



Foot Racing Image



Background to Hebrews 12
Robert C. Newman



History of Foot Racing

- # Origin lost in antiquity
- # Probably began (like most other ancient sports) as practice for warfare



Ancient Athletics

- # Greece is our main source of information on the ancient period.
- # After Alexander the Great, Greek culture spread through most of the Mediterranean world.
- # This culture was continued (with some additions) by the Romans.

Ancient Athletic Meets

- # In ancient Greece, there were four main competitive meets, held for centuries every two or four years.
- # These were:
 - Olympic Games
 - Pythian Games
 - Isthmian Games
 - Nemean Games

Olympic Games

- # Every four years, in August of the 1st year of the Olympiad
- # At Olympia in the W Peloponnesus
- # In honor of Zeus
- # Prize an olive wreath



Olympic Games

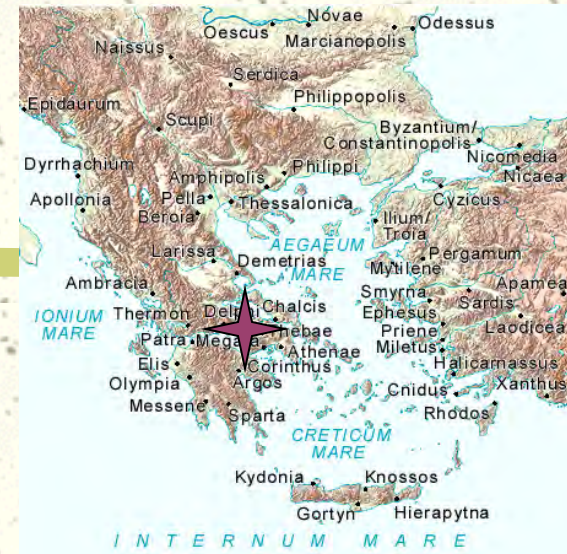
- # Originally only men were competitors; later boys & adolescents.
- # Events:
 - Various Footraces
 - Discus
 - Javelin
 - Broad jump
 - Boxing
 - Wrestling
 - Pankration
 - Pentathlon



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Pythian Games

- # Every four years, in August of the 3rd Olympiad year
- # At Delphi, 80 mi NW of Athens
- # In honor of Apollo
- # Prize a laurel wreath.
- # Events similar to Olympics, plus musical competition



Isthmian Games

- # Every two years, in Apr/May of 2nd & 4th Olympiad years
- # At Corinth
- # In honor of Poseidon
- # Prize was dry celery wreath, later pine
- # Not as prestigious as Olympics



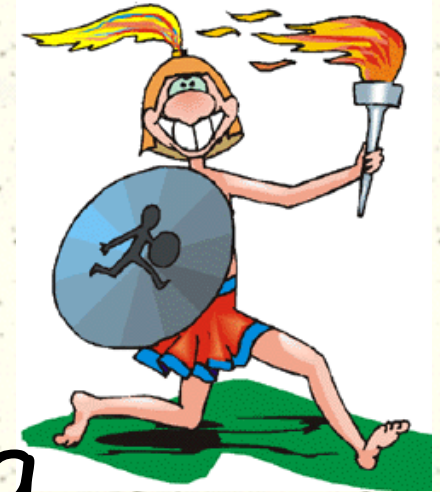
Nemean Games

- # Every two years, in July of 2nd & 4th Olympiad years
- # At Nemea, 15 mi SW of Corinth
- # In honor of Zeus
- # Prize a wreath of fresh wild celery



Other Games

- # By New Testament times, every major city in the Roman empire had games annually or at longer periods, with much less prestige than these four.
- # Prizes were more valuable, but less prestigious.
- # Athletics by this time had become dominated by professionals.



Ancient Footracing



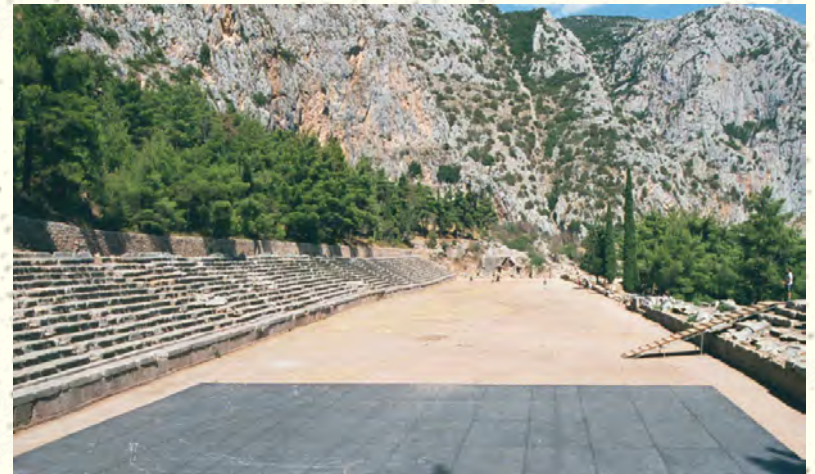
Little information about non-
Greek footracing

Various Footraces

- # Stadion or dromos
 - The standard-length race, one length of the stadium, about 200 yards
- # Diaulos
 - One turn at end of stadium, ~400 yds
- # Dolichos
 - Various longer races, up to 3 miles (24 stades)
- # Hoplite
 - Racing in full or partial armor, 2-15 stades

Stadium

- # Long, narrow (200 x 30 yd) with stands all around
- # Up to 20 runners ran side-by-side
- # Turned at one or more posts at end, rather than having an oval track.

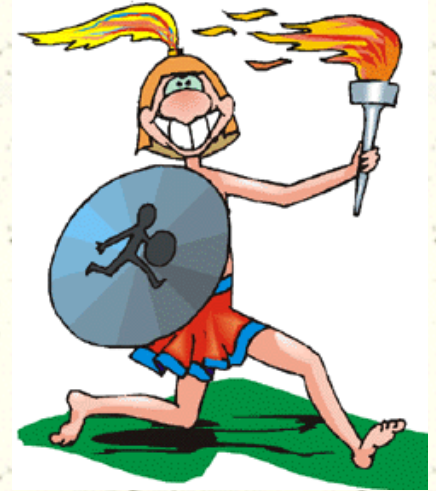


Delphi Stadium

Sources

- # *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1970)
- # E. N. Gardiner, *Athletics of the Ancient World* (1930)
- # *Athletics in Antiquity, The Ancient World* (March 1983)
- # *Ancient Games & Athletics, The Ancient World* (August 1984)
- # www.perseus.tufts.edu/Olympics

The End



Run so as to obtain the prize!