistening snow, showcased popular winter disciplines such as figure skating, ice hockey, and skiing. The VIII Winter Olympiad truly epitomized the power of sports to unite nations and showcase the beauty of human athleticism against a stunning natural backdrop.

## **The Legacy of the Olympic Century**

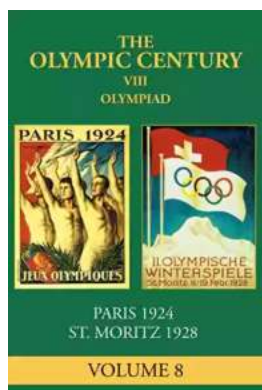
The VIII Olympiad Paris 1924 and St Moritz 1928 left an indelible mark on the Olympic movement. These games exemplified the central theme of the games - promoting friendship, solidarity, and peace through sport. The iconic moments and record-breaking performances of athletes from around the world created lasting memories that have continued to inspire generations.

Throughout the ensuing decades, the Olympic Games have grown in scale and sophistication, captivating audiences worldwide. The celebration of the Olympic centennial in Paris and St Moritz set the stage for the countless memorable moments that followed, giving birth to what is referred to as the Olympic Century.

The legacy of the Olympic Century has undeniably shaped not only the sporting landscape but also society as a whole. The games have become a symbol of hope, resilience, and the pursuit of excellence, transcending political boundaries and cultural differences.

The VIII Olympiad Paris 1924 and St Moritz 1928 represent a magnificent chapter in the Olympic Century. These games not only celebrated the history and legacy of the Olympic movement but also set the stage for the countless inspiring

moments that have defined subsequent Olympics. As we look back at these extraordinary events, we honor the athletes who dedicated their lives to the pursuit of greatness and the visionaries who forged the path towards a better world through the power of sport.



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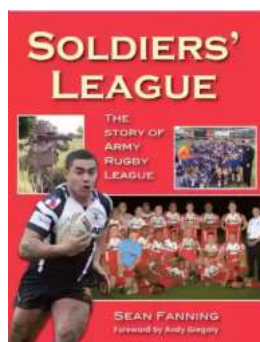
The VIII Olympiad, the eighth volume in The Olympic Century series, begins in the most extraordinary of cities at a most extraordinary time: Paris in the 1920s. Now the stuff of legend, it was a place where the likes of Ernest Hemingway, James Joyce and Pablo Picasso discussed art and culture in the cafes by day and danced in the jazz clubs long into the night.

Played out in front of this dazzling backdrop, the Games of Paris 1924 created its own legends. Paavo Nurmi, the Flying Finn, cemented his status as the most dominant distance runner of the age, claiming five gold medals in individual and team competition. In the pool, a 20-year-old American named Johnny Weissmuller won three golds in swimming and a bronze in water polo, while also

winning acclaim for his chiselled physique. Weissmuller would go on to parlay his Olympic fame into a long Hollywood acting career playing Tarzan the Ape Man.

The focus then shifts to 1928 and the second Winter Olympic Games, held in the luxurious French resort town of St. Moritz. The book paints a picture of exuberant crowds cheering as fearless sledders pilot primitive bobsleighs down the treacherous Cresta run, and urging the Swedish lumberjack Per Erik Hedlund through the slush for close to five hours to win the 50-kilometre cross-country ski race. It also tells the story of a smiling, 16-year-old figure skater from Norway named Sonja Henie, the unrivaled star of St. Moritz, who floated effortlessly between soft spots in the ice to win gold. Like Weissmuller four years earlier, Henie's Olympic triumph would also lead to Hollywood stardom.

Juan Antonio Samaranch, former President of the International Olympic Committee, called *The Olympic Century*, "The most comprehensive history of the Olympic games ever published".



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