**Sports in the world**

Britain.

Britain is a country where leisure time and the sporting life are taken seriously. There is widespread interest in most kinds of sport throughout Britain.

The British invented the rules of many of the sports and games now played all over the world. The game of football or soccer was first played in Britain and spread to other countries. Cricket is sometimes called the English national game. It is usually played by men and boys though there are teams of women and girls as well. Players traditionally wear white clothes. There are a lot of amateur cricket teams. Bowls is another outdoor summer game which has been played in Britain for centuries. Bowls is played on a specially prepared bowling green, a piece of ground covered with grass. No one is allowed on the green except players wearing the correct kind of shoes.

The British have a reputation for being mad about sports. In fact they enjoy watching sports rather than playing them. The British are natural spectators and the most popular spectator sports are, undoubtedly, cricket and football. Large crowds attend occasions such as football and rugby union matches; the Wimbledon lawn tennis championships; the classic horse races and international cricket matches.

The Oxford-Cambridge Boat Race is a traditional annual rowing race between teams from Oxford University and Cambridge University, held on a section of the river Thames in London. The Cup Final is one of the main annual competitions of the football season organized on a knock-out basis, with the final match played at Wembley in London. Wimbledon is a famous place, where the annual open lawn tennis championships are held. The Wimbledon tournaments are regarded as the most important tennis events in the world. They draw large crowds of spectators.

The USA.

Sports in the USA is a complex, many-sided phenomenon. Like many other aspects of American life sports is one of the most profitable goods on the American market. It has become a social institution which influences education, economics, art, international relations. It is widely used in American political life. Many communities maintain tennis courts, swimming pools and golf courses for public use. Seldom more than an hour’s drive from any American town are facilities for camping, fishing, boating, swimming and horse riding. The one sport that draws more participants than any other in America is bowling. Men, women and children make up teams rolling heavy balls. The most popular kinds of professional sports are American football, baseball, basketball, boxing, rugby and hockey. Most games are shown on TV and the camerawork is so skillful that the thrilling events can be followed even if you know nothing about the game. In the USA football is the most popular sport in autumn. It is played by almost every college and university in the country. There are professional football teams in nearly all the major cities of the United States. Baseball is often called the "national pastime". Heroes in baseball are talked about and remembered as perhaps in no other sport.

Russia.

Millions of people all over the world are fond of sports and games. Sport help people to stay in good shape, keeps them fit, healthy and makes them more organized and better disciplined in their daily activities.

We have always paid great attention to sport in our schools, colleges and universities. You can hardly find a school without a gym or a sports ground. Every city and town has a few stadiums or swimming pools where local competitions are usually held.

It’s been a tradition in this country to divide sport into professional and amateur. There are different sporting societies and clubs in Russia. Many of them take part in different international tournaments and are known all over the world. A great number of world records have been set by Russian sportsmen: gymnasts, weightlifters, tennis player, swimmers, figure skaters, runners, high jumpers. Our sportsmen also participate in the Olympic Games and always win a lot of gold, silver and bronze medals.

There are also a lot of amateur clubs and keep-fit centres in Russia where people go in for aerobics, yoga, body-building, swimming, skating, jogging. Thousands of people go to the stadiums to support their favorite teams and many thousands more prefer to watch the games on TV. But watching sport events and going in for sports are two different things.