



WHO IS THE BEST HIGH JUMPER EVER?

Bonjour. My name is Pierre. Pierre Baron de Coubertin and I know everything about the Olympics. Really. For example: Do you know who is *the best* high jumper ever?
I do

High jumping started with the Ancient Greeks. These were strange people who liked to jump, but only over *bulls*. Which was very, very spectacular, but not very high. The best high jumper is also not **Ellery Clark**, but he was the first golden high jump medalist of the Olympics. He jumped over 1.81 meters, which was very impressive at the time, but today people with only one leg can jump higher. It was also not the very talented **Ray Ewry**. He was an American that won the standing high jump in four olympics. He had polio as a child, but he still could jump 1.65 meters, without a running start. *Incredible...*

But the standing high jump was cancelled, because like every one knows, if you make a running start you jump higher. For example the legendary Russian **Valeriy Brumel**, how could jump 2.28 meter, very impressive, especially because he had to land in a sawdust pit. But is he the best High jumper ever?

No.....

Because around 1960 a softer, raised landing area was introduced. Suddenly high jumping became a lot safer, but people got more recklessly. People like **Dick Fosbury** who developed a new backwards technique. It was called The Fosbury Flop by a reporter, because he thought it looked like a fish flopping. But Dick Fosbury wasn't the best high jumper for long because soon everybody started flopping and the athletes jumped higher and higher and higher and higher, until in 1993 **Javier Sotomayor** from Cuba set the current worldrecord at 2.45 meters. In 1999 he was tested positive for cocaine, so Javier Sotomayor truly was a *high jumper*.

But is he the best ever? Noooo...

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Is it maybe Polish **Artur Partyka** who jumped 2.37 meters in Barcelona, but actually was much, much higher...?

No...

A gymnastic jumper, maybe? They are very flexibel. Or **Michael Jordan**, another great Olympic Athlete who really could fly. Or Vince Carter who - during the 2000 Olympics - jumped over a 7 foot 2 french guy. Or the boys from the house of pain? They like to Jump Jump.

No No No No....

Or what about **Sergej Bubka**. After all he set a new worldrecord 35 times. Yes, but he did use a very large stick. Is it a woman then? Like worldrecord holder Stefke Kostadinova... or the beautifull Blanka Vlastic.

Yes...! er.. no!

No, if we look at this closely we see the best High Jumper ever is not a woman, or a man. It is **an animal**.

Maybe you think a Kangaroo, but No... it is *a horse*. Not many people know this, but in 1900 high jumping for horses was a very popular Olympic Event. It disappeared from the program, which was a giant mistake, because horses are very, very good at high jumping. And no horse was as good as Huaso. **Huaso the High Jump Horse!**

In 1949 Huaso, droven by Captain Alberto Larraguibel, jumped over 2.47 meters. A more than 60 year old worldrecord that still stands today. A jump that was two centimeters higher than Javier Sotomayor.

And Huaso did it with someone on his back

And he did not use a foam landing device.

So he could not use the Fosbury Flop technique.

A fact that made his driver Captain Larraguibel a very happy man, and a fact that makes Huaso the Horse the very very best High Jumper ever.

Really!

