

# BOSTONIA

## Varsity Sports

Photographs by Melody Komyerov

THERE won't be a parade down Commonwealth Avenue for the Curling Club, a fun-loving group that treks out to Wayland, Massachusetts, once a week to slide heavy objects across a sheet of ice. And despite the fact that a badminton shuttlecock travels at roughly twice the speed of a tennis ball, the badminton team is unlikely to appear in the sports section of the *Boston Globe*. As for the Quidditch Team? Its fortune is best left to the imagination, as is its provenance. Here *Bostonia* focuses its camera on seven sports in which athleticism takes a backseat to enthusiasm.



The team that  
has the most fun wins



## BADMINTON

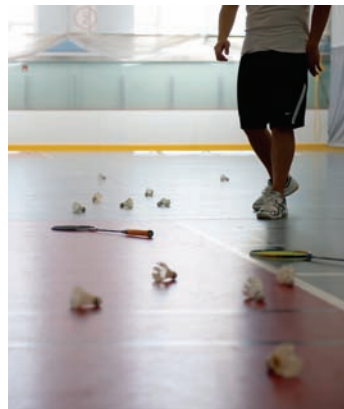
**ORIGIN:** The Chinese played the game shuttle-kicking in the fifth century B.C., and ancient Greeks developed a variation more than 2,000 years ago. By the 1600s, “battledore and shuttlecock” was a popular children’s game, and in the mid-nineteenth century, British officers stationed in India added a net, thus inventing a game that looked a lot like modern badminton. Badminton 5.0 was launched in 1873 at Badminton House in Gloucestershire, England, the country estate of the Duke of Beaufort.

**RECORD FOR SPEED OF SHUTTLE:** 206 mph

**WHY THEY PLAY:** “Badminton is very energy-intensive and can really train a player’s reflexes. You can’t win by just hitting the shuttle as hard as you can.” *Eddie Lau (SMG’11)*

**WHAT GOOD IS IT?** “Roger Federer played badminton when he was a child. People always say Federer has really good footwork. That’s because he played badminton. Any advanced badminton players will tell you that footwork is probably the most important part of badminton.” *Eddie Lau*

**OLYMPIC SPORT:** Yes. Debuted in 1992 as a full-medal sport.



*The Badminton Club at play: (facing page) Alec Fong (SMG’13); (above) Kuan-Ting Chang (CFA’10); and (left) Emma Chiang (SMG’10). “I love the suspense when the shuttlecock flies to my side of the court,” says club president Jennifer Cha (CFA’12), “and nothing feels as good as when you smash it on the opponent’s court.”*

**WEB EXTRA**  
Watch videos about curling, extreme croquet, kendo, and quidditch at [bu.edu/bostonia](http://bu.edu/bostonia).



## CRICKET



Most members of the BU Cricket Club have played the game since childhood. Relaxing after finishing a practice at the Track and Tennis Center are Shilpin Makwana (GSM'09) (above, third from left) and Krishnan Nair (ENG'10) (second from right).

**ORIGIN:** The bat-and-ball sport was first played in southern England in the sixteenth century. It spread with the British Empire and is now played in 104 countries.

**2009-2010 RECORD:** 13-4-0

**GREATEST SPEED OF BALL:** 90-plus mph

**WHY THEY PLAY:** "Most of us in the club have been playing since childhood. Our club includes Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis — major cricket-playing countries — and a few

people from the United States and other origins. Cricket is a religion in the Indian subcontinent (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka). I love this sport because I get to exert my mind and body." *Ankush Chandra (CAS'11), right arm fast bowler*

**FIRSTS:** "The first time two countries competed against each other in any sport was a cricket match between the United States and Canada, in 1844." *Ankush Chandra*

**OLYMPIC SPORT:** No, oddly.



## CURLING



Strategy plays such an important role in curling that the game is often described as chess on ice. Curling at BU is a niche interest for a small but dedicated group, including (above) Jonathan Chamberlain (CAS'12) and (below) Joe Cerasuolo (CAS'12).



The Scots played the game with stones on frozen lochs as early as 1541.

**ORIGIN:** Competitions among groups of people sliding stones on frozen ponds and lochs in Scotland were recorded as far back as 1541.

**THE STONE:** Traditionally made from a type of granite called ailsite, found on Ailsa Craig, an island off Scotland. Its low water absorption prevents the stone from being eroded by the freezing and melting of water.

**WHY THEY PLAY:** "Curling has both a physical and a mental aspect to it. You really

have to be thinking ahead and planning out the best shots to take, which will ultimately affect future placement of your team's stones." *Kellie Borrero (SMG'11)*

**HOW IT WORKS:** "The stones weigh about forty-four pounds. By sweeping in front of the stone harder, it melts the ice and allows the stone to travel farther and straighter. Sweeping less means that the stone will travel slower and will curl, or turn, more." *Kellie Borrero*

**OLYMPIC SPORT:** Yes, oddly. Since 1998.





## EXTREME CROQUET

*Zack Kohn (COM'10) plays extreme croquet on the Esplanade. The boundaries, he says, "are set by your imagination."*



**WHAT IT IS:** A variation of traditional croquet, the game is played in all weather conditions on all kinds of terrain.

**ORIGIN:** 1920s, on the Long Island estate of Herbert Swope, editor of the *New York World*, whose course had sand traps, bunkers, and a rough.

**WHERE THEY PLAY:** The BU Beach, the

Esplanade, the Boston Common, the College of Communication lawn

**2009-2010 RECORD:** "The only time we played against another school, we lost." *Zack Kohn (COM'10)*

**WHY THEY PLAY:** "Anyone can play it. There are no boundaries — the course can exist anywhere. You have to take risks. And it's a little bit offbeat." *Zack Kohn*

**BU TRADITIONS:**

"Occasionally we dress up while we compete, and we drink tea and eat crumpets after each match. We typically punish the tournament winners by making them perform some absurd task, like taking a dip in the Charles River." *Zack Kohn*

**OLYMPIC SPORT:** No.

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## FENCING

**ORIGIN:** Ancient Egypt. A bas-relief in a temple built by Ramsès III circa 1190 B.C. depicts competitors holding a weapon and a shield and wearing a face mask. According to a translation of the hieroglyphs, opponents shouted at each other, "On guard ... and admire what my valiant hand shall make."

**WHY THEY FENCE:** "I started fencing because my friends and I were inspired by all

of the swashbuckler movies, such as *Pirates of the Caribbean*, and I continued fencing because I love it." *Katherine Gillman (CAS'12), foil*

**REACTION FROM PEOPLE WHEN LEARNING SHE**

**FENCES:** "I think that everyone secretly wishes that they knew how." *Michelle McInnis (CAS'12), foil*

**OLYMPIC SPORT:** Yes, since the first Olympic Games, in 1896.



*Amy Ferguson (CAS'13) prepares for another bout. Fencing Club members practice four times a week in the Fitness and Recreation Center.*



“Everyone secretly wishes they knew how.”



Monica Yao  
(CAS'13)  
(top, middle)  
practices with  
the Kendo  
Association;  
Victor Michael  
Pan (SMG'11)  
(bottom) wear-  
ing a men, or  
mask, with  
a metal face  
shield.



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**KENDO**

**ORIGIN:** A descendant of feudal Japanese samurai, whose martial art was just that: a form of combat.

**MEANING OF THE WORD:** "The way of the sword."

**WHY THEY PLAY:** "Not only is it a form of exercise, but in terms of a martial art, I appreciate the finesse and mental awareness necessary to truly consider my-

self a martial artist."  
*Alex Eitoku (CAS'12)*

"When I started kendo, my father said to me — and the reason I kept with it, and my attitude toward life — 'Once a fighter, always a fighter.'"  
*Eugenia Yang (SAR'07, SDM'11), founder of the BU club, who represented Taiwan in the thirteenth World Kendo Championships in Taipei in 2006*

**OLYMPIC SPORT:** No.



“Once a fighter, always a fighter.”



## QUIDDITCH



**ORIGIN:** Quidditch, the international sport of the wizarding world, was created by author J. K. Rowling, of Harry Potter fame. Muggle (Rowling’s word for nonmagical people) quidditch originated in 2005, when a Middlebury College alum adapted the game. Today more than 200 colleges throughout the United States have quidditch teams.

**HOW IT’S PLAYED:** Players run holding a broom between their legs. Each team has seven players: three chasers, two beaters, a keeper, and a seeker. Chasers score points by throwing a quaffle, or volleyball, through one of three hoops (worth ten points) while trying to avoid bludgers, or dodgeballs, that are thrown by beaters. (If chasers are hit by a bludger, they must drop

the quaffle.) The keeper’s job is to protect the three goalposts, while the seeker must capture the snitch — a sock stuffed with tennis balls carried by a person (typically a cross-country runner) dressed in gold. Capturing the snitch nets an additional thirty points and ends the game.

### 2009 INTERCOLLEGIATE QUIDDITCH WORLD CUP, AT MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE:

BU came in third out of twenty-one teams.

**WHY THEY PLAY:** “The sport is physical, challenging, and athletic. Many people don’t realize how much of a contact sport it is until they watch a match.”  
*Meredith Withelder (CAS’12), chaser*

**OLYMPIC SPORT:** Not anytime soon. ■

*Kedzie Teller (COM’12) (top, left) and Meredith Withelder (CAS’12) play muggle quidditch, an earthbound version of the fictional game, on the BU Beach.*