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https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/453/2021_2022_15_E7_AF_87_E6_96_87_E7_AB_c83_453885.htm the Ancient Olympics With great anticipation, China is busily preparing for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games. Beijing will be added to a long list of the great cities that have invited the world to honor the world ' s greatest athletes in the modern era of the Olympic Games. China will also become part of an important, rich heritage that goes back more than 2000 years. The origins of the ancient Olympic Games tend to be submerged in sea of Greek myths. One popular myth suggests that Pelops, a prince from Lydia, in Asia Minor (nowadays Turkey), won the hand of a princess by unfairly defeating a competing suitor in a chariot race. The loser was to be condemned to beheading. The prince rigged his opponent ' s chariot to crash during the race. Later, the chariot did crash, killing the driver. The princess became Pelop ' s bride, and he instituted the Olympic Games to celebrate his victory. However, others claimed that the first Olympic event was a funeral festival to honor his dead competitor. Another myth involved Hercules, the mythical strong man. Hercules was the son of Zeus, the Greek god, and one of the god ' s mistresses. Hera, Zeus ' wife, and also his sister, was very upset. She attempted in many ways, to kill Hercules as a baby. Hercules survived. Later, after he had married, Hera successfully put a spell on him, demanding that he kill his wife. Because he was the son of the god, Zeus, Hercules was destined to become a god himself. In order to accomplish this, Hercules had to

be cleansed of his wife ' s murder. To do this, he was directed to perform twelve difficult labors. If he successfully completed these, he would become an immortal god, like his father. One of the majestic labors was to clean the stables of the King of Elis, in the impossibly brief period of one day. The king had huge stables with very large herds of cattle. Hercules asked the king to give him one tenth of his cattle, if he completed the task in one day. The king, perhaps humoring Hercules, or perhaps believing that this task couldn ' t possibly be done in one day, agreed. In one day, Hercules diverted two rivers through the barns, cleaning them, but he did not receive the cattle that were promised in the deal. Hercules waged a successful war on the King, sacking Elis. He introduced the Olympic Games to celebrate this victory and to honor his father, Zeus, who lived on nearby Mount Olympus. The myth also suggests that Hercules measured out the stade, a footrace event of about 200 meters (or the length of the stadium). As today, athletes in the ancient world were popular and had tremendous impact on the society of their day. The goal of the well-disciplined, physically trim athletes was to be the best. The champion athlete assumed a position of honor and privilege in Greek society. The status of a triumphant athlete also enhanced the reputation of his home city-state. Every young Greek boy who pursued the dream of being an Olympic champion some day envied the athletes. An important part of a Greek school boy ' s curriculum was vigorous physical training in gymnasium. The ancient Olympic Games, which began in 776 BC, lasted for over 1100 years. In 394 AD, the Christian Roman Emperor Theodosius

abolished the games, as pagan festivals. At that time the Roman Empire was in decline. The modern Olympics have been around for only a little over 100 years, since 1896. The Olympics of 776BC was the first, for which there is a written record, but it is believed that these events existed before this. There is evidence to show that athletic contests took place in Ancient Egypt and in the ancient Minoan civilization on the island of Crete. 100Test 下载频道开通，各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 www.100test.com