

Ancient olympics essay



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Contents

- Mention Page

The Origins and History of the Ancient Olympics

Introduction

The first antediluvian Olympic Games can be traced back to 776 B. C and were celebrated until 393 A. D (Young, 1987) . The Games continued for 12 centuries and were dedicated to Olympic Gods. Olympia became the site of these historic antediluvian games that sowed the seeds for the most desired featuring international event of modern times, the Modern Olympics. The site of the Ancient Olympics is located in the western portion of Peloponnese. Harmonizing to Greek mythology, Peloponnese is the island of Pelops, the Founder of the Olympic Games (Young, 1987) .

Olympia, in Greece is the sanctuary site for the ancient Grecian Gods. The cardinal portion of Olympia was dominated by the olympian temple of Zeus. The ancient games enjoyed a secular tradition and aimed at procuring good dealings between the metropoliss of Greece and demoing physical qualities and development of the public presentations accomplished by the young person. The Olympic Games were held in four old ages intervals at the ancient bowl in Olympia that could suit more than 40, 000 witnesss. The environing countries around the ancient Olympic bowl were continuously developed until the fourth century BC and were used as preparation evidences for jocks or to function as places for the Olympic Judgess (Young, 1987) .

The Ancient Olympics allowed merely free work forces who spoke Greek to take part in the Games. The ancient games had a little international spirit as they included participants from other parts of Greece. The Greeks that came to the Sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia shared the same spiritual beliefs and spoke the same linguistic communication. The jocks were all male citizens of the city states from every corner of the Greek universe, coming from as far off as Iberia (Spain) in the West and the Black Sea (Turkey) in the E (Reeser, 2005)

In the antediluvian Olympics, married adult females were non allowed to take part in any manner. However single adult females could merely spectate. The ancient Olympic Games though did non let female participants ; an exclusion was made at the Herean Games, staged every four old ages to honor Hera, married woman of Zeus, leting female jocks to take part in the games. Kyniska, girl of King Archidamos of Sparta, was the first adult female to be listed as an Olympic master in Antiquity. The events were judged by the ‘ Herald ’ , a Hellanodikis (Greek Judge) . The Olympic masters in ancient times received their awards instantly after the competition. The Herald, after denoting the name of the master, placed a thenar subdivision in his custodies. Red threads were tied on his caput and hands to typify his triumph. The official award ceremonial that took topographic point on the last twenty-four hours of the Games was a proud twenty-four hours for the master. From the elevated anteroom of the temple of Zeus, the Herald announced the name of the victor, his male parent ‘ s name and the name of his fatherland. The victor was eventually honoured

with the Herald putting the sacred olive tree garland or ' kotinos ' on the victor ' s caput (Reeser, 2005) .

The Olympic Games, originally created to honor Zeus, was the most of import national festival of the ancient Greeks, and a focal point of political competitions between the nation-states. However, all competitions involved single rivals instead than squads. Wining an Olympic competition was regarded more extremely than winning a conflict and was cogent evidence of an single jock ' s personal excellence. The victors were presented with Garlands, crowned with olive garlands, and viewed as national heroes (Young, 1987) .

Although records of the Olympics day of the month back to 776 BC when the Olympics were reorganized and the functionary " First Olympiad " was held, Homer ' s *Iliad* suggests that they existed every bit early as the twelfth century BC. Emperor Theodosius I of Rome discontinued them in the fourth century AD, and they did non happen once more until they were reinstated in Athens in 1896 (Young, 1987) .

Originally, the Olympics was confined to running, but by the 15th Olympiad, extra athleticss were added, such as the pentathlon which was made up of five different events, pugilism, wrestle, chariot racing, every bit good as a assortment of foot races of changing lengths, including a long-distance race of about 2. 5 stat mis. Athletes normally competed without apparels proudly exposing their perfect organic structures. Women, aliens, slaves, and dishonoured individuals were out to vie ; adult females, one time they were

married, were non allowed to spectate any Olympic events, except for chariot races (Reeser, 2005) .

The existent events taking topographic point have changed significantly since the Ancient Olympics. Evidence shown in images, dating from circa 490-480 BC, depicts two work forces wrestling. Above them hang a discus in its bag and a brace of leaping weights called ‘ halteres. Long jumpers used the weights to increase their competition distances by smartly singing them frontward at the minute of takeoff. The manager or trainer bases to the left of the grapplers, tilting on his staff and keeping a long bifurcate subdivision. (Rhizopoulou, 2004) .

The ancient Olympic Games began in the twelvemonth 776 BC, when Koroibos, a cook from the nearby metropolis of Elis, won the bowl race, a pes race 600 pess long. Harmonizing to (Wei, 1996) , this was the lone athletic event of the games for the first 13 Olympic festivals or until 724 BC. From 776 BC, the Games were held in Olympia every four old ages for about 12 centuries (Young, 1987) .

The endurance contest was non an event of the ancient Olympic Games. The endurance contest is a modern event that was foremost introduced in the Modern Olympic Games of 1896 in Athens, a race from the nor'-east of Athens to the Olympic Stadium and the jock had to finish over a distance of 40 kilometers. The race commemorates the tally of Pheidippides, an ancient “ day-runner ” who carried the intelligence of the Iranian landing at Marathon of 490 B. C. to Sparta (a distance of 149 stat mis) in order to enlist aid for the conflict. Harmonizing to (finely, 1976) during the 5th century B. C.

Ancient Grecian historian Herodotus, Pheidippides delivered the intelligence to the Spartans the following twenty-four hours. The distance of the modern endurance contest was standardized as 26 stat mis 385 paces or 42. 195 kilometer. in 1908 when the Olympic Games were held in London. The distance was the exact measuring between Windsor Castle, the start of the race, and the finish line inside White City Stadium (Wei, 1996) .

Although the ancient Games were staged in Olympia, Greece, from 776 BC through 393 AD, it took 1503 old ages for the Olympics to return. The first modern Olympics were held in Athens, Greece, in 1896. The adult male responsible for its metempsychosis was a Frenchman named Baron Pierre de Coubertin, who presented the thought in 1894. His original idea was to unveil the modern Games in 1900 in his native Paris, but delegates from 34 states were so enthralled with the construct that they convinced him to travel the Games up to 1896 and have Athens serve as the first host (Wei, 1996) .

The thought of the Olympic torch or Olympic Flame was foremost inaugurated in the 1928 Olympic Games in Amsterdam. There was no torch relay in the ancient Olympic Games. There were known, nevertheless, torch relays in other ancient Greek athletic festivals including those held at Athens. The modern Olympic torch relay was first took topographic point at the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin. The Modern Olympic flag of five coupled rings, each with a primary coloring material used in the flags of the states viing in the games, was introduced in 1908. There is no ancient footing for this modern symbol (Rhizopoulou, 2004) .

THE POLITICS OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES

The jubilation of the Olympic Games in antiquity was an juncture for citizens of scattered Grecian city states to piece. At the Games they discussed of import political issues, celebrated common military triumphs and even formed political and military confederations. But the Games were non merely a forum in which to discourse political events ; they were besides the cause of political struggle. Control of the Sanctuary and the Games brought with it prestige, economic advantages and, most significantly, political influence. Equally early as the seventh century BC we hear of differences over the control of the Sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia between the metropolis of Elis (30 stat mis to the North) and the little neighbouring town of Pisa (Wei, 1996) .

In 668 BC, harmonizing to Pausanias (a second century AD Greek traveler) , the powerful autocrat of Argos (named Pheidon) was asked by the town of Pisa to capture the Sanctuary of Zeus from the city state of Elis. Pheidon, with his ground forces of well-trained hoplites (armed soldiers) , marched across the Peloponnesos, secured the Sanctuary for the town of Pisa, and personally presided over the behavior of the games. But Pisa ' s control of the Sanctuary was brief: by the following twelvemonth Elis had regained control (Fineley, 1976) .

The Olympic Truce was instituted by the city state of Elis to protect against military incursions which interrupted the Games. Every four old ages, particular trumpeters from Elis were sent out to all corners of the Grecian universe to denote the nearing Olympic festival and games. Along with this intelligence, they would denote the Olympic Truce, which protected jocks, visitants, witnesss and official embassies who came to the festival from

going involved in local struggles. Subsequently, political autocrats of the 7th and 6th centuries BC attempted to accomplish influence by more peaceable agencies. They participated in the athletic and equestrian competitions of the Olympic Games and dedicated conspicuously munificent offerings to Olympic Zeus at the site of the games (Finley, 1976) .

Nowadays there is a strong connexion between salesmanship and athleticss and some would even state that the line between gross revenues flipping and fast pitches has become wholly bleary. At Olympic competitions, jocks ‘ uniforms and equipment bear the discreet but readily identifiable hallmarks of their makers. After the Games, we are presented with images of Olympians backing merchandises and looking on cereal boxes. Later, some Olympic famous persons become trade goods themselves, as Television shows and record labels hard currency in on their celebrity (Wei, 1996) .

Even in the Ancient Olympics, the winning jocks were still celebrated and became celebrated for their outstanding abilities and accomplishments. Sculptors were commissioned to make statues of winning jocks to be set up in the Sanctuary or in the place town of the jock. Harmonizing to Pliny, most of the statues set up in the Sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia were idealistic images of jocks. We are told that merely if an jock had won three Olympic triumphs could a realistic similitude of the athlete appear in the Sanctuary. In the Ancient Olympics, if an jock was found guilty of rip offing or corrupting functionaries, they would be subjected to some signifier of public humiliation. For illustration if jock ‘ s were found guilty of rip offing theA they were made to make statues ofA the eventual title-holders which were placed in bowl so that people could observe them (Rhizopoulou, 2004) .

THE MODERN OLYMPICS

Today ' s Modern Olympic Games have 32 different classes of competency events. When you consider that of these many, like path and field, have several events within the class and so interrupt down farther to work forces ' s and adult females ' s and squad and single competition, it is about impossible to maintain path of the Games as they progress. Things were much simpler in the yesteryear. The Ancient Olympics had 13 events which were divided into 6 chief classes and merely work forces were allowed to take part in the events (Vassill, 2004) .

The chief classes were packaging, equestrian events, pentathlon, running and jumping. The Equestrian events were broken down into two sub-categories: chariot racing and equitation. The Pentathlon was a combination of five events: discus, javelin, leap, running, and wrestle (Crowther, 1996) .

Boxing in ancient Greece had fewer regulations than packaging today. There were no unit of ammunicions and drawers fought until one of them was knocked out, or admitted he had been beaten. There was no regulation that prevented a pugilist from hitting an opposition when he was down. There was no weight category in either the work forces ' s or male child ' s divisions and the contestants were chosen indiscriminately. The drawers did non wear baseball mitts but wrapped their custodies and carpuss with leather straps called himantes. and this meant that their fingers were left free (Vassill, 2004) .

Equestrianevents were divided into categories of chariot racing and equitation. The chariot races consisted of both the 2-horse chariot and the 4-
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horse chariot and there were separate races for chariots drawn by foals. There was a race of carts included in this event that consisted of competition between carts drawn by squads of 2 mules. The length of the chariot races was 12 laps around the bowl path which was about 9 stat mis (Vassill, 2004) .

Riding was the other equestrian event and the class was 6 laps around the bowl path which equaled 4. 5 stat mis. The jockeys rode without stirrups and the races were broken down into competition between foals and adult Equus caballus. Because it was so expensive to develop, provender and fit the participants the proprietors were awarded the olive garland of triumph alternatively of the riders (Wei, 1996) .

The most physical event of the Ancient Olympic Games was the pankration. This grueling event consisted of both pugilism and wrestle. The custodies were non wrapped in the leather himantes. The lone restrictions on physical ferociousness were the regulations against biting and force outing the opposition ' s eyes, nose, or oral cavity with fingernails. Kicking in any portion of the organic structure was allowed. There were separate divisions for work forces and male childs, but like in packaging there was no weight division and the oppositions were chosen at random (Vassill, 2004) .

The pentathlon, like the modern event, consisted of a 5-event combination. The 5 events of the Ancient Olympic Games were discus, javelin, jumping, running and wrestle. The Greeks considered this the most beautiful of the competitions as it combined the endurance of the race class and the bodily strength necessary for the other physical events. The discus was made out

of either of Fe, rock, bronze, or leads and was shaped to resemble the discus of today. The sizes varied and the male child competed with a lighter weight than the work forces. The ancient Greeks thought the preciseness and beat of an athlete throwing the discus every bit of import as his strength (Wei, 1996) .

The javelin was a throwing event as in the modern games and like the discus the competition was based on the distance the object was thrown and in the instance of the javelin the preciseness. The javelin was made of wood, with either a sharpened terminal or an affiliated metal point. The javelin had a lash for the throwers' fingers that was attached near to the centre of gravitation of the instrument that increased the preciseness and distance of the throw (Wei, 1996) .

The leap event was similar to the modern long leap but with a major exclusion. The jumpers carried rock or lead weights called *hackamores* . These weights, shaped like telephone receiving systems, were carried out in forepart of the jumper when they jumped the weights were thrust backward and dropped during the descent to increase the distance of the leap (Fineley, 1976) .

Runing was broken down into 4 types of races in the Ancient Olympic Games. The stadion was the oldest of the events and consisted of a dash covering one stade (192 metres) which was the length of the bowl. Other races were the 2-stade race and the long distance runranged from 7 to 24 stades. The most grueling of the races was the warrior race designed to construct and prove the velocity and stamina Greek work forces needed for

military service. The race was 2 to 4-stades in distance and was run by an athlete wearing armour. The standard armour of that class weighed about 50-60 lbs and of class included a helmet and shield (Fineley, 1976) .

Wrestling was similar to the modern athletics in that the jock was required to throw his opposition to the land set downing on a hip, shoulder, or back for a just autumn. To win a lucifer required 3 just falls or throws. Genital holds and seize with teething were non allowed and interrupting your opposition ' s fingers was besides non permitted (Vassill, 2004) .

The art and sculpture of ancient Greece is alive with the word pictures of the Olympics and the events described in this article. One can experience the exhilaration and spirit of the Ancient Olympic Games in that art. In modern games the spirit of the Olympism of old is recreated in the ceremonials and fight of the event (Fineley, 1976)

In decision the Ancient Olympics were held to honor Zeus. There were 13 events in the Ancient Olympics ' compared to the 32 events in the modern Olympics. Most of the events that were held at the Ancient Olympics are still portion of the modern twenty-four hours Olympics. A In the antediluvian Olympics merely work forces were allowed to vie whereas nowadays work forces and adult females are allowed to vie in all of the events. The jock who won gilded decorations at the Ancient Olympics had sculptures with their image on them so that people could observe their victory. A Nowadays, there are some traditions that are still valued and for many jocks, winning an Olympic gold decoration is still the chief high spot of their calling.

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