

CULTURAL GAMES in The FIRST WORLD WAR

FOOTBALL

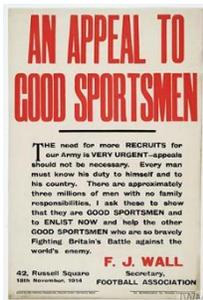


1. MANY MUNITIONS FACTORIES HAD THEIR OWN WOMEN'S FOOTBALL TEAMS

During the First World War, more than 900,000 women worked in munitions factories. Most factories employed a welfare officer to monitor the health, wellbeing and behaviour of their new female work force. Sport, especially football, was encouraged and many munitions factories developed their own ladies football teams.

2. FOOTBALL HELPED KEEP MEN FIT AND MORALE HIGH

Troops on the Western Front would spend considerable periods of time behind the lines. To keep men fit and active and to maintain morale, sport was encouraged and in many cases officially sanctioned.



3. FOOTBALL WAS USED AS A RECRUITING TOOL

Football was widely used as a tool for recruiting men for the forces. The text on this poster is a direct appeal from the Secretary of the Football Association for 'GOOD SPORTSMEN' to 'ENLIST NOW and help the other GOOD SPORTSMEN who are so bravely Fighting Britain's Battle against the world's enemy.'

4. PRISONERS OF WAR PLAYED FOOTBALL IN CAMPS

Only nine-a-side matches could be played in the camp due to lack of space. Many of the footballs were sent to POWs via Holland.

5. FOOTBALL GAMES WERE USED FOR PROPAGANDA

The British made a toy football game in the First World War. Like many propagandist games of this period it poked fun at the Kaiser. The aim of the game is to get the ball bearing 'footballs' from kick off, through the maze of trenches and into the Kaiser's mouth.



6. FOOTBALL WAS PLAYED IN ALL THEATRES OF THE WAR

Christmas Day 1915. Sports such as football were seen as a good way for officers to develop leadership skills and to forge links with their men.

7. 'NEW' SPORTS WERE PLAYED AT BRITISH FOOTBALL GROUNDS

The arrival in Britain of American and Dominion troops brought new sports such as Baseball and Australian Rules Football to the British public.

8. TROOPS ON BOTH SIDES PLAYED FOOTBALL DURING THE 1914 CHRISTMAS TRUCE

Many contemporary letters and diaries describing the truce mention opposing troops kicking around a football.



9. SERVICE PERSONNEL PLAYED FOOTBALL TO PREVENT BOREDOM

Most service personnel had to endure long periods of boredom when they were not in action. Keen to prevent bored seamen becoming restless and unruly, Admiral Jellicoe encouraged the development of sports facilities at Scapa Flow naval base in the Orkney Islands. A football pitch was constructed, although there were complaints that the ground was too boggy.

RUGBY



1. Thirty-one Scottish international rugby players died in World War One, more than from any other country.

The rugby stars, along with their counterparts in football and cricket, were celebrities to the other soldiers. When war broke out many of these educated rugby players found themselves in the officer ranks, which was not a safe place to be.

2. Rugby International players that died in the First World War

Scotland – 31. England – 28. France – 21. Wales – 14. Ireland – 12. New Zealand – 12. Australia – 9. South Africa – 5. British Isles – 2. United States of America – 1

3. Scotland: Dr David Bedell-Sivright.

Enjoyed the reputation of being the roughest, toughest forward of his day and the arch exponent of the skill of dribbling. Played for Scotland 22 times during 1900 to 1908. Led the 1904 Lions, worked in Australia for a year as a stock rearer before returning to Edinburgh to complete his medical studies. Contracted Septicemia and Like Swannell, died at Gallipoli, he was buried at sea.



4. In 1919, in the aftermath of WWI.

A group of international rugby teams gathered in Britain for the King's Cup, a tournament unprecedented in its time but little remembered today. Pictured: Royal New Zealand Returned and Services' Association: 1/2-014210-G Alexander Turnbull Library | King George V presents the King's Cup to New Zealand on April 19, 1919, at Twickenham

5. Rugby was considered a more intelligent game than football

There were more rules in Rugby than in football which marginalised the working classes in terms of participation and educating the masses.

CRICKET

1. Cricket in World War I

Was severely curtailed in all nations where first-class cricket was then played except India.

2. At least 210 first-class cricketers are known to have joined the armed forces, of whom 34 were killed.

The obituary sections of Wisden between 1915 and 1919 contained the names of hundreds of players and officials of all standards who died in the service of their country.

3. Anzac soldiers played improvised games cricket under shellfire on Shell Green in Gallipoli in 1915.

The Australians played a game in view of the Turks to give the impression of normality and confidence while the entire force was being secretly evacuated from the beach area.

4. Cricket was played overseas, often in fund raising matches.

A game involving an English XII against an Indian team held at the [Bombay Gymkhana](#) in December 1915 for war relief was watched by 40,000 people.

5. British and Empire soldiers were instructed to throw bombs using a technique to that of bowling a cricket ball.

Training classes were given on how to best do this. A cartoon satirising this was published by Geoffrey Stobie in 1918.