

Olympic Mascots history: Since the first mascot in Olympic history made its appearance at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games, Olympic Mascots have become a main element of the Olympic image. As a unique and popular image full of vitality, a mascot is able to materialize the Olympic spirit, communicate the concepts of each Olympic Games, promote the history and culture of the host city and create a festive atmosphere for the Games. Mascots act as a significant vehicle for communicating the Olympic spirit to the general public, especially children and youth. Whatever shapes they have, they fundamentally share a creative rationale, that is, the mascots must be able to convey the theme of the Olympic Games, showcase the distinctive geographical features, history and culture unique to the host city.



Waldi--mascot of 1972 Olympic Summer Games in Munich, Germany

Waldi, the dachshund. Very popular in Bavaria, but he also possesses qualities which are indispensable to an athlete: resistance, tenacity and agility. These are among the reasons he was chosen to be the mascot. He was dressed in pastel colors to express the gaiety and joy of the Olympic festival.



Amik--mascot of the 1976 Olympic Summer Games in Montreal, Canada

It was a beaver called Amik, a name taken from the Algonquian language, which is the most popular language amongst the American Indians in Canada. Amik means beaver. The beaver symbolizes hard work.



Misha--mascot of the 1980 Olympic Summer Games in Moscow

The Moscow Olympic bear Misha was developed by the renowned illustrator of children's books Victor Chizikov. Misha became an instant international success.



Sam the Eagle--mascot of the 1984 Olympic Summer Games in Los Angeles, USA

Designed by Walt Disney, Sam is a cartooned Eagle with sheer American characteristics who wears the dress of the legendary American Uncle Sam with a star-spangled background in red, white and blue, typical colors of USA. Commercial use of olympic mascots was initiated henceforth.



Hodori -- mascot of the 1988 Olympic Summer Games in Seoul, Korea

For the 1988 Olympic Games, which was held in an Oriental country, a little tiger designed by Kim Hyun with typical Oriental color was chosen as the mascot, who was named Hodori. Hodori was designed as an amicable tiger, which portrays the friendly and hospitable traditions of the Koreans. Ho is derived from the Korean word for tiger, and Dori is a diminutive for boys in Korea. The friendly tiger of Seoul wore the Olympic Rings around its neck, much like a medal, while sporting a traditional Korean dance hat on its head.



Cobi -- mascot of the 1992 Olympic Summer Games in Barcelona, Spain

The mascot was a dog named Cobi. The Barcelona Organizing Committee for Olympics had specially produced a TV series for Cobi to communicate the spirits of the Games. The Valencian artist, Javier Mariscal, created the dog Cobi as official mascot of the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games.



Izzy -- mascot of the 1996 Olympic Summer Games in Atlanta, USA

Izzy mascot of the 1996 Olympic Summer Games in Atlanta--was the first mascot designed by computer. It was an amorphous abstract fantasy figure. It carried the name Izzy, derived from "What is it?" because no one seemed to know exactly what Izzy

really was.



Syd, Olly and Millie -- mascots of the 2000 Olympic Summer Games in Sydney, Australia

Ollie, Syd and Millie, designed by Matthew Hattan, are three native Australian animals chosen as mascots for the Sydney 2000 Games. They represent earth, air and water. "Olly", a

kookaburra, epitomizes the Olympic spirit of generosity and universal generosity (from Olympic); "Syd", a platypus, represents the environment and captures the vigor and energy of Australia and its people (from Sydney); "Millie", an echidna, is a techno-whiz and information guru, with all the facts and figures at her fingertips (from Millennium).



Athena and Phevos -- mascots of the 2004 Olympic Summer Games in Athens, Greece

The lovely Olympic Mascots, Athena and Phevos, with their whacking feet, longish necks and puny heads, one in deep yellow and the other in deep blue, are based on dolls, thousands of years old, found at archeological sites in Greece. Greek mythology had it that Phevos and Athena are

brother and sister, named after two Greek gods: Phevos, the god of light and music, and Athena, goddess of wisdom and patron of the city of Athens.

The Official Mascots of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games

福娃 Fuwa



Like the Five Olympic Rings from which they draw their color and inspiration, Fuwa will serve as the Official Mascots of Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, carrying a message of friendship and peace -- and good wishes from China -- to children all over the world.

Designed to express the playful qualities of five little children who form an intimate circle of friends, Fuwa also embody the natural characteristics of four of China's most popular animals -- the Fish, the Panda, the Tibetan Antelope, the Swallow -- and the Olympic Flame.

Each of Fuwa has a rhyming two-syllable name -- a traditional way of expressing affection for children in China. Beibei is the Fish, Jingjing is the Panda, Huanhuan is the Olympic Flame, Yingying is the Tibetan Antelope and Nini is the Swallow.

When you put their names together -- Bei Jing Huan Ying Ni -- they say "Welcome to Beijing," offering a warm invitation that reflects the mission of Fuwa as young ambassadors for the Olympic Games.

Fuwa also embody both the landscape and the dreams and aspirations of people from every part of the vast country of China. In their origins and their headpieces, you can see the five elements of nature -- the sea, forest, fire, earth and sky -- all stylistically rendered in ways that represent the deep traditional influences of Chinese folk art and ornamentation.

Spreading Traditional Chinese Good Wishes Wherever They Go

In the ancient culture of China, there is a grand tradition of spreading good wishes through signs and symbols. Each of Fuwa symbolizes a different blessing -- and will honor this tradition by carrying their good wishes to the children of the world. Prosperity, happiness,

passion, health and good luck will be spread to every continent as Fuwa carry their invitation to Beijing 2008 to every part of the globe.

At the heart of their mission -- and through all of their work -- Fuwa will seek to unite the world in peace and friendship through the Olympic spirit. Dedicated to helping Beijing 2008 spread its theme of One World, One Dream to every continent, Fuwa reflect the deep desire of the Chinese people to reach out to the world in friendship through the Games -- and to invite every man, woman and child to take part in the great celebration of human solidarity that China will host in the light of the flame in 2008.



In China's traditional culture and art, the fish and water designs are symbols of prosperity and harvest. And so Beibei carries the blessing of prosperity. A fish is also a symbol of surplus in Chinese culture, another measure of a good year and a good life.

The ornamental lines of the water-wave designs are taken from well-known Chinese paintings of the past. Among Fuwa, Beibei is known to be gentle and pure. Strong in water sports, she reflects the blue Olympic ring.



Jingjing makes children smile -- and that's why he brings the blessing of happiness wherever he goes. You can see his joy in the charming naivety of his dancing pose and the lovely wave of his black and white fur. As a national treasure and a protected species, pandas are adored by people everywhere. The lotus designs in Jingjing's headdress, which are inspired by the porcelain paintings of the Song Dynasty (A.D.960-1234), symbolize the lush forest and the harmonious relationship between man and nature. Jingjing was chosen to represent our desire to protect nature's gifts -- and to preserve the beauty of nature for all generations. Jingjing is charmingly naïve and optimistic. He is an athlete noted for strength who represents the black Olympic ring.



In the intimate circle of Fuwa, Huanhuan is the big brother. He is a child of fire, symbolizing the Olympic Flame and the passion of sport -- and passion is the blessing he bestows. Huanhuan stands in the center of Fuwa as the core embodiment of the Olympic spirit. And while he inspires all with the passion to run faster, jump higher and be stronger, he is also open and inviting. Wherever the light of Huanhuan shines, the inviting warmth of Beijing 2008 -- and the wishful blessings of the Chinese people -- can be felt. The fiery designs of his head ornament are drawn from the famed Dunhuang murals -- with just a touch of China's traditional lucky designs. Huanhuan is outgoing and enthusiastic. He excels at all the ball games and represents the red Olympic ring.



Like all antelopes, Yingying is fast and agile and can swiftly cover great stretches of land as he races across the earth. A symbol of the vastness of China's landscape, the antelope carries the blessing of health, the strength of body that comes from harmony with nature. Yingying's flying pose captures the essence of a species unique to the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, one of the first animals put under protection in China. The selection of the Tibetan Antelope reflects Beijing's commitment to a Green Olympics. His head ornament incorporates several decorative styles from the Qinghai-Tibet and Sinkiang cultures and the ethnic design traditions of Western China. Strong in track and field events, Yingying is a quick-witted and agile boy who represents the yellow Olympic ring.



Every spring and summer, the children of Beijing have flown beautiful kites on the currents of wind that blow through the capital. Among the kite designs, the golden-winged swallow is traditionally one of the most popular. Nini's figure is drawn from this grand tradition of flying designs. Her golden wings symbolize the infinite sky and spread good-luck as a blessing wherever she flies. Swallow is also pronounced "yan" in Chinese, and Yanjing is what Beijing was called as an ancient capital city. Among Fuwa, Nini is as innocent and joyful as a swallow. She is strong in gymnastics and represents the green Olympic ring.