

THE SPORTS ARENA

by Mark Maestroni

IMOS METER HONORING ERNST CURTIUS

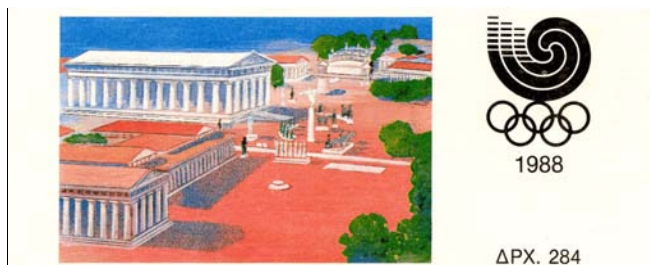


Scholars of the Olympic Games have one man in particular to thank for, quite literally, his groundbreaking work at Ancient Olympia: Ernst Curtius (1814-1896).

A native of Lübeck, Germany, Curtius was the first archeologist to undertake a complete excavation of the Ancient Olympia complex. A French expedition in 1829 had managed to partially excavate the temple of Zeus. However it was not until 1874 that Curtius, working on behalf of the German Reich, reached an agreement with the government of Greece. In exchange for being allowed exclusive access to the site, Germany agreed to finance the expedition in its entirety with all finds remaining in Greece. Unfortunately most of the larger pieces of statuary had already been looted in antiquity.

The expedition began its work in 1875. Within six years, Curtius and his crew had managed to clear and identify most of the ancient Altis including the Temples of Hera and Zeus, the Metroum (Temple to Meter), the Philippaeum, the precinct of Pelops and the Echo Colonnade.

Curtius' work at Ancient Olympia generated universal interest in the Games themselves. Pierre de Coubertin, while in his early 20's, visited Ancient Olympia during the Curtius excavations. There is little doubt that what he saw was a catalyst for the renovation of the Olympic Games.



Greek booklet cover depicting the Altis at Ancient Olympia, much as Curtius envisioned it.

IMOS "WO IST BEHLE" METER



One of the best known catchphrases of the Olympics was uttered by Bruno Moraver, a reporter for the German broadcaster ZDF: "Wo ist Behle?" or "Where is Behle?"

This all began during the 15 km cross-country skiing event on February 17, 1980 at the Lake Placid Olympic Winter Games. The object of the reporter's concern was German skier Jochen Behle. At the 5 km mark, Behle had been in the lead. Then suddenly he just seemed to disappear. Watching on his monitor, Moraver began to repeatedly utter those memorable words, "Where is Behle?"

Eventually, the missing skier resurfaced crossing the finish line in 12th place, the victim of television's perennial obsession with the "race leaders."

Behle, who was only 19 at the time of the 1980 Lake Placid Olympics continued to compete on the world stage taking part in the 1984 Sarajevo, 1988 Calgary, 1992 Albertville, 1994 Lillehammer, and 1998 Nagano Games. His best Olympic finish was fourth in the men's 4 x 10 km relay at Lake Placid and Lillehammer.

Behle is now retired from competitive skiing.

And "Where is Bruno" Moraver? Having retired from broadcasting in 1986, he now lives in the Allgäu ski area in Nesselwang near Munich where he continues to closely follow the local sport scene.



Jochen Behle