



Štěpánka Sekaninová & Anastasia Stročkova

Unforgettable Sport Events



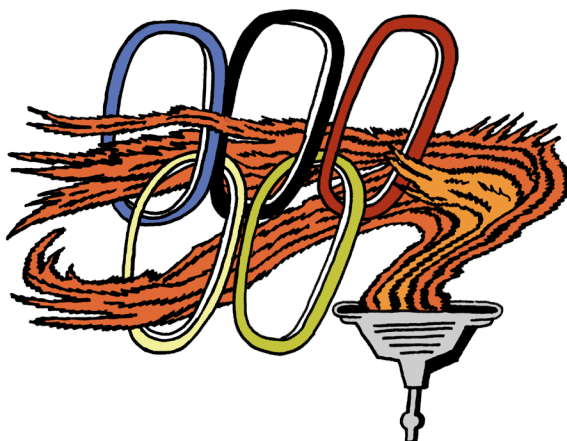
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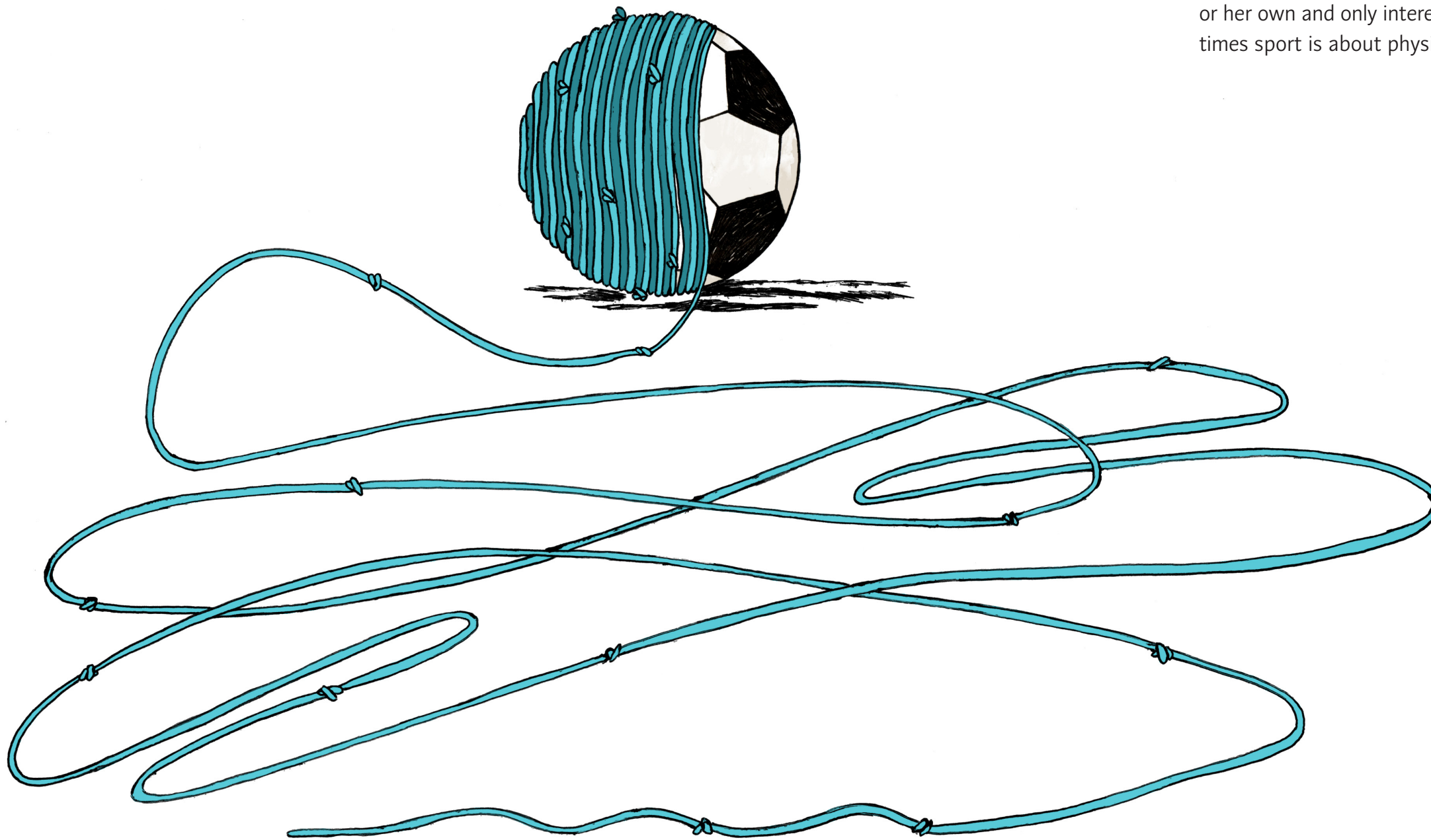


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Introduction

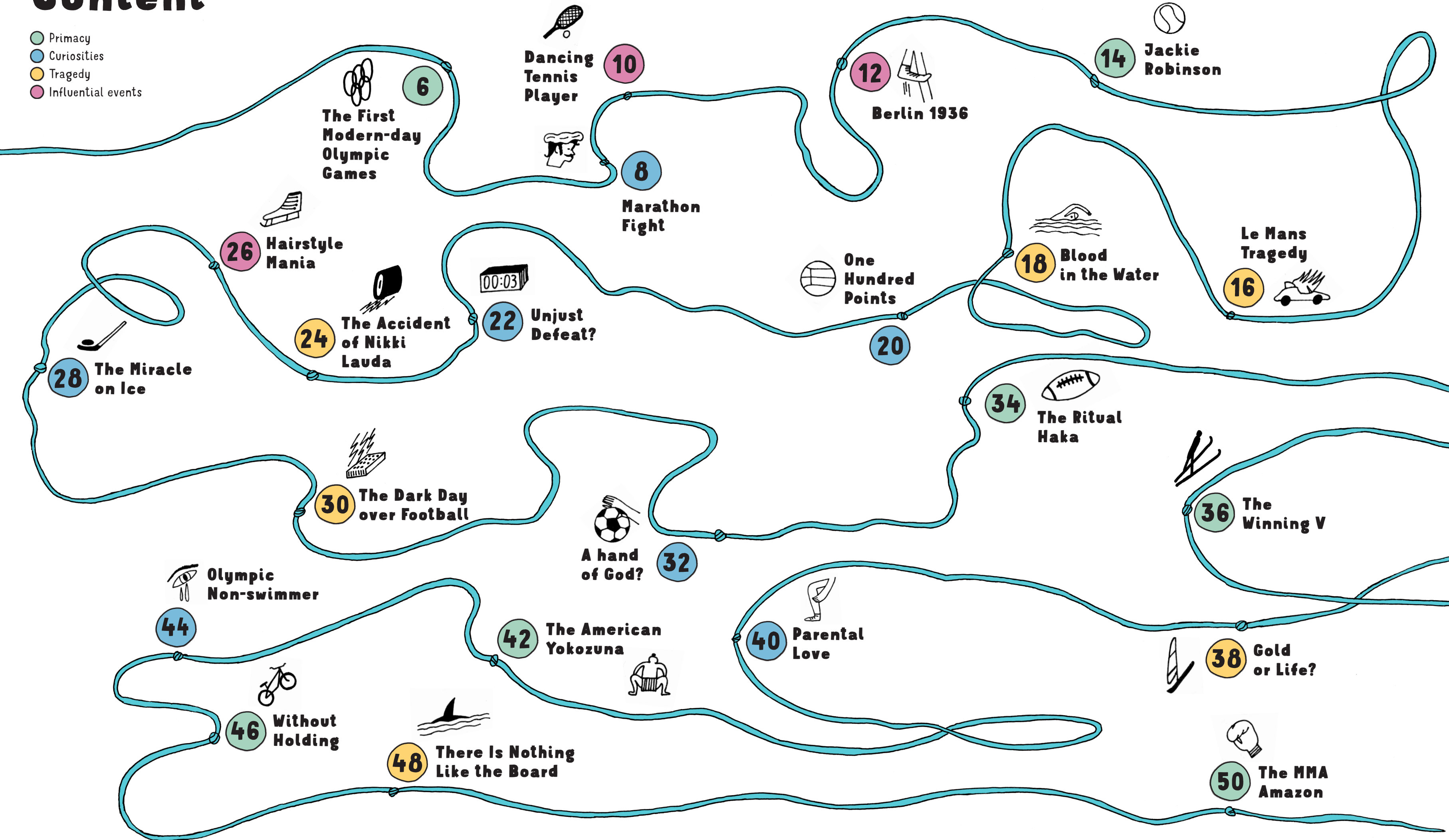
People liked doing sports since time immemorial. And, even more happily, they compared their strengths. Who can run faster, who can run the longest, who jumps far, who higher, and so on. After all, even our prehistoric ancestors compared their sporting skills. In antiquity, athletes were acclaimed and admired celebrities, almost like today. You know, one must make some effort to deliver an extraordinary performance, and that is worthy of admiration. But sport is not just about records and showing one's strengths. Sport is also about fair play. A true athlete, especially a true personality, would always help an opponent who is at the end of tether, or even at risk of life, rather than merely following his or her own and only interest, that is winning. And sometimes sport is about physical pain and pushing one's

own limits when you for example take part in a difficult event though your leg is hurt, so as not to jeopardize the performance of your whole sports team by your injury. This is a story that the gymnast Kerri Strug could recount. Sometimes you can be in peril of your life and you escape the death only thanks to good luck and a guardian angel embodied by your resourceful opponent. Moreover, plenty strong and unforgettable emotions are associated with sports. The pages of this book reveal twenty three selected events to show you the strongest sports moments of the 20th and 21st centuries. Moments of happiness, fatigue, and total exhaustion, and also moments of sports grievances, never overcome rivalries, and moments of horror.



Content

- Primacy
- Curiosities
- Tragedy
- Influential events





The First Modern-day Olympic Games

Baron Pierre de Coubertin **1**, a young historian from France, was an avid admirer of the idea of ancient Olympic Games, during which all military conflicts fell silent for a time. He was the man who pushed through the idea of making the modern-day Olympics. This happened on 6th April 1896. The sports games were

held at the Panathenaic Stadium **2** built in 330 B.C. Participants, 280 men from 12 countries, were to compete in athletics, swimming, fencing, gymnastics, cycling, wrestling, weightlifting, shooting, and tennis. Women were excluded. The sidelight is that anyone from the audience could have taken part in the games.

A British tourist, John Pius Boland **3**, signed up for the tennis match, which he easily won. The Greek cyclist Konstantinidis **4**, on the other hand, had to borrow a bike from one of the spectators to take part in the road race from Athens to Marathon and back. The Greek gambled on the ancient tradition of the Marathon run, which, to their satisfaction, was won by Spyridon Luis **5**. That moment turned an unknown Greek errand boy to a national hero. On the other hand, they were

disappointed by discus throwing, a discipline that athletes from other countries saw for the very first time at the Olympics. Paradoxically, the winner was a foreigner, an American named Garret **6**. The idea of modern time Olympics, which in 1896 were attended in Athens by 80,000 spectators **7**, established itself successfully, and nowadays it is hard to imagine our lives without the prestigious Olympic Games.



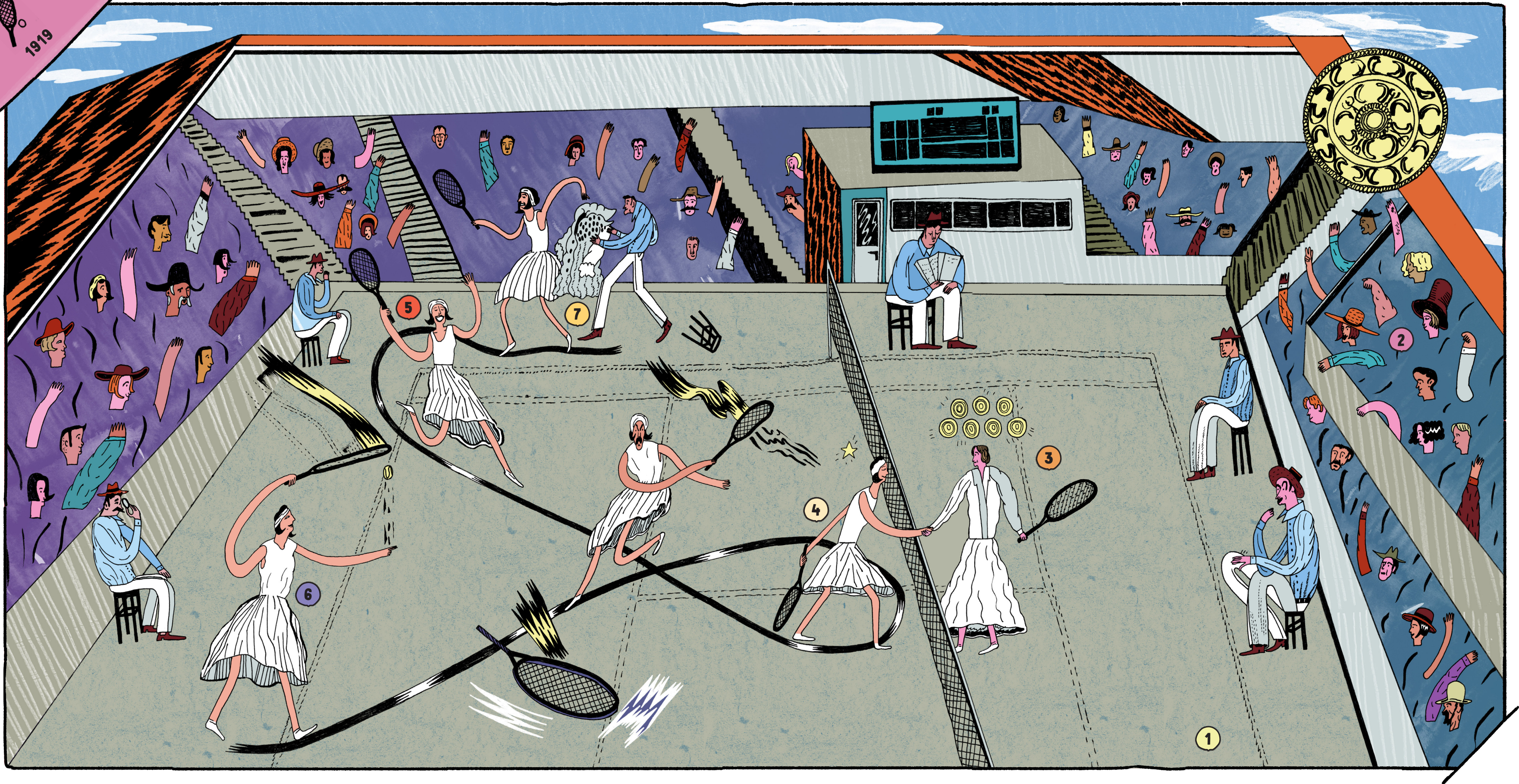
Marathon Fight

Finally! The first marathon racer enters the London Stadium ❶ But what? Instead of heading to the left, the fool starts running to the right. Referees dash to him immediately and they turn him to the right direction. But the young man, the 22 year-old Italian confectioner Dorando Pietri ❷, stumbles and falls on the ground.

Organizers Jack Andrew and the physician Michael Bulger stand him and they literally push him to the finish. ❸. The last 350 meters take ten endless minutes for the exhausted runner. But he finishes first. 100,000 spectators ❹ are enthusiastic, applauding wildly. A short time later, the finishing tape is overcome by

the American Johnny Hayes ❺ who immediately raises a complaint. Dorando Pietri is not entitled to the gold trophy passed from the hands of the Queen ❻. Given that the organizers put him upright and pushed him to the finish, he should have been disqualified, and this really followed. On the other hand, the young Dorando Pietri

was engraved indelibly in minds of compassionate spectators. The famous writer Sir Arthur Conan Doyle ❼, along with the Daily Mail, established a fund that later allowed Dorando Pietri to open not only a sweet shop of his dreams but actually a whole family hotel.



Dancing Tennis Player

After a four-year wartime break, tennis lovers could enjoy the prestigious Wimbledon match once again. It was the first year of peace, 1919. The fourth Worple Road Court ① was heavy with spectators ②, full to the bursting. With tension, everyone was waiting for the match between two women. The excellent and

experienced Briton Lambert Chambers ③ who was successful enough to win seven Wimbledon titles in pre-war times and who was expected to get her eighth title, against the very young and sweet phenomenal French Suzanne Lenglen ④. The French appeared at the courts, watched by Queen Mary and King George V

who were present as well, looking surprisingly relaxed. With the charm of a naiad, she arrived in an extravagant white hat ⑤ and a white dress ⑥ reaching to the middle of thighs, only to subsequently amaze everyone with a tough overhead service, which had only been performed by men. Suzanne Lenglen was aggressive, dynamic, and forceful. Suzanne defeated the fancied Briton Chambers in that match, though by a narrow margin, and she became the Wimbledon champion.

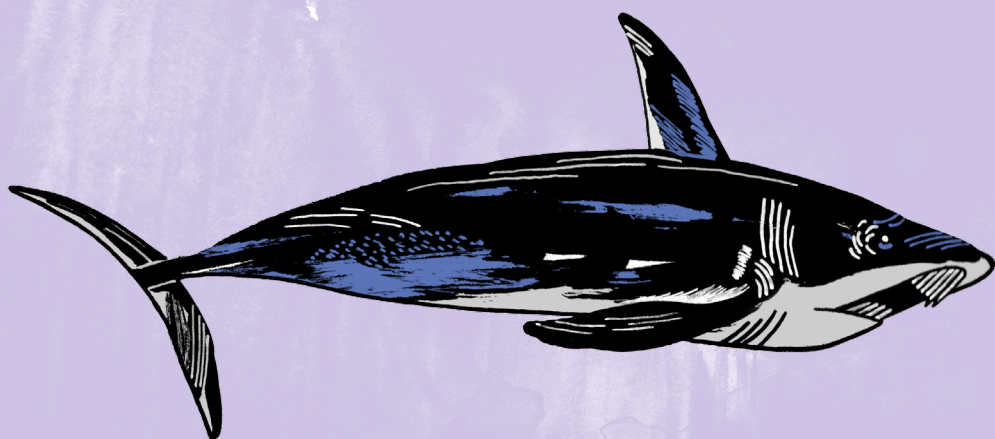
In the course of her whole, though brief tennis career, she was defeated just seven times. Suzanne Lenglen was the first woman who could rage at the court in front of everyone, who amazed by models she was wearing at tournaments – short skirts, close-fitting tops, bandana headbands, ermine collars or mink fur coats ⑦, the first true sports celebrity and player whose technique outpaced the tennis developments by decades and who changed the whole concept of women's tennis.



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From the **First Modern-day Olympic Games** to **MMA**



Humanity has enjoyed sports and games since time immemorial. There's nothing quite like moving your body and testing your strength! While many great moments in sport are lost forever to the ash heap of history, others are with us still and will never be forgotten. They include phenomenal victories and achievements, but sadly also moments of tragedy. Let us recall some of these together in 23 two-page narrative illustrations.

