

Pre-intermediate Video script Unit 1

Unusual sports

VO = Voice over **FM** = Fran Martinez **RJ** = Ray Justin

VO: New York – the Big Apple – is home to more than eight million people. New York is also an important sporting city. As well as sports such as baseball, the city is also famous for a sport played there for more than 70 years ... Stickball.

The first people to play stickball were immigrants in the 1930s. Played with old broom handles and a ball, the sport became popular in poor areas of the city. Stickball began as a social game. But people soon started to take it seriously, and the first stickball leagues began.

People play stickball all over New York, but the real heart of the sport is the Bronx, where there is a large Latin community. Stickball in the Bronx has a rich history.

Fran Martinez is a star stickball player. He helps to organise the Emperor Stickball League, the sport's first league. It began in 1985. The Emperor League helped to bring different communities together.

FM: In those days, stickball was pretty big, it was huge actually, because it bridged a lot of racial tensions ... 'Cos Italians played stickball, there were blacks that played stickball and of course you know the Latino community played stickball and the only time that these guys were in the same street together without brawling was to play stickball.

VO: Ray Justin is one of the Emperor League's best young players. He also plays in his school baseball team.

RJ: I love coming here every Sunday ... playing around with my friends ... 'cos uh ... without stickball I would just be staying at home ... doing nothing ... come here and be active ... play as much I can ...

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VO: Stickball has come a long way in the last 70 years. The Emperor League has helped the sport to grow. With more people playing than ever before, it seems that people in New York City will enjoy stickball for many years to come.