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| 1936 Berlin Olympics and the 2012 London Olympics |
| A COMPARISON AND CONTRAST |
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**INTRODUCTION**

The 2012 Summer Olympics are to be held in London, England starting July 27. It features 26 sports, 34 venues, 8.8 million tickets, 10,490 athletes, 302 medal events, and 204 National Olympic Committees (Beaumont, 2012). The Olympics have been around for over 12 centuries. They began in ancient Greece and were held as a competition to impress the Gods. Now they have become a way for the world to set aside its differences and honor each other through the celebration of our athletes and sport. However, sport and politics have still found a way to sneak into the celebration. A good example of this is the 1936 summer Olympics in Berlin, Germany. As controversial as those Olympics were, it will still have quite a bit in common with the 2012 Olympics due to start soon.

**HOST CITIES: GEOGRAPHY AND POLITICS**

GEOGRAPHY

England is a part of the United Kingdom, it is bordered by Scotland to the north and Wales to the west. It is surrounded by the Irish Sea, Atlantic Ocean and North Sea. England covers about 50,356 square miles, or 130,410 square kilometers. The population of England is just under 60 million people (N/A, 2012). The games will actually be taking place in England’s capital city, London. The greater London area covers about 610 square miles, or 1,579 square kilometers. London is an urban city packed with tons of different cultures combined together (Lewis, 1999).

Germany is home to over 81 million people. Germany is in Central and Western Europe. It is bordered by Denmark to the north, Poland and the Czech Republic to the east, Austria and Switzerland to the south, and France to the west. Germany hosted the 1936 Summer Olympics in its capital city, Berlin. Berlin is located in northeast Germany and is Germany’s most populated city, being home to over 3.5 million people. Berlin is also a city combined with many cultures, and is home to many museums and research institutes (CIA 2012).

POLITICS

The 1936 Berlin Olympics were very controversial. They were officially known as the “Games of the XI Olympiad” but were given the nickname “The Nazi Olympics.” Berlin had been chosen as the host, however, in 1931. This was two years before the Nazis came to power. Hitler wanted to use the games as a way to show the world just how elite the Aryan race was.

London is ruled through parliament and still has a queen, keeping its strong royalty traditions alive. While London is founded on these traditions, it has stepped into the lime light as one of the most influential cities on the planet, since forming its parliament in the late 18th century, then coming into its own in the early 19th century. The Olympics of 2012 insure its reputation as a true worldwide city icon.

**HOST CITIES: PEOPLE, CULTURE, AND TRADITIONS**

While Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party attempted to portray Berlin as a peaceful civilized city during the summer Olympics of 1936, it was only seen as the racist militaristic monster that it had become over its previous four years. The people of Berlin either lived in fear, or joined in hating those of difference. The people who celebrated its culture and rich history had been covered by a dark cloud of shame and anger (Holocaust Museum, 2012).

The people of London, or Londoners, as they’re called, are a vibrant group of people. While Parliament runs their government; their dedication to their Queen and the Family shows the dedication they have to the history of their country. London is most well-known for the arts. From music to museums to music and festivals, London is widely believed to be one of the culture capitals of the world. Other cultural icons that are associated with London are Big Ben, Buckingham Palace, and the red telephone booths. For hundreds of years, Londoners have thrived on their sports and pub life. The Olympic games of 2012 will be if at all else, an example of the dedication Londoners have to sport and competition (Barrow 2010).

**OLYMPIC HIGHLIGHTS AND FACTS**

When looking past the dark cloud of Hitler and the Nazi party, one name comes to mind. A young black male by the name of Jesse Owens. Owens, a standout track and field star at The Ohio State University, surprised the world by winning 4 gold medals in the track and field events. His four medals were the most by any Olympian, and would stay the record until 1994. His historic wins in those games will forever embody the world uniting to show Nazi Germany that their “race” was not superior, but an idiotic idea of self-motivation.

The 2012 Olympics in London, England may not have the internal conflicts of the 1936 Berlin Olympics, but it is sure to not disappoint in the historical department. With athletes and sports thriving as strong as ever, every event will be a must watch. Even with what is being called the new “Dream Team”, the U.S. basketball team who is sure to blow out many of the teams, are still expected to have record highs in viewing and support. With Michael Phelps, who is one of the most decorated Olympians in history, still competing, fans can still see be sure to see some sort of history. Many other historical contributions will be made this year. One being that a man is running in the marathon as an independent. He will not be running for a country, but for himself technically because he is not yet a citizen of the United States and refuses to run for his home country, Sudan, because of the war and problems going over there. Up until this has been unheard of! Another new feat is a Paralypian will be competing in the actual Olympics this summer in track and field, running for South Africa.

**OLYMPIC REVENUE, SPONSORSHIPS AND THE MEDIA**

Adolf Hitler saw the Games as an opportunity to promote his government and ideals of racial supremacy, and did not want Jews or Blacks to be allowed to participate in the Games. However, when threatened with a boycott of the Games by other nations, he relented and allowed Blacks and Jews to participate, and added one token participant to the German team—a German woman, Helene Mayer, who had a Jewish father. In order to outdo what the U.S. had done in the 1932 Olympics, Hitler had a series of massive venues built specifically for the games. Adolf brought in and installed a private television network to capture every second of the games and Germany’s “dominance.” This was the first ever televised Olympic Games. The technology and filming techniques used are still widely used in Olympic Games and sporting events worldwide. While the Revenue of the 36’ games from tickets were 7.5 Reichsmark , Adolf spent an estimated 24 million. This is not including the estimated 30 million that the German National Government contributed; a lot of money in the year of 1936.

Londoners will contribute estimated £625 million to the Olympic and Paralympic Games through taxes. (London Councils 2012 Team). This has become a very controversial topic, and while this isn’t as much as China spent four years ago, the amount of new technology and events that will take place throughout the games are causing quite the buzz. The Olympic Games are on track to hit and even exceed their revenue target. However, London’s private sector needed to raise £2 billion for the games, they have expanded their sponsorships and that alone will generate more than £700 million. At 100 days to go before the games, seven million tickets had been sold to the public with another four million to go. More than £1 billion is expected to be made in merchandising and over 10,000 different items are on track to be sold in the UK (SkySports 2012).

Sponsorships are a huge part of the Olympics, and they help to pay for a lot of it. As the years have progressed so have the Sponsorships. In 1896 during the games in Athens, a few companies generated revenue through souvenirs, then in the 1912 games in Stockholm about 10 companies were given permission to sell memorabilia and take pictures. Today there are 11 major companies that sponsor the Olympics. They are: Acer, Atos Origin, Coca-Cola, Dow, GE, McDonald’s, Omega, Panasonic, Procter & Gamble, Samsung, and finally, Visa (Smith, 2012).

**TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION**

As stated before, to show the world the dominance of the Nazi’s, Adolf spent an enormous amount of the Germans Olympic funding to set up a closed circuit television network. This Private network recorded and captured every second of the games. Hitler even acquired Leni Riefenstahl to produce the broadcast, which would be seen in 41 countries. She was a personal favorite of Hitler’s, and though was rumored to have disagreed with the actions of the Nazi party, she had feared for her life if to not accept his “generous” offer.

London has set the stage to have a beautifully traditional ceremony, while showing off the latest technologies of 2012. With the mass media market never being bigger then it is in today’s society, the London Olympic committee will have information and interaction with fans and athletes worldwide through the mass connections of social media sites. No other Olympic games in the history of the Olympiad will have ever been more publicized than the games of 2012. From the interactions between the athletes and fans on sites such as Twitter, to the visually stunning and motivational videos of today’s most popular athletes on Youtube and Facebook. London, England, and the international Olympic Committee, has truly corned the ideal media market for the 2012 games.

**DOPING, ETHICS, SCANDALS, AND MORE**

The Nazi Olympics were nothing short of scandalous. From Hitler cleaning up the streets of Berlin to present the world with a façade of peace and unity, to the salute scandal, the Aryans being beat by a black runner, to the anti-Semitism of the games; there was not a dull moment. Hitler got rid of every anti-Jew sign and anything remotely showing off his hatred for Jews as a stunt to fool the media. At the same time, he saw the games as an opportunity to promote his form of government and ideals of racial supremacy and did not want Jews or blacks to be allowed to participate in the games. He was threatened, though, with boycotts from other nations and reluctantly allowed it. The salute scandal was that at the opening ceremonies many countries did the Olympic salute towards Hitler, it became such a scandal because the Olympic salute was alarmingly identical to the Nazi salute. Another scandal was the anti-Semitism. The German Olympic Committee did not allow anyone to compete for Germany if they were from any type of Jewish or Roma (Gypsy) decent. The Germans allowed one token Jew to compete, this was Helene Mayer. The decision to exclude many of these athletes meant not allowing some of the best in the country to compete. Many countries did not boycott the games as they, morally, probably should have. The United States did not boycott because a member of the IOC, Avery Brundage, went on to say that politics and sports do not influence one another and should always be kept apart. Jesse Owens also was a big scandal, as mention earlier, Hitler was so embarrassed that a black man had beaten his Aryan runners that he left immediately after the events and did not even shake hands with him as he did with all of the other medalists (Berlin Summer Olympics, 2012).

Even the 2012 Summer Olympics which will be held in London are struggling with scandals. There has been talk of supposed anti-Semitism in these games. An Australian track athlete named John Steffenson has threatened to boycott after alleging racism because he was not selected individually for the 400 meter. He claims that because he is of aboriginal decent they will not allow him to compete. He received a qualifying time but so did another individual so they are allowing him to run instead, since Steffenson is already in the relay (Associated Press, 2012).

**CONCLUSION**

The time periods, culture, and way things were done have obviously changed a lot from the 1936 Summer Olympics to now. The Nazi’s are obviously not in power anymore and racism is not as big of a problem anymore. Current times still have problems but they are different from the ones before, yet there are still similar things going on. From financial problems, to racism still lingering, our history has shown us that things aren’t as perfect as we are led to believe.

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