

## Year 5

# Issues in Sport: Let Women Compete 2

## Retrieval 2b

Athletics has always been one of the most popular sports at the Olympics, but the battle for women's inclusion in track and field has been long. Women's track and field was first allowed at the 1928 Games. Even then, only five women's events were offered, while for the men there were 22 athletics events.

In the 1928 Games, the longest women's running event was 800 metres. Afterwards, the runners appeared exhausted and were sweating – all of that is considered normal today. But in 1928 it caused an international sensation. Afterwards, the IOC cut the race out of the Olympic programme, and from 1932 until 1960 the longest women's race in the Olympics was 200 metres.

By the 1970s, women's rights had become a major issue and women wanted equality in all areas of their lives. That included equality for girls and women in sports.

Women's sports got a boost in other countries during the 1970s as well. Football was the world's most popular sport. The modern rules for football were invented in England, a country that has always been a leader in men's football. But the sport's organisers banned women from playing the sport in 1921, claiming that football was “quite unsuitable for females and ought not to be encouraged”. Other countries made similar rulings. The English ban was lifted in 1971, while West Germany lifted its ban one year earlier. But Brazil did not lift its ban on women players until 1979.

Women's football took off soon after the ban was lifted. The Women's World Cup debuted in 1991, and women's football was added to the Olympic Games in 1996. Both competitions have since grown into major events and professional leagues exist in the United States, United Kingdom and other countries, mostly in Europe.

# Questions

1 When did women's track and field become included in the Olympic Games?

---

2 Look in the second paragraph.

Find **two** women's running distances that featured in the Olympics between 1928 and 1960.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3 Complete the table below with facts from the text.

How many women's athletic events were allowed at the 1928 Games:	
The longest running event for women at the 1928 Games:	
When the ban on women's football was lifted in West Germany:	
When the women's football World Cup first took place:	

4 Look at the fourth paragraph. Which **three** countries began to allow women to play football between 1971 and 1979?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

5 Choose the best group of words to fit the sentences.

Draw a circle around your choice.

(a) Track and field events...

were limited  
for women

were not popular  
Olympic sports

included  
playing football

did not include  
running

(b) Immediately after the 1928 Olympics,

women competed in the  
same events as men

one type of women's  
race was removed

women felt  
more equal

women could run  
in the 1500m race

6 Look at the paragraph beginning '*Women's sports got a boost in other countries during the 1970s as well...*'

Why were women banned from playing football?

---

7 Look at the whole text.

Number the following 1–4 to show the chronological order of the events below.

England lifted the ban on women's football.

The women's 800m track and field event was removed from the Olympics.

Women competed in the first women's football World Cup.

Women could compete in track and field events at the Olympics.

8

Using information from the text, tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

	True	False
The modern rules for football were invented in Brazil.		
Football was the world's most popular sport in the 1970s.		
Sweating after running an Olympic race was not considered normal in 1928.		
England was the first country to lift the ban on women's football.		

# Answers

1 When did women's track and field become included in the Olympic Games?

**In 1928/the 1928 Olympic Games.**

2 Look in the second paragraph.

Find **two** women's running distances that featured in the Olympics between 1928 and 1960.

**800m.**

**200m.**

3 Complete the table below with facts from the text.

How many women's athletic events were allowed at the 1928 Games:	<b>Five</b>
The longest running event for women at the 1928 Games:	<b>800m</b>
When the ban on women's football was lifted in West Germany:	<b>1970</b>
When the women's football World Cup first took place:	<b>1991</b>

4 Look at the fourth paragraph. Which **three** countries began to allow women to play football between 1971 and 1979?

**England.**

**West Germany.**

**Brazil.**

5 Choose the best group of words to fit the sentences.

Draw a circle around your choice.

(a) Track and field events...

**were limited  
for women**

were not popular  
Olympic sports

included  
playing football

did not include  
running

(b) Immediately after the 1928 Olympics,

women competed in the  
same events as men

**one type of women's  
race was removed**

women felt  
more equal

women could run  
in the 1500m race

6 Look at the paragraph beginning '*Women's sports got a boost in other countries during the 1970s as well...*'

Why were women banned from playing football?

**Because it was considered quite unsuitable for females and ought not to be encouraged.**

7 Look at the whole text.

Number the following 1–4 to show the chronological order of the events below.

3

England lifted the ban on  
women's football.

2

The women's 800m track and field  
event was removed from the Olympics.

4

Women competed in the first  
women's football World Cup.

1

Women could compete in track  
and field events at the Olympics.

8 Using information from the text, tick one box in each row to show whether each statement is **true** or **false**.

	True	False
The modern rules for football were invented in Brazil.		✓
Football was the world's most popular sport in the 1970s.	✓	
Sweating after running an Olympic race was not considered normal in 1928.	✓	
England was the first country to lift the ban on women's football.		✓