

Newsreel Interview with Ellen Braumüller, Javelin World Champion (1932)

Abstract

In this 1932 newsreel clip, one of Germany's best track-and-field athletes at the time, Ellen Braumüller, demonstrated her skills in three of the events in which she regularly competed—the shot put, the high jump, and her specialty, the javelin. Braumüller had set a world record in the women's javelin in 1930, but the American superstar "Babe" Didrikson edged her out for the gold medal in that event at the 1932 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles, and Braumüller settled for silver. That finish still made her the best-performing German track-and-field athlete, male or female, at the Games, and it showed how far women's sports had come in just a few decades. After the First World War, as more and more German women began taking part in organized sports, heated debates arose over the physical, psychological, and moral effects of such activity. Some commentators and physicians stoked fears that athletic participation would "masculinize" women or prevent them from bearing children, while others criticized the revealing nature of women's sporting attire. By the early 1930s, though, an increasingly vocal cohort of sports advocates began touting the benefits of female participation in sports, claiming that it made women better workers and mothers who could more readily negotiate the challenges of the modern world. The Los Angeles Olympics represented only Germany's second Summer Games since the International Olympic Committee (IOC) had allowed the nation to start competing again after the war, but—in a sign of how far Germany had come in rehabilitating itself on the world stage—the IOC had already, in 1931, awarded the 1936 Summer Olympics to Berlin.

Source

Speaker: Ellen Braumüller, the world champion in javelin throwing, will represent Germany at the Olympics in Los Angeles. She threw the javelin 42.28 meters. A nice distance. You will see her in a moment.

Braumüller: As you can see, I am training hard to be in top form for Los Angeles. My sister Inge is a capable training partner.

Reporter: Do you hope to win an Olympic medal in the javelin throw?

Braumüller: As you know, the javelin throw is my specialty. I have set my sights high, that's for sure.

Reporter: And how far can you throw the shot put?

Braumüller: Almost 12 meters, but I absolutely have to do one meter more. Let's see if I can do it.

Inge Braumüller: 12.05 meters.

[Ellen Braumüller practices the high jump]

Inge Braumüller: Bravo, Ellen! 1.35 meters.

Source: *Deuligton-Woche* No. 10 (clip), Deulig-Film, 1932. Bundesarchiv Filmarchiv, Filmwerk ID: 625942.
<https://digitaler-lesesaal.bundesarchiv.de/video/625942/665655>

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