

Timeline

776 B.C.

Greece's first recorded Olympic Games. Only Greeks are allowed to compete, and the games are limited to foot races of approximately 200 yards.

490 B.C.

According to Greek satirist Lucian, a courier named Pheidippides runs from the plains of Marathon to Athens, a distance of about 22 miles, with news of a Greek victory over the Persians. This becomes the inspiration for modern-day "marathon" races.

1457

Scotland's Parliament forbids "futeball and golfe" as their popularity is distracting men from practicing archery which is required for military training.

1552

Scotland's Royal Golf Club of St. Andrews begins. Its official founding comes 200 years later in 1754.

1702

Queen Anne of England gives approval for horseracing and introduces the idea of sweepstakes.

1744

First recorded cricket match in England. Rules of the game are codified in 1788.

1842

Alexander Cartwright invents baseball. Although the game has been played for many years, Cartwright writes down rules of play.

1863

The official rules for soccer are established by the Football Association in England.

1869

Princeton and Rutgers play the first college football game. Rutgers wins 6-4.

1874

British sportsman Walter Clopton Wingfield codifies the rules for lawn tennis.

1875

First running of the Kentucky Derby, won by Aristides.

1876

The National League (NL) is formed. The NL becomes the first stable baseball major league.

1877

The first Wimbledon tennis championship is won by Spencer Gore.

1891

Basketball invented by **James Naismith**, a physical education instructor at Springfield Men's Christian Association Training School. Naismith wrote the first 13 rules for the sport.

1892

"Gentleman Jim" Corbett defeats **John L. Sullivan** to win the first boxing championship fought with padded gloves and under the Marquis of Queensberry Rules.

1896

First of the "modern" Olympics are held in Athens, Greece. Competing are 311 athletes from 13 countries.

1900

The American League (AL) is formed. It soon joins the National League as a baseball major league.

Britain's Charlotte Cooper wins the first women's Olympic gold medal in women's tennis. Margaret Abbott wins the nine-hole golf competition, becoming the first American woman to win Olympic gold.

1903

The National Agreement calls an end to the war between the American and National baseball leagues. The agree-

ment calls for each league to be considered major leagues, the same alignment as today.

The first World Series is played. It features the Pittsburgh Pirates of the National League and the Boston Pilgrims of the American League. Boston wins the series 5-3.

1908

Jack Johnson defeats Tommy Burns to become the first African American to hold the world heavyweight boxing championship.

1911

First Indianapolis 500 is run.

Cy Young retires with a career record 511 wins. The trophy given annually to the best pitcher in each league is named after Young.

1912

Jim Thorpe wins three Olympic medals, one of them a gold medal in the decathlon. The medals are stripped from him in 1913 when it is discovered that he accepted a token sum of money to play baseball. The medals are restored and returned to his family in 1982.

1917

The National Hockey League (NHL) is formed. The new league contains only four teams.

1919

The **Chicago "Black Sox"** throw the World Series against the Cincinnati Reds in the biggest sports gambling incident of all-time. Eight players, including the great "**Shoeless" Joe Jackson**, are banned from baseball by commissioner Kennesaw Mountain Landis.

1920

The New York Yankees purchase the contract of **Babe Ruth** from the Boston Red Sox. "The Curse of the Bambino" prevents the Red Sox from winning a World Series since.

The National Football League (NFL) forms in Canton, Ohio. The original league has 14 teams.

1926

Gertrude Ederle becomes the first woman to swim the English Channel. Her time is nearly five hours faster than the previous five men who made the crossing.

1927

Babe Ruth of the New York Yankees hits 60 home runs in one season, breaking his own single-season record.

His total is more than 12 *teams* hit during the season. Ruth retires with 714 career home runs, also a record at the time.

1928

Ty Cobb retires from baseball with a lifetime .366 average that still stands as a record today. Cobb also retired with the career record for hits (4,189) and runs (2,246).

1930

Uruguay hosts and wins the first soccer World Cup. The event has been held every four years since.

Bobby Jones wins "Grand Slam" of golf by capturing the U.S. and British Opens and Amateurs.

1931

Knute Rockne dies in a plane crash. He finishes with a 121-12-5 record, a winning percentage of .881. Rockne led Notre Dame to five unbeaten and untied seasons.

1932

The Negro National League is formed. This is the first "major" league set up for African-American players.

Babe Didrikson Zaharias wins three gold medals at the Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, California. She sets new world records in the javelin throw and 80-meter hurdles.

1936

Sonja Henie wins the Winter Olympics gold medal for women's figure skating for the third consecutive time.

Jesse Owens wins four gold medals in track and field at the Summer Olympics in Berlin, Germany. Owens' feat comes as a shock to German dictator Adolf Hitler.

1937

Don Budge wins tennis's "Grand Slam." He is the first player to win Wimbledon and the Australian, French, and U.S. championships in the same calendar year.

1938

Helen Wills wins the final of her 19 "Grand Slam" singles tennis titles. She wins eight Wimbledon, seven U.S. Opens, and four French Opens.

The great **Joe Louis** knocks out German fighter **Max Schmeling**. The victory carries extra meaning as it also marks a win against Nazi Germany.

1939

The first baseball game is televised. The game features Cincinnati and Brooklyn.