

Plan suggested for ELE 23 (2007) on Football

Intro: [1] *Introduce the three docs:*] Excerpt from a recent **magazine article** from famous American weekly (*Time*), whose subject is football, mainly from a historical perspective = how & why it became the successful sport it is today; then an excerpt from a well-known 1857 British **novel**, in which the author fictionalizes memories of his years in a *public school*, and evokes the violent emotions aroused by a football game at Rugby; and finally, a **colour poster** dating from the first year of WWI, which aims at getting young men to join the army by stressing the fact that sports (football & cricket) are also part of a soldier's life.

[2] *Indicate what the general theme of these documents is:*] Hence this set of documents stresses the **importance of football in British life**, and the various uses it has always been put to = **leisure, propaganda, social cohesion**.

[3] *Indicate what your angle of approach will be:*] I will stress the **"duality"** (as the article puts it) of football, and will endeavour to show that, at all stages in its history, this sport has been marked by paradox & obvious ambivalence. [4] *Indicate the plan you'll follow – slowly, clearly, fully.*]

1. Elitist game versus sport for the masses (historical evolution)

- A game **for the elite right from the start**: Only played by "public school" kids (Harrow & Rugby mentioned in this set of documents) → obviously linked with class and affluence. Cf. the American article explains that "public" schools are not really public but, on the contrary **"fee-paying"** = for the rich.

- Not only that but, in the 19th century, each school obeyed its own set of rules (handle the ball? carry it? + slow introduction of scrimmage (line 8 in the novel excerpt) and H-shaped goal (not mentioned), etc. Once out of school, you could tell which school a young man had attended by the kind of football he played → distinctive sign, school spirit.

- By WWI, the sport had become so widespread that it was used as a **tool for propaganda**: One way to attract young men **from all walks of life** into the army was to appeal to their team spirit / their fondness for sports = the army promised the same **camaraderie** as at *any* school since the young soldier in the poster seems to be a private, not even an NCO (non commissioned officer) like a corporal or a sergeant. Analyse the ideas conveyed by the drawing: Elegance, order, cleanliness, spotless whiteness, goodwill, team / individual effort, etc. → in praise of young manhood, as if they all came from a high social class → sports as a kind of **ennobling activity**.

- How did this come about? Well, as the years went by (late 19th century), the game evolved as it became popular: detail the **systematization, standardization, and professionalization** described in the article. The elite may have set its rules, but the sheer numbers now involved allowed the working class to "mug" the game (article, 35) = they "stole" it from the elite.

Transition: The verb "mug" here is an interesting choice of words: In spite of all this talk of class / gentlemanness, the set of documents perfectly shows the underlying current of violence that hides behind the elitist veil.

2. Fair play versus violence

- Speaking of interesting word choices: Analyze "not all work" in the poster, which places the stress on "all", and therefore hides the **euphemism** of "work." As far as a young man toting a gun is concerned, "working" in the army = not only the famous "potato fatigue" but actual... shooting & killing – "mayhem," to use a term found in the article (6). [You may pun on *mettle* (= courage) and *metal* (the material weapons are made of...)]

- Playing (foot)ball is said to be a **global, timeless instinct** in the article: Tribes used to play with enemies' heads! (article, 3). The novel excerpt perfectly shows the **simple dichotomy established** by such a game. Cf. We, "the School House" (heroic actions, devotion, skilfulness) ≠ they, "the School" ("an artful dodger," with a negative connotation here in this set phrase) → long list of names on "our" side (Tom Brown, of course, East, Warner, Hedge, Old/Young Brooke) ≠ hardly any "player-up" mentioned (Crew only on "their" side → vague "they" in lines 24-5) → obvious similarities with war waging, where it is easier to kill an *anonymous* antagonist (less remorse involved?!)

- Winning as a strong force. Analyze the **hatred & "fervent identification"** (37, 45) which can drive men wild, especially if brought on by **booze binges and a parochial spirit**. Sports are one way for men to become (mock?) **heroes, quasi-divine entities**. Analyze the novel excerpt more closely: Allusion to "Job's warhorse" Cf. Job 39:19-25 (7 verses in the book of Job in the Bible, which explains that the strength of the horse, which is so eager to wage war, comes from God → humans owe everything that is beautiful / powerful to their Maker) + the scrimmage that "parts asunder" (novel, 8-9) recalls the episode of Moses & the parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 14).

- Remark on the use of such **literary devices** as: metaphor (6), similes (9, 26 = compared to the 1815 battle of Waterloo!!), hyperboles & superlatives (10, 12, 21, and 28), alliteration (13), subject-verb inversion (1), vocatives (29, 3) to create tension, drama, and a lofty tone. **Lexical field of war in last 10 lines: column, charges, carcass** (26, 33) → sports IS war indeed!

Transition: So much effort / tautness – especially for a 30-minute class, from 4:30 to 5 pm! – could sound laughable, but much more has always been at stake with football than just a few boys' private joy & feeling of exultation.

3. Leisure versus domination

- In the case of hooligans from the industrial North, sports are a means to voice anger, disillusionment, hatred → the **elegance, refinement, symmetry in the poster seem outmoded today** (as far as football) ≠ public school games, where what was at stake was a feeling of belonging, one's **honour** (4) & that of one's family (generation after generation used to attend the same institution), one's / the school's / the **country's reputation** ("like Englishmen" 3, doing one's duty 5, "this is worth living for" 12 = this is worth dying for??).

- More than that, sport was used to **uphold "muscular Christianity"** (article, 5). Also, it is a well-known fact that public schools made the Empire possible – and school sport is a vital **part of the imperialistic system** ("the biggest empire the world has ever seen," 35). It is about **dominating oneself** (obedience to rules, fair play, a becoming conduct) and **dominating foreign / colonized countries**: Albion's sense of superiority is analyzed in the article (20-22 + "grandly" 12 + line 18) + British sports culture taken to America by Lancashire workers → not a mere sport, but a whole **system of values**.

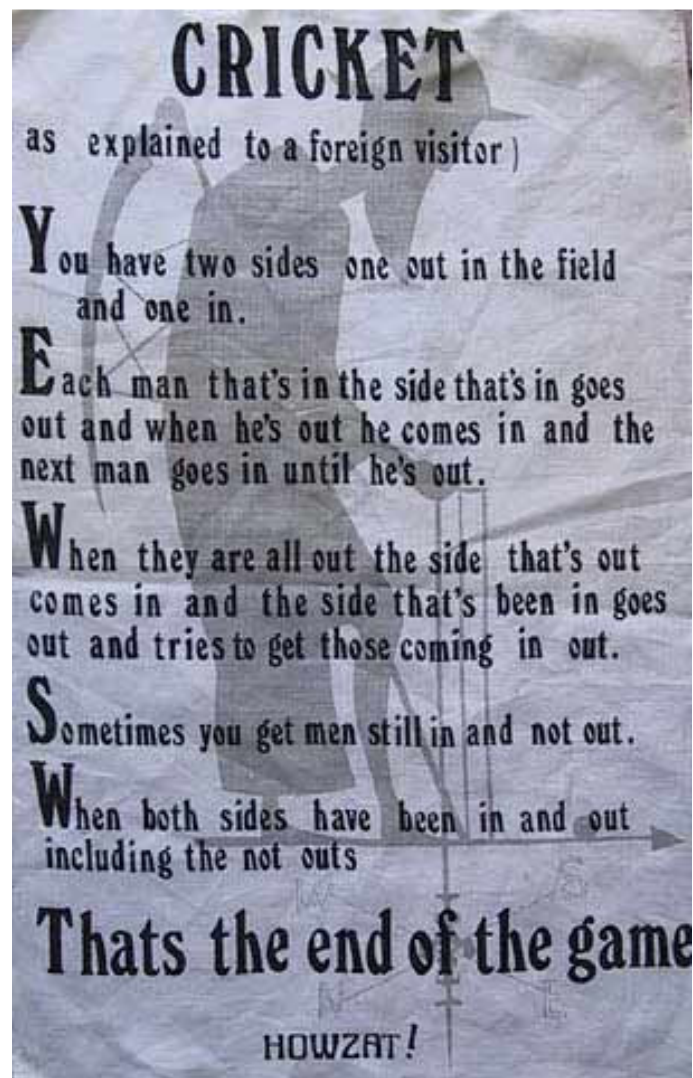
- Sports as propaganda: Analyze the **harmony in the poster colours**, the presence of **codified uniforms** (as in the army) but also of **exposed flesh**, as if fighting didn't entail wounds, dirt, mud, maiming, blood, etc. → cunning glorification of youth.

Conclusion: [Summarize:] Illustrates what's best & worst in the human spirit, the wish to ennoble / improve oneself, but also to exert power over others. [Branch out:] In this sense, sports can embody the spirit of a person / nation, for whatever use human beings may decide to put at any given time in history.

Appendix 1: "Job's warhorse"

Job 39, <i>New International Version</i> (1965)	Job 39, <i>King James Version</i> (1611)
19 Do you give the horse his strength or clothe his neck with a flowing mane?	19 Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?
20 Do you make him leap like a locust, striking terror with his proud snorting?	20 Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? the glory of his nostrils is terrible.
21 He paws fiercely, rejoicing in his strength, and charges into the fray.	21 He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men.
22 He laughs at fear, afraid of nothing; he does not shy away from the sword.	22 He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword.
23 The quiver rattles against his side, along with the flashing spear and lance.	23 The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield.
24 In frenzied excitement he eats up the ground; he cannot stand still when the trumpet sounds.	24 He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet.
25 At the blast of the trumpet he snorts, 'Aha!' He catches the scent of battle from afar, the shout of commanders and the battle cry.	25 He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

Appendix 2a: The simple rules of cricket!



Appendix 2b: The simple rules of cricket (explained more seriously)

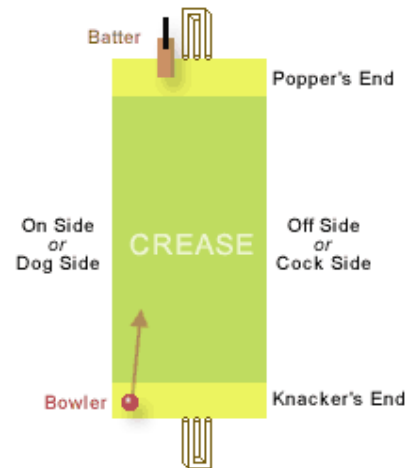
Source: <http://www.allworldknowledge.com/cricket/>

Cricket: The Rules

Henry VIII called it "the sport of kings," but for many cricket is shrouded in enigma. This needn't be the case. At heart, once removed of jargon, it remains a simple game of immense depth and beauty, combining strategy, cunning, raw hand-to-hand fist fighting to the death, teamwork and even the occasional tear of sorrow. What follows is a simplified summary of the rules, as first set down by WG Grace, Lord of Wisden, in 1851.

The Basic Set-up

Cricket is played between two opposing teams. One team bats while the other fields. It is easy to tell which is the batting team, because they are wearing fenners — white woolly jumpers with two cyan stripes around the upper arm (the other team's jumpers have two turquoise stripes). The batters play within the light green rectangle known as the crease, and each stands in front of the wicket — the small wooden apparatus at each end. Although anyone in the team may bat, usually two batters are chosen. The ball is thrown at the batter by the bowler. It is the bowler's job to try and befuddle the batter so that he misses the ball or plays a bad shot.



How Are Points Scored?

Players gain points in the following way:

- By **Runs**: after hitting the ball the batter may run as many times as he likes between the two ends. Each run (there and back) equals one point on his team's score.
- By **Fours**: after hitting the ball the batter may crawl on all fours between the two ends. Each completed trip scores four points.
- By **Popping**: If the ball 'knobs' the batter, a **pop** (two points) is added to the score.
- By **Googling a Six**: If the ball, after being hit, rolls along the ground uninterrupted for fifty yards (a **google**), the team receives six points. (Named after Reg Google, Australian wicket-keeper who was so short that he was incapable of lifting the bat.)
- By an **Over**: one point is scored (see below).

Fielding

Lord Larry Grayson said "cricket, like chess, is won in the field," and it is certainly true that the strategic positioning of your men on the pitch can make the difference between check and checkmate. However, it is important to remember that fielders mostly stand around doing nothing. The sometimes obscure names for fielding positions are illustrated below.



Bowling

The ball must be thrown from **the Knacker's End: the end nearest which the umpire (referee) wearing the Knacker's Hat stands.** The ball bounces and the batter must attempt to hit it. If he fails to hit the ball, the following penalties apply, in order:

- First miss: umpire calls 'maiden' and the ball is passed again to the bowler.
- Second miss: umpire calls 'over' and one point is given to the opposing team.
- Third miss: umpire calls 'bye' and the player must leave.

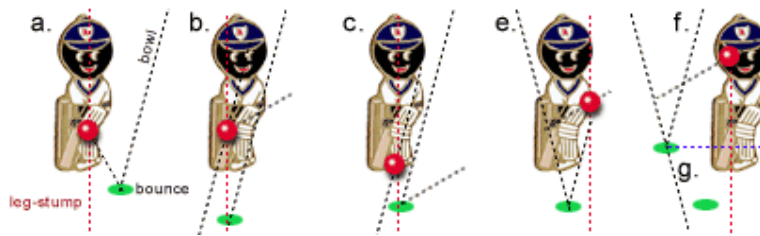
Other Ways of Being Out

There are in total seven ways of being out, or **dismissed**:

1. When the umpire calls 'bye' (explained above).
2. When the ball is caught by an opposing fielder before it has touched the ground, but after it has been knocked by any part of the batter (including the bat) other than the **extra** legs (below the navel) or the eyes.
3. When the player is adjudged to be **wasting time** (taking more than 24 hours between consecutive bowls).
4. When the player hits the ball twice, unless doing it to protect his wicket or testicles.
5. When the umpire calls 'leg before wicket'. This is a complex rule, explained below.
6. When player, bat and ball remain static, at the discretion of the umpire. This rule was introduced in 1983 after a cardboard cut-out of Ian Botham played for seventeen hours. (Does not apply in wet weather.)
7. When the ball, after being bowled, hits the wicket and knocks it over (rare).

Leg Before Wicket

This rule was introduced when players realised that it was more productive to kick the ball rather than play it using the bat, because no-one may be caught out thereby (rule 2 above).



The following criteria must be satisfied for LBW to be called (see diagrammatograph):

1. The line of the leg-stump (the path of the ball) must intersect with the player's leg, groin or knee (**a**).
2. The ball must bounce once before rising upwards, and must be heading towards the *middle* wicket, taking account of the direction it is spinning.
3. The player's groin must be facing the knacker's edge in the case of a full toss (cock inwards, as in **a**).
4. In the case of **g**, where the ball pitches (bounces) outside the edge of an imaginary line drawn between cock and knee (**b**), it must be following a path towards the opposite side (left (right) side from the batsman's point of view).
5. If the ball pitches *inside* the edge of an imaginary line drawn between top of bat and bottom of forward foot (shown back-to-front in **c**), player is out only if the ball goes on to hit opposite leg.
6. Drawing **e** shows the reverse case. This is not-out because the forward foot remains within leg-stump and well behind pitch point.
7. If the batsman makes an attempt to hit the ball as in **d** and **f**, and rule 6 above applies, player is out in any case.
8. If the ball pitches twice, and the second pitch lands in the fourth dimension (**f**), rule 8 applies whether the batter attempts a knock-on, full-swipe or pixie-flick.

As you can see, LBW decisions are complex and often controversial. This is why the umpires' deliberations often last well into the night.

Who Wins?

The winning team is the one whose members are still conscious after five days. In the event that both teams remain conscious, Australia wins.