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Internationalism and Sport in the Making of Nations

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It has been suggested that nationalism is becoming obsolete as a result of globalization and that the role of sports in the making of nations is weakening. Global sport has presented fundamental challenges to local and national sport, but it has also created the opportunity for sport to be more international. The role of sport in terms of reconciliation is rarely mentioned within contemporary discussions of global sport, power, and culture; the same is true for sports’ contribution to the process of anti-globalization. This article begins to address both of these issues while at the same time questioning the simplicity of framing contemporary sport purely in global or local terms, which for this author at least is deemed to be a false choice.

Key Words: internationalism, global sport, reconciliation, anti-globalization

Clearly, there is no one theory of globalization or of global sport. The idea of globalization and global sport has become the source of intense political dispute. The central argument in terms of globalization has been the extent to which it promotes economic well-being throughout the world. For its proponents, the spread of free trade encourages enterprise, economic growth, jobs, and wealth creation. For its critics, globalization is seen as a key cause of rises in poverty and inequality. Global sport, like globalization, operates unevenly, bypassing certain institutions, people, and places.

Past and present commentaries upon global sport have made substantive contributions to our understanding of the complex ways in which sport has been influenced by various forces that are impacting upon the world (Bairner 2001; Houlihan 2003; Maguire 1999). In Maguire (1999), the processes and development of global sport have been uniquely crafted alongside an understanding of figurational sociology. Maguire (1999: 54) asserts that global sport and globalization have no fixed starting or finishing point but have been subject to a number of processes and phases of development that may have stemmed from a period of early sportization in England (sic). More recently, Bairner (2001), through his comparative studies of sport in Northern Ireland, Scotland, Sweden, Canada, the United States, and the Republic of Ireland, has reminded us about the complexity of some of the different variet-
ies of sport and nationalism that emerged in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In agreement with Maguire, Bairner (2001: 176) concedes that any assessment of global sport must accommodate the idea that globalization has resulted in increasing varieties and diminishing contrasts of sports, nationalisms, and identities.

While the global governance of sport may be advanced, this is only relative to other areas that are less advanced, such as the international governance of environmental regulation or human rights. In sport, according to Allison (2002: 353), global governance results from a combination of factors, many of which are international by nature. Three examples are: (1) international organisations involved in the governance of sport whose leaders and authority are often virtually unaccountable; (2) transnational corporations, particularly in the media, that sponsor sport; and (3) the growth of an effective system of international law that has influenced aspects of sport, such as the 1995 Bosman ruling that outlawed certain aspects of the football transfer system to bring it, at the time, more in line with European legislation on the freedom of workers to travel within Europe. In 1999, the Monopolies and Merger Commission of the United Kingdom government intervened to stop the media mogul Robert Murdoch—through his ownership of British Sky Broadcasting—from taking over Manchester United Football Club.

The term *glocalisation* is used by Bairner (2001: 176) to refer to the extent to which sport and nationality have resisted aspects of globalization. Global capitalism through the sponsoring of international sporting competition has ensured that national sporting identities remain the “flagships of the global sporting economy” (Bairner 2001: 176). It is for this reason Bairner adds “that we can talk of nationalism having successfully resisted the encroachment of globalisation’s homogenising tendencies and that sport and globalization have become accomplices in the process whereby the importance of national identity has been ensured” (Bairner 2001: 176). Thus it is concluded that sport will continue to play a part in allowing nations to resist global homogenisation.

The impact of globalization processes upon sport is one of the core areas of investigation within an increasing body of research that exists in relation to sport, identities, global studies, culture, and power. The way in which global sport seems to be changing has been the subject of debate. For its proponents, the sharing and cross-fertilisation of different sporting cultures and tastes is something to be celebrated. For its critics, global sport is seen to undermine traditional sporting heritages of nations that are key to people’s sense of their belonging. Indigenous sporting cultures are seen to be threatened by market-driven mainstream forms of sport that can be sold in the marketplace or prove to be popular to television viewers.

The term anti-globalization (Begg 2000; Katwala 2000; Mertes 2002) has become increasingly associated with a movement for global change. The term anti-globalization refers to an extremely loose network of individuals and campaigning organisations seeking to transform the way in which globalization is proceeding. If a summary of the basic differences between radical and moderate approaches to anti-globalization in relation to sport were possible, it might proceed along the
following lines: while the radical wing sees fundamental flaws in the whole process of global sport, the moderate wing is more open to the potential good that may be derived from all forms of globalization. The true potential of global sport for moderates is undermined by globalization’s domination by a neoliberal agenda and undemocratic sporting structures. What is clearly obvious from the existing literature on global sport is the extent to which any debate about anti-globalization and sport is present at all.

At the same time as a burgeoning commentary on sport and globalization has emerged over the past decade, so too has there been an extensive debate about the role of sport in the making of nations (Allison 2002; Bairner 2001; Cronin 1999; Jarvie and Walker 1994). It has been suggested that nationalism is becoming obsolete as a result of globalization and that the relationship between sport, nationalism, and national identities is weakening. Fukuyama (1992:12) continued to champion the cause of a globalised culture within which the nation-state was viewed as being anachronistic. There is a considerable amount of evidence to suggest that the relationship between sport and nationalism has a future, but in the first instance it is fruitful to remind ourselves of some of the concrete ways in which sport has figured in the making of nations.

Politicians from various political parties, including nationalist, have used the emotions associated with different sports to rally support for the nation. In the 1960s, the then Labour Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, made great political mileage out of England’s football victory in the 1966 World Cup. Throughout the 1970s, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania often remarked that sport helped bridge the gap between national and global recognition in developing nations. Immanuel Wallerstein suggested that African citizens could feel affection for the victorious athlete and the nation (Jarvie 1993). He suggested that this affection might not have existed in the first instance given the social and ethnic divisions within African nation-states. The process necessary to develop this affection depended on athletes accepting the politics of the nation and working with the party structures. During the 1980s, a key element of African National Congress (ANC) policy in South Africa was “One Can Not Play Normal Sport in an Abnormal Society.” By the 1990s, President Mandela argued that sport had become part of the new glue that held the nation together. This was exemplified by South Africa’s victory in the 1995 Rugby World Cup (Ramsamy 2002), a victory viewed as being symbolic of a new post-apartheid era. Jim Sillars, the deputy leader of the Scottish Nationalist Party (S.N.P) in 1992, following his defeat in the 1992 General Election, chastised the Scottish electorate for not voting for the nationalist cause, maligning them for being “ninety-minute patriots” and saving their nationalist fervour for major sporting occasions (The Herald, 24 April 1992: 1). In other words, sport had served as a substitute for nationalism with a big P, namely political as opposed to cultural nationalism, because patriots could show an affinity for the nation on various sporting occasions without necessarily voting for nationalist parties.

The symbolism of sport has helped to promote national identity and sentiment.
at major sporting events. Sport has helped to provide a sense of cultural autonomy to such places as Catalonia, Brittany, and Taiwan. Sporting success has often helped to foster a close symbolic link between specific sports and specific places such as athletics and Kenya, football and Brazil, ice hockey and Canada and Sweden, golf and Scotland, sumo wrestling and Japan, cycling and France, baseball and Cuba, and hurling and Ireland. In short, the idea that sport and sporting achievements contribute to a nation’s greatness, national identity, and at times help to transcend internal strife and social deference is but one argument that has been dressed up in a number of guises and commented upon extensively over the last decade or more.

Sport at times has also been implemented in the politics of imperialism and national reconciliation. In the build up to the 2002 Football World Cup jointly hosted by Japan and South Korea, Emperor Akihito of Japan acknowledged that Japan’s imperial family was descended from the Kingdom of Paeckche, an ancient Korean civilization. Following Japan’s annexation of Korea in 1910 and the subsequent thirty-five years of colonial rule, Emperor Akihito used the then imminent sporting event to break the ice between the two nations. The co-hosting of the World Cup by Japan and South Korea was only the second time since the Second World War that the two countries had co-operated over such an event, and they made attempts to normalise relations in the run up to the event. Japan dropped its visa requirements for South Korean short-stay visitors while Seoul removed a ban on broadcasting Japanese music. In reality, any reconciliation in regard to the colonial past, remarked one of Japan’s first Korean residents, would not come about through football but through ordinary Korean and Japanese people being brave enough to acknowledge the past and move on (The Financial Times Weekend 25 May 2002: 10). At times, football travels beyond the confines of national identity, reconciliation, and national politics. In the first match of the 2002 World Football Cup in Japan and South Korea, Senegal defeated their former colonial rulers and the then World champions, France. The country’s President praised the success of the team in terms of defending the honour of Africa (The Times Higher 14 June 2002: 19).

The relationship between sport and nationalism and the role that sport has played in the making of nations has been commented upon extensively. Discussions relating to sport in the making of nations have tended to rely upon some or all of the following arguments:

1. sport acts as a form of cultural nationalism;
2. sport acts as a substitute for political nationalism;
3. sport can contribute to both ethnic and civic forms of nationality, many of which may be mythical, invented, and/or selected;
4. sport helps with the process of national reconciliation;
5. sport provides a safety valve or outlet of emotional energy for frustrated peoples or nations;
6. sport helps to build national identity and patriotism;
7. nations denied national sports representation have at times vested great national sentiment in specific clubs or sports such as “Barca”;  
8. nationalist support for sport has been a natural reaction against the pressures arising out of the development of global or international sport;  
9. sport contributes to the building of national consciousness; and  
10. sport has contributed to the politics of cultural imperialism and colonialism.

The nationalism that is connected to sport may be constructed in order to be manifested within and between different types of nations, to be real and imagined, to be a creative or reflective force, to be both positive and negative, transient and temporary, multi-faceted and multi-layered and/or evolutionary in its format. Drawing on a number of specific examples, Cronin (1999: 55) asks pertinent questions concerning the ways in which sport has been inextricably linked to the forces of nationalism. Is sport being appropriated by countries in the search for a new national identity? How has the relationship between sport and nationalism developed? Why is it so important in contemporary society and what should we do with it or about it? While it is increasingly difficult to sustain the argument that a single sport represents any one nation, nonetheless certain “nation-specific” games such as Gaelic games, American football, shinty, Aussie rules football, or pelota still thrive, despite the advances of global sport, and continue to play a central part within various national cultures. To use one Swedish example quoted by Cronin:

Nothing awakens Swedish national feeling so easily and strongly (at least among men) as sporting success. Glorious history, royalty, a splendid army, democracy and the welfare system, ancient ideals and traditions, Volvo and other great companies—none of these things can measure up to sport in providing bonds of national solidarity or in creating collective consciousness of one’s country (1999: 59).

A point that needs to be emphasised is to caution against any rigid universal form of thinking that perpetually links a particular sport to a particular nation in the sense that the relationship between sport x and nation y becomes fixed in content, time, and space. This is a view that fails to acknowledge the nation or the territory as a process that is neither fixed nor immutable. Territorial expansion or contraction is but one of many ways in which the nation as a place changes over time and the idea of what the nation is or which sports represent the nation also changes in relation to the social, cultural, and political contexts. Different sporting occasions and different sporting heroes and heroines may all help to keep alive ideas of what a certain nation is; many of these experiences have at their core different notions of what the nation is, was, or should be.

Australian sportswomen like Cathie Freeman, Evonne Cawley, and Dawn Fraser, all of whom have represented Australia, might all be deemed to be patriotic sportswomen. Yet they represented Australia at different points in the history of Australia and, therefore, the twenty-first century Australia represented by Cathie Free-
man as she won the gold medal at the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games was a slightly
different Australia from the 1970s Australia experienced by Evonne Cawley, the
first Aboriginal women to play tennis at Wimbledon, which in turn was different
from the Australia experienced by Dawn Fraser. The Australia of the 2000 Sydney
Olympics era seemed to be more tolerant and celebratory about its Aboriginal
sporting history than the Australia of the 1970s experienced by Evonne Goolagong
Cawley.

Vamplew and Stoddart’s (1994) examination of Australian sport acknowledges
that in the twentieth century aborigines were vastly under-represented in most sports
and virtually non-participants in many others. In only three sports were Aborigine
men disproportionately successful, namely Australian Rules football, boxing, and
rugby league football. Hargreaves’s (2000: 85) discussion of Aboriginal sports-
women notes that these sporting heroines are part of two worlds of sport and two
forms of nation-building, namely the imperial culture of Australia’s mainstream
sport and the indigenous sporting culture of the indigenous nations within the na-
tion-state that is/was Australia. Aboriginal women have forged sporting opportu-
nities in both mainstream and aboriginal sport and yet Australian sport per se can-
not be properly understood without the contexts of discussions about racism, colo-
nization, post-colonialism, and how Aboriginal sports people have been portrayed,
represented, and empowered within Australia. Thus place and time are just a part
of the transcendent or changing ideas of the sporting nation as it moves through
history. One of Bairner’s (2001) contributions to the debate about sport, national-
ism and globalization has undoubtedly been the extent to which his research has
illustrated that content, timing, and place all help to contour specific relationships
between sport, nationalism, and globalization.

**Sport, nationalisms, and their futures**

The idea that sport and sporting achievements contribute to a nation’s greatness
and transcend internal strife and social deference is but one argument that has
remained as potent in the twenty-first century as it has in the past. Following the
war in Afghanistan, the former Tottenham Hotspur football captain Terry Mabbutt
was involved in the organising of football matches between peacekeeping forces
and Afghan citizens in Kabul in February 2003. A spokesperson for the Ministry
of Defence suggested that football was a global language and that more matches in
the future would be played between peacekeeping forces and local people. During
the American and British invasion of Iraq in 2003, it was suggested that when the
fighting was over the Football Association and in particular the then England Foot-
ball Captain David Beckham should play a role in restoring normality and peace to
Iraq. Indeed, during the early part of the war British forces played a football match
against local people in Umm Khayyal and more than 1,000 spectators turned out to
watch the home side win (*The Sunday Express* 5 April 2003: 11).

In a relatively recent discussion on sport, nationalisms, and their futures Reid
and Jarvie (2000) concluded that despite the momentous events of the twentieth century, the nation-state remains a unit of political currency. The changing configuration of nation-states is such that it would be a brave person who would predict the future make up of international sports competitions such as the World Football, Rugby and Cricket Cups; the Olympic, Asian, and Pan American Games; or any other international sporting event. The proliferation of nationalisms and nation-states over the last twenty years or so only serves to confirm this point. The relationship between sport and nationalisms rather than waning seems to be waxing and certainly shows no signs of dying.

Sport continues to play an important role in the construction of national consciousness in modern China. The complexity of sport in post-Maoist China is evident in the fact that while Chinese leaders in the build-up to and subsequent gaining of the right to host the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing have used sport, and in particular Western sports, in what Hwang (2003) describes as an attempt to break out of Asia and advance into the international arena, at the same time, specific attempts to modernise traditional forms of sport and exercise are resisted for fear of enhancing Western ideas of democracy. Following the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade on 8 May 1999, the immediate response of the Chinese government was to ban the broadcasting of American National Basketball Association (NBA) games on Chinese national television. NBA teams were popular among 79 percent of Chinese teenage television viewers at the time. On the other hand, the traditional form of exercise known as quigong was featured in a public protest in Beijing by more than 10,000 members of the Falun Gong on 25 April 1999. The government responded by saying that “this kind of gathering affected public order and that it was completely wrong to damage social stability under the pretext of practicing martial arts and traditional sports” (Central Daily News 29 June 1999: 7).

There are at least four immediate arguments that may be put forward to assert that the relationship between sport and nationalism is likely to have a future. First, in a sovereign sense the nature of the nation-state may change, but the existence of sports teams representing territorially defined nations or regions aspiring to be nations is likely to continue. Second, national-state governments and nationalist organizations such as the African National Congress or the Palestinian Liberation Organization will continue to operate with the principle of sovereignty and will promote distinctive sporting policies that reflect links between sovereignty and territory. Third, distinctive nationalist sporting organisations such as the Gaelic Athletic Association will continue to provide a national focus for traditional national sports. Finally, whether these be sporting or otherwise, an international society as an association of states cannot totally rely upon supranational bodies to make and enforce laws, since these require states to accept legal and constitutional limitations above and below. In this sense, the nation-state or new forms of sovereignty involving national fractions remains central to any proposed international economy, society, or culture. Sport as an entity is managed both nationally and
internationally—it is not a question of either/or.

Nationalisms have continued to rise in regions and territories that wish to break away from existing states. In some senses, McCrone (2000: 129) is correct to point out that the contemporary relationship between nationalism and the nation-state is at best contradictory, if not illusory. Just as nationalism is growing in importance, the nation-state appears to be losing its powers as it is replaced in part by global or international powers such as those exercised by, for example, the International Monetary Fund, The Court of Arbitration for Sport, the World Bank, the European Union, and the International Olympic Committee. All of these agencies would seem to have eroded the power of the independent state or national sports body, and yet there has been an increase in national movements wanting a state of their own. One answer is to suggest that the homogenous view of the viable nation-state is over, if it ever existed, and that the national vision must be redefined. Sport could be viewed as a good indicator of modern nationality and internationality in the sense that international sports teams are less dependent upon players being born in the country for which they play. Indeed, many athletes have played for different countries and are defined as a “national” if they play for the national side.

In a rapidly global or internationalising world, many of the traditional things that helped forge a sense of belonging—nation-states with putatively relatively homogenous populations; sports teams of home-grown nationals; well-established local communities; and allegiance to local teams, history, and tradition—are all being challenged. To know thyself is a fundamental human need. Having some idea of who we are helps us to define how we ought to live and conduct our daily affairs. In other words, who or what we are as individuals, nations, or international communities helps determine how people may conduct or live out their lives. Sport through allegiance to all of the above has helped and will continue to help different configurations or groups know themselves.

Sport, internationalism, and reconciliation

Undoubtedly, the world is changing rapidly and much of what has been advocated about sports both diminishing social and political contrasts and increasing varieties of nationalism and globalization remains crucial to our understanding of sport. As part of these understandings, we must continue to examine the role that sport has played in internationalism, or at least particular versions of it. It is important, therefore, to remember the complexity of the global–local axis in order to appreciate how internationalism, cosmopolitanism, and orientalism are pertinent to understanding the dynamic processes that are impacting upon the post-millennium world of sport (Anderson 2002; Brennan 2001). Few political notions are at once so normative and so equivocal as internationalism. Whatever sense is given to the term “internationalism,” logically it depends upon some prior conception of nationalism and yet at the turn of the millennium, while nationalisms have proven to be alive and well, this has been within certain limits. Internationalism may refer to any outlook or practice that
tends to transcend and propel the nation toward a wider community of which na-
tions continue to form the principal units. Paradoxically, internationalism and inter-
nationality may be viewed as having positive values as both a defence against, for
example, American unilateralism and also as a form of American hegemony.

On the one hand, American unilateralism itself may be viewed as a creeping
form of internationalism that will necessitate a series of checks and balances to be
put in place. On the other hand, the international community also needs to assert
itself, for example over the issue of universal human rights, in ways that do not
conform to American internationalism. It has been suggested (Anderson 2002: 25)
that Americanism and Britishness as forms of Western internationalism under the
banner of human rights are problematic. For instance, these nationalist-based no-
tions of internationalism provide, in the name of the international community, the
forces to blockade, bomb, or invade peoples or states that displease them (as in the
cases of Cuba, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, and Iraq), while at the same time nourish-
ing, financing, and arming states that appeal to them (Turkey, Israel, Saudi Arabia,
and Pakistan). As for the Chechens, Palestinians, Tutsi, Sahrawi, Nuer, and other
peoples without a state, they are left to a world of charity that cannot after all be
ubiquitous. Overlaying all of this, other ideologies and movements, as represented
for example in Islamic fundamentalism and Catholic post-integralism, muster as
residual place holders for an alternative form of life that is equally international
but also less captive to the world of consumption.

Some or all of the following arguments are associated with sport and
internationalisms:

1. the international governance of sport is relatively advanced in the twenty-first
century and the relationship between sport and specific national territories can-
not be fully understood without recognising the part played by transnational
organisations and international forces of development;
2. sport in specific times and at specific places has contributed to specific forms
of internationalism; at times it may be a catalyst in reviving or sustaining inter-
national sentiment;
3. sport can help with the processes of reconciliation;
4. the hybridity associated with post-modern international sport has meant that
sport operates in both a post-nationalist and post-colonial phase of develop-
ment, and yet historically sport has served as an agent of both imperialism and
colonialism; and
5. the nation-state and various the forms of internationalism discussed above pro-
vide potential alternative sites for the “other” worlds of sport outside the
gaze of the transnational sports corporation.

There are a number of ways in which sport might be thought of being actively
international or cosmopolitan rather than national, all of which in turn serve as a
qualification and warning against accepting uncritically the notion of global sport.
I would like to further expand upon this. First, there is the historical case that can substantiate sports’ historical role in promoting certain forms of internationalism (Beacom 2000). Historically, international contacts through sport provided opportunities for European workers to understand those factors that divided nations with a view to attempting to overcome them. One of the most interesting aspects of workers’ sport in Britain was the way in which sport was used to forge links with the continental workers sports movement in Germany, France, Austria, Italy, Finland, Israel, Canada, and the former Soviet Union. The principle of internationalism flowed over into the sports arena with sport festivals and Workers Olympiads being popular forums for continental socialists. If international peace was to be forwarded by bringing workers together, then sports events had to be organised effectively and in such a way as to develop political awareness as well as sporting progress. The provision for workers sports events spread throughout Europe to the extent that between 1926 and 1934, 966 national and international sporting events had been organised under the auspices of Socialist Workers Sports International (SWSI), which by 1927 had 1.3 million members from eighteen different countries (Jones 1988: 170). The workers sports movement strengthened a rather weak internationalist ethic among continental workers during the first half of the twentieth century. Despite political difficulties, workers sport helped to stimulate some form of common European ethos or internationalism through sporting contact. The available evidence from the stories of workers sports movements throughout Europe and beyond suggests above all that worker sportsmen and women were internationalists and supported causes such as anti-fascism, which tended to circumvent national boundaries (Jones 1988; Kruger and Riordan 1996).

The examples that could be drawn from sport to illustrate the past and present link between sport and forms of internationalism are many. The following are but several examples drawn from the period between 1928 and 2003:

- 1928—the entry of women into Olympic athletics after being excluded for thirty-two years;
- 1931—the Olympics, held in Vienna under the banner of internationalism and peace, involved 8,000 worker athletes from twenty-three countries;
- 1936—Jesse Owens won four gold Medals at the Nazi Olympic Games held in Berlin;
- 1964—the expulsion of South Africa from the Olympic Games heralded the official international anti-racist campaign against apartheid;
- 1984—the Algerian athlete Hassiba Bourghiba won an Olympic gold medal and screamed as she crossed the line on behalf of all oppressed women;
- 1988—the Seoul Olympic Games, which were the first Olympic Games for years not to be affected by a western boycott;
- 1995—Nelson Mandela wearing a Springbok cap and shirt following South Africa’s victory in the Rugby World Cup held in South Africa, thereby demonstrating the need for the new “Rainbow” nation to work together and respect
each other;

- 1998—France’s victory in the World Football Cup held in France was accomplished with an international team, which was proclaimed to represent the new ethnically integrated France;
- 2003—Liverpool and Celtic Football fans, during the quarterfinal of the UEFA Cup competition, sang together the same songs and wore scarves with Liverpool and Celtic symbols and colors printed on the same scarf.

Second, recent substantive studies have criticised the notion of global sport and have argued that it might be better to suggest that contemporary sport is emerging along international, national, and local lines rather than global. A particular critique of globalization is borne out in McGovern’s (2002) case study of the migration patterns of foreign football players into the English football league between 1946 and 1995. The empirical evidence provided brings into question the idea that international labour migration might reasonably have been expected to be one of the defining features of globalization as far as football is concerned. Within the football industry, the employers—the clubs—tend to be permanently fixed to specific geographical locations, while the employees—footballers—within certain limits can move between cities, continents and countries. Toward the end of the twentieth century, the increased mobility of footballers led to the popular view that the football industry was undergoing a process of globalization mostly because of the increasing numbers of European clubs importing players from a wide range of countries. But because of the social embeddedness and historical patterns of recruitment involved in football migration, McGovern concluded that labour market migration was characterised by a process of internationalisation and that the recruitment of players was influenced by a range of social, economic, and political factors that were national and international in origin. Thus, it is important to distinguish between the terms “globalization” and “internationalization”: the latter refers to the extension of activities across national boundaries, whereas the former refers to not only the geographical extension of economic activity across national boundaries, but also to the functional integration of such internationally dispersed activities. There was no evidence arising from the study to suggest that international sources of recruitment had been functionally integrated into the labour market practices of English football clubs between 1946 and 1995. While the market for professional football players was clearly becoming more international, this trend was developing along regional rather than global lines (McGovern 2002: 38).

Third, at another level of internationalism, sport may influence new generational attitudes toward past conflicts. Following the 2002 FIFA World Cup, co-hosted by Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK), it may be suggested that a new Japanese internationalism has been encouraged through football. An editorial entitled “A Key Role for the World Cup Generation” in Chosun Iibo, a leading newspaper from the Republic of Korea, stated that the World Cup had awakened young people’s pride in the ROK and that the performance of the ROK football team,
which reached the semi-finals of the tournament, seemed to have left young Japanese with the impression that South Korea is cool (Katwala 2002). As indicated previously, Japan’s relations with the ROK historically have been tense. Yet some feel that the co-hosting of the World Cup together with the performance of the ROK team have laid the groundwork for future internationalism between Japan and the ROK. A leading Japanese newspaper, *Asahi*, referred to this as a new easy-going nationalism that transcended borders and stated that the relations between Japan and the ROK were entering a new international era (Katwala 2002).

Sport today might be thought of as being cosmopolitan. The terms “cosmopolitanism” and “internationalism” are neither historically dead nor irrelevant to contemporary sport. The changing composition of sports teams, even of national teams, is more cosmopolitan than it has been in previous decades and supporters are asked to associate themselves with a range of identities rather than with any one national team defined in only territorial terms. This factor may merely add to the complexity of both sport and nationalism. Historically cosmopolitanism has combined two distinct ways of thinking about sport (Brennan 2001). On the one hand, it designates an enthusiasm for different sporting customs and rituals. The shinty/hurling matches that take place every year between Ireland and Scotland allow for a merging of the two sets of rules (the rules of hurling and the rules of shinty), to allow a completely different form of game to take place. The term cosmopolitan allows for the blending or merging of customary differences that may emerge from a multiple of local sporting customs.

On the other hand, cosmopolitan sport projects a theory of world sporting governance and the corresponding citizenship. In other words, the structure of the hypothetical underlying unity of the cultural meaning of the term “cosmopolitan” is also carried over into a political meaning of the term; cosmopolitan sporting structures or events would also imply more cosmopolitan sporting citizens. The cosmopolitan ideal envisages a federation or coalition of sporting bodies rather than an all-encompassing representative sporting structure in which members can deliberate about sport on a global scale. That is to say cosmopolitan sport is neither local nor global and is closer to the term “international.” The transformation of local sport into *glocal* sport may at some point require recognition of cosmopolitanism. This may include 1) elements of sporting mobility in which people have the means, opportunity, and right to travel and experience other places through sport; 2) an openness to other peoples and cultures and a recognition of “other” sporting traditions and customs as being of value; and 3) a commitment to voluntary sports activity involving communities outside of one’s own locality. It might be that international TV coverage of sport has contributed to an awareness of a shrinking sporting world and a more cosmopolitan awareness of the world of sport.

**Conclusion**

Maria Isabel Urrutia of Colombia was a medal winner at the Sydney Millennium
Olympic Games, having lifted 75 kg in the clean and jerk weightlifting category. The Olympic gold medal winner represents a country where young athletes have had to pass through guerrilla and paramilitary roadblocks while traveling between cities to national competitions. Colombia holds the unfortunate distinction of being the world’s leading country in terms of kidnapping with some 3,000 reported cases per year. Commenting on her gold medal victory, Urrutia said “that she hoped that her victory would reach others like her—poor, black and female” (*Sunday Herald* 1 October 2000: 18). She went on to say that “as a poor person I hope others see that you can make a living, see the world and get an education through sports or even music and other arts. As a woman I hope that girls who are now 13, like I was when I started, now realise that they don’t have to become teenage mothers, and as a black person I hope the country sees that there’s another Urrutia besides the white man who signs our pesos” [referring to Miguel Urrutia of Colombia’s Treasury (*Sunday Herald* 1 October 2000: 18)].

Above is an example of the normative potential of sport at a particular time in a particular community, but also a reminder that sport has an important part to play in the making of nations. This article has attempted to locate a discussion of the multifaceted ways in which sport has been used in the process of internationalism and reconciliation. It has done so by acknowledging the valuable contribution made by those who have highlighted the fact that global sport has resulted in increasing varieties and diminishing contrasts of sports, nationalisms, and identities. At the same time, the article has been critical of those positions that have viewed the available explanatory options as being a simple choice between global and local sport, which is a false choice. Thus, it may be suggested that the development and discussion surrounding global sport is not simply a question of thinking globally and acting locally, but of recognising that actual transformation of local sport and the role of sport in the making of nations may involve issues of internationalism and cosmopolitanism.

While sport at times reproduces the politics of contested national and other identities, it need not be at the expense of an acceptance of the possibility of internationality or a focus upon common humanity. Living sporting identities are in constant flux, an ever-changing international balance of similarities and differences that may contribute to what it is that makes life worth living and what connects us with the rest of the changing world. If we are to come to terms with the contemporary crisis of sporting identities, then we need to transcend the nationalist or global/local simplicities and celebrate difference without demonising it. Increasing similarity of sporting tastes, choices, and aspirations can exist without implying homogeneity. As such, the notions of international sport and new forms of internationality must remain part of the vocabulary of global and regional sporting debates because they temper the all consuming notion of globalization and provide grounds for explaining the “other” worlds of sport outside of the transnational corporation. Future research into global sport, culture, and society needs to acknowledge the contribution of sports to processes of internationalism and anti-globalization.
Notes

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