The Best Metal-Grabbing Games Ever: How a Tiny Nation Won the Most Medals (By Far)

Nils Lid Hjort

Department of Mathematics, University of Oslo

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Abstract. For three Winter Olympics in a row, tiny nation Norway has out-medalled everyone else, in 2026 winning 18 golds, 12 silvers, 11 bronzes, i.e. 41 medals, compared to e.g. 12 + 12 + 9 = 33 for the USA, 10 + 6 + 14 = 30 for home team Italy, 8 + 10 + 7 = 26 for powerhouse Germany, etc. Never before have we [pluralis proudiensis] or anyone else won as many as 41 medals at a Winter Olympics. But how impressive is this, really, when we factor in that the number of events has increased so drastically?

Key words: binomial process, gold and silver and bronze, national pride, tiny nation, tiny secrets, Winter Olympics

Yes, let's watch the Olympics

Figure 1: Norway at the front: Klæbo, Nyenget, Iversen, in the 50 km cross country race. Everyone else (in the 2026 Games) are lagging behind.

Indeed, the haul of metal and medals is pretty impressive, and it has demanded attention and forces for many of us, day after day, catching the most salient moments, living through the drama. For these strata of people this is not merely a nationalistic pastime, swimming in perceived passport-related glory, but a complex sociological process, where we also follow long lists of warm-hearted good-looking strong-willed competitors from other countries, with attention, admiration, and good wishes. In the Olympic Process of things I have even been on tv and on radio and on Titan to explain the inner-outer intricacies of speedskating to The People, and to dicuss various other Olympic-sized Issues.

Apparently, millions & millions followed not merely the drama of their favourite events, but also the *medal table*, from day to day, ending here; see Appendix A below for a fuller table, including correlated information using the classic *Olympic points* 7-5-4-3-2-1 scoring system. Some followers narrowly insist on 'no, gold and only gold is what matters to human beings' (bless them; though I hesitate to bless the subgroup who also claims 'and this is the only correct way, all others are wrong'). There is no official UN-IOC given way of summarising and ranking such metallic counting; I belong to the more generous segment who look with admiration also on the silvers and bronzes (and to the sure fjerdeplassen). So our friends NED have a very decent 9th place.

		gold	silver	bronze	total
1	NOR	18	12	11	41
2	USA	12	12	9	33
3	ITA	10	6	14	30
4	GER	8	10	8	26
5	JPN	5	7	12	24
6	FRA	8	9	6	23
7	SUI	6	9	8	23
8	CAN	5	7	9	21
9	NED	10	7	3	20
10	SWE	8	6	4	18

Sorting Metal and Counting Medals

Even though many of us have ecumenic and altruistic views, on our sofas, when watching the Olympics, part of the reason for getting up in the morning to watch the gruelling fifty-km cross-country race, minute by minute, remains, admittedly, hoping that Our Own do well. And, indeed, we [pluralis familiaris immodestiae et superbiae] did exceedingly well: 18 + 12 + 11 = 41 is a new Olympic Record (the previous being Norway 14 + 14 + 11 = 39 in PeyongChang, 2018).

But there's an element of apples and pears here, or, rather, smaller and medium-sized and bigger apples. The number of events has increased drastically, from 16 in Chamonix, 1924, to 34 in Innsbruck, 1964, to a high 61 at Lillehammer and Hamar, 1994, to a whooping de lux 102, 109, 116 at PyeongChang, Beijing, Milano. Surely, Thorleif Haug and Johan Grøttumsbråten and Oskar Olsen and Clas Thunberg ("Alone Against All of Norway") and Julius Skutnabb and Sonia Henie didn't quite see it coming, the unheavenly legion of new types of events, from snowboarding and halfpiping and moguls and team figure skating and massastarts (yes, that's Dutch) and mixed relays and autocorrelated biathlon events (if you're a medal contender in one event, you can win five medals) and big-air to curling for couples (married or not). Hence, winning 41 medals in 116 events (in 2026) is arguably less impressive than winning 17 medals in 16 events (in 1924).

How hard it is to win depends also, not surprisingly, on the volume and quality of your competitors. Relevant here, for analysing & interpreting the 2026 results, is the absence of Olympic powerhouse Russia (and Belarus). One may speculate about, and even form statistical models with fine-tuned parameters, to predict how many fewer Norwegian medals there would have been, in the alternative and happier counterfactual universe with the athletes also from these nations being invited. People are people, incidentally, regardless of their passports. Reading the Olympic rhetoric of 1896 and 1908 it'd be fair to say that

sanctioning segments of athletes from taking part, on the basis of where the dice of fate have let them be born, goes against the Olympic spirit.

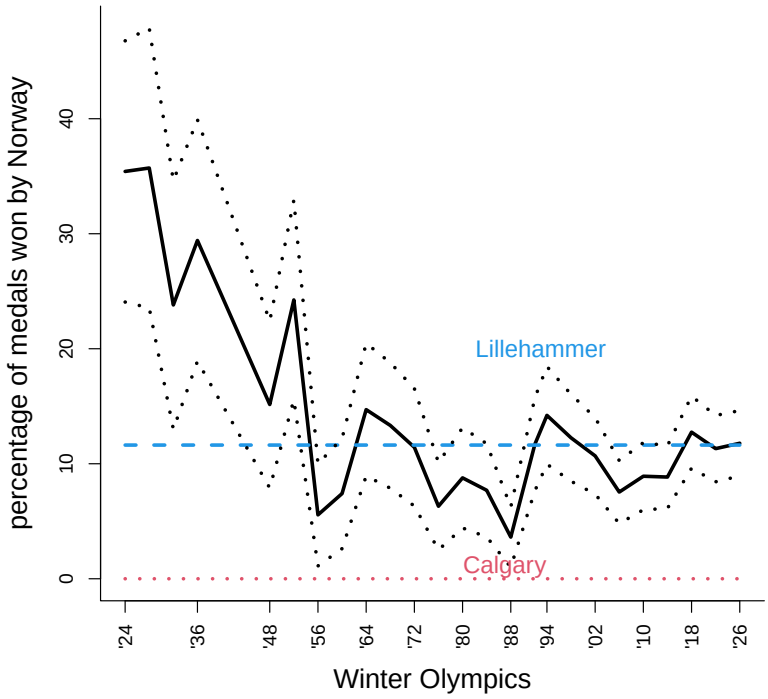

Figure 2: Medals won by Norway, in percent (black curve), through Winter Olympics history, 1924 to 2026. The horizontal line is for the post-1960 average 11.6 %, and the dotted lines indicate a 90 % confidence band.

At any rate, a statistician can at least start counting, and putting up ratios; perhaps he or she can also model the outcomes to learn about patterns and trends and influential factors (and predict the future). The counting business is in terms of gold + silver + bronze medals, and the relevant ratios, from the current Norwegian perspective, are the percentages of Norwegian medals, from Olympics to Olympics. Thus, in 2026 we won $18 + 12 + 11 = 41$ medals out of $116 \cdot 3 = 348$ medal chances (11.6 %), which is less than winning $10 + 11 + 5 = 26$ medals out of $61 \cdot 3 = 183$ medal chances (14.2 %) in Lillehammer 1994. It is similarly less than 14 medals from 37 events (13.3 %, Grenoble, 1968) and 15 medals of 34 events (14.7 %, Innsbruck, 1964). And, amazingly, Norway won 35.4 %, 35.7 %, 23.8 %, 29.4 % of the medals in the first four Winter Olympics, as well as about a quarter of the medals on home ground in 1952; see the table of Appendix A. So perhaps our 41 medals flown home from Italy isn't quite a national, or an Olympic, or a world record, after all.

A Multinomial Process Approach to Medal Counting

In addition to staring transfixedly at the medals, and their numbers, which are being used for national political reasons and thrown into various debates (should Norway ever bother to host the Olympics again, for example, or is it easiest for us to come to lots of other parties, grab most of the medals and eat most of the food, party hard, and fly home), a statistician

can sit back for a moment and contemplate the underlying processes, to check for trends, patterns, regime shifts, and assess the variability of podia. Here we may start by considering $\widehat{p} = y/(3m)$, for each Winter Olympics, the binomial proportion of y medals won by Norway out of the $3m$ medal chances over m events. I've plotted these percentages in Figure 2, along with 90 % confidence intervals. Since the very start in Chamonix 1924, the tiny nation has won 447 medals across 1279 events, i.e. the astounding 34.9 % of all medals. The horizontal blue line in the figure is however the more relevant 11.6 %, the post-1960 average.

We learn that the 2026 national data point is sufficiently fabulous, by all means, but also that it isn't a Wondrous Outlier, compared to the level achieved and kept in reasonable balance since Kuppern Moe Maier Innsbruck 1964. Reading from the band of confidence we are reminded of the Collective National Trauma of Calgary 1988 ("og så faller Geir Karlstad") and the Somewhat Painful Torino 2006 (Northug sitting at home). Largely speaking, we're not in "alt lykkes for denne regjering" terrain; Norway seems able to catch around 10 % of all medals, regardless of the colour of the government and the increasing number of pseudo-youth-ish Olympic events and even the number of skiing days at Bjørnholt. "Det er typisk norsk å være god", as explained Gro Harlem Brundtland to the world (well, in 1992).

Norway, USA, Italy are Almost Equally Wondrous Countries

Chance plays a role in these games, of course (which might be why they're called games). Even Norwegians might admit that Sturla Lægreid crossing the finishing line 0.2 seconds sooner than Émilien Jacquelin in the biathlon men sprint (enough to give him bronze and three television minutes and world wide fame, "I wish to be a role model, but I have failed") could have turned out the other way, and even the Dutch might nod to the thought that Wiklund's 0.06 loss to Rijpma-De Jong in the 1500 m is close to zero. Similarly, there were as usual a little string of dramatic half-traumatic fourth-places which very easily could have been bronzes.

With this in mind we may have another look at the overall medal table, attempting to interpret the counts as statistical sightings of underlying hard-core probabilities, and then ask whether the probabilities

$$p_{\text{NOR}}, \quad p_{\text{USA}}, \quad p_{\text{ITA}},$$

estimated at

$$\widehat{p}_{\text{NOR}} = \frac{41}{3 \cdot 116} = 11.8\,\%, \quad \widehat{p}_{\text{USA}} = \frac{33}{3 \cdot 116} = 9.5\,\%, \quad \widehat{p}_{\text{ITA}} = \frac{26}{3 \cdot 116} = 7.5\,\%,$$

are really that different. Figure 3 gives confidence curves for the three probabilities (via methodology of Schweder and Hjort, 2016, Ch. 3). So 90 % confidence intervals overlap, and there is no significant evidence that the three countries NOR, USA, ITA are really different, at heart. A standard log-likelihood ratio test for the hypothesis that the three probabilities are equal has a non-significant p-value of 0.153.

The Tiny Country's Tiny Secrets

Amazingly, even Big Media in other countries are writing about the Norwegian medal catching abilities, offering tentative explanations and speculative factors behind the heist (and,

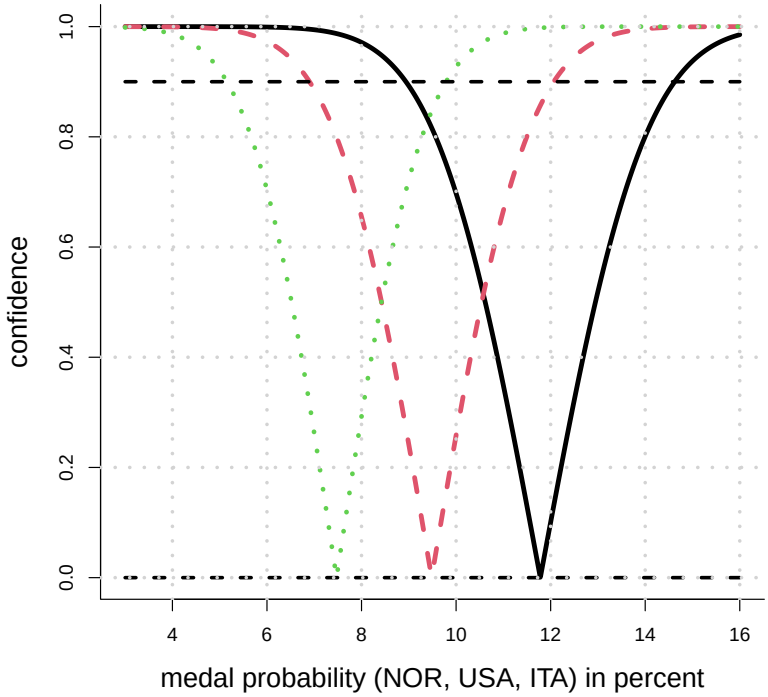

Figure 3: Confidence curves for the three medal winning probabilities, for Norway, for Sambandsstatene, for Italy, with point estimates 11.8 %, 9.5 %, 7.5 %. 90 percent confidence intervals can be read off via the horizontal line. We learn that the three countries aren't that different, after all, as confidence intervals overlap.

interestingly, with most of the headlines telling their readers that the articles give them The Norwegian Secrets, which means we need to develop New Secrets for the coming Olympics). You may check The Guardian's Norse Code theories (egalitarian society, the team experience, no jerks), TIME's crushing theories (working hard, let the children play, bosses not being gorillas, never asking a fellow human being how much she or he weighs, apparently), CNN's yet further secrets (winning by focusing on not focusing on winning, which sounds difficult, but we manage), etc.

Yes, there's something there, in these Revealed Secrets, which are of course not secrets but just plain facts of Norwegian habits, instincts, lives. There are a couple of other dimensions to point to. Yes, we still manage to be a decently egalitarian society, where we might bump into the king or the finance minister or Martine Ripsrud while skiing or in the bookshop and say 'hei' and we don't weaponise our teachers and students. After all, we belong to *The Almost Nearly Perfect People* (see Booth, 2014). These (remaining) egalitarian aspects are also reflected in how most of us look at sports. In various other societies, we learn by our anthropological tourist studies, there's somehow a bigger sociological distance between the top athletes and the mainstream people, and between the mainstreamers and say the top academics, than in Norway. Reading Schwanitz and his fascinating *Bildung. Alles, was man wissen muß*, for example, teaches us what we're supposed to know, to have a good Bildung in life – but also, intriguingly, we're being told what we should rather not know ("Was man nicht wissen sollte"). We should rather *not* know about the personal records of

Dutch and Soviet speedskaters from the 1970ies and 1980ies, and neither about Eggen vs. Tiainen and Vedenin, or Alsgaard vs. Teichmann, or Kulizhnikov vs. Wotherspoon (I take it), since that's conceivably about as bad a public stain on your personality as paying too much attention to sladreblader and die Regenbogepresse and paparazzi reports.

Figure 4: How to win three Olympic medals: be good; be eager; do your homework; try different sports (e.g. orienteering and skating); take your studies seriously; graciously and smilingly allow your competitors to win (occasionally). She also has the Zivilcourage to say (VG, 23/ii/2026), contrary to public perception and cultural expectation, that she values her 2 silvers and 1 bronze more than the 1 gold she didn't win.

But we are different (apparently), and we dare to be. It's considered perfectly acceptable, even for the intellectuals and for academics, to take a serious interest in the sociology, history, and current nerdy details of sports, and perhaps in the Winter Olympics sports and details in particular. Read Knausgård's heart-warming essay on the secrets of speedskating, read Thor Gotaas, read Eldar Høidal, read Rune Slagstad. Perhaps the Svenska Akademien and the rest of the literary world are utterly surprised and bewildered when they encounter forty pages of speedskating details in the middle of Dag Solstad's Nordisk Råds Litteraturpris winning novel. We're not.

Other Statistics-Olympic Perspectives

I suppose I've managed to flag my above-average interest in the Winter Olympics and the accompanying host of correlated issues and themes. Here are just a few further statistics related topics worthy of over-coffee conversations (along with what in academia is called 'further thought').

A. There is much talk of and posting of opinions and even memes along the path of 'With a US population sixty times that of Norway, why do they still beat us', supplemented by medals per capita tables, etc. Ingar Kiplesund's Norwegian long jump record is 8,21 m,

as we know, which must correspond to a jump of length 499 m, clearly more impressive than Powell's so-called world record of a mere 8,95 m.

Also, we're a Tiny Nation, with a healthy production of metal per capita, but occasionally we're being Olympically soundly outperformed by perhaps Liechtenstein, or Luxembourg, in the medal-per-capita event. In 2018, Liechtenstein had 1 medal for 37,531 inhabitans; Norway, with her population being then 5,195,921 / 37,531 = 138.443 times bigger, captured only a modest 39 medals.

So what matters, taking sizes of populations seriously, would be the *participation rates* – how many high-level skiers are there, in the US, in Sweden, Finland, Russia, compared to the Norwegian numbers? Tables constructed from such numbers (which are not accurate, but which could be tentatively estimated) would have some interest. I do think Norway would still win, though, even when taking participation numbers into account. See Hjort (2016a) for mathematics and statistics pertaining to such themes, there discussed for the world of top chess players; there are basically *two* crucical factors at work, the participation n and the variance σ^2, when forming basic predictions of how clever the very most clever are. So different nations would by tradition naturally foster higher σ than others, even when taking participation into account.

B. When discussing the naturally occurring questions of why and how Norway apparently beat everyone else, there are various paths to uncovering the contributing factors. One is on statistical top level – let's do logistic regressions, for one nation at the time, or multiple nations. So let's find data for BNP, education level, Gini indexes of egalitarianism, military spending, corruption level, budgets for sports, scores for laziness and cultural upbringing. These covariates $x_1, \ldots, x_p$ can then be thrown to a statistical analyser, via

$$p(x_1, \ldots, x_p) = \frac{\exp(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \cdots + \beta_p x_p)}{1 + \exp(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \cdots + \beta_p x_p)}$$

modelling the percent of medals captured. Such exercises would be feasible (just get the numbers) and informative – I actually tried this with x taken to be the *democracy scores* for nations, since I had these in my computer, via the Cunen, Hjort, Nygård (2020) peace research project. Surprise: it didn't matter at all; the relevant β was close to zero.

These endeavours would clearly not be sufficient, however; one must visit the lower levels, closer to the ground; how sports are organised, with what levels of trainers and coaches, with which mechanisms and incitements to foster not merely high level outcomes, but the very highest. Just as Norwegian teachers go to Finland to check out the hows and whys of the reportedly very best school teachers in Europe, before coming home to implement some of their ideas, other sports administrators could come to Norway to check us out. But, again, our tiny nation's tiny secrets are not really secrets.

C. This has clearly been the Worst Ever Winter Olympics for Norway. The number of events where we didn't win a single medal has never been so high. Checking golds only shows that we won a mere 18 golds in 116 events, which means 98/116 = 84.5 % non-NOR-golds. In 1924 there were 12/16 = 75.0 % non-NOR-golds. This doesn't go quite as far as 'everything can be proven by statistics' or to Twain's front door of all the Lies, Damned Lies, and Statistics we can hurl in the general Olympic direction of things, but is a neutral reminder that we ought to concentrate our statistical efforts (counting, tableing, analysing, relating, comparing, modelling, predicting) on the more vital questions, as driven by context.

D. I'm not particularly fond of the incessant focus on the Medals and Only the Medals, and dislike the implied and often explicit notion of The Horrible Painful For Ever Embarrassing fourth place ('den sure fjerdeplassen' has about hundred thousand google hits). There should be a special Norwegian Wood Medal for the exceedingly honorable 4th place, and I humbly ask the United Nations and the IOC to see to it that this is institutionalised within the 2034 Utah Olympics. At any rate, we can count them!, and my possible favourite, qua statistical long-term Olympic summary, is the notion of Olympic Points: 7-5-4-3-2-1 for gold-silver-bronze-4-5-6. Such a table can be seen and contemplated in Appendix A below, with data found via Erik Helmersen's diligent efforts. I also like the Fibonacci scale 13-8-5-3-2-1; people in their homes can indeed try out different scales, given the tables of outcomes, and learn about the quite high Spearman correlation coefficients across the different tables.

E. Rather than counting medals for absolutely all of the events (including what is sometimes called 'circus events'), one may of course form separate medal tables for the core long-standing events. I've spent some nerdish half-hours collecting and summarising data, Olympics for Olympics, for the mulitiple events of long-track speedskating, with medals for the different nations, through history 1924–2026, men and ladies (where our erratic friend AI simply couldn't do it). See Appendixes C and D.

F. High-level sophisticated statistics also famously comes into play when the more ambitious nations select their athletes, to maximise medal chances given the strict IOC quotas. Everyone in the Netherlands know about *the matrix*, associated with complicated prediction algorithms.

Figure 5: A tiny subset of an educated household's shelves with speedskating history, here associated with various Olympic Gold Winners: Friesinger, Grishin, Heiden, Holum, Jansen, Keller, LeMay Doan, Postma, Rosa.

Note

A plagiarism checker, should such algorithms take any interest, will be able to find that some of the prose used in this note indeed can be found in my FocuStat Blog Post from 2018, written up after the Beijing Olympics. The self-plagiarism component is moderate to low, though, as I've thorougly dived into and organised more data, worked through new perspectives, etc., and added more Olympic prose.

Thanks

I'm grateful to all the 2922 participants in the 2026 Olympics – and, by backwards induction, to the participants of all previous Winter Olympics (from the 2800 in Sochi 2014, to the 1738 in Lillehammer and Hamar 1994, the 1094 in Innsbruck 1964, the 494 in Oslo 1952, and all the 292 in Chamonix 1924). I also appreciate that science journalists and the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation NRK apparently read our FocuStat Blog Posts, with my 2 x 1000 m piece leading to appearances in Abels Tårn (where I was properly starstrøkked) and in Titan. For the 2026 Games specifically I applaud NRK's efforts, to bring the events and also the grander perspectives to the people. Finally, a vigorous nod ought to be given to the stimulating and variegated contributions from flocks of eager people in the *Forum for Skøyehistorie* at Facebook, where we watch and comment and discuss and shout and sigh (and disagree) on a day-by-day basis during the bigger championships.

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Appendix A: Medals & Olympic Points

Here I list nations, sorted with respect to medals won, giving also the Olympic Points to the right, using the historically informed 7-5-4-3-2-1 scale, along with the consequent spearmanny well correlated rank list. AIN is the *athlètes individuels neutres* category, all to be admired for competing under exceedingly difficult circumstances, both at home and here.

		gold	silver	bronze	total	OP	ranking
1	NOR	18	12	11	41	295.0	1
2	USA	12	12	9	33	254.5	2
3	ITA	10	6	14	30	220.0	3
4	GER	8	10	8	26	192.0	4
5	JPN	5	7	12	24	145.5	9
6	FRA	8	9	6	23	178.5	5
7	SUI	6	9	8	23	161.0	6
8	CAN	5	7	9	21	152.0	6
9	NED	10	7	3	20	146.0	8
10	SWE	8	6	4	18	122.5	11
11	AUT	5	8	5	18	131.0	10
12	CHN	5	4	6	15	113.0	12
13	KOR	3	4	3	10	65.0	13
14	AUS	3	2	1	6	48.0	15
15	FIN	0	1	5	6	44.0	16
16	GBR	3	1	1	5	53.0	14
17	CZE	2	2	1	5	38.0	17
18	SLO	2	1	1	4	29.0	18
19	POL	0	3	1	4	28.0	19
20	ESP	1	0	2	3	17.0	21
21	NZL	0	2	1	3	16.0	22
22	LAT	0	1	1	2	22.0	20
23	BUL	0	0	2	2	11.0	25
24	BRA	1	0	0	1	7.0	28
	KAZ	1	0	0	1	8.0	26
26	DEN	0	1	0	1	5.0	30
	EST	0	1	0	1	6.0	29
	GEO	0	1	0	1	8.0	26
	AIN	0	1	0	1	13.0	23
29	BEL	0	0	1	1	12.0	24
	SVK					3.0	31
	HUN					3.0	31
	ROM					2.0	33
	UKR					2.0	33
	LIT					1.0	35
total:		116	118	115	349		2552

Appendix B: The Norwegian Medal Table, 1924 to 2026

The table gives for each Olympics the number of events; then the metal count (with total); followed by the number of nations taking part; and the percent of medals won by Norwegian athletes.

		ev	g	s	b	tot	nations	percent
Chamonix	1924	16	4	7	6	17	16	35.4
St Moritz	1928	14	6	4	5	15	25	35.7
Lake Placid	1932	14	3	4	3	10	17	23.8
Garmisch	1936	17	7	5	3	15	28	29.4
St Moritz	1948	22	4	3	3	10	28	15.2
Oslo	1952	22	7	3	6	16	30	24.2
Cortina	1956	24	2	1	1	4	32	5.6
Squaw Valley	1960	27	3	3	0	6	30	7.4
Innsbruck	1964	34	3	6	6	15	36	14.7
Grenoble	1968	35	6	6	2	14	37	13.3
Sapporo	1972	35	2	5	5	12	35	11.4
Innsbruck	1976	37	3	3	1	7	37	6.3
Lake Placid	1980	38	1	3	6	10	37	8.8
Sarajevo	1984	39	3	2	4	9	49	7.7
Calgary	1988	46	0	3	2	5	57	3.6
Albertville	1992	57	9	6	5	20	64	11.7
Lillehammer	1994	61	10	11	5	26	67	14.2
Nagano	1998	68	10	10	6	25	72	12.3
Salt Lake Placid	2002	78	13	5	7	25	78	10.7
Torino	2006	84	2	8	9	19	80	7.5
Vancouver	2010	86	9	8	6	23	82	8.9
Sochi	2014	98	11	5	10	26	88	8.8
PyeongChang	2018	102	14	14	11	39	92	12.7
Beijing	2022	109	16	8	13	37	91	11.3
Milano Cortina	2026	116	18	12	11	41	92	11.8

Appendix C: medal counts for speedskating, 1924-2026

I now focus on the iconic classic events of long-track speedskating, through Olympic history. The table on the next pages gives *all medals won*, for men and ladies (the term used by the ISU over hundred years, but now apparently abandoned, for the more prosaic 'women'). Readers are advised to print out my report and then to pencil in vertical bars.

Medals have been won by *19 nations* for the men and *17 nations* for the ladies. As we recall, Han Pil-hwa of North Korea won a 3k silver in 1964, and for statistical simplicity I've pushed her under KOR in this table (though see Appendix D). I've also lumped together BRD and DDR with their GER.

The political history of states is reflected here: CCCP took part from 1956 to 1988, after which RUS and BLR and KAZ after an interregnum period came into the tables. Medals have exploded, if not in sizes then in numbers: for 1924–1956, there were *4 events* (12 medals to fight for); then ladies were let in in 1960, and with the addition of *team pursuit* since 2006 and *mass start* since 2018, there are now an astounding *14 events* (42 medals to fight for, each Olympics).

medal table for the speedskating men:

	nor	ned	usa	fin	swe	can	aut	sov	ger	jpn	kor	rus	blr	bel	ita	pol	chn	cze	den
	85	86	45	17	18	20	3	28	10	12	16	7	2	3	8	3	5	2	1
1924	6		1	6															
1928	6		1	4															
1932	2		5			5													
1936	6		1	4			1												
1948	6		2	2	3														
1952	6	3	2		1	1													
1956	2			1	2			7											
1960	3	1	1		1			6											
1964	7	1	1		1			3											
1968	4	4	1		2				1										
1972	4	4			2			1	1										
1976	4	5	2					4											
1980	6	2	5			1		2											
1984	1				2	3		4	2	1									
1988		4	1		2		2	2	3	1									
1992	5	4							2	3	1								
1994	5	4	1								1	3	1						
1998	1	9				2				2				1					
2002	2	6	5						1	1									
2006		5	7			1					1	1			3				
2010	1	4	4			1				2	4	2							
2014		13				2				1						2			
2018	4	7				2					5			1	1		1		
2022	3	5	1		2	1				1	4	1		1	1		1		
2026	1	5	4			1									3	1	3	2	1

medal table for the speedskating women:

	nor	ned	usa	fin	swe	can	aut	sov	ger	jpn	kor	rus	ita	pol	chn	cze	kaz
	5	60	33	2	0	27	3	30	61	17	5	9	4	4	7	7	1
1960			1	1				6	2					2			
1964			2					10			1						
1968		5	4	1				2									
1972		5	4					2	1								
1976	1		4			1		5	1								
1980	1	2	3					2	4								
1984								3	9								
1988		3	2						10								
1992			2				1		9	1					2		
1994			2			1	2		5	1		2			1		
1998		2	2			3			6	1							1
2002		2	3			3			7								
2006		4				7			3			2			2		
2010		3				4			4	1	1			1	1	3	
2014		10									1	3		1	1	2	
2018		9	1							6	2	1				2	
2022		7	2			4				4		1	2			1	
2026	3	8	1			4				3			2				

Appendix D: Speedskating medals, men + ladies

Here I again single out long-track speedskating for scrutiny, with accumulated numbers of medals, through Olympic history 1924–2026.

When Jorrit Bergsma won the mass start, with his characteristic haircut, amazingly securing his fourth medal, he also ended Hundred Years of Norwegian Male Dominance; NED 86 > NOR 85. Among other notable aspects here are these. (i) Egalitarian Norway has not really minded enough about the women, who had only a very modest 2 before Wiklund now earned 3 more. (ii) Sweden, where art thou? Zero ladies medals, and even though your men are occasionally fabulous (particularly in the 10k), we need more of you. (iii) I've lumped together BRD, DDR, GER. Carefully looking through 25 wikipedia articles (which I did to manually harvest the data for Appendixes C and D), one is reminded of the supreme dominance of the DDR skateresses, over many years. (iv) We do hope you became and remain a national hero of the DPRK, Han Pil-hwa, with your silver from 1964, but we long for your comrades: come and take part. (v) Good for you, Viktor Thorup, impressive silver; next time bring also your wife, this year's European Champion in that event. (vi) So it's 3 + 0 = 3 for BEL, and perhaps you abstained from winning the 5k, Sandrine Tas, just out of politeness to your NED pairmate.

```
NED  86 + 60 = 146
NOR  85 +  5 =  90
USA  45 + 33 =  78
GER  10 + 61 =  71
SOV  28 + 30 =  58

CAN  20 + 27 =  47
JPN  12 + 17 =  29
KOR  16 +  4 =  20
FIN  17 +  2 =  19
SWE  18 +  0 =  18

RUS   7 +  9 =  16
ITA   8 +  4 =  12
CHN   5 +  7 =  12
CZE   2 +  7 =   9
POL   3 +  4 =   7

AUT   3 +  3 =   6
BEL   3 +  0 =   3
BLR   2 +  0 =   2
NKR   0 +  1 =   1
KAZ   0 +  1 =   1
DEN   1 +  0 =   1
```

Why peace, not war? The Olympics is a Peace Project, perhaps not since Ancient Greece 776 b.C. but in principle at least since 1896 a.C. There are setbacks and disappointments and boycotts and polarisation and politics and sanctions against innocent fine athletes, who perhaps have been born with the wrong passport.

It is hopeless and we don't give in, as Norway's national poet Jan Erik Vold writes, an author also of speedskating poetry, a two-word combination making perfect sense in Norway if not in Andorra or Zimbabwe – but we're getting there. We need more time.

We also need the cultural continuity, across and beyond the four-year cycles. Yes, we do need snow and ice and fabulous athletes who apparently need their medals. By extension the world also needs *recruitment*, in the broadest sense. Perhaps more important than young clever people's dreams of *becoming* Olympians is other young clever boys and girls and their dreams *about* Olympics. Hello, young nerdy boys and girls, go for it, immerse yourselves, do watching and noting and comparisons and tables and figures and of course follow the laptimes of speedskating – and your lives will be meaningful and good. Yes, admittedly, even Solstad refers to these matters as 'empty feelings', but they build character and metaphors and literary instincts and poetry and fascination and spell-binding and finess the speculative instincts we're born with (which is helpful when you attempt to fall in love or do your homework). And, indeed, albeit slowly, to friendships and peace.

Smågutter tar Gullmerket på ski

så det fyker!

9-åring med 1000 km bare i vinter

Høyeste utmerkelse til 12-åring fem år på rad

I dag skal vi rope et lite hurra for to gutter: 9 år gamle Nils Lid Hjort i Slemdalsveien, og Petter Nielsen Berg, Meltzers gate, 12 år gammel. De kjenner ikke hverandre. Men de har ett til felles: De elsker å gå på ski, og de er bortimot Oslo-mestere i å ta lange turer om vinteren.

— Fortsettes 13. side —

Til høyre: Nils med sine tre gullmerker.

Petter med fem gullmerker.

Norsk «Peer

turné til

Vil være av stor interesse

publikum, mener regiøsse

Som har tilbud om flere

Fra vår New York-korrespondent BENT VANBERG

NEW YORK i dag.

«Haugtussa»!

Figure 6: 9-åring med 1000 km på ski bare i vinter! Front page of Dagbladet (once upon a time).