



# **Sport and the Military: The British Armed Forces 1880-1960**

*Tony Mason, Eliza Riedi*

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On battleships, behind the trenches of the Western Front and in the midst of the Desert War, British servicemen and women have played sport in the least promising circumstances. When 400 soldiers were asked in Burma in 1946 what they liked about the Army, 108 put sport in first place - well ahead of comradeship and leave - and this book explores the fascinating history of organized sport in the life of officers and other ranks of all three British services from 1880-1960. Drawing on a wide range of sources, this book examines how organized sport developed in the Victorian army and navy, became the focus of criticism for Edwardian army reformers, and was officially adopted during the Great War to boost morale and esprit de corps. It shows how service sport adapted to the influx of professional sportsmen, especially footballers, during the Second World War and the National Service years.



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