



BASEBALL: AMERICA'S GAME

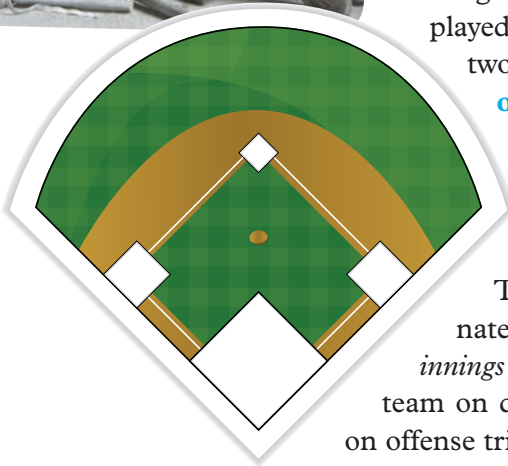


Baseball has a special place in the hearts of most Americans. Let's take a closer look at the history of this game and why it has become such a big part of American life.



The Origins of the Game

Before the American Civil War (1861-1865) people in America started playing a game called *Rounders*. The game was closely related to Cricket in England. Over the years, *Rounders* became immensely popular – children and adults played it all over the East Coast of America. During the early part of the 18th century, small towns formed teams, and baseball clubs were formed in larger cities. In 1845, Alexander Cartwright wanted to formalize **a list of rules** by which all teams could play. Much of that original code is still used today. Many people believe that the game was invented by Abner Doubleday, but Baseball's true father was Cartwright. In 1871, the first professional Baseball League was created. Almost every large city on along the East Cost of America had a professional team. The teams were divided into two leagues called the American and National leagues. The teams only played other teams in their league, and at the end of the year, the two best teams from each division played each other in a **best-out-of-seven** (the first team to win four games out of seven was the winner) **Championship Series**.

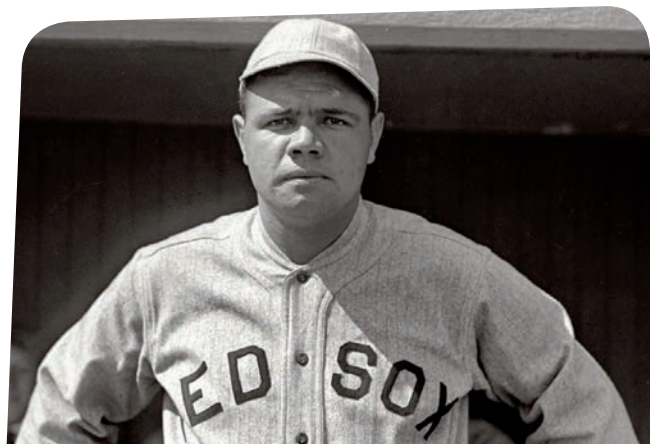


The Rules

Baseball is played on a field called a “baseball diamond”. There are nine players on each team and the two teams alternate between offense and defence. The game is divided into nine *innings* (periods) and each team gets three outs per inning. The team on defence **pitches** the ball to the team on offense. The team on offense tries to **hit** the ball and run around the bases. If the player on offense runs around all the bases, that team gets one point, called a *run*. The goal of the game is to get more *runs* than your opponent.

What Baseball Means to America

In the 1920's Baseball became known as America's Pastime because it was the most played sport in America. This was because of national heroes such as **Babe Ruth**, one of the best offensive players in the history of Baseball, and **Jackie Robinson**, the first African-American player. During this time, Americans were obsessed with the sport. Before the age of TV, computer games, video games and films, Baseball was how teens and adults used to pass their time. After school, children would go to the Ballpark and play a game of Baseball and at night they would go to the stadium to watch their favourite players. It was something that all Americans could talk about, as almost every American knew something about the game.



GLOSSARY

- a list of rules:** un elenco di regole.
- best-out-of-seven Championship Series:** una finale al meglio delle sette partite.
- pitches:** lancia.
- hit:** batte, colpisce.



Baseball in Other Part of the World

Today Baseball is no longer just an American game. The sport is played in many other countries around the world – with a particular interest in Latin America. In **Major League Baseball (MLB)** today there are 79 players from the Dominican Republic and 38 from Peru. Baseball is also popular in Asia with 11 professional players coming from Japan and 9 coming from Korea. Every year, The World Baseball Federation celebrates the diversity of this game and holds a world tournament called the **World Baseball Classic**.



K E T ← Multiple choice

Circle the correct answer A, B or C.

- 1) What was the original name of the game?
 - a. Cricket.
 - b. Baseball.
 - c. Rounders.
- 2) Who is the real creator of Baseball?
 - a. Alexander Cartwright.
 - b. Abner Doubleday.
 - c. Babe Ruth.
- 3) What is a point called in Baseball?
 - a. Run.
 - b. Inning.
 - c. Out.
- 4) Why could everyone talk about Baseball?
 - a. Because Americans played it after school.
 - b. Because most Americans had knowledge about the sport.
 - c. Because Americans watched the sport on TV.
- 5) Not including the USA, where do most Baseball players come from?
 - a. Japan.
 - b. Peru.
 - c. The Dominican Republic.