



Going the Distance

The Rise and Dominance of Endurance Athletes From the Great Rift Valley

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Historical Context

Marathons as events

From myth to main event

Originating from a Greek myth in which Pheidippides ran from Athens to Marathon, the marathon has been a mainstay in the modern Olympic Games, in which time we've seen the times drastically improve by nearly a full hour.

Political

Bans and Boycotts

Political statements, terror threats, and acts of defiance have long been a part of the Olympic Games

- Thus, the participating countries vary due to the political climate
- Is GDP related to performance?

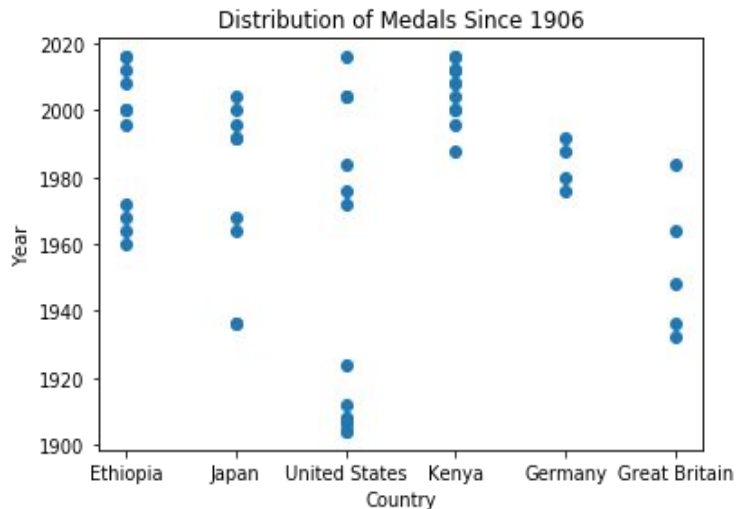
Geography

"Ciao firenji!"

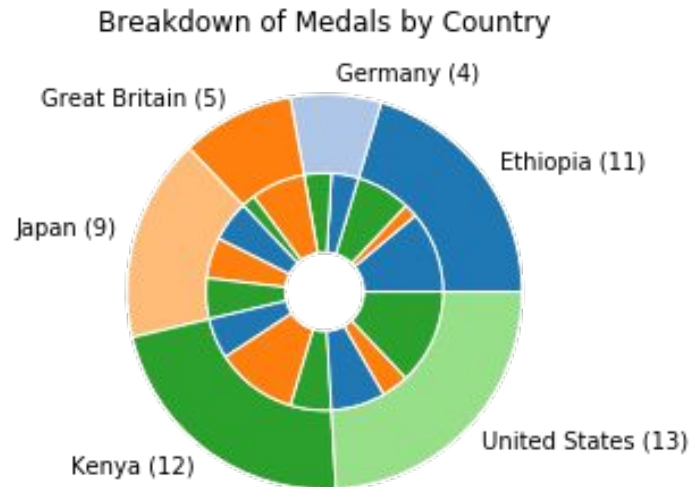
Are there factors beyond years spent training and natural ability that impact success in marathon and distance running? Is geography more indicative than genetics?

Historical Perspective:

100 Years of Olympics

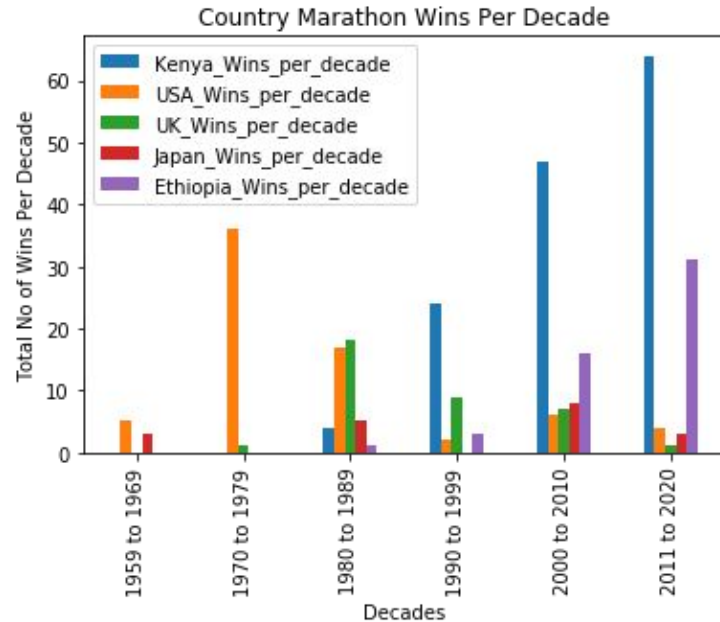
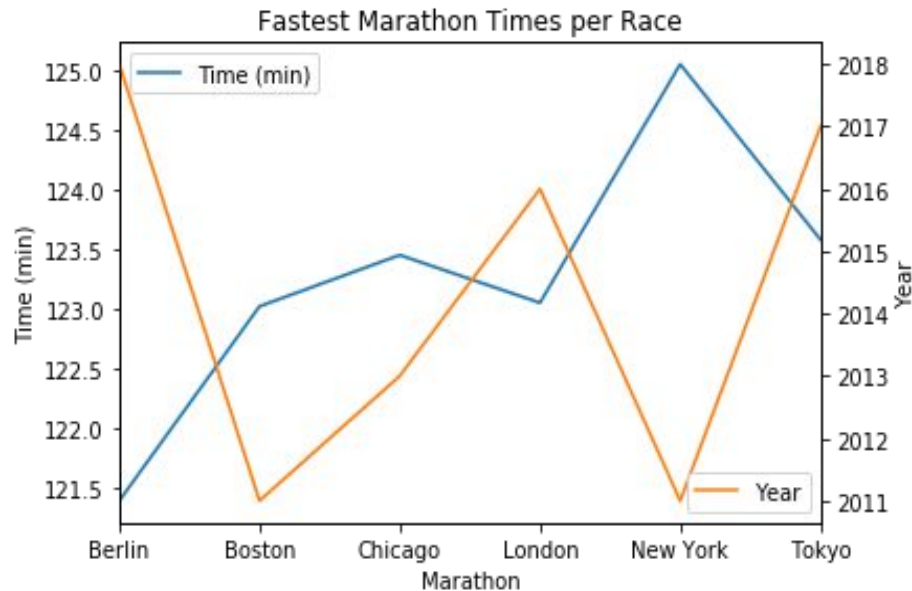
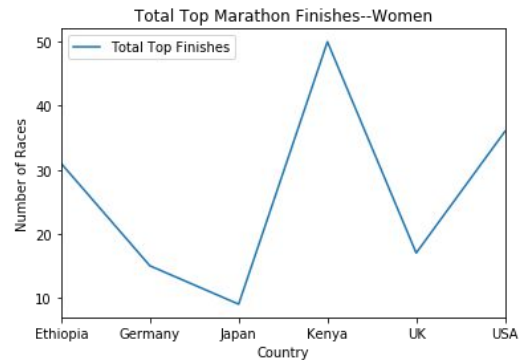


Medal Summary



Abbot World Marathon Majors

- Berlin
- Boston
- Chicago
- London
- New York
- Tokyo

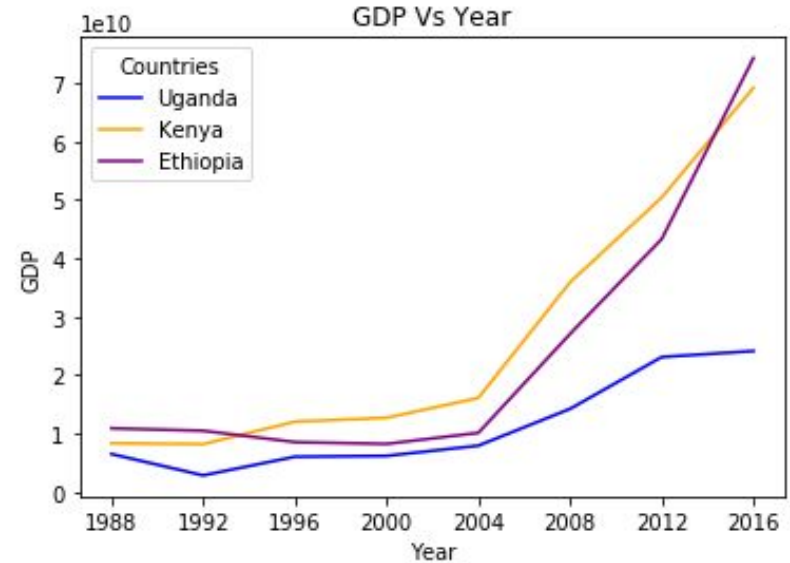
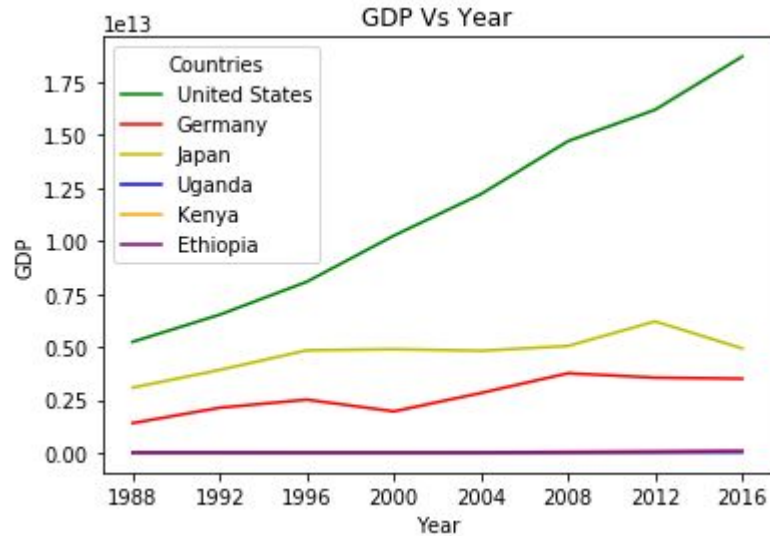


Money Matters?

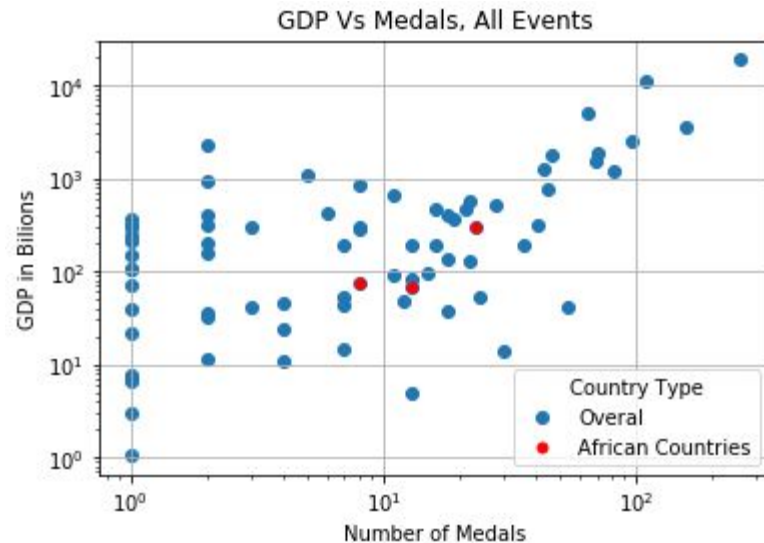
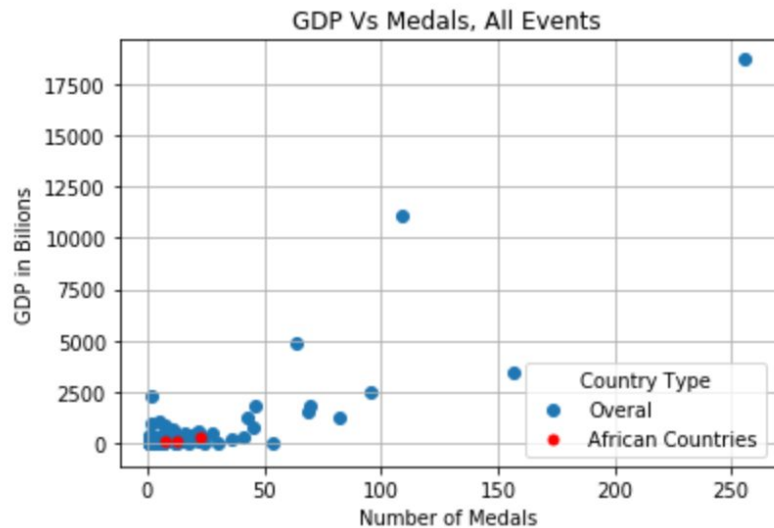
In fact one athlete told me that the motivation to run your way out of poverty is so strong, that if Kenya were to become a rich country he believed it would stop producing such fast runners.”

~Claudia Hammond

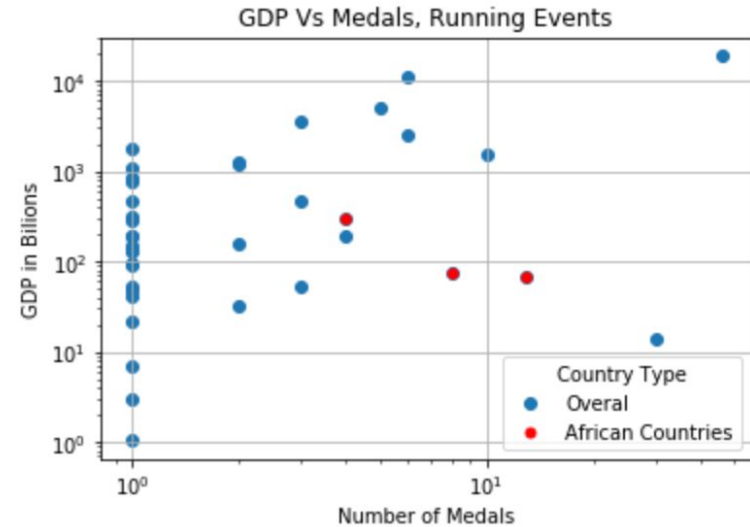
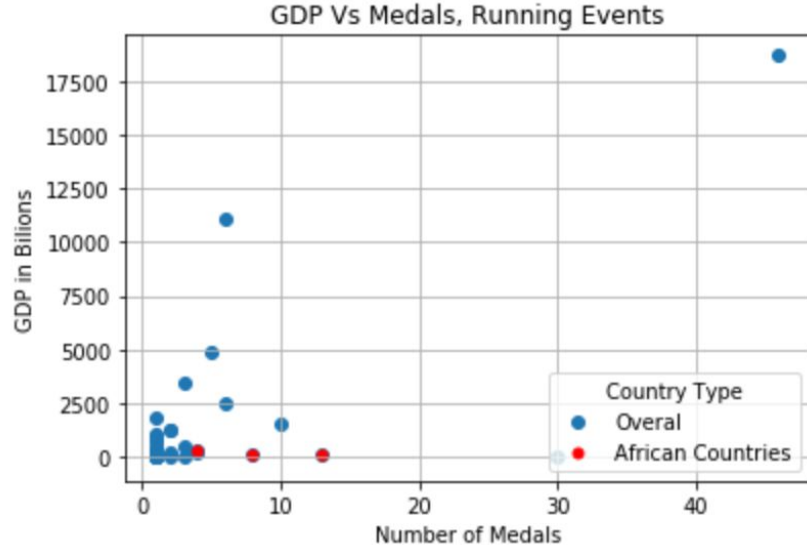
Examine of GDP VS. Performance



Examine of GDP compared to number of medals



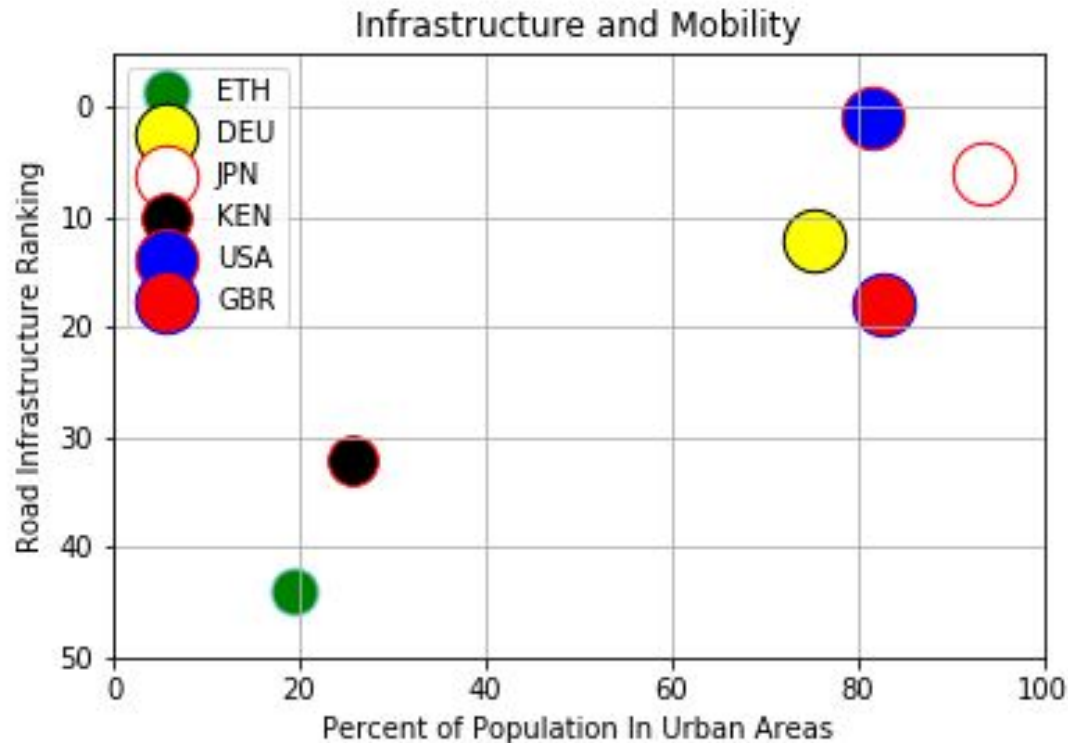
Examine of GDP compared to running medals



Development Visualized

Unimproved drinking water - use any of the following sources: unprotected spring; cart with small tank or drum; tanker truck; surface water, which includes rivers, dams, lakes, ponds, streams, canals or irrigation channels; or bottled water.

~CIA World Factbook



*Note:
Size of circle
represents
percentage
of water
sources
improved

Environmental Advantages

“The world’s best runners come from three mountainous districts near the Rift Valley in Africa, according to the BBC: Nandi in Kenya and Arsi and Shewa in Ethiopia.

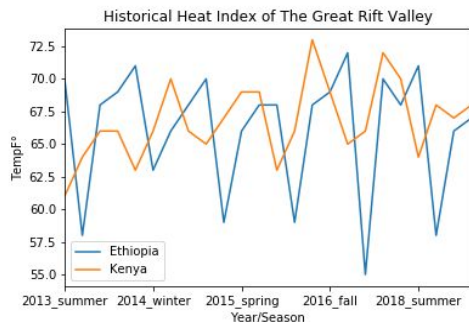
Out of 149 male marathon performances faster than 2 hour and 10 minutes in 2013, 80 were by Kenyans, 47 by Ethiopians, and eight by Eritreans and Ugandans, who are from the same region and of similar ethnicity, as Runner’s World Reports.”

~Shekhtman

Weather and Environment

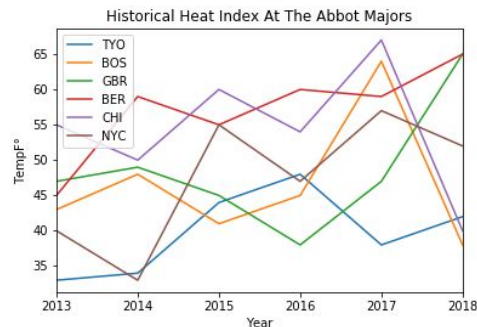
Region Weather

Weather During Training



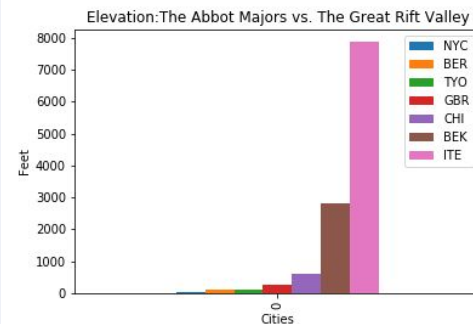
Race weather

Weather During events



Elevation

How's the air up there?





Conclusion

Citation

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