

Other Competitions

The ancient Olympics were more than just an athletic competition, and so it makes sense that athletic events weren't the only contests. The ancient Greeks believed firmly in excellence not only of the body, but of the mind as well, encouraging citizens to be well-rounded and proficient both in athletics as well as intellectual pursuits. Ancient Greek *gymnasiums* were spaces not just for exercise, but also philosophical debates.



Heraldic Competitions

Red-Figure Calyx Krater with Mercury the Herald, Greek, Attic, ca. 480-470 BCE, Terracotta, 1999.011.002, Atlanta, Michael C. Carlos Museum

In a world without email or cars, heralds were a primary way of communication between cities. Heralds had an important role to play before the Olympic games as messengers of the implementation of the **Sacred Truce** (See Section 6: Politics for more information). During the games themselves, a single herald announced each event. The heraldic competition, introduced in 396 BCE, decided who would be the announcer for the next games. The runner-up was given the honor of being the trumpeter for the next Olympic games. Contestants were judged on the volume and clarity of a speech that they gave at some distance from the judges.

Suggested Further Reading

Faulkner, Neil. "The Programme". In *A Visitor's Guide to the Ancient Olympics*, 195-243. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012.