

ACT 1: OPENING CEREMONIESScene 1) Lord of the Olympic Rings

25 ATHLETE performers are on the field warming up as the audience meanders in. Outlining the perimeter are 25 Styrofoam “pool noodle” flotation devices in the five Olympic colours (blue, red, green, yellow, black); five noodles per colour. A Commentators’ desk is set on the north position of the perimeter and a small podium housing the Olympic beacon to be “lit” by the Olympic flame resides nearby. On a musical cue the ATHLETES form five groups of five and start moving their bodies in unison forming various athletic statuesque poses.

VOICEOVER The World is changed...
 I can feel it in my water...
 I can smell it in my cleats...
 Much that once was...is lost.

The music shifts and the ATHLETES each grab a pool noodle and form five vertical columns – each column dedicated to one country and colour in the following order from stage right to left: GREECE (blue), BRITAIN (yellow), FRANCE (red), ITALY x2 (green and black). PROSPERO, wielding his “Olympic” staff, enters with PUCK from stage right and as they do so the ATHLETES go on bended knee facing them. Over the next VOICEOVER bit, PROSPERO and PUCK walk through the columns of ATHLETES, then turn and stand facing them.

It all began when the Olympic Rings of Power were made by the good lord Prospero. Five they were in number, forged in the fires of Mount Olympus and given to the greatest athletes in the Teams of Men.

As the VOICEOVER comes to each country, their columns stand and raise their pool noodles bended in the shape of a ring (circle).

First Ring to Greece on A Midsummer Night’s Dream;

GREECE stands and raise their blue pool noodles.

Second to Britain in Windsor where the Wives are Merry;

BRITAIN stands and raise their yellow pool noodles.

Third to France where All’s Well That Ends Well;

FRANCE stands and raise their red pool noodles.

And Fourth and Fifth to the Merchants of Italy and their
Much Ado about Nothing.

*The two columns of ITALY stand and raise their green and black
noodles respectively.*

But they were all of them deceived...for another Ring
was made.

*DUKE FREDERICK emerges from stage left and all ATHLETES go
on bended knee to face him. FREDERICK walks through the
columns, turns, and faces the ATHLETES.*

The dark lord Frederick forged in secret a Master Ring
to control all others and usurp his brother.

*DUKE FREDERICK laughs maniacally as PROSPERO and PUCK
exit stage left.*

And into this Ring he poured his cruelty, his malice, and
his will to dominate all endorsement contracts.

*During this next section, the five columns scatter and re-form into
five new groups, each group containing an ATHLETE holding a
different coloured pool noodle, and each group bend their noodles
into rings to form giant Olympic Ring symbols.*

Five Rings to rule them all,
Five Rings to find them,
Five Rings to train them all,
And in Olympia bind them.
In the land of Athens where you can judges' bribe.

ATHLETES My preciousssss.

*The Upstart Crow Sports Network (UCSN) theme begins as the
ATHLETES scatter and exit. JONSON and FALSTAFF enter to take
their positions behind the Commentators' desk. JONSON is the
knowledgeable sports-savvy commentator who often plays "straight
man" to FALSTAFF's obnoxious and overbearing character.*

Scene 2) March of the Athletes

FALSTAFF You're watching Upstart Crow Sports Network,
Toronto's only Elizabethan sports station. If you're not
watching us, it ain't iambic pentameter, folks. Welcome

to UCSN's live coverage of the '04 Elizabethan Olympics in Athens, Greece. I'm Jack Falstaff and joining me at the anchor desk today is...

JONSON Ben Jonson.

FALSTAFF Good to have you back, Ben.

JONSON I'm sure it is, Sir John. I'm clean-shaven and looking every bit the announcer.

FALSTAFF By the hot-blooded gods, after that drug scandal in Korea, I never thought I'd see Ben Johnson involved with sports again.

JONSON I...uh...what do you mean by drugs?

FALSTAFF You kids out there, just say "no" to drugs. You know, back when I used to coach young Prince Hal, we didn't need no steroids or whatever witch's brew they're pushing these days; because remember, kids, there's no "eye of newt" in "team."

JONSON I'm not sure what you're talking about... steroids? I'm Ben Jonson...the playwright? Volpone? The Alchemist? Numerous court masques?

FALSTAFF Masks? Don't get me started. All these fancy-pants Europeans wearing facemasks while fencing! Makes ya sick.

JONSON Jack, that's masques with a "Q..."

FALSTAFF Queue! Great, now they're lining up to get 'em!!! You know, back in my day, you didn't mind getting a few dueling scars – all the ladies loved 'em – as long as you still had one good eyeball...

JONSON You don't want to talk to me about dueling.

FALSTAFF Ah...this place has gone to the dogs. And remember folks, when night-dogs run, all sorts of deer are chased!

CALIBEAR – half Caliban and half teddy bear – enters.

JONSON Speaking of animals, let's take a moment to introduce

our Olympic mascot. Ladies and Gentlemen, the son of Sycorax: the delightful Calibear.

FALSTAFF What do you have to say, Calibear?

CALIBEAR gives them the finger.

JONSON *(beat)* I think he's saying we're number one...

FALSTAFF After all the trouble we had getting that bloody costume, you can bet we'll be seeing Calibear again.

JONSON Before we continue, we'd like to thank the sponsors of this year's Olympics: the Greek General Confederation of Labour: "At the Confederation of Labour, we're not strike happy, we're just opportunistic."

FALSTAFF And these Olympics are also brought to you by Callipho's International House of Souvlaki: "Bringing you meat on a stick, since Hercules was just a glint in Zeus' eye."

JONSON We're coming to you live from the Olympic Stadium in Athens. Folks, we apologize for the lack of roof, but we're still better off than the big 'O' in Montreal.*

Cue Opening Ceremony music.

Well, it looks like we're ready to go to back to the opening ceremonies and The March of the Athletes!

GREECE enters.

And here comes the Greek delegation. As founding nation of the Olympic Games, they always lead the parade, but as host country, they're supposed to be last. I guess the Greeks like both ends.

FRANCE enters.

And here comes the French team sponsored by Gauloises cigarettes. Just keep them outside folks, and there won't be any trouble. Vous comprenez mes ami?

* Referring to Olympic Stadium in Montreal, Canada, and its reputation as being a declining facility.