



Wenlock and Mandeville, the mascots for the 2012 Olympic Games in London

## Wenlock and Mandeville – Mascots for 2012

London 2012 has launched its Olympic and Paralympic mascots with a tribute to Olympic history. Named Wenlock and Mandeville, they highlight the important role played by the Wenlock Olympian Games in the inspiration of de Coubertin and the work of Sir Ludwig Guttman and the Stoke Mandeville games in developing sport for those with disabilities.

The mascots were unveiled during a popular current affairs and entertainment programme on BBC Television. The prototypes were fashioned from steel used in construction of the Olympic stadium itself.

The work of London creative agency Iris, they have been deliberately aimed at a young audience and Children's Laureate Michael Morpurgo has written an accompanying book to introduce them. The mascots will begin a two year journey to inspire interest in the games and will also interact online.

"We've created our mascots for children."<sup>1</sup> said London 2012 Chairman Lord Coe. "They will connect

young people with sport and tell the story of our proud Olympic and Paralympic history."

The controversial design is set to polarise. Media reaction was critical. The designs were said to be "a calamity and patronising"<sup>2</sup> and "Faster, Higher, Stronger, Tackier."<sup>3</sup>

The London 2012 logo had provoked a similar reaction but mascots have always been controversial. Atlanta's Izzy was not universally well received and Seoul's tiger Hodori ran into copyright problems because of its similarity to a Kellogg's corporate logo.<sup>4</sup>

Philip Barker

### References

- 1 London 2012 Media Release – May 19<sup>th</sup> 2010
- 2 *Daily Telegraph* – May 19<sup>th</sup> 2010
- 3 *The Independent* – May 20<sup>th</sup> 2010
- 4 Park Seh Jik. *The Seoul Olympics - The Inside Story*. London 1991.