

AN OBSERVATION ON THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF SOCCER FROM BEFORE CHRIST TO THE FIRST WORLD CUP

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Abstract

Soccer is one of the most widely played games in the world today. Millions of people are watching soccer games and its popularity has risen dramatically day by day. A variety of research works has been done on the history of football to satisfy people's curiosity. Archaeological and historical evidence is a valuable resource for reconstructing soccer's ancient history. Therefore, the current researchers would like to undertake an investigation that requires a review of the archaeological and historical literature. The primary goal of this scholarly qualitative research was to look at the historical evolution of soccer from Before the Common Era (BCE) to the first world cup. The literature was collected in this systematic qualitative analysis using online and offline methods. Present researchers found that between the Before Christ (BC) to the first World Cup, soccer underwent major changes, from violent to social. The rules of the game have been developed in line with the demand. During this time different types of football were played on different shapes of fields. No one had any headaches over a time frame. We must remember that today's modern creative football stands on the golden history of the past.

Key Words: Soccer, History, Game, Archaeological evidence, World cup

INTRODUCTION

Soccer is one of the most complex and dynamic games in which 22 players compete for 1 ball (in match situations). Since the game is defined as "own possession," "out of possession," and "transitions," a ball could influence these 22 players. Therefore, instead of worrying about the impact of a ball on one player, the new scientific coach must understand the impact of a ball on 22 players (Islam, 2020). Indeed, soccer has become famous because of the uncountable intuitive movements that create rapidly changing situations in a game (Dolci et al., 2018; Islam et al., 2019; Islam, 2018). Consequently, it is necessary to know how this creative game evolves in the modern era. So, the game's historical background must be restored due to its popularity.

Football is played on a soccer pitch, which is a rectangular field with goalposts at either end. The objective of the game is to score by pushing the ball past the goal line and into the

opposing goalpost (Gifford, 2009). Football, also known as soccer or rugby (rugby and football were separated on December 8, 1863), is one of the most common and widely played sports in the world today (Aneja, 2016). Association Football (FA) is a professional sport played with a spherical ball between two teams of eleven players each. In more than 200 nations, there are approximately 250 million athletes are engaged in this beautiful game (“Portal: Association football,” 2020).

While football developed on British soil, there is abundant documentation of ancient games that follow the same basic principles as modern-day football. The first of these was discovered in China during the Shang Dynasty in the first century B.C., to kick a leather ball through a hole in a piece of cloth held between two 30 feet poles (Mal, 2009).

However, the game’s origins are unknown, but it became common among Mesoamerican cultures such as the Teotihuacanos, Aztecs, and Maya around 3,000 years ago. Its name changed over time-ullamalitzli in Aztec, Pok-ta-Pok or Pitz in Maya-and so did its rules, which included movements like bumping the ball with body parts or using racquets or bats to hold it in play (Blakemore, 2018). Football dates back over 2,000 years to early China, according to reports. Although Greece, Rome, and parts of Central America claim to have invented the sport, it was England that transformed soccer, or as the British and many others refer to it, into the game we know today (*How Soccer Originated. Soccer History.*, n.d.). Egypt: Around 2500 BC, a football-like game existed in ancient Egypt. It is attested to by a linen ball discovered in an ancient Egyptian tomb. Many artifacts discovered in Egyptian tombs also serve as evidence. However, this ancient influence of soccer may glorify Egyptian football. Egypt qualified for the World Cup in the first round in both 1934 and 1990 (Express, 2018).

History of Soccer Game

In addition, the earliest form of the game for which there is scientific evidence was an exercise from a military manual dating back to the second and third centuries B.C. in China. The Han Dynasty (Lal, 2007) forebear of football was called TSU’ Chu and it consisted of kicking a leather ball filled with feathers and hair through an opening, measuring no more than 30-40cm in width, into a undersized (small) net fixed onto extended bamboo canes (Klotz, 2016; FIFA.com, n.d.-a).

The Japanese ‘Kemari,’ which started 500-600 years later and is still played today, is another version of the game that originated in the Far East (Witzig, 2006). Participants in this game stood in a circle and had to move the ball to each other in a small room, without letting it hit the ground (Mal & Kapri, 2005; FIFA.com, n.d.-c).

In Greece, a similar football was also common (Episkyros). This game required a lot of coordination and was played between two teams of 12 to 14 players each (*Greek Episkyros (Ball Game)*, n.d.), with one ball and rules that allowed players to use their hands (David, 2008). However, author Craig (2002), stated “this is played by teams of equal numbers standing opposite one another. They mark out a line between them with stone chips; this is the *skuroson* which the

ball is played. They then mark out two other lines, one behind each team”, (101). The target was to get the ball over the opponent’s goal lines (FIFA.com, n.d.-c). A version of Epyskyros was played in Sparta during an annual city festival, with five teams of 14 players each (Craig, 2002).

Harpastum was an ancient type of football. Harpastum is a Greek term that means “snatch”. This was a famous social ball game during the Roman Empire’s reign, (Sharma, 2007) with roots dating back centuries earlier (Craig, 2002). According to the present literature ‘Harpastum’ Lal (2007), referred to as a “very rough and brutal game”. In this ancient sport, a player won points by kicking the ball across the goal line, running with it across the goal line, or tossing it across the line to another player. The other team’s goal was to avoid them in every way possible. There was no set length for the field, no touchline, no boundaries, and no set number of players for each side (Mal, 2009).

Medieval Football (Mob Football)

The word ‘Medieval Football,’ also known as ‘Mob Football,’ refers to a variety of ball games that do not always include kicking a ball. With no limit on the number of players and almost no rule book, this game between neighboring towns and villages often devolved into violent scenes (Mal, 2009). In this period, the ball sport had only one clear rule- doesn’t kill your opponents (Broeke, 2014). Due to this extreme chaos it usually caused, as long ago as 1314 the lord Mayor of London saw fit to issue a proclamation prohibiting football within the town (Mal, 2009; Magoun, 1929). The king, Edward IV, continued to fight the ever-expanding game. In 1477, he legislated that “no one shall practice any unlawful games such as dice, quoits, football, and such games,” but that “every strong and able-bodied individual shall practice with a bow for the purpose that the national defense depends upon such bowmen” (Vasilev, 2009, p. 1).

Football, on the other hand, was particularly common during Elizabethan times. Since too many windows were destroyed, football was outlawed in Manchester in 1608. Even though the game has been outlawed for 500 years, it has never been fully eradicated (FIFA.com, n.d.-b). Scoring the Hales, a Shrove Tuesday football game held in Alnwick, Northumberland, as well as Royal Shrovetide Football in Ashbourne, Derbyshire, and other Shrove Tuesday football games held in Atherstone, Warwickshire, and Corfe Castle in Dorset, to name a few, are still played today (Johnson, n.d.). Therefore, early studies stated that ancient Mob football was common in medieval England. It required an infinite number of participants, a pig’s bladder, and very few rules (Medieval Period-5th to 15th Century).

The Home of Football in Britain

The game, which was common in the British Isles from the eighth to the nineteenth centuries, had a wide range of local and regional variations, which eventually led to the creation of modern-day games such as Rugby Football, Gaelic Football in Ireland, and Association Football in the United Kingdom (FIFA.com, n.d.-a). From the 1850s onwards, more and more factory workers had Saturday afternoons off, and many of them switched to the modern sport of football

to watch or play. Working-class boys and men were organized into recreational football teams by key urban organizations such as churches, labor unions, and colleges (Rollin, n.d.). Football rules first established that the size and weight of the ball were eventually standardized in 1863 (Gerhardt, 2019). In 1866, the first 90 minutes of the match between London and Sheffield were played. School football became popular in the nineteenth century, particularly at the famous public school. There was no standard form of the game, so the rules were still fairly loose and simple to understand (FIFA.com, n.d.-a). In the nineteenth century, advanced football became an important part of the school program. In 1863, the evolution of football reached a pinnacle point. The Freemason Tavern was visited by members from eleven London clubs and colleges. This event is regarded as the beginning of association football. The never-ending debate about shin-kicking, carrying the ball, tripping, and other issues were brought up at this stage (Witzig, 2006). Finally, rugby and football were divided on 8 December 1863. Following that, football progressed at a breakneck rate. The Football Association had 50 member clubs over the next eight years. The FA Cup, the world's first football competition, was founded in 1872 (*The FA Cup*, n.d.). The Scottish FA (1873), the FA of Wales (1875), and the Irish FA (1880) are the next oldest, after the English FA (FIFA.com, n.d.-a). The influence of the British and the spread of football rapidly spread across the world. Following 1880, a football association was founded by some countries. Accordingly, Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) was originated in Paris in May 1904. In 1904, the total number of FIFA members (country) was 7 but in 1930 (the first Football World Cup) the number increased by 41. Between 1937 and 1938, FIFA President Stanley Rous established the modern-day laws of the game. The success of football continued to attract new followers over the next couple of decades and now FIFA has 211 (according to the Association of Men's National Football Teams) members in every corner of the world (FIFA.com, n.d.-a). To understand the evolution and growth of the World Cup, first examine the past of the Olympic Games, which have long been regarded as the World Cup's counterpart tournament in terms of global scope and prestige. The distinction is often made that the Olympics celebrate not only one sport, but sport as man's pastime, while the World Cup is just a gathering of football playing nations from across the world (Siu, 2014).

First World Cup Football

In the first World cup football, the possibility of making the long boat trip a three-week voyage in those days-deterred the Europeans from coming, despite Uruguay's offer to cover all travel and hotel expenses for the visiting teams. There was no commitment from any European nation to participate in the World Cup two months before it was scheduled to begin. Finally, FIFA President Jules Rimet intervened and placed some pressure. Belgium, Romania, Yugoslavia, and France all changed their positions and agreed to take part in the first world cup. On June 21, 1930, the four European teams set sail from Villefranche-sur-Mer, a small town on the French Riviera, with a stop in Rio de Janeiro to pick up the Brazil team before arriving in Montevideo on July 4 (Molinaro, 2018). However, the first formal World Cup was held in Uruguay in 1930, and it has

been held every four years since then (with exceptions for interruption due to the Second World War) (*The History of World Cup in Football*, 2021). Uruguay defeated Argentina 4–2 in the first world cup final (Wills, 2014).

CONCLUSION

Undoubtedly, soccer has gone through many ups and downs and reached today's modern stage. The current state of soccer is based on the efforts of previous decades. It has been proven on all counts and based on observed evidence that the rules of the game have been changing since before Christ (BC). The basis of today's modern football thinking is the ball-dependent game of different nations and countries of the past. So, the present authors believe that there should be more scientific research required on the history of football.

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