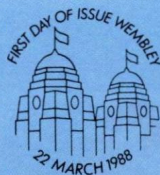


22 March 1988



On 22 March (brought forward from 12 April) four stamps will be issued celebrating Sport. They mark the centenaries of the British Amateur Gymnastics Association, the Lawn Tennis Association and the Football League and celebrate British contributions to organised skiing. The stamps were designed by Jake Sutton and feature stylistic representations of the four sports. This year, 1988, also sees the Olympic Games taking place in Seoul.



The **18p** stamp features gymnastics. More than 4,000,000 enthusiasts are catered for by some 10,000 clubs under the aegis of the British Gymnastics Association. There are four distinct sections of the sport, the longest established being men's and women's artistic gymnastics, which include floor exercises as well as the use of apparatus such as the parallel bars, rings, pommel and vaulting horses, balance beams and horizontal bar.

On the **26p** is a representation of skiing. In 1898, Sir Henry Lunn, an Englishman, initiated the first winter package tour to the Alps and five years later the Ski Club of Great Britain was formed, the first national ski organisation in the world. Sir Henry also founded the world's oldest downhill race in 1911 and his son, Sir



Arnold, invented slalom racing in 1922 and organised the first world championships in downhill and slalom racing in 1931.

Lawn tennis features on the **31p** value. Now played by an estimated 50 million people worldwide lawn tennis has its invention normally credited to a Welshman, Major Walter Clopton Wingfield who published his first book of rules in 1873. Wingfield's rules were modified for the first championship staged by the All-England Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club at





Wimbledon in 1877 and in 1888 the Lawn Tennis Association, now the national governing body for tennis in the UK, was formed.

The 34p stamp depicts football which was first played at English public schools. Rules were agreed at Cambridge University in 1843 and the Football Association was formed in 1863 to administer the sport. In 1888, the Football League was formed by 12 professional clubs after a meeting held in London on 23 March. The teams concerned were: Accrington, Aston Villa, Blackburn Rovers, Bolton Wanderers, Burnley, Derby County, Everton, Notts County, Preston North End, Stoke, West Bromwich Albion and Wolverhampton Wanderers. This eventually grew in membership to 92 clubs.



Technical Details

Designed by Jake Sutton the stamps have been printed in photogravure by Harrison and Sons Limited. In format they are square, 34.7mm x 34.7mm, perf. 14½, printed on unwatermarked, phosphor-coated paper. Printing is in sheets of 100 on PVA Dextrin gum.

PHQ Cards

PHQ cards (Nos 109 A–D) featuring each of the four stamps will be available from 7 March, price 15p each.

Presentation Pack

The presentation pack will cost £1.31 and was designed by Collis Clements and Tom Sawyer with illustrations by Jake Sutton and text by Mike Barden. It was printed by Clement & Foster Limited.

First Day Cover

The first day cover design is similar to the presentation pack. It costs 16p. Two pictorial postmarks will be used for the first day cover service, one from the British Philatelic Bureau featuring sporting trophies and the other from Wembley showing the entrance towers of the Wembley Stadium.

Customers requiring only the special pictorial postmarks may obtain them under the re-posting facility by sending on the first day of issue a stamped addressed envelope under an outer cover endorsed 'Special First Day of Issue Handstamp' to:

'British Philatelic Bureau' 20 Brandon Street,
EDINBURGH EH3 5TT

'Wembley' Special Postmark Duty
51 College Road
HARROW
HA1 1AA



SPORT

Royal Mail Mint Stamps



BP 22388



Lawn tennis is yet another sport which owes much to British innovation. Credit for the invention of the modern game is usually attributed to a Welshman, Major Walter Clopton Wingfield, who published his first book of rules in 1873 and patented the game as 'Sphairistike' a year later. The name, not surprisingly, did not survive long, but the game certainly has, since it is now played by an estimated fifty million people worldwide.

Wingfield's rules were modified for the first ever tennis championship, staged by the All-England Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club at Wimbledon in 1877 to raise funds for a new lawn roller. These rules, allowing the server one fault and incorporating a rectangular court

instead of an hourglass-shaped one as Wingfield had stipulated, are fundamentally those still in use to this day. What is more, the championship became — and remains — the most prized in the sport.

Within a few years, tennis was being played throughout the country and in 1888 the Lawn Tennis Association, now the national governing body for tennis in the UK, was formed. The sport also spread quickly abroad, especially to the United States of America where it was taken up with enthusiasm.

In terms of worldwide popularity, the sport against which all others have to be measured is soccer since its participants are numbered in hundreds of millions. The game as we know it today was first played at English public schools, most of whom eventually came to adopt rules agreed at Cambridge University in 1843. Over the next two decades, so many new clubs were formed that the need for a central body to administer the sport became evident. The result was the formation of the Football Association in 1863.

The Scots, Welsh and Irish soon followed the example of their English counterparts by establishing their own associations. Abroad, the game was spreading

too: the famous AC Milan club in Italy was formed by expatriate Englishmen, while a Liverpool club in Uruguay, an Everton in Chile and a Corinthians in Brazil are evidence of British influence there.

In 1888, the Football League was formed by twelve professional clubs to ensure regular fixtures between evenly matched teams. This eventually grew in membership to ninety-two clubs and is regarded as the most competitive league in the world today.

Despite the growing diversity and attractions of other sports, football remains the most popular spectator sport in Britain with attendances at League games of over seventeen million people during a season.

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SPORT
Royal Mail First Day Cover