Ancient Sports (HIST 205)
T–TH 10:00–11:20, Global Scholars’ Hall 123
Instructor: Stephanie L. Budin (sbudin@uoregon.edu; Office is 313 McKenzie Hall)

Required Texts: Donald G. Kyle, Sport & Spectacle in the Ancient World (2nd edition);
Texts on Canvas

Aims of the Class: To learn about the role of sports in ancient Egypt, Crete, Greece, and Italy,
with a consideration of how we know what we know (or at least think we know).

Requirements and Grading:
Attendance is mandatory. You have to be here and talk and listen just like everyone else.
There will be a mid-term, a research paper, and a final exam during finals week. You will be
graded 20% on Attendance and Participation, 30% on the Midterm, 20% on the Research Paper,
and 30% on the Final Exam. If you miss any of these (e.g. fail to turn in the paper or take a test),
you fail the class. The class, not the assignment.

DO NOT PLAGIARIZE. Plagiarism is using someone else’s ideas or writing and
presenting it as your own. For example, cutting and pasting text from the Internet, or copying
someone else’s text from a book, without proper citation, is plagiarism. If you plagiarize, you
fail the class. Period.

DO NOT BRING ELECTRONIC ANYTHING TO CLASS UNLESS IT IS WIRED
INTO YOUR ENDOCRINE SYSTEM OR THE POLICE STRAPPED IT TO YOUR ANKLE
(you know who you are). No laptops, no cell ‘phones. Your teacher is 800 years old AND a
former World of Warcraft widow, and she hates these things.

Don’t eat in class.

Week One
Tuesday: Introduction—Ancient Egypt, Greece, and Italy (Welcome!). Some thoughts
on ancient sport and spectacle.

Thursday: No class (instructor has a conference)
Reading: S.L. Budin, “Ancient Egypt” and “Ancient Aegean” (Canvas)
Kyle, Introduction

Week Two
Tuesday: Ancient Egypt I: Royals Running, Shooting, and Riding
Reading: Kyle Chapter 1
Decker Chapters 1–3 (Canvas)

Thursday: Ancient Egypt II: “Common” Sports (or not)
Reading: Decker Chapters 4–5 and 7.
Week Three
Tuesday: Sporting Minoans I: Warrior Sports
Reading: Kyle Chapter 2
L. Platon: “Athletes and Sports” (Canvas)
A. Peatfield: “The Paradox of Violence” (Canvas)

Thursday: Sporting Minoans II: Bull Leaping (really!)
Reading: J. Younger: “Bronze Age Representations of Bull-Games” (Canvas)

Week Four
Tuesday: “Epic” Sports in the Greek dark Ages
Reading: T.P.J. Perry: “Sport in the Early Iron Age and Homeric Epic”
Kyle Chapter 3
Iliad, Book 23 (Canvas)

Thursday: More Homer, and a Glimpse of Things to Come
Reading: Odyssey, Book 8 (Canvas)
S.L. Budin: selections from Intimate Lives of the Ancient Greeks (Canvas)

Week Five
Tuesday: Enter the Olympics!
Reading: Kyle Chapters 4–6

Thursday: The Pythian, Isthmian, and Nemean Games
Reading: Kyle Chapter 7
REVIEW FOR MIDTERM

Week Six
Tuesday: MIDTERM

Thursday: Athenians Kicking @ss
Reading: Kyle Chapter 8

Week Seven
Tuesday: Women’s Sports in Ancient Greece
Reading: Kyle Chapter 11

Thursday: Hellenistic Sports
Reading: Kyle Chapter 12

Week Eight
Tuesday: Etruscan Sport and Spectacle (all on Canvas)
Reading: J.M. Turfa “Introduction to the Etruscans”
G. Bevagna, “Etruscan Sport”
Thursday: Roman Sports I: The Republic  
Reading: Kyle Chapter 13

Week Nine  
Tuesday: Roman Sports II: Late Republic and Principate  
Reading: Kyle Chapter 14

Thursday: Roman Sports III: The (Evil) Empire  
Reading: Kyle Chapter 15

Week Ten  
Tuesday: Byzantine Chariot Racing (and you thought soccer fans were nuts)  
Reading: D.A. Parnell, “Spectacle and Sport in Constantinople in the Sixth Century CE.”

Thursday: Review  
PAPERS DUE!!!!!