



20 August 2009



10 April 2006



02 April 1977

Nick Weatherhogg



22 November 2003



18 July 1927



15 July 2018

The Diary of Sport



03 July 1988



05 September 1886



24 September 1988



15 September 1978



15 July 2018

History, Facts & Figures from Every Day of the Year



18 August 2015



29 June 1971



04 February 2018



12 July 1966

The Diary of Sport

History, Facts & Figures from
Every Day of the Year

Nick Weatherhogg



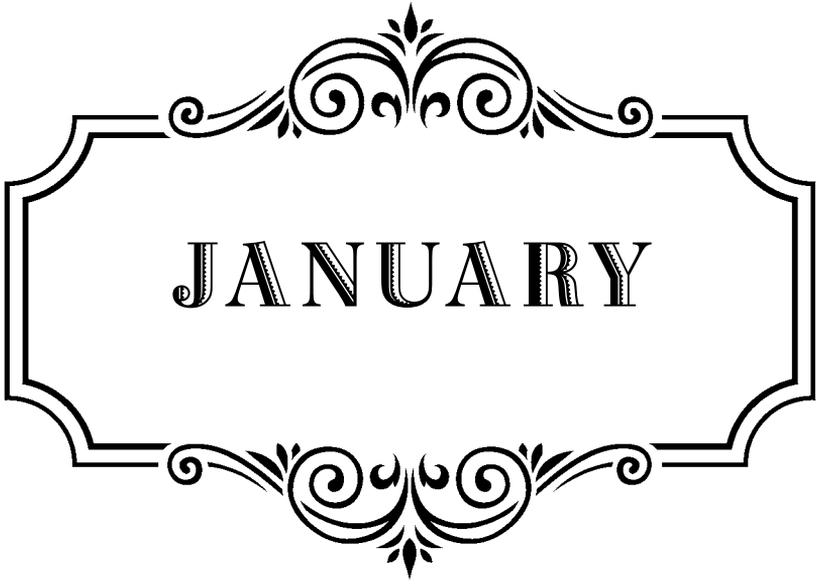
Introduction

‘Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where once there was only despair.’ Nelson Mandela.

Sport holds a unique place in society, and in individuals. There is very little, as Mandela says, that can unite people in the same way – but very little that divides people quite so strongly. Very little that brings so much joy, and so much pain simultaneously. It can bring both hope and despair, both comedy and tragedy.

The Diary of Sport presents the chaotic beginnings of various sports and the evolution into what we know today. It brings the records, the bizarre events, the sublime performances alongside the absurd. The individuals who make sport so entertaining, both the famous and the infamous. Presented in diary form with something for everyone. Read and enjoy!

Nick Weatherhogg



1 January

Any year: The birthday of any thoroughbred horse in the northern hemisphere. Bizarrely it doesn't matter on what date a horse is actually born, its birthday must always be counted as being on 1 January ... as long as it is in the northern hemisphere. Any horse from the southern hemisphere has its birthday on 1 August.

1840: Knickerbocker Alleys in New York City, the first indoor bowling team in the world, hosts the world's first bowling match.

1940: Heart of Midlothian beat Hibernian 6-5 in the Edinburgh derby. The ground became enveloped in fog shortly before kick-off – such a dense fog that the crowd of 14,000 could barely see anything ... and neither could the commentator Bob Kingsley! He just made it up ... for 90 minutes! Ordinarily of course the match would have been called off – but this was wartime so extra efforts were made. The commentary was due to be broadcast, and the War Office didn't want to risk alerting the Germans of bad weather over Edinburgh where they could therefore send the Luftwaffe undetected. So the match went on and Kingsley was ordered not to mention the fog. The only part of the commentary that was accurate was the goals – he couldn't miss any or broadcast ghost goals so he set up a series of runners around each goal to run and tell him when a goal was scored. The fog was so bad by the end that many of the crowd stayed in for at least ten minutes simply because they were unaware the match had ended. Amusingly when Hearts got to their dressing room they realised their left-back John Donaldson was missing – so they sent out a search party. He was found still hugging the wing and calling for the ball, hoping it would appear out of the gloom.

1957: South African cricketer Russell Endean becomes the first international to be dismissed 'handled the ball' after he had scored three runs against England.

1971: During the Martini International golf tournament in Norwich, John Hudson hits a hole-in-one on the 11th hole using a 4-iron. The

12th is considerably longer, so he selects a driver ... and gets another hole-in-one! The first (and currently only) time any golfer has achieved aces on successive holes.

2007: Death of Denver Broncos cornerback Darrent Williams at the age of just 24. Williams had been at a New Year's Eve party with teammates. He was killed in a drive-by shooting as he was driving home, hit by a single bullet to the neck. Two teammates in the car were also injured.

2 January

1832: Orchard Lake Curling Club opens – the world's first organised sports club for curling.

1879: On day one of the third Test match ever, Australian fast bowler Frederick 'The Demon' Spofforth achieves the first hat-trick in Test cricket, reducing England to 26/7 in Melbourne.

1902: Heart of Midlothian beat Tottenham Hotspur to claim the 15th Football World Championship. Hearts won the tie 3-1 on aggregate.

1932: The England rugby team are hosting the touring South African side at Twickenham. During the game Springbok full-back Gerry Brand broke a world record by successfully scoring a drop goal from 77.7m (85yds), a record that remains unbroken.

1971: The Old Firm football match takes place at Ibrox Park in Glasgow, the home of Rangers FC. Celtic took the lead in the 90th minute, resulting in Rangers fans immediately heading to the exits. Thousands streamed through stairway 13 and it appears that somebody fell, causing a domino effect with people piling up and falling. As the pile-up worsened, tragically 66 people died with at least 200 injured.

1986: Japanese motorcyclist Yasuo Kaneko rides his Honda XR 500 on the Dakar Rally. As he approached the town of Sète at the end of the first stage he was hit by a civilian car. The driver of the

Peugeot 205 had been drinking, and the 41-year-old Kaneko was killed instantly.

3 January

1865: Con Orem and Hugh O'Neill box a competition bout outdoors. This was well before judges' decisions – the boxers continue to fight to a finish, however long it takes. However, the referee did stop this bout – after 193 rounds – simply because it was too dark to continue.

1929: Day five (of seven) of the third Test match between Australia and England, held in Melbourne. Australia finished the day 347/8. Last man out, just a few minutes before close of play, was Don Bradman. Batting at number six, Bradman had scored 112 – his first Test century in only his second Test match.

1939: Akinoumi Setsuo beats Futabayama Sadaji in a sumo bout, bringing to an end Sadaji's winning streak of 69 matches, lasting three years.

1947: Birth of England and British Lions prop forward Fran Cotton. After his retirement Cotton set up one of the best-known sports clothing companies – Cotton Traders.

1969: Birth of Formula One legend Michael Schumacher, widely considered one of the finest Formula One drivers of all time. His name is most associated with Ferrari, for so long the sleeping giant of F1, with whom Schumacher won five consecutive World Championship titles.

1996: Tragedy strikes in Morocco during the Dakar Rally. Laurent Gueguen was driving a support truck for the Citroën team when the truck drove over a Moroccan landmine just off the main track. The truck burst into flames, killing Gueguen. He had two co-drivers with him at the time but they managed to escape the burning vehicle.

4 January

1902: Liverpool entertain Stoke at Anfield in what turns out to be one of the most bizarre matches of all time. Stoke players enjoyed a lunch of fish ... and it turned out there was something wrong with it. The first affected was the goalkeeper, who sprinted off the pitch after just eight minutes in search of a toilet (immediately after conceding the first goal). He had a pulse of 148 and did not reappear. By the beginning of the second half Stoke were down to seven players (several of whom weren't feeling great), and the Stoke dressing room apparently resembled 'the cabin of a cross-Channel steamer in bad weather'. Unsurprisingly Liverpool won 7-0.

1967: Holder of the world record for water speed travel, Briton Donald Campbell, dies in an attempt to stretch the record still further. To counteract the possible advantages of wind or current, a water speed record must be the average of two 1km sprints in opposite directions on the same stretch of water. On Coniston Water in the Lake District, Campbell had completed his first leg at an average speed of 297mph (478kmh). On the second leg he was travelling at about 320mph (515kmh) when his boat, the *Bluebird K7*, flipped 15m (50ft) in the air and totally disintegrated on landing on the water again. Campbell was killed instantly.

2002: In the second round of the Mercedes Championship at Kapalua in Hawaii Tiger Woods hits a drive unofficially measured at 455m (1,494ft) on the 18th.

2009: The Argentine stage of the Dakar Rally sees the death of French motorcyclist Pascal Terry in very unfortunate circumstances. Terry ran out of fuel in a deserted part of the rally and sent an emergency signal to organisers for help. However, shortly after he had requested help his brother, another competitor, arrived safely at the stage finishing line – and the name confusion left organisers believing Terry was safe and the search was abandoned. Three days later his absence was discovered and a new search was established. He was found dead about 50m from his motorbike.

It is believed that had the original search continued his life would have been saved.

2016: American Justin Dargahi scores an incredible 26 basketball three-pointers in just one minute. (This was purely a record-breaking attempt, not game play.)

5 January

1869: Kilmarnock FC is formed from a local group of cricketers who are keen to find a competitive sport to play through the winter months. Given the year this was not strictly football as we would recognise it today; it was more a sort of rugby/football hybrid ... which explains the name of the ground that still exists today as Rugby Park.

1910: The beginning of the first season of the National Hockey Association, a men's professional ice hockey organisation and the forerunner to the NHL. The league was cancelled almost immediately while a few key points were ironed out, but restarted ten days later and ran for two months. Seven teams played 12 matches each to form a league, with the Montreal Wanderers the inaugural champions.

1950: In awful weather conditions (snow with near zero visibility), a Soviet-built Misunov Li-2 crashes near Koltsovo Airport at Sverdlovsk, resulting in the deaths of all 19 people on board. The plane was carrying the Soviet Air Force ice hockey team VVS Moscow en route to a game against the Chelyabinsk hockey club. All 11 players perished, along with the club doctor and a masseur. Only two members of the Moscow first-team squad survived – Viktor Shuvalov was injured and so did not travel with the team, while winger Vsevolod Bobrov overslept and missed the flight.

1971: Australia host England at Melbourne Cricket Club in the world's first one-day cricket match ... and it isn't even planned! England were touring Australia, and were due to play a Test

match in Melbourne. However, the first three days were totally washed out, making a Test match unworkable. Rather than just abandoning play altogether the umpires decided to give the crowd something to cheer, and hastily arranged a one-day international with 40 eight-ball overs per side. Australia won the toss and put England in to bat. The match was won by Australia.

2014: Death of legendary footballer Eusébio (birth name Eusébio da Silva Ferreira, aka the Black Panther or the Black Pearl), widely considered one of the greatest footballers of all time. He is most associated with a long and distinguished career with Benfica, for whom he played for 15 years, playing 440 matches in total and scoring 473 times.

6 January

1369: First known record of the ancient sport called Haxey Hood, a game which appears to contain elements of rugby but seems to have very few rules. Four teams in a town or village representing four pubs meet in the town square. The competition is then to simply push a leather tube to their pub – while being tackled, attacked and harried by the opposition. The successful team get to keep the ‘ball’ to display for a year until the following year’s competition.

1681: The first known boxing match takes place between the butcher and the butler of the Duke of Albemarle, which the duke organises to entertain his guests and friends.

1934: Death of renowned football manager Herbert Chapman. Chapman made his name as an innovative and influential manager. He won the FA Cup and two Division One titles with Huddersfield Town in just four years before repeating the success (exactly) at Arsenal. Chapman is also credited with introducing original tactics and modern training methods, as well as promoting European club competitions, numbers on shirts, floodlighting and many other aspects of the game.

1942: Death of Henri de Baillet-Latour, the third president of the International Olympic Committee, and the first one to die in office.

1990: Czechoslovak ice hockey defenceman Luděk Čajka is badly injured during a game when he collides with an opponent and crashes into the board in open play. Čajka was left paralysed and comatose in hospital, where he died 39 days later.

1990: One of the most bizarre horse races ever takes place on a very foggy course in Louisiana. The 23-1 shot Landing Officer, ridden by Sylvester Carmouche, won by 24 lengths. Such an overwhelming victory in such awful conditions demanded an investigation, so the tapes were carefully analysed – showing eight horses entering the final straight and nine crossing the finishing line. The commissioners concluded that Carmouche left the starting line with the others, and simply let them go. He then backed Landing Officer up to a few yards away from the finishing tape and waited for the others to enter the finishing straight, before riding through the tape. Carmouche was banned from racing for ten years.

1994: During the US Figure Skating Championships skater Nancy Kerrigan is savagely attacked by a man with a baton. The injuries put her out of the remainder of the championship. Suspicion fell upon the ex-husband of her rival Tonya Harding, who denied any involvement in the attack. Harding was subsequently found guilty of obstructing the investigation and was then banned from participating in the sport by the US Olympic Committee.

7 January

1936: Tennis champions Howard Kinsley (Wimbledon finalist in 1926) and Helen Moody (winner of 19 Grand Slam titles – four at the French Open, eight at Wimbledon and seven at the US Open) set the world record for a tennis rally (contrived) when they volleyed a ball back and forth 2,001 times. The rally took one hour

and 18 minutes, and was stopped deliberately because Kinsley had to go and teach a pre-arranged lesson.

1960: Death of Dorothea Chambers, one of the most successful British women's tennis players of all time. At Wimbledon 1919 she bore the unusual (and unfortunate) distinction of reaching the finals of the women's singles, women's doubles and mixed doubles – losing all three! Chambers was also one of the leading badminton players in the country.

1970: Foundation of South African football team Kaiser Chiefs, south of Johannesburg. The pop group of the same name are actually named after the football club ... indirectly. The band members all live in Yorkshire and are massive fans of Leeds United. At the time the band was formed Leeds were captained by the South African Lucas Radebe, who had been signed from the Kaiser Chiefs, so they settled on that!

1973: Administrator Olly Croft founds the British Darts Organisation (BDO), the central organising body for darts tournaments for both professionals and amateurs. The BDO sets the rules and regulations of the game, such as the dimensions of the board, the height of the board and the length of the oche. It also organised the first World Professional Darts Championship in 1978.

1984: Eric Bristow wins the world darts title for the third time in one of the most dominant displays of darts ever witnessed. The victory led to one of the most iconic moments of sports commentating of all time when Sid Waddell said: 'When Alexander of Macedonia was 33, he cried salt tears because there were no more worlds to conquer ... Bristow's only 27.'

8 January

1789: Death of Jack Broughton, influential English bare-knuckle boxer. He was the first man to produce a set of rules for boxing, initially for his own amphitheatre but later evolving into the

London Prize Ring Rules, which became the standard for bare-knuckle bouts. Rules included that a round would last as long as both boxers were standing, and would end as soon as one of the fighters went down. Then there would be a 30-second gap between rounds.

1824: Tom Spring becomes the first recognised British boxing champion when he knocks out Jack Langan. In the early days of boxing the outcome was always by submission or knockout as there was no time limit placed on the bout. Spring beat Langan after two and a half hours of fighting.

1962: The future golfing legend Jack Nicklaus makes his first professional performance as a 21-year-old in the Los Angeles Open. He finished 50th (and last) – 21 shots behind the winner Phil Rodgers. He earned the princely sum of \$33.33 for his efforts.

1995: Death of Argentine middleweight boxer Carlos Monzón, undisputed world champion for seven years including 14 successful defences of his titles. He fought 99 times in his career, winning 87 of the bouts with 59 knockouts. He died in a car accident while on a weekend furlough from jail, where he was locked up for killing his second wife.

2016: Death of Maria Teresa de Filippis, the first woman ever to compete in Formula One. Driving for Maserati, she competed during the Monaco Grand Prix in May 1958 but failed to qualify. Her first involvement in a GP race was the following month in Belgium when she finished tenth.

9 January

1811: Musselburgh golf course on the outskirts of Edinburgh in Scotland hosts the world's first golf competition for women, over a shortened course. Musselburgh had a long and proud tradition of female golfers – there are clear records of Mary Queen of Scots playing there. To attract women into entering, prizes were offered –

the winner would get a creel (a basket used for carrying fish), with runners-up getting two fine blue silk handkerchiefs from Barcelona.

1942: Joe Louis defends his world heavyweight boxing title for the 20th time, in a fight with Buddy Baer. Despite weighing more than three stone less than his opponent (-20kg) Louis managed to knock Baer out in the first round. The bout was partly organised for a charity relief for the Navy Relief Fund, with a proposed 50 per cent of the gate money going to the fund. Louis donated his entire purse of \$47,000 to the fund, leading promoter Mike Jacobs to give the entire gate of \$37,000. Baer then gave one sixth of his purse (\$4,000). So, having been knocked out in less than three minutes, Baer was the only one to actually make any money from the fight (-\$20,000).

1965: Birth of basketball star Muggsy Bogues, the shortest person ever to play in the NBA, standing at just 5ft 3in (1.60m). Despite this he enjoyed a 14-season NBA career before moving over to coaching, leading the Charlotte Sting in the women's league.

1990: Paul Lim becomes the first darts player to complete a nine-dart finish at the World Championship in his round against Jack McKenna. Lim won £52,000 for the achievement, while Phil Taylor received £24,000 for winning the overall competition and becoming world champion.

2007: Death of South African motorbike racer Elmer Symons following an accident in Morocco during the fourth stage of the Dakar Rally. Having previously worked as a mechanic, this was Symons's first attempt as a rider. The emergency services took just eight minutes to get to him, but by then it was already too late.

10 January

1909: The first-ever meeting in one of the most anticipated and hotly contested football derbies in the world. AC Milan beat their neighbours Internazionale 3-2 in the Italian football championship.

1949: Birth of boxer George Foreman. His first major success was winning the gold medal in the 1968 Olympics in the heavyweight division. He turned professional the following year, and won the world heavyweight title from a then undefeated Joe Frazier in 1973. Foreman's first defeat was in the third defence of his title – the famous 'Rumble in the Jungle' with Muhammad Ali in 1974.

1982: The Cincinnati Bengals beat the San Diego Chargers 27-7 in an American Football Championship game. The match has subsequently become known as the Freezer Bowl because it is the coldest AFC match in history. The air temperature on the day was minus 22.8°C (minus 9°F), but with a bitter wind blowing throughout the game the chill factor was recorded as minus 50.6°C (minus 59°F).

2010: In the Africa Cup of Nations group match, Angola are leading Mali 2-0 at half-time. With just 11 minutes to go the score had moved on to 4-0 ... and the final score was Angola 4 Mali 4, including two goals scored in injury time.

2011: Lionel Messi of Barcelona and Argentina wins the inaugural FIFA Ballon d'Or, as the best football player in the world, 2010. The Ballon d'Or had been in existence since 1956, when England's Stanley Matthews won the first event, but this was the first which was officially recognised by FIFA, the world's governing body.

2014: Belgian motorbike racer Eric Palante fails to finish the northern Argentine stage of the Dakar Rally so organisers launch a search of the area. His body was found, although there was no indication as to the cause of death.

11 January

1857: Birth of English flat race jockey Fred Archer (aka The Tin Man), who has been described as the 'best all-round jockey that the turf has ever seen'. He was named Champion Jockey at the

age of just 17, and then won the title for 13 consecutive seasons – every year until his premature death. He rode 2,748 winners from 8,084 starts, including a then record 246 wins in one season. Tragically he lost his wife in childbirth, and that coupled with suffering from delirium led to him taking his own life at the age of 29.

1892: Death of St Mirren and Scotland international footballer James ‘Daddy’ Dunlop. Dunlop was playing for St Mirren on New Year’s Day when he fell over and cut his knee on some discarded broken glass. The wound became infected, he developed a tetanus infection and died ten days later.

1902: Death of England and Lancashire spin bowler Johnny Briggs, at the age of 39. He was the first bowler to take 100 wickets in Test cricket, and also toured Australia six times, a feat matched only by Colin Cowdrey. Over his first-class career he took 2,221 wickets at an average of just 15.95, taking five wickets in an innings 200 times. Sadly at the age of just 36 he suffered a severe epileptic fit which left him in severe mental distress, meaning that he spent the final three years of his life in an asylum.

1959: On day four of the semi-final of the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy between Bahawalpur and Karachi, Karachi batsman Hanif Mohammad is out to the final ball of the day for a then first-class record score of 499. To make matters worse he was run out looking for his 500th run.

2003: Sunderland earn a goalless draw at home to Blackburn Rovers in the Premier League. It would prove to be their final point of the season as they then lost all of the remaining 15 matches, ending bottom of the league and being relegated. This is the longest consecutive losing stretch in England’s top flight.

2004: In the fourth round of the Mercedes Championship at Kapalua in Hawaii, Davis Love III drives a shot measured at 435m (1,428ft) on the 18th – the longest drive ever officially verified.

12 January

1873: Birth of Greek marathon runner Spyridon (aka Spyros) Louis (aka Loues). When the new Olympic Games were announced for Athens there was much local enthusiasm, particularly for the new marathon event. Louis won the first-ever Olympic marathon, and became a national hero.

1944: Birth of ‘Smokin’ Joe’ Frazier, undisputed heavyweight boxing champion of the world from 1970–73. In 1964 he won Olympic gold for heavyweight boxing, and turned professional the following year. In a 16-year career Frazier only lost four times – twice to Muhammad Ali and twice to George Foreman. Frazier died in 2011 of liver cancer.

1964: One of the most remarkable bowling performances ever. Indian slow left-armer Bapu Nadkarni, bowling for India against England on the third day of the Madras Test, bowled 29 overs for just three runs – one single off each of three overs, and 26 maidens.

2001: Death of American racehorse Affirmed, the 11th winner of the United States Triple Crown of Thoroughbred Racing (1978) and Horse of the Year for two consecutive seasons. Racing in the 1970s he won \$2.8m.

2017: Death of erstwhile England football manager Graham Taylor. Taylor made a name for himself, after a rather mediocre career as a player, by managing Watford to three promotions in five years to take them from the Fourth Division (now League Two) to the First Division (now the Premier League).

13 January

1889: Death of Staveley footballer William Cropper. Cropper is one of an elite group of sportsmen who played football for Derby

County and cricket for Derbyshire. At the age of just 26 he was playing for Staveley against Grimsby Town when he ruptured his bowel during the match. He died the next day in hospital.

1933: American tennis star Bunny Austin shocks the tennis world when he becomes the first player to appear on centre court at a tournament wearing shorts.

1979: John Spencer compiles the first 147 maximum break in an official competitive match. This should also have been the first live televised maximum ... but the camera crew had disappeared for a tea break!

1991: Tragedy strikes in Mali during the Dakar Rally. Charles Cabonne was driving a support truck for the Citroën team during the eighth stage of the rally when he was shot dead by rebels at the side of the road. Organisers cancelled the next two stages and when the race resumed the Malian army accompanied teams passing through the country.

2018: Australian Derek Herron lands a world record basketball shot. He found a safe and secure place near the top of the Maletsunyane Falls in Lesotho, while his friends set up the basket near the bottom, before he successfully threw the basket – a shot of 201.4m (660ft 10in).

14 January

1897: Swiss mountaineer Matthias Zurbriggen is the first person to reach the summit of Aconcagua in the Andes. At 6,962m (22,841ft) it was the highest confirmed climb to date.

1898: On day one of the third Test of England's tour of Australia, home batsman Joe Darling hits the first-ever Test match six. In these early days simply clearing the boundary still only got a four; to get a six a batsman had to hit the ball out of the ground ... something Darling managed three times in this innings, the third of which brought up his century.

1954: Possibly the most famous wedding involving a sports star, as baseball player Joe DiMaggio of the New York Yankees marries silver screen icon Marilyn Monroe. Although the marriage was short-lived (274 days to be precise), the two remained very good friends, and DiMaggio never stopped loving her. When Marilyn died DiMaggio had half a dozen long-stemmed roses delivered to her grave twice a week every single week for the rest of his life (nearly 37 years).

1964: Day four of the first Test between India and England in Madras. Indian bowler Bapu Nadkarni bowled a record 131 consecutive dot deliveries (including 21 maidens).

1969: Sir Matt Busby announces that he will be retiring at the end of the season from his role as manager of Manchester United. Busby had been manager of the club since 1945, a reign which began with the rebuilding of Old Trafford after it had been damaged in the Second World War. He then developed the 'Busby Babes', nurturing players such as Bobby Charlton and Duncan Edwards. He was one of the few survivors of the Munich air crash, before leading his team to success in the European Cup just ten years later.

1985: Tennis legend Martina Navratilova becomes only the third player in history to win 100 tennis tournaments (after Chris Evert, who reached the total in 1980, and Jimmy Connors in 1983).

15 January

1910: England beat Wales 11-6 in an international rugby fixture, in the first international game ever played at Twickenham.

1927: The first sports event ever broadcast in the United Kingdom is the Five Nations rugby union international between England and Wales at Twickenham. England won the fixture 11-9 (although under modern scoring allocations it would have been a 13-13 draw).

1967: The first-ever AFL-NFL World Championship game, the challenge which would subsequently become known as the Super Bowl. In the inaugural game the Green Bay Packers (NFL champions) beat their AFL counterparts Kansas City Chiefs by a score of 35-10.

1968: Death of Minnesota North Stars ice hockey centre Willie Masterton. He was hit hard, fell backwards and hit his head on the ice. Like most players of his day he was not wearing a helmet. Masterton started bleeding from his nose, ears and mouth. He was rushed into hospital and died of his injuries.

1998: Fifteen-year-old schoolboy Ian Thorpe becomes the youngest ever male world champion swimmer when he wins the 400m freestyle at the World Championships in Perth. His style and pace rapidly earned him the nickname 'Thorpedo'.

16 January

1902: Birth of Scottish Olympic runner Eric Liddell. In 1924 he refused to run in the 100m heats at the Olympics because they were run on a Sunday and conflicted with his deeply held Christian faith. Instead he ran in the 200m and won the bronze medal, and followed it up with a gold in the 400m. Liddell also represented Scotland in rugby union. After retiring from his athletics career he served as a missionary in China, where he remained until captured by the Japanese in the Second World War. He died in one of the Japanese concentration camps. His story is immortalised in the Oscar-winning movie *Chariots of Fire*.

1935: Birth of American racing driver AJ Foyt, the only man in history (to date) to have won the Indianapolis 500, the Daytona 500, the 24 Hours of Le Mans, and the 24 Hours of Daytona. He holds the USAC (United States Auto Club) record of 159 victories.

1966: The Chicago Bulls are formed and granted the NBA franchise – the third such award for the city of Chicago following the Chicago Stags (who had folded in 1950) and the Chicago Packers (now known as the Washington Wizards). The team started in the NBA that season, just a couple of months after their formation, and became the only NBA team ever to qualify for the play-offs in their inaugural season.

1992: The Professional Darts Corporation (PDC) is formed in the UK when a group of leading players split from the British Darts Organisation (BDO) having become increasingly disillusioned and unhappy with their governance of the sport. The PDC was originally called the World Darts Council (WDC).

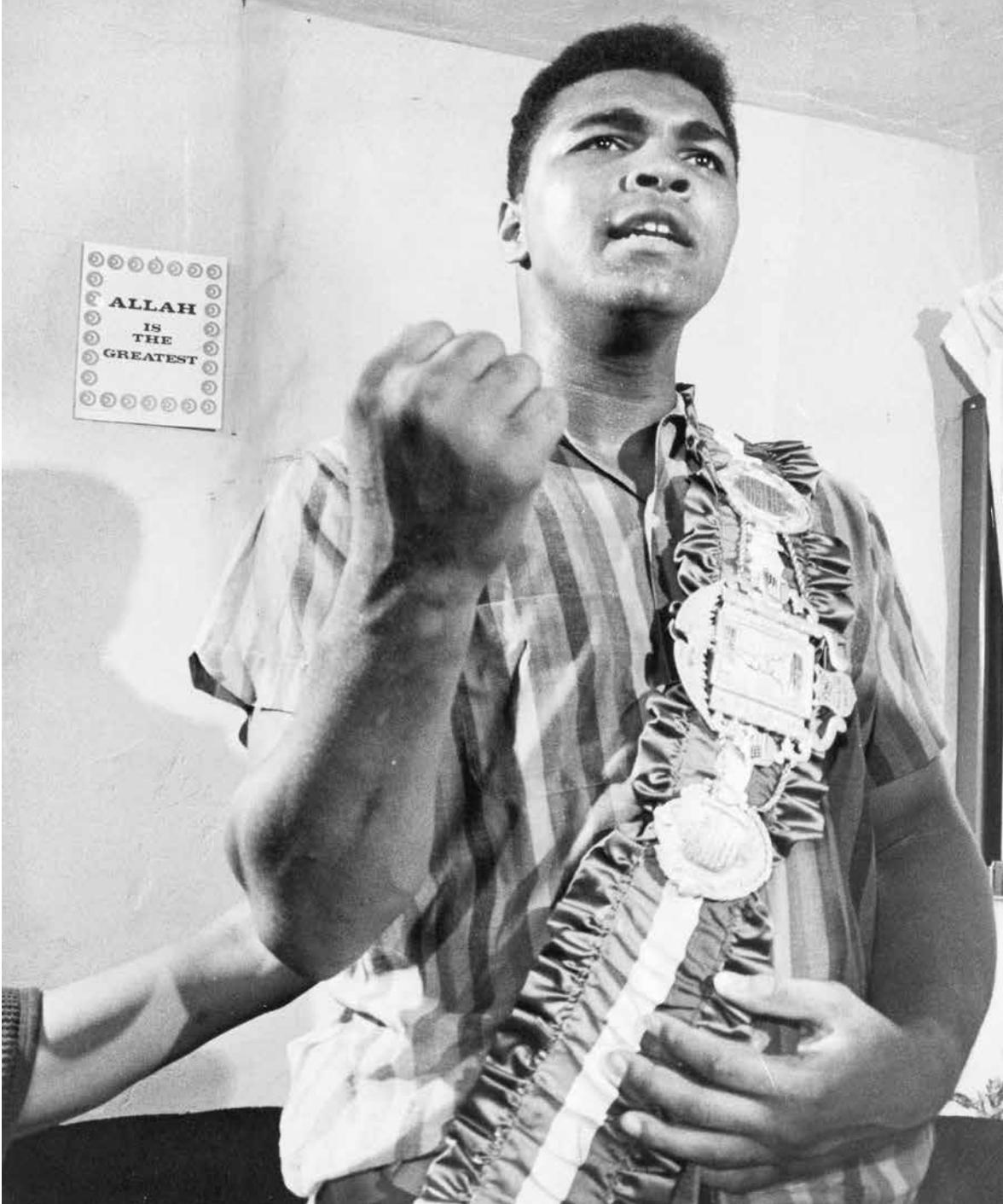
2004: Fourteen-year-old Freddy Adu becomes the youngest athlete of all time to sign a professional sport contract in the US when he signs for DC United in the MLS SuperDraft. Three months later he became the youngest ever MLS player when he came on as a substitute against the San Jose Earthquakes.

17 January

1597: The first definite reference to the game of cricket. In a legal dispute in Surrey regarding the ownership and purpose of a small tract of land, coroner John Derrick testified under oath that he had played cricket on the land as a boy. Or, to be more precise, ‘from the Free School at Guildford, hee and diverse of his fellows did runne and play at creckett and other plaies’.

1803: The Jockey Club compiles the first set of official rules under which horse races can be conducted, and sanctions racetracks to host meetings under these rules.

1942: Birth of Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr, the future world heavyweight boxing champion of the world who is better known as Muhammad Ali. Clay began boxing when he was 12 and gained his first major success at just 18 when he won Olympic gold in



Muhammad Ali

17 January 1942–3 June 2016

World heavyweight boxing champion. Widely regarded as the greatest boxer of all time, and one of the greatest sportsmen who ever lived

the light-heavyweight division of the 1960 Rome Olympics. He turned professional later that year.

2014: During the Masters final snooker legend Ronnie O'Sullivan creates another world record when he scores 556 points without reply. In a period of six frames he compiled breaks of 79, 88, 72, 134, 77, 56 and 39 without opponent Ricky Walden potting a single ball.

2015: The beginning of the first World Marathon Challenge. The challenge is running seven full marathons on seven continents in seven days. The first race for this inaugural competition was in Antarctica – and would be followed by Chile, the US, Spain, Morocco, the UAE and Australia. Twelve people competed in the challenge. The first winner was David Gething with a total time for the seven marathons of 25 hours, 36 minutes and three seconds.

18 January

1896: The University of Iowa invite students from the newly formed University of Chicago to play the first-ever college basketball fixture as an experimental game. Chicago beat Iowa 15-12.

1953: The Argentine Grand Prix is the first official Formula One race run in South America. Argentine president Juan Perón was seeking the popularist vote and so allowed free access to the circuit, meaning spectators were literally lining the edge of the track to get a close-up view. On lap 31, one spectator wanted an even closer view, so wandered on to the track. Nino Farina had to swerve to avoid him and lost control of his Ferrari. He ploughed into the crowd, killing 13 spectators.

1961: The £20 maximum wage is abolished, and Fulham immediately boost Johnny 'The Maestro' Haynes's wage to £100 a week in a bid to retain his services.

1967: Death of Goose Tatum, the African American star of multiple sports. Tatum made his name playing baseball in the

Negro League, before joining the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team as the original ‘clown prince’.

1975: Death of Mexican jockey Álvaro Pineda in California, from a freak accident. While racing in Arcadia, he was waiting in the starting gates on his horse Austin Mittler when the horse suddenly reared up so far that it toppled backwards, crushing Pineda’s head against the steel frame of the gate, killing him instantly. He left a wife and two young children. His younger brother Roberto died in a horse racing accident just three years later.

2014: Manchester City were playing against Cardiff City in the Premier League. City forward Edin Džeko had a shot at goal. Cardiff defender Kevin McNaughton hooked the ball out of the goal. City claimed the ball had crossed the line while Cardiff believed their defender had saved the goal. Referee Neil Swarbrick consulted with his watch and awarded the goal – the first league goal ever awarded by goal line technology.

2015: Batting against the West Indies, South Africa’s batsman AB de Villiers shatters two one-day international batting records. He scored his first fifty in just 16 deliveries, and needed just 15 more balls to complete his century in a record 31 deliveries. He went on to score 149 in total in a comfortable victory for South Africa.

19 January

1950: The beginning of the first-ever Ladies Professional Golf Association tour. The opening event was the Tampa Open in Florida and was won by America’s Polly Riley by two strokes, with a four-day total of 295. The purse for the event was \$3,500, but Ms Riley was not eligible for any prize money because she was an amateur.

1973: The first race of the inaugural World Rally Championship, starting with the Monte Carlo Rally. For the first six years of the WRC only manufacturers were given points; the first drivers’

championship was not established until 1979. In the first race the Alpine Renault A110 1800 took five of the first six positions, including all three places on the podium.

1981: On a visit to Los Angeles Muhammad Ali hears of a suicidal man who also happens to be a fan of Ali. He went to see the man, and managed to talk him down from a ninth-storey ledge where he was intending to jump from.

2013: After years of denial Lance Armstrong finally publicly admits to doping offences in all seven of his Tour de France victories. He went further, claiming he could not have possibly won any event without cheating since (he alleged) everyone else was doing it.

2013: Death of legendary baseball player Stan Musial (aka Stan the Man), one of the best and most consistent hitters in baseball history. Musial spent 22 seasons in MLB with the St Louis Cardinals, scoring 475 home runs with a batting average of 0.331. He was World Series champion three times, and the National League (NL) batting champion seven times, as well as being named in the All-Star line-up 24 times including 22 consecutive entries.

20 January

1687: A diary entry by medical student Thomas Kincaid gives the first known description of a golf stroke: 'I found that the only way of playing at the Golfe is to stand as you do at fenceing with the small sword bending your legs a little and holding the muscles of your legs and back and armes exceeding bent or fixt or stiffe and not at all slackning them in the time you are bringing down the stroak (which you readily doe).'

1987: During a practice match between India and Pakistan at the Brabourne Stadium, one of the Pakistani fielders is injured, and they haven't got a 12th man, so they borrow one! India lent them a young prodigy who was rapidly gaining a reputation as a lad of immense talent – the 13-year-old Sachin Tendulkar. So it is

technically correct to say that the Indian batting legend actually played for Pakistan before he played for India.

1994: Death of football manager Sir Matt Busby. He established one of the best youth systems of all time, the so-called ‘Busby Babes’, and led Manchester United for 25 years, winning 13 trophies.

2007: With Sheffield United losing 2-0 away to Reading their manager decides it is time to go on the offensive, bringing on Northern Ireland international winger Keith Gillespie to replace defender Derek Geary. As Gillespie entered the field he shoved an opponent which was noticed by the referee – who gave him a straight red card. Since the referee had not restarted play from the substitution his red card is officially timed at an unbeatable zero seconds.

2007: Just 15km from the end of the 14th stage of the Dakar Rally, French rider Eric Aubijoux falls off his Yamaha 450WRF and dies immediately. Initially it was thought he had suffered from a heart attack. However, a post-mortem revealed he had died of significant internal bleeding, implying he had been involved in a major accident. Yet his bike was in excellent condition, showing no signs of any accident. The precise cause of Aubijoux’s death was never confirmed.

21 January

1927: The first football match ever broadcast on radio in Britain is a 1-1 draw between Arsenal and Sheffield United. To enable listeners to have a clearer vision of exactly what was happening on the pitch one commentator described the play, while a second shouted out grid numbers to let people know where on the pitch the ball was at any time. The numbered grid was published in the *Radio Times*. One of the goalmouths was labelled as grid number one ... so a back pass to the goalkeeper to start building up the play all over again was ‘back to square one’, from where we get the frequently used phrase.

1940: Birth of golfing legend Jack Nicklaus (aka The Golden Bear), considered by many as the greatest golfer of all time. In a professional career lasting a quarter of a century Nicklaus won 18 major championships, being placed in the top three 46 times. Overall he won 73 PGA events, behind only Sam Snead and Tiger Woods. At 26 he became the youngest golfer in history to win the career slam of majors.

1945: Murder of Young Perez, the Jewish Tunisian boxer and erstwhile world flyweight champion. Perez was initially held in the Drancy internment camp in France and was one of 1,000 prisoners moved to Auschwitz in 1943. He was one of just 31 survivors 18 months later from the original 1,000. Perez was then one of those ordered on the infamous death march and was murdered by his captors.

1990: Tennis legend John McEnroe, renowned for his behaviour as much as his play, becomes the first player to be thrown out of the Australian Open. Already with two code violations, McEnroe swore loudly and frequently at the chair umpire Gerry Armstrong, who called a third and final code violation: 'Default Mr McEnroe. Game, set, match.'

2016: Death of alpine skier Bill Johnson. In 1984, at the age of 24, he became the first American to win an Olympic gold medal in the alpine events, competing in Yugoslavia (in Sarajevo, which is now in Bosnia). In 2001, during the US Alpine Championships, a bad crash left him with severe brain damage and comatose for three weeks. He suffered a series of mini-strokes over the next few years until a massive stroke left him confined to care for the remaining years of his life.

22 January

1857: The National Association of Baseball Players is founded in New York.

1862: The first known public competition for ski jumping is held at Trysil in Norway. As well as distance, a panel of judges awarded points for ‘elegance and smoothness’.

1880: The initial groundwork towards creating the game of table tennis is made when lawn tennis is adapted to be played on the dining room table using improvised equipment.

1955: Snooker legend Joe Davis makes the first officially ratified 147 maximum snooker break. This was in London, in an exhibition match against Willie Smith.

1959: Death of British racing driver Mike Hawthorn, just three months after he is crowned 1958 Formula One World Champion and announces his retirement. He had also won the Le Mans 24-Hours just four years earlier – the first driver to claim both titles. Ironically he lost his life in a car accident while driving to London. Hawthorn had only recently been told he had just a couple of years to live due to kidney problems.

1973: Birth of Rogério Ceni, the Brazilian goalkeeper. A tremendous stopper, he also gained a reputation as a penalty and free-kick taker, scoring 131 goals – an unprecedented total for a goalkeeper. To put that into context, that is a goalkeeper scoring more goals in his career than the likes of Stanley Matthews, Billy Bremner, Zinedine Zidane or Ryan Giggs.

1995: Anderlecht win 3-2 away to Germinal Ekeren in the Belgian league. All three of Anderlecht’s goals were scored by Stan van den Buijs ... the Germinal Ekeren defender who nets a fairly unique hat-trick of own goals.

23 January

1879: The National Archery Association of America is established in Crawfordsville, Indiana.

1939: Death of Austrian footballer Matthias Sindelar (aka the Mozart of Football) at the age of just 35. A poem released shortly after his death implied he took his own life in a suicide pact with his girlfriend, although the official verdict was carbon monoxide poisoning. Voted Austria's greatest ever footballer, he played for his country 43 times, scoring 26 goals.

1976: Australian Rod Laver beats Britain's Mark Cox 6-3 6-4 on the carpet surface to win a tennis tournament in Detroit in the US. The win was Laver's 200th career title (a world record), and would turn out to be his last as he retires shortly afterwards.

1983: At the age of just 26 and already with 11 Grand Slam victories to his credit (five Wimbledon, six French Open), Björn Borg shocks the tennis world by announcing his retirement.

1988: The women's singles final at the Australian Open is the first tennis Grand Slam final to be played indoors under cover after the Open moves to Flinders Park in Melbourne. Just three games had been played before light rain started and the final had to be held up for 83 minutes while the roof was closed. German Steffi Graf beat American Chris Evert 6-1 7-6 in the final.

2017: Liberty Media complete the \$8 billion takeover of Formula One, with Bernie Ecclestone losing his position as the supremo of the sport after nearly 40 years in charge (although he remains as chief executive).

24 January

1900: Newcastle Badminton Club, the oldest badminton club in the world, is formed in Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

1907: Glenn Curtiss sets a new speed record for a motorbike on board his 4,000cc Curtiss V-8 during a race at Ormond Beach in Florida. Curtiss was clocked at 136.3mph (219.3kmh).

1958: Birth of East German biathlete Frank Ullrich, gold medal winner in the 1980 Winter Olympics in the sprint event. One of the most successful biathletes of all time, Ullrich also won nine gold medals at world championships between 1978 and 1983, as well as 11 victories in World Cup events.

1974: The first-ever English football league game to be played on a Sunday sees Millwall beat Fulham 1-0 at The Den in Division Two. The game kicked off at 11.30am at the request of the police to try to minimise crowd trouble. The first Sunday kick-off in a top-flight match was a week later when Chelsea entertained Stoke City.

2015: The longest competitive match in squash history takes place between Leo Au of Hong Kong and Canadian Shawn DeLierre in the semi-finals of the Holtrand Gas City Open in Alberta, Canada. World number 33 Au won 11-6 4-11 11-6 7-11 16-14 in two hours and 50 minutes.

25 January

1915: Welsh flyweight boxer Jimmy Wilde is beaten by Tancy Lee of Scotland, which brings to a close Wilde's record-breaking run of 103 bouts without defeat. More than 100 years later this remains the record for professional boxing, and given that modern boxers only fight maybe twice a year, this record is unlikely ever to be beaten.

1924: The beginning of the very first Winter Olympic Games. Chamonix in France was chosen as the host, with the delightful setting for many of the events being at the foot of Mont Blanc as 258 athletes from 16 nations participated in these inaugural Games – Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Finland, France, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, United States and Yugoslavia. The winners of the event were Norway with 17 medals, four of which were gold (out of 16 events). (For comparison the 2018 Winter Olympics in South Korea featured 2,922 athletes from 92 nations, competing over 102 events.)

1995: In a Crystal Palace vs. Manchester United game at Selhurst Park, United striker Eric Cantona is sent off for kicking Palace defender Richard Shaw. As he walked towards the tunnel Cantona leapt into the crowd, initially feet first followed by a series of punches. Cantona was sentenced to 120 hours of community service. He called a press conference to explain his actions, the full transcript of which is as follows: ‘When the seagulls follow the trawler, it’s because they think sardines will be thrown into the sea. Thank you very much’ – at which point he got up and left, leaving behavioural psychologists struggling to explain what on earth that was about.

2001: Australian greyhound Brett Lee wins his race at Angle Park in South Australia, running the 515m in a record 28.88 seconds – with an average racing speed of 62.4kmh (or 38.8mph).

2004: Death of Hungarian international footballer Miki Fehér while playing for Portuguese side Benfica away to Vitória de Guimarães. In injury time at the end of the game he had just been given a yellow card when he suddenly bent over in pain before collapsing backwards on to the pitch. Shortly before midnight news came from the hospital that he had passed away by cardiac arrhythmia.

26 January

1871: The Rugby Football Union is formally founded at a meeting of clubs in the Pall Mall Restaurant in Regent Street, London. The initial reason for the meeting was to standardise the rules since many regions and even individual clubs had their own sets of laws. The 21 clubs that attended this first meeting included Harlequins, Blackheath, Civil Service, Guy’s Hospital, King’s College, Wellington College and St Paul’s School, which are still playing today. Other clubs now defunct, or playing under other names, were the Flamingoes, Gipsies, Wimbledon Hornets, Mohicans, Marlborough Nomads, Addison, Lausanne, Belsize

Park, Ravenscourt Park, West Kent, Law, Clapham Rovers and Queen's House (from Greenwich). One notable absentee from the meeting was Wasps who had been invited but, as recorded at the time, 'In true rugby fashion ... turned up at the wrong pub, on the wrong day, at the wrong time and so forfeited their right to be called Founder Members.'

1888: The Lawn Tennis Association is founded as the national governing body of tennis in Great Britain. Seven-time Wimbledon champion William Renshaw was elected as the first president.

1906: American Fred Marriot, driving a Stanley Rocket, is the first person to clear 200kmh on a speed trial. The steam-driven vehicle was timed at 205.44kmh (127.66mph).

1993: The final day of the fourth Test between Australia and the West Indies at Adelaide. Australia had been set a modest total of 186 to win (or 185 to draw). Australia were dismissed for 184 leaving the West Indies with a one-run victory, the narrowest win ever in Test cricket.

2000: Death of American tennis player Don Budge, the first person in history to win a calendar Grand Slam (all four major tournaments in the same year). In both 1937 and 1938 he achieved the hat-trick of singles winner, men's doubles winner and mixed doubles winner at Wimbledon.

2003: The 91st women's Australian Open final witnesses the battle of the sisters as 21-year-old Serena Williams beats her older sister Venus 7-6 3-6 6-4.

27 January

1894: The University of Chicago beats the Chicago YMCA 19-11 in the first-ever college fixture for basketball.

1969: Margaret Court beats Billie Jean King 6-4 6-1 in the women's final of the Australian Open tennis tournament. The

seeding for this year's competition was unusually accurate – the unseeded Helen Gourlay reached the quarter-finals along with the players seeded 1 to 7; seeds 1 to 4 made the semi-finals, and the top two seeds contested the final.

1973: When the Barbarians beat the touring New Zealand All Blacks team for the first time they produce what has been frequently called 'The greatest try ever scored', finished by Gareth Edwards. The match was played at Cardiff Arms Park and the Barbarians won 23-11.

1984: During the Millrose Games, an indoor athletics meet in New York City, multi-event champion athlete Carl Lewis wins the long jump in a new indoor world best of 8.79m.

1994: A football match with a great deal at stake turns into one of the most bizarre spectacles ever seen in any sport. Barbados were playing against Grenada in the mini-league format of the Caribbean Cup. If Barbados won by a margin of two or more goals then they would go through to the finals. If not Grenada would progress. Part of the farce that ensued must have been due to the organisers who were experimenting with two new rules. Draws were discouraged to try to make matches more exciting – any match ending level after 90 minutes went into extra time. And extra time would be decided by a golden goal (i.e. the first team to score in extra time, and the match would end to avoid any possibility of an equaliser). The other new rule was that for some reason golden goals would count double. Midway through the first half Barbados were winning 2-0, and were sailing through to the finals. Then with about ten minutes to go Grenada scored – 2-1 to Barbados, advantage Grenada. A quick discussion among the Barbados players concluded that they were unlikely to score again in the short time left. They decided their best bet was to let Grenada score again to take it to 2-2, and then score in extra time to get the double-value goal. When they were playing almost unchallenged Grenada worked out what was going on – and so refused to score. So Barbados decided they would score for them. For the final few minutes the crowd were totally confused by the sight of Barbados desperately trying to score an own goal – with

the Grenada players earnestly defending the opposition goal to prevent this happening. In the final minutes Barbados did manage to score to take the tie into extra time – and then managed to get their golden goal to progress 4-2. These experimental rules were never used again.

28 January

1900: The Deutscher Fußball Bund (DFB) is founded in Leipzig as the official national football association of Germany, with 86 member clubs.

1978: Birth of legendary Italian goalkeeper Gigi Buffon, holder of numerous footballing records. In 2016 he went 974 minutes without conceding a goal, including ten consecutive clean sheets. With 176 international caps Buffon is not only the most capped Italian of all time but the most capped European. He attended a record five FIFA World Cup tournaments, although in his first in 1998 he was a non-playing substitute.

2005: The West Indies play Pakistan in a one-day international at the Adelaide Oval as part of the Tri-Nations series with Australia. The West Indies batted first and reached 339/4 with captain Brian Lara scoring 156 off 138 balls, including 12 fours and five sixes. This was Lara's 19th and final ODI century.

2017: Serena Williams beats her sister Venus in the final of the Australian Open – a match and a result that brings several records. It was the first time that the final had been contested by two players over 35, and the first time any player had won the Australian Open seven times. Williams's win was her 23rd Grand Slam singles title, overtaking Steffi Graf's record of 22. Shortly after the event Williams announced she was expecting her first baby, the timing meaning that she would have been a few weeks pregnant when she won the title.

29 January

1924: A military patrol event is staged for the first and only time at a Winter Olympic Games. Military patrol was for a team of four members – one officer, one NCO and two privates. It was over a 25km cross-country skiing course (15km for women), that had to climb from 500m to 1,200m (300m to 700m for women). The officer carried a pistol, but did not participate in the shooting element of the competition. All other members carried rifles, and had to carry a backpack of at least 24kg. Switzerland won the gold medal for this unique event. The event was the forerunner to the modern biathlon, although it would be 36 years before this became an official sport for the Winter Olympics.

1961: In the Italian league Internazionale (aka Inter Milan) thrash Catania at the San Siro. And they didn't even need to try too hard, since Catania did most of the work for them. After Egidio Morbello had opened the scoring for Inter, Catania then scored a remarkable four own goals.

1994: Thomas 'The Hitman' Hearns beats Dan Ward in the first round on a technical knockout to win the NABF cruiserweight title in Nevada. The win means that Hearns has now won international titles in an unprecedented six different weight categories, having previously won the USBA welterweight title (1980), the WBC light-middleweight title (1982), the NABF middleweight crown (1986), the NABF and WBO super-middleweight belt (1988), and the WBA light-heavyweight title (1991).

1996: Magic Johnson re-signs for LA Lakers five years after his retirement following the announcement that he has contracted HIV. He played his first game in five years the following day against the Golden State Warriors, coming off the bench. He would only play 32 games in this post-retirement season before retiring for the third and final time.

2003: Daniela Iraschko-Stolz of Austria becomes the first woman ever to jump 200m on skis when she clears exactly 210m (656 feet) on Kulm in Bad Mittendorf in Austria.

30 January

1929: Birth of South African Test spin bowler Hugh Tayfield. Playing for South Africa against Australia when still only 20, he was brought on to bowl when Australia were 31/0 and he took 7-23 to help reduce them to 75 all out. In a 1956/57 Test series against England Tayfield ended his spell in the first innings with 119 dot balls, and started the second with another 18. This sequence of 137 consecutive Test match deliveries without conceding a run remains a record.

1948: The beginning of the V Olympic Winter Games – the first for 12 years due to the Second World War. The Games were held in St Moritz in Switzerland, with 670 athletes from 28 nations contesting 22 events. St Moritz was chosen since she maintained her neutrality during the war and therefore would present no obvious hostility to any country competing. The financial drain of the war proved a problem to many competing countries who turned up ill-equipped for the Games. The Norwegian team, for example, had to borrow skis from the US team in order to compete.

1957: Spain beat the Netherlands 5-1 in a friendly international played in Madrid. Three of the goals are scored by Alfredo Di Stéfano ... his first goals for Spain, and his first international hat-trick, but not his first international goals! Ten years earlier he had played six matches for Argentina, scoring six times. He had also played four games for Colombia, but had failed to score for them.

1964: Lidiya Skoblikova from the Soviet Union wins the 500m speed skating final at the Innsbruck Winter Olympic Games. The following day she repeated her success in the 1,500m event. The day after that she won gold in the 1,000m. And then finally on the

next day she won the 3,000m to complete the clean sweep of speed skating medals, a feat never achieved before.

1995: Birth of Venezuelan baseball pitcher Victor Rodriguez, the youngest Seattle Mariners pitcher ever to throw a no-hitter. At the age of just 20 he returned to his homeland for a holiday and was struck by a boat while he was swimming. He was rushed to hospital for surgery where he stayed for six weeks before eventually succumbing to the injuries sustained.

2011: Japan's Sumie Inagaki takes the women's world record in completing the 24-hour run. At an indoor event in Espoo in Finland, Inagaki completed 240.6km (149.5 miles).

31 January

1874: Major Walter Wingfield, the father of modern tennis, produces the rules for playing tennis on grass courts, and patents several items of tennis equipment.

1944: Jewish Hungarian footballer and football manager Árpád Weisz is murdered by the Nazis in an Auschwitz concentration camp, a victim of the Holocaust.

1953: Death of Swiss bobsledder Felix Endrich, gold medallist at the 1948 St Moritz Winter Olympics in the two-man event. In the 1953 world championship he and his partner won gold in the two-man bob. He was also a member of the Swiss four-man team. The sled he was driving cleared a wall and smashed into a tree, breaking his neck. He was rushed to hospital, but was dead on arrival.

1991: The Kaiser Chiefs and Orlando Pirates meet in a friendly football match in the Oppenheimer Stadium in Orkney, South Africa. The stadium had a capacity of 23,000, but to try to increase revenue about 30,000 fans were let in with no segregation between fans of the two teams. The referee allowed a rather controversial goal by the Chiefs which led to hostility from the Pirates fans and

eventually a full-blown fight. Forty-two fans lost their lives and hundreds more were injured.

2013: The transfer that never was. Nigerian striker Peter Odemwingie was clearly growing increasingly unhappy at West Bromwich Albion, even to the point of criticising the club publicly. It was no secret that he was keen to move, and so it came as little surprise to see him rushing down to London to sign for Queens Park Rangers ... little surprise to anyone, that is, except QPR manager Harry Redknapp who stated he had never shown any interest in signing him and didn't particularly want him. Given Odemwingie's friction with West Brom the proposed move had generated a flurry of media interest, and the cameras gathered at Loftus Road to see Odemwingie stranded in the car park before getting back into his car and returning to the Midlands in disgrace.