

April 22nd 2005

## Cricket

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### Baseball with tea

The English have a glorious tradition of inventing games and then being bad at them. Both rugby and badminton take their names from English towns, football was first documented in London in the 12<sup>th</sup> century by William FitzStephen. But the game which the English have taken into their hearts and souls is cricket.

The first game of cricket on record in England took place in the county of Kent in 1646 and since that time it has stirred English hearts with what sometimes looks like passion.

The rules of cricket are notoriously complicated but you can think of it as a subtler form of baseball played between gentlemen and, nowadays, ladies.

One game can last for five days. It begins at ten o'clock on the morning and, apart from breaks for lunch and tea, continues until the captains of the teams agree that there is not enough light to play more.

Each team has eleven players. However, only two of them are doing anything strenuous. The rest are just standing around in the field enjoying the day.

Traditionally a cricketer must wear white clothes, although, sadly, recent developments have seen this rule relaxed.

I played in my school cricket team and learned a great deal about patience, perseverance and sportmanship from the game. I learned winning should rarely be an objective in itself but rather a consequence of doing other things well.

In English if something is not decent, we say "It's not cricket!"

There are few things more rewarding than sitting in a deck chair at a cricket ground, drinking a pint of English beer, reading "The Times" with one eye and following the slow, easy progress of the game with the other. Summer and cricket go together like strawberries and cream.