

Book Reviews

Susan Brownell (ed.), *The 1904 Anthropology Days and Olympic Games: Sport, Race, and American Imperialism* (Lincoln, NE and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2008). Pp.1 + 471, bibliography, index, pictures. US\$55. ISBN 978-0-8032-1098-1.

Scholars have generally treated the study of the history of anthropology and the study of the Olympic Games as mutually exclusive tasks. This collection of essays, *The 1904 Anthropology Days and Olympic Games: Sport, Race, and American Imperialism*, aims for the first time to link the two fields together. A wide range of topics are covered in the book's 11 essays: the Anthropology Days and the Olympic Games of 1904; the inclusion of Canadian Indians; the participation of Germans and other Europeans; the Fort Shaw Indian School girls' basketball team; how the events influenced the field of anthropology; and the attitudes of Baron Pierre de Coubertin towards the events. Despite the variety, the collection neatly connects themes that initially might seem unrelated. Editor Susan Brownell nicely illustrates this point in the first line of her introduction, stating: 'This volume reunites two strands of history that are usually treated separately: the histories of anthropology and the Olympic Games' (p. 1). This anthology of essays not only addresses the link between the Anthropology Days and the Olympic Games, but also looks at the effects the 1904 Olympics had on other nations and the impact that both had on future events.

In two related essays, Nancy Parezo and Mark Dyreson examine the Anthropology Days exhibition that took place at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, also home to the 1904 Olympic Games. W.J. McGee organized the Anthropology Days and planned to study the 'primitive' peoples displayed in recreations of their villages and habitats. Using scientific techniques such as measuring skulls of the 'primitives', McGee and his colleagues compared these people to American and European whites. Also, the organizers created a programme of sporting events for the 'primitive' people, dubbed the 'Special Olympics' by James Sullivan, director of the Physical Culture Department. Parezo argues that the poor performances of the native athletes – often because they had never played these games before and because many did not speak English – reinforced the commonly held racial beliefs in European superiority. Instead of gleaned new information, the anthropologists reconfirmed their suppositions using shoddy scientific techniques. Parezo's chapter skilfully analyses the 1904 Anthropology Days and sheds light on the scientific methodology used at this event. Dyreson addresses similar issues, but also shows the reader that 1904 may have been the beginning of long-standing trends to read racial and evolutionary patterns into results from Olympic stadiums. Ultimately, to both

W.J. McGee and James Sullivan, *Anthropology Days* proved the inferiority of 'primitive' races to the superior whites.

Linda Peavy and Ursula Smith give a contrasting example to the general trend of poor performances by many of the 'primitive' and 'native' groups. Their essay, "'Leav[ing] the White[s] ... Far Behind Them'", describes the success of the Fort Shaw Indian School's girls' basketball team. The team dominated girls' basketball at the 1904 fair. During the course of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, they beat state champions and college teams, never lost and generally won by wide margins. Their unstoppable success became a highlight of the anthropology exhibit at the fair and their games drew magnificent crowds. Peavy and Smith illustrate that even at an exposition designed to showcase the superiority of people of white European descent, the Native American girls of Fort Shaw could break racial and gender barriers to prove that they were just as good – indeed, even better than their white American counterparts.

This anthology goes beyond the anthropological aspects related to cultural evolution as studied by W.J. McGee. Some authors explore the relation of the 1904 Olympic Games to other nations and the turning point it represented in Olympic history. Since the St Louis Olympics drew mainly North American athletes, the competition often pitted US clubs against one another. These games marked the end of the early Olympic years, before nationalism took greater hold of the games. Even in 1904, nationalism cropped up in some of the competitions. In Chapter 7, Suzuko Mousel Knott insightfully analyses how the German identity was misconstrued at the 1904 games. Since club affiliation remained foremost at St Louis, some Swiss and Austrians associated with German clubs became part of a pan-Germanic ideal. Some of the athletes, however, requested that the national anthem of their nation of origin be played during the medal ceremony (such as the Swiss immigrant Adolf Spinnler, a member of a German *Turnverein*), rather than the German national hymn. As the *Turner* controversies reveal, national pride and identity were important considerations even at the overwhelmingly American-dominated 1904 Olympics.

The 1904 Anthropology Days and Olympic Games affected not only the future of the Olympics but also the future of anthropology. W.J. McGee's practice of 'evolutionary racism' in his displays and studies influenced the future of anthropology. Though the practices of McGee and his colleagues are outdated and no longer used by most contemporary anthropologists, they continue to echo in a popular culture that Jonathan Marks labels the 'return of racial pseudoscience' (p. 388). Marks's concluding essay addresses the problems in recent work by some scholars who propose that sport reveals genetic differences based on race. He criticizes Jon Entine's work on the black athlete's dominance in sport and questions Entine's conclusions. Marks observes that 'we are minimally obliged to wonder what black athletic body he has in mind. Basketball guard Kobe Bryant's wiry body? Baseball Slugger [David] Ortiz's enormous body? Speedy Carl Lewis? Lanky Jerry Rice? Stocky Joe Frazier?' (p. 394). Marks makes it clear that the effects of McGee's 'pseudoscience' at the Anthropology Days continues to plague the field today.

Overall, *The 1904 Anthropology Days and Olympic Games* provides excellent insight into the events of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition and how it affected the future of both the Olympic movement and the field of anthropology. Although the repetition of some historical facts from essay to essay can be tedious, it does allow the reader to take each chapter as a stand-alone piece of scholarly research. While the book may have some flaws, it has very few weaknesses. Each chapter notes the influence of either the Anthropology Days or the 1904 Olympic Games and makes well researched arguments for the significance and impact of the events.

The connection between the histories of the Olympics and anthropology provides a unique perspective on the history of sport. *The 1904 Anthropology Days and Olympic Games* highlights the importance of both the history of anthropology and the history of the Olympics while tying the two together. This collection significantly brings together anthropology and the Olympic Games in a way not seen previously. *The 1904 Anthropology Days and Olympic Games* would make an excellent addition to the library of any scholar interested in the history of the Olympics or the history of anthropology.

COLLEEN ENGLISH © 2010
Pennsylvania State University

Marcello Di Cintio, *Poets & Pahlevans: A Journey into the Heart of Iran* (Toronto: Random House of Canada, 2007). Pp. 294. \$19.95. ISBN 978-0-676-97733-2.

Few people today would spontaneously associate wrestling with poetry. To the ancients, however, such an association would have seemed natural, as Homer's epics and Pindar's odes illustrate. Wrestling has always been popular among Iranians, and so classical Persian literature, too, contains references to it, which are still familiar to contemporary Iranians. In Iran's national epic, the tenth-century *Shahnameh* (Book of Kings) of Ferdowsi, we read repeatedly of wrestling matches – some of them with a deadly outcome – between the heroes of rival armies, the *pahlevans*, a word that in modern Persian usage has come to mean wrestler. The most famous of these contests is that between Rostam and Sohrab, at the conclusion of which the former kills the latter, only realizing when it is too late that he has killed his own son. Three centuries after Ferdowsi, the celebrated poet Sa'di of Shiraz wrote a collection of didactic stories in his *Golestan* (Rose Garden), one of which tells of a master wrestler who knew 360 holds, but wisely taught his star pupil only 359, so that when the young man gave in to pride and challenged his teacher to a match before the king, the old man was able to defeat the much stronger challenger by using the 360th hold; the moral of the story being that one should never reveal all one knows, lest it be used against one.

Marcello Di Cintio is a Canadian travel writer who loves both poetry and wrestling. What with Iran's reputation in the West as an inaccessible and incomprehensible

place, his curiosity was piqued: perhaps his twin passions would provide a key to understanding a country that even the well-meaning find enigmatic. So he took two trips to Iran, in search of what is left of the country's poetic and athletic culture. This review concentrates on the latter.

He had learnt some Persian and his cauliflower ears identified him quickly as a wrestler in a country where, until a few decades ago, cauliflower ears were considered a badge of manhood among the popular classes. He thus gained entrée to circles and events few Westerners have witnessed. His reading, however, was largely limited to works known in the West. So he fails to mention some important untranslated works, such as the long poem *Gol-e-Koshti* (flower of wrestling) by the seventeenth-century poet and *pahlevan* Mir Nejat Esfahani, in which all the science of wrestling is playfully depicted in over 600 distichs.

His fieldwork is quite revealing. In two cities he visited a *zurkhaneh*, the traditional gymnasium of urban Iran where poetry and exercise come together as the athletes go through a series of standardized exercises in a hexagonal pit, moving in synch with poetry that is rhythmically chanted to the accompaniment of a drum. In Qazvin he found only one young man among the *zurkhaneh* athletes (pp. 28–32), but in Kerman the future of the institution seemed assured: he met lots of boys romping in the gymnasium. The *pahlevans* told him about the noble ideals that – in theory, I am tempted to add – guided their lives and activities, but what they did not tell him is that in the late 1940s Iranian wrestling ceased to be practised in the *zurkhaneh* pit, the reason being the increasing popularity of freestyle wrestling, in which one could compete internationally and win medals. And when wrestling disappeared from the pit, the various exercises, whose *raison d'être* had been to prepare the athletes for it, lost their attraction for young men who drifted either to international freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling or modern team sports. *Zurkhaneh*-style wrestling survives in a diminished way to this day as *pahlevani* wrestling carried out on mats, but the fact that someone as enthusiastic as Di Cintio does not seem to have witnessed it testifies to its marginality.

After the Islamic revolution of 1979, when the state became committed to the promotion of 'cultural authenticity', half-hearted attempts were made to repopularize the *zurkhaneh*, for which purpose the old rule that only post-puberty boys would be allowed into the pit was abandoned. The result is what Di Cintio witnesses in Kerman (pp. 75–6), but whether the enthusiastic boys will continue frequenting the gymnasium when they grow up is a by no means certain. In my own experience, a definite 'coolness' deficit attaches to the *zurkhaneh* in the eyes of most athletically inclined young Iranian men.

Zurkhanehs can be found all over Iran, and even in some adjacent countries. But Iran is also home to an astonishingly high number of regional and local styles of wrestling. These were practised at weddings or harvest festivals, and differ from the traditional *zurkhaneh* variety in that they permit no ground-work; many resemble the British back-hold or Icelandic belt-wrestling. Di Cintio criss-crossed the country in search of these regional and local styles, and sometimes he found what he was looking

for. On other occasions the local wrestling officials he first approached referred him to an old *pahlevan* who told him about past traditions but then sadly admitted that they have disappeared. A number of times he visited wrestling practices in gymnasiums where the local freestyle coach told two athletes to demonstrate the local variety for him, even allowing him to engage in participant observation.

It would seem that the local wrestling styles that are surviving best are those that belong to areas with strong regional or ethnic identities – like Khorasan's *bachukheh* (pp. 44–7), Gilan's *gilehmardi* (pp. 182–6) or the Turkomans' belt-wrestling styles. Here events that belonged to the realm of folklore can be sportified, to the point where after a contested fall at a *louchu* tournament in Mazandaran, officials review a videotape of the match, as the two bare-footed contestants and the prize sheep look on (p. 149). Di Cintio knows what he is talking about, and his graphic depictions of these regional styles and the rules that govern them are the most valuable part of the book for the sports historian, who can find this information in no other English-language source.

And yet – at the end of the day young Iranian men of today are far more eager to kick a football on a dusty field than to test their strength and skills on a grassy one, and they are far more likely to have the names of the players of Bayern Munich or Manchester United at their fingertips than those of Iran's national wrestling teams. But in a diminished way the love of wrestling endures in Iran, and Di Cintio's book has the great merit of affording outsiders a glimpse of that world – not to mention his sympathetic observations on Iran in general, which make for riveting reading.

H.E. CHEHABI © 2010
Boston University

Anthony Bateman, *Cricket, Literature and Culture: Symbolising the Nation, Destabilising Empire* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009). Pp. 236. £55. ISBN 978-0-7546-6537-3.

Cricket has long been thought to have a larger and richer literature than most other sports. Cricket writers such as Cardus and Arlott have been accorded a literary critical acclaim not usually associated with writers in other sports while such differing but major literary figures as Barrie, Wodehouse, Blunden and Pinter have also written about cricket. Surprisingly, the literary quality and significance of cricket writings have received little attention from academics and no team sport in Britain has an equivalent to Michael Oriard's admirable study of how print and other media represented American football in the first half of the twentieth century. Anthony Bateman's book is a long-overdue attempt to analyse cricket's literary canon.

Bateman approaches cricket writing from a literary-critical perspective. His discussion of cricket's literary canon is restricted very largely to books and to their

messages about cricket. His description and explanation of what he calls the literaturization of cricket is a valuable and much welcome addition to the historiography. He analyses cricket writings from the early nineteenth century to the 1960s and in particular how they connected cricket with notions of English identity, imperialism and challenges to the empire. Although he writes at length about the aesthetics of cricket, much of what he has to say is concerned with how the style of cricket playing was considered a form of artistic expression. Only passing comments are provided about the linguistic devices which cricket writers used to achieve their literary effects. Bateman's book is not an easy read for those unfamiliar with the terminology of current literary criticism, but it does repay careful study. The so-called linguistic turn in historical study often left one with the impression that it was manipulating a new and complicated vocabulary to tell us what we already knew. This could not be said of Bateman's book.

Bateman's main contention is that writings on cricket not only reflect and express how cricket was perceived at any given time but have had a key role in shaping perceptions of the sport. He sets cricket literature in its historical setting and recognizes that cricket 'is not merely a discourse, and the field of cricket is currently been refashioned by the forces of global capitalism' though some may feel that he does this in a rather generalized way. Bateman provides the most thorough examination to date of how assumptions about cricket shaping and expressing English identity were very much linked with the pastoral tradition in English literature. He also shows how in the nineteenth century the ethical status accorded to cricket was very much connected with its nature as an imperial sport and with the literary representations of the empire as a moral crusade. Print, he explains, was crucial to the middle-class appropriation of cricket and to the role of cricket in the value system of the public schools. While it seems highly plausible that literary representations of cricket have done much to fashion perceptions of cricket, proving this is difficult. Bateman says little about what readers made of cricket's canonical works but evidence about reader reactions and whether theses changed between classes, localities and over time is exasperatingly scarce.

A large part of Bateman's book is concerned with how Neville Cardus and C.L.R. James, two writers whose work was suffused with literary allusions, depicted cricket. Cardus, Bateman argues, stressed that cricket could be played with a style that gave it an artistic beauty and that amateur batsmen, who were economically privileged and learned the game at public schools, were the ones most likely to play in an artistic and romantic manner. Professional batsmen eschewed risk-taking and had a machine-like approach to the game. Cardus contrasted the period before the First World War, for him cricket's golden age when amateur batsmanship flourished, with the safety-first style of the inter-war and post-1945 years. By regretting the decline of amateur batting and the privileges which had been part of it and by arguing that the masses could not appreciate artistic beauty, Cardus sanctioned conservative social relationships and was far from adopting a democratic view of cricket. By praising the style of amateur batsmanship, Cardus was in effect

defending the public-school system, but Bateman does not consider how far Cardus's outlook could have been affected by his employment as a cricket professional at Shrewsbury school and then as the headmaster's secretary. Cardus very much accepted and helped to strengthen the notion that the rusticity of cricket helped to make it a major constituent of English identity. James, with his Trinidadian background and Marxist outlook, was more concerned with the repercussions of cricket on imperialism and with cricket's democratic tendencies. He accepted that, as English apologists for cricket and empire had argued, cricket playing instilled English values into black West Indians but claimed that cricket, instead of consolidating imperialism, had subverted it. Outplaying the colonizers on the cricket field had political implications for black West Indians. Their mastery of orthodox cricket technique demonstrated their maturity and discipline and capacity to equal or surpass the colonizers in other areas of life. Cardus's writings often stressed the otherness of West Indian cricketers and by ascribing their playing strengths and weaknesses to innate characteristics formed a racist discourse. James also differed from Cardus in believing that the populace could appreciate the artistic beauty of cricket. By juxtaposing Cardus and James, Bateman provides new insights into their work.

The sharpness of Bateman's perceptions leads one to hope that he will turn his attention to other representations of cricket. His book has only brief comments on the period after the 1960s. One can be sure that he would have much of interest to say about what can be learned about the status of cricket since 1945 from such prolific and different writers as Swanton and Arlott. The fact that they were also broadcasters indicates that we need to know more about the images of cricket emanating from radio and television and about the relationship between cricket writings and broadcasting. The esteem of *Test Match Special* can tell us much about how cricket has been perceived. Analysing how and why television commentary has become dominated by former Test players could reveal much about the changing nature of cricketing celebrity.

JACK WILLIAMS © 2010
 Liverpool John Moores University

Patrick Chaplin, *Darts in England, 1900-39: A Social History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009). xiv + 258 pp. index, photographs. £55. ISBN 978-0-7190-7803-3.

Darts is exactly the sort of activity that would fall below the historian's radar even if its serious study were not inhibited by enduring conventions about what constitutes the stuff of 'proper' history. It lacks formal, dedicated, ordered archival sources and depends heavily on occasional publications, ephemera, oral history and the investigative techniques of the family historian. It is significant that this genuinely

pioneering work comes from an enthusiast who has found a welcoming academic environment in Cambridge, but not 'at Cambridge'. It is to the credit of the historians at Anglia Ruskin University that they were happy to nurture the doctoral thesis that forms the basis for this book.

The book has not escaped from the deadening conventions that are increasingly interfering with thesis writing, even in a resistant discipline like history. If the dutiful, mechanical trudge through the 'historiography of leisure' can be skipped, as the author suggests, we must query its inclusion in the first place, although we are spared the sterile formula of the longer 'review of the literature'. But Dr. Chaplin soon moves us on, examining in turn the origins of darts (and the myths that have grown up around personalities and events), the relationship between darts and the pub, attempts to organize the game and prescribe standard rules, the roles of breweries and the popular press in the development of competitions, the development of a 'darts industry' whose traces are most readily found in London's old East End, and the emergence of a 'darts craze' on the eve of the Second World War, which might appear a slightly overheated proposition. Whatever critical comments one might make about this book, we have to emphasize its originality, its effective organization and the genuine contribution that it makes to a historical understanding in a new and relatively inaccessible area.

The main focus of the book is on darts as an inter-War 'pub game' with earlier roots. The question of whether and in what sense(s), or under what circumstances, it might be regarded as a sport is never pursued systematically. Allusion is made to darts as a fairground activity, but the potential importance of the fairground as an incubator and disseminator of the game is acknowledged but never properly followed up, despite the (limited) use made of the excellent National Fairground Archive at Sheffield University. Mention is also made of darts as a domestic enjoyment and a feature of fêtes and similar events, but the pub predominates. Within this framework, particular attention is paid to attempts to organize darts competitively and, as part of this process, to standardize rules and equipment. The importance of developing leagues as part of this process becomes apparent very quickly, and it would be interesting to see a wider examination of the development and spread of the 'league table' as a model for the organization of society on regulated, competitive lines: the developing sporting hegemony of this idea is apparent in the development of organized darts from the mid-1920s. But consideration of such developments marginalizes darts in its unorganized form as something sociable, informal, casual and friendly or, perhaps, 'with the politics left out'.

Dr. Chaplin's focus on the pub leads him into debates on the changing role of that institution during the inter-War years, and into a misleading general endorsement of Gutzke's strange 'pubs and progressivism' thesis, which argues for the overriding inter-War importance of 'progressive' brewers' pursuit of legitimacy, new markets and (apparently) social reform through the provision of new, reformed premises. Darts would be attractive to landlords as a way of drawing new people in (perhaps especially on otherwise quiet nights: it would be interesting to see whether darts

leagues tended to be organized on Monday evenings) and of reducing drunkenness by phasing consumption over a longer period, but not necessarily as a 'rational recreation' for its own sake. No real evidence is provided here for any elective affinity between the provision of darts and the development of a 'pub reform' agenda, and the only way to check on this aspect of the 'respectability' or otherwise of darts would be though an examination of the kinds of pub that provided teams for the developing darts leagues. This would be possible, though not conclusive (smaller, back-street, 'unreconstructed' pubs might have had dart-boards but not league teams), but in any case it has not been pursued here. Attempts to organize darts as a sport in the mid-1920s were supported partly by reference to an unspecified threat from temperance or other regulatory interests, especially as regards the relationship between darts and betting; however, a trawl through the National Archives online catalogue finds no obvious evidence of Home Office interest in darts as such, and the author has not made use of the National Archives collections. Another surprising omission is the archives and publications of the various wings of the temperance movement, which may contain relevant material. Comparison of darts with Carolyn Downs' work on bingo would also have been interesting from several perspectives: gambling, skill, gender and location, for example.

This book is (admittedly) almost entirely a view from south-east England, through the twin lenses of the National Darts Association (an important discovery, but national in aspiration rather than actuality) and the *News of the World* knockout competition. There are interesting indications of regional and local diversity, but without more detailed research support. Local newspapers are neglected, even when there is evidence of court cases which are likely to have reached their pages. Local oral history collections are not investigated, even when indexed, although admittedly darts is just the sort of topic that an indexer might omit. Inter-War novels, such as Anthony Powell's *Afternoon Men*, have a great deal more to offer than is suggested here; and what of, for example, P.G. Wodehouse? The grasp of historical context (living standards, the Means Test, regional economic change) is often limited. And there is a disappointing failure to follow seemingly obvious leads: Rupert Croft-Cooke is presented as the author of the first proper survey of the game of darts, but we are given no hint of his identities as a best-selling crime and travel writer, and (after the War) gay icon and martyr. Croft-Cooke as the first gay darts player would provide an interesting new myth for the annals of the sport.

Generally, Dr. Chaplin is good at demystifying myths and detecting their embroidery by successive authors. He provides a sound introduction to a neglected theme, and this is a worthwhile book. But the missed opportunities are a source of continuing frustration to the attentive reader.

JOHN K. WALTON © 2010

Departamento de Historia Contemporánea
Universidad del País Vasco UPV/EHU, Vitoria/Gasteiz, Spain

Linda Peavy and Ursula Smith, *Full Court Quest: The Girls from Fort Shaw Indian School, Basketball Champions of the World* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2008). Pp. xiv + 479, bibliography, index, pictures. \$29.95. ISBN 0806139730.

As the only 'American-made' sport, basketball enjoys a rich and complex history. The game has undergone significant changes since its creation in 1891. Basketball's inventor, James Naismith, and his employer, the YMCA, intended the game to serve as an instrument of 'Americanization' in an increasingly pluralistic and heterogeneous United States. Basketball spread rapidly from its birthplace to a variety of venues where concern for the assimilation into American culture intersected with interests in competitive team sports. Educational institutions, municipal recreation departments and other social organizations aligned with Americanization projects sponsored basketball leagues for boys, girls, men and women. Indeed, in contrast to the hyper-masculine realms of turn-of-the-century American football and baseball, basketball allowed for greater inclusion of women.

At the same time that basketball marched across the United States, the long series of wars between the expanding nation and the continent's Native American inhabitants reached its endgame. Broken by US military power and consigned to the reservation system, Native Americans faced a relentless effort to 'civilize' their cultures. Troubled by what to do with the increasing number of Native Americans living on reservations and with a strong desire to 'Americanize' the younger generations, the US government transformed many of its military forts, originally built to defend against Native American attacks, into Indian schools. The government designed these schools to integrate the Native American children into the mainstream American way of life. The Indian schools adopted basketball to further the civilizing process. Native American youth, however, had other ideas for the game. At one school on the far western frontier, basketball became part of the 'quest' to assimilate and the 'quest' to maintain Native American dignity. Through a series of serendipitous events the school at Fort Shaw, opened in 1892 in north-western Montana, sponsored a young women's basketball team that, in 1903 and 1904, barnstormed the country en route to a 'World Championship' at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition and World's Fair in St Louis, a victory long forgotten by most Americans. In the process the Indian students celebrated their native identities and assimilated to new realities. Recovering a narrative that threatened to be lost to history's unwritten pages, authors Linda Peavy and Ursula Smith recount the spirited adventure of these young Native American women in their book, *Full Court Quest*.

Peavy and Smith capture the pervading sense of irony that saturates the entire story of the Fort Shaw girls. Although they experienced a magical journey by overcoming doubts and beating the odds, their victories came at a price. The female students at Fort Shaw Indian School were originally brought there to erase their Native American customs and replace them with American values – most importantly, to replace their native languages with English. For many, the Indian

schools of this era exemplified the arrogance of white America towards indigenous peoples. Peavy and Smith describe in their stories of escape attempts that for some students life at the school was horrific. Yet for other students, notably the girls of the 1904 Fort Shaw basketball team, their experiences at the Indian school became legendary tales to be passed down from generation to generation.

Full Court Quest is composed of small yet effective chapters beginning with brief histories of basketball and of Fort Shaw Indian School. Peavy and Smith wind readers through the school's opening days, basketball's growing popularity among young women and the details of the game's entrance into the lives of Fort Shaw students. In learning about the background of each student who played a pivotal role on the basketball team, this reader was struck by the unlikely course of events that made their story possible.

Initially, the girls did not know what to make of this new sport, but within days the game became an obsession and their skills increased exponentially. The book analyses the formation of the team and its early battles against other, mainly white, teams from around their local area. Watching the team's success, school superintendent F.C. Campbell discovered a great opportunity to spread the merits of a Fort Shaw education to a wider audience. He took the girls on a state-wide tour playing to sold-out auditoriums. Basketball fever soon took hold of the state of Montana, largely due to the exploits of the Fort Shaw girls. News of their success eventually spread beyond Montana. The director of the 1904 World's Fair in St Louis contacted Campbell and invited the team to play in the fair's tournament. Overjoyed at the chance to showcase Fort Shaw, Campbell sent his team east to take part in the spectacle of the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition. Exhibited to curious millions as a part of the Model Indian School at the fair, the girls did more than just play basketball. They swung Indian clubs and lifted barbells; they performed musical numbers, classical dances, poetry recitations and theatrical pantomimes. The girls' impressive entertainment repertoire at the St Louis World's Fair did not slow their basketball team down one bit.

While at the fair the team put out a call to any basketball squad that wished to challenge them: they would meet any time or place for a match. The Fort Shaw team played teams of 'All-Stars' from Illinois and Missouri. While both of the white teams took the court confident that the 'Indian' girls could not possibly beat them, both squads left humbled by the superior skill and conditioning of the team from Fort Shaw. Interestingly, the St Louis fair also hosted the Games of the Third Olympiad. Unfortunately for the Fort Shaw team, women were not yet allowed to participate in the formal programme of the Olympics. In lieu of participating in the Olympics, the girls from Fort Shaw staged an exhibition game between their own first-string and second-string players inside the Olympic arena. Fair officials dubbed the girls from Fort Shaw as the world champions of girls' basketball at that event.

Holding the silver trophy, identical to the ones given to Olympic victors, the girls had reached the summit of a sport still in its infancy. After the World's Fair the girls returned home as heroes and local celebrities and most of the team completed their

schooling at Fort Shaw. The team eventually disbanded but not before it had given Montana an unrivalled display of basketball genius.

The book contains two sections of fascinating photographs which put faces to the names of the endearing characters and bring their stories to life. 'The Years Thereafter' provides highly interesting information on where the players went and how they spent the remainder of their lives. The authors did an enormous amount of historical spadework to bring this story to light, as is made clear in the extensive notes and bibliography. Engaging and sprightly written, the book tells an important story that might otherwise have been forgotten.

Full Court Quest has many strengths and few shortcomings. Once the stage for the story is set the format lends itself well to the nature of narrative with multiple viewpoints and events occurring simultaneously, but the beginning sections leave the reader slightly disjointed. The ironic aspects of the situation are clearly laid out in the Epilogue, but might have been more cleverly woven into the narrative. True to the Fort Shaw girls' experience, the assessment of the Indian schools is generally positive. The limited discussion of the negative experiences might have received more analysis to balance the narrative and give readers a more complete picture of life at Indian boarding schools. Otherwise, the book introduces the reader to an amazing group of young women who deserve their place in history. *Full Court Quest* adds a significant story to the history of basketball, women's history, Native American history and American history in general.

JARROD JONSRUD © 2010
Pennsylvania State University

Gerald R. Gems and Gertrud Pfister, *Understanding American Sports* (London and New York: Routledge, 2009). Pp. x + 440, glossary, bibliography, index. \$49.95. ISBN 978-0-415-44365-4.

Readers are likely familiar with the work of co-authors Gerald R. Gems and Gertrud Pfister, who have both contributed numerous important books to the sports history canon, and who collectively have authored or edited more than 15 books and dozens of articles. The team reprises a collaborative effort that, with co-author Linda J. Borish, produced *Sports in American History: From Colonization to Globalization* (2008). In *Understanding American Sports*, this capable pair undertakes the challenging task of providing a 'broader, general guide to understanding American sport' intended primarily for 'sport students in Europe, South America or the Far East' (p. 2). The expert knowledge of both authors is thoroughly evidenced throughout the book. Assuming that readers have virtually no knowledge of American sport – or American history – the authors provide brief summaries of the history and evolution of the nation and its various sports, then build upon this foundation by adding layers of analysis and discussions of sport's social impact.

Rather than attempting to pave new analytical ground, the authors mine their previous works, and that of many other leading sports historians, to assemble a sweeping history of American sports and a thorough analysis of modern sport sociology. The final product unquestionably meets its stated goal of providing a primer on American sports for non-American readers, at the same time offering many passages that will interest the most seasoned sports historian.

The book consists of 14 chapters, organized topically. In addition to the text, each chapter includes several illustrations and 'boxes' citing other studies, quotes, or primary documents, allowing for deeper commentary on certain subjects. The first three chapters offer concise summaries of US history from three different approaches: Chapter 1 covers US history in general; Chapter 2 sports in US history; and Chapter 3 immigration in US history. Chapters 4 and 5 discuss the two most significant sports in America, baseball and football. Chapters 6 to 9 discuss sport at various levels: college sport; sport in American schools; professional sport; and recreational sport. The final five chapters probe more deeply into the relationship of sport to various social factors including race, women, sports heroes, media and sport as big business. The topical structure allows readers to pick and choose which sections to read – the book need not be read from start to finish, as the authors explain. While it is true that each chapter stands alone, there are many instances in which the reader is referred to other sections or pages where a topic is more thoroughly explained, and other cases in which information is repeated.

On the whole, the authors accomplish their stated goal admirably and, at times, brilliantly. The story of early baseball, and particularly the Abner Doubleday myth, is recounted in fresh and engaging prose. The sections on soccer in America, often overlooked in previous studies, are vigorous and insightful. Equally outstanding are sections on the organization of college sport; children's and youth sports; football heroes; and gendered sports coverage. The chapter on women's sport is simply excellent throughout, and even an experienced student of sports history is likely to find new revelations on almost every page.

As is inevitable in such an ambitious volume, the book is not wholly without flaws. Some editorial decisions concerning the illustrations included and the content in some of the 'boxes' might be questioned. The maps included in Chapter 1 are dated and barely legible in the black-and-white format (pp. 14, 19). A series of photographs from the North Central College Archives, depicting images of baseball, football, a marching band, cheerleaders and homecoming festivities, might best be described as uninspired (pp. 102, 103, 136, 137, 139, 140, 148, 167, 169). One wonders if more tantalizing photographs could not have been found. Content in some of the 'boxes' is similarly questionable. For instance, quotations drawn from Tom Wolfe's fictional account, *I Am Charlotte Simmons*, lose their punch after the first two or three; there are 13 such quotations in all. To be fair, many of the illustrations and 'boxes' are perfectly suited to the material, and add much to the book; but others might have been better left on the editor's desk.

In a similar vein, more careful editing of the book might have detected numerous minor errors. The Emancipation Proclamation, for instance, did not '[free] all slaves'; the 13th Amendment did (pp. 25, 231). The Atlantic Coast Conference includes 12 teams, not ten (p. 157). And the AAU is the Amateur Athletic Union, not the American Athletic Union (p. 292). At other times, an uninformed reader might be left more with a false impression than an outright mistake, as when the authors state that 'No player has ever approached .400 since [Ted Williams]' (p. 318). George Brett, Rod Carew and Tony Gwynn would be disappointed at that assessment. Since the rise of Tiger Woods, describing golf's following as 'devoted but small' understates the case (p. 197). And the 'goal' in football might better be described as the 'end zone' (p. 123). International readers with little knowledge of such things would never notice these errors, but more knowledgeable readers, and certainly scholars of sport history, will stumble over these and other minor points.

Any perceived shortcomings of this book will not detract from its success in achieving the authors' stated goal – to provide a general book on American sports for an international audience. Based on decades of outstanding teaching and publishing, Gems and Pfister have recognized the need for this type of text. Current texts assume too much knowledge of basic American history and sports to be useful for many international students. The authors have remedied this situation in splendid fashion.

KEVIN B. WITHERSPOON © 2010
Lander University

Carles Sirera, *Cuando el fútbol no era el rey* [When Football was not King] (Valencia: Universitat de València, 2008). Pp. 207. €14. ISBN 978-84-370-7094-0.

Though the beginning of modern sport (1850s–1900s) in Spain is a subject of historical interest, until relatively recently studies were confined largely to lists of the dates and places where the different sports (and attitudes towards sports and physical activity) first appeared, accompanied by a study of the evolution of each one of those sports in that area, plus their later diffusion (if any) throughout the rest of Spain.

Such approaches focus largely on the history of the sporting highlights of those cities where innovations are best known to have taken place. Naturally, such innovations occurred mainly in the capital, Madrid, and other leading cities, where cultural interchange with foreigners was greater. Consequently, we know all about the innovations that took place in Madrid or Barcelona. For example we know that the first rugby match in Spain was played in Barcelona in 1911. But quite often there is less available knowledge about the detail of other sporting developments, so we know less about when rugby first appeared and evolved in Madrid. The history of sport in Spain is weaker still in terms of cities where a sport was taken up later, rather than earlier in the innovation and diffusion cycle.

Historians of Spanish sport have responded to these historiographical gaps in two ways. Some authors published works focusing on a specific city studying its whole sporting life. Such studies are growing in volume, but there has been a need to widen such studies to other parts of Spain. Other authors decided to write about sport during a specific period in a specific city. Again, the majority of works refer to Madrid and Barcelona.

Now Sirera adds another city to the list: Valencia, host to the America's Cup and the F1 World Championships. Adopting the latter view, he studies the situation of sport in that city from the second half of the nineteenth century up to the 1910s, before the advent of football and 'mass society' (p. 200). The account is not limited to the local, for the author relates everything that happens in the Valencia area with what happens in the rest of the country, because often the local events find their explanations in what was happening at the time in the rest of the country – and some times vice versa. Yet Sirera doesn't commit the mistake of retelling again the sports history of Spain, but only includes more relevant elements to add clarification to the story of sport in the city. Thus at the same time that one learns about the evolution of modern sport in Valencia, one also gets a fresh look at the sports history of the Spain of the day.

Valencia was then one of the most important cities of Spain, so the image that Sirera offers of it can be assimilated to that of other Spanish cities of similar characteristics. Helpfully, the author mentions these similarities when they take place (e.g.; the fashion for Basque pelota), warning, nonetheless, about the peculiarities of the Valencia area that explain why processes that occur in the rest of the country do not operate there (e.g. amateurism – p.98).

After an introduction where the author discusses the issues above, the text is set out thematically, each section devoted to one of the sports that were practised in Valencia at that time; dove shooting, roller-skating, polo, cycling, yachting, tennis, long distance running, fencing and pelota (a kind of squash played with the hand instead of a racquet or bat, the most popular sport in Valencia).

The work rightly identifies the social and political processes that operated as motor of sport in the Spain of the late nineteenth century, which turns this text into a rather handy manual for all those interested in studying sport in Spain at that time.

Furthermore, due to the extensive use of primary sources (documents from municipal archives, local newspapers, announcements etc), the work manages to give a rigorous and fresh touch to its theoretical side. For example, Sirera plays now and again the amusing game of continually comparing and completing the excerpts from some newspapers with others (those of the conservatives with those of the liberals), thus illustrating theory with what was the reality of the moment, giving a view closer to the spirit in which those activities were experienced by those people. Besides, these reality bites that season the text provide delicious anecdotes that offer the reader a more agreeable reading (e.g. p.33 – one shooter, vexed by the ill-intentioned way in which the colombaire was delivering to him the doves he had been assigned, pointed the barrels of his shotgun at the latter's belly, and gave him a piece of his mind in no

uncertain terms). Nonetheless, at times Sirera's use of primary sources can lead to a loss of pace in the text, as when he provides an exhaustive analysis of the documents that record the basis for participating in the different competitions (e.g. p.39). While it is obviously the result of thorough research in the archives, and worthy of recognition, his presentation soon becomes tedious. But on the whole, due to the use of primary sources, this work can be considered as a valuable source book.

Moreover, this work offers, for those interested in sport history, a precious analysis of how sport worked in the Spain of the late nineteenth century, showing the dynamics and conventions that kept all that structure running. One of the strongest points of this book is that it helps us to better understand the society of those cities of the nineteenth century different from the two great cities of Madrid and Barcelona. One of the main tasks of sport history is to help to understand better a society through the forms of sport it practised: this is masterly achieved by Sirera and, in this respect, his work must be recognized as a genuine contribution to sport history. This, combined with its brevity and style, makes it an very useful text for scholars.

ALFONSO MANAS © 2010

University of Granada

Marie Coleman, *The Irish Sweep: A History of the Irish Hospitals Sweepstake, 1930-87* (Dublin: UCD Press, 2009). Pp. xvi + 288, bibliography, index, illustrations. £24 (pb), ISBN 987-1906359-41-6. £50 (hb), ISBN 978-906359-40-9.

Coleman's well-researched and very detailed book is not about sport. It is about the way in which the Irish organized funding largely from Britain and North America for cash-strapped voluntary hospitals, first in Dublin and then from 1933 across the Free State. Hospital money came not from the public purse but from three annual sweeps, all on English horse races famous for generating betting interest: the Grand National, the Epsom Derby and either the Cambridgeshire or Cesarewitch.

During British rule and after initial independence in 1922, Ireland was one of the poorest countries in Western Europe, and only remained financially solvent as a result of limitations on government expenditure. Part of Coleman's theme is the evolution of the Irish state, and in so doing she touches on how the sweep connected with Irish nationalist politics, the health services, media advertising and broadcasting, sponsorship and social welfare, gambling and unsavoury gangsterism, charity and commerce.

The story that Coleman tells is shot through with sporting (and associated gambling) connections. The connections between sport, society and gambling have been explored in some depth in, for example, Susanne Morton's work on Canada or Roger Munting's study on Britain and the USA, though surprisingly Coleman has not explored any of the standard British literature on gambling by Chinn, Clapson, Laybourn, Myers and others. Even so, the book provides a subtle, well-researched and

thoughtfully detailed Irish case study that draws out what can happen when a government gets overly close to the gambling industry.

At the book's centre is the famous Irish Hospitals Trust and its revenue-raising arm, the iconic Irish Hospitals Sweepstake, a competition that was well-known across Ireland, Great Britain and North America. In all three regions in the 1920s, sweepstakes and lotteries were illegal. In Britain tickets were popular and widely sold despite the attempts by anti-gambling groups and the Home Office to enforce the Lotteries Act of 1823 that made it an offence to sell lottery tickets. At this time the Calcutta Turf Club sweep, for example, blatantly offered a huge first prize of £75,000, while London's Stock Exchange sweep had a first prize of £25,000.

An early chapter describes the origin of the Irish Hospitals Sweepstake and how it became adopted by the Dáil. The Dublin bookmaker Richard Duggan had organized racing sweeps in the 1910s and 1920s, often linked to charities. After 1922 Duggan continued to evade the law by organizing sweeps for various Dublin hospitals from offices overseas in Switzerland and in London. He was prosecuted in both England and Ireland but the fines were small, and given that he was able to take his unpublished promoter's costs out of the sweeps before handing over prize and charity money, he must surely have paid them out of income. The confusions and complexities of anti-gambling legislation were revealed when the Revenue Commissioners tried to tax Duggan on his sweepstake profits and he argued that as sweepstakes were part of an 'unlawful and criminal enterprise' they were not gains 'within the meaning of the Income Tax Acts', a view upheld by the Supreme Court in 1928 (p. 7).

Over the 1920s the Dublin voluntary hospitals faced a financial crisis, thanks to problems associated with independence, inflation, increased demand, deteriorating facilities and withdrawal of Protestant support. This forced a change of heart about sweepstakes by the Irish government, and in 1930 the Public Charity Hospitals (Temporary Provisions) Act was passed despite anti-gambling opposition from the Protestant churches and within the Ministry for Justice. Duggan changed the name of his company from Promotions Limited to Hospitals Trust Limited and was allowed to organize the first sweepstake, assisted by two particularly able directors, his publicist Spencer Freeman and Joseph McGrath (1888–1966), who had been a minister of labour in the first Free State government. The three rapidly became millionaires as a result of their involvement. McGrath's wealth enabled him to form glass-manufacturing companies, including Waterford Glass, marketed to American customers via the sweepstake distribution network. After 1939 he became a leading Irish racehorse owner and breeder and a key figure in Irish racing.

Three further chapters then take the story into the 1930s, the major focus of the book. Coleman begins by drawing out in detail the impact of the sweep in Ireland, though the complexities of the ambivalent role of the Catholic Church are briefly passed over. Chapter 4 explores the impact of the sweep in Britain, where it contributed to the wider shift of support away from a vociferous anti-gambling Protestant minority. The British, for example spent over £7 million in tickets in 1932,

and forced the British government, faced by economic slump, to set up a Royal Commission on Lotteries and Betting to consider new legislative measures to counter sterling losses to Ireland. The subsequent Betting and Lotteries Act of 1934 reduced sales substantially, though Coleman suggests that the British continued to purchase perhaps a quarter or a third of tickets (p. 104). Chapter 5 examines the sweep in North America in the 1930s, where likewise sweepstakes were illegal, but bribery, smuggling, front companies and other methods were used to outwit the attempts of the Post Office Department and the Customs Bureau to curtail sales. Coleman argues that both in Great Britain and in the United States some sweep organizers had had extremely intimate links with the Irish Republican Army.

Two subsequent chapters explore 'Survival and Recovery 1939–1961' and 'Decline and Closure 1961–1987'. During the Second World War the sweep was able to continue thanks to Irish neutrality by using Irish races. Over the course of its lifetime the Irish Hospitals Sweepstake raised the equivalent of €170 million for the Irish health service, and created a network of hospitals, clinics and medical centres across Ireland. It was a major employer of labour, and still employed about 5,000 as late as 1961.

Running parallel to the chapters on the sweep are other chapters focused on the Irish health services. Chapter 3 covers the transformation of Irish hospitals in the 1930s, both in plant and equipment, largely as a result of trust money. Chapter 8 covers the sweepstakes and hospital development from 1939 to 1987, by which time the sweep had long outlived its usefulness and media investigations were increasingly foregrounding its problems.

Coleman is critical of the linkages between successive Irish governments, the sweep and its promoters. She concludes that 'the sweepstake represents one of the great missed opportunities in the history of independent Ireland' (p. 224). Successive governments did not capitalize sufficiently on the opportunities it offered, and constantly postponed the comprehensive reforms necessary to modernize the hospital system. They abjured any moral responsibility, ignored the various illegal means that the trust adopted to sell tickets overseas where purchase was illegal, and all major parties accepted campaign contributions from the trust. Politicians closed their eyes to the way the Irish postal service gave its connivance, and to the insider dealing that allowed individuals connected with the trust to be the first to contact those who drew a ticket before the race, and purchase relatively cheaply a share in the ticket. Those who attempted to question or criticize the sweep or the way sweepstake revenue was spent by the promoters were ignored.

There are some weaknesses, despite the rigour of the research and analysis. There is limited sense that competing interpretations or readings of the sources are being considered. A more rigorous counterfactual approach might have allowed a better understanding of what might have happened to Irish hospitals in the 1930s *without* the revenue provided by the sweeps. Coleman's reading of the broader historiography associated with betting and lotteries or betting sports such as racing is very limited and the relevant journals are off her radar. This is an economic, organizational and

political analysis of the sweeps and of their impact on hospitals in Ireland, and not really a social or cultural analysis. Though the blurb stresses the sweeps' 'social importance' there is little or no sense of the sweep's consumers or of what the purchase of tickets or a win might have *meant* to them. I'd have liked to have some understanding about where sweep purchase fitted into betting culture in Ireland, of how far the popularity of the sweeps impacted on Irish racing, of whether the Sweeps contributed to wider changes in societal attitudes to gambling, and of the way in which the sweeps helped McGrath play a central part in Irish racing administration. But overall this is a fascinating study, and well worth a place on university bookshelves.

MIKE HUGGINS © 2010
University of Cumbria

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