

SPORTS IN GREAT BRITAIN and THE USA

1. Read and translate the text.

The British are known to be great sports-lovers, so when they are neither playing, nor watching games they like to talk about them. Many of the games we play now have come from Britain.

One of the most British games is cricket. It is often played in schools, colleges, universities and by club teams all over the country. Summer isn't summer without cricket. To many Englishmen cricket is both a game and a standard of behaviour. When they consider anything unfair, they sometimes say "That isn't cricket."

But as almost everywhere else in the world, the game which attracts the greatest attention is football, or **soccer**. Every Saturday from late August till the beginning of May, large crowds of people support their favourite teams in football grounds. True fans will travel from one end of the country to the other to see their team play. International football matches take place at Wembley.

Rugby is also very popular, but it is played mainly by amateurs. Next to football, the chief spectator sport in British life is horse-racing. A lot of people are interested in the races and risk money on the horse which they think will win. The Derby is perhaps the most famous single sporting event in the whole world.

Britain is also famous for motor-car racing, dog-racing, boat-racing, and even races for donkeys. The famous boat-race between the teams of Oxford and Cambridge attracts large crowds of people.

A great number of people play and watch tennis. Tennis tournaments at Wimbledon are known all over the world. The Innumerable tennis courts of Britain are occupied by people between the ages of 16 and 60 who show every degree of skill – from practically helpless to the extremely able.

The British also like to play golf, baseball, hockey, grass-hockey. Various forms of athletics, such as running, swimming, and boxing are also popular. You can sometimes hear that there are no winter sports in England. Of course the English weather is not always cold enough to ski, skate, or toboggan, but winter is a good season for hunting and fishing.

The most popular kinds of sports in the United States are American football, baseball, basketball, hockey, rugby and boxing.

Football is the most popular spectator sport in autumn. It is originated as a college sport. It is still played by almost every college and university in the country. American football differs from European soccer and rugby. The players are dressed in plastic armour, because the game is rough and there are hundreds of specific rules. The players can run with the ball, touch and push each other. The field looks different and even the ball is a different shape. The matches are accompanied by cheerleaders, who dance and lead the cheering.

Baseball is played throughout the spring and summer. It is often called the "national pastime". To play baseball you need two teams of nine players. Americans start playing baseball young. There are "leagues" which children of eight can join. The top players become big stars and earn a lot of money every year.

Basketball is a common winter sport in American schools and colleges. It is more popular here than in other countries. Many Americans prefer it to football because it is an indoor game and faster than football.

Words

Wembley - стадион Уэмбли в Лондоне
the Derby - Дерби
Wimbledon - Уимблдон
cricket - крикет
unfair - нечестный, несправедливый
to attract attention - привлекать внимание
crowd - толпа
to support - поддерживать, болеть
football ground - футбольное поле
fan - болельщик
amateur - любительский
rugby football - регби
next to football – на следующем

месте после футбола
chief - главный, основной.
spectator sport - зрелищный вид спорта
racing - бега
boat-race - гребные гонки
tournament - турнир
innumerable - бесчисленный
degree - степень, уровень
skill - умение
helpless - беспомощный
extremely - чрезвычайно
to toboggan - кататься на санях, санках

Answer the questions

1. Are the British fond of watching sport games?
2. What kind of sport is especially associated with Britain?
3. What is cricket for an Englishman?
4. What is the most popular game in the world?
5. Where do the Cup finals take place?
6. Is rugby played by professionals?
7. What kinds of racing are popular in Britain?
8. What are the most popular kinds of sports in the USA?
9. How does American football differ from European soccer and rugby?
10. What sport is often called the “national pastime” in the USA?
11. Why do many Americans prefer basketball to football?