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## Sport History

### **Boxing**

#### **Origins and the sport today:**

Boxing dates back thousands of years and was accepted by the ancient Greeks as an Olympic sport in BC 688. Prizefighting was popular in Great Britain between the 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, but numerous deaths in the ring resulted in the first boxing rules being introduced by champion Jack BROUGHTON in 1743, with a form of padded bandage or mitten encouraged.

Boxing took more of a professional shape in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, with the Marquess of Queensbury rules drafted by John CHAMBERS in 1867 - Queensbury Rules are still associated with the sport today.

Amateur boxing became an Olympic sport at the London 1908 Games, with a point-scoring system to determine the victor if neither of the fighters were stopped.

#### **Boxing at the Commonwealth Games:**

Boxing was part of the inaugural British Empire Games in 1930 and is recognised as a core sport – one of 10 sports that must be included at the Commonwealth Games. The others are: aquatics (diving and swimming), athletics, badminton, hockey, lawn bowls, netball, rugby sevens, squash and weightlifting. It has appeared at every Commonwealth Games and their equivalent.

Women's boxing was first contested in the Commonwealth Games at Glasgow 2014 and is also on the program at Gold Coast 2018.

England top the overall Commonwealth Games boxing medal table, with a total of 118 (54 gold, 27 silver and 37 bronze). Canada are second with a total of 82 medals and Scotland third on 63.

At the Glasgow 2018 Commonwealth Games, a total of 52 medals were awarded, with England topping the gold medal table with five, in a total of seven medals. Northern Ireland won nine medals, but just two gold. In the high-profile heavyweight division, Samir EL-MAIS (CAN) won gold, with David LIGHT (NZL) taking silver. Scotland dominated lightweight (60kg) and light welterweight (64kg), with golds for Charlie FLYNN and Josh TAYLOR respectively.

At the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games, 48 medals will be awarded (10 medal events for men and six for women).

#### **Boxing in Australia:**

The sport's Australian governing body, Boxing Australia (BA), was founded in 1924, as the Boxing Union of Australia – it took its current name in the 1990s. It was in 2005 that boxing was accepted as a program sport for the Australian Sports Commission's (ASC) National Talent Identification and Development program, which focused on indigenous and heavyweight talent.

The Boxing Australia Centre of Excellence was developed as a decentralised program within each state and territory, to identify talented boxers in the regions. In 2013/14, the Centre of Excellence program changed to the BAL Development Program, focusing more on adolescent athletes with potential.

One of the most famous names in the history of Australian boxing is Jeff FENECH. Fighting at several weights, from bantamweight up to lightweight, FENECH competed at the Los Angeles 1984 Olympic Games as the boxing team captain. He lost a controversial decision in the quarterfinals to Yugoslavian Redzep REDZEPOVSKI. FENECH was



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initially awarded the fight, but the decision was reversed following a recount. FENECH went on to win world titles in three weight divisions and is considered one of the finest fighters Australia has produced.

While Australian boxers have struggled at Olympic Games, with only one silver and three bronze medals, the country has enjoyed much more success at the Commonwealth Games, with 15 gold, 15 silver and 32 bronze, to be fourth on the overall boxing medal table.

Antony 'Tony' MADIGAN was the flagbearer at the Perth 1962 British Empire and Commonwealth Games. He won bronze at the Rome 1960 Olympic Games, losing in the semifinal to Muhammad ALI (USA). He also won a silver and two gold in the light heavyweight division across three Commonwealth Games (silver at Vancouver 1954, gold at Cardiff 1958 and gold at Perth 1962).

Shelley WATTS won gold in the women's lightweight division at the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, as did Andrew MOLONEY in the men's flyweight category.

Jarrold FLETCHER won gold at the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games as a middleweight, while Indigenous Australian, Cameron HAMMOND, represented Australia at the Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games and London 2012 Olympic Games.