

**Greek Gods And Goddesses: The
Odyssey/ Jason And The Argonauts
Sunday 25 July BBC ONE**

Greek Gods And Goddesses sails back in time to revisit the lives of two of the greatest heroes of ancient Greece: Jason, who led his Argonauts on a fantastic quest for the magical Golden Fleece, and Odysseus, whose epic journey home from Troy was recorded by Homer.

Presented by former Olympic athlete Jonathan Edwards, the programmes bring the Greek

Wheels Of Gold BBC ONE

Wheels Of Gold is an observational documentary following the Great Britain Men's Wheelchair Basketball team as they prepare for the Athens 2004 Paralympics. At the Sydney Paralympics, the Great Britain team came fourth, narrowly missing out on bronze in the dying seconds of the match. Four years later, only gold will do. Coach David Titmuss has brought in new training techniques, nutritional advice, sports psychology and expertise from around the world to make sure this Great Britain team is in better shape physically and mentally than any previous squad.

However, their biggest challenge is selection – only 12 players will make it to Athens from a squad of 17.

BBC Sport has had full access to the squad over the last year. The programme follows individual players in their battles against broken bones, learning the sport from scratch and fighting each other for a coveted place on the team for Athens. Through traditionally shot footage and the players' own personal home videos, viewers hear their private thoughts and learn how they juggle family life with the expectations of a demanding coach and tough training regime. The programme also explains the personal stories about their disabilities and how much it means to them and their families to make it on to the team for a shot at gold. As the deadline for selection looms, self-doubt and bad performances creep in for the players as the coach makes his final decision.

This is a programme about a unique bunch of lads preparing for the biggest competition of their lives.

The Elgin Marbles Saturday June 26, BBC TWO

In the year in which the Olympic Games return to Greece, art critic Andrew Graham-Dixon unearths the many layered story which lies behind the greatest artistic controversy of the last 200 years – the Elgin Marbles.

This is the tale of an extraordinary man and the sculptures he took – some say stole – from the Parthenon in the early 1800s. An aristocrat, lieutenant colonel in the Army, elected MP and British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Lord Elgin was a highly successful man, married to a beautiful young woman in the 1790s. He lived their lives as a man of letters and a man of letters.

gold at Sydney 2000, the Olympic Games have produced countless moments of unforgettable drama.

Hazel Irvine presents the programme live from the Greek capital, with Sue Barker and Steve Rider, and Steve Cram is at the British Olympic training camp in Cyprus. The programme talks to the athletes who are responsible for some of the most memorable Olympic moments, such as Mark Spitz, seven-times gold medal winner at the Munich Olympics; Carl Lewis, four-times gold medal winner at the LA Olympics; Steve Redgrave, five-times gold medal winner and one of the greatest Olympians of all time; Lord Coe; and Michael Johnson, the fastest man on Earth.

The phone lines are now closed, but viewers can still vote by logging on to bbc.co.uk/Olympics

Sunday Grandstand – The Big Interview Sunday 12 September, BBC TWO

Clare Balding speaks to Great Britain's most famous Paralympian, Tanni Grey-Thompson, about her aspirations for Athens, following her success at the last Olympics in Sydney.

Horizon – First Olympians BBC TWO

Two and a half thousand years ago, sport was tough. Few athletes survived the rigours of the great sporting arenas of the Ancient Greeks and only one athlete has survived the ravages of time to offer a unique insight into a remarkable ancient world. *First*

Olympians tells the “Athlete of Taranto’s” fascinating story.

Fifty years ago, a skeleton was found in Taranto in Southern Italy. On opening an ancient tomb, archaeologists found the skeleton with four richly decorated jars in each corner of the tomb, revealing that the owner had an obsession for sport.

In *First Olympians*, scientists explain how the mystery of the tomb and its contents was solved and, using dramatic reconstruction, the programme brings to life the world in which the athlete lived and competed – the world of the ancient games.

My Big Fat Greek Olympic Dream BBC THREE

As a gangly teenager, BBC Radio 1 DJ Nemone Metaxas had two big dreams: one was to become a Radio 1 DJ and the other was to run the 400m at the Olympic Games.

A decade on and she's already a regular on Radio 1 but her other ambition has, until now, been just out of reach. In *My Big Fat Greek Olympic Dream*, cameras follow Nemone in her training as she bids to be fast enough to compete at the highest level.

Gory Greek Gods – Divine Violence/Divine Sex Begins Sunday 1 August, BBC THREE

The Olympians – the mythical Greek Gods – operated like a fantasy family firm of mobsters. While not dealing directly in crime, these ancient-world *Sopranos* were certainly in the protection business ... divine protection.

Presented by Ninia Benjamin of *3 Non-Blondes* fame, *Gory Greek Gods* illuminates the sometimes outrageous world of these mythical Gods and their ancient worshippers.

In this two-part series – *Divine Violence* and *Divine Sex* – rotoscope animation is used to bring to life the world of the Gods in all its

church. The preacher is Pastor Panagiotis Kantartzis and music is provided by the musicians of All Souls Church, London, who are visiting Athens during the Olympics.

Olympic Stories
Begins Monday 16 August

direct way with words, full of humour and yet also fully aware of poetic resonance, and has previously worked on Greek classics.

Tim McInnerny plays Odysseus; Amanda Redman is his faithful wife, Penelope; Janet McTeer is the goddess Athena; John Wood is Zeus; Cheryl Campbell is Arete; Benedict Cumberbatch is Telemachus; Adjoa Andoh is Calypso; and Frances Barber is Circe.

The Odyssey is broadcast over a weekend to coincide with the end of the Olympic Games.

A Game Of Marbles BBC RADIO 4

In this play about the Elgin Marbles, Lord Elgin battles to convince the Government of his day that the Marbles are really worth buying.

Sports International – Olympic Games That Changed The World Begins Friday 23 July, 1.05-1.30pm, BBC WORLD SERVICE

Sports International investigates momentous events in Olympic history. Politics, finances, drugs and controversies past and present all come under the spotlight in the four-part series *Olympic Games That Changed The World*.

The series is presented by Michael Johnson, one of the greatest athletes of all time, who made Olympic history by winning both the 200 and 400m at Atlanta in 1996.

Hitler used the Berlin Games of 1936 as a mass rally to promote German supremacy, the first, but not the last, time the Games were

used for political purposes. Other notable examples feature in the programme on Friday 23 July. In Mexico in 1968, Black American sprinters, Tommy Smith and John Carlos, bowed their heads and raised gloved fists in a Black Power salute on the awards stand while The Star-Spangled Banner played. Their gesture reverberated around the world.

Munich 1972 was the first time terrorism ever hit a sporting event. An attack on the Israeli

qualities that make a champion, is presented
by Jonathan Edwards.

**Play Of The Week –
Birth Of The Olympians
Saturday 7 August 6.30pm
BBC WORLD SERVICE**