

総合英語レベル 7⑤ 英国スポーツの現況

予習課題 次の英文を読んで、内容を理解しなさい。

There is a wide variety of sport in Britain today, catering for large numbers of spectators and participants (the latter at different levels of competence). Some are minority or class-based sports (such as yachting and rugby league respectively), while others (like football) appeal to majority tastes. The number of British people participating in sports increased in the 1990s. This coincided with a greater awareness of health needs and the importance of exercise, particularly at a time when many Britons are overweight and increasing numbers are obese. Expenditure on playing and watching sports, and buying sports equipment, amount to a considerable part of the household budget. But it is argued that Britain has inadequate sporting facilities and leisure centers in both the public and private sectors and that sports participation has again declined in recent years. However, it is recognized that the creation of new and increased facilities can lead to greater national sporting success, as with the British cycling team at the Beijing Olympics (2008) and the awarding of the 2012 Olympic Games to London.

The 2007 *British Social Attitudes* reported that 49 percent of adults over eighteen had attended a sports event at least once a year as a spectator. Fewer numbers had attended on a more regular basis. A *Social Trends* poll in 2006/7 reported that 40 percent of adults had participated in moderately active sport for at least thirty minutes in the week of interview and 22 percent had managed three separate days in that week. There appeared to have been a decrease in participation in outdoor and indoor sports or forms of exercise for both men and women compared with earlier years. Opinion polls in the early 2000s varied somewhat but most suggested consistently that the most popular participatory sporting activity for both men and women was walking (including rambling and hiking). Billiards/snooker/pool were the next most popular for men, followed by cycling, indoor swimming, football and golf. Keep fit/yoga was the next most popular sport for women, followed by indoor swimming, cycling and snooker/pool/billiards. Fishing was the most popular country sport. But most of these percentages have declined over the decade, despite government efforts to increase the exercise rates and to counter obesity. At the beginning of the 2000s, gyms and indoor activities were very popular, but membership has gradually declined because of gym costs, a lack of time and the recession.

(注) cater for : 要求を満たす、 *British Social Attitudes* : 英国の調査誌、 *Social Trends* : 英国の情報誌、 recession : 不況