

## BRITISH UPPER-CLASS SPORTS

### RUGBY

When it comes to tastes in sport, Britain and Poland are chalk and cheese or, you might say, poles apart. Sports that are popular in Poland and featured on primetime TV, wouldn't get a look in on British television. For example: volleyball, basketball and ski-jumping, and what's more, most Brits haven't heard of handball even. Well, British sports make much more sense and have the history, take rugby for example.

The story goes back to Rugby School (in the town of Rugby) where the pupil, William Webb-Ellis, picked up the ball and ran with it during a game of football in 1823. It's probably mythical, but nonetheless, the origins of the game are still attributed to the school and the first official set of rules was written there.

The game is played with an elliptical ball which lends itself to throwing and catching but after being kicked, bounces in an erratic and unpredictable manner. The aim of the game is to score a try by touching the ball down in the opponent's in-goal area or score points by kicking through the H-shaped bars. Each team consists of 15 players divided into eight forwards and seven backs. The backs run and pass, whereas the forwards tend to fight for possession. This is a full contact sport and some of the tackles can be bone-crushing just to watch.

The forwards include the big, strong, scary guys of the scrum with cauliflower ears, who are now protected with gum shields and scull caps and are made up of the tight-head prop, loosehead prop and hooker of the front row, the second row, flankers and the number eight, who anchors the scrum and is usually the biggest man on the field. These are supported by smaller, quicker players, such as the scrum half, who throws the ball into the scrum and distributes the ball and the two fastest runners who play on the wings.

Rugby is now played all over the world but it is particularly popular in Australasia where countries such as New Zealand and Samoa perform a pre-match Maori tribal war dance known as the Haka; it's very spectacular and fascinating to see how what was once a British public school game, has been absorbed into a totally different culture.

### POLO

Horse sports tend to be taken up by British toffs. Princess Anne and her husband, Captain Mark Phillips were both members of the British Olympic Show Jumping Team, and keeping with the horsey tradition, Prince Charles is rather keen on a sport of polo which is fittingly described as The Sport of Kings.

Although existing in various forms, such as using a dead kid (a young goat, not a child) and originating in Persia and Central Asia, the game is strongly associated with royalty and the upper class. It caught on with the Brits through the British Raj in India. British expats also took the game to Argentina, where the game is also played by the upper classes there.

Basically, the game involves teams of four players on horseback trying to score goals during one of six chukkas into which the game is divided. They hit the ball with what's called a mallet in the US or, simply, a polo stick in the UK.

Although a game for gentlemen, it can be fast, furious and dangerous, and even HRH (His/Her Royal Highness) has received the occasional injury over the years.

## CRICKET

In essence, the game, that can be traced back over 400 years in England, is simplicity itself. Two teams each take a turn (or number of turns) at bowling and batting.

The aim of the game is to score the highest number of runs by hitting the ball across the boundary for six in the air or four along the ground, or running between the wickets. Hitting the ball in any given sector of the field has a specific name, such as a cover drive, square cut or leg glance.

The bowling team can remove players by catching them out whereby the ball is caught directly from a strike before it hits the ground or by bowling a batsman out by hitting the wicket and knocking off the bails balanced on top of the three stumps. A strange sight for many foreign spectators is the way in which the bowler rubs the hard, red, leather ball on his white trousers to increase the shine and thus, speed of the ball – this is allowed, but picking at the stitching of the ball is viewed as tampering and is a serious offence. Another way for the batsman to get out is by LBW or Leg Before Wicket – that occurs if the batsman is adjudged by the umpire to have blocked a ball that would have hit the stumps with his leg. When catching a player or bowling him out, the bowling team often jump up and appeal to the Umpire for the player's dismissal by shouting 'Owzat!' or in other words, 'how is that?'

So far, so good, but the fun thing is that the bowling team can set up their fielders around the cricket pitch in a variety of oddly named positions such as: third man, deep square leg, silly point and silly mid off. Cricketers wear cricket whites and woolly jumpers, and when they bowl, they take their jumper off and give it to the umpire, who wraps it around his waist. It all sounds like a Monty Python sketch but it's for real. The shortest games are one day, limited over matches, (an over is six deliveries of the ball by a bowler) that end with a clear outcome, but then, international test cricket can last for months and many innings, after which the end result may be a draw, particularly, if rain stops the play.

Exercises:

1a. Match the words to the proper sport.

flankers      a mallet      pitch      wickets      innings      chukkas  
gum shields      a bowler      forwards      stumps      a tackle  
a batsman      skull caps      H-shaped bars      backs      the scrum

Rugby: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_

Polo: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Cricket: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_

1b. Translate the words into Polish.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

2. Match the meanings of the expressions taken from the text.

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. to pass the ball         | a. wynik, rezultat                         |
| 2. the tighthead prop       | b. grać na pozycji skrzydłowego            |
| 3. the hooker               | c. sędzia, arbiter                         |
| 4. the loosehead prop       | d. granica, linia graniczna                |
| 5. to play on the wings     | e. być 'przy kiju', odbijać                |
| 6. horsey sports            | f. robić coś na zmianę                     |
| 7. the players on horseback | g. prawy filar (pozycja zawodnika w rugby) |
| 8. to take a turn at sth    | h. środkowy napastnik (w rugby)            |
| 9. a boundary               | i. zdobyć punkt (w rugby)                  |
| 10. to bowl                 | j. serwować (w rugby)                      |
| 11. to bat                  | k. podać piłkę                             |
| 12. to score a run          | l. gracze polo                             |
| 13. the umpire              | m. sporty konne                            |
| 14. an outcome              | n. zdobyć punkt (w krykiecie)              |

15. to score a try

o. lewy filar (pozycja zawodnika w rugby )

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
14.	
15.	

3. Give the translation of the expressions:

1. the opponents' in goal area - \_\_\_\_\_

2. to distribute the ball - \_\_\_\_\_

3. the player's dismissal - \_\_\_\_\_

4. to anchor the scrum - \_\_\_\_\_

5. the forwards fight for ball's possession - \_\_\_\_\_

ANSWERS:

**1a. Match the words to the proper sport.**

flankers      a mallet      pitch      wickets      innings      chukkas  
gum shields      a bowler      forwards      stumps      a tackle  
a batsman      skull caps      H-shaped bars      backs      the scrum

Rugby: *flankers, gum shields, forwards, a tackle, skull caps, H-shaped bars, backs, the scrum*

Polo: *a mallet, chukkas*

Cricket: *pitch, wickets, innings, a bowler, stumps, a batsman*

**1b. Translate the words into Polish.**

Rugby: skrzydłowi, ochraniacze na dziąsła, napastnicy, zagrywka, kaski na głowę, bramka z prętów w kształcie litery H, obrońcy, młyn

Polo: kij do polo, część meczu polo (trwająca 7,5 minuty)

Krykiet: boisko, bramki, rundy (serie serwów), zawodnik serwujący, część bramki krykietowej (jeden z trzech słupków, który ją tworzy), zawodnik wybijający piłkę

**2. Match the meanings of the expressions taken from the text.**

- |                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. to pass the ball         | a. wynik, rezultat                         |
| 2. the tighthead prop       | b. grać na pozycji skrzydłowego            |
| 3. the hooker               | c. sędzia, arbiter                         |
| 4. the loosehead prop       | d. granica, linia graniczna                |
| 5. to play on the wings     | e. być 'przy kiju', odbijać                |
| 6. horsey sports            | f. robić coś na zmianę                     |
| 7. the players on horseback | g. prawy filar (pozycja zawodnika w rugby) |
| 8. to take a turn at sth    | h. środkowy napastnik (w rugby)            |
| 9. a boundary               | i. zdobyć punkt (w rugby)                  |
| 10. to bowl                 | j. serwować (w rugby)                      |

11. to bat
12. to score a run
13. the umpire
14. an outcome
15. to score a try

- k. podać piłkę
- l. gracze polo
- m. sporty konne
- n. zdobyć punkt (w krykiecie)
- o. lewy filar (pozycja zawodnika w rugby )

1.	k
2.	g
3.	h
4.	o
5.	b
6.	m
7.	l
8.	f
9.	d
10.	j
11.	e
12.	n
13.	c
14.	a
15.	i

### 3. Give the translation of the expressions:

1. the opponents' in goal area – *pole bramkowe (punktowe) przeciwników*
2. to distribute the ball - *wybić, serwować piłkę*
3. the player's dismissal – *zdyskwalifikowanie gracza*
4. to anchor the scrum – *przytrzymywać (łączyć) młyn*
5. the forwards fight for ball's possession – *napastnicy walczą o przejęcie piłki*

*Bibliography: English Matters. Sport. 7/2013, pp.14-18*

Ćwiczenia na licencji Creative Commons



*Mgr Joanna Sztaba Surowiec*