

TOFT SPORTS DAY

The first Sports Day in the village was held as part of the celebration of the Coronation in 1953. Prizes for winning 1/6d, a shilling for second place and sixpence for third, not bad money in those days! This was the beginning of an annual Toft Social occasion which until 2004 has only been omitted once or twice. Parish Council meetings in the 50's were regularly vexed by the need to raise money for prizes and this led to Whist Drives in the winter. One year the Parish Council advanced the money from funds but were informed that this was illegal at the time, so a return to whist drives was needed.

From the beginning catering obviously played a part as Mrs R. Collett and her helpers were regularly thanked in the minutes. Early Sports days were run by Mr Balcombe, Geoff's father, until they were taken over by the People's Hall Entertainment Committee, but always under the aegis of the Parish Council. A comprehensive set of results, kept by Jimmie and Sheila Hansford from 1975 – 2002 shows that in 1977, the Queen's Silver Jubilee, sports events were divided into 4 age groups – up to and including 7, 8-11, 12-16 and the rest! Prizes were 1st 15p; 2nd 10p; 3rd 5p. The Toft resident with the highest number of points in specific events won the Challenge Cup.

Different organisers introduced variety to the events, what was presented and so on. In 1981 every participant received a mug and by 1988 this had become a goody bag. In 1985, it became an all day event with Toft Trails, the Sports and a dance in the evening and in 1987 there was a children's parade, a crafts and hobbies exhibition at the Methodist Church, a painting competition, and even *boules* put in an appearance! In 1990 the barbecue was an innovation at the end of the day, each family producing its own meat but salad and bread were provided.


Village Sports days consisted of a range activities - races and games for all the family - including wellie and horseshoe throwing; pitching the bale; sack, and egg and spoon, wheelbarrow and 3-legged races; costume, skipping and obstacle races; a round the village race, tug of war (odds v. evens that is odd number houses versus even number houses!), slow bicycle..... In addition to the Challenge cup there was a shield for the Round the Village Race, and a walking stick for the first over 50 to finish the same race. The rounders match to conclude the event also often used the odds v evens system and saw such large teams they could have been in the Guinness Book of Records.

In 2002 Sports day became *Funday Sunday* with different attractions; in 2003 these included a football penalty shootout and dribbling contest, netball shooting, bowling for the pig, a beer tent and a barbecue over lunchtime. In 2004, the last 'Sport Day' was entitled 'Sports Relief links with Toft Funday Sunday' with all the profits from *Go the extra mile* donated to Sports Relief. Many of the old events were contested rounders, round the village, tug of war but support had dwindled and it was decided to stop until 2012 when, as part of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the Sports Day will live again.

All these events took place in Home Meadow courtesy of firstly of Clifford Tebbit and more recently Michael Tebbit.

Ann Mitchell



 **TOFT VILLAGE**
SPORTSDAY
on Saturday the 7th day of July 1990

Commencing at 2.30. in the afternoon, or as near as may be determined by the readiness of the contestants and organisers

ON THE MEADOW
by kind permission of Mr Clifford Tebbit

Featuring

THE GREAT SKIPPING RACE

open to all ages – whether short or tall, little or big, lean or fat, young or old

COSTUME RACE

A Battle of the Sexes. The *Ladies* versus the *Gentlemen* in this exciting new addition to our programme

FLAT RACES

for all complexions and ages

OBSTACLE RACES

THE ROUND THE VILLAGE RACE

The Winner to hold for one year a most excellent engraved shield

TODDLERS RACE • WELLIE THROWING • PITCHING THE BALE

SPUD & SPOON • THROWING THE BEAN BAG

CREAM TEAS

on sale throughout the afternoon provided by "Toft Playgroup". Orange squash free to all children

RACES - WHEELBARROW • 3-LEGGED • SLOW CYCLE • SACK

Concluding with
A GRAND FAMILY BARBECUE

will take place in the early evening – bring your own meat (to be barbecued by our cooks)
and something to drink. Salads, bread and utensils provided.

PLAGIARISM BY J&JTEBBIT



Boys' sprint



Koran Collett - Master of ceremonies



Egg & spoon race



Tossing the bale



Sack race



Jim and Sheila Hansford - keeping the records



Line-up of the winners