

THE HISTORY OF SPORT

Medieval period (1200 - 1485)

- People had little time or energy for recreational activities
- Leisure time activities were originally confined to feast days
- Games were local in nature, each village having its own particular activities for feast days
- From time to time the government banned traditional activities in favour of archery training

Tudor and Stuart period (1485 - 1714)

- Traditional folk games and activities flourished in Tudor times
- Puritanism greatly reduced the opportunities to play and types of activity allowed
- After the restoration in 1660, traditional activities were revived
- Sport moved away from its former links with merrymaking and lawlessness

Hanoverian period (1714 - 1790)

- Play and sport were largely ignored by the government
- People of all classes enjoyed their leisure to the full
- Increasing industrialisation demanded regular working patterns
- There was some pressure for Sunday to be a day of rest
- Large gatherings for sport often meant social disorder
- Regular, organised, rule-governed sport on a national scale emerged

Changing times (1790 -1830)

- Traditional sport was under attack from all sides
- Factory owners wanted a regular working week
- Property owners feared the damage caused by large crowds
- Churches criticised idleness, drunkenness and slack morality
- Commercialisation of sport developed, especially in horse racing, cricket and prize fighting

Victorian Sport (1830 - 1901)

- Sport developed in the context of industrial capitalism and class inequality
- Sport became linked to a moral code defined by the middle classes:
 - it was accepted that sport developed character and morality
 - competition had to be fair and rule-governed with similar conditions for all players
 - sport was to be played, not for reward, but for its own sake
- Nationwide sport developed through the influence of technology, the public schools and the national governing bodies
- For the masses, Saturday afternoon free from work was the turning point, enabling them to play and spectate
- Amateur and professional sport became increasingly separated

- Working class sport in school was limited largely to drill and therapeutic gymnastics

Edwardian Sport (1901 - 1918)

- Organised sporting involvement expanded rapidly across all classes
- Increasingly, the different classes played their sport separately
- Public school athleticism still dominated sport
- Male working class influence increased, notably in football in England and rugby in Wales. However, working class women were largely excluded from sporting involvement
- Commercialisation of sport continued with large numbers of spectators and increased numbers of professionals in major sports
- Sport was increasingly a matter of national concern

Between the world wars (1918 - 1940)

- Steady growth in sports participation continued for all classes of society, although working class were least involved
- Most sports were still class orientated
- Football (in all its versions) continued to increase in popularity and by the 1930s, was the most popular sporting activity
- Lack of facilities became an issue, particularly when national teams failed
- There was little government involvement in sport, apart from physical education in schools
- School physical education moved from therapeutic exercises to creative physical training
- Commercialisation of sport expanded rapidly, especially the provision for spectator sport
- Sport, as a part of a national culture, now extended to the majority of the population

British Sport (1940 - Today)

- An improved standard of living has enabled greater participation in sport for most social groups
- Amateur administrators only reluctantly allowed commercial forces to enter the world of sport
- Professional sports people had a long battle to be given fair rewards
- Television coverage increased in importance for sport and the sponsors
- The definition of amateurism for competition was replaced by the concept of eligibility
- Central government involvement in sport has always been fragmentary
- There has been a long standing under funding of sport by central government
- An advisory Sports Council was established in 1965 and the independent executive Sports Council in 1972
- Physical education was established in the 1944 Act for its educational value
- The movement approach conflicted with traditional games teaching
- Physical education moved away from educational values towards physical recreation and more recently towards health-related fitness
- Various academic qualifications in physical education stimulated scrutiny of the subject (for example, BEd, CSE, GCSE, A-Level)

- Physical education is now established in the national curriculum as a foundation subject
- There has been an increasing influence of market forces on schools, physical education, sports facilities and sport .

