

History of Soccer



The oldest soccer-like sport was played over 2,000 years ago in ancient Chinese, Greek, and Roman cultures. A rock sometimes served as the ball. In some instances, a "ball" was made from an animal hide stuffed with hair. In its current form, though, soccer evolved from 19th century England and was brought to the United States by immigrants.

England's first football association was created in 1863, which is when the sport began to become standardized. The association established rules which continued to evolve. One of those rules, that the ball could not be carried by hand, resulted in the official separation between the sports of soccer and rugby.

Increasing industrialization made soccer more and more popular in England. While it had originally been played largely by public school teams, workplace-based teams began to emerge in the 1900s. Talented players were paid, and as a result of workplace-team matches, soccer became a revenue-generating spectator sport.

The first professional soccer league was the English Football League. Semi-professional leagues were introduced in Germany in 1949, and the first professional German division began in 1963/64. While the first American soccer leagues used the term "football" for the sport like their European counterparts, they switched to the term "soccer" in the late 1910s and early 1920s to avoid confusion between soccer and the American game also (and still) called football. The first U.S. professional soccer leagues formed in 1967: the United Soccer Association and the National Professional Soccer League. These soon merged to create the North American Soccer League in 1968. Soccer's popularity continued to increase in the United States, and in 1994, the U.S. hosted the 1994 FIFA World Cup. Major League Soccer in the U.S. was established in 1996.

Name _____

QUESTIONS: History of Soccer

Circle the correct answer.

1. The oldest soccer-like sport was played over 2,000 years ago by:
 - A. Ancient Chinese
 - B. Ancient Greeks
 - C. Ancient Romans
 - D. all of the above

2. Soccer as we know it today evolved from:
 - A. 19th century England
 - B. Ancient Greeks
 - C. Ancient Romans
 - D. Ancient Chinese

3. True or False: . Increasing urbanization made soccer less and less popular in England.

4. Which came first, public school teams or workplace teams?
 - A. public school teams
 - B. workplace teams

5. Which country had the first professional soccer league?
 - A. Germany
 - B. England
 - C. the United States
 - D. Greece

6. When did the United States start calling football soccer?
 - A. 1910s/1920s
 - B. 1949
 - C. 1963/1964