

'Anyone for Rounders?' A Look At School Life in Britain

By MARTIN TOOMBS

Except for the accents, an American student could attend class in a British school and not notice much difference, at least until the break for lunch.

"Anyone for rounders?"

"Cricket forming over here."

The invitations to join the games would provide a startling reminder to the American that, despite the same language, Great Britain is a very different country.

Rounders, played by the girls, and cricket, by the boys, are forerunners of baseball, but opposites themselves. Cricket is a slow moving game, with only about 20 players at a time. Forty can play rounders, and never stop running around the bases or playing hits in the field.

Before a day was out, American students would notice other differences. Study halls are unknown in Britain. Students are in class every period of the day. In some schools, certain classes meet more than five times a week, to fill up the extra periods. Other schools have each student take eight subjects each day.

English students are interested in much the same things as American students, clothes, music, and the general gossip about the school. They dress more neatly than Americans, but the most notable difference is the lack of denim, it has to be imported and is too expensive for most teenagers.

A conversation with a group of students finishing school in a small town in the north of England brought as many questions from the students as from the American visitors. They wanted to know what

Americans thought about "Kojack," a leading television show in Britain. They also asked about the size of American cars, saying that they had seen some and couldn't imagine why anyone would want a car that large. They also asked about crime in the United States. Their knowledge of the U.S. is based on news reports and American television shows, and they see this country as a dangerous place. They seemed reassured to hear that not all Americans carry guns in order to defend themselves.

Several of the students, although academically prepared for college, said that they would be getting jobs as soon as they finished school. They explained that their parents could not afford to have them continue school, even though college costs would be paid.

Education in Britain is free at every level. Religious schools and colleges are funded in much the same way as state schools. College students also receive a living

allowance. But in Britain, it is much harder to get into college. Only five per cent go to the major universities, with another 15 per cent attending other schools.

Sports competition between schools in Britain is usually without officials, leagues, fans, and sometimes without keeping score.

Professional sports are another matter. Every town of more than 10,000 people has a professional soccer team, and the fans support them. There are 96 professional soccer teams in England and Wales, which have a population of 45 million. A similar ratio of teams to population in this country would mean that the National Football League would have nearly 500 teams.

It is characteristic of British soccer fans that the FA Cup game, similar to the Super Bowl, is televised on two networks, with neither a television blackout nor empty seats.

Start of school gives mom free time

Packing your children off to school again can make for some hectic moments. But once they're settled and on their way, what will you do with all that spare time you suddenly find on your hands?

- Why not try some of these ideas?
- Take lessons—tennis, needlepoint, piano or even sculpture. Take up something that you've always said you'd learn "one day."
- Form your own private "health spa" with a group of your friends. Get together at someone's house and pool your resources. Give each other facials, manicures or per-

manent waves. Serve a low-calorie lunch. Buy an exercise record and get in the swing all together.

- Get tickets to a play, go to the movies, read that "good book" you've been saving all summer. Now's the time to catch up on the projects that are important to you.

Summertime is a wonderful season with lots of good weather and outdoor fun. But back-to-school can be just as rewarding as a quiet period of rest and renewal for busy Moms who have worked hard all summer long!

On true learning

What is the true purpose of education? In a time when people are questioning the "relevance" of our current academic systems, accusing the schools of indulging in unnecessary courses which do not lead to specific vocations and skills, it is refreshing to turn to the past for a moment for some timely insight.

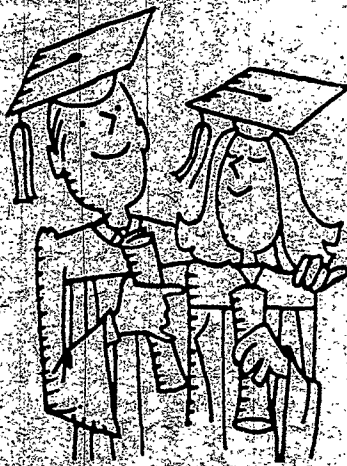
In "The Spirit of Learning," written in 1909, Woodrow Wilson had these thoughts to offer with regard to the educated man.

"The object of a liberal training is not learning, but discipline and the enlightenment of the mind. The educated man is to be discovered by his point of view, by the temper of his mind, by his attitude towards life and his fair way of thinking. He can see, he can discriminate, he can combine ideas and perceive whither they lead; he has insight and comprehension.

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He is a 1952 graduate of Aquinas and holds degrees from Assumption University (Windsor, Canada), the University of St. Michael's in Toronto, and the University of Rochester.

He has been chairman of Aquinas' Science Department and has taught Biology for 12 years.

Father Kuder replaces Father Frank Boehm who has been transferred to Phoenix, Arizona.

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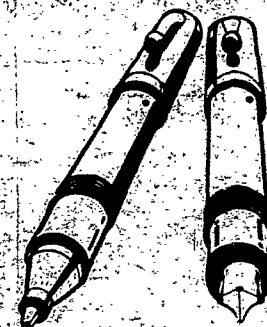
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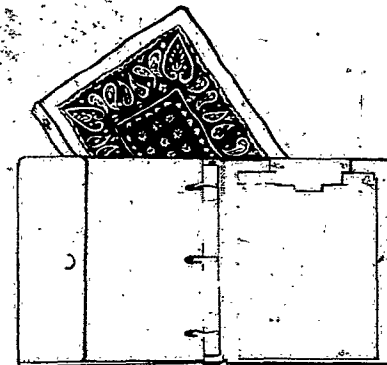
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