

Understanding cricket

Beginning of September, one of the last cricket game of the season in Lyme-Regis (lovely place, lovely friends, skittle in the pub Saturday night).

The other team couldn't make it so instead of playing only half the time "my" team plays all the time with other rules and they enjoy it (much more?).

On my part I stay with the other women not really watching (not at all) but spending a very enjoyable afternoon together... My understanding widens. In fact we're not there to look at our husband/boyfriend.. but just to spend a wonderful chatting afternoon in the sun (when there's sun) and be able to say to their men at the end of the game how great they were ("did you see me when I ...")

But still, cricket is a very coded world, a cultural test!.

By the way do they have questions asked about cricket when you take the "Life in the UK test" to apply for naturalisation? I know "*you must not be of unsound mind. You must be of good character.*" Are all the cricket players not of unsound mind and of good character?

I can tell you, you're very quickly mislaid by coded words and incomprehensible vocabulary.

Would you say it's a cricket game? A cricket match? A cricket test? A test match?

Let's take a **test**. You could think like me that if it's a test and that the real match will come later. But no, it's the real thing and everybody gets wild about it.

It's "international" and 5 days duration. I'm impressed, "international", several countries. I checked. There are currently ten Test-playing teams, representing individual nations except for England and the West Indies. So that makes 8 nations (Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, Bangladesh) all coming from the old British empire.

Oh, coming to "empire" I thought it was the name of the referee ("the enforcers of the law"), linking it to the countries that play cricket. But no, it's an **umpire**!

So here you are, you play (at last). You have two sides, one **out** in the field (who's got to throw the ball, to bowl) and one **in** (who's got to bat). When the sides change, when you were out you're in and when you were in you're out! But still you're in the game and you're not out watching.

How do you win ? It's kind of subtle, yes, subtle. OK, "*the winning team is the one that scores more runs in their innings*" but the strategy when you bowl is to eliminate (dismiss) the batsman. When 10 out of 11 are dismissed, they have been **bowled out**. So you've got to get in to go out. You can't get out to get in.?????? "A batsman goes out and is then in until he gets out"

You could also say it this way: "*You have two sides, one out in the field and one in. Each man that's in the side that's in goes out, and when he's out, he comes in and the next man goes in until he's out. When they are all out the side that's out comes in and the side that's been in goes out and tries to get those coming in out. Sometimes you get men still in and not out. When both sides have been in and out including the not-outs, that's the end of the game. Howzat?"*

You've been playing and you get tired. What do you do? You take **tea**, but it's serious, official, it's an interval, the tea interval, it's scheduled. And it's great!

You'll never believe me but it's a **game of animals**, there are rabbit, ferret, duck, bunny, a cow corner, a cow shot, a donkey-drop. Don't ask me what it means!

And there's also a coffin. It's the container to carry the cricket kit and also "a bloody nuisance in a cramped club dressing room".

And don't forget the initials like DND (did not bat) or LBW (leg before wicket).