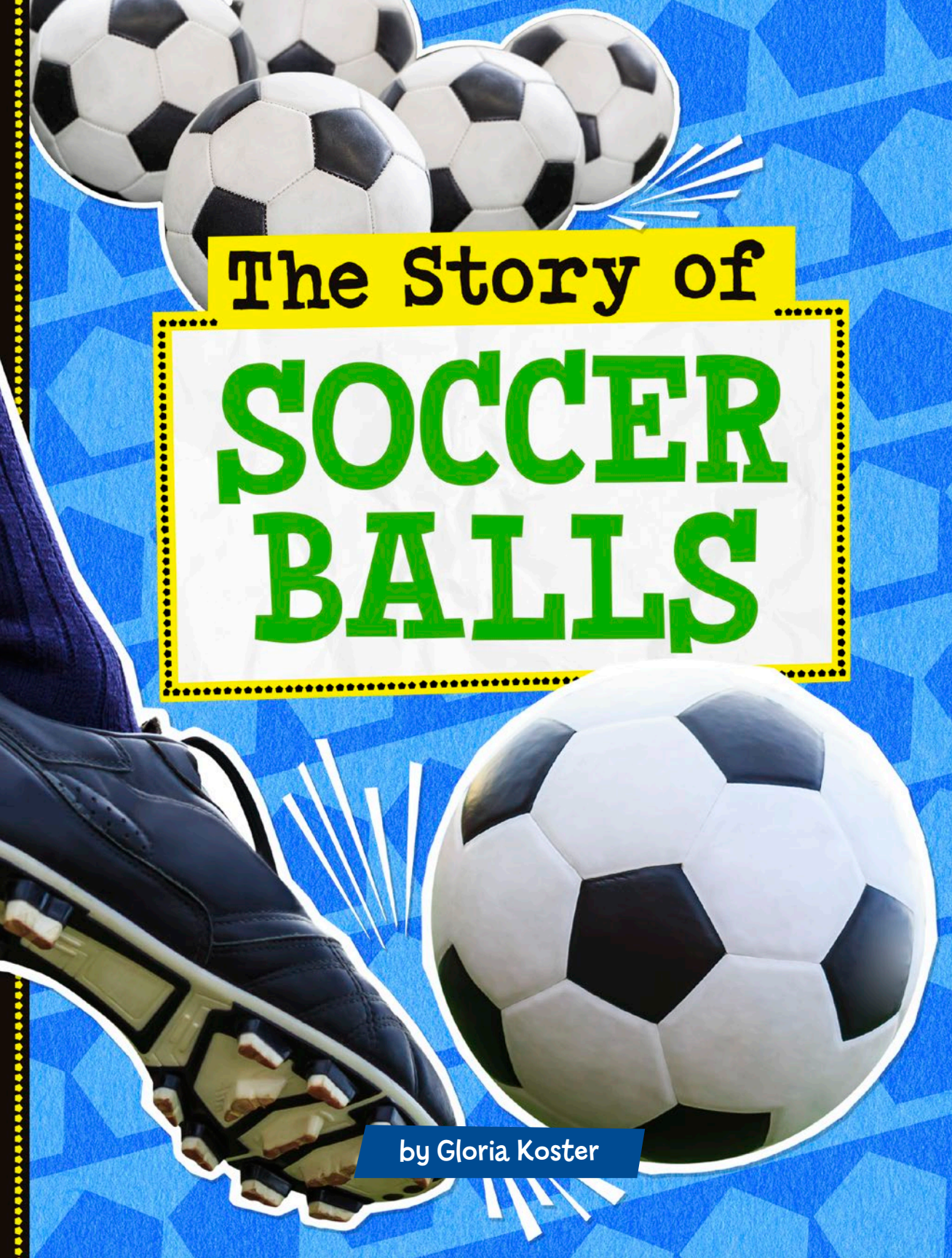

The Story of
SOCCER BALLS
by Gloria Koster

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Words in **bold** appear in the glossary.

For Review Only

A Soccer Story

During World War I (1914–1918), England and Germany were enemies. But they stopped fighting for one day—Christmas. What did the soldiers do? They played soccer!



English and German soldiers celebrating together

For Review Only



A historic soccer game

Somebody had a ball. Coats were used as goal posts. This was a day of peace. It was the Christmas **Truce** of 1914.

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Soccer Then and Now

Soccer is the most popular sport in the world! In most countries it is called football. People have played ball games like soccer for thousands of years.

Ancient Greeks and Romans held ball contests similar to soccer. Ancient Chinese played a ball game called cuju. They stretched a net between two poles and passed a ball through a hole in the net.

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Children playing cuju

In the **Middle Ages**, English villages played soccer-like games against each other. They kicked a ball from one village to the next!

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Early soccer balls were made by hand. The outside pieces were leather or cloth. They were sewn or laced together. Then the ball was filled with animal fur, seeds, or feathers.

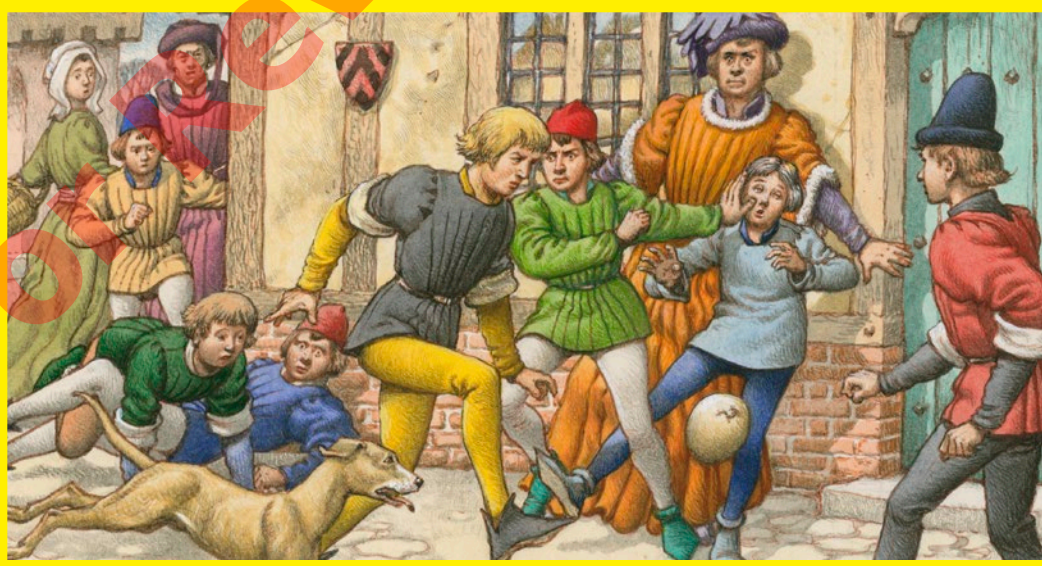


sheep's wool

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The ball sometimes held an animal's bladder—usually from a pig. A bladder is a sack inside animals and humans that holds **urine**. Inside a ball, it can hold air!

But these early soccer balls weren't very strong. They often fell apart during the game.



Children playing with a ball made from a bladder

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Rubber

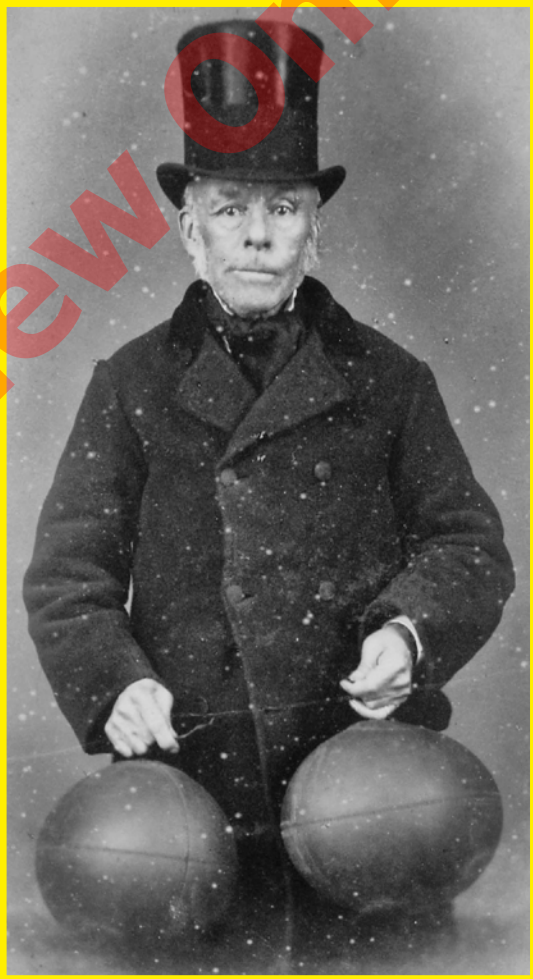
In 1839, inventor Charles Goodyear invented **vulcanized** rubber. He heated rubber with a chemical. This made it harder and stronger. Over time, this rubber has been used to make many things. In 1855, Goodyear used it to make a soccer ball.



Charles Goodyear

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In 1862, H.J. Lindon improved on the idea. He created a vulcanized rubber bladder to go inside a ball. It could be **inflated**. These soccer balls kept their shape better than ones with animal bladders.



H.J. Lindon

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Make a Soccer Ball!

What You Need:

- 1 balloon
- packing tape
- 1 old T-shirt
- newspaper
- 1 plastic bag



What You Do:

Work together with a grown-up.

1. Blow up the balloon.
2. Wrap packing tape around the balloon.
3. Cover the balloon with the T-shirt. Tape the loose ends.
4. Cover the T-shirt with a few layers of newspaper. Tape the loose ends.
5. Place your ball inside a plastic bag. Knot the bag.
6. Invite some friends to play soccer!

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