

Winning Hearts



1

Bandy is the second most popular winter sport in the world. Basically, it's a mixture of football and ice hockey. Like football, there are eleven players on each team – but like ice hockey it is played on ice. Players move around on skates and hit a small ball with sticks. Bandy is mostly played in colder climates – but, believe it or not, one African country has a bandy team – Somalia!

2

It all started in Borlänge, in central Sweden, in early 2013. Around that time, 3,000 Somali refugees were having difficulty adapting to their new home. So as a way to help, the chairman of the town's bandy team, Hans Grandin, formed a team for Somali refugees. Soon though, a local filmmaker, Patrick Anderson, thought of a way to get the team more attention. He persuaded Grandin to enter the team into the 2014 Bandy World Championship! The Somali national bandy team was born!

3

In June 2013, the team had their first practice and it was clear that they needed a lot of work! Firstly, most of the team couldn't even skate! So, they began by learning on roller skates, and then a figure skating coach taught them how to skate on ice. For seven months they trained four times a week, and then in January 2014, they flew to Irkutsk for the 2014 Bandy World Championship.

4

For the championship the team was joined by Anwar Hared, a Canadian ice hockey player with Somali parents. But even with Hared's help, the team struggled. They lost their first game 1-22 to Germany and their other four games ended in similar scores. The team came last in the tournament, but they kept trying and were very popular with spectators. Also, when they returned, they received a heroes' welcome in Borlänge!

5

In 2015, the team's inspirational story was made into a documentary called *Nice People*. But the 2014 championship wasn't the end for the team! They've appeared in every world championship since, and although they still haven't won a game, they continue to touch hearts in Sweden and around the world.

1

★★ Read the text and match the headings (A-F) to the paragraphs (1-5). One heading is not needed.

- A Champions at last
- B Starting from zero
- C Never giving up
- D Unexpected participants
- E Returning like champions
- F A helping hand

2

★★ Read the text again and decide if the statements (1-10) are T (true) or F (false).

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| 1 More people play bandy than any other winter sport. | T | F |
| 2 In bandy, each team is made up of eleven players. | T | F |
| 3 In 2013, the total population of Borlänge was 3,000. | T | F |
| 4 It was Grandin's idea to make a team for international competitions. | T | F |
| 5 The team did not ice skate on their first day. | T | F |
| 6 The team practised for over a year for their first world championship. | T | F |
| 7 Anwar Hared was the only team member not living in Borlänge. | T | F |
| 8 The team managed to score in the 2014 championship. | T | F |
| 9 <i>Nice People</i> is a book about the team. | T | F |
| 10 The team haven't entered an international competition since 2014. | T | F |