

THE OLYMPIC GAMES

The first Olympic Games took place in Ancient Greece in 776 BC. The Greeks were fond of music, drama and all kinds of physical exercises. They were also religious people. The famous games at Olympia were held in honour of Zeus and always included lots of religious ceremonies as well as sporting events. The Olympic Games took place every leap year and all cities in Greece sent their best athletes to take part in them. The strongest athletes came together to run, jump, wrestle, throw the discus and javelin. There were also chariot races. The winners did not get medals. The highest honour was an olive wreath and people treated the winners as national heroes.

It became a tradition to stop wars for the time of the Olympic Games. After the Romans conquered Greece there were no more Games at Olympia.

Pierre de Coubertin revived the classical Games and in 1896 295 athletes from 13 countries attended the first modern Olympic Games in Athens. The Olympic Flame has always been a symbol of peace, harmony and friendship. The five circles on the Olympic flag symbolize five continents. The capitals of many countries have been Olympic cities. The best athletes of the world take part in the Olympic Games for the honour of their countries and for the glory of sports.