

## **HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF SPORTS AND SPORTS EDUCATION IN ANCIENT GREEK**

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### **Abstract**

The civilized society and social structure that gave its earliest examples in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and India, have led to significant improvement in the ancient Greek society. Greeks interacting with many communities through maritime trade have been influenced by the cultures of these communities. In particular, they have formed a new culture by blending the cultures of the lands that they have settled through colonization with their own cultures. One of these formations is sporting events. In the present study, sports and branches of sport in Ancient Greece are examined; yet since Olympics are considered as a different study, it will not be within the scope of the present study. In the present study, based on the writings of the authors of ancient times the interest of the ancient Greek society in sports has been determined.

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### **Keywords:**

Ancient Greek;  
Sports;  
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## 1. Introduction

The ideas of a civilised society and social structure, with first examples in Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, showed great improvement in the Greek society of the Ancient Age.

Greek civilization is based on Minoan and Mycenaean civilizations which are based on the civilisations of the Middleeast with a civilization and culture heritage of three centuries. The Greeks who overthrew the Minos Civilization were influenced by their civilizations and their values. The origin of sporting games, assumed to be of religious origin, have always been attributed to gods and goddesses, and organized to honour them. Sports, which diverted from its religious features with time has become along with music one of the cornerstones of education especially in the philosophical period (5th – 6th century BC). Sports also played an important role in the training of soldiers; they even participated in competitions in some branches of sports competitions with their weapons and military outfit.

Sporting events such as cart-races, boxing, wrestling, and spear games emerged with the beginning of the 8th century B.C in sagas and at some funeral ceremonies depicted in archaeological documents. Celebrations and competitions of this kind are organized on behalf of the gods - goddesses and some are even originating from mythological events. The award of the winner in these festivals was either a crown made of olive branches, a statue of him erected, or poems written to honour his name. Most importantly was the honour that came with victory. For this reason, young people have tried to build their body and mind through systematic and continuous training. With the victory, young people became the national heroes of the Greeks and were rewarded with various awards.

In time, sports (especially in the first century BC) have become sine qua non along with music in education. Seven-year-old boys were brought to the palaestra as part of the gymnasium. Here, the art of the Muses and the principles of all athleticism types were taught.

Importance was given to Pentathlon. Regular planned contests in jumping, javelin and discus throwing, running, and wrestling were held. The body and the brain were trained as a whole. The gymnasiums had gardens, row columns, shaded woods, open and closed spaces and classes. These were the pride of their city. The boys of rich men would attend gymnasium until

the age of twenty; children of the poor had to leave these places at an earlier age. These halls have also fulfilled a cultural mission. Sculptors, painters, choose the athletes training in these places to as a model. Athletes have also inspired the most famous works of classical culture.

They were preferred as a model for sculptures and vases. They have formed the concept of “physical form” one of the best legacies of the Greeks in the modern world. The places used for sports were also a place of conversation and discussion for philosophers.

Classical and archaeological sources provide information on ancient Greek sports

## 2. Research Method

In this study, quantitative research method was used. Quotations from relevant documents have been made. At that time, the writings of the authors were supported with examples. Both the vase paintings and the sculpture images were supported at the time.

### Classical Resources

#### Epinikion

In the Greek literature, Epinikions are poems written in honor of those who have won in sporting matches by poets. These poems were sung by the choir at the celebration ceremonies (or before returning to the city). The victorious athletes were welcomed with enthusiastic celebrations on their return to their hometowns. In these victory poems, information about the won games, related legends, the descendants of the victorious sportler, the city in which he was born, the legends of the city and its protecting gods would be mentioned.

Normal epinikion scheme that goes back until Simonides has three sections:

- 1- Because of the victory gained,
- 2- The middle section full of mythos which relates the homeland or the descendants of the first in various ways (sometimes there is no such section in short poems),
- 3- Moral lesson element. This was the most personal part (the choice and formulation of the mythos) and, as for the most part, it gained political significance when the one who became the first was prince.

The first information about ancient Greek sports was obtained from Homer. Pindaros, Bakchylides, Pausanias' works also provide information about sports.

## Homer

The place of birth, date of birth and death of Homer, who is the most significant represent of heroic saga, is uncertain. He was most probably born in Smyria (Izmir) within the Ionia region. His lifetime is accepted to be between B.C. 750-700.

The first definition of sports spirit is found in Homer's sources. In Homer, sport is to be the best, leave behind the others and have fun in the power. Every Achaean warrior is an athlete who combines his spirit of war with the spirit of entertainment.

The word athlete was first used in the Odysseus epic in which Odysseus reached Phaeacian after the shipwreck. In these lines, Homer depicted young people as jogging, jumping, wrestling, boxing and throwing discus. (Gardiner, 1930)The definition used includes pain and stamina. Homer expected every warrior to be an athlete. The rewards of real athletes were not material but spiritual.(Geber, 1971)

In the 23rd book of Iliad, after the funeral of Patroklos, it is written that Akhilleus organized competitions in his honor. First, prizes are set for the three-wheeled horsecart races, races are held, and at the end prizes are given to the competitors. After car races, rewards for boxing fights are determined. Right after boxing, running competitions are held. Afterwards duels made with spear in total warriors' outfit, and the final contest is archery. .

Homer as a host wants to show his guest Odysseus, the hero of Homer's Odysseia, their superiority in boxing, wrestling, jumping, and running, and organizes competitions. After the wrestling competition, Odysseus is also asked to compete.

Homer's athletes, within the social structure, are aristocrats. Due to this feature they are differing from historical Greek games. Boxing and wrestling were more of the aristocrats' pursuits, and they had no organized training. (Gardiner, 1930)

## Pindar

He was born in Kynoskephaloi, near Thebai, in 522 / 518-446 BC. (Çelgin, 1991) Pindar, who was interested in poetry and music from an early age, is said to be a student of Myrtis and Korinna, both female poets.

He received his first musical education in his hometown. He lived in Athens in the last years of the sixth century, where he became a student of Hermione Lasos. His presence in Athens must have broadened the horizons of his art, which later became national and Panhellenic. He wrote poems for all Greece. (Robinson, 1995)

Pindar's earliest poem, the date of which could be defined, is X. Pythik written for young Hippokles in 498 for the winner of a running contest. In 490, the year of the Marathon war, Pindaros is a well known poet. The winner of the horsecart race is Ksenokrates, brother of Theron the seigneur of Akragas (VI. Pythiki and the flutist Midas from Akragas). XII. Pytnik: the only poem that celebrates a music competition. Orkhomeos (488: First poem for the First Prize in the Olympics) Athens (for Magakles from the Alkmainoia family), Aigina (especially for his favorite island has reserved eleven of his 45 epiniks).

He has written also poems praising Kyrene, Delphia, Loknis, Eyrzenhyria, Korinthos, Opoeis, Akharnai, Himena, Rodos, Kamatina, Tendelos, Argos, and some other places.

In the first, a merry and calm poem, he celebrates Theron's victory and recounts that the Olympic games were held when Herakles had brought the olive tree from the country of the Hyperbora.

From 470 onwards, he had begun to fall into disfavor. In this year, he had sent to Hieron his Pythic celebrating the tyrant's first place in Delphi and the new town of Hieron five years ago, Aitne. After this year, Bakkhylides was the favorite of Hieron due to his uncle's influence. In 468, the honor of writing the epinikion for the first place in the horsecart race in Olympia was given to Bakkhylides, not Pindaros.

After 466, we can't learn anything about the poet. The last information about him is that he wrote his VIIIth Pythik for Aristomenos from Aigina. The epinics collected in four books reached completely our days. There are in total 144 poems; 14 Olympik, 12 Pythik, 11 Nemea, 7 Isthmia (however this distinction is not always definite). Up to 350 fragments have remained.

Among the most remarkable epinics in terms of poetry, are the following: VIII. Isthmik (478): Pancreas, for children of Kreandros from Aegina in, I Olympik (476); III for Hieron from Syrakusa in horsecart racing. Olympik (476); Theron from Akragas for horsecart racing, I. Nemea (476); for Khromios, from Syrakusa in horsecart racing VI. Olympik (464): for Diagoras of Rhodes in boxing; for Arkesilaos of Cyrene horsecart racing, X Nemea (444); written for Theraios from Argos, is among the most original epinics showing Pindaros' inspiration. It is the celebration of the race which is held in honor of a hero still preserving the old sacred value of religious glory in which the winner is belauded in panhellenic memories in a celebration of religious glory and feast jocundity. The children of the great aristocratic families, who were mostly connected to a hero, would re-experience their old glory. Like for Alkalos and Theognis, this is a part of family tradition. Thus, athletes participating in these races are in a mixture of physics 'alka' and morality 'areta'. These are excellent examples of old and large dynasties; through the excellence they affirm their right to wealth, power and glory. Pindaros is mainly a mythical poet. He exalts gods and heroes rather than mighty, strong athletes, majestic gentlemen. According to Pindaros, heroes are as pure as gods. He avoids dishonourable deeds for them. It also shows the supremacy of a respected hero, the cities legendary founder, or the athlete's lineage. In this way, the legend is immortalizing the glory of the day and connects the present to the past.

The athlete who became the first is reminded of the responsibility for his old and glorious descendants. The unity of Pindaros' epinics is based on this fact. A unity of inspiration from a single departure point exists in the world consisting of infinite values that Pindaros keeps alive in his imagination. This is the sum and substance that feeds the world of inspiration and poetry. All that he can do for the bold horsecart driver, the strong pancreasist, the fast runner, is to unite them with this world, to say that this divine and heroic light shines on them as well. While

reading poems, the athletes and gentlemen living in an unreal world are breathed in like the air of a sculpture museum.

### Bacchylides

He was born in Iulis on the island of Keos in 518/517. Although not many things are known on his life, certain events can be derived from his poems. He gained fame in Macedonia before 490. He met Pindaros at Aigina in 487. (Robinson, 1995) Aigina is a kind of poem fortress of Pindaros, and Pindaros officially celebrated Pytheas' first place in the Nemean games. (V. Nemea); but Bakkhylides, wrote spontaneously for the same success his XIII epinikion.

When Hieron's horse came first with Pherenikos in Olympia in 476, Bakkhylides sent from Keos the V. epinicon the most beautiful one of his epinics. Pindaros also wrote in Syrakusa his I. Olympik. When Hieron became first with his four-horse cart in Pythia in 470 Pindaros wrote I. Pythik, and Bakkhylides wrote his very short IV. epinikion. At last, when Hieron won the biggest of his successes with his four horse-drawn carriages in Olympia, a year before his death, Bakkhylides celebrated alone this success with III. epinikion. We don't know where the poet went after Hieron's death. Towards the end of his life, the poet returned to his home town and wrote VI. epinicon in 452, when the young Lakon of Keos became the first in Olympia, an event to which an exact date could be defined.. He probably died towards the year 450.

Like Pindaro, in his epinicon Bakkhylides hails the ancestors of those who became first, thanks to the gods for the success, makes wishes for new achievements. In poetry, he often links the praise of the athlete who becomes first to the mythus, a very weak interest; in the middle section of the poem he tells the legend and ends his poem with the praise and thanks of the one who became first to the gods, etc...

In his V. epinicon, he celebrates the success of Hieron's racehorse Pherenikos competing with the breezes of Boreas among the audience's applause. In his IX. epinikion, the poet describes how Automedes's extremely beautiful body throwing discus, throwing spear amid the enthusiastic cheers of the crowd, and how he beats his combatants to the ground.

## Pausanias

He was born in the 2nd century AC. He has written a travel memoir consisting of 10 books entitled *Periegesis Hellados* (Greece's description). The work is the most complete portrayal of Greece at that time. (Çelgin, 1991) The accuracy of what he told was later proven by research and excavations.

He describes in his first book, Attika, Korinthia in second, Lakonia in third, Messenia in fourth, Elis in fifth and sixth, Akhaia in seventh, Arkadia in eighth, Boitia in ninth, and Phokis in tenth. Pausanias is often interested in works of art and monuments. He saw almost all of the places he told, and had reliable references. (Robinson, 1995) His work is important for Greece mythology, monuments, and topography.

Archaeological resources, the vases, sculptures, reliefs, etc. that were dug out as a result of archaeological excavations. These antique artifacts are displayed in various museums in Greece, England, Italy, Germany, France, Vatican and other countries.

## Ancient Greek Sports Branches



their success.

In many festivals held in Ancient Greece, competitive sports and games were vital. The Olympic Games in Olympia were held to honor Zeus and Apollo. The Pythian Games in Delphi were an opportunity for the soldiers to show their talents and athletic heroism, as well as to make a fortune for

## Running

According to Herodotus, when the Athenians learned that the Persians went to Marathon in 490 BC to attack Athens, an ambassador named Pheidippides rushed to Sparta to seek help. This original marathon runner crossed over 260 km of rough terrain in less than two days and the Persians are defeated at the Battle of the Marathon.

The simplest foot race, the 600-flat race, is one of the most original competitions of the Olympic Games, and it is evident that had been improved in time. Running is the most popular sport among Greek athletes.



The running track is made of soft sand; if the sand was too tightly placed, the runners would run until they were out of breath and continue with severe difficulty.

The Greek have several barefoot races. The shortest is 60 feet of one-way speed running. "Diaolor" is a running contest between two athletes in which they have to run up and down as fast as possible; the other running contest is running around an oval field which is 2400 feet long twice, the last but most difficult one is "dolichor" long distance running which could be arranged according to agreement as 7,12,20,24 stadia. It is said to be the most difficult race of the Olympics (about 3 miles).

As soon as the first race, the simple one, ends, the second starts quickly. 5 strong men with war equipment (helmet, shield, armor) come forward. The armor race called Hoplitodromos is only free of danger for experienced soldiers or professional athletes.

The Greeks have taken every kind of barefoot races very seriously. However, there are neither records of the prizes nor famous runners in these games.



Bare-foot running contests are also mentioned also in Homer. The length of the various barefoot running races were determined according to the length of the stadium. There were races organized for all age groups. Races for girls are known to be shorter. It is known that foot races in Olympia are 1/6 shorter than normal races. (Davis, 1995)

Although women were not allowed to compete in the Old Greek Olympics, they competed at the Heraia games in Olympia. This competition was a 160-meter race for women named after the goddess Hera. The Spartan women were particularly strong opponents, and this 2,500-year-old bronze statue was a rare portrayal of a Spartan girl.

The first of the two main features distinguishing Greek races from the present is that the returns were not at road bends but stakes and the presence of gates enabling the simultaneous start of every athlete. (Harris, 1972) BC 5th century can be given as the date of this application. There are anecdotes of those days in which those who were off and running before the start sign were beaten up. At this time in Olympia, a mechanical starting gate was created for horsecarts. The athletes named by the Greeks as 'husplex' had burrows under their feet indicating the presence of a starting gate with grooved stakes at the starting lines. In 1956, Oscar Broneer's excavations at Isthmia made it clear. Broneer, found at the ground of the stadium a perfect husplex, grooved stakes behind the starting pit of the athletes.

The grooves are fixed with bronze staples in the original position. This is the most common model of husplex. Olympia, Delphi, Epidaurik, Delos and Didyma can be presented as evidence. One of the most charming places is Priene. Whereas there was a place for twelve to twenty runners in most stadiums, here were only for eight. They were probably placed in a very complex way, working with a different principle. The excavations uncovered the untouched foundation of this place, several pieces on top of the pillars, including the stones on the upper beam section, and found ten well-built foundations on the threshold. On the inner surface of the compartment of each runner in Priene were the square columns with vertical grooves on the inner surface of the chamber, and the grooves here were continuously descending along the canals to the threshold. From these canals, there were two gates opening to the center of the stadium.

The excavations at Epidaurus yielded an elegant old-fashioned starting threshold, piles for the runners' feet, and a single block of squares similar to those in Priene. This gives the impression that the authorities in Epidaurus experimented with the next model. It is known that at Panathenaik Stadium in Athens the 'husplex' were rebuilt in 100 BC.

There is only one problem at the Priene stadium. In many sports athletics, all races ended at the same place, so that the 400-yard long-distance run and the armored run started and ended on the same line. The 200-yard run ended in the opposite direction of the stadium. This explains why in Olympia and Delphi, there is 'husplex' ready starting line at each finish. There is no indication that Priene and other stadiums had more than one. The start gate was clearly needed for 200

yardruns. Accordingly, in Priene, this race either ended up on the opposite side of the others or at longer distance runs they started at the 200-yard line and no starting gate was used.

### Long and High Jump

This sport was very useful in crossing narrow mountain passes and waterways during a passage in the Greek countryside. There were very few walls around here. As there were almost no walls, high jump was not important.

Pole vaulting was a sport that was applied outside the program. Xenophon described the lance as a pole and used it as a method to jump on horse as, animated in these vase illustrations.



The Greek long jump is still full of contradictions. Modern experiences cannot explain the long jumps of the Greeks because they use jumping weights. In single jumps, throwing backwards in the air can increase the athlete's performance. However, our findings suggest that the Greek athlete was

holding it until he fell. There are only two jumping records from the past. They are 52 feet and 55 feet.

(Uzunatlama, Kırmızıfigürbardağı, Panaitios.Boston  
GüzelSanatlarmüzesindekikırmızıfigürbardağı. (F: Wellcome Images, wikimedia  
commons.)(Arkeofili, 21.10.2017))

According to other findings, the Greek jumps is conducted as single, in pairs, in three, or even in fours and the modern techniques of using weight in such a confusing branch are unknown. The old technique was carefully transferred to us by vase paintings depicting the exercises for us.

### Javelin throw

Javelin throw is a sport made for the purpose of war preparation. It was the second most important weapon of the infantry of Homer's time until the Roman Empire. Each soldier was carrying two, before they approached the enemy.(Harris, 1972)Hitting the target was of great importance. The Greeks were had military training for this purpose. Throwing away was of great

importance because the javelin had to reach the target before the enemy's shot. In athleticism, the distance of the javelin was important.

The Greeks were throwing javelins at war and in the stadium wearing thin leather on their fingers. This thin leather served two purposes; increased the radius of the throwing armand the speed of the throw. More importantly, wrapped around the javelin it enabled it revolve and go like a bullet coming out of the gun to a certain target by balancing the javelin flight. This was also necessary to measure the distance. When thin leather was used, the shooter was pushing the javelin backwards in order to keep it straight. This is seen in many vases. Javelin throw contests were also of great benefit for the Greeks at wars. Likewise, was throwing stones as it was a handy weapon ready for use in the nature. Homer has clarified the origin of this activity.(Homer)



As javelins were used for hunting and war, the lance had to be heavy. Javelins for war were made of cornus trees. For hunting, grattiuscornus, myrtle, yew, pine, broom, wild olive tree or frankincense were preferred. Whereas Bakkhylides states that old trees should be athletics Theophrastus though not explicitly stated for athletics, states that bamboo would be appropriate. Javelin used for athletics should be thoroughly sanded in order not to be affected by air drag. The pictures show that athlete throw javelins sometimes blunt and sometimes with spikes. Probably the ones with spikes were used at competitions, and the blunt ones during training. The best Greek athlete comes to the fore by beating his opponents during the competition, the degree obtained by the other in other competitions were not as important.

### Discus Throw

There are no records of the distances covered in the past. Only Philo Judaneus is the only writer who touches the measurements with two jump records.

Discobolus statue is perhaps the most famous disc shooter of old times. This sculpture, known as «TownleyDiscobu», is in fact a replica of a lost bronze Greek original. Rather than all the rotations we see today, the sculpture emphasizes the old technique of three-quarters. This marble statue was built by the sculptor Miron around 470-440.



The discus was a competition held at funerals as well as a competition to win the copper ingot as an award. The metal molted was often poured into round molds. Thus the shape of the ingot would have a flat structure on the upper and lower parts. Many ingots have reached our day. Although some of them are large, the ones in the Cagliari museum are approximately the same as those used in today's modern athletics.

The disc throwing method of the Greek is revealed from artefacts. The only information in literary works is that the disk throwers turn around themselves. Paintings and sculptures cannot give us the information we want. Before throwing the discuss, the athletes turn around themselves with a disc in their hands to limber up. Painters and sculptors have preferred the stance, turn to the power position, and power position to throwing which was more difficult to portray. Only in a few art artefacts the turns on the thrower are depicted, yet these are different from the circular movement of modern throwers. In order to reach maximum distance, the disc must remain airborne without staggering. This could only be achieved by keeping the shooter his thumb stretched out from the disc.

The difference between the old and modern shots can be understood from some pictures.(Willoughby, 1970) Basically, the distance-to-shot speed is determined as the horizontally optimal high combination. At present, the velocity of the shot is obtained by the centrifugal force and the arm of the shooter is stretched along the movement; supported by legs, body, and shoulders. In many pictures, it is seen that the elbows of the old disc shooters are bent before the shot.

## Boxing

In ancient Greece, boxing was not classified according to the weight. Before the boxing matches were divided into rounds, it continued without interruption until one of the boxers raised his hand and accepted defeat. Like today, gloves were worn to protect the hand.(Harris, 1972)The illustrated sources show that the gloves worn in the early days consisted of soft leathers wrapped around the hands. The athletes wore inner gloves made of fine material that reached from the wrist up to the fingertips and wrapped each finger one by one. Onto the inner glove they put soft

boxing gloves which were one-inch-thick and three-inch wide. These fine leather materials were soft and their surface not easily worn.. The aim was to protect the protect the rival's skin when being punched. A band made of lamb skin started immediately from the wrist and wrapped the entire forearm. The purpose was to enable the boxer to wipe his sweat.

They did not comprehend the importance of passing 'baxat nmatches with knock out or at irregular attendances. As a result, a contestant could be considered as bax in any round, several



times within the same match, or even at thefinals. The sportler in the baxwas named 'ephedros' 'sitting at the side. The athlete who won the round without bax would be given some extra points and was called anephedros..

In Greek boxing, we don't know exactly know what is allowed and what is forbidden. We learn from vase paintings that ther open-handed punches and from the epic descriptions that sledgehammer like punches are free. Even kicking might be allowed. Anthylius, an author of medicine, recommends fighting the imaginary rival, the most popular training method of ancient times.

There is some information about the training methods of Greek boxers; like their modern counterparts, they were wearing headgear and soft-surfaced gloves and training like that. Headgear was not worn during box matches. In Greek literature, there are even references to ear deformities.



The sack was filled for the weak with miller or flour, for the strong with sand. Hanging from the ceiling, it was at the eye-level. Those training with it, would exercise with both hands hitting it first softy than hard and thus enabling it to gain pendulum and change its direction by using force. Then punching the spots that could not reached with the arms, the sack would return as if somebody' body would fall onto the trainee. With one last effort, he should strike with

all his strength on the return of the sack without staggering. Sometimes they would encounter the sack with their hands, breasts or even back. Thus they build up muscles and shape their bodies.

The match was controlled by referees and the rules were enforced. Those who didn't stick to the rules would be beaten. Forked sticks used to ensure discipline is depicted in some vase paintings.

((<http://www.aktuelarkeoloji.com.tr/antik-yunanda-atletik-siddet>)))

## Wrestling

In ancient Greek athletics age was the single criteria for classification. In the matches, there was no classification according to the sporters weight as in the modern world. Therefore, only bulky people could achieve the greatest success. (Harris, 1972)(Gardiner, 1930)The Greeks called it

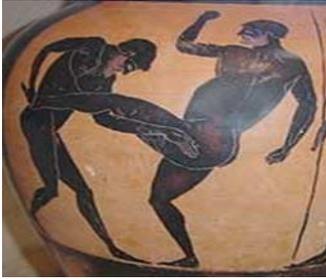


accordingly “heavy activity”. Hence, athletics has passed into the hands of professionals with time and thus standards and capabilities have increased. On the other hand, wrestling has continued to be a common activity for ordinary amateur young people who do not have high goals and want to gain success in their own weight. (Gardiner, 1930)(Willoughby, 1970)

All Greek athletes would oil themselves before training and protect thus their skin pores from dirt. At the end, they would have a bath to remove dust, sweat and oil from them with bronze brushes. After oiling, the wrestlers would powder each other, in order to have a good grip. These schools would consume a lot of oil and special powders. In three ways would a wrestling match end. One of them was that the shoulder of one wrestler would touch the ground. Grappling, tripping, and overthrowing were like in modern wrestling. The Greeks used two main techniques. The first was to try to catch the arm or the wrist of the other, or to grasp the shoulder or hips.

## Pancreas

It was a specialized form of the struggle, which covered many combat tools and was strictly controlled by rules and traditions. The aim of the pancreas fighter was to make his opponent accept defeat or to make him suffer by suffocation and a broken bone.(Harris, 1972)(Gardiner, 1930)Although the event is similar to wrestling trying to grasp the opponent firmly it differs as benefit is sought from his fall to the ground.



Indeed, pankration fighters often rolled tightly on top of each other and many victories were won pretending to be lying on their back. It was free to hit with the fist, and this was often done while trying to save from a tight grip of the opponent. Gloves preventing tight grips were not worn. In the Greek anthology in an anecdote from 216 BC the "Isthmian Games" the celebration of the achievements of Thebes Kleitomachus, who won an Olympic victory in wrestling, boxing, and pankration fighting is retold

Related to this success trilogy, the poet tells us the following:

"He took off his bloody boxing gloves and almost went off to fight the wild pankration."

(Anthologia Palatina IX, 588)

### Pentathlon

We do not know what the origin of the Pentathlon is. Homer does not report anything about it. The Greeks sometimes regarded the pentathlon as a superiority in many aspects, sometimes as a consolation for the athletes who could win barefoot race. (Harris, 1972)(Gardiner, 1930) (According to Suidas's records, the mathematician Eratosthenes, who lived in the 3rd century BC, had many achievements of the highest degrees in many branches and was therefore



sometimes named the 2nd Plato, sometimes Beta, and sometimes Pentathlete. The underlying cause could be that the officials in Olympia did in the early days not consider throwing and jumping worth giving separate prizes and have grouped these with wrestling. Even after the game planners had put pentathlon into the program in Olympia, the prejudice of the people towards it did not change. Pentathlon has been loved by children and young people in the Greek world for centuries.

There was always a debate to determine the winners in the matches. Two facts were clear. Only championships were important as the Greek did not accept second place and third place as success. It was of course impossible to accept an athlete who lost in one contest out of three as

successful. Victory was the only accepted outcome in running and wrestling which were considered as activities in their own sense.

According to the available evidence, the following is the predominant comment on pentathlon: like a tennis match it has five sets and ends when a contestant has won in three events. Pentathlon-specific long jump and two shooting were conducted beforehand.

(<https://tr.ilovevaquero.com/sport-i-fitness/102950-pyatibore-sovremennoe-pyatibore-pyat-sportivnyh-sovershenstv-v-odnom.html>)

According to the Greek, if a pentathlon athlete wins all three competitions, then he is the winner in the first three. Otherwise, following this stage, there were either three winners with one victory, A, B, and C or one with two victories. These two people would then run 200 yards. If A is victorious, he will have three victories somebody with two victories A and B with a single victory, these will have a foot race. If A wins then he will have three victories, and he will become the champion.

If B wins then they will have a draw and the wrestling contest will determine the next champion, If every contestant has a only one victory, then an immediate running contest will be held and the winner A will have now to victories. B and C will have one. Hence A will become 'epheuros' and move to the box whereas B and C will be wrestling in the semi-finals, A will wrestle with the winner of the activity in order to determine the champion of all activities.

### Swimming

The vast majority of the Greek lived at the seaside or riverside and hence both men and women were very good swimmers and divers. (Gardiner, 1930) This feature was an advantage for them in sea battles. They would have survived all kinds of sea accidents.



Swimming was always universal and instinctive, so they didn't pay much attention to sports training. Water sports were not only limited to swimming and diving, but ship and kayak races were also important.

(<https://tr.pinterest.com/pin/427349452117918873/>)

### 3. Conclusion

The Greek, believed that along the education and development of the thought, the body should also be trained and hence physical education was from the age of seven to eighteen compulsory. In many cities, sports festivals were organized. Young people were trained by special trainers to participate in these festivals as athletes for months in gymnasia and palaestera. Their aim was to win victories in competitions; this was the greatest honor for them. The Greek people would come to watch the competitions at these festivals from all around the country. Other cities, which have experienced the enthusiasm at these festivals, have also started to organize sports festivals. In order to attract good athletes to their festivals, they have set prizes. These prizes were sometimes money and other times erection of the athletes' statue. Now, the idea of competition for the victory and the honor brought by it, the amateur spirit, has had given way to professionalism in the sports and the underlying reason for participation in competitions became the prizes. The Greeks have begun sports due to a matter of belief, have added philosophical qualities, added human qualities and laid thus the foundation for the professionalism of today's sport, but they have always known to keep the measures and qualities of sport.

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