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History of the sport



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THE MEANING OF "SPORT"

The term sport derives from the Latin word "deport."

The word has among its meanings to "go out of the door," that is, to go outside the cities and engage in sports.

From this term derived the Provençal and the Spanish "deportar," as well as the French "desport" (leisure entertainment); from this latter originated in 14th century English the term "disport," which later in the sixteenth century was shortened to today's common term in SPORT.

Sport can be defined as the set of those physical and mental activities carried out to improve and maintain the entire human psycho-physical apparatus in good condition and to entertain those who practice them or those who are spectators.

The sport can be practiced individually or in a group (team sport), without competitive ends or competing against other athletes. In the latter case, we talk about sports competitions.

The important thing is not to win but to participate.

Pierre De Coubertin

The Second is the first of the losers

Enzo Ferrari



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INTRODUCTION

In almost all societies of the contemporary world, sport is a reality evident from the economic and political point of view. It is an integral part of the culture of a community that develops in parallel with its continuous changes. Please think of the traditional sports that led to the cultures of the nations they began and the relationships that link sport to the mass media.

Leaving aside for the moment the physical education, a fundamental base for the sport, both recreational and competitive, the practice of sport at all levels is more widespread in those societies with cultural and economic realities that allow you to take advantage of the means and facilities necessary to practice it.

In countries with more sporting traditions, sport must be considered as a means of transmitting universal values and a school of life that teaches people to fight for a just reward, also emphasizing respect for their teammates and opponents

The development and popularity of the sport have contributed to the emergence of new activities dedicated to the organization, culture, and study of all aspects of sports activity, helping to create a movement of interests that often go beyond ethics. Physical education, for example, has a primary role in the education and training of the individual already within the school, as it leads to self-discipline and respect for ourselves and our neighbors. On the other hand, in the competitive sport that has now become excessive due to purely economic factors, we witness phenomena completely unrelated to sporting ethics. The Panathlon International is committed to fighting the false roads of sport, creating a moment of healthy fighting, loyal, clean, and transparent sport.



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PROFESSIONALISM AND DILETTANTISM

During the twentieth century, many new sports were born alongside those already existing, bringing a fundamental mutation to the world of sport for the economic aspect that revolves around sports events, creating a distinct distinction between amateur and professional sports. Professional athletes are paid to carry out their activities.

They could be defined as 'workers of the show' these are inserted in the companies that, thanks to sponsors who economically support the sports apparatus, derive image for their companies. The amateur standard, on the other hand, while being of lower performance, is a forge in which, with great sacrifices, are forged new champions that tomorrow will pass to professionalism. In Western countries, the most popular professional sports attract the majority of practitioners, while the minor sports are constantly struggling to support the management expenses and maintain significant results. The amateur sports activity involves significant management costs on the part of the companies that cannot always cover through sponsors. Losses are resolved through the interventions of managers and with the contribution of public local administrations.

Undoubtedly professionalism with the mirage of solid earnings for athletes brings the approach to the most popular sports of a growing number of young people who join amateur clubs for a future to aspire to a place in the goth of professionalism. Professionalism and Dilettantism have been the worldwide contrast for participation in the Olympics for years. During the last years of the Olympics (first reserved only for amateur athletes) were also admitted professional athletes who are usually better prepared can express their talent with high performances.

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This decision resolves the hypocrisy that has made the management of competitive sports opaque for decades.

In the past, the presumed amateurs, both those of the communist bloc and those of the West, trained full-time with scientific methods, obtaining salaries and expenses reimbursements, sometimes substantial.

This management method has relegated to a secondary level the activities of study and work, both for the time spent and for a social profit.

Many countries have included athletes in a career path with the armed forces or police. This political invented the state athlete.

Nothing excluded that from these career promotions, athletes could get, by reflex, socio-economic "gains" in contrast to the sporting ideals of De Coubertin.



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THE IDEAL OLYMPIC GAME

The famous Baron Pierre De Coubertin, in the recent past time, created the modern Olympics dream.

It had described the Olympic ideal with the famous phrase "The important thing is not to win but to participate" to condense in the Olympic spirit those principles of loyalty, commitment, and respect that should be the basis of every sport, both professional and amateur.



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BREAKDOWN OF SPORTING ACTIVITIES

As a whole, what we call sport consists of various disciplines that, with its basic components, stimulate in the individual the spirit of competition, the desire for fun, and the desire to improve in increasingly high results.

Analyzing the various modes of play and the rules imposed in the various disciplines, we can identify the sporting gesture into three categories: Individual, couple, and team. Another subdivision can be made by analyzing how competition is played: Racket sport (a sport that involves the use of a racquet; more famous examples are Tennis and Table Tennis), Equestrian sports that involve the use of the horse, Motorsports with cars or motorcycles, Martial arts (e.g., fencing), Water sports (sailing, windsurfing, motorboating)



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SPORT THE BEGINNING OF HISTORY

Studies on the development of sport in the history of humanity can give us information on how, over the centuries, the changes have affected the sporting activity in different cultures. Sport has always been conceived as an activity involving the individual's physical and mental abilities to exercise and constantly improve them and then use them appropriately and profitably in a completely different field.

This vision leads us to think that sport is probably as old a concept as the development of human intelligence. In the time of primitive man, physical activity was essential to improve the mastery of the environment in which he lived; therefore, he lived every "sports activity" for survival. Today sports activity expresses competition in the social dimension.



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PREHISTORY

Discoveries of "rock art" that occurred during the XIX century in France (in Lascaux), Africa, and Australia prove that physical activities during ritual ceremonies involved the participants in prehistoric times.

The rock engravings relating to physical activity are old, about 30000 years ago.

In the Libyan desert have been found engravings depicting men intent on swimming and hurling the arrows with the bow. The graffiti makes us think that the caveman used physical activity to get food for survival and recreation.

Even if we do not identify direct sources that indicate a sporting activity in prehistoric times, we can hypothesize that we practiced physical activities related to ceremonies or propitiatory rituals in that period.

We could take these facts as the beginning of the sport practiced in the ancient Euro-Asian civilizations.



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ANCIENT EGYPT

In ancient Egyptian monuments, multiple inscriptions bring us to know that already in the time of the Pharaohs, many sports activities: gymnastics, wrestling, swimming, boating, running, jumping, boxing, and several ball games, were practiced for mainly recreational purposes. The Pharaohs and the state dignitaries of ancient Egypt attended the sports competitions and willingly supported the construction of the necessary structures. From the hieroglyphics, the scholars have been able to establish that millennia before the Greeks, the ancient Egyptians had drawn up basic rules for some games. They had also provided, for control of the regular course of activities, how to appoint a neutral referee and equipped teams with an equal number of players. They also assigned to winners of the race the collars forged in different ways. A good rule was also to pay homage to winners and losers, the former for their superiority and the latter for participating with sporting spirit.



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ANCIENT CHINA

Findings of ancient artifacts and buildings suggest that Chinese civilization has begun engaging in athletic activities that can be assimilated to the modern concept of sports since 4000 BC. The development of ancient sports in China seems to be linked to the development of other human activities: agriculture, crafts, war, and entertainment. The most popular sport in ancient China seems to have been gymnastics. Thanks to the Buddhist monks, rules dating back to 2700 B.C. provided for bending, twisting, and breathing. The same masters of the Tao taught gymnastics because it guaranteed the body's health and the soul's immortality. Gymnastics can be easily traced to the development of martial arts in China (the most famous style, certainly the Kung-Fu of the Shaolin temple) and the acrobatic tradition of traditional Chinese circus artists.



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ANCIENT GREECE

In ancient Greece was practiced many sports were:

wrestling

boxing

throwing of the spear

throwing off the puck

war chariot race

long jump

pentathlon

Undoubtedly, all this makes us think that the Greek military culture has been predominant in developing related sports. In 776 BC., the first Olympic Games were established in honor of Zeus every four years in Olympia, a small village in the Peloponnese. The Olympic event was not only a sporting event but served to celebrate the excellence of the individual and the artistic variety of the entire Greek culture. It was mainly an opportunity to honor the highest religious deity. The Greeks considered the Olympic Games sacred, and during their course, it was considered blasphemy to Zeus to provoke an outbreak of hostility.

Thanks to this political and religious decision, they proclaimed a truce on all battlefields. A peace lasted from the beginning to the end of the games.

During this truce, were suspended executions. The Olympic truce allowed all Greek citizens to meet peacefully and compete in full mutual respect. The poet Pindar sang the deeds of the Games' protagonists.



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ANCIENT ROME

Roman and the Hellenic sports culture exalted physical competition.

Since the founding of the City, non-competitive sports in the spa were mainly practiced as a fundamental culture of well-being. This good practice was one of the strengths of Roman society—as in Greece, and it included sports competitions in the celebrations of religious holidays.

Generally, all roman sports competitions of the time were referred to as “Ludi” (a word probably derived from the Etruscan language).

The members of the Roman priestly class organized the “Ludi” with the participation of the young members of the nobility. In Rome, the sacredness of sports games, very common in ancient Greece, was replaced by the spectacular aspect of collective entertainment. In Rome, as old accounts testify, the games also included the Greek Olympic specialties; among these, the Roman public preferred the most violent disciplines such as boxing and fighting, especially the “Pancrazio,” a very damaging variant of boxing that many times led to lethal results. The predominant violence in ancient Rome’s sporting competitions is later found in the widespread gladiatorial fighting, which was also used as a social stabilizer. From here, you can guess why in many cities of the empire, the Cesars have built theaters to accommodate the large audience; the most famous arena is the Colosseum.



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THE OLYMPIC GAMES

The origin of the ancient Olympics is shrouded in mystery. One of the traditional versions tells us of the young Pelope, sacrificed mercilessly to the Gods by his father, and of Jupiter, who gave him back his life.

Pelope celebrated the event with a party and a series of wrestling, boxing, and racing competitions. Since then, in 1700 BC, the Games were repeated occasionally and almost disappeared over the centuries. A thousand years later, in Pelops, in 784 BC, King Iphitus conquered Ilia and learned of the ancient tradition of the Games. It celebrated the "Olympic Games Jupiter" in Olympia in 776 BC. The Greeks immediately showed great enthusiasm for the Olympics, which became a fixed event repeated every four years. The Olympics became a perfect expression of Greek culture, which emphasized physicality. The education on the formation of the body, the membership of ethnic groups, and the individual challenges, were encouraged not only to make young people strong and ready for war but also to give them the strength to sustain the labors of life: strength of the body and strength of the spirit.



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The Olympics were so significant that the states could not declare wars during the Olympics, and battles that were in progress must announce the suspension of the fighting

In the six days of the Olympics event, the first and the last were dedicated solely to the opening and closing ceremonies. Many spectators flocked to Olympia, while the athletes had to be in the city a month before the races. The athletes competed naked to avoid the encumbrance of the dress and because the sporting competition represented a moment of extreme purity.

During the event, women could neither go out nor attend games since, for them, it was forbidden to enter the place of the performances.

The games always followed a fixed schedule: the first and last day was dedicated exclusively to the opening and closing of the games and the ceremonies.

The second day has dedicated to the race of runners, A run of about 200 meters, a half-distance of about 400 meters, and a bottom of about 5000 meters.

The third day was dedicated to fightings sports like boxing, wrestling Pancrazio. The latter game was a particularly violent type of struggle in which all blows were practically allowed.

The fourth day was dedicated to equestrian sports: the chariot and horse race shows.

On the fifth day, the pentathlon was held, a race consisting of long jump, javelin throw, run, discus throw, and fight. After each specialty, only the best could enter the next test.

So, in games, only the best agonists can fight between them to win and be celebrated like the Olympic champion The winners of the Olympic races were admired, immortalized in poems and statues, and awarded with a laurel wreath and a pot of oil.



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The ancient Olympics were held until 393 D. C. when the emperor Theodosius, at the explicit request of the bishop of Milan St. Ambrose, decided to suppress the sporting event. The Olympics, over the centuries, had changed profoundly, lost the initial sporting spirit, and became, little by little, a big business in which corruption reigned uncontested. In addition to the Olympian Games, other religious competitions were held: the Pythian Games in honor of Apollo at Delphi; the Nemean Games at Nemea in honor of Zeus; the Isthmian Games in honor of Poseidon and the God Palaemon at the Isthmus of Corinth; the Panathenaic Games in Athens. On June 16, 1894, during a congress on the problems of amateur and professional sport, Baron de Coubertin illustrated his plan: to revive the Olympics. De Coubertin achieved great success: they were decided immediately, in 1896, and place Athens, the first edition of the Olympics of the modern age. April 6, Easter Monday, 1896, was the big day: after 1503 years, in front of 70,000 people, the Olympics finally came back to life. Since then, the world's greatest athletes have competed every four years to enter the great Olympic history. Unlike the Olympics of antiquity, which also stopped wars, modern ones were forced to cancel in three editions (1916, 1940, 1944) for the war events. At the first Athens Games of 1896, 13 nations and 285 competitors existed. Ten sports on the program: athletics, swimming, rowing, fencing, gymnastics, wrestling, boxing, weight lifting, cycling, and tennis (rowing races did not take place due to lack of registration).



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The Olympic emblem consists of 5 rings representing the five continents: blue for Oceania, black for Africa, red for the Americas, green for Europe, and yellow for Asia, and the motto: "Citius, Altius, Fortius. " At each Olympics' opening, an organizing country athlete takes an oath to the loyalty of Olympic value.



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One of the main problems of the Olympics (and sport in general) is doping. In the early twentieth century, people began to use drugs to achieve better sports performance. The only death to doping occurred during the Olympics was at the 1960 Rome Games, in the road bike race. The Dane Knut Enemark Jensen fell off his bicycle and died. The autopsy revealed that the athlete was under the influence of amphetamines.

The IOC introduced anti-doping testing starting with the 1968 Olympic Games. The first Olympic athlete tested for doping was the Swedish pentathlete Hans-Gunnar Liljenwall during the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City. Liljenwall lost the bronze medal. Seventy-three athletes followed Liljenwall for the next 38 years, including many medals. The most publicized doping disqualification will always remain that of the Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson, who won the 100 meters of Seoul in 1988. It has been found positive for anabolic steroids. Despite the controls, athletes have continued to use doping substances over the years. In 1990, the discovery of some documents denounced the fact that many East German athletes were forced by their coaches and preparers to take doping substances. Recently the Russian Olympic Committee has been suspended for problems of state doping.



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