

Usain Bolt

Biography

So, how do you become the greatest sprinter of all time?

Usain St. Leo Bolt once said, 'When I was young, I didn't really think about anything other than sports.' He first showed sprinting potential at a very young age and became the fastest 100m runner at his school by the age of 12. Whilst at secondary school, Usain was encouraged to concentrate on sprinting, which led him to win his first High School Championships medal. Since then he has set new world records, overcome injuries, won many medals, become a national treasure in his home country of Jamaica and he hasn't even finished yet!



Usain was born on 21st August 1986 in Jamaica. He grew up with his brother and sister, and enjoyed playing football and cricket.

He took part in his first race whilst at primary school, but sprinting wasn't his first love. Bolt has often said that if he hadn't have become a sprinter, he would have loved to have been a fast bowler, having been inspired by Waqar Younis, a former cricket player.

Whilst at high school, Usain focused on sprinting and won his first silver medal in the 2001 High School Championships. His talent caught the eye of former Jamaican Olympic sprinter Pablo McNeil, who went on to become his coach. Pablo would sometimes get frustrated with Bolt as he didn't always take his training seriously and enjoyed playing practical jokes.

The 2001 World Youth Championships was Usain's first appearance on the world stage. He didn't win any medals, but he did set a new personal best in the 200m race. The World Junior Championships came next for Usain and it was here that he became the youngest World Junior gold medallist.



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In 2004, Usain became the first junior sprinter to run 200m in under 20 seconds. With this fantastic time, he turned professional and he was also chosen to compete in the Jamaican Olympic team. Bolt went to the Olympic Games in Athens in 2004 but a leg injury ruled him out of winning any medals. He had offers to go and train in America but Usain wanted to stay true to his roots and even though the training facilities were basic, he stayed in Jamaica. For some time after that, injuries caused him problems but he always came back stronger.



As the years passed by, Bolt took his sport more seriously and began to train harder to win events. At the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games, he broke more world records and won gold in the 100m, 200m and relay. This was followed by the World Championships in Berlin, where he improved his times even further.

Bolt competed in the 100m, 200m and relay at the London 2012 Olympic Games, where he won golds in each event once again. This made him the first person to win all three events at consecutive Olympic Games. Following his performance in London, a fellow runner said, 'There's no doubt he's the greatest sprinter of all time.'

Bolt amazed everyone yet again during the 2016 Rio Olympics, by claiming not only gold in all three races (100m, 200m and relay) but also the title the 'triple-triple' meaning he had won gold in 3 events in 3 consecutive Olympic Games. However this amazing achievement didn't last long as in 2017, Bolt and his team mates were stripped of the gold medals from the 100m relay in the Beijing Games due to one of his teammates being disqualified for taking a banned substance.

In 2017, at the World Athletics Championships, Bolt's winning streak was over as he won a bronze medal in one event and in another, he collapsed on the track with a hamstring injury and had to be helped across the finish line by his teammates. This was Bolt's final ever race.

Usain is nicknamed 'Lightning Bolt' and continues to be widely regarded as being the fastest sprinter of all time.

Olympic Games	Event	Medals
2008 Beijing	100m, 200m, relay	Gold
2012 London	100m, 200m, relay	Gold
2016 Rio De Janeiro	100m, 200m, relay	Gold

Questions

1. When and where was Usain born?

2. By what age had Bolt become the fastest 100m runner at this school?

3. Who is he inspired by?

4. Why did Pablo McNeil get frustrated with Bolt?

5. How do you think Bolt felt when he was chosen to represent his country in the Olympic Games?

6. Why do you think Usain reached a point in his life where he decided to take his sport more seriously and train harder?

7. Why is Usain nicknamed 'Lightning Bolt'?

8. Which do you think is Usain's greatest achievement to date? Why?
