

- 16 Someone must fill the gap between platitudes and bayonets.
- 17 Reading a speech with his usual sense of discovery.
of ex-President Eisenhower at the Republican convention of 1964

Sports and Games See also **Baseball, Boxing, Cricket, Football, Golf, Tennis**

- 1 DORCAS: I thought runners were all sportsmen and totally honest.
LEN: Not this lot. They're all as bent as hell.
on being asked why he did not hunt:
- 2 I do not see why I should break my neck because a dog chooses to run after a nasty smell.
- 3 Playing snooker gives you firm hands and helps to build up character. It is the ideal recreation for dedicated nuns.
view of the Pope's emissary, attending a sponsored snooker championship at Tyburn convent
- 4 If you think squash is a competitive activity, try flower arrangement.
- 5 Oh wasn't it naughty of Smudges?
Oh, Mummy, I'm sick with disgust.
She threw me in front of the Judges
And my silly old collarbone's bust.
- 6 A man described as a 'sportsman' is generally a bookmaker who takes actresses to night clubs.
- 7 The trouble with referees is that they just don't care which side wins.
a US basketball player's view
- 8 His blade struck the water a full second before any other: the lad had started well. Nor did he flag as the race wore on . . . as the boats began to near the winning-post, his oar was dipping into the water nearly *twice* as often as any other.
often quoted as, 'All rowed fast, but none so fast as stroke'
- 9 He just can't believe what isn't happening to him.
- 10 That's the fastest time ever run—but it's not as fast as the world record.
- 11 Makes me want to yell from St Paul's steeple
The people I'd like to shoot are the shooting people.
- 12 The thing about sport, any sport, is that swearing is very much part of it.
- 13 Vladimir, Vladimir, Vladimir Kuts
Nature's attempt at an engine in boots.
on the Russian runner Vladimir Kuts in 1956

Adlai Stevenson 1900–65: Leon Harris *The Fine Art of Political Wit* (1965)

Gore Vidal 1925– : in *New York Review of Books* 29 September 1983

Alan Ayckbourn 1939– : *Sisterly Feelings* (1981)

Arthur James Balfour 1848–1930: Ian Malcolm *Lord Balfour: A Memory* (1930)

Luigi Barbarito 1922– : in *Daily Telegraph* 15 November 1989

Alan Bennett 1934– : *Talking Heads* (1988)

John Betjeman 1906–84: 'Hunter Trials' (1954)

Jimmy Cannon 1910–73: in *New York Post* c.1951–54 'Nobody Asked Me, But . . .'

Tom Canterbury: in *Guardian* 24 December 1980 'Sports Quotes of the Year'

Desmond Coke 1879–1931: *Sandford of Merton* (1903)

David Coleman: in *Guardian* 24 December 1980 'Sports Quotes of the Year'

David Coleman: Barry Fantoni (ed.) *Private Eye's Colemanballs* 3 (1986)

Howard Dietz 1896–1983: 'By Myself' (1937)

Jimmy Greaves 1940– : in *Observer* 1 January 1989 'Sayings of the Year'

A. P. Herbert 1890–1971: Ned Sherrin *Cutting Edge* (1984)

- 14 The only athletic sport I ever mastered was backgammon.
- 15 It is very strange, and very melancholy, that the paucity of human pleasures should persuade us ever to call hunting one of them.
- 16 I remain of the opinion that there is no game from bridge to cricket that is not improved by a little light conversation; a view which . . . is shared only by a small and unjustly despised minority.
- 17 It is to be observed that 'angling' is the name given to fishing by people who can't fish.
- 18 Rodeoing is about the only sport you can't fix. You'd have to talk to the bulls and the horses, and they wouldn't understand you.
- 19 If you shout hooray for the Pennsylvania Dutchmen Every team that they play will be carried away with a crutch when They're out on the field if they're wearing the shield of the Dutchmen.
- 20 I hate all sports as rabidly as a person who likes sports hates common sense.
- 21 Sport, as I have discovered, fosters international hostility and leads the audience, no doubt from boredom, to assault and do grievous bodily harm while watching it.
- 22 There's been a colour clash: both teams are wearing white.
- 23 All winter long I am one for whom the bell is tolling I can arouse no interest in basketball, indoor fly casting or bowling.
The sports pages are strictly no soap
And until the cry of 'Play Ball', I mope!
- 24 The sport of ski-ing consists of wearing three thousand dollars' worth of clothes and equipment and driving two hundred miles in the snow in order to stand around at a bar and get drunk.
- 25 Most of their discourse was about hunting, in a dialect I understand very little.
Goering's excuse for being late was a shooting party:
- 26 Animals, I hope.
- 27 SHE: Are you fond of riding, dear?
Kindly tell me, if so.
HE: Yes, I'm fond of riding, dear,
But in the morning, no.
- 28 A handicapper being a character who can dope out from the form what horses ought to win the races, and as long as his figures turn out all right, a handicapper is spoken of
- Douglas Jerrold** 1803–57: Walter Jerrold *Douglas Jerrold* (1914)
- Samuel Johnson** 1709–84: Hester Lynch Piozzi *Anecdotes of . . . Johnson* (1786)
- Osbert Lancaster** 1908–80: *All Done From Memory* (1953)
- Stephen Leacock** 1869–1944: attributed
- Bill Linderman** 1922–61: in 1961; Jonathon Green and Don Atyeo (eds.) *The Book of Sports Quotes* (1979)
- Hugh Martin** and **Ralph Blane**: 'Buckle Down Winsocki' (1941)
- H. L. Mencken** 1880–1956: Laurence J. Peter (ed.) *Quotations for our Time* (1977)
- John Mortimer** 1923– : *Clinging to the Wreckage* (1982)
- John Motson**: in 'Colemanballs' column in *Private Eye*; Ned Sherrin *Cutting Edge* (1984)
- Ogden Nash** 1902–71: in *Sports Illustrated* 1957
- P. J. O'Rourke** 1947– : *Modern Manners* (1984)
- Samuel Pepys** 1633–1703: diary, 22 November 1663
- Eric Phipps** 1875–1945: Ned Sherrin *Cutting Edge* (1984); attributed
- Cole Porter** 1891–1964: 'But in the Morning, No' (1939)
- Damon Runyon** 1884–1946: *Take it Easy* (1938); 'All Horse Players Die Broke'

most respectfully by one and all, although of course when he begins missing out for any length of time as handicappers are bound to do, he is no longer spoken of respectfully, or even as a handicapper. He is spoken of as a bum.

- 29 You do not keep accounts and tell everybody that you think you are all square at the end of the year. You lie and you know it.
- 30 I can't see who's in the lead but it's either Oxford or Cambridge.
- 31 It ar'n't that I loves the fox less, but that I loves the 'ound more.
- 32 'Unting is all that's worth living for—all time is lost wot is not spent in 'unting—it is like the hair we breathe—if we have it not we die—it's the sport of kings, the image of war without its guilt, and only five-and-twenty per cent of its danger.
- 33 I am here to propose a toast to the sports writers. It's up to you whether you stand or not.
- 34 I have observed in women of her type a tendency to regard all athletics as inferior forms of foxhunting.
- 35 I used to think the only use for it [sport] was to give small boys something else to kick besides me.
- 36 The English country gentleman galloping after a fox—the unspeakable in full pursuit of the uneatable.
- 37 The fascination of shooting as a sport depends almost wholly on whether you are at the right or wrong end of a gun.
- 38 Jogging is for people who aren't intelligent enough to watch television.

S. J. Simon 1904–48: *Why You Lose at Bridge* (1945)

John Snagge 1904– : C. Dodd
Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race
(1983)

R. S. Surtees 1805–64: *Handley Cross*
(1843)

R. S. Surtees 1805–64: *Handley Cross*
(1843)

Freddie Trueman 1931– : Michael
Parkinson *Sporting Lives* (1993)

Evelyn Waugh 1903–66: *Decline and Fall* (1928)

Katharine Whitehorn 1926– :
Observations (1970)

Oscar Wilde 1854–1900: *A Woman of No Importance* (1893); see **The Law** 42

P. G. Wodehouse 1881–1975:
attributed

Victoria Wood 1953– : *Mens Sana in Thingummy Doodah* (1990)