

## Topic Page: [Nurmi, Paavo, 1897-1973](https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/nurmi_paavo_1897_1973)

Summary Article: **Nurmi, Paavo (Johannes)**

From *The Hutchinson Unabridged Encyclopedia with Atlas and Weather Guide*

Finnish long distance runner. He was known as the 'Flying Finn', and won nine Olympic gold medals, including five at the 1924 Games. He broke 20 world records in 16 separate events ranging from the 1,500 metres to the 20,000 metres. Through his achievements and his scientific approach to training and racing he transformed competitive running in the 1920s. He set his first world record in 1921 in the 10,000 metres, and his last in 1931 when he became the first man to beat nine minutes in the two miles.

### Career highlights

**Olympic Games** gold 10,000 metres 1920, 1928; gold individual cross country 1920, 1924; gold team cross country 1920, 1924; gold 1,500 metres 1924; gold 5,000 metres 1924; gold 3,000 metres team 1924; silver 5,000 metres 1920, 1928; silver 3,000 metres steeplechase 1928

At the 1920 Olympics in Antwerp he won the 10,000-metre and individual and team cross-country titles, but could only finish second in the 5,000 metres; a defeat which prompted him thereafter to run with a stop watch so that he could pace himself better. Whatever the benefits of this innovation, four years later at the Paris Olympics he was unbeatable, winning gold medals in the 1,500 metres, 5,000 metres, individual and team cross country, and the 3,000-metre team event; his victories in the first two races coming within an hour of each other. In 1925, on a celebrated tour of the USA, he won 53 of 55 indoor races. At the 1928 Olympics he won the 10,000 metres and won silver medals in the 5,000-metre and 3,000-metre steeplechase to bring his tally of medals to 12, including 9 golds. In 1932 he was controversially disqualified from competing in the Los Angeles Olympics for an alleged breach of the amateur code.

### APA

Chicago

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## Chicago

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## Harvard

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## MLA

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