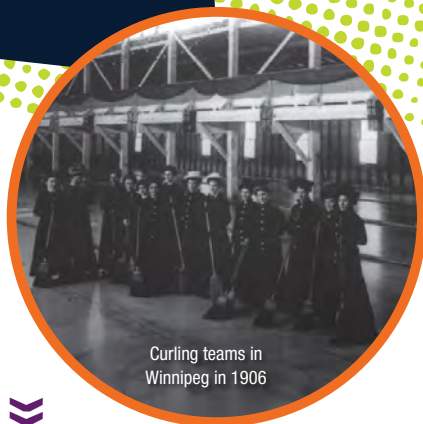# YAY TEAM!

Canada's favourite sports go back a long way

CURLING >>>

In 1759, Scottish soldiers melted some cannonballs to make curling "stones" for a match in Quebec City. Formed in 1807, the Montreal Curling Club was the first of its kind outside Scotland. More than 710,000 Canadians curl every year, which might just make it our country's most popular organized sport.

Curling teams in Winnipeg in 1906

CRICKET

The first Canadian cricket clubs formed in Toronto in 1827 and St. John's in 1828 after British soldiers brought it with them. Canada beat the U.S. in 1844 in the world's first international cricket match. In 1867, Sir John A. Macdonald declared cricket Canada's first national sport.

1869 Canadian lacrosse champions from the Mohawk community of Kahnawake, Que.

LACROSSE

Canada's official summer sport comes from a common First Nations game known by the Anishinaabe as *bagaa'atowe*, and as *tewaarathon* by the Kanien'kehá:ka. (French priests named it lacrosse in the 1630s.) Games were often used to train warriors, and could involve hundreds of players on a field as long as a kilometre. Non-Indigenous people picked up on the fast, exciting sport in the mid-1800s. William Beers, a Montreal dentist, wrote down rules for the first time in September, 1860.
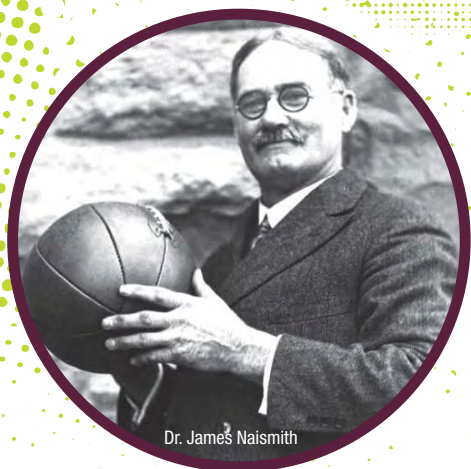

Star Canadian cricketer Amarbir Singh "Jimmy" Hansra

Library and Archives Canada, CP Images

Ontario's Galt Football Club, formed around 1881, won the 1904 Olympic tournament

SOCCER 〉〉〉

More commonly called football in its early life, soccer was considered unladylike from the first days of organized play in the 1870s until well into the 1950s. In 1904, the Canadian men's team won gold in its first-ever Olympics.

Dr. James Naismith

〈〈〈 BASKETBALL

Dr. James Naismith of Almonte, Ont., needed a new game that could be played indoors by the gym class he was teaching in Massachusetts in 1891. So he nailed a peach basket to a pole about three metres off the ground, and basketball was born. On Nov. 1, 1946, the New York Knickerbockers and the Toronto Huskies played the first game of what would become the NBA, then the Basketball Association of America, in Toronto.

BASEBALL 〉〉〉

Many people — well, many Canadians — insist that the first ever game of baseball was played in Beachville, Ont., in 1838, seven years before the first recorded game in the U.S. The sport grew out of the English game of rounders, which has posts instead of bases, and whose players use their bare hands.

Players from the 1887 Toronto Baseball Club.

FOOTBALL 〉〉〉

It was Canadians who introduced Americans to this sport when players from Montreal's McGill University played a variation of rugby against Harvard University in 1874. The games developed a bit differently, with Canadians still playing on a bigger field under our own rules. The biggest prize in Canadian football, the Grey Cup, was donated by Earl Grey, the Governor General, in 1909.

The Grey Cup, awarded every year to the best team in the Canadian Football League

HOCKEY >>>

Lots of places in Canada claim to be the birthplace of hockey, but we don't know for sure where or how it started. The first organized game took place in Montreal in 1875. The name for the sport probably came from *hoquet*, the French word for a shepherd's tall, hooked stick. Hockey is Canada's official winter sport. The National Hockey League celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2017. The NHL was founded on Nov. 26, 1917, and the first official games were played on Dec. 19.

The amazing Maurice "The Rocket" Richard played for the Montreal Canadiens in the 1940s and 1950s.

Library and Archives Canada, CP Images

Saskatchewan's Hayley Wickenheiser is one of the greatest players ever in women's hockey

Goalie Patrick Roy hoists the Stanley Cup after the Montreal Canadiens' victory in 1986. The Canadiens have won the cup 24 times, more than any other team.

GOLF >>>

Scottish immigrants brought golf with them to Canada in the 1800s. Although the first golf clubs sprang up in Quebec and Ontario, the first 18-hole course didn't arrive until 1893 in Victoria, B.C.

Golfing in the 1950s

Members of the Ottawa Lawn Tennis Club in 1898

<<< TENNIS

Although tennis has been played in Europe for more than 500 years, it didn't become popular in Canada until the mid-1800s. The Canadian Lawn Tennis Association formed in 1890 and held the first national championships in Toronto the same year.

RUGBY >>>

Although it was introduced in eastern Canada first, rugby really took off in Vancouver, partly due to the milder weather. The first organized game happened in Montreal in 1865 between British military men and students from McGill University.

Wiki Commons, Library and Archives Canada,

McGill University Rugby Club in the late 1800s