Taken from

bbclearningenglish.com
© British Broadcasting Corporation 2005

Summer Sport

Wimbledon

Wimbledon is the most important sporting event of the British summer. Since the first **tournament** was played in 1877 in front of a few hundred **spectators**, the competition has become a global sporting event attended by over half a million people, and watched on television by millions.

The world's top tennis players agree that playing at Wimbledon is an experience like no other. John McEnroe, a three-time Wimbledon winner, describes Wimbledon as 'the **hallowed ground** of the sport'.

Although the Wimbledon tennis championship has been in existence for more than a **century**, the sport of tennis has a much longer history. Most experts agree that the modern game has its origins in a **courtyard** ball game played by French **monks** in the 11th century.

words: **deuce** (pronounced 'juice') comes from the French word 'deux', meaning 'to two'. The word **love**, meaning zero, also has French origins.

Much has changed since the first Wimbledon Tournament in 1877 – the first champion, Spencer Gore, won a prize of £12; this year the **prize money** is £630,000.

Indeed, success in tennis championships is a very **lucrative business**. 2004 Wimbledon champion, Roger Federer has won nearly $17,000,000 in prize money since **turning pro** in 1998. Even more impressive, Serena and Venus Williams have won a staggering $30,000,000 between them over the last ten years.

Although, Wimbledon has traditionally been dominated by Americans and Europeans, other countries are beginning to produce **world-class players**. Li Ting and Sun Tian Tian, who won gold medals at the Athens Olympics, both play at Wimbledon this year. They are currently **seeded** 146 and 52, respectively.

All Chinese competitors will be under pressure to do well; their coach, Jiang Hongwei, has **gone on record** as saying, 'My first target is to lift my players into the top 30. Olympic gold is not enough.'

Glossary

tournament – a series of contests in which competitors eliminate each other in order to reach the final

hallowed ground – land which is of special spiritual or religious significance

courtyard – an unroofed, walled area inside a building

scoring – a system of awarding points based on performance

love – zero (only in tennis)

lucrative business – a very profitable business

world-class players – the highest level of sportsperson

gone on record – quoted in print

spectators – the people who watch a game

century – one hundred years

monks – Christian men who live apart from society, devoting their lives to God

deuce – 40 points each (only in tennis)

prize money – the money the winner receives

turning pro – become professional

seeded – ranked

1. Reading Quiz

Are these sentences true or false? Circle the correct answer.

1. The Wimbledon tennis championship was first held one hundred and twenty five years ago. **True / False**

2. The roots of tennis are in a ball game played in monasteries. **True / False**

3. Much of the vocabulary around tennis comes from France. **True / False**

4. Successful tennis players can become astronomically wealthy. **True / False**

5. Chinese tennis players, Li Ting and Sun Tian Tian have won Wimbledon in previous years. **True / False**

LABEL THE PICTURES

Look at the pictures below. Do you know what these items are? Write the name of the object underneath the picture.

1. _____

2. _____

3-_____ 4-_____

5-_____ 6- _____

strawberries and cream - umpire's chair - net - tennis ball - trophy - tennis racket -

3. Sports Idioms

Look at the idioms below. Each one is connected to sport and balls. Match the idiom to its definition.

1. the ball's in your court	a. to make a mistake and fail to arrive at a successful conclusion
2. to drop the ball	b. to take an idea and develop it in the right direction
3. we're in a whole new ball game	c. the next stage of progress with a project or plan is in the hands of another person
4. to run with the ball	d. to be in a completely new and different situation

Now complete the sentences below by using one of the idioms above.

1. 'We have put forward our plans and proposals. Now _____. It is up to you what happens next.'

2. 'As you can see from my presentation, the communications market has changed significantly in the last ten years. The fact is _____. We must adapt to the new environment if we want to survive.

3. 'Well, Tony, I am giving you the job of managing this project through to completion. I want you _____.'

4. 'I don't think Gary has enough experience to do the job.'

   'Really, why's that?'

   'I'm not sure he can deal with the pressure. He's likely _____. We should use Anna instead – she's very capable.'

4. Wordsearch

Try to find the words associated with tennis in the puzzle below.

There are ten words to find. Words can be written horizontally (g), vertically (i) or diagonally (m)

c	a	n	r	a	c	h	r	h	l	a	p
h	s	d	e	u	c	e	v	e	o	d	r
a	d	e	g	h	j	b	w	h	v	o	i
m	s	w	f	r	c	b	d	e	e	n	z
p	m	o	k	l	f	o	t	e	d	v	e
i	b	r	a	b	t	e	u	a	b	f	r
o	z	f	u	c	h	v	e	r	i	m	u
n	b	a	x	v	e	l	r	t	t	n	m
w	d	v	g	d	h	t	d	m	x	s	p
w	r	a	c	q	u	e	t	j	n	x	i
l	i	e	f	r	h	v	s	t	e	n	r
a	h	s	e	r	v	e	n	e	t	a	e