

# Ancient pentathlon essay



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' Pentathlon' has been derived from the Greek language, it is a combination of two words, ' pente' which means five and ' athlon' which means a competition. As the name suggests, a pentathlon is therefore a contest which features five different events. The first evidence of this contest was seen in ancient Greece, in the ancient Olympic Games. The contest was played over in one day with athletes competing in five different events – long jump, discus throw, javelin throw, and stadion which is a short foot race and finally wrestling.

Athletes participating in pentathlon are known as pentathletes and were regarded to be highly skilled, as the five events played here were considered to come handy during war. Pentathlon training was therefore often imparted as part of the military service. The Olympic Games was again revived in the modern era and this marked the return of pentathlon albeit in two formats. Athletics pentathlon was a new version of the traditional contest, where athletes had to compete in over five track and field events. Pierre de Coubertin, known as the father of Modern Olympics, invented the modern pentathlon. Below is a brief description of the events in the ancient pentathlon: Discus: In ancient Greek, the strength of an athlete was reflected in the rhythm and precision by which he threw his discus.

Discus was made of iron, bronze, lead or stone and was in the shape of a flying saucer. The discus was of various sizes depending on the competitors, as all the competitors were not expected to throw the discus of the same weight. Javelin: Javelin was a wood which was as tall as a man in height. It either had a sharpened end or had a metal point attached to it. For increased precision and distance, it normally had a thong at the centre for the athlete's

fingers. Jump: In order to increase the length of their jump, most athletes used lead or stone weight jumps in the shape of telephone receivers.

During ascent, the weights were held in front of the athlete and pushed behind his back and dropped while descending to help push his body further.

The jump weights were also used as weight lifting equipment while training.

Running: There were four types of races which the athletes had to compete in. In addition to the four races, the athletes also had to participate in the fifth arduous race, where the athletes had to compete wearing their armour.

The intention was to build the speed and stamina of the Greek men, which would prove very useful in the military service. Wrestling: Like the wrestling

played in today's time, the Greek athletes had to pin his opponent down to the ground. For a fair win, the opponent either had to land on the hip, shoulder or on his back. The wrestlers were not allowed to bite or hold the genitals, but they were given the liberty to break the opponent's fingers.

However the winner had to throw the opponent 3 times in a row to win the match.