

Track and field history and evolution



Every athlete wishes to be at the height of their sport, all across the world athletes are putting in the work to become the ultimate athlete. Football players have the Super Bowl, soccer has the World Cup, and track and field have the Olympics.

All of the athletes involved in any of these competitions have an enormous amount of dedication and work ethic. The amount of time and effort to go to any major athletic event is incredible. People work for years for even the slightest chance to become a professional athlete. The prestige of being at the height of your sport is something any athlete dreams of, and only the very best of the best can make it.

Where track differs from many other sports is how the athleticism of the athletes is measured. In football, each man has a job, and depends upon everyone around him in order to win, the same applies to soccer, as well as any other team sport. There are a plethora of variables that make a good soccer player. What makes a single-player good or bad? Any athlete on a team of good athletes looks at least halfway decent by default, this is where track and the athletes that compete in its events begin to separate themselves from other sports.

Humans by nature are very competitive creatures, they want to be superior to their peers, to prove their dominance. So it's no surprise that the prestige of being the fastest, being the strongest, being the best, has attracted people for thousands of years. Traditionally, the biggest and the strongest took what they wanted regardless of what anyone else thought, just because they could, Feats of strength and speed have been recorded throughout

history. The fastest and the strongest have always been held in high esteem, only one person can be the best, and there's only one way to prove it.

As civilization advanced, the need to be physically competent at tasks diminished, the qualities that helped our ancestors survive the harsh environments they grew up in was no longer necessary. Out of a combination of religion and the need to prove who's the best the Olympics were born.

The first Ancient Olympic Games were held on the Greek plains of Olympia in 776 B. C. and continued until they were declared unlawful by Emperor Theodosius in 393 A. D. (IOC). Any and all free male Greek citizens were permitted to compete in the games, regardless of social standing (IOC). The duration of the games has changed several times, the games were a singular day event until 684 B. C. when it was changed to three days. It was changed to five days in the 5th century B. C. in order to accommodate more events and competitors (IOC). The athletes competed for a variety of events, many of which are still in the modern-day Olympics. These events included races ranging from 200 to 4800 meters, the long jump, the Discus and Shotput, Wrestling, Boxing, Equestrian Events, and Pankration (A fight to submission with few rules) (IOC).

The times that those ancient athletes ran and threw were set thousands of years ago, and still rival the times and distances of current-day athletes, because at the end of the day the sports themselves haven't changed in principle. Sure the rules have changed a little, but the idea behind the Olympics hasn't changed much since its inception all those years ago. Those

who possess superior athletic ability can compete in contests and prove their worth, the Olympians of the ancient times were quite similar to the athletes of today, in more than one way.