



TRANSCRIPT – SPORTS IN THE USA: THE VIDEO

The USA is a country that is passionate about sports. There are few countries that take sports so seriously. That is why, it is so important in American culture and has such a high status. Sports are big business in the USA and they generate more money than in any other country. And unlike the rest of the world, most high schools and universities in the USA have organized sports programs. Scholarships are given to excellent athletes to play sports and study at the same time.

The four most popular spectator sports in the USA are: 1) Football; 2) Baseball; 3) Basketball and 4) Ice Hockey. Other sports that are gaining popularity are soccer, auto-racing, tennis and golf. But now let's concentrate on the top four team sports.

Football in the USA is not the same sport known as 'football' by the rest of the world. It is a sport where players, curiously, use mainly their hands. In the game, players dressed in protective equipment carry out strategies, which involves extreme physical contact, to move an oval-shaped ball over a field and try to reach the end-line known as a 'touchdown'. The league is known as the NFL (National Football League) and is composed of 32 professional teams. Games are typically played on Sundays and the season lasts from September to December. The two best teams play each other in the 'Superbowl' in January.

Baseball is the second most popular sport in the USA. It is a game that requires a great amount of concentration and skills but sometimes may seem slow. The object of baseball is to hit a ball and move around bases. If a player is able to advance until 'home base', he scores a run. The most exciting moment is when a player is able to hit a ball out of the field and score a 'home run'. 30 teams, divided into the National League and the American League, play in MLB (Major League Baseball). Teams play almost every day (162 games) from spring to fall and the best team from both leagues play each other in the 'World Series'.

Much faster and exciting than other sports, basketball has been gaining a lot of popularity. Several exceptional players like Michael Jordan and LeBron James have helped make this sport more spectacular and attractive. In recent years, foreign players like Pau Gasol and Dirk Nowitzki have also made the NBA (the National Basketball Association) popular all over the world. In the NBA, 30 teams play about 100 games from October to June. When the regular season finishes, there are 'playoffs' and the two best teams meet in the 'finals'. The players of the champion team are given rings as a prize.

Another fast and exciting game is Hockey. There is a lot of physical contact, like American Football, and sometimes there are violent fights between players. It is more popular in parts of the USA where the climate is cold in winter. Hockey is extremely popular in Canada and the majority of players in the NHL (National Hockey League) are Canadian. Only 20% are American and the rest are European. The NHL has 24 American teams and 7 Canadian teams who play about 80 games from October to April. The two top teams who advance in the 'playoffs' play for the spectacular 'Stanley Cup' trophy in the final.