**Athletics**

Athletics are group of sporting events that involves competitive running, jumping, throwing and walking. The most common types of athletics competitions are track and field, road running, cross country running and racewalking.

The simplicity of the competitions and the lack of a need for expensive equipment makes athletics one of the most common types of sports in the world.

History

Athletic contests in running, walking, jumping and throwing are among the oldest of all sports and their roots are prehistoric. Athletic events were depicted in the ancient Egyptian tombsi n Saqqara, with ilustrations of running at Heb sed festival and high jumping apearing in tombs from as early as 2250 BC.

Tailtean games (Ireland) founded circa 1800 BC. They were a thirty day meeting which included running and stone throwing among its sporting events.

First olympics 776 BC – 393 AD.

Stadium length running event. known as the stadion. Later expanded to include throwing and jumping events within the ancient pentathlon (stadion, javelin, discus, long jump and wrestling). Strictly male affairs (participants and spectators). Women had Heraea games.

The development of modern sport, however, has come only since the early 19th century. Organized amateur footraces were held in England as early as 1825, but it was from 1860 that athletics enjoyed its biggest surge to that date. 1866 the AAC yielded governing power to the Amateur athletic Association.

1896 – revival of the olympic games.

1912 – International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF). 1987 – more than 170 national members. It’s rules applied only to mens competition until 1936, when the IAAF became also governing body of womens athletics.

World athletics – founded on 17th July 1912 at stockholm, Sweden. Headquarters are in Monaco. It has 214 member federations. It’s governing body covering sports of athletics, covering track and field, cross country running, road running, racewalking, mountain running and ultra running. Included in it’s chargé are the standartization of rules and regulations for the sports, recognition and management of world records and the organisation of athletics competitions. In 1982 the IAAF passed several amendments to its rules to allow athletes receive compensations for participating in international competitions.

**Track and field**

Competitions that are held both indoor and outdoors divided to few categories.

Sprints – 100m, 200m, 400m

There are relay races in 4x100m and 4x400m.

Middle distance – 800m, 1500m, 3000m

Long distance – 5000m, 10000m

Hurdles – women 100m, men 110m, for both 400m and 3000 m steeplechase.

Jumping disciplines – long jump, triple jump, high jump, pole vault

Throwing disciplines – shot put, hammer throw, javelin, discus

Combined events - Heptathlon (womens discipline) and Decathlon (mens discipline).

**Road running**

Disciplines mainly conducted on courses of paved or turmac roads although major eventsoften finnish on the track of a main stadium.

Common recreational sport and also elite level of the sport. The world Marathon majors – the Berlin, Boston, Chicago, London, New York city and Tokyo.

**Cross country**

Races for both teams and individuals, are run on grass or woodladnd courses nad might also include stretches of gravel paaths, road and hills.

**Czech athletes**

Emil Zátopek – Olympic gold medalists from 10k metres race at the Olympic games in London 1948 and three times olympic gold medalist in 1952 Helsinky from Marathon, 5k and 10k.

Dana Zátopková – wife of Emil Zátopek. She has olympic gold medal from Helsinky 1952 for Javelin throw and a silver medal from the 1960 Rome olympics.

Barbora Špotáková – Javelin throw – two time olympic champion and three time worl champion. She also holds the world record.

Jan Železný – Javelin throw – three time olympic champion and three time world champion.

Pavel Maslák – 400m indoor – three time world indoor champion and three time european indoor champion.