# 12.3 The $1 million baseball

**Grammar** *both, neither, either*
**Can do** describe similarities/differences



## Reading

**1** Discuss.

1 What is the game in the photo?
2 What is the aim of the game?
3 Why do you think a baseball might be worth $1 million?

**2** Read the text and answer this question.

What was the argument between Alex Popov and Patrick Hayashi about?

**3** Read the text again and answer the questions.

1 What record did Barry Bonds break?
2 Why was the ball worth $1 million?
3 Who caught the ball first?
4 Why did he then lose the ball?
5 What did Hayashi get from the officials?
6 What did Popov do after the game?
7 How long did the court case last?
8 What did the judge decide?

**4** Find the following words in the text. Look at the context, i.e. what comes before and what comes after. Say what you think the words might mean.

1 the stands (line 1)
2 home run (line 4)
3 to own (line 7)
4 an official (line 13)
5 to claim (line 15)
6 a fee (line 19)
7 to appeal (line 20)

**5** Discuss.
Do you think the judge made the right decision? Why/Why not?

## The strange story of the $1 million baseball

When Barry Bonds hit a baseball into the stands, he had no idea he was starting one of the strangest legal battles in sporting history. On 7th October, Bonds, who plays for the San Francisco *Giants*, completed his seventy-third home run of the season, beating the existing record.

As he hit the ball towards the crowd, it instantly became worth a million dollars – and the fans knew it. The fight over who owned the ball began as soon as it was caught.

Alex Popov and Patrick Hayashi both said that they had caught the ball. In fact, according to TV video recordings, Popov caught the ball first but it was then knocked out of his hands by other fans. Then Hayashi got it and held it in the air. He was taken away by officials. They gave him a certificate saying it was his.

However, Popov wasn't happy and took Hayashi to court. Popov claimed that the ball was his. For four months Judge Kevin McCarthy considered the case. In the end, he didn't agree with either man and said that the ball belonged to neither of them. He told them to sell it and share the money. Unfortunately for the men, however, any profit will go to pay their lawyers' fees. Both men say they will appeal.

## Vocabulary | verb + prepositions (2)

**6** Some verbs are often followed by a preposition. Look at the text again and find which prepositions often follow:

play agree belong

**7** Complete the sentences with the prepositions from the box. Check in a dictionary if necessary.

for (x3) on to at with (x2)

1 Why don't you go and play football ____ your friends?
2 Why did you argue ____ that police officer?
3 Look ____ that crowd of people! What are they doing?
4 Sheila has applied ____ a job in New York.
5 I'd like to listen ____ the news at 9p.m.
6 Martin apologised ____ being rude to me last night.
7 I've been waiting ____ ages. Where have you been?
8 I'm not sure if we'll play tennis today. It depends ____ the weather.