

Putting the Past in Order: Sports Milestones

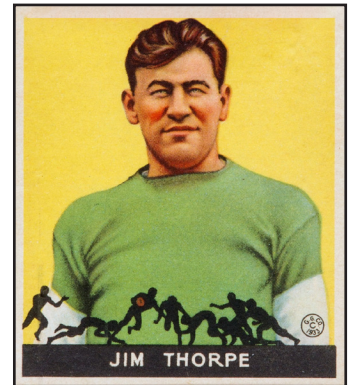
Get ready to test your sports knowledge and relive the glory of these historic moments. Put the sports milestones in the correct order to win.

Setup

- Print a copy of the [40 game cards](#) and cut them out along the solid lines.
- Using the list below, write the corresponding year on the backs of the cards. **Note:** Two events happened in the same year (1973) so include the month and year for them.

Let's play!

1. Deal three or four cards to each player, event side up.
2. The object of the game is for each player to arrange their cards (left to right) in the order in which the events occurred, from earliest to most recent. Decide in advance how much time will be allowed.
3. When everyone has settled on an order, turn the cards over and check the dates. Are they in order?
4. Players get one point for each correct placement. The easiest way to check the number of correct placements is to rearrange the cards in order. How many cards did you **not** have to move? That is your score.
5. Award an extra point if all cards are in the correct order.
6. Gather the cards, shuffle the deck, and play as many rounds as you want.
7. At the end of the game, the person with the most points wins.



Tips & Variations

- Cut a long strip of paper or piece of masking tape and write *1st*, *2nd*, *3rd*, and *4th* along it. Give one strip to each player. Have them place their card under the correct number.
- Use the cards for solitary games or one-on-one activities.
- Have players work in pairs or teams.

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1. **1912. Jim Thorpe becomes the first Native American to win Olympic gold medals.** He won in the decathlon and the pentathlon. He also played six years of Major League Baseball and 12 seasons of professional football. He was called the “World’s Greatest Athlete.”

2. **1919. Eight White Sox players are accused of fixing the World Series for money.** They lost to the Cincinnati Reds. The “Black Sox” scandal almost destroyed baseball and resulted in the players involved, including Shoeless Joe Jackson, being banned for life from the game.
3. **1920. Babe Ruth is sold to the New York Yankees from the Boston Red Sox.** This became known as the “curse of the Bambino,” as Boston wouldn’t win a World Series for 86 years.
4. **1924. Red Grange scores six touchdowns—four in 12 minutes—during a college game.** He was aptly nicknamed “The Galloping Ghost.” He went on to play professional football and was a charter member of both the College and the Pro Football Halls of Fame.
5. **1926. Gertrude Ederle is the first woman to swim across the English Channel.** She beat the existing men’s record by more than two hours.
6. **1930. Bobby Jones wins golf’s Grand Slam.** He is the only player to win all four (pre-Masters) championships in one year: the Amateur Championship at St. Andrew’s, the British Open, the U.S. Open, and the U.S. Amateur. He is considered one of the greatest golfers of all time.
7. **1936. Jesse Owens wins four Olympic gold medals in Berlin.** The Olympic medals had been awarded before the Nazis rose to power, and Owens’ victories in track and field proved Hitler’s racist theories wrong. His record of four Olympic track-and-field victories stood for almost 50 years.
8. **1938. Joe Louis KOs Max Schmeling.** Louis won in the first round. The match lasted two minutes and four seconds, and Schmeling was hospitalized afterward.
9. **1939. Lou Gehrig gives his farewell address.** Diagnosed with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig’s disease, he said farewell to baseball in a speech to fans, saying “I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the earth.”
10. **1947. The Brooklyn Dodgers sign Jackie Robinson to a Major League contract.** He was the first Black man to play Major League Baseball. Robinson won Rookie of the Year that year as well.
11. **1951. New York Giant Bobby Thomson hits the “shot heard around the world.”** Thomson hit a walk-off home run in the ninth inning, and the Giants won the NL pennant. Russ Hodges, broadcasting the game on radio, is famous for his commentary: “There’s a long drive... it’s gonna be, I believe... The Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant!”
12. **1954. Roger Bannister breaks the four-minute mile.** He did it with minimal training because he was a practicing physician. His record lasted only 46 days.
13. **April 1956. Rocky Marciano retires as heavyweight champ with an undefeated record of 49–0.** He is the only heavyweight champion who retired undefeated.
14. **October 1956. Don Larsen throws a perfect game in the Major League Baseball World Series.** In all of MLB baseball, there have been only 24 perfect games, and Larsen is the only one to do it in a World Series.
15. **1958. Soccer great Pelé scores six goals in his first World Cup.** He was only 17 at the time. In his career, he scored 762 club goals, the most of any player for over 50 years. Currently, Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo have scored more.

16. **1960. Wilma Rudolph is the first woman to win three gold medals in track and field in one Olympics.** She also broke world records in the 100, 200, and 4X100, earning her the title of “fastest woman in the world.”
17. **1961. Roger Maris hits 61 home runs, beating Babe Ruth’s record.** His record remained unbroken until 1998, when Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa both passed it.
18. **1962. Wilt Chamberlain scores 100 points in a single game.** In addition to that record, he also scored a single-season record, averaging more than 50 points per game.
19. **1964. Cassius Clay (Muhammad Ali) defeats Sonny Liston.** Clay was an 8–1 underdog. But his superior speed helped him evade most of Liston’s punches, and he was able to land combination punches at will. Liston gave up at the beginning of the seventh round.
20. **1967. The Green Bay Packers win their third straight NFL Championship in frigid conditions.** Dubbed the “Ice Bowl,” the temperature registered –13°F (–25°C) at the game’s start and –18°F (–28°C) by game’s end. With 16 seconds remaining, the Packers were two yards from the goal line and down 14–17. The field was a sheet of ice, and a running play was out of the question. Everyone expected a pass. But quarterback Bart Starr surprised everyone and dove across the goal line, and the Packers won.
21. **1968. Bob Beamon sets a new long jump record at the Mexico Olympics.** He shattered the record by almost 22 inches. His record stood for 23 years.
22. **1969. Joe Namath promises a Super Bowl win for the New York Jets.** Days before the Super Bowl, and despite being 18-point underdogs, Namath said, “We’re going to win on Sunday. I guarantee it.” They beat the Baltimore Colts 16–7.
23. **1972. The Miami Dolphins have a perfect season.** They finished 17–0, winning Super Bowl VII. No other team, before or since, has ever had a perfect season.
24. **June, 1973. Secretariat wins the Triple Crown.** He was the ninth horse to win the Triple Crown. He still holds the speed record for all three races: the Kentucky Derby, the Preakness Stakes, and the Belmont Stakes.
25. **September, 1973. Billie Jean King wins the “Battle of the Sexes” tennis match.** Bobby Riggs, formerly ranked No. 1 in men’s tennis, stated that women were inferior at the game and that he could beat any female. Billie Jean King beat Riggs in straight sets.
26. **1975. Muhammad Ali wins the “Thrilla in Manilla.”** This was the final fight between Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier III. It is still considered one of the best fights ever. It ended when Frazier’s corner conceded after the 14th round.
27. **1976. Nadia Comaneci scores the first perfect 10 in Olympic gymnastics.** Only 14 years old, she received six more perfect 10s and won three Olympic gold medals.
28. **1977. Tom Watson wins the “Duel in the Sun.”** At the 1977 British Open Championship, played under sunny skies in Scotland, Tom Watson and Jack Nicklaus moved well in front of the rest of the players, battling it out between them in a golf duel that is still considered one of the finest tournaments ever.

29. **1980. The United States defeats the Soviet Union in ice hockey during the Lake Placid Olympics.** This was referred to as the “Miracle on Ice.” The Soviet Union was the four-time Olympic champion and highly favored to win again. But the U.S. beat them 4–3, and commentator Al Michaels declared, “Do you believe in miracles? YES!”
30. **1982. U.C. Berkeley beats Stanford on the final play of the game, dubbed “The Play.”** This wild play started with a kickoff return, included five laterals, and resulted in a touchdown. The Berkeley player had to run through the Stanford marching band, which had already started marching onto the field, to reach the end zone.
31. **1985. Villanova upsets Georgetown, winning the NCAA basketball tournament.** Eighth-seeded Villanova is the lowest-seeded team ever to win an NCAA basketball tournament.
32. **1986. Maradona scores the “Goal of the Century” in the quarterfinals of the FIFA World Cup.** During the match between Argentina and England, Argentine Diego Maradona snaked his way past four English outfield players before fooling the goalkeeper with a feint and then scoring. This play was voted the “Goal of the Century” in 2002.
33. **1992. The Dream Team dominates at the Barcelona Olympics.** The Dream Team was the first time professional American basketball players were able to participate in the Olympics, although professional players from other countries had always been allowed. The rule was changed in 1989, and the Dream Team was born. They defeated their opponents by an average of more than 40 points and won Olympic gold.
34. **1994. Wayne Gretzky breaks the record for most hockey goals scored in a career.** On March 23, 1994, Gretzky scored his 802nd goal to break the record. He is nicknamed “The Great One” and is considered the greatest ice hockey player ever. His record of 1,016 goals (combining both regular season and playoffs) is said to be one that will never be broken.
35. **1995. Cal Ripken breaks Gehrig’s record for most consecutive games.** He surpassed “Iron Man” Gehrig’s streak of 2,130 consecutive games on September 6, 1995, and eventually played 2,632 games, a record that is still unbeaten.
36. **1997. Tiger Woods becomes the youngest-ever Masters champion.** At age 21, he won his first major championship by finishing 12 strokes ahead of Tom Kite.
37. **1998. Michael Jordan’s final shot as a Chicago Bull secures their third NBA Championship.** Chicago was trailing by three points in the final minute. Jordan scored twice in that final minute, including the final shot with five seconds left, leading the Bulls to victory.
38. **1999. Seventeen-year-old Serena Williams wins the U.S. Open.** This was the tennis legend’s first major tournament and quite the introduction into the world stage of tennis. She has since won 23 Grand Slam titles.
39. **2008. Michael Phelps wins eight gold medals at the Beijing Olympics.** He beat Mark Spitz’s record of seven gold medals at the Munich Olympics. Phelps is the most successful Olympian ever, with a total of 28 medals over five Olympics.
40. **2010. University of Connecticut women’s basketball team notches 90th win in a row.** This is the longest streak in NCAA Division I basketball. They repeated this feat, tying their own record again in 2017. In 42 seasons (1981–2023), their cumulative record is 1216–230.

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Eight White Sox players accused of fixing the World Series for money.

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Red Grange scores six touchdowns (4 in 12 minutes) during a college game.

Gertrude Ederle is the first woman to swim across the English Channel.

Bobby Jones wins golf's Grand Slam.

Jesse Owens wins four Olympic gold medals in Berlin.

Joe Louis KO's Max Schmeling.

Lou Gehrig gives
his farewell
address.

The Brooklyn
Dodgers sign
Jackie Robinson
to a Major
League contract.

New York Giant
Bobby Thomson
hits the "shot
heard around
the world."

Roger Bannister
breaks the four-
minute mile.

Rocky Marciano
retires as
heavyweight
champ with
an undefeated
record of 49–0.

Don Larsen
throws a perfect
game in the Major
League Baseball
World Series.

Soccer great
Pelé scores six
goals in his first
World Cup.

Wilma Rudolph is
the first woman
to win three gold
medals in track
and field in one
Olympics.

Roger Maris hits
61 home runs,
beating Babe
Ruth's record.

Wilt Chamberlain
scores 100 points
in a single game.

Cassius Clay
(Muhammad Ali)
defeats Sonny
Liston.

The Green Bay
Packers win their
third straight NFL
Championship in
frigid conditions.

Bob Beamon sets a new long-jump record at the Mexico Olympics.

Joe Namath promises a Super Bowl win for the New York Jets.

The Miami Dolphins have a perfect season.

Secretariat wins the Triple Crown.

Billie Jean King
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of the Sexes"
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Muhammad Ali
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Nadia Comaneci
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Tom Watson
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U.S. defeats the Soviet Union in ice hockey during the Lake Placid Olympics.

U.C. Berkeley beats Stanford on the final play of the game, dubbed "The Play."

Villanova upsets Georgetown, winning the NCAA basketball tournament.

Maradona scores the "Goal of the Century" during the quarter finals of the FIFA World Cup.

The Dream Team
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the Barcelona
Olympics.

Wayne Gretzky
breaks the record
for most hockey
goals scored in a
career.

Cal Ripken
breaks Gehrig's
record for most
consecutive
games.

Tiger Woods
becomes the
youngest-ever
Masters
champion.

Michael Jordan's
final shot as a
Chicago Bull
secures their
third NBA
Championship.

17-year-old
Serena Williams
wins the U.S.
Open.

Michael Phelps
wins eight gold
medals at the
Beijing Olympics.

University of
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women's
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