

# History of Military Sports in Mesopotamian Civilizations from Persian Empire to Now

## Mesopotamia

Mesopotamia is a geographical region in west Asia located within the Tigris–Euphrates river system, most of in current Iraq, and also in Turkey, Iran, Syria and Kuwait. Mesopotamia is well-known because of the civilizations formed in this region. The Sumerians and Akkadians (including Assyrians and Babylonians) dominated Mesopotamia from the beginning of written history (c. 3100 BC) to the fall of Babylon in 539 BC, when it was conquered by the Achaemenid Empire. Many religions and cultures were shaped in Mesopotamia and the Code of Hammurabi, and Cyrus cylinder of human rights are the famous remainders of this region.

### Sumerians

This civilization was very primitive in many ways. Each city had its own king named Patsy or priest, from which the word reveals the extent to which the government was associated with religion. The organization of the tribal monarchs was a means of maintaining the social order. The Sumerians knew some of the uses of copper and tin and made bronze from their mixture, but metal was a luxury item for them anyway. The tools of the Sumerians were mostly made of flint. Most of the goods were transported by water, and because stone was scarce in Sumer, it was brought from the Persian Gulf or the northern parts of the two streams by boat. The most amazing thing left of the Sumerians is the calligraphy of these people. The emergence of the cuneiform and its stages of evolution is the greatest motto that the Sumerians have on human civilization.

### Akkadians

Another nation, led by the great Sargon, established the Akkadians and placed its capital at Agada, three hundred and twenty kilometers northwest of the Sumerian cities.

### Babylonians

No one, looking at the site of ancient Babylon today, remembers that this poor, barren, burning and continuous land on the banks of the Euphrates River was once a strong and rich center of civilization. Babylon was made up of Sumerians, but they conquered the city after the Akkadians invaded the western deserts. Hammurabi united the small and scattered states in the south of Mesopotamia and with his great code established a new order in these lands.

### Assyria

The people of this land were forced to follow a difficult military and heroic life due to the constant threats from the surrounding mountains, and gradually they overcame the invaders and bumps, and the brilliant civilization of Assyria spread to Egypt. Among his inventions are the first lens or telescope lens and the invention of locks and keys and the establishment of the world's first library by Assyrian Banipal.

## **The importance of sports between Iranians and the military forces**

Among the ancient civilizations, Iran was a country that had given great importance to sports and physical education in its education system. While at the same time other countries did not pay much attention to sports and physical training, Iranians recognized the importance and value of the ability and health of the body as one of the most important factors in creating a victorious and victorious army. In the following article, you will review the importance and role of sports in the education system of ancient Iran. Efforts to preserve the Iranian web based on the teachings of Zoroaster, which is called the Holy Land, as well as the desire to open up and conquer neighboring lands, required young people to receive regular military training based on sports and physical education. In fact, the military training program of many young people was limited to physical skills and abilities in order to acquire the necessary characteristics of a good and worthy soldier. In sum, the education of the children of ancient Iranian society - and in some cases the children of nobles and princes - was almost entirely focused on physical education, and it was shaped by military goals. Children were raised by their mothers until the age of seven. The boys then began their formal education at the age of seven, and from then on were officially recognized as belonging to the country, and by the age of fifteen they were learning military techniques. They began serving in the military at the age of fifteen and remained in the military until the age of fifty. Young people began their daily workouts at sunrise by running, throwing stones, and throwing spears, including their usual exercises: building a low-fat, high-heat diet, long walks, and crossing the river without getting wet and sleeping outdoors. Was. Horseback riding and hunting were also two common activities and jumping on a horse and jumping on it while running and in general speed and agility were the characteristics of horsemen riding in the Iranian system.

## **References of historians, scientists and literary figures**

According to Herodotus, the children of aristocrats, nobles, and princes continued their education until they were 20 years old, preparing for the command of the corps and the rule and trial. This type of education in the history of education is the first example of educational control by the government, which was done for a specific purpose - which at that time was to maintain the power and greatness of the country. That being said, physical education programs were more focused on preparing young people for possible wars. Herodotus, the famous Greek historian, writes: From the age of 5 to 20, Iranians learned three things: 1- Equestrianism 2- Archery (shooting) 3- Truthfulness. Young people started their daily exercises at sunrise by running and throwing stones and spears. Resistance with low food, enduring extreme heat and cold, long walks, crossing the river without getting wet, and sleeping in the open air were among their exercises. Horseback riding and hunting were also two common activities. Jumping on a horse and jumping on a horse while running (training speed and agility) were the characteristics of Iranian cavalry riders. Describe the types of military sports

1- Horse riding: The ancient Iranians had a great attachment to horses and considered this creature as a member of their family and prayed for horses like other members of their family. The importance of the horse in the life of the people of ancient Iran was such that the names of many famous kings were combined with the word horse. Such as Lohrasb (fast horse), Tahmasb (strong horse holder) and Arjast (honorable horse holder). The invention of the first equestrian tools such as spans, horseshoes, saddles and stirrups has been attributed to the Iranians. Chariot racing in ancient Iran was also an important part

of the Mehregan celebration program, which was held in honor of Mehr, the angel of light. The Greeks took this match from Iran and Romans adopted it from the Greeks.

2- Shooting: After equestrian training, shooting and hunting training began. Long bows and arrows made of reeds and short spears were among the hunting and shooting tools of the Iranians. Much has been said about teaching shooting and hunting to children in the Shahnameh, and amazing stories have been told about Bahram Gore's skill in shooting.

3- Polo: Another physical education program in ancient Iran is polo, which was invented by the Iranians. Children on foot and young people on horseback played and loved polo. English cricket and golf, which are popular sports around the world today, are derived from the game of Iranian polo.

4- Swimming: Another important sports program in ancient Iran was teaching children to swim. Swimming was taught in streams and rivers, and this training was done for military purposes. According to Strabo, the Iranians taught their children to cross streams and rivers without wetting their weapons.

5- Wrestling: In Iran, martial arts in the form of local wrestling and ancient sports have existed for a long time. It is noteworthy that sports and bodybuilding in terms of moral virtues were also considered by the ancient Iranians and they believed that sports in addition to providing health and strength, cultivates the virtues of good qualities such as courage, chivalry and humility. They considered physical education as the basis of strength and wanted strength to arrest the disabled and not for coercion and adventure, so much so that they associated strength and heroism with chivalry, purity of eye, humility and truth and many other moral virtues, and weakness and weakness. They considered it an inaccuracy. The great Iranian epic poet, Ferdowsi Tusi, who has translated the heroic and epic stories of ancient Iran into poetry. This is the opinion of the Iranians of ancient times as follows: Power in people leads to honesty, weakness and laziness leads to aberration and corruption

## Iran in CISM competitions

The Islamic Republic of Iran has participated in 5 of the 7 summer military competitions of the world. The rankings and medals that Iran has gained in these periods can be seen in the table below.

Year	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total	Rank
1995	2	5	3	10	15
1999	Did not participate.				
2003	Did not participate.				
2007	0	2	2	4	32
2011	5	3	4	12	11
2015	3	10	15	28	15
2019	4	2	5	11	14
Total	14	22	29	65	
Average	2.8	4.4	5.8	13	17.4

Our country's athletes have achieved the best results in Taekwondo in the CISM World Championships, followed by wrestling and volleyball. In terms of ranking, Iran had the best performance in 2011 and in terms of the number of medals, in 2015 it won the most medals. Iran has not won a medal in the

World Military Winter Championships, but it has won 5 gold and 2 silver medals in the competitions of Iranian officer universities.

## Iran in CISM Summer Games

