

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 numerous 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, to parents Wellesley and Jennifer Bolt. He grew up with his brother and sister, and adored playing football and cricket.

He competed 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 international 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 Jamaican Prime Minister recognised Bolt's talent and arranged for him to move to Kingston to train with the Jamaican Amateur Athletic Association.

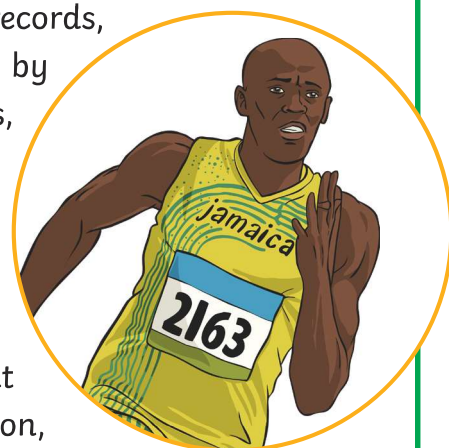
The World Junior Championships came next for Usain and it was here that he became the youngest World Junior gold medallist. He continued to win medals in 2003, when he competed at the World Youth Championships.

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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 was chosen to compete in the Jamaican Olympic team. He went to the Olympic Games in Athens in 2004 but a recurring leg injury ruled him out of winning any medals. He received offers to go and train in America but Bolt wanted to stay true to his roots and despite the basic facilities available to him, remained in Jamaica. For some time, injuries thwarted him, but he came back even 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, winning gold in the 100m, 200m and relay. This was followed by the World Championships in Berlin where he improved his times, running the 100m race in 9.58 seconds and the 200m in 19.19 seconds.

Bolt competed in the 100m, 200m and relay events at the London 2012 Olympic Games, where he won three golds once again. This made him the first person to win all three events at consecutive Olympic Games. Following his performance in London, a fellow competitor 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 sprinting races 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 was beaten by just 0.03 seconds putting him in 3rd place for the first time in 10 years. And to make things worse, whilst taking part in another race at the Championships, Bolt 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.

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. Why did Usain move to Kingston?

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

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

8. Explain how Bolt has shown resilience in his professional career.

9. Why is Usain nicknamed 'Lightning Bolt'?

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

Answers

1. When and where was Usain born?
Usain was born in Jamaica on 21st August 1986.
2. By what age had Bolt become the fastest 100m runner at this school?
He became the fastest 100m runner at his school by the age of 12.
3. Who is he inspired by?
He is inspired by Waqar Younis, a former international cricket player.
4. Why did Pablo McNeil get frustrated with Bolt?
He got frustrated with Usain because he didn't always take his training seriously and enjoyed playing practical jokes.
5. Why did Usain move to Kingston?
He moved to Kingston because the Prime Minister spotted his talent and wanted him to train with the Jamaican Amateur Athletic Association.
6. How do you think Bolt felt when he was chosen to represent his country in the Olympic Games?
Answers will vary.
7. Why do you think Usain reached a point in his life where he decided to take his sport more seriously and train harder?
Answers could include reference to: Usain realising his own potential, upcoming important sporting events were getting closer, not wanting to become injured again and/or that he felt the need to please people who had believed in him, like his trainer and the Jamaican president.
8. Explain how Bolt has shown resilience in his professional career.
In 2004, Bolt went to the Olympic Games in Athens but a leg injury stopped him from winning any medals. He was injured for some time but came back stronger to win gold at the 2008 Olympic Games.
9. Why is Usain nicknamed 'Lightning Bolt'?
It's a play on words because of his surname and also to signify his speed - as fast as lightning!
10. Which do you think is Usain's greatest achievement to date? Why?
Answers will vary.