

Wildcat Olympians

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Now that the 2008 Olympic Games have come to an end, it is time to recognize the very impressive number of K-State athletes who have participated in the Olympics, either while attending the University or after leaving. In fact, K-State has sent at least one athlete to the Olympics since the 1968 games in Mexico City! Christian Smith ran the 800 meters at the most recent Olympics but did not qualify for the finals.

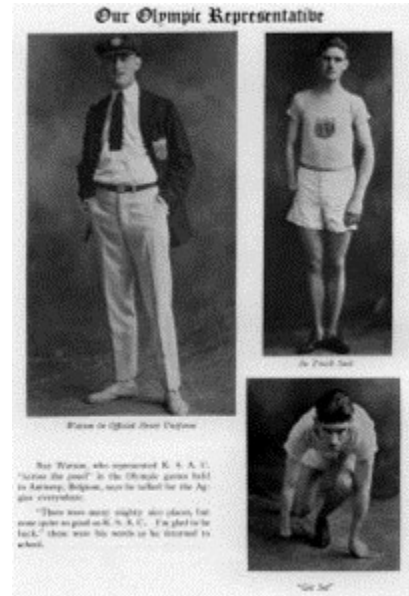
Beginning with the 1920 Olympics, 20 K-Staters have competed in the Games winning a total of 11 medals including 4 gold, 4 silver, and 3 bronze. This total is even more impressive when you consider that major Olympic events swimming and gymnastics have not been varsity sports at K-State for many years.



THANE BAKER receives the Big 7 100-yard dash trophy from Chester Brewer.

Thane Baker

Ray Watson holds the distinction of being the first Wildcat to become an Olympian when he placed 7th in the steeplechase in 1920. He also participated in the 1924 and 1928 Games. Watson holds a place in Wildcat lore by becoming the University's first NCAA champion, winning the mile run in 1921. His accomplishments are even more impressive considering he lost his hand in a shotgun accident at age 14!



Ray Watson

Thane Baker is the most decorated Wildcat having won the silver medal in 1952 (200 meters), and a gold (400m relay), silver (100m), and bronze (200m) in 1958. Other gold medal winners include: Bob

Boozler, basketball, 1960; Kenny Harrison, triple jump, 1996; and Mitch Richmond, basketball, 1996.

Five Wildcats participated in more than one Olympics, Ray Watson (1920, 1924, 1928), Thane Baker (1952 and 1956), Mitch Richmond (1988 and 1996), Attila Zsivoczky (2000 and 1004), and Austru Skujyte (2000 and 2004).

Margaret Thompson Murdock not only was the first K-State female Olympian, she was the first woman ever to

1965 Rifle Team - Top Row: James L. Flory, Virgil F. McIntyre, Spencer A. Linderman, Michael L. Wentz, James K. Lepper, Robert H. Doran. Bottom Row: Michael F. Kingman, Margaret L. Thompson, Roanne L. Jefferies, Larry G. Hess.



Margaret Thompson (bottom, 2nd from left) and the 1965 Rifle Team

win a medal in rifle shooting! She won the silver in 1976 when men and women competed against each other in the event!

K-State has maintained a tradition of excellence in track and field sending 15 athletes to the Olympics. Of those, 8 have represented the University since Cliff Rovelto became head coach in 1992. As a result of his reputation, numerous athletes from around the world have come to Manhattan to coach and train with him, many became Olympians.

Below is a list of all the Wildcat Olympians in chronological order:

1920 Antwerp. Ray Watson, steeplechase, 7th

1924 Paris. Ivan Riley, 400m hurdles, bronze; Ray Watson, 1,500m

1928 Amsterdam. Ray Watson, 800m, 7th

1952 Helsinki. Thane Baker, 200m, silver

1956 Melbourne. Thane Baker, 400m relay (gold); 100m (silver); 200m (bronze)

1960 Rome. Bob Boozer, basketball, gold

1968 Mexico City. Conrad Nightingale, steeplechase

1972 Munich. Jerome Howe, 1,500m; Ken Swenson, 800m

1976 Montreal. Margaret Thompson Murdock, rifle shooting, silver

1980 Moscow. Rolando Blackman, basketball, U.S. boycotted games



Kenny Harrison

1984 Los Angeles. Doug Lytle, pole vault, 6th

1988 Seoul. Mitch Richmond, basketball, bronze

1992 Barcelona. Craig Wilson, baseball, 4th

1996 Atlanta. Kenny Harrison, triple jump, gold; Mitch Richmond, basketball, gold; Steve Fritz, decathlon, 4th; Ed Broxterman, high jump; Connie Teaberry, high jump

2000 Sydney. Attila Zsivoczky, decathlon, 8th (for Hungary); Nathan Leeper, high jump, 11th; Austra Skujyte, heptathlon, 12th (for Lithuania)

2004 Athens. Austra Skujyte, heptathlon, silver (for Lithuania); Attila Zsivoczky, decathlon, 6th (for Hungary)

2008 Beijing. Christian Smith, 800 meters

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Sources. University Archives: Vertical Files; Athletic Department, Olympic Games; contains numerous articles from K-Stater, Sports Information Office, K-State Collegian, and other newspapers. Photographs are from the Royal Purple yearbook and Student Publications.