

The List [March]

10

POINTLESS OLYMPIC SPORTS ...AND THEIR REPLACEMENTS

SYNCHRONISED ANYTHING



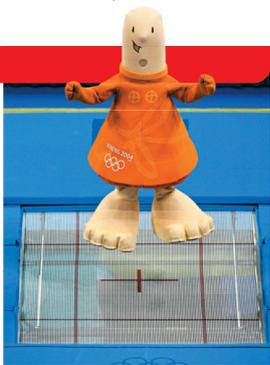
» What is this, a '50s Hollywood movie? Why not make the competitors sing a few verses from *Showboat* while they're at it? Let's have 20 perfectly dovetailed lovelies sliding down a big slide with roses between their teeth. On the other hand, let's not.

REPLACE WITH: MARBLES.

TRAMPOLINE

» When someone has to explain how difficult a sport really is, you know something's up. This is zero-g gymnastics: a bouncy, crèche-spawned nonsense that makes a mockery of those who've flogged their bodies for years to make an Olympics. Why not hand out medals for sitting on the swing as well?

REPLACE WITH: DARTS.

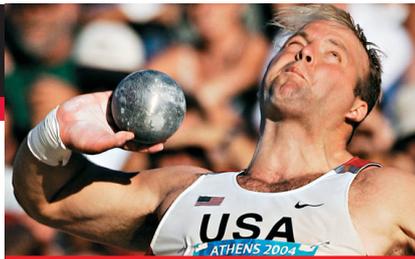


FOOTBALL



« There are plenty of proper competitions already, without the Olympics muddying the pitch. Hence, everyone fields their under-12 asthmatic team, who get to play out a tension-free comp in a half-deserted temporary stadium, 34km from the Olympic city.

REPLACE WITH: TUG-OF-WAR.



SHOT PUT

« The put performs well in the "grunting giant on steroids" category, but falls short in the "sheer, exhilarating entertainment" category. Some behemoth awkwardly chucking a metal sphere four metres is, at best, a brief distraction from watching litter blow across the long-jump pit.

REPLACE WITH: WOOD-CHOPPING.

WINDSURFING

» Come on, this is something dentists do on Sunday afternoon. There's an awfully big gap between the grand ocean-going sailing traditions and standing on a wet board pumping a plastic sail back and forth. The ancient Greeks didn't windsurf and there's at least one good reason.

REPLACE WITH: WWF WRESTLING



THE WALK

« You're a supreme athlete at the peak of fitness – so what do you do? Take part in an event that makes you look like you're desperate to visit the porta-loo. There's nothing wrong with running, y'know.

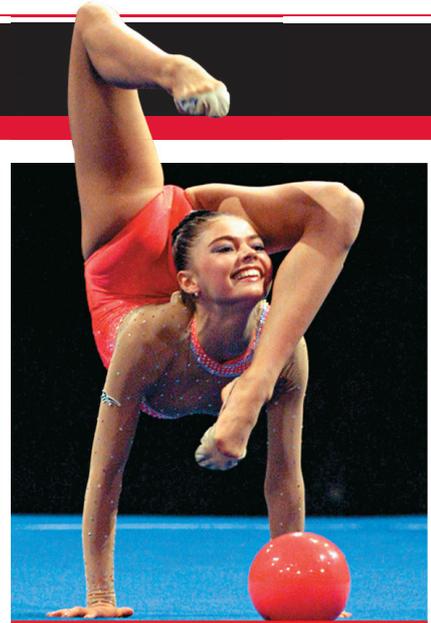
REPLACE WITH: ARM-WRESTLING.



TENNIS

« For a cyclist from Uzbekistan, the Olympics is the ultimate dream. For a millionaire tennis pro it's another tourney with a busier hotel. They don't care. If they did, they wouldn't get knocked out early and spend the rest of their holiday signing autographs for Uzbekistani cyclists.

REPLACE WITH: SQUASH.



RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS

« You can imagine the committee meeting. "I know: how about a smirking waif prancing about while waiving a streamer in the air? Worth a medal or two." "Brilliant. Or she could throw a giant ball in the air and catch it on her foot while she's upside down." Whatever old, noble de Coubertin envisaged for his Olympics, this wasn't it, boys.

REPLACE WITH: UTE-RACING.

DRESSAGE



« Nine baffled viewers and a small dog witness a haughty stallion tiptoe sideways, ridden by a man in a top hat and tails. A plummy commentator says, "Oh, that's lovely there." No one knows what's going on.

REPLACE WITH: TRUCK PULLING.

MODERN PENTATHLON

» A proper multi-task Olympic event involves running, jumping and throwing things – democratic, accessible family entertainment.

Modern pentathlon consists of events (pistol shooting, equestrian, epee fencing) practised by pinch-faced sadists who've been to elite German universities and list "thrashing the servants" as their hobby.

REPLACE WITH: DOUBLE HELPINGS OF NORMAL DECATHLON.

