

The Australian Women's Register

Entry type: Person
Entry ID: IMP0176

Boyle, Raelene Ann

(1951 -)

Born 24 June, 1951, Melbourne Victoria Australia

Occupation Commonwealth or Empire Games Gold Medalist, Olympian, Track and Field Athlete

Summary

Raelene Boyle represented Australia at four Olympic games as a sprinter. She was appointed a Member of the British Empire on 15 June 1974 for services to athletics, and was named ABC Sportsperson of the Year in 1974. Named by the National Trust as one of '100 Living Treasures in 1998', Raelene Boyle was an Olympic torchbearer at the Opening Ceremony of the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000.

Details

Raelene Boyle, daughter of Gilbert MacDonald and Irene Joy (née Wilkinson) Boyle was educated at Coburg High School. At 17 years of age she was selected to represent Australia in the 1968 Mexico City Olympics. She won a silver medal in the 200-metre sprint and ran fourth in the 100m. She also won medals at the Munich (1972) and the Montreal (1976) Olympics. She did not complete in the 1980 Moscow Olympics.

At the Montreal Games in 1976, Raelene Boyle was the first Australian woman to be given the honour of carrying the Australian flag into the opening ceremony. She finished fourth in the 100 metre final after a slow start and was disqualified for a false start in the 200 metre semi-final. Raelene Boyle had been favourite to win the gold medal in her favourite event. The electronic starting device registered a clean start, but the starter, Jack Fisher, recalled the athletes. He claimed Boyle had jumped the gun. Film of the incident later showed she hadn't – even though she did move her shoulders.

Raelene Boyle completed in the Edinburgh (1970), Christchurch (1974), Edmonton (1978) and at Brisbane (1982) Commonwealth Games. After retiring from competitive athletics, she completed a horticulture course at the Victorian College of Agriculture and Horticulture (Burnley) and worked as a landscape gardener for the then Prahran Council. She has also been involved with coaching and television commentary.

Raelene Boyle was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1996 and has since assisted in raising awareness of the disease, becoming a founding member of Sporting Chance Cancer Foundation in 1997.

Events

1968 - 1968

Athletics – 200m Sprint Event

1972 - 1972

Athletics – 100m and 200m sprint events

1976 - 1976

2007 - 2007

Appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM)

1970 - 1970

Athletics – 100m and 200m, 4 x 100m Relay

1974 - 1974

Athletics – 100m and 200m, 4 x 100m Relay

1982 - 1982

Athletics – 400m

2001 - 2001

Awarded a Centenary Medal 'for service to Australian society through the sport of athletics'

2000 - 2000

Awarded an Australian Sports Medal for 'outstanding contribution as a competitor (Athletics)'

1974 - 1974

Awarded The Order of the British Empire – Member (Civil) (Imperial) 'in recognition of service to the sport of athletics'

Published resources

Book

Encyclopedia of Australia Sport, Shepherd, Jim, 1980

Australia at the Olympics, Andrews, Malcolm, 2000

Resource Section

Raelene Boyle,

<http://www.national.com.au/Community/0|||2173||00.html>

Edited Book

Monash Biographical Dictionary of 20th Century Australia, Arnold, John and Morris, Deirdre, 1994

Who's Who in Australia 2002, Herd, Margaret, 2002

Newspaper Article

On the Boyle, Reed, Ron, 2003

Resource

Australia at the Games, Australian Olympic Committee, 2006,

<http://corporate.olympics.com.au/index.cfm?p=25>

Trove, National Library of Australia, 2009

Site Exhibition

She's Game: Women Making Australian Sporting History, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2007,

<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/sg/sport-home.html>

Faith, Hope and Charity Australian Women and Imperial Honours: 1901-1989, Australian Women's Archives Project, 2003,

<http://www.womenaustralia.info/exhib/honours/honours.html>

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