Ukrainian sports are quite well developed and some Ukrainian athletes rank with the world stars. Evidence of this is found in the Olympic results. It can be said that Ukraine's participation in the world Olympic movement started in 1894, when a 56-year-old Ukrainian General by the name of Oleksii Butovsky, born in the village of piatybortsi, Poltava Gubernia, visited Paris to attend the Athletic Congress, where he became one of the founding members of the Movement. Another Ukrainian found himself on the Committee a hundred years later. In 1994 Valerii Borzov, the famous sprinter of the 1970s, was elected member of the IOC.

In 1994 Independent Ukraine sent its national team to vie in the Games for the first time. At the 17th Winter Games in Lilehammer, young figure skater Oksana Baiul went down into Olympic history, winning the first gold medal for Ukraine.

The Olympic victories of Ukrainian athletes are quite impressive: 400 trophies, including 180 gold medals. By its athletic attainments over the past 40 years Ukraine ranks with the world's 20 leading Olympic countries. Among the Olympic champions are gymnasts V. Chukaryn, L. Latynina, M. Horokhovska, B. Shakhlin; rowers V. Morozov, O. Shaparenko, S. Chukhrai; yatsman V. Mankin; track-and-field athletes V. Borzov, V. Holubnychy, O. Bryzhina, Yu. Siedykh; wrestlers O. Kolchynsky, S. Bielohlazov; weightlifter L. Zhabotynsky; handball players L. Karlova, Z. Turchyna; volleyball players Yu. Poliakov, Yu. Venherovsky; water polo players O. Barkalov, and many others.

Among the best known team athletes are the Kyiv Dynamo soccer players who in 1975 and 1986, led by noted coach V. Lobanovsky, took the European Cup Holders' Cup. Practically every tournament was won for almost 20 years on end by the Kyiv Spartak handball team, led by I. Turchyn. Great success was achieved by women's basketball team winning the 1995 European Championship. The Kyiv Budivelnyk basketball, Sokil hockey and Zaporizhia's Orbita volleyball teams enjoy constant popularity with their fans.

The Ukrainian school of calisthenics is recognized the world over. At different periods I. Deriuhina, O. Tymosheriko, O. Skaldina, K. Serebrianska, O. Vitrychenko and others won world and European championships.

Also at different periods chess players V. Ivanchuk, O. Biliavsky, O. Romanyshyn; checkers players A. Hantvarh, O. Chyzhov, and tennis player A. Medvediev were named among the worlds 10 Best. S. Bubka, this world-famous pole vaulter who was the first in Ukraine to receive the title "Merited Master of Sport of Ukraine" followed

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by that of "Master of Sport, International Class" is the holder of 35 world records the last being registered in 1994 when he chalked up 6.14 m in Italy.

A number of prominent sportsmen came from the Ukrainian diaspora, among them hockey players T. Sawchuk and D. Hawerchuk, and the American football legend W. Chizhowicz.

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