

The Origins of Sports



TopicReads

LEVEL D-10 • Written by Elfrieda H. Hiebert



Streetball, a relaxed form of basketball, began in New York City.

Streetball

It was 1946 and another hot summer in New York City. That summer, a worker for the city began a street basketball tournament. That tournament was the origin of the sport that many people play today. Streetball, as it is called, is like basketball, but it is different, too, because the origins of streetball are in the street, not the gym.

Streetball is fast, and style counts more than it does in basketball. There is no net because most baskets have no nets. In streetball, a group of people decide the rules and play. Most streetball is played without refs.

Like many games, streetball comes from a particular place. Streetball was born because New York City had basketball hoops and hard surfaces on which to bounce basketballs. New York City still has these, and streetball is still played off and on its streets.

Key Notes:

What is streetball?



Snowboarding

In the snowy hills of Michigan in 1965, a father made a toy for his daughter. He put together two skis with a rope at the tip so the rider could hold the toy as it went down hills. His daughter's friends loved it, so the Michigan man made more. By 1966, more than half a million of these toys were sold.

The new sport got the name snowboarding, and soon many people were making snowboards. One was a young man who rode trays down the hills at his school. The young man started a business called Winterstick to make his snowboards. Unlike the ones first made in Michigan, these snowboards did not have a rope. Instead, snowboarders used their arms for balance.

The sport has grown. At first, many ski areas did not allow snowboarders, but not almost all do.

Key Notes:

What is snowboarding?



**Rhymes and two
twirling ropes are part
of Double Dutch
jump rope.**

Double Dutch Jump Rope

Jump rope made its way across the ocean with Europeans who settled on the east coast of North America. Although many children in Europe jumped rope, Dutch children played the game in a different way.

Two children held the ends of two ropes and turned them in different directions. Another child stood within the twirling ropes, jumping over and under them. When English children saw jump rope played this way, they named it double Dutch.

The game was always common in New York City, but in the 1950's, a double Dutch craze began. Children said rhymes as they jumped to the difficult beat of the twirling ropes.

In the 1970s, the game became a sport, with teams saying rhymes as they competed to show their speed and skill. Today, double Dutch jumpers compete in meets around the world.

Key Notes:

How is double Dutch jump rope different from other kinds of rope jumping?



Stock cars are built to race on a track.

Stock Car Racing

When World War II ended, U.S. carmakers turned their attention from tanks to cars. They made fast, powerful cars, and young men loved racing them.

People in different parts of the country raced different kinds of cars. In the South, people raced stock cars-cars from a car dealer. In 1948, a racer named Bill France organized stock car racers into an association called the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing, or NASCAR. Members raced stock cars on oval tracks..

From the time it was organized, NASCAR grew into a huge sport and a big business. Today, even though almost all the drivers and teams are in the South, millions of fans around the country watch NASCAR drivers race. These cars don't come from the dealer anymore. Instead, they're designed for one thing-going as fast as possible.

Key Notes:

What is stock car racing?

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