Chapter 7
History and Sport: The Story of Cricket

❖ History and Sport: The Story of Cricket
  • Cricket was invented in South-eastern England.
  • It became quite popular by the 17th century.

❖ Development of Cricket
  • 1744: ‘Laws of Cricket’ were drawn up.
  • 1760: The world’s first cricket club was formed in Hambledon.
  • 1787: The Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) was formed and was responsible for the revision of the laws.
  • The curved bat was replaced with a straight one. Width of the bat was fixed at 4 inches.
  • The weight of the ball was limited between 5 ½ to 5 ¾ ounces from between 5 to 6 ounces.
  • 1774: Leg-before law was published; third stump became common.
  • 1780: The common length of a common match became 3 days and the first six-seam cricket ball was created.
  • During the 19th century, the rules of wide balls were specified; protective equipments such as the gloves became common; boundaries were introduced and over-arm bowling was permitted.
  • The makeup of the bat changed from a single wood piece to two pieces- the blade made of wood of the willow tree and the handle made of cane.
  • 1848: The invention of vulcanized rubber led to the introduction of pads and protective gloves.

❖ Cricket and Victorian England
  • Amateurs: The rich people who played for pleasure.
  • Professionals: The poor people who played for a living.
  • The wages of the professionals were paid by patronage or subscription.
  • The game was seasonal and did not offer employment the year round.
The amateurs were called the ‘Gentlemen’ and the professionals were called the ‘Players’.

The amateurs tended to be batsmen, making the professionals do the hardworking aspects of the game such as fast bowling and fielding.

The captain of the team was traditionally an amateur owing to his social superiority.

1930: The English team was led by a professional named Len Hutton from Yorkshire.

Cricket glorified the amateur’s belief of playing not for victory or profit, but for the spirit of fair play.

The Spread of Cricket

- Cricket was established in the British colonies.
- Playing cricket became a sign of superior social and racial status.
- White elite dominated the game, while the blacks played informal cricket.
- 1960: Frank Worrell, a black player, led the West Indies team for the first time.
- 1932: A national team of India was given the right to represent India in a Test match.

Cricket, Race and Religion

- Cricket in India was organized on the principles of race and religion.
- 1792: The Calcutta Cricket Club was established as the first Indian club.
- 18th century: Cricket in India was played by the British military men and civil servants in all-white clubs and gymkhanas.
- Bombay was the origin of cricket in India.
- 1848: The Parsis founded the first Indian cricket club, the Oriental Cricket Club in Bombay.
- 1889: A Parsi team beat the all-white club, Bombay Gymkhana.
- 1890s: Hindus and Muslims started gathering funds and support for a Hindu Gymkhana and an Islam Gymkhana.
- Cricket Quadrangular tournament was played by four teams - the Europeans, the Parsis, the Hindus and the Muslims.
- A fifth team named the ‘Rest’ comprised of all the communities left over, like the Indian Christians; this team also joined the tournament later.

The Modern Transformation of the Game

- 1932: C.K. Nayudu became India’s first Test captain.
- 1877: Test cricket originated and contests were organized between different parts of the British Empire.
Decolonisation and Sport

- The regulations of international cricket were laid down by the Imperial Cricket Conference (ICC).
- 1965: The Imperial Cricket Council was renamed as International Cricket Council.
- The ICC was dominated by its founding members, England and Australia.
- 1989: Privileged positions were scrapped in favour of equal membership.
- South Africa practiced a policy of racial segregation.
- With political pressure from the newly decolonized countries of Asia and Africa, the English cricket authorities were forced to cancel a tour by South Africa in 1970.

Commerce, Media and Cricket Today

- 1971: First one-day international was played between England and Australia in Melbourne.
- 1975: First cricket world cup was played.
- 1977: Cricket celebrated 100 years of Test matches.
- An Australian television tycoon, Kerry Packer staged unofficial Tests and one-day internationals under the name of World Series Cricket.
- Coloured dress, protective helmets, field restrictions and cricket under lights, became a part of cricket.
- Satellite television created a global market for cricket.
- The ICC headquarters shifted from London to Dubai.

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