The Olympic Games, an international amateur athletic competition which takes place every fourth year in whatever country the International Olympic Committee decides. The name is derived from the National Athletic Festival held at Olympia (776 BC - 394 AD) in honour of Zeus by the ancient Greeks. The games were revived in 1896, in Athens, when eight countries took part. Today most countries are represented in summer competitions for men and women which include track and field athletics, as well as swimming, shooting, boxing etc. and in separate winter games.

The games are opened with a spectacular ceremony in which the Olympic flame is lit by a torch carried from Athens by relays of runners. The host country for 1984’s summer Olympics, Los Angeles, has been host to the Games previously in 1932.

The History of Zimbabwe and the Olympics

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) gave recognition to the then, Rhodesia to compete as a nation on 25 July 1928. At this time no Committee was formed as Olympic Sports in Rhodesia were virtually non-existent. The Rhodesia Empire and Olympic Games Association came into being at the inaugural meeting held in Bulawayo on 15 February 1934. During the ensuing years the Committee changed its title in keeping with the various political changes which affected the country and finally after the Lancaster House talks the National Olympic Committee of Rhodesia officially changed its title on 13 April 1980 to that of the National Olympic Committee of Zimbabwe (ZOC).

From this date things moved at a rapid pace, the new President, Mr Frank Lincoln, attended the IOC meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland. Zimbabwe was recognised, and placed its house into order the Constitution was amended to a Model Constitution as laid down by the IOC. Zimbabwe was accepted by the IOC in May 1980 and an official invitation was then sent to the Zimbabwe Olympic Committee by the organising Committee Olympic Games - Moscow 1980 to compete in the games commencing in July.

In the Moscow 1980 Games, Zimbabwe sent athletes, 25 men and 22 women, and obtained a Gold Medal in women's hockey (see section on the 1980 Olympic Games issue).

For the 1984 Games, Zimbabwe sent a team of 15 athletes, no medals were won by those competing. The team comprised 6 track & field athletes, 3 boxers, 2 divers, 1 sailor and 3 shooters. Diver Lesley Smith got as far as the finals and was ranked seventh. Nduba Dube, the bantamweight boxer reached the quarter finals before being knocked out. 3

About this issue

The Zimbabwe Olympic Committee requested a set of postage Stamps be issued to commemorate the
1984 Olympic Games to be held in Los Angeles.

A national children's competition was held for the design of the stamps. The competition was open to children between the ages of eight and eighteen. The ZOC wanted to illustrate the stamps with the Games as seen through the eyes of our children. With all the candid sincerity of youth, children can express what the Games mean to them and what represents for them the sports culture of their world.

The final judging took place in September 1983 and the four winners were each from a separate age group depicted.

The Zimbabwe Olympic Committee presented each prize winner with $25 and a further $25 was given to their schools.

11c Cyclist  Vivienne Fick, Chisipite Junior School, Harare. Prize winner in the 11-year-old group.
21c Swimmer Joanna Hogg, Chisipite Junior School, Harare. Prize winner in the 9-year-old group.
30c Runner  Blessing Chikoore, Mutare Junior School, Mutare. Prize winner in the 15-year-old group.
40c Hurdler  Wayne Gubb, Plumtree School, Plumtree. Prize winner in the 13-year-old group.

The Stamps

Catalogue listings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SG</th>
<th>ZSC</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>639</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>11c</td>
<td>Cyclist by Vivienne Fick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>640</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>21c</td>
<td>Swimmer by Joanna Hogg</td>
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<td>641</td>
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<td>30c</td>
<td>Runner by Blessing Chikoore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>642</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>40c</td>
<td>Hurdler by Wayne Gubb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td></td>
<td>Offset</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

~ 2 ~
Technical details

Stamp size: 42 x 28 mm

Sheet Size: 50 stamps (10 rows of 5 stamps), two panes per printed sheet

Artist: As stated above

Paper: ZSC paper type C – paper known as "Postmaster", manufactured and converted by Smith & McLaurin Ltd, Scotland. The coating is not as fluorescent as the previous papers and the gum is described as 'particle gummed'. It is a very different adhesive from PVA as it has a matt, non-reflective appearance. It is what is known as 'dry gum'.

Print colours:
- 11c Black, magenta, light blue, yellow
- 21c Black, red, cyan, yellow
- 30c Black, magenta, cyan, yellow
- 40c Black, brown, cyan, yellow

Perforations: SG 14½, ZSC 14¼
- Top margin: Perforated through
- Other margins: Imperforate

Printer: Mardon Printers (Pvt) Ltd., Harare, Zimbabwe

Printer’s Imprint: Bottom Margin, below columns 2 to 4. Imprint printed in black

Cylinder numbers:
- All stamps above R1/5, colours reading from left
- 11c yellow, light blue, magenta, black
- 21c yellow, cyan, red, black
- 30c yellow, cyan, magenta, black
- 40c yellow, cyan, brown, black

Colour register:
- Type TL 4 – round boxed – left margin opposite R1/5
- 11c Black, magenta, light blue, yellow
- 21c Black, red, cyan, yellow
- 30c Black, magenta, cyan, yellow
- 40c Black, brown, cyan, yellow

Sheet Value:
- All stamps - bottom margin, above R1/1, all printed in black.

Sheet Number:
- Type SN 4a with ‘PTC’ prefix, opposite R1/1, reading downwards

Print numbers:
- 11c 750,000
- 21c 750,000
- 30c 500,000
- 40c 500,000

Issue date: 18th July, 1984

Withdrawal from sale: 31st January, 1994

Demonetarisation: 31st January, 1994
Listed varieties

ZSC 66a – offset

The example shown is from R1/5, and shows the offset of both the brown and yellow inks, in both the stamps and margins.

Unlisted varieties

There are numerous small dots and specks in the printing of these stamps, particularly in the backgrounds. Some dots and specks shown below are a bit more distinctive, some may be constant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>21c: Vertical white line through swimmer. R1/1 (probably not constant)</th>
<th>21c: vertical white line through Olympic logo. R1/2 (probably not constant)</th>
<th>30c: Additional green slashes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

First Day Covers

The cover numbering comes from the catalogue produced by Geoff Brakspear.

A pictorial first day of issue canceller was produced for this issued and was used by the Philatelic Bureau. Other first day cover cancellers continued to be used at main post offices.
Bibliography:

3. Wikipedia on title Zimbabwe at the 1984 Olympic Games