

HISTORY AND TYPES OF ANCIENT GEORGIAN SPORTS**Vaso Imerlishvili****Profession: arm wrestler, two-time world champion, three-time
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Georgia is known in the world for its unique nature, culture, folklore, traditions, etc. However, few people know how rich the history of Georgia is in the field of sports. The national sports of Georgia have played an important role since time immemorial and reflected examples of the life of the Georgian people and the fight against the enemy. These are: Georgian wrestling, horseshoes, isindi, zucchini and business.

Georgian wrestling has a long history of salvation in my country. It is one of the oldest types of sports, Georgian wrestling was written about in hagiographic works of the 19th century. In Georgia, wrestling was mostly spread in those areas where it was necessary to protect oneself from invaders. Therefore, initially, it had a combat purpose and was considered one of the bases of military training. Many information about Georgian wrestling can be found in the life and epic of Kartli. Georgian literary monuments also tell us about interesting burial stories.

bilisi, the capital of Georgia, became the real center of Georgian wrestling, where wrestlers from different corners gathered and held competitions. By the 20th century, this type of sport was already famous, and the people had outstanding and beloved athletes, such as Data Khizambareli, Ivane Kirimelashvili, Aleksandre Kakhniashvili and others.

The main axis of today's Georgian wrestling is the Kartli-Kakhuri wrestling, although it is enriched with techniques from different corners: Svan "Librgiel" (wrestling with a belt), Rachu, Khevsur "mosh-mosh" (without legs), eyed wrestling, etc. The mentioned types of wrestling developed a specific feature and were very effective in the issue of physical training of the warrior. For example, "single" wrestling embodied the wrestling of a warrior wounded in the hand.

The Olympic, world and European champions were brought up on the example of Georgian wrestling and later became famous in the world: Arsen Mekokishvili, Vakhtang Balavadze, Giorgi Skhirtladze, Shota Kharabeli and many others.

On November 29, 2018, in the city of Port Louis, Mauritius, at the meeting of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage, Georgian wrestling was included in the representative list of UNESCO cultural heritage.

One of the types of Georgian national equestrian sports is horse-riding. Historical sources and ethnographic materials prove that there has been an original horse-riding game in Georgia since the beginning, different from the forms common in Eastern countries and Western Europe, the so-called Georgian chogani. One of the first records of this game, or bowling, is preserved in the writings of the first historian of King Tamar. As the historian tells us, bowling was held in honor of the Muslim apostles who visited Tamar's court. Described by 17th century Italian missionaries Don Christopher de Castelli, Archangelo Lambert and Dionigo.

Horseball is played by two teams consisting of 6-6 riders (1 goalkeeper). The length of the straight

competition field is 150-300 meters, the width is 75-120 meters. Flags are attached to the corners of the field. The length of the goal is 6, and the height is 3 meters. In front of the goal, a penalty area of 10-20 meters is marked.

The main equipment of the game is a solid ball and wooden rackets with a net arc attached to the end. The goal of the game is to score the ball into the opponent's goal so that the rider touches the ball only with the chogny. The game lasts 20 minutes, after the first 10 minutes there is a 15-minute break. After the start of each half of the game and after the ball is scored, the referee, who is also sitting on a horse, brings the ball into play by throwing it up in the center of the field. The referees act along the side lines.

As I mentioned above, Georgia was known for its high equestrian culture, horse breeding and the art of training them since ancient times. From the Georgian classical literature, starting with "Life of Kartli", there was talk of Georgian competition in everything.

Isindi is an ancient Georgian equestrian sports game, which includes elements of military tactics: reconnaissance, sudden attack, quick retreat of the horse, running away at full speed, attack and counterattack. The game is played on a 150-210 m long and 40-50 m wide rectangular field, at two opposite ends of which there are camps of the opposing teams. In order to line up the teams, a straight starting line is drawn as a border in front of the camp. 2 teams of equal number of horsemen participate - at least six riders in each team. Each rider is armed with a spear 120-150 cm long, on which is attached a spear for striking. The spear is called Isindi. The teams line up at the starting line of the field. The first "challenger" of the starting team, at the referee's mark, rushes to the opposing team, crosses its penalty line and tries to hit the opponent or his horse with his horse (2 points). After falling, he quickly returns to his team and stands up in Blosch. Then the first player of the team quickly hangs the "challenger" of the opposing team to the penalty line and tries to repeat the same, quickly turning back so that the next rider of the opposing team cannot hit him or his horse. The rider will get an additional 2 points for catching a piece of Christmas Eve in the air. The team that collects more points wins.

The next oldest national sport is the squash field in feudal Georgia. As for the squash tactics: a pole was erected in the middle of the field, on which a gold or silver cup was placed as a target. Riders with bows lined up at the starting line. At the referee's signal, one of the riders would approach the mast with his wheels and shoot an arrow to knock down the trophy placed on the mast, then cross the finish line and stop. After the participants finished each trial, they were allowed to try again: this time, the furniture line was considered the starting line. The results of the competition were determined by how many times the riders could throw the target and how much time they spent on it.

In the old days, people eagerly waited for the Zucchini Championship to be held, and in the capital, Tbilisi, a field was even prepared for Zucchini. Zucchini was described by Vakhushti Batonishvili ("Description of the Kingdom of Georgia"), Archangelo Lambert ("Description of Samegrelo"), Dionijo Karli ("Description of Tbilisi") and others.

The last type of sport that I will touch on is this - Lelo. As one of the oldest national sports. This is a team game and it was mainly spread in West Georgia.

Leloburti enjoyed a special privilege in Guria and Samegrelo in Western Georgia. The game of try has survived until recently and is mainly played on the football field. The field does not have a goal. A team is awarded a point if it passes or moves the ball beyond the opponent's goal line by any means, hands or feet, either in the air or on the ground. The winner is the one who does this more times. The game consists of two 30-minute halves and a 10-minute break. There are 13-13 players in each half. Every year in Georgia, the republican try-ball championship is traditionally held.

Thus, as I described in the article, the history of Georgian sports is diverse and unique. Each course contains elements of physical training of warriors and the art of fighting. Georgian people have

always had to constantly fight with the enemy, and this embodied fighting ability or self-defense is also evident in each course of national sports. However, of course, not only in national, but also in the fields of modern sports of the world today, Georgian sportsmen are working with great success, such as: judo, rugby, arm wrestling, in which I also participate, football, etc.

In fact, sports genes have been so deeply embedded in us since time immemorial that we wrestle each type of sport full of fighting spirit, we consider it a personal struggle and protection of dignity and turn it into a way of life. On national holidays, of course, we hold our own, national games, thus we pay respect to their creators, our past and ancestors.

References: Georgian Sports Chronicle 2022 (Guram Dzagania, Nino Dzagania).