

Australia prepares



Focus

In terms of finance and travel arrangements, how did the Australian team get to London for the Olympic Games?

Review video interview with 1948 Australian Olympian John Treloar.

Preparing for the Olympics in a time of austerity (4min 8sec.) -

<http://media.olympics.com.au/video/preparing-for-the-1948-games/prevCollectionID/prevCollectionID>

The 1948 team finally numbered seventy-seven, and was managed by Edgar Tanner, aided by seven sectional managers, the swimming coach Forbes Carlile and a chaperon, Doris Magee. The expenses of the thirty-three for whom the AOF did not have enough money in hand were raised in about three weeks by individual sports and state Olympic councils. Much later, John Winter remembered standing in a boxing ring at a stadium in Perth, being introduced to the crowd with Shirley Strickland, and both shielding their eyes and heads as two-shilling donations to the Olympic fund were showered into the ring. "They hurt a bit, too," said Winter. With the exception of the ten water polo players, who sailed on the liner Orion, the team became the first ever to travel by air from Australia to the Olympic Games. Three contingents made the trip, taking four days, with overnight stopovers in Singapore, Karachi and Cairo. The one-way fares cost £375, against £69 by steamer, so the financially stretched AOF made the prudent decision to bring the team home by sea.

Source: Harry Gordon, *Australia and the Olympic Games*, Queensland University Press, 1996 (3rd edition), p166.

London Olympics 1948 – The Australian experience



Focus

Use this extract and your own research to piece together a narrative of the Australian athletes experiences at the Games.

Review video interview with 1948 Australian Olympian John Treloar.

John Treloar about Olympic accommodation (41 sec.) -

<http://media.olympics.com.au/video/accommodation-in-1948/prevCollectionID/prevCollectionID>

Australia and the Olympic Games

London Olympics 1948 and 2012

The Games



So soon after the most punishing war in history, at a time when food, clothing, transport and accommodation were still in short supply, it was only to be expected that London's Olympics would be characterised by a certain austerity. As little money as possible was spent, and there was much emphasis on renovation and repair. No new stadiums were built, and the main track events were run on a temporary track which had been spread around Wembley Stadium. There was no real Olympic village; athletes were housed in army camps and converted schoolrooms, and the Australians found themselves at one stage eating food prepared in a domestic-science classroom. They were camped first at Richmond Park, a former air force camp overlooking the Thames Valley, but were later moved, against Edgar Tanner's protests, to a suburban technical school at Willesden. The transport facilities were woefully inadequate. Tanner reported afterwards that he often had to stand on roads thumbing lifts for his team in trucks, wagons and private cars, and that once a bunch of athletes had reached the main stadium by courtesy of a garbage truck. Jack Metcalfe, the athletics manager, deprived of transport to Paddington Oval, persuaded the driver of a horse and dray to take some of his boys standing up in the back and waving all the way".

Source: Harry Gordon, *Australia and the Olympic Games*, Queensland University Press, 1996 (3rd edition), p167.

Opening Ceremony

Review video interview with 1948 Australian Olympian John Treloar.

Opening ceremony (2min 38sec.) - <http://media.olympics.com.au/video/1948-opening-ceremony/prevCollectionID/prevCollectionID>