Asia: Over the past two decades, heated rivalry among Japan, China, and South Korea has increased the passion for soccer across the continent, especially after Japan and Korea co-hosted the World Cup in 2002. However, not all Asian countries share the passion: India and Pakistan prefer cricket.

The Middle East: Countries such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Qatar have lately been investing huge sums of money in soccer. They've hired the best players and coaches that money can buy. Qatar's hosting of the 2022 World Cup will be very important for Middle Eastern soccer.

Australia: Sports in Australia have long been dominated by cricket, rugby, and surfing. However, since they qualified for the 2006 World Cup, Australians have become much more interested in the game.

Africa has produced a number of soccer superstars, but many of them have been lost to the rich European teams. Africa is rich in talent, with thousands of gifted young players dreaming of big-time soccer. South Africa's hosting of the 2010 World Cup was very important for African soccer.





LIVEWORKSHEETS

By the mid-19th century, with the help of English public schools, the game had become less violent. Each school had different rules for playing the game. Problems arose when boys from the different schools went to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and wanted to continue playing. This is from the description of a match played in Cambridge in 1848:

"... The result was chaos, as every man played the rules he had been accustomed to at his school."

It became common to play half a match by one side's rules, the second half by the other's. That's how half-time came about. However, this was not good enough for the university men. They decided to sort out the rules once and for all.

On Monday, October 26, 1863, they met in London. By the end of the day they had formed the Soccer Association, and a *Book of Laws* was on its way. The sticking point was whether a player could pick up the ball and run with it or not, and this was not decided until December 8. From this decision the games of both soccer and rugby were born.

Soccer around the world

Europe is home to the world's richest professional teams: Manchester United, AC Milan, FC Barcelona, Real Madrid, Bayern Munich. These teams are famous in many countries around the world. Only 1% of Manchester United's fans are from the UK, and there are 131 Real Madrid fan clubs outside of Spain!

South America has produced some of the most exciting soccer on earth. Many of the world's leading players have come from simple lifestyles to play on the world stage. They have been snapped up by important European teams after making their mark at home. Brazil has won the World Cup five times, Uruguay three times, and Argentina twice. Brazil and Argentina are soccer rivals. In fact, many Brazilians cheered for Germany in the finals of the 2014 World Cup.

North America is the only continent where soccer has become more popular with females than males. In 1991, the U.S. won the first Women's World Cup and then again in 1999 and 2015. Interest among American men has been growing since the World Cup in Los Angeles in 1994, and more recently since the arrival of international stars such as David Beckham.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

LIVEWORKSHEETS

READING AND SPEAKING

Soccer – a global passion

1 Soccer—do you love it or hate it? Why? Have a class vote. How many famous soccer players can you name? What teams do they play for?

2 Whether you love it or hate it, soccer is difficult to ignore. Read only the introduction and the final part of "The Beautiful Game."

1 What statistics are given? Do any of them surprise you?
2 How did soccer become known as "the beautiful game"?
3 In what ways is soccer a "simple" game?
4 Which famous players are mentioned? What do they have in common?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Read "How soccer began" Answer the questions

1. What is tsu chu?

2. Which nationalities were the first to play a kind of soccer? When?

3. What images do you have of "mob soccer" Describe a game

4. How was the game played at English Public School?

5. What caused chaos when the boys tried to play soccer at college?

6. How did the idea of half-time started?

7. Why is London important to soccer?

8. What was the "sticking point" Which game was also born? Why?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Read "Soccer around the world."

1 Complete the sentences with the name of the continent.

a _____ has become more enthusiastic about soccer since the 2006 World Cup.
b _____ has the wealthiest soccer teams in the world.
c Not all countries in _____ have a passion for soccer.
d _____ and _____ often lose their most talented players to rich European teams.
e In _____ soccer has become more popular with girls than boys.

1. Which continents are most/least enthusiastic about soccer?

2. Why do some continents often lose players to Europe teams?

3. How and where has the World Cup increased interest in soccer?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

The Beautiful Game

Over the last hundred years, the game of soccer has totally changed the worlds of sports, media, and leisure. Soccer is played worldwide by more than 1.5 million teams and 300,000 clubs. An amazing eight out of ten people in the world watch the World Cup. It is, as the great Brazilian soccer player Pelé described it, "the beautiful game." *Andrew Hunt reports.*

How soccer began

As far back as 2500 BCE the Chinese played a kicking game called *tsu chu*. Similar games were played by the Romans and North American Indians. In England in medieval times "mob soccer" was wildly popular. In 1583, Philip Stubbs said of soccer players:

"sometimes their necks are broken, sometimes their backs, sometimes their legs, sometimes their arms."

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