ATHLETICS FROM ANCIENT TIMES TO THE END OF THE 19th CENTURY

COLLECTION OF 100 ITEMS DONATED BY CONSUDATLE TO THE IAAF HERITAGE PROGRAM
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Roberto Gesta de Melo
Organizer
PRESENTATION

My personal interest in the hobby of collecting started due to the influence of my grandfather Manoel Barbosa Gesta, an expert in Brazilian stamps and coins. With him I learned the importance to research what was represented in those little artifacts.

Later on, having run sports organizations, my theme of choice in the vast field of collecting was only natural.

After I was elected to the IAAF Council, I was contacted by the two former Presidents to manage a project of setting up a museum devoted to Athletics. Unfortunately their efforts, either in Monte Carlo or in Athens, were not successful.

Now, President Sebastian Coe has wisely created the IAAF Heritage Department and so it is time for the members of the large Athletics Family to contribute to preserve the legacy of Athletics and to promote the knowledge on the history of our sport.

On our side, some years ago, CONSUDATLE began to acquire several articles related to Athletics throughout different ages in order to create an Athletics Museum.

Taking into consideration that our Area Confederation is completing its Centenary of existence and to mark the importance of this occasion, CONSUDATLE is donating 100 items to the Athletics International Body which can be used in Expositions or in other ways. We hope that this single gesture will help to spread out the interest in studying our magnificent past in the whole world.

There were only few days to select the items and to prepare a catalog of this small collection. So, I apologize for any eventual mistake. But the real meaning of this donation is to instigate people to give contributions to better describe what each piece represents, adding commentaries and informations. On the IAAF website for sure a section on this subject will be created with the addition of the images of hundreds of other objects.

Roberto Gesta de Melo
In the City-States of Ancient Greece, physical exercises and sports competitions were integral part of the youth education.

Among the several Panhellenic Games, the most important were the Olympic Games (the greatest of all) in the sanctuary of Olympia, in Elis, first accurately recorded in 776 B.C.; the Isthmian Games, in the sanctuary of Isthmus of Corinth, first historically dated in 582 B.C.; the Pythian Game, in the sanctuary of Delphi, first well known in 582 B.C.; and the Nemean Games, in the valley of Nemea, registered since 573 B.C.
THE IMPORTANCE OF ATHLETICS IN THE ANCIENT OLYMPIC GAMES

For the first 13 Olympic Games, the competition consisted of a single race of 192,27m (stadion), the length of the stadium. The first recorded victor in 776 B.C. was Coroebus of Elis, a cook. The athletes of Elis maintained an unbroken string of victories until the 14th Olympic Games at which time a second race of two lengths of the stadium was added. In the 15th Olympic Games, an endurance event was added in which the athletes went 12 times around the stadium, about 4½ kilometers. The athletes competed in groups of four, which were determined by drawing lots with the winners meeting the other winners until a final race was run.

The Hoplitodromos was the last foot race to be added to the Olympics, first appearing at the 65th Olympics in 520 BC, and was traditionally the last foot race to be held. Unlike the other races, which were generally run in the nude, the hoplitodromos required competitors to run wearing the helmet and greaves of the hoplite infantryman from which the race took its name. Runners also carried the aspis, the hoplites’ bronze-covered wood shield, bringing the total encumbrance to at least 120 kgs. After 450 BC, the use of greaves was abandoned; however, the weight of the shield and helmet remained substantial.

01. ELIS OLYMPIA
AR HEMIDRACHM COIN
Date: 256-252 B.C.
Obverse: Laureate head of Zeus right.
Reverse: F-A and Thunderbolt within wreath. ZEUS was worshiped as the supreme deity of the Olympic Games.

02. ASPENDUS, PAMPHYLIA
AR STATER COIN
Date: 460-420 B.C.
Obverse: Hoplite advancing right, shield in left, sword in right.
Reverse: Triakele
THE Isthmian Games were organized in honor of Poseidon. This festival seemed to focus primarily on combat sports, in contrast with the other three Panhellenic festivals.

THE Pythian Games were considered to be founded to celebrate the victory of Apollo against the Python serpent. Homer, the legendary epic poet, “the father of History”, relates in the Iliad and the Odyssey the organization of sports contests, including racing and discus throwing.

In the beginning, only musical contests were held in the Pythian Games then extended by singing to instrumental performances.

The athletics competition included four track sports (stadion, diaulos, dolichos, hoplodoramos) and pentathlon. These events were introduced to the games gradually over time.
ATHLETICS FROM ANCIENT TIMES TO THE END OF THE 19th CENTURY

THE NEMEAN GAMES, according to some legends, were held to commemorate the victory of HERAKLES against the Nemean Lion.

The first task of Hercules was to bring to King Eurytheus the skin of an invulnerable lion which terrorized the hills around Nemea.

When Hercules got to Nemea and began tracking the terrible lion, he soon discovered his arrows were useless against the beast. Hercules picked up his club and went after the lion. Following it to a cave which had two entrances, Hercules blocked one of the doorways, then approached the fierce lion through the other. Grasping the lion in his mighty arms, and ignoring its powerful claws, he held it tightly until he had choked it to death.

Athletics events in the Nemean Games: Stadion foot race (about 178m at Nemea); Diaulos Twice the Stadion foot race (about 355 meters at Nemea); Hippios Twice the Diaulos foot race (about 710 meters at Nemea); Dolichos. A long distance running race. The exact length of this race is uncertain; it could have been 7, 10, 20 or 24 times round the stadium; Hoplitodromos A Diaulos foot race with the competitors wearing helmets, a bronze covered hoplon and initially metal greaves; Pentathlon This pentathlon consisted of the stadion, a game of wrestling or pale, javelin-throwing, discus-throwing and long-jump.

By 146 B.C. Greece was subjugated by the Roman Empire and the Elis region became part of the Roman province of Acaia. Gradually the Olympic Games started to gather an heterogeneous community, with participants coming from the different far-offs towns conquered by the Roman legions, losing their primitive identity.

In general, Sports Games in Ancient Rome had a more violent character, being famous the Chariot Racing (with bigas, trigas and quadrigas) and the Gladiators fights.

05. TARENTUM, AR DIOBOL COIN
Date: c380-345 B.C.
Obverse: Head of Athena right
Reverse: Herakles (Hercules) wrestling Nemean lion

06. ROMAN REPUBLIC, L. ANTESTIUS GRAGULUS SILVER DENARIUS
Date: 136 B.C.
Obverse: GRAG, Helmeted head of Roma right, below chin.
Reverse: Jupiter in quadriga right, scepter and reins in left, thunderbolt in right L AES below, ROMA in ex.
The Olympic Games degenerated and no lists of victors are known after 267 A.D. There are even doubts if the competitors were later held in the sanctuary of Olympia.

The Ancient Games associated with the cult of different deities were officially abolished in 393 A.D., as a result of a decree of the Christian Roman Emperor Theodosius I, following a long series of actions for the proscription of Paganism, including the destruction of the old temples.

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After 393 A.D. Athletic Games continued to be organized in Greece Cities of the East, the most important of them in Antioch. According to reliable researchers, in Antioch a Sports Festival started to be called Olympic Games on 212 A.D., but other Games had been held there for Centuries.

Those were the last Athletic Games of the Roman Empire. They were abolished on 520 A.D. by Emperor Justin I or on 528 A.D. by Emperor Justinian I, in accordance with other sources.
THE MIDDLE AGES

During the Middle Ages, between the 5th and the 15th Centuries, with the domination of Christianity in Europe, which identified the Ancient Sports Festivals with Paganism and considered the cult of the body sinful, Athletic Games, as they were known in the Classical Antiquity, disappeared. At that time, the ability to read was circumscribed to very few people and the memory of the Ancient Games was almost completely forgotten for more than 1,000 years.

THE RENAISSANCE

With the Reform, the Renaissance, the Age of Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution, a dramatic change occurred in the world. By 1439, Johannes Gutenberg invented the mechanical movable type printing and the books preserved by handwriting manuscripts, especially by the copyist monks at the monasteries, started to be published. The splendors of the Greek civilization were spread out through the works of ancient writers and words like Olympics and Olympic Games became to be frequently used. The most important publication on this field was indubitably the Odes of Pindar, about the Olympian, Pythian, Nemean and Isthmian Games.

Pindar, the greatest lyric poet of Ancient Greece, celebrated victories achieved in the Ancient Panhellenic Games.

In the same way, studies on competitive sports and the human body associated to physical exercises came into light.

De Arte Gymnastica was the predecessor on sports medicine, dealing with the comprehension and the behavior of the Ancient Greeks and Romans about diet, practice of sports and natural methods to cure the diseases. The second edition printed in 1573 was the first with the famous illustrations on the nature of sports in the Classical world.
According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the first ever recorded use of the word Olympian in the English language is to be found in William Shakespeare’s Henry VI, Part 3, written in about 1591.

However, in fact Richard Mulcaster had already cited the term Olympian in the “Elementary” Pedagogic Treaty, published in 1582.

11. THE PLAYS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

From the correct edition of Isaac Reed, Esq., Volume III (containing King Henry VI, Part III: King Richard III, King Henry VIII.

THE REVIVAL OF THE OLYMPIC GAMES

With the advent of a new Era, Sports Festivals in Europe – in Great Britain in special – started to add the denomination Olympic or similar to give prestige to those manifestations. Among them, there were the Cotswold Olympick Games, which probably started on 1612 and were organized by Captain Robert Dove.

The Cotswold Olympick Games were explicitly recognized by the King James I, who enjoyed such manifestations, in opposition to the Puritans, who considered them sinful.

King James I is more know because in 1604 he authorized that a new translation of the Bible into English be started. It was finished in 1611. The Authorized King James Version of the Bible quickly became the standard for English-speaking Protestants. Its flowing language and prose rhythm has had a profound influence on the literature of the past 400 years.
OTHER BRITISH OLYMPIAN FESTIVALS

Several other Festivals used the name Olympic but some of them were crucial for the restoration of the Modern Games: the Much Wenlock Olympian Games and the British Olympic Festivals.

Dr. William Penny Brookes, now recognized as the first precursor of the Modern Olympic Games, was born in Much Wenlock, in Shropshire, England in 1809. He was a doctor and a very prestigious man at his time.

In 1850, in October, he organized the first Much Wenlock Olympian Games “to promote the moral, physical and intellectual improvement of the inhabitants and neighborhood of Wenlock”. Pierre de Coubertin recognized the importance of the Much Wenlock Olympian Games for the revival of Modern Olympics. Those Games are held until nowadays.

In 1865, Dr. Brookes, John Hulley (Liverpool Athletic Club), Ernst Ravenstein (German Gymnastic Society, in London) and other enthusiasts founded the National Olympic Association, which organized six National Olympian Festivals: London (1866), Birmingham (1867), Wellington (1868), Much Wenlock (1874), Shrewsbury (1877) and Hadley (1883).

GREEK NATIONAL OLYMPIC GAMES (ZAPPAS GAMES)

In Greece, the ideal to re-establish the Olympic Games continued in the imagination of new generations.

In 1833, in Athens, Panagiotis Soutsos, writer and journalist, pleaded for new Olympic Games in Greek territory.

Finally, in 1859, 1870, 1875 and 1888/1889, the Greek Olympic Games (also known as Zappas Games, as they were financed by the Maecenas Evangelis Zappas), were organized in Athens.
GREAT BRITAIN

THE CHANGES IN SPORT IN GREAT BRITAIN IN THE MODERN ERA

Over time, the British Festivals have undergone changes and incorporated the practice of sports with a certain degree of formal organization.

For the implementation of a formal sports system in Great Britain, written codes were created to discipline the way of practicing the various modalities, allowing, with the universalization of norms, the participation of different institutions in the competitions.

For this transition, one of the relevant factors was the Industrial Revolution, which led to the emergence of a new class of workers. At first, the working day was extremely strenuous, but the time available for leisure was gradually expanded with successive social achievements, allowing opportunities to use leisure time for a large number of people.

Manuals of sports began to guide the practice of these activities in everyday life.

SPORTS IN UNIVERSITIES AND SCHOOLS

Meanwhile, middle schools and, above all, the British Universities have incorporated into their academic curricula the incentive to the sport, considering this activity as an important factor in the formation of the character of the youngsters, as in what happened in Classical Greece. This relevance attributed to sport has become one of the hallmarks of insular education.

Competitions between Universities and High Schools in Britain have become popular and have attracted the interest of the population and the press. Meetings between British and American Universities and also from other countries began to be held regularly.

15. MANUAL ON "ATHLETICS" FROM H. H. GRIFFIN. London: George Bell & Sons, York Street, Covent Garden, 1891.
The Inter-University Athletics Meetings between Oxford and Cambridge started in 1864 and took place on the Christchurch Ground and resulted in a tie. In 1865, the sports were held on the grass at Fenner's and Cambridge were the winners by six events to three. Next year the venue was again at Oxford, and Cambridge were once more victors, by 5½ to 3½. At that time, the authorities of both Universities decided that the competition must be on a neutral venue. At Beaufort House in London there was a cinder path and the 1867 event was held there.

The winner of putting the weight was R. Waltham (Boston Grammar School, Lincs and Peterhouse, C.) 34 ft. 9½ in.; the second was T. Batson (Sidney College, Bath and Lincoln, O.) 32 ft 11 in.; and the third was C. A. Abloom (Private and Trinity, C.) 32 ft. 8 in.

16. THE OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ATHLETIC SPORTS.

The contest was organized in London for the first time. Beaufort House – Putting the Shot THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS – April 20, 1867

The winner of putting the weight was R. Waltham (Boston Grammar School, Lincs and Peterhouse, C.) 34 ft. 9½ in.; the second was T. Batson (Sidney College, Bath and Lincoln, O.) 32 ft 11 in.; and the third was C. A. Abloom (Private and Trinity, C.) 32 ft. 8 in.

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17. THE OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ATHLETIC SPORTS.

The contest was organized in London for the first time. Beaufort House – Putting the Shot THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS – April 20, 1867

The winner of the long jump was E. Baddeley (Derby and Jesus, C.) 20 ft. 10¾ in.; C. W. M. Kemp (Harrow and Oriel, O.) 20 ft. 8¾ in. was second; and J. A. L. Fellowes (Marlborough and Exeter, O.) 20 ft 3 in. was third.
Interesting fact in this meeting described on the “Fifty Years of Sport at Oxford, Cambridge and the Great Public Schools” which stated the difficulties of the judges to take decisions:

It is generally thought that the judges made a mistake in deciding that Ramsbotham and Fry had dead-heated in the one hundred race. Fry was quickest into the running and though Ramsbotham was going the faster at the finish he never quite got up until the pair were past the tape. Fry was on the outside under the stand, and the judge, who is posted on that side, is so close to his men that he does not get a perfect view of him who comes up within 2ft. of his nose. On this occasion the referee, seeing that both winner and second were Oxford men, did not care to pronounce one of the judges wrong.

18. BRONZE PRIZE MEDAL OXFORD & CAMBRIDGE ATHLETIC SPORTS. Putting the Weight — 2nd — 35ft. 0 1/2 in. — 1889 — J. C. Miller.

C. Rolfe (Merchiston and Clare, O), 35ft. 6 1/2 in. won the weight for Cambridge, with J. C. Miller (Haileybury and New, O) and C. R. Wilson (Haileybury and Exeter, O) tied for the 2nd place.

19. OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ATHLETIC SPORTS. THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS. April 1, 1893.
International Meetings

The first “foreign match” of English and American undergraduates was brought off on July 16, 1894, when Oxford tackled Yale. The Yale visitors enjoyed their stay in Oxford and it was noted that: “The Americans cheered the Oxford winners as heartily as any Britisher, and were more successful in making the right noise than the English spectators who tried to imitate upon occasions the elaborate and esoteric Yale cry.

20. OXFORD AND YALE ATHLETICS SPORTS. THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS. July 21, 1894.

“On four occasions Oxford and Cambridge have combined to meet the united forces of Harvard and Yale. The first of these meetings, at Queen’s on July 22, 1899, produced as great a contest as has often been seen. Individual performances were of the best; the teams won alternately until eight events had been decided, and it was left to the three miles to settle the issue, and only points in which the entertainment fell short of perfection was in the provision of exciting finishes”.

“The gathering of spectators was worthy of the occasion, and the Prince of Wales, who was accompanied by the Duke and Duchess of York, honored it by his presence. The Royal party arrived before the star and stayed till the finish”.

“Oxford and Cambridge won by five events to four, and the spectators had some practice in cheering, which enabled them to give a proper send-off to two future kings of England as they left the ground”.

While the Oxford versus Cambridge Athletics Meetings started in 1864 and the Amateur Athletic Club was founded in 1866, Athletics Meetings were held at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst since 1812, and at Woolwich since 1849.
THE CREATION OF SPECIALIZED FEDERATIONS

With previously established rules, several specialized federations were founded, which went on to run regular sporting events, with an increasing degree of sophistication, among the hundreds of existing clubs.

In this initial period, the distinction between the amateur sport (practiced by the dominant elite or other layers of the population as a form of leisure) and the “professional” was common, which had as its primary objective to provide material benefits to the practitioners. This dichotomy has become increasingly important, and it was forbidden to include professionals in amateur events, which, not infrequently, caused controversy, since in some cases this difference was not clear.

Amateur Athletic Association (AAA), the British national governing organization for the sport of Athletics was founded in 1880. It took over as the governing power from the Amateur Athletic Club, founded in 1866. The Association was the first such organization in the world. The AAA was one of the first groups to reject the requirement of upper-class background that had previously been necessary to achieve amateur athletic status.

The Championships Meetings in 1866 – 1878, and the first Meeting in 1879, were held by the Amateur Athletic Club, and the second Meeting in 1899 was promoted by the London Athletic Club. The A.A.A. Championships commenced in 1880.

24. AMATEUR ATHLETIC CHAMPIONSHIPS AT BIRMINGHAM.
THE ILLUSTRATED SPORTING AND DRAMATIC NEWS. June, 28, 1884.

25. BRONZE MEDAL. AMATEUR ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIP 1888 – 10 MILES CHAMPIONSHIP TIME. Medal won by G. A. Pemington
Time  55m 25 sec. In this event, the champion was E.W. Parry, Salford Harriers, 53m 43 2/5.
ATHLETICS FROM ANCIENT TIMES TO THE END OF THE 19th CENTURY

27. THE SOUTH LONDON HARRIERS AT KENNINGTON OVAL. THE ILLUSTRATED SPORTING AND DRAMATIC NEWS, September 29, 1883.

On the front page of the Athletic News, March 5th 1884, the following paragraph appeared.

“The Salford Harriers is the title of a new cross-country club about to be formed tonight at the Grapes Hotel, Cross Lane. Athletes and other desirous of supporting the new organisation are requested to meet at 19:30. The chief promoter is Mr. J.H Hardwick, and of those who have promised to join may be mentioned, E. Kane, R. Barlow, J.W Brown, J. Wilson, J.W Roberts, C. Silcock”.

South London Harriers was founded in 1871, making it one of the four oldest athletic clubs in England.

It was formed at a meeting in the Vivian Hotel in Peckham Rye. The founders were ex-members of the Peckham AAC, who had left that club after an argument about smoking in the changing room. The original object of the club was, ‘To enable athletes by means of cross-country runs, to continue training during the winter months’. Admission to the club was reserved exclusively to “Gentlemen Amateurs”.

26. SILVER AND GOLD MEDAL. SALFORD HARRIERS CLUB, 1892.
London Athletic Club is a track and field club based in London, England. It is the oldest independent track and field club in the world. More than sixty athletes connected with the club have since become Olympians and top athletics administrators in Britain.

Description of the race by a newspaper of the period:

“The last metropolitan meeting of the year was that of the LONDON ATHLETIC CLUB, held at Beaufort House, on Dec 4. All the events were confined to members only.”

“Four only out of ten entries started in the half mile novices’ race, and two alone of these four completed the distance. A. B. Hill appeared winning easily up to 50 yards from home, when he slipped in the mire, and fell hopelessly. W. F. Woods and H. M. Durnford thus passed him, but the latter was exhausted 10 yards from the tape, so Woods spurted and won cleverly by a couple of yards, in 2 min. 33 sec.”

On May 31, 1867, the United Hospitals Athletic Club was formed at the West Brompton running grounds by Mr S Edwin Jolly. Eligible members were students on a medically-related degree at King’s, Guys, London, St Thomas’s, University College, St George’s and St Mary’s. An annual meeting hosted by the UHAC featured events such as the 100 yards, 250 yards, 880 yards, 1 mile, 2 miles, 120 yard Hurdle Race, 440 yard Hurdle Race, High Jump, Long Jump, Hammer, Cricket Ball Throw, Stone Put, Three Legged Race and the 250 yards Consolation Race.

Such was the thirst for athletics in the late 1880’s, the fourth meeting of the Championships had to be moved to the A.A.C Grounds in Lille Bridge to cater for a crowd of over 3,000 spectators. By the end of the 19th century, the club held the championships at Stamford Bridge - the home of the London Athletics Club. The Meeting was held at Little Bridge, West Brompton, on 8th April, 1871. The winner of the 120 hurdles race was A.F. Kinnaird.
Savernake Forest House, near Marlborough, in Wiltshire, the seat of the Marquis of Ailesbury, was the scene of a popular festival on Monday Week, followed by a grand muster of the local benefit societies next day, and the opening of the Savernake Cottage Hospital, with a religious service by the Bishop of Salisbury, on the Wednesday, the whole concluding with a ball given by the Marquis and Marchioness at their noble mansion. The object of these festivities was to raise funds for the new Cottage Hospital. ... Many of the nobility and gentry connected with that part of the country were present. The lawn and gardens, on the Monday were thronged with holiday people of different ranks and classes, who all seemed to enjoy themselves. ... The athletic sports, in which some of the young gentlemen from Marlborough College took part, afford the subject of an illustration.”
32. THE SOUTHBOROUGH ATHLETIC SOCIETY’S SPORTS. The Steeplechase.
THE ILLUSTRATED SPORTING AND DRAMATIC NEWS. SEPTEMBER 4, 1875.


34. BRONZE MEDAL, MANCHESTER ATHLETIC FESTIVAL. 1870 Quarter Mile Flat Race – Second Prize.

35. BRONZE MEDAL, WITH RIBBON THIRD PLACE. W. M. I. A. 1889. Standing High Jump.
Hare and Hounds is an outdoor game in which certain players, the hares, start off in advance on a long, scattering small pieces of paper, called the scent, with the other players, the hound, following the trail so marked in an effort to catch the hares before they reach a designated point.
Early pedestrianism’s existence was underpinned by gambling on an enormous scale.

The blue riband discipline of the era was the six-day race, the longest timespan available without encroaching on the sacrosanct Sabbath. Competitors typically raced indoors, on sawdust tracks, from the early hours of a Monday to late Saturday night, doing umpteen thousand laps, stopping only for snatches of sleep in trackside cots or tents. The leading “Peds” attracted tens of thousands of paying fans.

Edward Payson Weston became the first man to walk 500 miles inside six days, in a closely monitored walk in December 1874 in New Jersey. It took him 143hr 34min, or 26 minutes shy of six days.

Daniel O’Leary responded by walking 500 miles at a Chicago rink in 1875.

Undeterred, O’Leary went head-to-head with Weston in a six-day race in Chicago in November 1875, and won, walking 500 miles in 143hr 13min, and breaking Weston’s six-day record by walking 503 miles in the full time. The Tribune reported the crowd of 8,000 was “motley, but largely respectable, it represented wealth, standing, and brains, and thieves, gamblers and roughs.”

Weston and O’Leary met in another famous race at the Agricultural Hall in Islington, London, in April 1877. O’Leary won again, breaking his own six-day record by walking 519 miles. The London Standard reported that there were 35,000 fans present at the end. The protagonists split the gate money and O’Leary later said: “For the week’s work I received a check on the Bank of England for $14,000. It was a good week’s work.” In today’s money, that week’s work would be worth more than £200,000.

From the Independent, by Nick Harris.
**HIGHLAND GAMES**

Highland games are events held in Scotland and other countries as a way of celebrating Scottish and Celtic culture, especially that of the Scottish Highlands. Certain aspects of the games are so well known as to have become emblematic of Scotland, such as the bagpipes, the kilt, and the heavy events, especially the caber toss. While centred on competitions in piping and drumming, dancing, and Scottish heavy athletics, the games also include entertainment and exhibits related to other aspects of Scottish and Gaelic culture.

The games are claimed to have influenced Baron Pierre de Coubertin when he was planning the revival of the Olympic Games. De Coubertin saw a display of Highland games at the Paris Exhibition of 1889.
THE INFLUENCE OF BRITISH SPORT IN THE WORLD

The British Empire, in its colonies, which extended across all continents, and through its enormous commercial influence contributed enormously to the diffusion of the sport, in its present form, by the world.

42. GAMES OF THE HIGHLAND BRIGADE AT CAIRO. THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS January 20, 1883.

43. BRITISH ATHLETIC SPORTS AT ALEXANDRIA. Astonishing the Natives. THE GRAPHIC – March 3, 1877.
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The United States of America developed and accentuated the practice of sport in Colleges and Universities and created Clubs and other Sports Institutions that began to greatly influence the formation of the citizens of that country.

Perhaps insufficient credit has been given in the past to the role of athletic clubs in the development of sport in the United States. Sports historians, with the exception of Betts and Krout, have but mentioned the athletic club phenomenon of the late 1800’s and early 1900’s, since the athletic club movement did much to popularize and lend respectability to amateur athletics, especially track and field, at a time when this sport was largely the province of promoters and professional pedestrians. The athletic clubs of this era also organized and provided most of the leadership in the formation of national athletic organizations to govern amateur sport and provided the first amateur competition at the national level in swimming, wrestling, boxing and track and field. Moreover, athletic clubs of the late 1800’s were responsible for many innovations in sports equipment and facilities in the United States being the first to introduce such items as the spiked track shoe, the first cinder track, the use of lanes and staggerers as well as many other “firsts.”

Quoted from “Social Stratification in New York City Athletics Clubs”, by J. Willis and R. Wetten Queens College, N.Y.

The New York Athletic Club was founded in September of 1868 and soon became the best known club in the United States.

On November 11th, 1868, the NYAC sponsored the first Indoor Athletics Meeting in American history. Subsequently, in 1874, the Club sponsored the first Inter-Collegiate Championships, and, in 1876, the first National Championships. The NYAC sponsored the National Championships for three years.
In 1870, the New York Athletic Club started their series of athletic meets, known as the Spring Games and Fall Games of the NYAC – two per year. Early in 1876, it was decided that a national championship meet was necessary and desirable and the best known meet of the year was chosen to serve that purpose. Thus, in late 1876, the 7th Annual Fall Games of the NYAC became the first national championship meet.

46. NEW YORK ATHLETIC.
Silver medal. 120 Yards Run 1895.

47. SPRING GAMES. Silver and gold medal. won by Lee Davis 25 1/5 sec.
220 Yards Dash, 1891.
In 1879, a national organization had been formed in the United States, composed of many member athletic clubs and known as the National Association of Amateur Athletes of America (NAAAA). They sponsored the 1879 Athletics National Championships and ran the meeting through 1887.

In 1888, a rival organization to the NAAAA, the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) came into being, quickly became the more powerful group, and held a national meeting in that year.

The NAAAA, however, refused to fold immediately and also conducted a national championship in 1888 – thus there were two that year.


The Knick was founded in 1871 by members of the Union Club of the City of New York who were concerned that the club’s admission standards had fallen.
51. NEW JERSEY ATHLETIC CLUB. Silver medal, with ribbon, 220 YARDS HURDLE.

52. INDOOR ATHLETIC GAMES. Silver medal, with ribbon. Silver and enameled medal. Running Broad Jump. March 11, 1899


Second Intercollegiate track meeting. Columbia was the winner.

56. INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETIC GAMES. AT THE BERKELEY OVAL, NEW YORK – May 25th, 1895.
Pennsylvania won the Meeting.
57. HARVARD YALE UNIVERSITY
DUAL MEETING. Track Athletic
Association. Silver medal, with
First Athletic Meeting between
Harvard and Yale. Harvard won by
85 to 27.

58. ENGLISH AND AMERICAN CONTESTANTS AT THE ANNUAL
CHAMPIONSHIP GAMES. Manhattan Athletic Club Grounds. Harper’s
Weekly – September 24th, 1887.
The New York Club was founded in 1868. It started to stage "annual
championships" beginning in 1876. In 1877, English athletes appeared and
there were very good results.

59. COLUMBIA GRAMMAR SCHOOL.
Silver medal. 120 Yards Hurdle.
Founded in 1764, Columbia
Grammar School is one of
the USA’s oldest private in
Manhattan.

60. COLUMBIA GRAMMAR SCHOOL.
Bronze medal, with ribbon.
Running High Jump 1896.
The Journal, May 2, 1896.
SCHOOLBOY GAMES. The
fifteenth annual games of
the Columbia Grammar
School's Athletic Association
were held at the Oval,
Williamsbridge, yesterday
afternoon.
ATHLETICS FROM ANCIENT TIMES TO THE END OF THE 19TH CENTURY


Major General Josiah Porter is reputed to have been the first Harvard College graduate to enlist in the Union Army during the Civil War.

64. THREE LEGGED RACE
Print 1800’s Color Print by Frank Feller.
A three-legged race involves two participants attempting to complete a short sprint with the left leg of one runner strapped to the right leg of another runner. The object is for the partners to run together without falling over, and beat the other contestants to the finish line.
66. SS GARONNE POTATO RACE. 
VOYAGE DECK. 1891.

67. POTATO RACE. Gold medal.
A potato race is a running contest where the winner is the first who collects in a basket or other receptacle a number of potatoes, usually eight, placed, as a rule two yards apart, along a straight line, and then crosses a finish line five or ten yards farther on.

68. SACK RACE.
A “sack-race” for wearers of “hobble” skirts: ladies in “tube” frocks engaged in a speed contest.

69. SACK RACE.
Gilt medal. May 30th, 1895.
A sack race is a race which the competitor’s legs and often bodies are enclosed in sacks.
70. HANDICAP RACE AT THE MANHATTAN ATHLETIC CLUB.

The Manhattan Athletic Club was organized in New York on November 7, 1877, and legally incorporated on April 1, 1878. Its emblem was a “cherry diamond”.

It established an athletic cinder ash track at Eighth Avenue, in Manhattan, which opened in 1878.

71. GREAT MEETING OF AMATEUR ATHLETES.
Under the auspices of the BOSTON ATHLETIC CLUB. HARPER’S WEEKLY March 1, 1890.

Among the USA’s oldest athletic clubs, the Boston Athletic Association was established on March 15, 1887 with the support of leading sports enthusiasts, entrepreneurs and politicians of the day.

The club held its first organized track and field competition in 1890 and in 1897 the first famed Boston Marathon took place. A unicorn was chosen as the Association’s symbol and appears on the Boston Marathon medals to this day.
72. CALENDAR SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER. Collegiate Athletics – High Jump.

73. SPALDING’S OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION OF THE UNITED STATES. February, 1899.

Spalding’s handbooks of sporting rules and training, containing full and authentic codes of rules governing all popular games and sports.
Athletics from ancient times to the end of the 19th century

FRANCE

Athletics in France has its origin in pedestrianism and walking.

74. LES COURSES À PIED AU BOIS DE BOULOGNE. L’ILLUSTRATION JOURNAL UNIVERSEL. Samedi 13 Juin 1865.

75. LA COURSE À PIED PARIS-BELFORT. Organisée par le “Petit Journal”. Samedi 18 Juin 1892.
76. LA COURSE À PIED PARIS-CONFLANS (40 KILOMETERS).
L’ILLUSTRATION, 25 Juillet 1896.

77. DES DIVERSES MÉTHODES DE MARCHE ET DE COURSE.
L’ILLUSTRATION, 22 Février 1896.
In September 1882, students from the Rollin, Monge and Condorcet high schools came together to found the Racing Club in the Bois de Boulogne. School students from Saint-Louis created the Stade Français in December 1883.
In January 1887, Georges de Saint-Clair, General Secretary of the Racing Club and former consul of France in Edinburgh, who had practiced athletics at an English college, founded the “Union des Sociétés Françaises de Courses à Pied” which adopted sports codes and standards used in Great Britain.
In 1889, the “Union des Sociétés Françaises de Sports Athlétiques” was founded, focusing on “all sports”, with an emphasis on athletics. At the outset, the influence of school sports was evident. In its constitution, in 1890, there were 9 student associations and 3 of adults.
ATHLETICS FROM ANCIENT TIMES TO THE END OF THE 19th CENTURY

87. SPORTS
ATHLÉTIQUES.
L’ILLUSTRATION JOURNAL UNIVERSEL.
Samedi 7 Juin 1890.

Reference to Military Athletic competition in England.

88. SPORT ENTRE LES GENTLEMEN
CADETS DU COLLEGE MILITAIRE
DE LA REINE. Angleterre. Le Monde Illustre. 23 Février 1867.

Reference to Military Athletic competition in England.
89. LA COURSE, Bronze medal, in the original case. U.A. M.S.C. 500 m H. 9 Juin 1892.

90. LA COURSE DE MARATHON. Organisée par le "Petit Journal". Dimanche 2 Aout 1896.

After the Olympic Games in Athens, the Tour de Paris Marathon took place on July 19, 1896. A big crowd gathered to watch 191 participants. It was run over a course of 40 km from Paris to Conflans-Sainte-Honorine via Versailles, and the organizers decided to award a commemorative medal to all runners who finished the race in less than 4 hours.

The race was won by Len Hunt from England who crossed the finishing line in 2 hours, 31 minutes and 30 seconds. His prize money was 200 francs.

91. LE MATCH DES JAMBES DE BOIS, À NOGENT-SUR-MARNE. L’ILLUSTRATION JOURNAL UNIVERSEL. 16 MARS 1895. (Next page)
ATHLETICS FROM ANCIENT TIMES TO THE END OF THE 19th CENTURY

La course à pied est l'une des disciplines les plus anciennes de l'athlétisme. Elle remonte à l'Antiquité et a été pratiquée dans de nombreux pays, y compris en Grèce et en Rome. Les premiers records de course à pied datent de la Grèce antique, où des courses étaient organisées de manière régulière. Les athlètes s'affrontaient dans des compétitions de course à pied qui étaient souvent les suivies de grands spectacles publics.

Le match des jambes de bois à Nogent-sur-Marne

Les athlètes sont prêts à démarrer. Ils sont vêtus de tenues traditionnelles, marquant l'héritage culturel de cette époque. La compétition est animée par une grande foule de spectateurs enthousiastes.

Le gars

Un homme est en train de se préparer à courir. Il porte un costume traditionnel, reflétant l'esthétique de l'époque. La concentration est palpable sur son visage, prête à affronter le défi.

Le départ

Les athlètes sont propulsés en avant, leurs jambes déchirant le sol en direction de la ligne d'arrivée. Le bruit des chaussures contre le sol se propage dans l'air, créant une ambiance de suspense et d'excitation.

Le sprint

Un athlète en tête, les bras tendus, se hâte vers la ligne d'arrivée. Son dévouement et son entraînement apparent à chaque mouvement de ses jambes sont visibles.

Le vainqueur

Un athlète est couronné comme gagnant. Il porte un masque, traditionnellement porté lors de compétitions sportives dans cette période historique. Sa joyeuse expression révèle sa satisfaction et sa fierté pour sa performance.
92. LA COUSE DE JAMBES DE BOIS. Le Petit Journal Dimanche.
24 Mars 1895.
Wooden leg race in France – precursor of the parasports competition.

93. FÊTE FÉDÉRALE DES GYMNASTES, AU LOCLE. Le Tir du Javelot. L’ILLUSTRATION – JOURNAL UNIVERSEL.
Samedi 2 Septembre 1865.
THE FIRST MODERN OLYMPIC GAMES – ATHENS 1896

Athens was chosen to stage the inaugural modern Olympic Games in 1896 during a congress organized by Pierre de Coubertin in Paris on 23 June 1894, during which the International Olympic Committee was also created.

The main venue was the Panathenaic Stadium, where Athletics took place.

The 1896 Olympics were regarded as a great success. The Games had the largest international participation of any sporting event to that date.

The Panathenaic Stadium overflowed with the largest crowd ever to watch a sporting event. After the Games, Coubertin and the IOC were petitioned by several prominent figures, including Greece’s King George and some of the American competitors in Athens, to hold all the following Games in Athens. However, the 1900 Summer Olympics were already planned for Paris and, except for the Intercalated Games of 1906, the Olympics did not return to Greece until the 2004 Summer Olympics, 108 years later.
96. POSTCARD OF THE STADIUM. Before the 1896 Olympic Games.


LES JEUX OLYMPIQUES

Dans un article récent dans le Journal Officiel de l'Education Nationale, M. de Gobineau a dit que la France, par la force de la nature, est devenue la première puissance du monde. Les premiers traces de cette puissance sont à la fois remarquables et paradoxales. Si l'on se base sur les faits, on ne peut que conclure que la puissance française doit être attribuée à la science. La science est la base de toutes les puissances, et la France est la plus grande puissance scientifique du monde. Il est clair que la puissance française est due à la science. Cependant, il est aussi vrai que la science est due à la France. La science est un produit de la nature humaine, et la France est un produit de la science. C'est à la fois la cause et l'effet.

La France a été la première puissance scientifique du monde, et elle est restée la première. Les Français ont été les premiers à comprendre l'importance de la science, et ils ont été les premiers à utiliser la science pour construire un empire. Le premier ministre, M. de Gobineau, a dit que la France est la première puissance scientifique du monde, et il a raison. La France est la première puissance scientifique du monde, et elle le restera. La France est la plus grande puissance scientifique du monde, et elle le restera. La France est la première puissance scientifique du monde, et elle le restera.
The men’s marathon event was a special race invented as part of the Athletics at the 1896 Athens Summer Olympic Games program. The length of the marathon in 1896 was approximately 38 – 40 km.

Michel Bréal, Coubertin’s friend, originated the idea of a race from the city of Marathon to Athens, taking inspiration from the legend of Pheidippides.

The first marathon race was a Greek national competition that served as a qualifier for the Olympic marathon organized on March 10, 1896 and won by Charilaos Vasilakos, who completed the course in 3:18.

According to Charlie Lovett, two runners had already run the course in February.

He also states that only few days before the Games another trial was held because the Greek officials were eager to field the best team possible. This race was won by Mr. Lavrentis and improvement of nearly seven minutes over the winning time of the first trial. So additional names were added to the team, including Spiridon Louis.

“In the earlier track and field events, the Americans had been dominant, and the Greeks were desperate for a victory. The marathon was considered the highlight of the Games. A failure by the Greeks to win the event would mean deep disappointment and resentment. Even the foreigners in the crowd of over 100,000 that lined the road and filled the stadium where the race would finish hoped for a Greek victory.”

“Spiridion Louis ran through the streets of Athens, barely able to pass through the joyous throng that greeted him. When he entered the stadium, he was joined by the Crown Prince Nicholas and Prince George who ran with him to the finish line and then carried him in triumph to the royal box. Louis was an instant national hero, and his victory erased all hard feelings.
ATHLETICS IN SOUTH AMERICA

At the beginning of the 19th Century, different manifestations in the South American countries may be considered valuable precursors of the practice of Athletics.

Travelers, the British in special, organized physical exercises and athletics demonstrations, in a recreational way, which drew attention of the local people. In different regions and after certain time, they started to imitate such practices, enjoying them and, in several cases, showing an interesting capacity of organization.

In Argentina, before 1870, Thomas Hogg, a pioneer of the sport, and his brother James, introduced the practice of Athletics and in the Buenos Aires Cricket Club the first meetings were organized.

In Uruguay also, in the same period, some athletics events were held under the influence of the British inhabitants and the organization of the Montevideo Cricket Club.

In 1890, the first Athletics League is founded, the Montevideo Athletics Association.

In Chile, in 1877, yet with the British, the athletics activities start under the coordination of the Valparaiso Cricket Club.

In Brazil, around 1850, races and walking events are registered, introduced by officials of the British Navy, in the occasions when their ships were in the Santos and Rio de Janeiro ports.

In 1880, the Jornal do Comércio newspaper, in Rio de Janeiro, starts to publish informations about sports events. On September 7th that year, it mentions the organization of the "Jogos Athleticos Inglezes" with several events.

In Venezuela, in 1896, there is a movement to encourage the practice of athletics and a club of youngster to participate in 300m, 500m races and steeplechase events is created, under the influence of an English man. "El Tiempo" newspaper also mentions, in a good-humored way, the foundation of a club for women runners.
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