

Text «From the History of Football»

allow — разрешать
for a purpose — с целью
whether — ли
both hands and feet — как руки так и ноги
disappointed — разочарованный
lose patience — потерять терпение
struggle — борьба
hold — держать
introduce — вводить в практику
prevent from — мешать

Ball games were well known hundreds of years ago. They didn't take place in the stadiums or on football fields (pitches). They were played in squares and streets of the cities and villages, and they are dangerous to windows and doors of the houses.

People in those days were so excited about these games that they used to leave their work to take part in a game. That's why at the beginning of the seventeenth century special laws were made against playing ball games. Nobody was allowed to play, and for two hundred and fifty years there were no games in Europe.

People began to play again in the second half of the 19th century.

In 1863, a meeting was called in a tavern in Great Queen Street, London, for the purpose of deciding the rules of the games. The main question was whether the players must use both their hands and feet, or only their feet. There was much excitement at the meeting. Shouts of "Only feet" came from one end of the hall. "Hands and feet" came from the other end. At last the disappointed "hands and feet" group saw that they could not win, they lost patience and left the hall, giving up struggle. The meeting then became quieter and thirteen rules of football were agreed on. In 1863, they were published and became the international rules of the game all over the world.

The rules fixed the number of men in a team: the team has a goal-keeper, one full-back, one half-back and eight forwards. Only the goalkeeper could hold the ball in his hands.

Within the time the rules were changing, for example, the sound of referee's whistle was heard for the first time in 1878. Before that time, the referees shouted to the players, or made signals with their arms. The goal, as we see it today, was introduced in 1891. The same year was the introduction of the eleven-metre penalty kick. At first, the goalkeeper was allowed to move six metres to defend his goal. He could cross from one corner of the goal to the other to prevent the player from making the penalty kick. But the rule was introduced fixing the position of the goalkeeper, and forcing him to stand without moving before the penalty kick was made.

In 1925, the rules were changed for the last time.