

# Chapter 3

## Studying the past: does it help us understand sports today?





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*Of the thousands of evils ... in Greece there is no greater evil than the race of athletes. ...*

*Since they have not formed good habits, they face problems with difficulty.*

*(Euripides, Greek dramatist, fifth century BC)*



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*They who laid the intellectual foundations of the Western world were the most fanatical players and organisers of games that the world has ever known.*

*(C.L.R. James, sociologist and West Indian cricket player, 1984)*



To understand sports today, we need a sense of what physical games and sports activities were like in past times. This chapter presents brief overviews of sport activities in different cultural and historical settings. Our intent is *not* to provide an integrated overall history of sports. Such a history would look at the development and organization of physical games and sports across all continents from one cultural group to another over time. This is an ambitious and worthy project, but it is far beyond the scope of this chapter.

This chapter focuses on (1) the Ancient Greeks, (2) the Roman Empire, (3) the Middle Ages in parts of Europe, (4) the Renaissance through to the Enlightenment in parts of Europe, and (5) the Industrial Revolution through to recent times, with special emphasis on the UK. These times and places, often covered in history courses, are familiar to many of us, and they illustrate the ways that sports are connected with the social and cultural contexts in which they exist.

The goal of this chapter is to show that our understanding of sports depends on what we know about the social lives of the people who created, defined, played and integrated them into their everyday experiences. As critical theory suggests, it is important to study the ways that people use their power and resources as they create and participate in physical activities.

When we view sports history in this way, dates and names are less important than what we can learn about social life by studying sports and physical activities at particular times and places.

## Understanding History While Studying Sports in Society

Many people think about history as a chronological sequence of events that gradually leads to a better and more 'modern' society. Many historical accounts are full of references to societies that are traditional or modern, primitive or civilized, underdeveloped or developed, pre-industrial or industrial. This terminology implies that history is always moving forward so that societies are improving and becoming more developed.

This approach to history enables some people to feel superior as they assume that they are the most modern, civilized and developed people in the world. However, this conclusion is not historically accurate. In the case of sports, there are literally thousands of 'histories' of physical activities among thousands of human populations in different places around the world. These histories sometimes involve patterns of changes that do not provide evidence of becoming more civilized or highly developed.

Research shows that physical activities and games have existed in all cultures. The specific forms of these activities and games, along with the meanings that people gave to them, were shaped through struggles over the meaning, purpose and organization of the activities, over who should play them and over the ways that they were to be integrated into people's lives. To say that physical activities and games over the years have evolved to fit a pattern of progress, or modernization, is to distort the life experiences of people all over the world (Gruneau, 1988).

There may be fewer contrasts among the sports and games that people play today, but this does not mean that sports are evolving to fit a grand scheme for how physical activities *should* be organized or what they *should* mean in people's lives (Maguire, 1999). Instead, it means that certain nations and corporations now have the power to define, organize and present through the media particular sport forms for the entire world to see. Therefore, when BMX (bicycle

motocross) was approved as a new sport for the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing it was an example of wealthy countries and corporations using their power to promote a sport through international travel, social connections and access to resources. When BMX became commercially attractive to the International Olympic Committee, it was not part of a general pattern of progress in the history of sports.

Therefore, this chapter is not a story of progress. Instead, it is a sample of stories about people at different times and places struggling over and coming to terms with what they want their physical activities to be and how they wish to include them in their lives. There is historical continuity in these processes and struggles, but continuity does not mean that history follows a grand plan of progress. Progressive changes do occur, but they are the result of actions taken by collections of people with the power to make them happen and maintain them over time.

## Sports Vary by Time and Place

People in all cultures, past and present, have used human movement in their ritual life. As we study history, we see that few cultures have had physical games that resemble the highly organized, rule-governed competitive games that we describe as sports today.

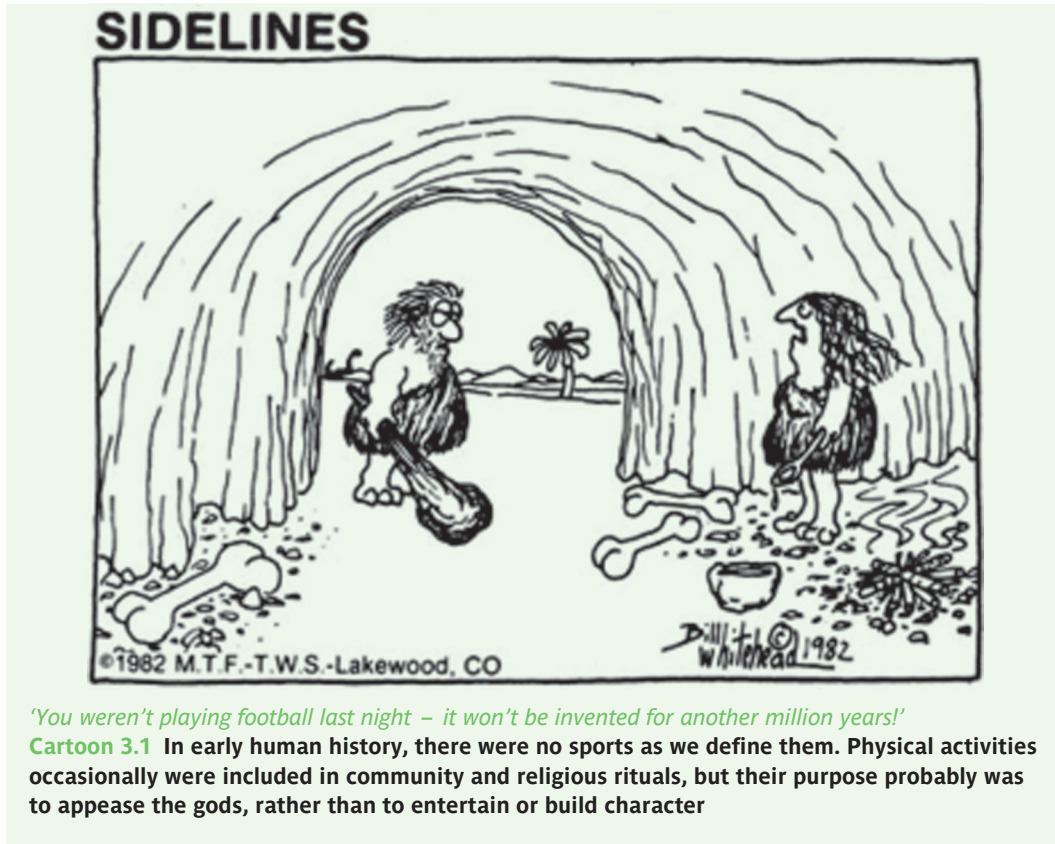
In prehistoric times, for example, there were no sports as we know them today. Physical activities were tied to the challenge of survival and religious beliefs (see Cartoon 3.1). People hunted for food, and sometimes used their physical abilities to defend themselves, establish social control and power over others, and appease their gods. The latter activities involved acting out events that had important meaning in their lives and, even though they may have taken the form of organized games, they were inseparable from sacred rituals and ceremonies. They often were performed as religious worship, and their outcomes were determined by religious necessity as much as the physical abilities of the people involved (Guttman, 1978).

The first forms of organized games among humans probably emerged from this combination of physical challenges and religious rituals. From what we can tell, these games were connected closely with the power structures and belief systems of the societies in which they existed, and they usually re-created and reaffirmed dominant cultural practices in those societies. On rare occasions, they served as sources of protest or opposition to the status quo in particular groups or societies.

Historical and cultural variations in physical activities remind us that all cultural practices, even sports, serve a variety of social purposes. This raises the question of how the definition and organization of sports in any society promote the interests of various groups within that society. People create sports activities within the constraints of the social worlds in which they live. Therefore, everyone does not have an equal say in how those activities are defined and organized. People with the most power generally have the greatest impact on how sports are defined, organized and played in a group or society. Sports activities do not totally reflect their desires, but sports represent the interests of the powerful more than they represent the interests of others.

This approach to studying sports in history is based on critical theory. It calls attention to the existence and consequences of social inequality in societies. Inequalities related to wealth, political power, social status, gender, age, (dis)ability, and race and ethnicity have always had a

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significant impact on how sports activities are organized and played in any situation. We will pay special attention to these in the following discussions of times and places.

## Contests and Games in Ancient Greece: Beyond the Myths (1000 BC to 100 BC)

The games played by early Greeks (*circa* 900 BC) were grounded in mythology and religious beliefs. They were usually held in conjunction with festivals that combined prayer, sacrifices and religious services with music, dancing and ritual feasts. Competitors in these games were from wealthy and respected Greek families. They were the only people who had the money to hire trainers and coaches, and the time and resources to travel. Sports events were based on the interests of able-bodied young males. They usually consisted of warrior sports such as chariot racing, wrestling and boxing, javelin and discus throwing, foot racing, archery and long jumping. Violence, serious injuries and even death were commonplace in comparison with today's sports (Elias, 1986; Kidd, 1984, 1996b; Mendelsohn, 2004). Greek women, children and older people occasionally played sports in these festivals, but they never played in the games held at Olympia.

The locations and dates of the Greek festivals also were linked to religious beliefs. For example, Olympia was chosen as one of the festival sites because it was associated with the achievements and activities of celebrated Greek gods and mythological characters. In fact, Olympia was dedicated as a shrine to the god Zeus about 1000 BC. Although permanent buildings and playing fields were not constructed until 550 BC, the games at Olympia were held every four years. Additional festivals involving athletic contests were also held at other locations throughout Greece, but the Olympic Games became the most prestigious of all athletic events.

Women were prohibited from participating as athletes or spectators at the Olympic Games. However, they held their own games at Olympia. These games, dedicated to the goddess Hera, the sister-wife of Zeus, grew out of Greek fertility rites. When women participated in sports, it was often to demonstrate their strength, sexually attract men and eventually bear strong warrior children (Perrottet, 2004). In general, physical prowess was inconsistent with dominant definitions of femininity among the Greeks. Women were seen as inferior to men. They could neither vote nor be Greek citizens. Wives were the property of their husbands and lived most of their lives in the confines of the home. Furthermore, women in Greece did not participate in political or economic affairs.

The men's games at Olympia took on political significance as they grew in visibility and popularity. Winning became connected with the glory of city-states. Physically skilled slaves and young men from lower-status backgrounds were forced to become athletes, or wealthy patrons and government officials hired them to train for the Olympics and other games. Victories brought cash prizes and living expenses for many of these slaves and hired athletes. Contrary to popular myths about the amateur ideals held by the Greeks, many male athletes saw themselves as professionals. During the second century BC, they even organized athletic guilds enabling them to bargain for rights, gain control over the conditions of their sports participation and enjoy material security when they retired from competition (Baker, 1988). Greek athletes were so specialized in their physical skills that they made poor soldiers. They engaged in warrior sports, but they lacked the generalized skills of warriors. Furthermore, they concentrated so much on athletic training that they ignored intellectual development. This evoked widespread criticism from Greek philosophers, who saw the games as brutal and dehumanizing, and the athletes as useless and ignorant beings.

Representatives of the modern Olympics have romanticized and perpetuated myths about Greek games to connect the modern games to a positive legacy. However, the ancient games were not tributes to mind-body harmony. Athletes were maimed and killed in the pursuit of victories and the rewards that came with them (Mendelsohn, 2004; Perrottet, 2004), fairness was not as important as honour, and athletic contests were connected with a cultural emphasis on warfare.

Physical contests and games in Greek culture influenced art, philosophy and the everyday lives of people wealthy enough to train, hire professionals and travel to events. However, Greek contests and games were different from organized competitive sports of today (see the box 'Dominant sport forms today,' p. 69). First, they were grounded in religion; second, they lacked complex administrative structures; third, they did not involve measurements and record keeping from event to event. However, there is one major similarity: they often reproduced dominant patterns of social relations in society as a whole. The power and advantages that went with being wealthy, male, young and able bodied in Greek society shaped the games and contests in ways

that limited the participation of most people. Even the definitions of excellence used to evaluate performance reflected the abilities of young males. This meant that the abilities of others were substandard by definition – if you could not do it as a young, able-bodied Greek man did it, you were doing it the wrong way. This legitimized and preserved the privilege enjoyed by a select group of men in Greek society.

## Roman Contests and Games: Spectacles and Gladiators (100 BC to AD 500)

Roman leaders used physical contests and games to train soldiers and provide mass entertainment spectacles. They borrowed events from Greek contests and games, but they focused athletic training on preparing obedient soldiers. They were critical of the Greek emphasis on individualism and specialized physical skills that were useless in battle. Because Roman leaders emphasized military training and entertainment, the contests and games during the first century AD increasingly took the form of circuses and gladiatorial combat.

Chariot races were the most popular events during Roman spectacles. Wealthy Romans recruited slaves as charioteers. Spectators bet heavily on the races, and when they became bored or unruly, the emperors passed around free food and tickets for prizes to prevent outbreaks of violence. This strategy pacified the crowds and allowed the emperors to use events to celebrate themselves and their power. Government officials throughout the Roman Empire used similar events and strategies to control people in their regions.

As the power and influence of the Roman Empire grew, spectacles consisting of contests and games became increasingly important as diversions for the masses. By AD 300, half the days on the Roman calendar were public holidays because slaves did most of the work. Many Romans held only part-time jobs, if they worked at all. Activities other than chariot races and boxing matches were needed to attract and distract people.

Bear-baiting, bull-baiting and animal fights were added to capture spectator interest. Men and women were forced into the arena to engage in mortal combat with lions, tigers and panthers. Condemned criminals were dressed in sheepskins to battle partially starved wild animals. Gladiators, armed with various weapons, were pitted against each other in gory fights to the death. These spectacles achieved two purposes for Roman rulers: they entertained an idle populace and disposed of socially ‘undesirable’ people such as thieves, murderers, unruly slaves and outspoken Christians (Baker, 1988).

Some Romans criticized these spectacles as tasteless activities, devoid of value. However, their criticisms were based not on concerns for human rights as much as their objections to events in which wealthy people and peasants mingled together. Other than some activist Christians, few people criticized spectacles on moral or humanitarian grounds. The spectacles continued until the Roman economy went into a depression and wealthy people moved from the cities, taking their resources with them. As the Roman Empire deteriorated, there were not enough resources to support spectacles (Baker, 1988).

Women were seldom involved in Roman contests and games. They were allowed in the arenas to watch and cheer male athletes, but few had opportunities to develop athletic skills.

Within Roman families, women were legally subservient to and rigidly controlled by men. As in Ancient Greece, few women pursued interests outside the household.

Although local folk games and other physical activities existed in the Roman Empire, we know little about how they were organized and played and what they meant in people's lives. The gladiatorial spectacles did not capture everyone's interest, but they attracted considerable attention in major cities.

Roman contests and games differed from organized sports today because they sometimes were connected with religious rituals, and they seldom involved quantifying athletic achievements or recording outstanding accomplishments (review the box 'Dominant sport forms today').

“

Just as the dominant class writes history, so that same class writes the story of sport.

”

(James Riordan, social historian and former football player, 1996)

## reflect on SPORTS

### *Dominant sport forms today: what makes them unique?* ● ● ●

The organized competitive sports so popular today are very different from the physical activities and games played in the past. Allen Guttmann's study of sports activities through history shows that today's *dominant sport forms* (DSFs) have seven interrelated characteristics, which have never before appeared together in physical activities and games. These characteristics are as follows.

- 1 *Secularism.* Today's DSFs are not directly linked to religious beliefs or rituals. They are sources of diversion and entertainment, not worship; they are played for personal gains, not the appeasement of gods; and they embody the immediacy of the material world, not the mysticism of the supernatural.
- 2 *Equality.* Today's DSFs are based on the ideas that participation should be open to everyone regardless of family or social background and that all contestants in a sport event should face the same competitive conditions.
- 3 *Specialization.* Today's DSFs involve athletes dedicated exclusively to participation in a single event or position within an event; excellence is defined in terms of specialized skills, rather than all-round physical abilities.
- 4 *Rationalization.* Today's DSFs involve formalized rules that regulate the conditions of participation and they are organized around rationally controlled strategies and training methods guided by 'sport sciences'.
- 5 *Bureaucratization.* Today's DSFs are governed by complex organizations and officials that control athletes, teams and events, enforce rules, organize events and certify records.
- 6 *Quantification.* Today's DSFs involve precise timing and measurements; scores and performance statistics are recorded and used as proof of achievements.
- 7 *Records.* Today's DSFs emphasize setting and breaking records; performances are compared over time to determine personal, national and world records.

One or some of these characteristics were present in the physical activities and games of previous historical periods, but not until the nineteenth century did all seven appear together in *modern sports*





**Dominant sport forms today emphasize quantification. Performances are timed, measured and recorded. The clock is crucial, and digital scoreboards now show times in hundredths of seconds (Source: David Biene; photograph courtesy of Ossur)**

(Dunning, 1999; Dunning and Sheard, 1979; Guttman, 1978). This does not mean that today's organized competitive sports are superior to the games and activities of past times and other places. It means only that they are different in terms of how they are organized and integrated into people's lives. Sociologists study these differences in connection with the social and cultural contexts in which physical activities and sports are played. Table 3.1 summarizes Guttman's comparison of games, contests and sport activities in each of the places and time periods discussed in this chapter. The table shows that the dominant sport forms that exist in many post-industrial societies today are different from the 'sports' played by people in times past. However, it does not explain why the differences exist or their social implications.

The seven characteristics identified by Guttman are not found in all sports today. Sports are social constructions. They change as social, economic and political forces change, and as people seek and develop alternatives to dominant sport forms. The DSFs played 50 years from now are likely to have characteristics that are different from these seven characteristics. *What do you think?*

## Tournaments and Games in Medieval Europe: Separation of the Masters and the Masses (500 to 1300)

Sport activities in medieval Europe consisted of folk games played by local peasants, tournaments staged for knights and nobles, archery contests and activities in which animals were brutalized (Dunning, 1999). The folk games, often violent and dangerous and sometimes organized to maim or kill animals, emerged in connection with local peasant customs. The

**Table 3.1 Historical comparison of organized games, contests and sport activities**

Characteristic	Greek contests and games (1000 BC to 100 BC)	Roman contests and games (100 BC to AD 500)	Medieval tournaments and games (500 to 1300)	Renaissance, Reformation and Enlightenment games (1300 to 1800)	'Modern' sports
Secularism	Yes and no*	Yes and no	Yes and no	Yes and no	Yes
Equality	Yes and no	Yes and no	No	Yes and no	Yes
Specialization	Yes	Yes	No	Yes and no	Yes
Rationalization	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Bureaucratization	Yes and no	Yes	No	No	Yes
Quantification	No	Yes	No	Yes and no	Yes
Records	No	No	No	Yes and no	Yes

\*This characteristic existed in some sports during this time, but not in others.

Source: Modified version of table 2 in Guttmann (1978)

tournaments and archery contests were linked with military training and the desire for entertainment among the feudal aristocracy and those who served them.

Some of the local games of this period have interesting histories. As Roman soldiers and government officials travelled around Europe during the fourth and fifth centuries, they built bathing facilities to use during their leisure time. To loosen up before their baths, they engaged in various forms of ball play. Local peasants during the early medieval period used the Roman activities as models and developed their own forms of ball games. They often integrated these games into local religious ceremonies and cultural events. For example, tossing a ball back and forth sometimes represented the conflict between good and evil, light and darkness or life and death. As the influence of the Roman Catholic Church spread through Europe during the early years of the medieval period, these symbolic rituals were redefined in terms of Catholic beliefs. In these cases, sports and religion were closely connected with each other.

During most of the medieval period, the Roman Catholic Church accepted peasant ball games, even though they occasionally involved violence. Local priests encouraged games by opening church grounds on holidays and Sunday afternoons. As games became a regular feature of village life, people played them during festive community gatherings that also involved music and dancing. The local ball games played on these occasions contained the roots for many contemporary games such as football, hockey, rugby, bowling, curling and cricket. However, the games in peasant villages had little structure and few rules. Local traditions guided play, and traditions varied widely from one community to the next.

The upper classes in medieval Europe paid little attention to, and seldom interfered in, the leisure of peasants. They saw peasant games and festivities as safety valves defusing mass

social discontent. The sports activities of the upper classes were distinctively different from those of the peasants. Access to specialized equipment and facilities allowed them to develop early versions of billiards, tennis, handball and pelota. Ownership of horses allowed them to develop forms of horse racing, while their stable hands developed a version of horseshoes. On horseback, they also participated in hunting and hawking. Owning property and possessing money and servants clearly influenced their sports.

Throughout the medieval period, the most popular sporting events among upper-class males were tournaments consisting of war games to keep knights and nobles ready for battle. Some tournaments resembled actual battlefield confrontations. Deaths and serious injuries occurred, victors carried off opponents' possessions, and losers often were taken as prisoners and used as hostages to demand ransoms from opposing camps. Later versions of tournaments had lower stakes, but they also involved injuries and occasional deaths. Towards the end of the medieval period, colourful ceremonies and pageantry softened the warlike tournaments, and entertainment and chivalry took priority over military preparation and the use of deadly violence.

Women during this time seldom participated in physical games and sport activities. Gender restrictions were grounded in a male-centred family structure and Catholic teachings that women were inferior to men. A woman's duty was to be obedient and submissive; however, peasant women were involved in some of the games and physical activities that occurred during village festivals.

Among the aristocracy, gender relations were patterned so that men's and women's activities were clearly differentiated. Aristocratic women did little outside the walls of their dwellings, and their activities seldom involved rigorous physical exertion for fun. They sometimes engaged in 'ladylike' games but, because women were subject to men's control and often viewed as sex objects and models of beauty, their involvement in active pursuits was limited. Feminine beauty during this time was defined in passive terms: the less active a woman, the more likely she was perceived as beautiful.

Even though some sports in Europe and North America today can trace their roots back to the medieval period, the contests and games of that time were not much like today's organized sports. They lacked specialization and organization, they never involved the measurement or recording of athletic achievements, and they were not based on a commitment to equal and open competition among athletes from diverse backgrounds (review the box 'Dominant sport forms today,' p. 69). Historian Allen Guttman has vividly described this last point:

In medieval times, jousts and tournaments were limited to the nobility. Knights who sullied their honour by inferior marriages – to peasant girls, for instance – were disbarred. ... Peasants reckless enough to emulate the sport of their masters were punished by death. (1978, p. 30)

Although some characteristics of medieval sports activities can be seen in the games and contests of the Renaissance, the Reformation and the Enlightenment, these later periods involved important social transformations, which shaped the forms and meanings of physical activities and games.

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*'Why don't we settle this in a civilized way? We'll charge admission to watch!'*

**Cartoon 3.2** Dominant sport forms in many societies have been organized to celebrate a particular form of masculinity, emphasizing aggression, conquest and dominance

## The Renaissance, the Reformation and the Enlightenment: Games as Diversions (1300 to 1800)

### The Renaissance

Wars throughout Europe during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries encouraged some monarchs, government officials and church authorities to increase their military strength and prohibit popular peasant pastimes. Those in authority felt that the peasants should spend less time playing games and more time learning to defend the lands and lives of their masters. But, despite the pronouncements of bishops and kings, the peasants did not readily give up their games. In fact, the games sometimes became rallying points for opposition to government and church authority.

At the time that peasants were subjected to increased control in many locations, the 'scholar-athlete' became the ideal man among the affluent. This 'Renaissance man' was 'socially adept, sensitive to aesthetic values, skilled in weaponry, strong of body, and learned in letters' (Baker, 1988, p. 59). Throughout the Renaissance period, women had relatively few opportunities to be involved in tournaments and sport activities. Although peasant women sometimes played physical games, their lives were restricted by the demands of work in and out of the home. They often did hard physical labour, but they were not encouraged to engage in public games and sports that called attention to their physical abilities.

Upper-class women sometimes participated in bowling, croquet, archery and tennis, but involvement was limited because women during this time were seen as ‘naturally’ weak and passive. Some of these ‘Renaissance women’ may have been pampered and put on figurative pedestals, but men maintained their power by tightly controlling the lives of women, partly by promoting the idea that women were too fragile to leave the home and do things on their own. The code of chivalry, popular during this time, had less to do with protecting women than with reproducing patriarchy and privileging men.

## The Reformation

During the Protestant Reformation, growing negative attitudes about games and sport activities discouraged participation, especially where Calvinist or Puritan beliefs were popular. For example, between the early 1500s and the late 1600s, English Puritans tried to eliminate or control leisure activities, including physical contests and games. They were devoted to the work ethic and viewed sports in this way:

[Sports] were thought to be profane and licentious – they were occasions of worldly indulgence that tempted men from a godly life; being rooted in pagan and popish practices, they were rich in the sort of ceremony and ritual that poorly suited the Protestant conscience; they frequently involved a desecration of the Sabbath and an interference with the worship of the true believers; they disrupted the peaceable order of society, distracting men from their basic social duties – hard work, thrift, personal restraint, devotion to family, [and] a sober carriage.

(Malcolmson, 1984, p. 67)

The primary targets of the Puritans were the pastimes and games of the peasants. Peasants did not own property, so their festivities occurred in public settings and attracted large crowds. This made them easy for the Puritans to condemn and control. The Puritans did their best to eliminate festivities, especially those scheduled on Sunday afternoons. They objected to the drinking and partying that accompanied the games, and disapproved of physical pleasure on the Sabbath. The physical activities and games of the affluent were less subject to Puritan interference. Activities such as horse racing, hunting, tennis and bowling took place on the private property of the wealthy, making it difficult for the Puritans to enforce their prohibitions. As in other times and places, power relations had much to do with who played what activities under what conditions. Despite Puritan influence and social changes affecting the economic structure and stability of English village life, many peasants maintained participation in games and sports.

During the early 1600s, King James I formally challenged Puritan influence in England by issuing *The King’s Book of Sports*. This book, reissued in 1633 by Charles I, emphasized that Puritan ministers and officials should not discourage lawful recreational pursuits among English citizens. Charles I and his successors ushered in a new day for English sporting life. They revived traditional festivals, and actively promoted and supported public games and sport activities. Consequently, cricket, horse racing, yachting, fencing, golf and boxing became highly organized during the late 1600s and the 1700s, although participation patterns reflected and reproduced social divisions in society.

During the Reformation period, England, as well as other European nations, attempted to secure colonies along the coast of America to increase their wealth. Many of the colonizers travelled to the 'New World' in order to escape religious persecution and, in colonial America, Puritan influence was strong. Many colonists were not playful people; hard work was necessary for survival. However, as colonists developed more routine lifestyles, more free time became available and Puritan beliefs became less important than the desire to include games from the their past into everyday life. Towns gradually abandoned the Puritan 'blue laws' that prohibited games and sports, and this made it possible for leisure activities, including sports, to grow in popularity.

During this time, the games of Native Peoples in the Americas were not directly affected by Puritan beliefs and cultural practices. Native Peoples in areas that now constitute eastern and north-eastern states in the USA continued to play the games that had been part of their cultures for centuries. In fact, sports and sports participation have many histories across North America. This alerts us to the issue of whose voices and perspectives are represented in historical accounts of games, contests and sports. The box 'Lessons from history' emphasizes that most historical accounts do not represent the experiences and perspectives of those who lack the power to tell their own stories and make them a part of dominant culture.



Each sport's distinctive past matters to the people who play and follow it in the present.



*(Martin Polley, historian, 2002, p. 49)*

### reflect on SPORTS *Lessons from history: who tells us about the past?*

History is much more than a chronological series of events that revolve around the lives of male leaders. Historical research, when done thoroughly, should take us inside the lives of people who have lived before us. It should give us a sense of how people lived and gave meaning to their experiences and the events of their times. Therefore, when we study sports, it is important to be aware of whose voices and perspectives are used to construct historical accounts, as well as whose voices and perspectives are missing. This awareness is important when studying the physical activities, games and sports of Native Peoples in North America.

Prior to the arrival of Columbus and other Europeans, the histories of Native Peoples were often kept in oral rather than written forms; they were local and personal histories. It was not until the late eighteenth century that accounts of the lives and cultures of Native Peoples were recorded in English. However, those accounts were written by Europeans with limited knowledge of the diverse languages, cultures and complex social arrangements that made up the lives of at least 500 unique cultural groups of Native Peoples in North America. This social and cultural diversity was obscured by general accounts describing the lives and customs of 'Indians', as if all native cultures were the same. These accounts provide limited information about the diverse games and sports played by Native Peoples. In many cases, accounts were written after the lives and communities of Native Peoples had been disrupted and influenced by European explorers and settlers. This history provides little information about the ways that traditional games and sports were played and integrated into the diverse cultures that existed in North America.

Europeans were seldom able to observe authentic expressions of traditional native cultures. When they did make observations, it was often under strained circumstances, and Native Peoples were

unwilling to reveal their customs while being watched by outsiders who often viewed them as 'oddities'. The fact that the most important games in native cultures were connected with religious rites made it even less likely that Europeans would be allowed to observe them in authentic, traditional forms or understand the meanings associated with them. By the time Native Peoples provided their own historical accounts in English, their cultures had changed in appreciable ways, and few people were willing to listen to their stories and publish them in forms that were considered 'real history'. In the meantime, experiences and meanings were lost for ever.

That we know so little about the many histories of games and sports among Native Peoples demonstrates that social, political and economic forces influence our knowledge of sport history and, even, our definitions of what constitutes 'real' knowledge. For example, if we wish to understand the importance of an event, such as the establishment of the Iroquois National Lacrosse Team in 1983, we must know the following:

- the histories and cultures of specific native societies and the six nations of the Iroquois Confederation
- the formal and informal political relationships between native societies and the US government
- the experiences of Native Peoples in North America as they struggled to maintain their cultures while others tried to strip them of their dignity, language, religion and customs.

Knowing these things enables us to initiate research on the significance of the Iroquois National Lacrosse Team in terms of those who formed it, participated on it and followed its matches.

The scarcity of information based on the perspectives of those who lack power diminishes our knowledge of sports history around the world. As British social historian James Riordan (1996, p. vii) has said, 'Just as the dominant class writes history, so that same class writes the story of sport.' Therefore, when our knowledge of the past does not go beyond the experiences and perspectives of those with the power to tell their own stories, it is always incomplete. In the worst case such stories reproduce stereotypes and justify discrimination against those with little power. This is why some people call for more cultural diversity in educational curricula and more materials representing the voices of those who previously were excluded from the knowledge production process. *What do you think?*

## The Enlightenment

During the Enlightenment period (1700 to 1800), the games and sport activities in parts of Europe and North America began to resemble sport forms that are popular today. With some exceptions, physical games and sports during the Enlightenment were no longer grounded in religious ritual and ceremony. They involved a degree of specialization and organization, achievements sometimes were measured, and records occasionally were kept. Furthermore, the idea that events should be open to all competitors, regardless of background, became increasingly popular.

However, sport activities during the Enlightenment period were different from the dominant sport forms of today in at least one important respect: they were defined strictly as diversions – as interesting and often challenging ways to pass free time enjoyably. People did not see them as having a purpose beyond the immediate experiences of participants and the occasion on which they were played. No one thought that sports and sport participation were related to health, character development and the organization of social life. Therefore, people had no reason to

organize sport activities for others or to create organizations to sponsor or govern sports. A few people formed clubs, and they occasionally scheduled contests with other groups, but they did not form leagues or national and international associations. But this approach to sports changed dramatically during the Industrial Revolution.

## The Industrial Revolution: the Emergence of Organized Competitive Sports (1780 to 1920)

It is an oversimplification to say that the organized competitive sports of today are simply a product of the Industrial Revolution. They clearly emerged during the process of industrialization, but they were actually social constructions of people themselves – people who played their games and sport activities while they coped with the realities of everyday life in rapidly changing families, communities and societies. Of course, the realities of everyday life included economic, political and social forces, which either enabled or constrained people, depending on their position in society.

The development of factories, the mass production of consumer goods, the growth of cities and increased dependence on technology marked the Industrial Revolution. It involved changes in the organization and control of work and community life, and was generally accompanied by an increase in the number of middle-class people in the societies where it occurred. The Industrial Revolution first began in England around 1780, spreading quickly to urban areas of Scotland and the mining regions of Wales, and became a part of life after 1800 in other European countries and North America. Notably, Ireland did not experience a comparable Industrial Revolution, and this led to problems of unemployment and famine.

### The early years: limited time and space for sports

During the early years of the Industrial Revolution, few people had regular opportunities to play games and sport activities. Farm and factory workers had little free time. The workdays, even for many child workers, were long and tiring. People in cities had few open spaces where they could play sports. Production took priority over play. Industrialists and politicians were not concerned with providing parks and public play spaces. Working people were discouraged from gathering in large groups outside the workplace. The authorities perceived such gatherings as dangerous because they wasted time that could be used for work. Additionally, they provided opportunities for workers to organize themselves and challenge the power of factory owners (Brailsford, 1991; Holt, 1989; Tranter, 1998).

In most industrializing countries, the clergy endorsed restrictions on popular games and gatherings. Ministers preached about the moral value of work and the immorality of play and idleness. Many even banned sports on Sundays and accused anyone who was not totally committed to work of being lazy. Work, they preached, was a sign of goodness. Not everyone agreed, but working people had few choices. For them, survival depended on working long hours, regardless of what they thought about work, and they had little power to change the conditions of their lives. The structure of working life was also changed to reduce the number of bank holidays per year from 17 to just four by 1834.



In most countries, games and sport activities during this period existed *despite* the Industrial Revolution, *not* because of it. People in small towns and farm communities still had opportunities to play games and sport activities during their seasonal festivities, holidays and public ceremonies. Local neighbourhood events that attracted crowds were often defined as illegal. For example, in Derby attempts were made to abolish the highly popular street football which was characteristic of many working-class pastimes: regulated by simple oral rules and played over several hours by hundred of participants who often used violent means to reach one of the goals situated at opposite ends of the town. It appears that resistance to this came from the middle classes, concerned about the working days lost for the event (see Delves, 1981; Guttman, 1978).

However, some communities have maintained their sporting rituals from this era. For example, in Leicestershire, bottle kicking (a form of football with beer kegs instead of a ball) is still played on Easter Monday. It has even been suggested that 'these archaic sports continue, perhaps because they appeal to other English virtues – of being drunk, of being violent and of beating the opposition' (Bull, 2007, p. 50)!

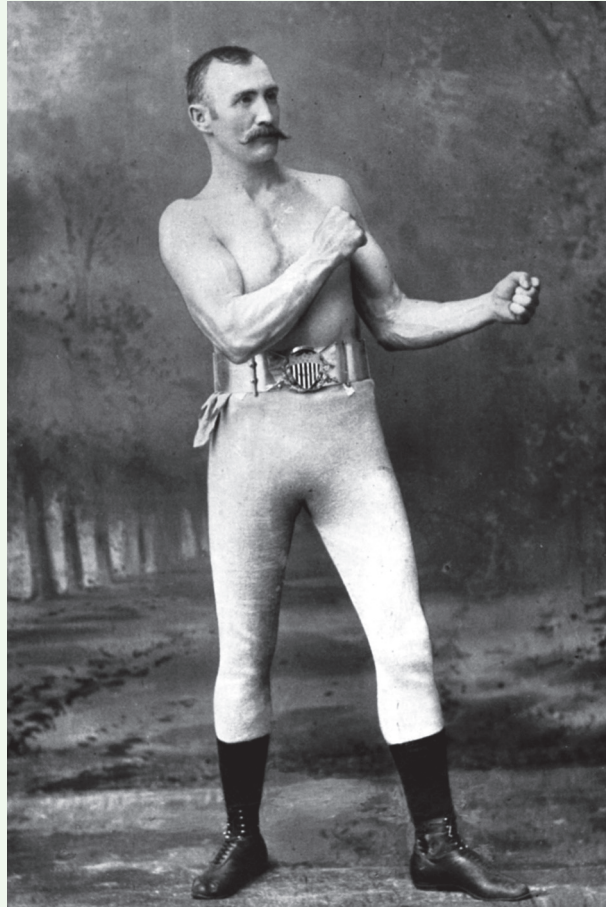
Most city people had few opportunities to organize their own games and sports, although the super wealthy lived highly publicized 'lives of leisure' (Veblen, 1899) including fox-hunting, cricket, horse racing and golf. Among the working classes, sport involvement seldom went beyond being spectators at new forms of commercialized sport events. These events varied by nation, but urban workers in most European and North American cities watched activities such as prizefighting in the form of boxing and wrestling, foot races, rowing and yachting races, circus acts, and various forms of animal contests including cockfighting, bull- or badger-baiting, among other things.

Some sports participation still occurred among urban workers, but it was relatively rare during the early days of the Industrial Revolution. However, between 1800 and 1850, some people in Europe and North America became concerned about the physical health of workers. This concern was partly based on the awareness that workers were being exploited and partly on the recognition that weak and sickly workers could not be productive. Consequently, there were growing calls for new open spaces and funding of 'healthy' leisure pursuits. Personal fitness was highly publicized, and there was an emphasis on callisthenics, gymnastics and outdoor exercises. Conflict theorists have suggested that such developments were a form of social control: to tame the workforce and ensure industrial progress (see Clarke and Critcher, 1985).

The sporting events which thrived tended to be organized commercial events which were approved in most industrial societies, even when they attracted large crowds. In fact, rules prohibiting crowds were suspended when people participated in controlled commercialized spectator events. These events were organized by and for the ultimate benefit of powerful and wealthy people, notably members of the aristocracy whose interests would be served by working-class involvement in these forms of sport. For example, prizefighters came from lower-class families, but the sport was patronized by people from the upper class who could profit by gambling on the outcome. Similarly, aristocratic gamblers were known to employ men from the lower social classes, ostensibly to work on their estate, but principally for their cricketing prowess to compete against other estates in matches which were watched by thousands. It was often the case that the aristocracy would socialize with the lower classes during such events, indicating a sense that they

felt secure enough in their social power to socialize with the lower orders. This is in marked contrast to the nineteenth-century trend of social class distinction perpetuated through amateur statutes, which leave their legacy today.

The emergence of formally organized competitive sports and the maintenance of records of achievement would require more than increased freedom and limited support for healthy leisure activities, but this was the time during which the foundations for organized sports were established. Golby and Purdue (1984) suggest that the transformation of British sports were influenced by four main factors, particularly from the 1840s onwards: a reduced working week, with a half-day Saturday; increased real earnings providing unprecedented levels of disposable income; improved public transport, particularly in the form of the railway network; and the expansion of commercial provision in leisure. In discussing these, and other more recent issues related to sports in society, we focus on events throughout the UK.



Prizefighting was popular among urban workers during the early years of industrialism. The majority of participants were lower class, but the upper classes were keen spectators and frequently gambled on the outcomes of contests (Source: Bob Thomas/Popperfoto/Getty Images)

### The later years: changing interests, values and opportunities

Over the past 150 years of UK history, there has been a growing emphasis on organizing all spheres of social life in a rational and systematic manner. For example, during the mid-1800s, newly formed clubs sponsored and controlled sports participation. Club membership usually was limited to wealthy people in urban areas and students at exclusive schools. However, the competitions attracted spectators from all social classes. The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), founded in England in 1844, was a clublike organization that had a less exclusive membership policy. During the late 1800s it began to change the popular notion that physical conditioning through exercise and sports was anti-Christian.

Central to the development of sporting forms at this time was the public school system. The sports culture of these institutions, epitomized by Thomas Arnold, the Headmaster of Rugby School from 1828 to 1842, was to turn out Christian gentlemen who could both govern themselves and the lower orders. Traditional games were transformed from popular folk games, such as football, into rationalized and ‘gentlemanly’ sports with codified rules. This process was largely responsible for the bifurcation of football into the two versions of soccer and rugby by the mid-1840s. The cult of athleticism was seen to underpin a healthy workforce, develop fit men for national defence and socialize male youth into the modern social order. By the 1860s, games were central to the school curriculum, and it was generally believed that boys who were active in strenuous sports would have ‘a healthy mind in a healthy body’: *mens sana in corpore sano* (Hargreaves, 1986).

As sports activities became more organized, they generally reinforced existing class distinctions in society. Upper-class clubs emphasized achievement and ‘gentlemanly’ involvement – an orientation that ultimately led to definitions of amateurism. The definition of *amateur*, which first appeared in England, became a tool for excluding working-class people from sports that were organized around the interests of upper-class people (Eitzen, 2003; Polley, 1998; Scambler, 2005). The activities of the working classes, by contrast, did not usually occur under the sponsorship of clubs or organizations, and they seldom received publicity. Instead, they generally involved local games and commercialized sports – a combination that ultimately led to professionalization. This dual development of amateurism and professionalization occurred in different ways in Europe and North America (Dunning, 1999).



the influence which bodily exercise, such as manly games and sports, has upon the character; these often develop a character as much as books, and when the young are engaged in them they are preserved from idleness, which is the root of much evil. England perhaps owes more than any country to its noble games.



(Reverend Maurice Ponsonby, 1879, cited in Collins, 1996a, p. 2)

### ***The seeds of new meanings***

Underlying the growing organization of sports activities in the decades after 1850 was a new emphasis on the seriousness of sports. Instead of defining sports simply as enjoyable diversions, people gradually came to see them as tools for achieving important goals such as economic productivity, national loyalty, and the development of admirable character traits, especially among males. This new way of viewing sports was fuelled by changes in every segment of industrial society: the economy, politics, family life, religion, education, science, philosophy and technology.

### ***The growth of organized sports in the UK: 1880 to 1920***

The years between 1880 and 1920 were crucial for the development of organized sports in the UK (Birley, 1995; Tranter, 1998). Wealthy people developed lives of leisure that often included sports, and they used participation in certain sports to prove that they were so successful that they could ‘waste’ time by playing non-productive games (Veblen, 1899). The wealthy often used sports to reinforce status distinctions between themselves and other social classes. For example, the well-documented division of rugby union from rugby league was largely a response of the

upper classes to the numbers of working-class men who were taking up rugby during the 1870s and 1880s. The rugby hierarchy would not facilitate these men playing on an equal footing with wealthy gentlemen, and so forced a split of the two codes (Collins, 1996b). The wealthy also influenced how sports were played and organized by others, especially middle-class people whose status aspirations led them to emulate the rich and powerful.

In this way, the upper class influenced the norms for many players and spectators, the standards for facilities and equipment, and the way in which people throughout society defined and integrated sports into their lives. Specifically, wealthy people used their economic resources to encourage others to define sports as *consumer activities* to be played in *proper* attire, using the *proper* equipment in a *proper* facility and preceded or followed by *proper* social occasions separated from employment and the workplace. Because many people followed these norms, sports became connected with and supportive of the economy. This connection was subtle because sports involved both consumption *and* work-like orientations while being popularly defined as ‘non-work’ activities, separate from the economy.

The emergence of these ideas about the ways that sports ‘should be’ played was important. It enabled people with power to reproduce their privilege in society without overtly coercing workers to think and do certain things. Instead of maintaining their privilege by being nasty, people with economic power promoted forms of sports that were entertaining and supportive of the values and orientations that promoted capitalist business expansion. Critical theorists have noted that this is an example of how sports can be political and economic activities, even though most people see them as sources of excitement and enjoyment (Gramsci, 1971, 1988; Rigauer, 2000; Sage, 2000).

During the period of 1880 to 1920, middle- and working-class people, especially white males, had new opportunities to play sports. Trades unions, progressive government legislation and economic expansion combined to improve working and living conditions.

As the middle class expanded, more people had resources for leisure and sport participation. The spirit of reform at the turn of the twentieth century also led to the development of sports facilities, parks and open spaces in which games could be played by urban residents, especially boys and young men.

### Ideas about sports participation and ‘character development’

During the early 1900s, opportunities for sports involvement increased, but those opportunities were shaped by factors beyond the interests of the participants themselves. Important new ideas about human behaviour, individual development and social life led to an emphasis on organized competitive sports as ‘character-building’ activities.

Through the 1880s most people believed that the actions and development of human beings were unrelated to social factors. They assumed that fate or supernatural forces dictated individual development and that social life was established by a combination of God’s will, necessity and coincidence. However, these ideas changed as people discovered that the social environment influenced people’s actions and that it was possible to change patterns of individual growth and development by altering the organization of society.

This new way of thinking was a crucial catalyst for the growth of modern sports. It made sports into something more than enjoyable pastimes. Gradually, sports were defined as potential educational experiences – experiences with important consequences for individuals,

communities and society. This change, based on behaviourist and evolutionary theories, which were popular at the time, provided a new reason for organizing and promoting sport participation. For the first time in history, people saw sports as tools for changing behaviour, shaping character, creating national loyalty and building unity.

People began to think about the meaning and purpose of sports in new and serious terms. For example, some religious groups, later referred to as 'muscular Christians,' suggested a link between physical strength and the ability to do good works; therefore, they promoted sports involvement as an avenue for spiritual growth. The increased spending power which resulted from the rise in real wages around the turn of the century meant that the working classes saw increased affluence, and the muscular Christians attempted to persuade the workers and their children to invest their economic good fortune in active sports participation. Sport was seen as a means of character formation, teaching self-discipline and team spirit. In addition, this 'rational recreation' was offered as a counteraction to crime, gambling and alcohol (Vamplew, 1988). Many current football and cricket teams have their origins in religious affiliations.

In addition to the religious groups, people interested in economic expansion saw organized sports as tools for generating profits by introducing untrained workers to tasks emphasizing teamwork, obedience to rules, planning, organization and production. Sports, they thought, could create good workers who would tolerate stressful working conditions, maintain fitness, obey supervisors and meet production goals through teamwork on factory assembly lines. Despite this, participation in sports was not as popular among the working classes as the muscular Christians and employers might have anticipated. However, entrepreneurs were quick to realize that many workers were keen to watch others play, and to pay for the privilege, and the commercialization of spectator sport is one of the success stories of Victorian Britain, as we shall discuss later.

### Organized sports and ideas about masculinity and femininity

The new belief that sports built character was applied primarily to males. The public schools routinely segregated boys from the influence of their family and from females, so ensuring the development of a chauvinistic masculine identity. Games were a medium for learning what it was to be 'gentlemanly'. Sports were used to counteract the negative influence of female-dominated home lives on the development of young males from middle- and upper-class backgrounds. The goal was to turn 'over-feminized' boys from affluent families into assertive, competitive, achievement-orientated young men who would become effective leaders in business, politics and the military. In these ways, contemporary sports were heavily grounded in the desire of people with power and wealth to control the working classes, while preparing their own sons to inherit their positions of power and influence (Burstyn, 1999; Kidd, 1996b).

Although women's sport participation increased between 1880 and 1920, many sports programmes ignored females. Organizers and sponsors did not see sports participation as important in the character development of girls and women. They sometimes included girls with boys in organized games at playgrounds, but they discouraged sex-integrated sports among children nearing the age of puberty. It was widely believed that if boys and girls played sports with one another, they would become good friends and lose their interest in being married, having children, and maintaining beliefs in male superiority and female inferiority.

When boys were taught to play sports on playgrounds in the early 1900s, girls were told to sit in the shade and preserve their energy. Medical doctors during this time warned that

playing sports would sap the energy that young women needed to conceive and bear healthy children. In 1887, the chair of the British Medical Association proposed that women should be denied education and other activities which might cause constitutional overstrain, and that this was in the interests of the 'progressive improvement of the human race' (cited in Hargreaves, 1994, p. 45). Many middle-class women were keen to follow the dictates of fashion and so wore restricting clothes, ate very little and did not take any exercise. It is no surprise that many became ill, fainted frequently and behaved submissively, so reinforcing the stereotype of the delicate female. Luther Gulick, who shaped the recreational philosophy of the YMCA at that time, wrote, 'It is clear that athletics have never been either a test or a large factor in the survival of women; athletics do not test womanliness as they test manliness' (1906, p. 158). Gulick also felt that strenuous activities were harmful to the minds and bodies of females. This was the gender ideology of the time.

Organized activities for girls often consisted of domestic science classes to make them good wives, homemakers and mothers. In many ways, the development of 'rational recreation' for males was paralleled by the development of 'rational domesticity' for females (Clarke and Critcher, 1985). When playground organizers provided opportunities for girls to play games and sports, they designed activities that would cultivate 'ladylike' traits, such as poise and body control. This is why so many girls participated in gymnastics and other 'grace and beauty' sports (Burstyn, 1999; Hart, 1981). Another goal of the activities was to make young women healthy for bearing children. Competition was eliminated or controlled so that physical activities emphasized personal health, the dignity of beauty and good form. In some cases, the only reason games and sports were included in girls' lives was to give them the knowledge they would need to introduce sports to their future sons.

Limited opportunities and a lack of encouragement did not prevent women from participating in sports, but they certainly restricted their involvement (Vertinsky, 1994). Some middle- and upper-class women engaged in popular physical exercises and recreational sport activities, such as quoits, skittles and gentle forms of tennis and badminton. However, they had few opportunities to engage in formal competitive events. Instead, they reinforced male sporting superiority by watching men participate in regattas and cricket matches. The sporting opportunities for working-class girls were largely limited to the introduction of Swedish gymnastics in state schools, which involved drill-like activity to teach discipline and obedience, thus consolidating social class divisions. Ideas about femininity changed between 1880 and 1920, but traditional gender ideology and many misconceptions about the physical and mental effects of strenuous activities on females prevented the 'new woman' of the early twentieth century from enjoying the same participation opportunities and encouragement received by males (Lenskyj, 1986). Medical beliefs supported this ideology by providing 'scientific evidence' showing that women's bodies could not tolerate vigorous activities. These faulty beliefs and studies damaged the health of women during these years (Vertinsky, 1987).

### Organized sports and ideas about national identity

The latter part of the nineteenth century was a crucial time in Anglo-Irish relations, much of which was played out in sports. Ireland and Britain were formally linked under the Act of Union from 1800 although, in reality, the Irish had been under British control for much longer. Throughout the nineteenth century, Irish nationalism was underpinned by a desire



Leisure activities among wealthy people in the early twentieth century included sports. However, physical activities and sports for girls and women often stressed balance and co-ordination, which were defined as 'ladylike' qualities. Girls and women were often trained to be graceful and co-ordinated so that they might become 'ladies' (Source: McGraw-Hill)

for independence and freedom from Britain. This was particularly the case following the Irish famine of the 1840s (for which the British were largely blamed) through to the problematic division of Ireland under the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921. Nationalists were keen to compare the history of prosperity under an Irish Ireland, to the poverty and problems of the British colonial era. They formed cultural organizations which celebrated Irishness and resisted the customs of the colonizer. Such groups included the Gaelic League and the Gaelic Athletic Association, formed in 1884, which promoted and supported traditional Irish sports. In particular, there was a desire to revive the fortunes of traditional rural pastimes, such as Gaelic football and hurling, which had declined during the years of famine.

In 1906 a ban was brought on playing 'imported' sports and, while this did not last long, it was indicative of nationalistic fervour. The authorities were particularly concerned by the success of the Gaelic Athletic Association which was seen as a front for insurrectionist activities. In 1912, the All-Ireland Gaelic Football Final was watched by 18 000 people, and the hurling final by 20 000 (Cronin, 1999). By 1913 there were several rule changes, consistent with the codification

of sports taking place in Britain, which increased attendance at games and helped those with a commercial interest in sports. However, many teams lost players who were more interested in military than sporting pursuits, and who subsequently joined the Irish Volunteers.

Gaelic sports were also the focus of one of the most famous tragedies of the Anglo-Irish conflict, when British troops killed 13 people (including one player) at Croke Park, the venue for a Gaelic football match between Dublin and Tipperary in 1920. While the Gaelic Athletic Association was not involved in the events surrounding the 'Bloody Sunday' atrocity, it gained legendary status as being central to the connection between national violence and national sport. Croke Park remained closed as a venue for 'British' sports until a vote at the Gaelic Athletic Association conference in 2005 revoked the rule.

Gaelic sport did not completely usurp British sports and, in fact, the modernization of the games took place largely along lines influenced by developments in British society. Notably, while the Gaelic Athletic Association was still in formative stages, the English football code was established among Irish Catholic working classes, as well as its more traditional supporters in the north and Protestant areas. Football became a central focus for working-class sectarian conflict, with tense and sometimes violent rivalry between the nationalist Catholics and loyalist Protestant supporters, and this tension continues today. (For a more detailed discussion of the relationship between sport and Irish identity, see Bairner, 2005; Hassan, 2003; Tuck, 2003a.)

### Organized sports and ideas about age and disability

Ageing involves biological changes, but the connection between ageing and sports participation depends largely on the social meanings given to those changes. Developmental theory in the early 1900s emphasized that all growth and character formation occurred during childhood and adolescence. Therefore, it was important for young people to play sports, but older people were already 'grown ups' and no longer needed the character-building experiences provided by sports.

Medical knowledge at the time also discouraged older people from engaging in sports. Strenuous activities were thought to put excessive demands on the heart and organs in ageing bodies. This did not prevent some older people from playing certain sports, but it did prevent the establishment and funding of organized sports programmes for older people. Furthermore, when older people were physically active, they participated by themselves or in age-segregated settings.

People with observable physical or mental impairments were denied opportunities to play sports and were often told that strenuous physical activities would upset their well-being. During this time, widely accepted definitions of mental and physical disability gave rise to fears and prejudices that led many people to think it was dangerous to allow people with disabilities to become physically active or excited. Therefore, programmes to build their bodies were discouraged. This meant that people born with certain disabilities were isolated and destined to be physically inactive; obesity and problems caused by a lack of physical activity shortened their life expectancy. People with 'acquired disabilities', usually those injured in war or accidents, were treated with physical therapy in the hope of some degree of rehabilitation. As explained in the 'Breaking barriers' box overleaf, sports for most people with disabilities did not exist until after the Second World War.



## breaking BARRIERS

'Other' barriers: *they found it hard to be around me*



Danny was 21 years old, a popular and able-bodied rugby player. Then came the accident, the amputation of his right arm just below the shoulder, the therapy and, eventually, getting back with friends. But reconnecting with friends after suddenly acquiring a disability is not easy. Danny describes his experience with these words: 'A lot of them found it very difficult ... to come to terms with it ... And they found it hard to be around me, friends that I'd had for years' (in Brittain, 2004, p. 437).

Chris, an athlete with cerebral palsy and one of Danny's teammates on the British Paralympic Team, explains why his friends felt uncomfortable: 'They have very little knowledge of people with a disability and [they think that] if I leave it alone and don't touch them and don't get involved, then it's not my problem' (in Brittain, 2004, p. 437). Chris raises a recurring issue in the history of disability: what happens when people define physical or intellectual impairments as 'differences' and use them to create 'others' who are distinguished from 'us normals' in social worlds?

Throughout history, people with disabilities have been described by words inferring revulsion, resentment, dread, shame and a world of limitations. In Europe and North America, it took the Second World War and thousands of returning soldiers impaired by injuries before there were widespread concerns about the words used to describe people with disabilities. Language has changed so that people with intellectual disabilities now have opportunities to participate in the Special Olympics, and elite athletes with physical disabilities may qualify for the Paralympics ('para' meaning *parallel with*, not *paraplegic*). Words like *retard*, *spaz* (spastic), *cripple*, *freak*, *deaf and dumb*, *handicapped*, *gimp* and *deformed* have largely been abandoned. However, they are not gone, and people with disabilities are still described as 'others' – such as 'she's a quad', 'he's a CPer', 'they're amputees' and 'what a retard!'

Improvements have occurred, but when people with disabilities are defined as 'others', encountering disability raises questions about personal vulnerability, ageing and mortality. It also highlights the faulty assumptions of normalcy around which we construct social worlds. Therefore, those identified as 'normal' often ignore, avoid or patronize people with disabilities, and this subverts the possibility of ever seeing the world through their eyes.

The fear of 'otherness' is powerful, and people in many cultures traditionally restrict and manage their contact with 'others' by enlisting the services of experts. These include doctors, mental health workers, psychiatrists, healers, shamans, witchdoctors, priests, exorcists and all professionals whose assumed competence gives them the right to examine, test, classify and prescribe 'normalizing treatments' for 'others'. Therefore, the history of disability is also the history of giving meaning to difference, creating 'others', and using current knowledge to treat 'otherness' (Foucault, 1961/1967; Goffman, 1963).

As noted in 'Breaking barriers' in Chapter 2, cultural traditions in the UK have long emphasized treatment-orientated approaches to fix impairments or help people adjust to living with disabilities. Only recently have these approaches been complemented by transformational approaches focused on creating barrier-free social spaces in which disabilities become irrelevant and 'others' are no longer created. This is an idealistic project, and it requires actions that disrupt the 'normal' order of social worlds. But Jean Driscoll, eight-time winner of the Women's Wheelchair Boston Marathon, has experienced such worlds, and she says that 'when sports are integrated, the focus turns from the person with a disability to the guy with a great shot or the gal with a fast 800-metre time. Integration provides the perfect venue where "actions speak louder than words"' (in Joukowsky and Rothstein, 2002b, p. 28). And we would add that interactionist theory helps us understand that words are the foundation for action.

## Since 1920: Struggles Continue

By 1920 major connections between sports and British society had been firmly established. Sports were a growing part of people's everyday lives, and they were linked to major social institutions such as the family, religion, education, the economy, the government and the media. Since 1920 the rate of change and the expansion of the visibility and importance of sports in people's lives have intensified. The past nine decades have been a time of many 'firsts' in UK sports. They have also been a time for continuing struggles over the following:

- the meaning, purpose and organization of sports
- who plays sports under what conditions
- how and why sports are funded.

As explained in Chapter 1, sports are social constructions *and* contested activities. Therefore, we can outline social trends and patterns in recent history by focusing on issues and events related to these three realms of struggle. They serve as useful reference points for discussing social history, and we use them to guide our choice of materials in the following chapters. They also provide a useful framework for understanding patterns and trends during the twentieth century.

Table 3.2 highlights events related to major struggles and changes in sports, providing a feel for the social side of what has happened in recent sports history. Of course, the timing, dynamics and outcomes of these struggles and changes were related to larger historical events and trends, such as wars, economic recessions, the growth of universities, the women's movements, the development and expansion of the electronic media and other technologies, globalization, and the growing concentration of corporate power and influence around the world. (For a list of specific events and trends, see the OLC at [www.mcgraw-hill.co.uk/textbooks/coakley](http://www.mcgraw-hill.co.uk/textbooks/coakley)).

Connections between the recent history of sports and these trends and events are too complex to discuss in this chapter. But it is possible to outline some of the major struggles that have occurred since 1920.

### AT YOUR *fingertips*

For more information on sports as contested activities and social constructions, see pages 7–11.

## Struggles over meaning: do sports encourage or challenge social divisions?

Sports have always had multiple meanings, and these meanings change over time. Sports in the UK have a long history of amateurism which, in turn, ensured a social class distinction between those who needed to be paid and those whose social position enabled them to play without financial reward. Amateurs controlled sport throughout the nineteenth century but the words 'amateur' and 'professional' had become largely meaningless by the end of the twentieth century. However, the changes were treated differently within different sports. While sports such as football chose to accept professionalism within its organization in order to control it, sports such as rugby union rejected professionalism and so lost control of that part of the game when it separated from the amateur body.

The meanings given to sports often vary from one region of a country to another. Professional sports took hold in many northern areas faster than in the south, largely due to economic differences. While rugby has been associated with public schools and the upper classes in England and Scotland, Welsh rugby has been a unifying force played by all social classes and immigrant groups, enabling a sense of nationhood. Gaelic sports have been popular in areas of Ireland keen to resist British culture. Similarly, in Scotland, it is argued that the revival of the Highland Games was to raise national consciousness against the cultural invasiveness of the English (Jarvie, 1991).

The meanings given to sports generally reaffirm the values and lifestyles of those who play and watch them, and this has certainly been true since 1920. Boxing is an example of a sport which reflects the social conditions in which it flourishes. Boxing has been particularly popular in inner-city areas where working-class boys, and specifically those from ethnic minorities, have had to fight for financial necessity because of social and racial oppression.

### Struggles over purpose: is winning the only thing?

Meaning and purpose are closely aligned. On a general level, the central purpose of most sports between the 1920s and 1960s was to foster fitness and fair play. However, as occupational success and social mobility became increasingly important in a growing capitalist economy during the 1950s, there was a gradual turn towards an emphasis on competitive success and winning in sports. There was particular concern that Britain's international sporting performance appeared to be declining, not least because of the successes from the 1950s to 1980s of the Communist nations of the former Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic.

As sports teams and sports events were linked to communities and the nation, the primary purpose of sports continued to shift from participation and fair play to wins that brought prestige to sponsors. By the 1960s, many people felt that 'winning is not the most important thing – it is the *only* thing'. This was particularly significant in competitions between the home countries, which offered the opportunity for Scotland to beat England in the rugby Calcutta Cup, and Northern Ireland to play against the Republic of Ireland in football. With the 1970s and the dramatic growth of media coverage, entertainment became an increasingly important purpose of sports. Entertainment and winning were closely linked because winners filled stadiums and generated revenues for sponsors and owners.

There is never complete agreement on the purpose of sports. For example, physical educators emphasize fitness and health, whereas people associated with the commercial media emphasize entertainment. This and other disagreements occur today as people struggle to define the purpose of sports in their schools and community-based youth programmes.

### Struggles over organization: who is in control?

Since 1920 there has been a clear trend towards organizing sports in formal and 'official' ways. Mainstream sports are increasingly organized around standardized rules enforced by official governing bodies. Some people have resisted increased organization and rationalization, but resistance has not slowed or reversed this trend. Even many alternative and recreational sports have become increasingly organized as people try to make them safer, more accessible or more commercially profitable. Hundreds of sports organizations have

come and gone over recent years, but the emphasis on organization has become more prevalent.

Sports have also been taken increasingly seriously by governments, particularly as the period since the 1920s saw relative parliamentary stability which enabled the government to turn its attention to wider aspects of social life. Sports were encouraged partly for capitalist interests and partly as an integral aspect of welfare reform. In particular, there was an increasing concern that the activities of young people needed to be curtailed, especially the privileged young men in the south who were visible in urban disorder such as the clashes in Brighton and Margate between 'mods' and 'rockers'. The Wolfendon Report of 1960 was seen to reflect a 'moral panic' regarding such behaviour (see Cohen, 1972), and it promoted sport as a means of controlling youth activities. This will be discussed further in Chapters 5 and 13.

The Wolfendon Committee recommended the establishment of an Advisory Sports Council, which was set up in 1965 to co-ordinate policy development and sports provision. This has remained a quasi-governmental organization, and classic and sometimes bitter struggles have taken place over who controls sports so that they will be organized consistently over time. In the process, governing bodies, coaches and other officials have become key 'players' in sports at all levels. In fact, many children today grow up thinking that sports cannot exist without coaches and referees.

### Struggles over sports participation: can everyone play?

Some of the most contentious struggles in sports since the 1920s have revolved around who participates in formally organized, mainstream sports programmes. Most sports were initially organized around various forms of exclusion and segregation based on social class, race, ethnicity, gender, age and (dis)ability. In particular, the period immediately following the mid-1920s saw persistent social inequalities in British society which were mirrored in divided leisure experiences. The decline in heavy industry and increased investment in light engineering, chemical and electrical industries meant that there became a north-south divide, with many in the south experiencing relative affluence and those in northern areas experiencing hardship. Men from relatively well-to-do white families have consistently had the greatest access to sport participation opportunities throughout their lives.

There were other changes in the make-up of society which impacted on sports. The relationship of Britain with its former colonies influenced sport in two main ways. First, there was the 'exportation' of sports which were spread through imperial conquest, most notably cricket in countries such as India and the Caribbean. And, second, the 'importation' of persons from the British colonies had a significant impact on the cultural make-up of British society. The key time for these changes took place from the mid-1950s when inducements were offered by employers to immigrants from the West Indies and the Asian subcontinent. The backlash against this by many white British people included ethnic segregation to exclude 'the coloureds', including from sporting contexts. However, by the 1970s, there were some visible black British sports heroes and there was gradual diffusion of immigrant cultures into British society. These processes will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 9.

There have been constant struggles to expand participation opportunities for ethnic minorities, women, people from low-income families and neighbourhoods, people with physical and

intellectual disabilities, and people labelled as gay or lesbian. Complex histories are associated with each of these struggles, but the general trend between 1920 and the early 1980s was to open sport participation to more people, especially through sports funded by public money and played in public facilities. The formation of the Sports Council in 1965 was largely in response to pressure on the state to address social deprivation and exclusion. However, private clubs and organizations have maintained exclusionary membership criteria over the years, and most continue to do so today. Increased privatization since the 1980s has made it more financially difficult for many people to initiate or maintain regular sport participation, and this trend suggests that sports will be characterized by increased socio-economic segregation in the future.

Struggles over who participates under what conditions have been further complicated by the diversity of goals among the people involved, illustrated in the various feminist sociologies of sport. Feminist theorists have long argued that involvement in sport can enable substantial benefits for women, including a sense of exercising self-control over their own lives independent of male influences (Deem, 1986; Kay, 2003; Talbot, 1986). Scraton and Flintoff (2002) identify the different goals of liberal feminists, who seek equality of access and opportunity, in contrast to radical feminists whose concerns are with structural power relations in sport. This is considered further in Chapter 8. These differences illustrate how some groups of people have fought to be integrated fully into organized, mainstream sports, whereas others have fought to have separate opportunities that meet their specific needs and interests. For instance, not everyone wishes to play sports developed and organized around the interests and experiences of young, able-bodied, white, heterosexual males. Many struggles have occurred around the funding of new or alternative sport participation opportunities.

### Struggles over funding: who pays, who gains?

In the period following the First World War, the UK, along with many other European nations, was influenced by the approach to sport and physical education used in the USA. Sports festivals were developed, and sport spectatorship steadily increased, largely due to increased radio coverage of sports fixtures. Football was particularly popular, especially with working-class men, and the introduction of two additional divisions in 1922 extended the appeal beyond the northern and Midlands regions. It was in the shift to the south, and particularly with the rise of Arsenal, that the economic base of the contemporary game was established. A more organized management structure appeared, investment in grounds followed and transfer fees rose rapidly, all to the benefit of those who owned the clubs (Clarke and Critcher, 1985). In the 1960s, the Professional Footballers' Association threatened strike action in order to remove the maximum wage restriction for players and enable them to gain from the increased revenue provided by television coverage.

One particular feature of sport at this time was the expansion of the gambling culture. The football pools became a business in their own right. Also, animal sports such as horse racing and greyhound racing were able to develop a place in the betting world as a combined result of increased disposable income among some classes and improved circulation of the popular press which contained fixtures and results. In today's society, it is possible to gamble on almost any sports event, providing a lucrative business for bookmakers.

The move towards a more competitive and professional era was global as well as local. Relations with the USA and the former colonies increased international competitions, and in 1948 London hosted the Olympic Games. The development of sports on a global scale has meant that sports needed to find sources of funding beyond government support. The fact that these large-scale competitions were of interest to television companies, means that corporate sponsors have been only too happy to provide large sums of money in return for media coverage and the association of their product with an appealing sporting image. Corporate sponsorship of sports, teams, events and individuals is now an integral part of the sporting scene, as we will discuss in Chapters 11 and 12.

This new form of sponsorship has had a major impact on the types of sports that have become popular and who has had opportunities to participate in them. Instead of being based on ideas about 'the common good' – such as the reduction of obesity, for example – sports today often are sponsored in connection with the commercial interests of corporations. Struggles over sports sponsorships have recently involved corporations that sell tobacco, alcohol, fast foods, products made in sweatshops and services defined by some people as immoral (related to gambling, strip clubs and escort services). These struggles will continue as long as the sports that people want to play and watch require large amounts of capital and as long as people do not approve of their tax money being used to sponsor public sports and sport facilities. Eventually, this could raise the question of whether people want to play and watch sports that require external sponsors. If this happens, people may decide that it is possible to have fun playing and watching sports that they can organize and maintain by themselves, if there are accessible public spaces in which sports can be played.

## Using History to Think about the Future

As we study the past, we learn that struggles over the meaning, purpose and organization of sports always occur in particular social, political and economic contexts. Sports history does not just happen; it always depends on the actions of people working with one another to construct sports to match their visions of what sports could and should be in their lives. Many people in recent history have ignored what others say is practical or realistic and pursued choices based on idealistic notions of what sports could be. These are the people who have inspired new opportunities for girls and women, new programmes for people with disabilities, the recognition and acceptance of gay and lesbian athletes, and new sport forms that are playful and accessible to nearly everyone. Table 3.2 does not do justice to those people and the struggles they have waged to turn their idealistic visions into realities. Each of those struggles has its own history, and those of us who choose to be actively involved in creating future histories will shape them.

**Table 3.2 UK social history time line**

Since 1920 thousands of sports organizations have come and gone, hundreds of legal decisions have regulated and deregulated sports, and thousands of important struggles have occurred over (1) the meaning, purpose and organization of sports, (2) who plays sports under what conditions, and (3) how and why sports are funded. This selective time line highlights events related to these struggles and the issues and controversies discussed in this book.

1922	Formation of the Women's Amateur Athletics Association
1924	The first live radio coverage of the Olympic Games was broadcast (from Chamonix, France); the first Deaflympics (called the Silent Games) were held in Paris; the Federation Sportive Feminine Internationale organized the first Women's Olympic Games in Paris; Suzanne Lenglen set new trends at Wimbledon, wearing short, light skirts which scandalized society
1925	Foundation of the National Playing Fields Association, to improve sports facilities
1926	Gertrude Ederle swam the Channel two hours faster than the best male swimmer
1927	First BBC live coverage of sports events on the radio
1928	Women entered the Olympics in Amsterdam, although were not permitted to run races longer than 800 metres as these were thought too strenuous for them – when some competitors appeared physically distressed at the end of the 800-metre race, this confirmed male opinion of them; British women stayed away from the Olympic Games to protest the lack of women's Olympic events, forming the only feminist boycott in Olympic history
1930	The British Deaf Sports Council was formed
1933	Carnegie Physical Training College was established, the first college to train male physical education specialists
1935	The Central Council of Recreative Physical Training was established, to act as an umbrella organization for all agencies concerned with sport; the fourth and last Women's Games were held in London
1936	The Olympics were held in Berlin; Jesse Owens (an African-American) won four gold medals and challenged Hitler's ideas about race and white supremacy
1937	The first screening of sport on British television occurred with the BBC coverage of Wimbledon in June
1948	London hosted the first summer Olympic Games after the Second World War; Fanny Blankers-Koen of the Netherlands was the first mother to be an Olympic gold medallist; the British Wheelchair Sports Association was founded
1954	Roger Bannister was the first person to run a sub-four-minute mile, in Oxford
1957	Althea Gibson was the first black player to win a title at Wimbledon
1960	The Wolfendon Committee report <i>Sport and the Community</i> led to the development of a National Sports Development Council, government involvement in the financing of sport and a programme for increased facilities
1961	The International Olympic Committee established a Medical Commission, in part to regulate drug taking
1963	County cricket abandoned the distinction between amateur and professional players; the first annual National Multi-Disability Games were held
1964	The Olympic Games in Tokyo were the first to be televised

1965	Formation of a Sports Council to act on behalf of the government in providing sporting opportunities
1966	FIFA conducted drug testing at the World Cup; England won the final, beating West Germany, with Geoff Hurst scoring a hat-trick although one of the goals remains famously contested
1968	Many black athletes boycotted the Olympic Games in Mexico City in protest at racial discrimination; Tommy Smith and John Carlos (both African-Americans) supported the boycott by raising gloved fists and standing barefoot on the victory podium at the Olympics; Mexican students protested against using public money for the Olympic Games, and police killed over 30 protesters; Enriqueta Basilio was the first woman to light the Olympic flame; Olympic drug testing began; the first Special Olympics was held, for athletes with intellectual disabilities; women athletes in the Olympics were forced to 'prove' that they were females by 'passing' a chromosome-based sex test; Wimbledon was opened to professionals
1970	Drug testing was introduced in the Commonwealth Games
1971	The International Olympic Committee produced the first list of banned substances and practices; Evonne Cawley (Goolagong) was the first aboriginal Australian to play in the Wimbledon tennis final
1976	The Sports Aid Foundation was established to provide financial support for elite athletes preparing for international competition; 29 nations, mostly from Africa and Asia, boycotted the Olympic Games in Montreal to protest New Zealand's sporting ties with white supremacist South Africa
1977	The all-male IOC prohibited women from running the 3000-metre race to protect women from physical damage
1978	Three sociology of sport textbooks were published, including the first edition of <i>Sport in Society: Issues and Controversies</i> .
1980	More than 50 nations boycotted the Olympic Games in Moscow because the Soviet Union unilaterally (and without United Nations approval) invaded Afghanistan in 1979. Athletes from Great Britain and Northern Ireland attended, but without government support
1981	Two new national disability sports associations were founded and recognized by the Sports Council: Cerebral Palsy Sport and the United Kingdom Sports Association for the People with Mental Handicap (which in 1995 became the English Sports Association for People with Learning Disabilities)
1984	The Soviet Union and 13 other nations said they did not trust US security and boycotted the Olympic Games in Los Angeles; the Los Angeles Games were the first to create a profit for the host city, and this intensified competition among cities bidding to host future Games; the women's marathon was introduced into the Olympics
1985	In the European Football Cup Final between Liverpool and Juventus, 39 fans were killed in Heysel Stadium when a wall collapsed during riots
1989	At the FA Cup semi-final between Liverpool and Nottingham Forest, 96 football supporters were killed in Hillsborough Stadium prior to the start of the game, mostly crushed to death by the fencing when supporters surged into a small area of the ground; the Council of Europe published the Anti-Doping Convention



1990	The Taylor Report was published, providing safety recommendations for football following the tragedies at Heysel and Hillsborough; British Les Autres and Amputee Sports Association founded
1991	The World Student Games were held in Sheffield
1992	The National Lottery Bill was established, which determined that the allocation of funding to sport was to be distributed between home country Sports Councils; the FA Premiership was formed
1993	'Let's kick racism out of football' was launched by the Commission for Racial Equality and the Professional Footballers' Association; an obsessive fan of Steffi Graf jumped from the stands during a tennis tournament in Germany and stabbed Monica Seles, ranked number one in the world at the time
1994	The Sports Council policy document 'Black and ethnic minorities and sport' recognized disadvantage and discrimination as the basis of racial inequality and a need for positive action; the Brighton Declaration of Women and Sport made a range of recommendations for equality of opportunities, and this was adopted by the International Olympic Committee in 1995
1995	The Bosman Ruling invalidated the restrictions of the number of players from the European Union in a European sports club/team, in line with European legislation offering freedom of workers to travel within the EU; rugby union was professionalized
1996	The European Football Championships were hosted in the UK, attracting 280 000 spectators and media, who spent £120 million; 'Tackle racism in rugby league' was set up by the Commission for Racial Equality and Rugby Football League; 'Hit racism for six' was established by the England and Wales Cricket Board
1998	The English Federation of Disability Sport was formed; Sporting Equals was created by the Commission for Racial Equality and Sport England to work with governing bodies to understand, and develop policies to address, racism in sport; Manchester United was the first British sports club to have its own television channel (MUTV)
1999	World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) formed
2000	The Racial Equality Charter for Sport was signed by the Chief Executives of the Rugby Football League, Rugby Football Union, UK Athletics, England and Wales Cricket Board, English Basketball, the Amateur Swimming Association and the National Coaching Foundation; Steven Redgrave's gold medal in rowing at the Sydney Olympics was his fifth in five successive Games
2001	The government's Plan for Sport was produced, with the aim of tackling social exclusion
2003	A Russian billionaire, Roman Abramovich, invested \$140 million in Chelsea Football Club to secure a majority stake, and making Chelsea the wealthiest club in the world
2005	London was awarded the right to host the 2012 Summer Olympic Games

## Summary: Can We Use History to Understand Sports Today?

Our selective look at different times and places shows us that physical games and sports are integrally related to social contexts in which they exist. As social life changes and power shifts in any society, the meaning, purpose and organization of games and sport activities also change.



Two significant events in recent British history were the first sub-four-minute mile, achieved by Roger Bannister in 1954, and England hosting and winning the men's football World Cup, beating the former West Germany 4–2 in 1966

In Ancient Greece, games and contests were grounded in mythology and religious beliefs. They focused on the interests of able-bodied young men from wealthy segments of society. As the outcomes of organized games took on political and social implications beyond the events, athletes were recruited from the lower classes and paid to participate. The existence of professional athletes, violence and an emphasis on victory show us a side of sports in Ancient Greece that contradicts many popular beliefs. It also demonstrates that sports may not represent the interests of everyone in a society.

Roman contests and games emphasized mass entertainment. They were designed to celebrate and preserve the power of political leaders and pacify masses of unemployed and underemployed workers in Roman cities and towns. Many athletes in Roman events were slaves or 'troublemakers' coerced into jeopardizing their lives in battle with one another or wild animals. These spectacles faded with the demise of the Roman Empire. Critically assessing the contests and games of this period makes us more aware of the interests that powerful people may have in promoting large sport events.

Folk games and tournaments in medieval times clearly reflected and reproduced gender and social-class differences in European cultures. The peasants played local versions of folk games in connection with seasonal events in village life. Knights and nobles engaged in tournaments and jousts. Other members of the upper classes often used their resources to develop games

and sports activities to occupy their leisure time. Studying the history of sports during this time period shows that gender and class issues should not be ignored as we analyse sports and sports experiences today.

Patterns from the medieval period continued through the Renaissance in parts of Europe, although the Protestant Reformation generated negative attitudes about activities that interfered with work and religious worship. Peasants were affected most by these attitudes because they did not have the resources to resist the restrictive controls imposed by government officials inspired by Calvinist or Puritan orientations. The games and sports of the wealthy generally occurred in the safe confines of their private grounds, so they could avoid outside control. The Enlightenment was associated with increased political rights and freedom to engage in diversionary games and physical activities. Studying these historical periods shows us the importance of cultural ideology and government policies when it comes to who plays sports under what conditions.

During the early days of the Industrial Revolution, the influence of the Puritans faded in Europe and North America, but the demands of work and the absence of spaces for play generally limited sport involvement to the wealthy and rural residents. This pattern began to change in the UK from the late 1800s through the early 1900s when the combined influence of progressive legislation and economic expansion led to the creation of new ideas about the consequences of sport participation and new opportunities for involvement. However, opportunities for involvement were shaped primarily by gender ideology and the needs of an economy emphasizing mass production and consumption. It was in this context that people developed organized competitive sports. Studying this period shows us that the origins of today's sports are tied closely to complex social, political and economic factors.

Sports history since 1920 has revolved around continuing struggles over (1) the meaning, purpose and organization of sports, (2) who participates in sports under what conditions, and (3) who funds sports and why. These struggles have occurred in connection with major historical events, trends and patterns. In most cases, powerful economic and political interests have prevailed in these struggles, but in a few cases, people motivated by idealistic visions of what sports could and should be like have prevailed. Every now and then, the visions of idealists have become reality, but struggles never end. As we study current issues and controversies in sports, our awareness of past struggles is useful.

## Website resources

*Note:* Websites often change. The following URLs were current when this book was printed. Please check our website ([www.mcgraw-hill.co.uk/textbooks/coakley](http://www.mcgraw-hill.co.uk/textbooks/coakley)) for updates and additions.

See the OLC, [www.mcgraw-hill.co.uk/textbooks/coakley](http://www.mcgraw-hill.co.uk/textbooks/coakley), for an annotated list of readings related to this chapter.

***<http://cain.ulst.ac.uk/issues/sport/source.htm>*** The official site of Conflict Archive on the Internet, providing a list of resources for information on politics in Northern Ireland, and the relationship of sport with 'The Troubles'.

***[www.cureourchildren.org/sports.htm](http://www.cureourchildren.org/sports.htm)*** A helpful site for anyone looking for information and creative ideas about sports and recreation for people with disabilities; links to dozens of related sites.

***www.deaflympics.com*** Official site of the Deaflympics, established in 1924 as the Silent Games; this was the first international competition for athletes with disabilities.

***http://depthome.brooklyn.cuny.edu/classics/gladiator/index.htm*** This site was developed by Roger Dunkle, an expert on Roman sports; excellent information and visuals related to the spectacles in which gladiators participated.

***www.hickoksports.com/index.shtml*** An easy-to-use site with many search options covering a wide range of history topics, events, athletes and other sport personalities; tends towards the popular rather than academic, although there is an excellent bibliography of sports history books.

***www.nassh.org*** North American Society for Sport History.

***www.studies.org*** The Institute for Mediterranean Studies; site summarizes and sells audiotapes on the Olympic Games in Ancient Greece and on sports in the Roman world.

***www.umist.ac.uk/sport/ishpes.html*** International Society for the History of Physical Education and Sport and the British Society of Sports History, provides links to many other sites for sports history.

***www.wsf.org.uk*** A good site for obtaining information on the history of women in sports in the UK.