

An Litir Bheag

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 1,033 (which corresponds to Litir 1,337). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

<p><i>I was reading about games that were played in Uist more than a hundred years ago. The account is in the periodical The Celtic Review. It was written by an Alexander Morrison. There is a description of twenty games in it. I want to tell you about some of them.</i></p> <p><i>To begin with, Speilean. There are two teams. One team bats. The other team fields. There is a hole in the ground in which one end of a speil, a small piece of wood, goes. The ball is put at that end of the speil above the hole. The batter hits the other end of the speil with a bat. That puts the ball into the air. While the ball is in the air, the batter gives it an almighty thump.</i></p> <p><i>If anyone catches it before it reaches the ground, the batter is out. But if the ball hits the ground, the first person who grabs it throws it towards the batter.</i></p> <p><i>The batter hits the ball again. If a person catches it, the batter is out. If not, a person who grabs the ball throws it towards the hole. If the ball goes into the hole, the batter is out. If not, people measure how far the ball is from the hole when it stops.</i></p>	<p>Bha mi a' leughadh mu gheamannan a bhathar a' cluich ann an Uibhist còrr is ceud bliadhna air ais. 'S ann anns an iris <i>The Celtic Review</i> a tha an cunntas. Chaidh a sgrìobhadh le fear Alasdair Moireasdan. Tha tuairisgeul ann de dh'fhichead geama. Tha mi airson innse dhuibh mu chuid dhiubh.</p> <p>An toiseach, <i>Speilean</i>. Tha dà sgioba ann. Tha aon sgioba a' batadh. Tha an sgioba eile a' glacadh. Tha toll anns an talamh anns am bi aon cheann <i>speile</i>, pìos beag fiodha. Tha am ball air a chur air a' cheann sin dhen speil os cionn an tuill. Bidh am batair a' bualadh ceann eile an speile le bata. Tha sin a' cur a' bhuill suas. Fhad 's a tha am ball shuas, tha am batair ga bhualadh le uile neart.</p> <p>Ma ghlacas duine sam bith e mus ruig e an talamh, bidh am batair a-mach. Ach ma bhuaileas am ball an talamh, bidh a' chiad duine a gheibh greim air ga thilgeil a dh'ionnsaigh a' bhatair.</p> <p>Tha am batair a' bualadh a' bhuill a-rithist. Ma ghlacas duine e, tha am batair a-mach. Mura glac, bidh duine a gheibh grèim air a' bhall ga thilgeil a dh'ionnsaigh an tuill. Ma thèid am ball a-steach don toll, tha am batair a-mach. Mura tèid, bidh daoine a' tomhas dè cho fada 's a tha am ball bhon toll nuair a stadas e.</p>
--	---

<p><i>If the distance is smaller than the length of the bat, the batter is out. If it is greater than the length of the bat, the batter keeps going and his team gets a point. The game continues until one team reaches a hundred points or until they are all out. Then the other team bats.</i></p> <p><i>Alexander Morrison describes another game of the same type that is somewhat similar to rounders. It was called Cluich an Taighe in Uist.</i></p> <p><i>It's rarely that we see games of this type played in this day and age. More's the pity.</i></p>	<p>Ma tha an t-astar nas lugha na fad a' bhata, tha am batair a-mach. Ma tha e nas motha na fad a' bhata, bidh am batair a' cumail a dol agus gheibh an sgioba aige puing. Tha an geama a' leantainn gus an ruig aon sgioba ceud puing no gus am bi iad uile a-mach. An uair sin bidh an sgioba eile a' batadh.</p> <p>Tha Alasdair Moireasdan a' dèanamh tuairisgeul de gheama eile dhen aon seòrsa a tha rudeigin coltach ri rounders. 'S e <i>Cluich an Taighe</i> an t-ainm a bha air ann an Uibhist.</p> <p>'S ann ainneamh a chì sinn geamannan dhen t-seòrsa air an cluich san latha a tha ann. Is mòr am beud.</p>
---	--