

# Sport in Ancient Greece

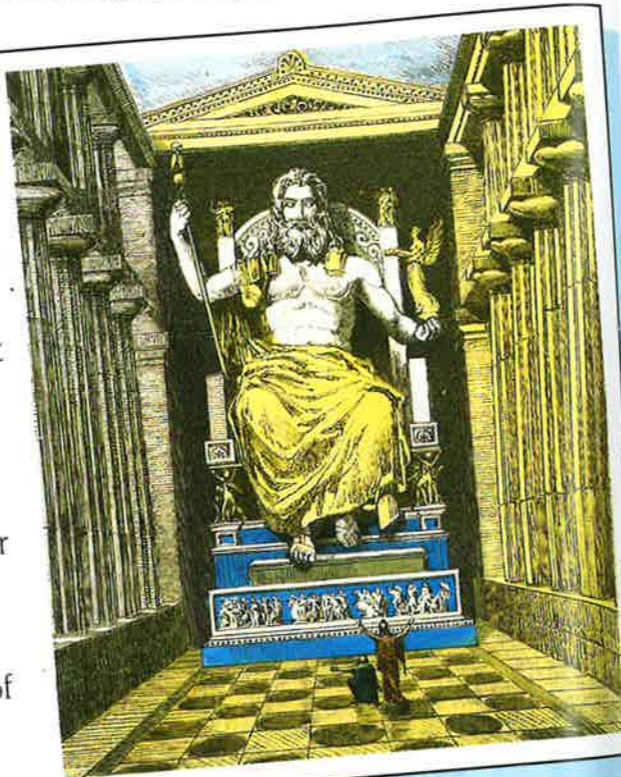
Read the information about Ancient Greece in the four book extracts below.

## Life in Ancient Greece

Mary Gardiner

In Ancient Greece there were many sports competitions but the four biggest ones were known as the Panhellenic Games.

Men came from all over the Greek world to take part (women were not allowed to compete in the men's games). Many buildings were erected for the Games. These were for housing the competitors and important people who came to watch, and for performing religious ceremonies. At Olympia, a huge statue was erected of Zeus, the king of the gods. It was about 13 metres high and was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.



The Olympic Games were held in honour of the god Zeus. No one knows exactly when the Olympic Games began, but official records date back to 776 BC. At first, there was only one event – running – but, later, others were added, including wrestling, boxing, chariot racing, horse racing and the pentathlon – an event with five separate parts. There was an enormous feast on the last day, and the winners were presented with palm branches, olive wreaths or woollen ribbons. If any athlete had performed really well, a statue was put up in his honour.

## The Ancient Greeks

John Turner

Of all the Panhellenic competitions of Ancient Greece, the Olympic Games were the most important. Held in Olympia, a city sacred to the god Zeus, the Olympiad, as the games were called, was part of an important religious festival.

The Games took place every four years for a period of over 1,000 years, but ended when Olympia was destroyed by earthquakes in AD 395. At first, the games lasted just one day but, from the seventy-seventh Olympiad, they were extended to five days.

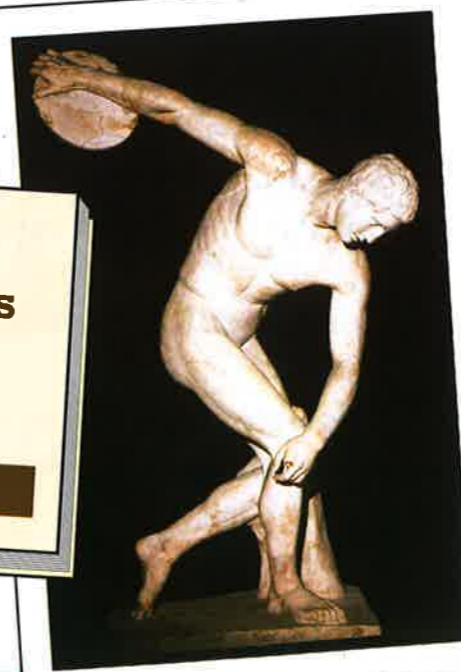


## The History of the Olympic Games

B. J. Brownlow

## Great Warriors

I. Brawl



There were many local sports competitions held in Ancient Greece. It was very important for the men to be fit, as they had to be prepared for battle in the many wars between states within the Greek empire. Every four years, when the Olympic Games were due to begin, messengers travelled throughout the empire, commanding that all wars between states should stop so that the competitors and spectators could safely gather at Olympia for the games.