



ESSENCE, APPEARANCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF CRICKET SPORT

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The history of cricket is quite old. There is strong evidence that a game very similar to cricket was played in the late 13th - early 14th century by Prince Edward. The first accurate and clear evidence of cricket comes from the late 16th century. In the following centuries, this then young game developed a lot and reached many places around the world. Towards the end of the 18th century, it became the national sport of England. With the expansion of the British Empire, cricket spread to British possessions and in the middle of the 19th century, the first international matches were played.

At the end of the 19th century, a large number of new sports cricket clubs were established and special stadiums were built. This helps cricket sport to make the transition from amateur to professional level.

The main reason for this was the newly formed English Cricket Union (ECU) in 1909, which at that time (mid-19th century) had a negative effect on the development of cricket. Its main goal was to keep the game of cricket only within the borders of the British Empire. However, the desire of countries such as Australia and India to develop and spread cricket sports on their territory was great. They created the current local championships "Sheffield Shield" in Australia and "Pentaguller" in India (H. Beckles, B. Stoddart, 1995).



In the '50s and '60s of the 20th century, there was a new powerful impetus in the development and evolution of the sport of cricket. A very important factor in this is the creation of the International Cricket Union (ICC), an organization whose sole purpose is to promote the sport of cricket worldwide. As a result, the number of "major" cricket countries doubled after 1948, with Pakistan, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, and Zimbabwe also joining the union.

Today the game is especially popular in Australia, India, Pakistan, the Antilles, the British Isles, New Zealand, South Africa, and others.

The sport of cricket is one of the sports included in the program of the Second Olympic Games in Paris -1900.

The development of cricket in the Republic of Bulgaria is primarily due to foreigners living and studying in our country, practicing this sport. Gradually, Bulgarians began to show interest in sports, which in turn led to the creation of sports clubs. In 2002 the Bulgarian Cricket Federation / BFC / was established.

For a short period of time, BFC manages to provide the necessary social, managerial, sports-methodical, material-technical, and financial conditions that help to create and build a sustainable and functioning system. It began to successfully develop the sport of cricket not only regionally but also nationally. There are currently twelve clubs in Bulgaria.

From 2003 until now, matches in various formats are held regularly (outdoors, indoors, T20 cricket) as part of the State Cricket Championship of Bulgaria. In the same year, the Bulgarian National Cricket Team was formed.

In 2004 the Project "Cricket Friends" was launched aimed at promoting and developing sports among children and adolescents and their participation in organized championships and events by BF Cricket.

Since 2005 the beginning of women's cricket in Bulgaria has been set.



The achieved successes in the field of sports allowed our country to be among the first countries from Eastern Europe to be admitted to the ICC /International Cricket Union/ in 2008.

The sport of Cricket in Bulgaria is practiced mainly by young people and mostly among students and pupils. One of the first sports clubs is NSA Cricket Club, built by students at the National Sports Academy "Vasil Levski" in Sofia. Since 2008, student championships and tournaments have been held.

In 2015, Bulgaria hosted the first European University T20 Cricket Tournament. Since 2009 our national cricket team has participated in tournaments and qualifications organized by ICC. Good results and rankings were achieved in the tournaments in Corfu - Greece, Prague, Bucharest, Skopje, Budapest, Ljubljana, Tallinn, Wales, and England. Since 2020, Bulgaria has been included in the European cricket series. The tournaments are held in 16 European countries and are broadcast online on the special platform and social networks in over 110 countries around the world. The winner in 2020 was the team of Bulgarian Student Cricket Union composed entirely of students from Medical University in Plovdiv. In 2021 the winner is the team of Indo-Bulgarian Cricket Club, which will represent our country in the group stage of the European Champions League from 14 to 20 February 2022 in Spain.

BF Cricket organizes and conducts state championships in T20 and T10 for men, women, and teenagers.

The development of cricket sports in our country and higher education is the reason why it is included in the sports calendar of Student Sports Association "Academic" in 2022 and is expected to appear in the University Sports Games, which will be held in May 2022 in Burgas. A student cricket league for men and women will be launched in the autumn of 2022.

For the first time during the summer semester of the 2013/2014 academic year the students from Sofia University, "St. Kliment Ohridski" were offered the opportunity to choose the sport - cricket. Together with participants in the Erasmus program, the first study group of 21 people was formed. During the training, the students expanded their sports knowledge and enriched their general culture in a non-traditional and new for Bulgaria sports field, which is gaining popularity very quickly.

A methodology for initial training in cricket is being developed for the students of Sofia University, which is adapted and compliant with the abilities and physical capacity of the trainers, which is also coordinated with cricket specialists.

In 2014, the Bulgarian Student Cricket Union was established, where a representative of Sofia University holds the position of Secretary-General. The main goals of the association are to provide the necessary social, managerial, methodological, material-technical, and financial prerequisites and conditions for long-term construction of a sustainable system for development and increase the social functions of the cricket game among youth, students, teachers, and staff in universities in the Republic of Bulgaria.

Basic rules of the game

1. Playground

The sport of cricket is played on a large oval field with a maximum size of 137/150 m. The course has an inner part /Infield/ and an outer part /Outfield/, and in the middle, there is a path /pitch/. The terrains are covered with grass, including the path in the center, which can be an artificial path with different coverage - flexpic or cement with artificial grass. The end of the field is fenced with rope or





markings. In the center of the terrain is the supply path, which is 20.12 meters long and 3.05 meters wide, where the doors (wicket) are located.

The wicket is made of 3 willow sticks with dimensions of 71 cm in height and 22 cm in width with sticks lying next to them.

2. Players

Both teams are composed of 11 players. The posts are batsman, bowler, fielder, wicketkeeper.

Batsman - the player who scores points by hitting the ball and running the distance between the two wickets or after the ball hit by him leaves the outline of the playing field.

Bowler - the player who throws the ball to the batsmen. The throw is a right hand over the shoulder to the batsman, and his goal is to get him out of the game. Each player on the team in defense (fielder) can be a bowler.

Wicketkeeper - the player who stands behind the wicket and stops the ball if the batsman misses it or catches it before the ball touches the ground after touching the bat.

Fielder - each competitor located in the field. The purpose of the fielders is to limit the points of the batsmen or to take out of play one of them by catching the hit ball or knocking down one wicket if the batsmen run between the wickets.

Field team players fielders are located on the field in different positions, trying to prevent a successful game of batsmen.



3. Equipment and teams

The cricket ball is red or white in color. Made of cork (sponge), which is lined with red /or white/ leather. The leather pieces are sewn together in the center and this part of the ball is called a "seam", the presence of which is very important for the technique of passing the ball. The ball for men's cricket and women's cricket differs in weight and circumference.

The piston is wooden with a length of not more than 38 inches (965 mm), a width of not more than 4.25 inches (108 mm), and a weight of 1.2 to 1.4 kilograms.

The batsman's equipment includes foot shells, batsman gloves, helmet, hand and foot protectors, and wicketkeeper gloves.



Competitors' teams wear white T-shirts, pants, and sweaters when playing with a red ball. The T20 format allows players to play with colored teams, numbers, and inscriptions by playing with a white ball.

4. General rules

Cricket is a game of two teams with 11 players in each. The game is divided into 2 parts /inning/. In the first one team is in attack /batting/ and the other in defense /fielding/. In the second part, the teams exchange positions. The object of the cricket game is to score more points. The team that manages to score more points than the opponent is declared the winner. The order of batting of players in a team is usually announced immediately before the match but may change.



The *batting team* starts the game with the two batsmen, each standing in front of one of the two wickets, which are located at both ends of the track. One of the batsmen is facing the bowler throwing the ball, and the other is ready to run in front of the opposite wicket. The task of the batsman is to protect the wicket from the ball thrown by the bowler and to use every opportunity to hit the ball harder and farther. The main events take place in the centre, on a specially prepared path - a pitch line between the two doors (wicket).



The run between the wickets is counted when the two batsmen exchange places, which brings 1 point. 6 points are awarded when the ball leaves the outline of the playing field in the air after hitting it before it touches the court. If the ball has left the outline on the ground or has touched the ground before leaving, 4 points are awarded. When the batsman is out, his place is taken by the next batsman and so on until there is one unremoved batsman in this team who does not have a partner teammate. Scoring 10 outs from the fielding team, the inning ends.



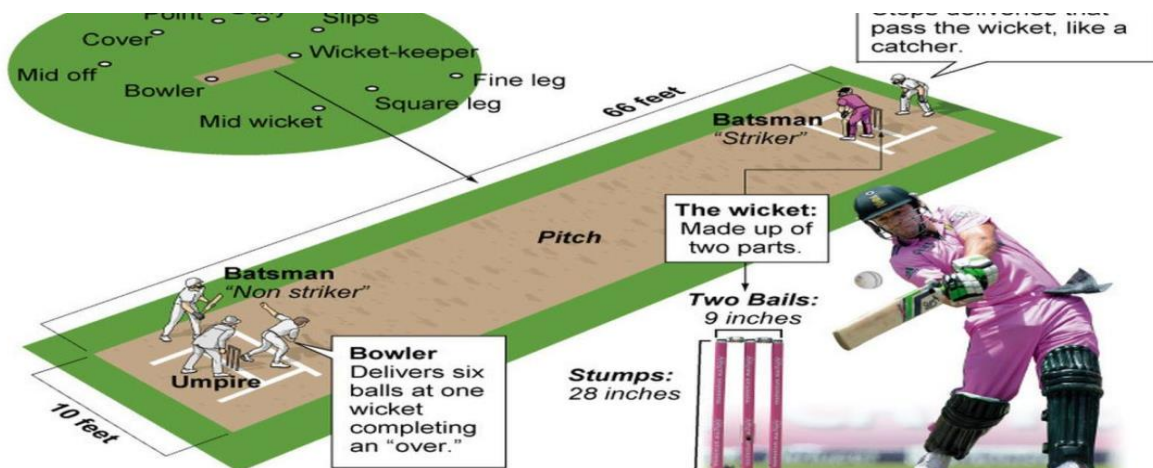
The *players from a team in the field /fielding/* are located in the field and their goal is to catch the hit ball and limit the batsmen to make points or take them out of play.

One of the fielding team is a wicketkeeper and the other is a bowler. Each player on the defensive team can be a bowler. His task is to make it as difficult as possible for the batsmen and, if possible, to make an out alone or with his teammates.

A batsman can be removed from play /announced out/ in the following ways:

1. when a ball hits and knocks down a wicket
2. a ball of the wicket played by the wicketkeeper when the batsman leaves his zone
3. if the fielder catches the ball in the air without touching the ground
4. a ball that strikes directly into the batsman's shells when attempting to play with the ball, he stands with his feet in front of the wicket. The fielding team appeals to the referee for this out
5. when trying to make a point the batsman fails to reach the box and the ball played by the fielder knocks down the wickets
6. out due to the fault of the batsman, knocking down the wicket with part of his equipment - bat, helmet, hat

When the batsman is out, his place is taken by the next batsman and so on until there is one batsman left in the game. After a short break, the two teams exchange positions.





All eleven players of the defending team occupy the field and there are only two players from the batting team (the two batsmen). Just before the start of the match, a draw is made by the team captains who are also players: the winner decides whether to fight first or defend the field.

The introduction and practice by students of new and non-traditional sports at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", in parallel with the traditional ones, expand the content and the effect of the impact in the educational and training process in physical education and sports. The challenge of the unknown develops in students the desire to learn more about sports and to play more sports with pleasure which is very important for increasing their physical activity. This motivates and provokes teachers to look for new opportunities for the promotion of sports among student youth.

Additional visual materials on the topic:

1. <https://youtu.be/VwII4y5vpyU>
2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3Vw3tIwXO8>

References:

1. Nedkova M., Trenev L., "Guide for cricket students in non-professional universities." Training manual for teachers and coaches. Avangard Prima Press 2016, 60 pages, ISBN 978-619-160-630-6
2. <https://www.the-next-step.co.za/>
3. <https://otroski.rtvsllo.si>
4. <https://lbb.in>