

Sport

Level: B2

Aims: to express opinions and give reasons; to make predictions; to read for specific detail; to think critically; to practise research and presentation skills



IDEAL+

Get thinking!

1 Look at the photos and identify the sports in the pictures. Then discuss the questions.

- Which of the sports have you tried?
- Which of the sports would you like to try?
- Which sports are most popular in your country?
- Is there a sports player you admire? Who?



Reading

2 Look at the photo. What can you guess about the person in the photo?

(Think about age, time period ...)

3 You are going to read an article about Lily Parr, the woman in the photo. Predict what you might read about the following things:

- cooking
- a factory
- a mood
- a penalty
- being brilliant
- the football hall of fame

Now **read** the article.

4 With a partner, check your answers to Exercise 3. Try not to look at the text again.

5 Read the article again.
Choose the correct alternative, A, B or C.

1 Lily began her football career when
a she was thirteen years old.
b she impressed Alfred Frankland.
c she played for St Helen's Ladies.

2 While playing during the war, women's teams
a personally donated money to charity.
b helped with national spirit.
c looked after disabled people.

3 Which of the following did the local newspaper article fail to mention?
a Lily's defense techniques
b Lily's handling of the ball
c how fast Lily could play

4 A statue of Lily
a was erected in 2002.
b stands near the Hall of Fame.
c was the first of a female footballer.



Lily Parr: Football legend

If someone is a **legend** (/ˈledʒənd/), they are a very famous person who is admired by other people.

A football legend

Lily Parr was born in 1905 in St Helen's, Lancashire. She was the fourth of seven children and learned to play both football and rugby from her older brothers. As a child, she **rejected** traditional girls' **pursuits**, such as cooking and sewing, and focused on sport.

Her size (she was 6ft), strength and lack of fear along with her athletic talent, meant that by the time she was 13, she was able to compete successfully in sport. Lily's football career began in 1919, at 14 years of age, when she signed for St Helen's Ladies. In her second match, when her team played against Dick, Kerr's Ladies, a factory team from Preston, she impressed the manager, Alfred Frankland so much, he invited her to join his team. As part of her signing, she was offered a job at the factory, accommodation with a teammate in Preston and ten shillings (approximately 50p) for every game she played.

Women's football at this time was hugely popular. During the First World War, when millions of young men had been sent to fight, women's football was used to **boost** the national mood, and teams played to raise large amounts of money for charities for disabled servicemen. Dick, Kerr's Ladies were one of the earliest teams and were the first team in which women played in shorts! In her first season at Dick, Kerr's Ladies, winger Lily Parr, scored 43 goals. A local newspaper wrote of her: 'There is probably no greater football prodigy in the whole country. Not only has she speed and excellent ball control, but her admirable physique enables her to beat challenges from defenders who **tackle** her.'

Lily played against both male and female teams and she apparently had a harder shot than any male player. A male goalkeeper once had to be taken off on a stretcher after she'd taken a penalty against him, apparently shouting 'Get me to the hospital as quick you can, she's gone and broken my arm!'

Lily also played international football and completed tours of France and the US, where she was **announced** as 'the most brilliant female player in the world.' in the press.

Despite the Football Association (FA) banning women's teams from playing on affiliated, professional pitches until 1969, Lily carried on playing football for 32 years, from 1951 at Preston Ladies, scoring over 980 goals throughout her career.

Lily eventually stopped working in the Dick, Kerr & Co. factory and trained as a nurse, working at Whittingham Hospital. Whilst working at the hospital Lily met her partner, Mary, and together they bought a house in Preston.

Lily died in 1978 and is buried in St Helen's. She was the first woman to feature in the National Football Museum's Hall of Fame in 2002 and in 2019, a life-size statue of her was erected outside the museum.

Follow up

6 Look at the words in bold in the text and match them with a similar meaning word:

- a said something officially _____
- b to challenge something / someone _____
- c to increase or improve something _____
- d refused something / someone _____
- e hobbies, or free-time activities _____

A **synonym** is a word or expression that has the same, or almost the same, meaning as another.

7 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in Exercise 7.

- a All the players on my team _____ opponents in a safe way.
- b Sandro prefers outdoor _____, like hiking and climbing.
- c Getting good marks in my exam really _____ my confidence.
- d My favourite football team _____ they have a new manager.
- e The local council _____ plans for a shopping centre in next week's vote.

8 In pairs, discuss the questions.

- Why do you think there is now a statue of Lily Parr?
- What obstacles might Lily have faced at the time?
- How might her life have been different from most girls her age? Is it the same today?
- Do female footballers still face the same obstacles?

Over to you ...

Think of a person you admire from the past or the present. What makes them a legend?

Use the ideas in the box to help you.

painter	actor	singer	artist	teacher
politician	writer	dancer	inventor	relative

Do some research on this person.

Write a text about this person, like the text about Lily Parr, (250 words).

Make a short presentation about this person, using photos, videos and other visual aids. Present it to your friends or record it for others to see.

Acknowledgements



Do feel free to visit us at [IDEAL+](#), on our [Facebook](#) page or our [Twitter](#) account.

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