Welcome to Spotlight. I’m Liz Waid. And I’m Joshua Leo. Spotlight uses a special English method of broadcasting. It is easier for people to understand, no matter where in the world they live. What is your favourite sport? Is it something very popular like football? Or is it something less common like golf? People everywhere play sports. Some sports are popular world wide. But other sports are more local, or indigenous. They are played in one area or community. They are part of a particular culture. These traditional sports have been played for many years. Today’s Spotlight is on indigenous, or traditional, sports. Join us as we take a short trip around the world to look at sports from different cultures. Through history, every culture has invented and played sports. Sometimes the sports are a part of religious celebrations or rituals. Or, they may just be a way to pass the time and have some fun. Sports have an important place in any community. Sports can encourage people as individuals and bring them together as a team. Sports also encourage important human values like respect, working as a team, and playing in a fair way. And playing sports is a great way to stay healthy. People all around the world get these positive results from playing indigenous sports. Let’s take a look at a few of these sports from around the world! We begin our trip in Ireland. Here, the sport of Hurling has been popular since before Ireland became a country. Hurling is played on a field, or pitch. The pitch is 137 meters long. And it has goal posts, or markers, on each end. The game involves two teams with 15 players each. Each player has a wooden stick called a hurl. A player uses the hurl to get the “sliotar”. The sliotar is a small ball. It is hard, and about the size of a baseball. A player can carry the ball in his hand for four steps. But after that he must pass it to another player. Or he must bounce the sliotar on the end of his hurl. He could also use the hurl to hit the sliotar into the air or on the ground. A player can also hit the sliotar with his foot or an open hand. If you think this game sounds a little dangerous - men running around with big sticks - you would be right! Hurling is a very physical sport. Players over age 21 are not required to wear protective equipment. And there are many injuries. But it is still very popular. Next we travel to Central and South America. Here, people play another very physically demanding game. Experts believe that it is one of the oldest sports in the world. They have evidence that it was played over 3,500 years ago! Many cultures across Central and South America played this game. The game is called “Ulama”. Ulama is played on a court called a “tlachtli”. Two teams play against each other. And each team has four or five people. The players wear just a single piece of cloth around their waist and between their legs. They may also wear leather animal skin on their hips. The hips are the outside parts of the leg right under the waist. The leather protects their hips. The aim of the game is to pass a ball back and forth from team to team. Players do this by hitting the ball with their hips. The ball is extremely heavy. It is pure rubber and it weighs about three kilograms. So, players often have large dark bruises where the ball hits them. The first team to get eight points wins the Ulama game. But Ulama games can last for a very long time. That is because of the complex way teams count points. Sometimes the points can re-set. They go back to zero! It is said that the longest Ulama game was eight days long! Our next stop is in Southeast Asia. A popular sport in this area is called Bola Tin. “Bola” is the word for “ball” in the Malay language. Two teams play this game. The game begins by setting up a pyramid of tin cans. The pyramid has more cans at the bottom. And it gets more and more narrow toward the top. About ten steps away from the pyramid, players mark a line. One team will try to knock down all the cans to destroy the pyramid. And the other team will try to build it again. The first team stands behind the line. They throw the ball at the pyramid of cans. Each player gets a turn. If the first team knocks down all the cans, both teams run to get the ball. If a player on the rebuilding team gets the ball, he throws it as far away as possible. Then his team will have more time to rebuild the pyramid. If a member of the throwing team gets the ball first, he can throw the ball at the pyramid. He can also throw the ball at members of the other team. If he hits a member of the other team, that player is out. He can no longer rebuild the pyramid with the rest of his team. If the throwing team gets all of the other team out, they win! But if the rebuilding team can rebuild the whole pyramid they get a chance to be the throwing team. Finally, we travel to the northeast Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh. We look at a sport called Hole Taso Dukanaram. This game is very simple to understand. And there are very few rules. But it is very difficult to do! It requires very good balance, strength, and good physical fitness. Players of this game copy the actions of a small local animal called the Hole Taso. The Hole Taso looks a little like a cat. It runs around and beats its chest with both its arms. But the Hole Taso can also lift one of its back legs in the air at the same time. So, a player in this game must run around beating his chest with his closed hands. He must also have one of his legs in the air as he runs around. There are many more traditional games that people play all over the world. Some are becoming less and less popular. But there are groups that work to save these games. They know that sports are an important part of history. They are an important part of people’s cultural identity. We invite you to tell us about traditional sports in your culture. You can leave a comment on the script page of this program. Or you can email us at radio @ radioenglish . net. The writer and producer of this program was Liz Waid. The voices you heard were from the United States. You can hear this program again, and read it, on our website at www.radioenglish.net. This program is called “Traditional Sports”. You can also find us on Facebook. Just search for Spotlight radio. We hope you can join us again for the next Spotlight program. Goodbye!