

7. Sports and History

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Sports combine entertainment and physical exercise.

To play is a natural human instinct. Hence, the history of sports begins with the origin of mankind. Various games have been played since the beginning of civilisation. Hunting was indeed a way of obtaining food for the ancient people but it was also looked upon as a game and



Wrestling

entertainment. The ancient Indian literature and epics mention various games such as games of dice (*dyut*), wrestling, Horse and Chariot races and chess.



Do you know ?



Sports and Greeks is a very ancient equation. The Greeks were the first to Standardise the rules of sports and organise them systematically. They started sports competitions of Discus throw, Horse and Chariot Races, Wrestling and Boxing, etc. The ancient event of Olympic competitions used to be held at Olympia, the ancient Greek city. To be able to participate in Olympics and be a winner is supposed to be a great honour for sports persons.



Do you know ?

There are a number of training centres for wrestling and other sports.

1. Vyayamshala of famous wrestlers Jummadada and Manikrao, Vadodara.
2. Kreed Vidyapeeth, Patiyala.
3. Svarnim Gujarat Sports, Gandhinagar.
4. Khasbag Talim and Motibag Talim, Kolhapur.
5. Hanuman Vyayam Prasarak Mandal, Amaravati.
6. Shri Shiv Chhatrapati Kreed Sankul, Balewadi, Pune.

7.1 Importance of Sports

To play games is very important for us. It enables us to overcome suffering and worries. Games help us to relax and refresh our minds. Games, which involve lot of physical activities, provide good exercise as well. Games help in building a tenacious and strong body. Playing games also helps us in developing courage, determination and sportsmanship. Games needing collective participation help us to develop a sense of cooperation and team spirit. It also helps in developing leadership.

7.2 Types of sports

Sports are of two types, 'Indoor Games' and 'Outdoor Games'.

Indoor Games : Indoor Games are played within a closed environment and a number of them are played by sitting at one place. They include chess, card games, games played with gamesmen and dice, carom, etc. The game known by various names as *Kachkavadya* or *Chaukabara*, or as Indian Ludo is very popular among Indians. The game known as *Sagargote* played with a bunch of seeds or stones, is usually played by girls. There is another game known as *Bhatukali*



Chess

(playing house) which is usually played by girls. However, all the members in the family can also participate in it, especially in the mock wedding of a girl doll and a boy doll. It is an occasion of



Kabaddi

family celebration.

Outdoor games : The outdoor games can be categorised into two types, 'Indian



Langadi

sports' and 'International Sports'. Indian games include *Langadi*, *Kabaddi*, *Atyapatya*, *Kho-kho*, etc.



Do you know ?

Daily schedule of Lakshmibai, the Queen of Jhansi :

'Her highness was very fond of physical exercise. She used to wake up in the early hours, spent an hour (2 *ghatikas*) exercising on the *Mallakhamb* and then she had rounds of horse ride and a long elephant ride. Two hours (4 *ghatikas*) after sunrise, she would eat *khurak* (a diet meant for enhancing physical strength) and drink milk. Thereafter, she had bath.'

(Translated from *Maza Pravas* by Vishnubhat Godse)

Indian games like marbles, *Lagori*, *Vitti-Dandu* or *Gilli-Danda*, *Bhingari* (whorls), *Bhovare* (tops), *Phugadi*, *Zimma* are quite popular.

The international games include Badminton (alternatively spelt as



Table-Tennis



Football

Badminton), Table Tennis, Hockey, Cricket, Football, Golf, Polo, etc.

Among outdoor sports, running races are popular all over the world. Sprints or short distance running races are usually arranged for 100 and 200 metres. There are also middle distance and long distance races. Marathon is a long distance running race. Other types of running races are hurdles and relay races.



Mallakhamb



Do you know ?

According to Manisha Bathe *Mallakhamb* and its various tactics were devised by Balambhat Deodhar, the physical trainer of Peshwa Bajirao II. She also notes that Balambhat was inspired watching monkeys while they leaped and played on trees.



Skating

Shot put, discus throw, long jump, high jump, water sports like swimming competitions, water polo, rowing and sports that combine physical exercise and acrobatics like *mallakhamb*, rope *mallakhamb*, gymnastics, etc. are all included in the outdoor sports based on physical skills.

Let us find out :

Get to know more about wrestlers Khashaba Jadhav, Maruti Mane and cricketer Bharatratna Sachin Tendulkar with the help of internet.

Adventurous games : Ice skating, skiing, ice hockey, etc. are popular games that require balancing skills.

There are many other adventurous games which include rock-climbing, gliding, auto racing – cars and motorbikes, etc.

Sports Competitions : Sport competitions of various types is a



Cricket

worldwide phenomenon. Sport competitions like Olympics, Asian Games also known as Asiad, Paralympic or Special Olympics for disabled people, Cricket World Cup, etc. are organised on regular basis. Also international competitions for many other sports like hockey, wrestling, chess, etc. are organised on a grand scale. In India hockey and cricket are very popular. Hockey is our national game. Competitions of all these games are organised at local, city, taluka, district, state, national and international levels. Sportspersons who perform well in national and international competitions have good career prospects.



Do you know ?

Major Dhyan Chand, an expert player of hockey was also the captain of the Indian hockey team. Indian Hockey team won a Gold Medal in 1936 at Berlin Olympics under his captaincy. He was also part of the previous Indian hockey teams in 1928 and 1932, which played at Olympics and won Gold medals. 29th August, the birth date of Dhyan Chand is celebrated as the National Sports Day in India. He was known as the 'Wizard of Hockey'. He was honoured with a 'Padmabhushan' in 1956.

7.3 Globalisation of Sports

The field of sports in the 20th-21st century was naturally influenced by the process of globalisation. The international matches of various sports like cricket, football, lawn tennis can be watched on television in any corner of the world. Thus, citizens of the non-participant countries can also enjoy these matches. For instance, the world cup winning match played by Indian cricketers was watched by cricket fans all over the world. Sports fans

scattered all over the world have significantly affected the entire structure of sports economy. Fans watch the matches for entertainment, industrial and commercial companies look at it as a good opportunity to advertise their ware. Retired sportsmen also have an opportunity to participate as commentators.

7.4 Game Materials and Toys

The means and equipments for the entertainment and education of children are called toys. Clay toys have been found in archaeological excavations. These toys were fashioned either by hands or by using moulds.

Dolls are mentioned in the ancient Indian literature. A Sanskrit play by Shudraka is named as *Mrichchhakatika*. It means a clay cart.



Do you know ?

Kathasaritsagara has very interesting descriptions of games and toys. There are descriptions of flying dolls. It mentions that on pressing a key some dolls used to fly, some used to dance and some used to make sounds.

Let us find out :

In India, there are regional traditions of making dolls. The wooden dolls made in Maharashtra were known as *Thaki*.

Let us find out about other regions where dolls were made or are still being made.

Let us also find out the local names of such dolls.

7.5 Toys and History

Toys can throw light on history and technological development. We can also get a glimpse of religious and cultural

traditions through them. As a part of traditional Diwali celebrations in Maharashtra model forts are made. Clay images of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and his soldiers and also people and animals are placed on these model forts. This tradition keeps the memory alive of the important role of forts in the history of Maharashtra.

An ivory doll made by Indian craftsmen was found in the excavation of Pompeii, an ancient in Italy. It is dated to 1st century C.E. This artefact throws light on the Indo-Roman trade relations. Thus, toys found in archaeological excavations can tell us about cultural contacts between nations in ancient times.

7.6 Literature and Movies on sport

Publishing of books and encyclopaedias of sports is a newly developing enterprise. The history of *Mallakhamb* has been recently published. There is an encyclopaedia on the subject of exercise. Some years ago there was a sports magazine named 'Shatkar'. There is ample literature available in English on sports. Some television channels are exclusively devoted to sports.

Recently, some movies on sports and biography of players have been released in various languages. For instance, the films *Mary Kom* and *Dangal*. Mary Kom is the first Indian female boxer to participate in the Olympics and to win a bronze medal. *Dangal* is based on the life story of Foghat sisters who were the first Indian female wrestlers to win gold medals at various international competitions.

The process of making a movie requires deep study of the particular period of the movie's story, language, dressing style, social life, etc. of that period. Students of history are well trained

to do research of this kind. Knowledge of history of sports is also essential for writing articles in various publications like encyclopaedia, newspapers, sports magazines, etc.

7.7 Sports and Professional Opportunities

Although sports and history appears to be distant as subjects, there is a close tie between them. Students of history can find many opportunities in the field of sports journalism. One needs to resort to history in order to write articles, reviews about sports events like Olympics or Asiad or national and international matches.

Expert commentators are in demand during sports matches. An expert commentator needs to have good knowledge of the history, statistics, previous records, eminent players, historical anecdotes, etc. related to the concerned game. Knowledge of history is useful for them.

Matches of various sports like cricket, football, kabaddi, chess, etc. are shown live on television on various channels. The role of professionals who track and keep the record of these telecasts from various channels has become very important now. The sports channels continue telecasting round the clock. There are many professional opportunities available in this field.

Referees are an essential factor of sports matches. Trained referees are required to pass qualifying examinations. Qualified referees can work at district, state, national and international levels. Government and private sectors are trying to promote sports. There are scholarships offered to sportspersons. There are reserved seats for them in the government and private establishments.



Do you know ?



Bal J. Pandit was the first Indian cricketer to pioneer cricket commentary. People used to listen very eagerly to his broadcasts from Akashvani. His well-studied commentaries were full of information about the

history of the playground, career history of the players, anecdotes about the game, and established records of the game. His commentaries used to be entertaining because of these historical details.



Exercise

1. (A) Choose the correct option from the given options and complete the statement.

- (1) The ancient event of Olympic competitions used to be held at
(a) Olympia, Greece (b) Rome
(c) India (d) China
- (2) The wooden dolls made in Maharashtra are known as
(a) Thaki (b) Kalichandika
(c) Gangavati (d) Champavati

(B) Identify and write the wrong pair in the following set.

- (1) *Mallakhamb* – Outdoor game based on physical skills
- (2) Water polo – Water sport
- (3) Skating – Adventurous ice sport
- (4) Chess – Outdoor game

2. Write notes :

- (1) Toys and Festivals
- (2) Sports and movies

3. Explain the following statements with reasons.

- (1) Currently the structure of sports economy has been significantly affected.

- (2) Toys can tell us about cultural history.

4. Write detailed answers to the following questions.

- (1) Write about the history of sports equipment and toys in ancient India.
- (2) Explain the close tie between sports and history.
- (3) Explain the difference between indoor and outdoor games.

Project

- (1) Collect information about your favourite sports and its players.
- (2) Discuss the hardships the sportspersons have to face while training for the sport with the help of information gathered through movies and literature.

