



Surf's Up at the 2020 Olympics

Article

ICHINOMIYA, Japan (Achieve3000, September 30, 2019). Surf's up! At the Olympics! For the first time ever, surfing will be an official Olympic sport at the 2020 Summer Games in Japan. Surfing fans all over the world are *stoked*.

The idea got the thumbs-up in 2016, when the International Olympic Committee (IOC) met to hash out plans for the 2020 Games. The sport's bid had been nixed before. This time around, though, the committee went all in. Setting their sights on attracting younger audiences, the 90 reps voted unanimously to bring surfing on board in the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo.

Then officials made a move that set off waves throughout the surfing world. They announced the event would take place at—wait for it—a beach! Sounds like a no-brainer, right? But lots of people had expected the competition to be held at an artificial wave pool. That would guarantee steady conditions for all the athletes. There were concerns about expenses and possible technical problems, however. They led organizers to opt for the good ol' ocean.

All the epic action's going down at Shidashita Beach near the town of Ichinomiya, about 40 miles (64 kilometers) from Tokyo. Forty surfers—20 men and 20 women, competing separately—will paddle out, hoping to bring home gold for their nations. Things will get rolling in July or August during an eight-day window—'cause awesome waves are worth waiting for!

Speaking of waiting, the sport's journey to the Olympics has been a looooong ride. The idea's been floating around for at least a century. Hawaiian hero Duke Kahanamoku is considered the father of modern surfing. Way back around 1919, he dreamed of the day surfing would be in the Olympics. The Duke *did* get to reign at the Olympic podium as a swimmer, though. He won five medals over three Olympic Games. No wonder one of his nicknames was The Big Kahuna!

In 1992, the International Surfing Association (ISA) started a focused campaign to add surfing to the Olympics. The group worked at it for decades. ISA President Fernando Aguerre was told that the sport didn't have formal groups in enough nations. So, he traveled the globe to promote it. He introduced surfing to many countries, including Afghanistan, Israel, and Iran. Even Norway, brrrrrr!

A big obstacle stood between surfing and its Olympic hopes: There was a limit on the total number of sports allowed in the Olympics. So, another sport had to get the boot for surfing to get the nod. In 2014, the IOC dropped that rule. Suddenly, surfing had a good shot at gettin' in the games!

Along the way, lots of famous surfers have been down with the Duke's dream. They include Stephanie Gilmore and Mick Fanning (Australia) and Gabriel Medina (Brazil). Then there's 11-time men's world champ Kelly Slater (USA). Just about everybody considers Slater the Greatest of All Time. He worked with a team of engineers and scientists to develop state-of-the-art artificial wave pools with an eye toward Olympic competitions. So did he decide to sit out when Olympic officials picked the Pacific over a pool? No way! If he qualifies for Team USA, the GOAT's gonna go for the gold.



Photo credit: David Bostock/Shutterstock

Pro surfer Kelly Slater was one of many people who looked forward to seeing the sport of surfing in the Olympics.

Is Olympic surfing here to stay? Maybe! The IOC's vote applied only to the 2020 Games in Tokyo. But surfing is on the schedule for 2024 in Paris, for now anyway. There's still a chance surfing's Olympic position could get, um, *wiped out* in the future. Leaders like Aguerre hope Olympic audiences will love surfing as much as they do. They see the 2020 Olympics as a chance to spread the joy of surfing around the world. The Duke would be proud!

UPDATE: April 2020 [Click here \(/kb/lesson/preview/?lid=19581&step=11&c=1\)](/kb/lesson/preview/?lid=19581&step=11&c=1)

Dictionary

focused (*adjective*) giving attention and effort to a specific task or goal

guarantee (*verb*) to make (something) certain

obstacle (*noun*) an object that you have to go around or over: something that blocks your path

reign (*verb*) to be the best or the most powerful or important person or thing

unanimous (*adjective*) agreed to by everyone

Activity

PART 1

Question 1

What Happened Next?

Duke Kahanamoku dreamed of having surfing included in the Olympics.

?

The rule limiting the total number of sports allowed in the Olympics was dropped.

The International Olympic Committee voted to include surfing in the 2020 Summer Games.

Based on the Article, which best replaces the question mark in the diagram above?

There are four boxes. The text above the boxes says "What Happened Next?" The first box says "Duke Kahanamoku dreamed of having surfing included in the Olympics". An arrow points from the first box to the second box. The second box has a question mark in it. An arrow points from the second box to the third box. The third box says "The rule limiting the total number of sports allowed in the Olympics was dropped". An arrow points from the third box to the fourth box. The fourth box says "The International Olympic Committee voted to include surfing in the 2020 Olympic Summer Games".

This question asks about when events happen. It does not ask where in the Article the events appear. Look back at the Article for clues, such as dates.

- (A) Surfing was added to the schedule for the 2024 Summer Olympic Games in Paris.
- (B) Olympic officials for the 2020 Summer Games announced that the surfing competition would be held at Shidashita Beach.
- (C) World champ surfer Kelly Slater qualified to compete for Team USA in the 2020 Olympics.
- (D) International Surfing Association started a campaign to add the surfing to the Olympic Games.

Question 2

What is this Article mainly about?

- (A) To honor surfing legend Duke Kahanamoku, many famous surfers have started a campaign to include surfing in the 2020 Summer Olympics.
- (B) With an eye toward the 2020 Summer Olympic Games, professional surfers have created artificial wave pools for the sport of surfing.
- (C) After much time and many hurdles, the sport of surfing has finally been added to the 2020 Summer Olympic Games.
- (D) Surfers hope the 2020 Summer Olympic Games will get people more excited about surfing so the sport will be included in the 2024 Games.

Question 3

Which is the closest **synonym** for the word *guarantee*?

- (A) monitor
- (B) conceal
- (C) hinder
- (D) assure

Question 4

Look at the following passage from the Article:

Then officials made a move that set off waves throughout the surfing world. They announced the event would take place at—wait for it—a beach! Sounds like a no-brainer, right? But lots of people had expected the competition to be held at an artificial wave pool. That would guarantee steady conditions for all the athletes. There were concerns about expenses and possible technical problems, however. They led organizers to opt for the good ol' ocean.

The author's purpose for writing this passage was to _____.

- (A) show how officials planned to handle the technical problems that could arise from using an artificial wave pool during the competition
- (B) prove that the ocean offers surfers steadier conditions for surfing competitions than artificial wave pools do
- (C) tell why officials decided to have the Olympic surfing competition in the ocean rather than an artificial wave pool
- (D) stress the fact that surfing competitions at artificial wave pools have high costs and technical problems

Question 5

Which of these is a statement of opinion?

- (A) Duke Kahanamoku is known as the father of modern surfing yet has won five medals in the Olympics as a swimmer.
- (B) The International Olympic Committee made the right choice to include surfing as an official sport of the 2020 Summer Games.
- (C) Fernando Aguerre tried to introduce surfing to other countries after being told there were not enough formal surfing groups around the world.
- (D) Even though surfing will be part of the 2020 Games in Tokyo, people do not yet know if it will stay on the schedule for the 2024 Games.

Question 6

The Article states:

ISA President Fernando Aguerre was told that the sport didn't have formal groups in enough nations. So, he traveled the globe to *promote* it. He introduced surfing to many countries, including Afghanistan, Israel, and Iran. Even Norway, brrrrrrr!

Which is the closest **synonym** for the word *promote*?

- (A) purify
- (B) navigate
- (C) publicize
- (D) observe

Question 7

According to the Article, what caused the International Olympic Committee to include surfing in the 2020 Summer Olympics?

- (A) The campaign efforts of the father of modern surfing himself, Duke Kahanamoku
- (B) The promise from world champ surfer Kelly Slater that he would compete in Tokyo
- (C) The committee's desire to attract a younger audience to the Olympic Games
- (D) The introduction of artificial wave pools designed for the sport of surfing

Question 8

Which information is **not** in the Article?

- (A) How the 40 surfers will be judged when competing in the 2020 Olympic Games
- (B) Why a beach was chosen as the spot for the 2020 Olympic surfing competition
- (C) What the International Surfing Association did to try to get surfing into the Olympics
- (D) What things stood in the way of getting surfing into the Olympic Games