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"Crowther provides here the second volume in the "Praeger Series on the Ancient World," which is aimed at the nonspecialist and general reader. Crowther's broad sweep includes the role of sports in ancient Egypt and the Middle East, early China and Japan, and even Mesoamerica. He focuses on Greek athletics (especially the Olympics) and Roman contests (especially spectator sports) and their use for political purposes, and he expands his discussion to sport in the Byzantine Empire, particularly charioteering. Other chapters emphasize social issues, and include a comparison of noted Greek, Roman, and Byzantine athletes and a discussion of the changing role of women in sport. Crowther's main themes include amateurism and professionalism, fair play, crowd behavior, politics, class, and sexuality. He includes a time line and a brief annotated list of further readings, but no notes. Crowther seems current with relevant sources, so one regrets his failure to name the authorities he discusses. Excellent graphics. Recommended. Lower-/upper-division undergraduates; general readers."-Choice