

EUROPE:BEYOND

A Magazine of the Institute for a Greater Europe



Sports and Diplomacy: The Bridge in-Between

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Martyna Hanak

“Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire.
It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does”
- Nelson Mandela.

Indeed, sports can bring us together in ways that no politician can, as we gather every weekend to cheer for our favourite football team or stay up all night to watch a tennis tournament played in a different time zone. Even those of us who don't regularly follow sporting leagues can't help but feel a little proud when the national team gets on the podium with medals around their necks to hear the national anthem.

Currently, in the era of increasing polarisation, as we are facing unrest of magnitude unseen to our generation – the war in Ukraine, economic crisis, energy instability and long-term post-Covid repercussions – yet again sport can have a role to play in restoring our faith in solidarity beyond borders, but also exert soft power in international relations. Historically, more than once it was used as a catalyst for change. In response to apartheid, for years South Africa was banned from most big international competitions. Now, similarly, Russian and Belarussian athletes are being excluded from many events. Sport's diplomatic power continues to influence the world around us.

There is a dark side to sports, however. In the past, it played a role as a dividing, rather than uniting force. The infamous football war between Honduras and El Salvador is perhaps the most extreme example. To this day, though, club rivalries cause unrest and, at times, claim casualties.

Nowadays, 'sportswashing' is becoming a powerful tool used by countries to distract from their questionable human rights track record or even concurrent military conflicts. The 2018 football World Cup in Russia came four years after the annexation of Crimea. China's dazzling spectacle at the opening ceremony of the 2022 Winter Olympics diverted attention from the horrors of Uighur detention camps. The now infamous 2022 World Cup in Qatar attracted numerous controversies, while thousands of migrant workers were dying building the grand stadiums.

In this issue, our amazing contributors examine the interconnection between sports and diplomacy, as they examine topics like the fight for feminism within the traditionally masculine sporting world, cricket's power to initiate dialogue amidst Pakistan-India antagonisms, the tricky question of sport sponsorship, and much more. I sincerely hope that our magazine will offer you a different perspective on the world of sports and, while watching your next game, you will think about its deeper impacts.

Have a great time reading!



Note from the Magazine Managing Editors

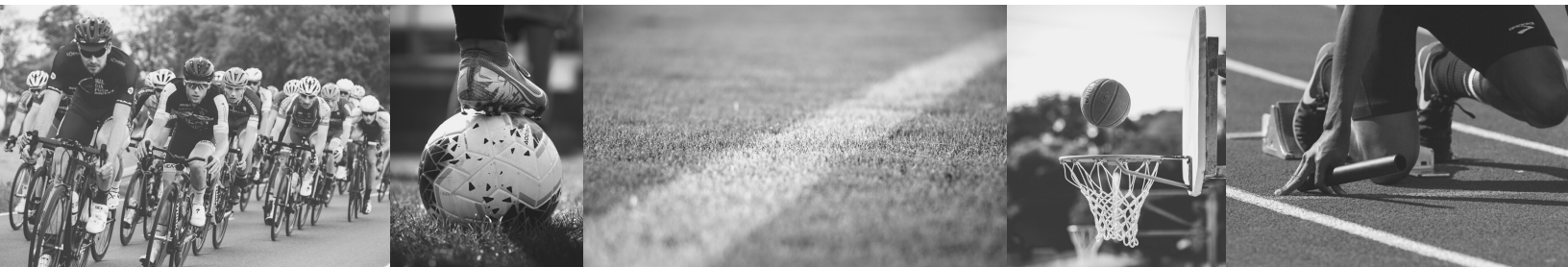
Jack H. Lashendock & Dyuti Pandya

This extraordinary publication represents one of the biggest projects undertaken by the Institute and we are honoured to play a role in it. This magazine reflects a mission; young scholars and professionals from across the world seized the opportunity to address such a globally systemic issue in a small, yet meaningful way. Like our first issue and others, this publication is the result of so many dedicated team members and colleagues from across the globe. As you read, I invite you to reflect upon, research, internalise, and even encourage you to (respectfully) dissent from the perspectives of these authors in this issue. It is my sincerest hope that you take the reflections of all the authors, editors, contributors, and collaborators and use them as the kindling to more meaningful discussion with your friends, family, and peers.

Reflecting back on the 2022 FIFA World Cup, we decided to have our focus of the Spring 2023 issue on the evolving concepts of sports and diplomacy.

Through the years, sports has been a phenomenon that has transcended lingual, national, and cultural borders. It has established communication between different cultures and individuals. Sports diplomacy at the very least can be used to harness intercultural understanding and empowerment between nations. In this issue, we thus bring out articles that talk about the bridge between "Sports Diplomacy" through a varied lens. This issue also has a "test your series" game and some great book recommendations which will allow you to widen your knowledge in this area further! We hope you enjoy this issue.

FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC & ALSO ASIA, HAPPY READING!



Updates from the Institute

Otto Barrow (Secretary General IGE)

1. **Another round of recruitment:** Among our new recruits, we've welcomed our new Treasurer (Conor Owens. Applications for this round are now closed, but another call is possible especially for grants officers, social media and desk officers. Contact Martyna Chmura (martyna.chmura@institutegreatereurope.com) if there is something you are interested in doing. Members are onboarded continuously soon; most are expected to join both Slack and have an email account.
2. **Chapter System:** We've created plans for chapter systems in the parts of Greater Europe where we have the most members, to organise in-person meet-ups. In particular, we'll have ones in Greater London, Greater Brussels, Greater Warsaw and Greater Randstad.
3. **Editing and Publishing:** We've welcomed our new Deputy editor-in-chief Timoteo Cozzio. The Editorial team has also been organising a workshop for new writers.
4. **Events:** The events team has been very busy, and has organised events ranging from "Lessons from Afghanistan" with the former UK ambassador Sir Laurie Bristow. Our president has also organised a Mapping of Civic Education talk and has been working on collaborations with organisations, such as European Guanxi.

Upcoming events:

1. Events with the Wilfried Martens Centre — We're organising events in common, starting with a smaller event on European Enlargement in April).
2. European Youth Event — Preparations are well underway, with Sam Crooks taking a lead on creating a delegation.
3. Another round of recruitment — we'll be recruiting more writers, and looking for members of an enhanced Treasury Team, to improve our grant-finding operation. Do apply, as this is an excellent skill to have for any potential employer!



SPORTS DIPLOMACY: EURO-CENTRIC ARTICLES

A Commentary: Can the Hosting of the 1936 Olympics in Nazi Germany be Justified?

Samuel Crooks

Between 1st and 16th August 1936, Nazi Germany hosted the Olympic Games in Berlin. Führer Adolf Hitler, whose regime would within a few years unleash the horrors of the Second World War and the Holocaust on Europe, opened the Games in a triumphant ceremony. Months before in March 1936, German troops had remilitarised the Rhineland in direct violation of the Versailles Treaty as the first step towards the militaristic expansionism which would lead to the invasion of Poland in September 1939. With the benefit of historical hindsight, it can be argued that it was unjustifiable that the Games should ever have been held in Nazi Germany and yet they were. The for this article is the extent to which hosting the Games in Berlin could be justified in 1936 and since. In order to understand why the International Olympic Committee justified hosting the 1936 Olympics in Nazi Germany, it is worth examining the values to which it subscribed at that time.

In the 1933 publication *The International Olympic Committee and the Modern Olympic Games*, the Committee advocates a vision of sport being a distinctly apolitical phenomenon which should foster virtue and goodwill. To this effect, the reader is even informed that until the founding of the International Olympic Committee in 1894 by Pierre de Coubertin and the hosting of the first modern Olympic Games in 1896, '[t]he moral virtue attached to sport had hitherto been neglected'.

Furthermore, the Games are presented as 'one of the best ways to make the different classes in a country as well as the units of different civilizations well acquainted with each other and to promote better understanding'. The same publication also quotes Pierre de Coubertin himself at length,, including his declaration that the Olympic Games were being revived for the modern age not as 'an object for museum or cinema, nor is it our wish that mercantile or electoral interest should seize upon them'

Instead, the Olympic Games were to follow the spirit of their counterpart from antiquity and become a 'school of moral nobility and purity' in the face of perceived degeneration in the modern world. These statements by the International Olympic Committee and its founder clearly demonstrate that the intention behind the Modern Olympic Games was to encourage international goodwill and utilise sport as a force for moral good which could inspire current and future generations to noble conduct. An understanding of sport and of the Olympic Games framed in such terms is consequently one which perceives them as a unifying phenomenon overcoming division and adversity.



In this sense, if sports is considered a universal activity open to participation by athletes from all countries regardless of their system of government and the Olympics as a force for moral virtue and international goodwill, the International Olympic Committee was justified in permitting the 1936 Olympics to be hosted in Nazi Germany.

Indeed, according to its own values, the International Olympic Committee would have been unjustified in preventing a Germany ruled by a Nazi regime from hosting the Olympics. To have done so would have violated the belief that sport itself, the object of the Games, is inherently apolitical and universal, and therefore it was inconsequential for the 1936 Olympics themselves that they were held in Nazi Germany rather than in a democracy.

If one subscribes to the official values of the Modern Olympic Games as explained above and refers to them exclusively when rationalising the hosting of the 1936 Olympics in Nazi Germany, the Games can even be presented as a success for the Olympic ideal. One piece of evidence in support of this view is that 3,963 male and female athletes from forty-nine countries participated in the games, the highest number of participating counties in any Olympics at that time - suggesting that participating countries and athletes supported the Committee's vision of sport and prevented any interference from the political world interfering in the sporting realm. In addition to this, the 1936 Berlin Olympics also witnessed the inauguration of an enduring Olympic tradition, the torch relay. In 1936 the Olympic torch was carried from Olympia in Greece over a distance of over 3,000 km through Greece, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Austria and finally into Germany.

Although it could be argued that this torch relay offers a sinister allusion to the future occupation and coercion of all these countries within a matter of years by Hitler's regime, it could also be claimed that the torch relay as a performative act is representative of the Olympic ideal of promoting international goodwill and togetherness through sport, regardless of what may occur politically or militarily between countries. The fact that the torch relay has been repeated for every subsequent Olympic Games also shows that it is untainted by any connections to the Nazi regime, demonstrating that sporting tradition can exist independently of political circumstances.

Despite the possibility of emphasising the universal, apolitical and moral nature of sport in defence of permitting Nazi Germany to host the 1936 Olympics, advocating this view necessitates a failure to recognise that despite the publicly stated values of the International Olympic Committee, the Nazi regime clearly utilised the Games as a propaganda spectacle in support of their ideology of Aryan racial supremacy. While Pierre de Coubertin and his associates wished to evoke the memory of the ancient Olympics as the ceremony of a peaceful and noble 'religion of Sport,' for the Nazis the evocation of Ancient Greece and the bringing of Ancient Greek sporting culture into the twentieth century had a distinctly militaristic connotation.

Central to this was the regime's veneration of the Ancient Greek warrior state of Sparta. Pro-Nazi academics such as Helmut Berve viewed Sparta 'as an ideal historical model for National Socialist government' because of his belief that the Nordic spirit could be best observed in the warrior state of Sparta. This was due to its favouring of aristocratic government, its racial laws which separated Spartans from those they had enslaved, and its proto-totalitarian state facilitated by 'elitist clanship which efficiently suppressed every individualistic notion.'

In particular, Berve declared in his 1936 work *Sparta* that 'Jugenderziehung, Gemeinschaftsgeist, soldatische Lebensform, Einordnung und heldische Bewährung des Einzelnen (cultivation of youth, spirit of community, soldierly way of life, classification and heroic testing of the individual)' constituted 'die hohen und ewigen Werte, die Sparta uns repräsentiert (the elevated and eternal values which Sparta represents to us)'. For Berve and supporters of the regime more widely, sport was not the pursuit of moral virtue and goodwill among the nations but rather a vital instrument in the preparation for war. The Olympic Games constituted a performative ritual of strength and prowess, not a celebration of peace and humility.



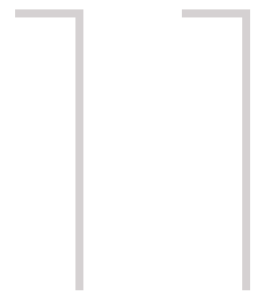
Nazi evocation of Ancient Greek sporting culture and the Spartan state on ideological grounds was by no means limited to academic circles, and the most striking example of Nazi philhellenism's interest in them can be seen in the cinematography of Leni Riefenstahl's 1938 film *Olympia*, a German propaganda film about the 1936 Berlin Olympics.

The first scene of the film's first part is especially evocative of the Ancient Greek past, consisting of the camera bringing the viewer through a ruined temple before presenting the viewer with a series of sculptures of sporting figures with athletically built bodies which gaze into the distance. When the camera finally presents a statue of a discus-thrower, the stone figure is gradually replaced by a living German athlete in the same pose who prepares to throw his discus. Accompanied by a dramatic strings-dominated orchestral arrangement and without dialogue, the opening sequence of *Olympia* appears to situate the Berlin Olympics within the wider historical context of the ancient Greek games through the reference to Greek architecture and sculpture.

The priority, however, for Riefenstahl's film has aspects in common with the Nazi evocation of Spartan warrior culture, as physical forms take precedence in her cinematography, with the impressiveness of the ruined temple and the perfect, sculpted bodies of the athletes ensuring that physical power is favoured.

Riefenstahl's film therefore distorts the official vision for the Olympic Games by presenting forms and phenomena which could be interpreted as representations of peace as an homage to war and strength. These two conflicting rationalisations of the Olympic Games by 1936 highlight the dilemma which continues to affect the Olympics and other international sporting tournaments to this day, namely whether it is justifiable to permit the hosting of such events in all countries regardless of the nature of their government. On one hand, one can adopt the viewpoint espoused by the International Olympic Committee, that as sport is a force for the good, providing a source of unity in a divided world and demonstrating the virtue of noble endeavour, it is inconsequential where Olympic Games are hosted because the universal and peaceful nature of sport decrees that it should not be overshadowed by any political considerations.

On the other hand, however, the case of the 1936 Berlin Olympics demonstrates that hosting major international sporting events enables dictatorial governments and totalitarian regimes to legitimise their ideologies to their own citizens and normalises their position within the international community as a country deemed worthy of hosting them.



In 1936 the Committee was justified according to its own values in permitting the hosting of the Olympics under Hitler's gaze in Berlin, but in so doing it provided the Nazi regime with fertile ground for propaganda and legitimised a brutal and militaristic dictatorship ruled according to a racist and later genocidal ideology in the international community.

About the Author

Samuel Crooks has served as an Events Officer at the Institute since September 2022. He is currently studying the MPhil in Modern European History at Downing College, Cambridge. He previously studied the BA in Modern and Medieval Languages at Cambridge and spent his Erasmus year at Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn. Before assuming his role at the Institute, Samuel served as Speakers Officer at Cambridge University United Nations Association (CUUNA) 2019-2022.

Comparison of Mega-Events, Sports Club Sponsorship and Sports Club Ownership

Eamonn West

In the increasingly interconnected world of the modern age, diplomacy has expanded far beyond the traditional scope between limited actors of states, now including a vast range of actions and actors. Public Diplomacy is the epitome of this. Communicating directly and indirectly with foreign publics, states now aim to foster positive perceptions and relationships with them in order to accrue soft power - allowing the ability to influence, rather than coerce. This strategy of communication and cultural attraction has been facilitated through the development of communication technology, digitalisation and globalisation, as these developments allow rapid global communication in a way never possible before.

Consequently, states have seized on a range of new channels of communication to engage in public diplomacy campaigns, utilising new mediums to engage with the public in unique and modern ways.

For example, Thailand funds Thai restaurants and chefs abroad with the objective of increasing their international profile and nation branding, in a strategy labelled “gastro-diplomacy” (Karp, 2018). As such, states are constantly searching for new and efficient methods to communicate with foreign publics, and few have the same level of appeal and potential as sport.

Sport is a cross-cultural, global phenomenon. Throughout history, sport has been used and abused as a social connector and a social divider, to both benevolent and brutal effects. The Romans famously used sport through Bread and Circuses to appease the masses, tribalistic support of the ‘Blues’ and the ‘Greens’ in Byzantium played a key role in the violent Nika Riots of 532 A.D., and the Anglo-French treaty of 1514 was preluded by the English and French kings playing two weeks of sports (Murray and Pigman, 2014). However, the increasingly interconnected world of the digital age has encouraged a significant rise in the ability of sport to be utilised as a diplomatic medium on a scale never possible before.

Sport has a unique ability to tap into intense emotions regardless of social or geographic dividers, forging a “collective consciousness” across these boundaries. Inherently sport can thus unite people in a way unparalleled by other means which, when paired with the great attention paid to sport, can present a significant tool in moulding the perceptions of the global public. The FIFA World Cup is the definitive example of the reach of sport, with 5.4 billion people watching the most recent World Cup in 2022. As a consequence, brands, states, and individual actors have scrambled to attach themselves to the positive experiences and perceptions of sports.

However, public diplomacy and soft power campaigns are not always successful. They can sometimes lead to the opposite of their objective, damaging a nation’s image and harming foreign perceptions of their country. This is known as soft disempowerment, where the soft power of a nation is reduced, perhaps by negative media coverage or an event which damages public perceptions (Brannagan and Giulianotti, 2018). As such, even in campaigns utilising sports, states must be wary in their public diplomacy campaigns of the legitimate risks to their reputation and ensure the benefits from their projects outweigh the potential disruption to their soft power.

Utilising sports as a major component of a soft power strategy has been employed by states in distinct ways. Yet, the primary methods of involvement focus on three approaches: hosting sporting mega-events, owning sports clubs and sponsoring sporting institutions. Each of these methods has its own advantages and unique traits which encourage state involvement in their sector. Similarly, each method also carries intrinsic weaknesses and risks of reputational damage and soft disempowerment as well.

Sporting mega-events are the most influential, dominating media discussion as the event takes place, and attaches the host nation to a major international event. This is both the key advantage and disadvantage of hosting: while the eyes of the world are on your nation, the scrutiny of the state and the event can overwhelm the perception of the onlooking public. Perhaps typified by the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, this mega-event fundamentally advanced Qatar’s aims to advertise a “modern” Qatar, and “de-orientalise” Western perceptions of the nation, while normalising business and media relations with the state.



By providing high-quality infrastructure and investing heavily in state-owned tv sports channels such as BEIN, Qatar was successfully able to present this modern image. Changing international perceptions is a common objective of hosting mega-events, with the German World Cup in 2006 attempting to erode the “time-dominated, serious” international image Germans suffered from.

However, while hosting sporting mega-events carries high soft power potential for states, the major international audience also amplifies the risk of soft disempowerment. During the build-up to the Qatari World Cup, there was a major discussion surrounding human rights violations within the country, leading to the fostering of negative perceptions of Qatar. Numerous actors engaged in anti-Qatar PR campaigns, typified by the renowned human rights group Amnesty International, which invested heavily in raising awareness of the systemic abuse within the nation. Private companies also seized on this discussion, with the alcoholic beverage company BrewDog launching an “Anti-Sponsorship” of the World Cup, introducing advertisements and products which highlighted the social issues within the country. As such, hosting sporting mega-events can underline not just the positives of the host nation, but also the controversial aspects on an international stage.

Outright ownership of sports clubs by states has been an emerging trend within the last decade which demonstrates the rising awareness of states towards the power of attraction in sports. The purchasing of Newcastle United F.C. by the Saudi Arabian Public Investment Fund in October 2021 is one of the most recent examples of this. While mega-events are costly, demanding massive investment, comparatively club ownership is much cheaper and benefits from constant media attention. Club ownership is therefore particularly appealing to states due to the regularity that clubs play.



While a mega-event merely occurs once, clubs play week-in week-out, and typically have a loyal and dedicated fanbase across the world. Through club ownership, states attempt to attach their brand and image to that of the club, redirecting the positive associations of fans' attachment and emotions surrounding the club, towards the state as well.

Smart investment in their clubs can lead to greater sporting success and thus greater positive attachment to a club owner, therefore improving a state's national image. However, this can also lead to accusations and perceptions of sportswashing, as well as resentment by rival fans who feel the influx of funding from a state into a rival club is unfair. On top of this, the heavy involvement of a state within sports can feel artificial and forced, with attempts to infiltrate the sporting world perceived by some as eroding the real identity of their clubs and community. As such, the ownership of sports clubs carries its own systemic risk towards the soft power of states as well.

Finally, states can also attempt to involve themselves in the world of sports through the sponsorship of sports teams, rather than outright ownership. Requiring less investment than the purchasing and management of a sports team, sponsorship still allows states to attach themselves to the established positive image and brand of a sports team. It can also provide a link to a critical industry within their nation.

For example, club sponsorships of Arsenal F.C. and Real Madrid C.F. by Emirates Airlines have helped promote the image of the UAE as a "global transport and business hub". Thus, it can also weave economic objectives into its soft power campaigns for an additional strategic benefit.

Further, sponsorship of sports teams can also be used as a supplementary tactic, working in tandem with club ownership and mega-events to solidify the connection between the state and the sport. As club sponsorship requires a state connection with an established sports club in a similar way to club ownership, it can also lead to similar perceptions of eroding a club's culture and negative perceptions by isolating their fans. However, as these sponsorships are much looser in involvement with their clubs than outright ownership, these risks are comparatively lesser- though so are the benefits.

Overall, it is clear that sports offer great potential for states to directly communicate with a range of international publics. Yet, each of the numerous methods of doing so presents specific advantages, as well as risks. States should therefore be aware of this, and plan appropriately to adequately utilise sport within their public diplomacy strategy.

A man with short dark hair, wearing a white t-shirt and a dark jacket, is sitting at a wooden desk. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. His hands are clasped together on the desk. Behind him is a large, multi-paned window showing green foliage outside. To the right of the window, a large flag with a circular emblem and stars is visible. The overall scene is an office or study environment.

About the Author

Eamonn West is a recent graduate from Loughborough University London, Eamonn studied Diplomacy, Politics and Trade as an MSc; he also has a BA Hons in History and International Relations from the University of Lancaster. During his undergraduate degree, he also studied abroad at Texas A&M University. Writing his prize-winning dissertation on a similar topic, Eamonn has a strong interest in international relations, and the use of non-traditional methods to secure soft power and cultural attraction, especially using sports and football. Eamonn is a contributor to IGE, and also occasionally writes on a private blog, Commons Sense, covering topics ranging from the war in Ukraine, climate change and the role of politics in sports. He is about to begin his career in the UK Civil Service, and currently volunteers for an organisation dedicated to assisting those with health issues find work.

An Opinion: Empowered in Play - How the Norwegian Handball Team Paved the Way for Female Ownership of Sports Kit

Isabelle Book

The onset of policing of women's bodies owes its existence through the patriarchal structure of society, and the very same is seen to thrive even in the sports industry. Even for the small proportion of women who push themselves from the cultural stigma attached to women's sport, they are faced with the expectations to fulfill their gender roles associated with femininity, nurturing, and passivity. This is often seen to be demonstrated through the dress codes that sports federations have imposed throughout the years. Throughout the 21st century, attitudes from international federations towards women's sportswear has been inherently stigmatized and sexualised in line with these patriarchal expectations. In 2004, the ex-Fifa President Sepp Blatter suggested that female athletes should wear tighter shorts to promote the women's game. Similar trends have been followed in subsequent years, projecting that women in sports have had to face passing comments from men. In 2011, the Badminton World Federation tried to make it compulsory for women to wear skirts or dresses to make athletes appear more feminine.

Such blatant attempts to sexualise female athletes in football and badminton never transpired into policies, however women have continued to be targeted for their choice of sportswear throughout the past, and the present.

How did the approach to female sportswear change?

Despite sports federations dictating what women should wear, women have, and continued to, do the opposite. In July 2021, the Norwegian handball team wore shorts, instead of bikini bottoms, at the European Championships in Bulgaria. The European Handball Federation (EHF) imposed a fine of 1,500 euros on the team for breaking the uniform policy which stated that female athletes must wear bikini bottoms with "a close fit and cut on an upward angle toward the top of the leg". The Norwegian athletes, pop artists P!nk, feminist activist Talitha Stone, and the Norwegian Sports Federation alike expressed their shock toward the federation's decision.

Social media generated an outcry over women's lack of agency whilst selecting their sportswear, which forced populations to question how we empower women in sport to take ownership of their sportswear. The Norwegian handball team's scandal follows innumerable years of the EHF's ruling which permitted men to wear fitted shorts, no longer than four inches above the knee, but insisted on women wearing bikini bottoms.



A spokesperson for the International Handball Federation could not, at the time, provide an explanation for why the rules were different for men and women and justification is yet to be provided. However, by forcing the discussion of sportswear inequality into the public eye, the EHF were forced to address the backlash. The federation released a statement after the tournament which stated that the tense reaction was “based on disinformation on the procedure” surrounding women's uniforms and the issue would be discussed under the new commission in August 2021.

Dissatisfied with the response and motivated by change, Talitha Stone spearheaded a petition to change the women's sportswear policy which received over 60,000 signatures. In November 2021, the EHF changed their policy now permit women to wear shorts up to mid-thigh length.

Hypersexualisation of Women's Sportswear

The new era of fourth-wave, intersectional feminism in which the Norwegian handball team's outcry took place has permitted female athletes across all sports to talk of their hypersexualisation which undermines their performance and increases the stigma attached to their sport. Instead of being appreciated for their athletic talent, women's sport takes on a performative nature that accommodates for the male gaze through flesh-baring uniforms that serve no performative benefits. Welsh international runner, Kate Seary, highlighted how self-conscious she feels when competing with her stomach on show which has a negative impact on her performance. The momentum created by the Norwegian handball team's backlash has encouraged other teams to speak up on their discomfort and hypersexualisation whilst performing.

The German gymnastic team fought back against the sexualisation of their uniform by wearing full-body unitards at the 2021 European Artistic Gymnastics Championships in Switzerland, the event falling shortly after the European Handball Championships.

Sarah Voss, the leader of the protest, highlighted that in training, the athletes would not be wearing unitards, thus there was no reason to wear them on an international stage. Rather than their performance being at the forefront of the spectator's focus, whatever women are wearing becomes a dominant factor of the conversation surrounding women's sport - thus degrading women further. Though the International Federation of Aesthetic Group Gymnastics (IFAGG) permits the wearing of a leotard or unitard, the social expectation for athletes remains to appease crowds aesthetically, such an imposition contributes to the hypersexualisation of professional athletes - an expectation their male counterparts are not made to fulfil. Even in sports such as figure skating where clothing is essential to allow flexibility, many women still feel inclined to wear the smaller leotard. At the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics, Swedish figure skater Josefin Taljegard was the only athlete to wear the longer unitard as she felt "strong and confident" wearing it. However, the fact that she was only one out of thirty athletes to wear the unitard shows the engrained societal expectation on women to opt for the leotard for the aesthetics of their importance which is ruled by notions of femininity and the male gaze.

Women have long struggled for the right to participate in sport, and whilst opportunities are ever opening to encourage their engagement, they fail to be recognised purely for their sporting achievements.

Modesty Ban

This new wave of feminism and the momentum generated by the Norwegian handball team is encouraging athletes to compete in whatever they feel most comfortable in - especially considering the Norwegian team had support from a joint letter signed by government officials from Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Iceland, and Finland pushing the IHF to encourage women's emancipation from hypersexualised sportswear. However, there are other governments blocking women's agency to choose what she wears when competing.

In January 2022, the French Senate, which is 35% female, voted 160 to 143 to ban the wearing of the hijab in sports competitions as an attempt to remove religion from the sports sector on the grounds of remaining neutral. The new legislation is in line with French Republican values that view citizens as French before any other identity, in opposition to multiculturalism. However, this has led to the hijab being criminalised and excluded in public spaces. Not only does this new legislation prevent Muslim women from participating, whether it be through playing, coaching, or officiating, it also impacts how they are viewed on a global stage. For Muslim athletes wanting to dress modestly at the 2024 Paris Olympics, this will no longer be possible due to the new legislation which could generate further backlash to add to the Norwegian momentum.

#SayPeriod Campaign

Hypersexualisation is one key aspect to which women have begun to fight back against in sport, however, they are also beginning to discuss the physical effects of being a woman on their performance – a conversation which would not be possible without sportswear already in the spotlight. Over fifty athletes are backing the #SayPeriod international campaign which aims to break the stigma surrounding periods and demand more research on the effects of periods on performance which can cause up to 64% of girls in the United Kingdom to drop out of playing sport before they get the chance to reach professional level.

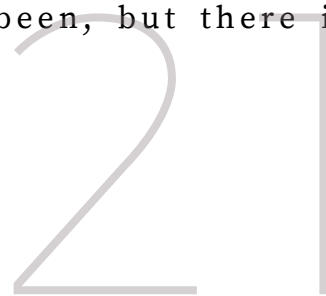
Professional athletes are regaining ownership of their periods and setting an example to the younger generations by instituting a change in sportswear to accommodate for menstruation when competing. Wimbledon, Manchester City FC, and Orchard County Gaelic football team have recently changed their uniform colour policy to reduce the stress of a potential bleed on players. Previously playing in white, players felt vulnerable when on their periods, thus the change in colour comes as a welcome to female athletes of all abilities who are able to continue playing confidently even when on their periods.

Conclusion

The Norwegian handball team's protest against international rules is an example that it only takes one to create a whole movement. The team inspired female athletes worldwide, at both a local and international level, to take back ownership of their sportswear, whether it be from hypersexualisation or unaccommodating colour policies, to allow them to perform at their very best abilities.

The increase in agency has forced international federations to respond to, discuss, and change their legislations in place – thus impacting countries under rule of the federations. Without international athletes making a stand on an international stage, such as European Championships, or the potential backlash to come at the 2024 Paris Olympics, those playing at a national level would not have a voice powerful enough to create change for themselves.

It is fundamental that athletes across Europe continue to take a stance against clothing injustice in the sports sector to ensure this issue continues to be in the spotlight to prevent the further alienation from women and girls participating. It is up to international federations to be diplomatic and respond to female athlete's demand for change, and change there has been, but there is much further to go.



A portrait of a young woman with blonde hair, blue eyes, and a nose ring, smiling. She is wearing a dark jacket and a necklace. The background is a blurred cityscape.

About the Author

Isabelle Book is an undergraduate student at the University of London Institute in Paris studying French and International Relations where she is writing her thesis on sex work policy in France. She will begin her M.A. in Public Policy at the University of Bath in September, focusing on disability and gender studies. Alongside her academic work, she is a research assistant to author and New York Times contributing writer, Elaine Sciolino.



SPORTS DIPLOMACY: OUTSIDE EUROPE

Relay of Experiences in Counterterrorism and the Development of Partnership: From London to Tokyo

Yuki Moritani

Introduction

In 2021, the United Kingdom and Japan emphasised the significance and the strength of security and defence cooperation between the two. In the same year, HMS Queen Elizabeth, the fleet flagship of the Royal Navy, visited Yokosuka, Japan. With this, the United Kingdom showed its seriousness to commit to the stability of the Indo-Pacific region, as stated in the UK-Japan Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation in 2017. The emergence of the UK-Japan partnership is not, however, brand new. Triggered by the joint statement of the United Kingdom and Japan in 2012 that stated the significance of each other as partners in Europe and Asia, the two states have gradually developed security and defence cooperation. Interestingly, although it was not a main driver, the Olympics had a certain role in promoting cooperation on security between the United Kingdom and Japan.

Olympics and Terrorism

The Olympics require serious preparations, not only for host cities but also for state governments. The appearance of mismanagements in front of worldwide attention can damage the image of a city and a state. Moreover, security is a serious issue for the Olympic games. For instance, during the 1972 Munich Olympics, 11 Israeli team members were killed by Black September, an assassination squad of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

The aim of the PLO was to appeal to the world the need to solve the Palestinian problem and to make the world recognise that the PLO is a proper partner to solve the problem. Terrorism was a theatrical strategy for the PLO to cause impact and to gain the attention of the world, which later brought an official status in the United Nations and the recognition as a state by more than 100 states.

As can be seen from the past, the Olympics can be a good target of terrorism to gain great attention from the world. If a host city and state fail to prevent terrorist attacks, fatalities and injuries might occur. Therefore, the management of the Olympics is not only about sports or the branding of cities and states, but also about national security.

Tokyo hosted the 2020 Olympics, being postponed to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Especially since its capital was selected as the host city in 2013, one of the biggest concerns for Japan was the risk of terrorism targeting the Tokyo Olympics. At the time, the threat of terrorism by Islamic extremists such as Daesh was a serious global concern, and Japan could have been an attractive target. In fact, two Japanese citizens were kidnapped by Daesh in 2014, and killed in 2015. The possibility of terrorist attacks targeting the Olympic games in Japan, thus, seemed high.

Although Japan is one of the historical producers of terrorist groups such as the Japanese Red Army and Aum Shinrikyo, it has been a common understanding that the Japanese government lacks knowledge and capability of counterterrorism. Consequently, to deal with the problem and to prepare for the Tokyo Olympics, the Japanese government decided to ask the United Kingdom for help.

A Relay from London to Tokyo

The host city of the 2012 Olympics was London. During the games, the United Kingdom successfully organised counterterrorism operations. For example, to protect the games and the city from airborne terrorist attacks, the Ministry of Defence of the United Kingdom deployed missiles on the rooftop of apartments close to the Olympic Park. Multiple cyber-attacks on infrastructure and the official website of the London Olympics were attempted. With the recent experience with the management of the Olympics, the United Kingdom was the best choice for Japan to learn from.



The experience of counterterrorism was relayed from London to Tokyo. On 7 April 2014, the United Kingdom and Japan held the first dialogue on counterterrorism in London. In total, four official meetings were held between the two governments, with the second one on 13 October 2015 in Tokyo, the third one on 11 and 12 January 2018 in London, and the fourth one on 2 and 3 December 2019 in Tokyo. Throughout the period, a variety of opportunities were presented both officially and non-officially. For instance, on counterterrorism in cyberspace, BAE Systems provided consultancy to Japanese companies. Also, the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies (RUSI) led the track 1.5 diplomacy to promote security cooperation between the United Kingdom and Japan, including counterterrorism operations regarding the Olympics. It didn't receive much attention after 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the Japanese police kept the cooperation with Scotland Yard.

Besides learning from the experience of the London Olympics, Japan also had to consider the risk posed by new technology such as drones. Japan was able to hold the Tokyo Olympics because of the effort on counterterrorism with the United Kingdom. The cooperation on counterterrorism regarding the Olympics resulted in the development of the security partnership of the United Kingdom and Japan, not limited to the safe management of the Tokyo Olympics. In 2017, two significant statements regarding the UK-Japan security cooperation were announced.

At the summit meeting in August, the Prime Ministers at the time issued the UK-Japan Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation. In December, the Third Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting (2+2) was held, which resulted in the announcement of the joint statement. In both statements, the United Kingdom and Japan emphasised the need to promote security cooperation to deal with the unstable international order as significant partners in Europe and Asia. These are significant initiatives for the current security cooperation between the United Kingdom and Japan. In the statements, the Prime Ministers and foreign and defence ministers mentioned the importance of cooperation regarding Olympics. In the summit meeting, Japan's former Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, told Theresa May that Japan wished to learn from the United Kingdom's rich experience on security to prepare for the Tokyo Olympics. As a result, the UK-Japan Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation stated that the United Kingdom and Japan would strengthen cooperation, including counterterrorism operations regarding the 2020 Olympics. The joint statement of the third 2+2 wrote that the further cooperation on counterterrorism which was promoted by the Tokyo Olympics was welcomed. The Olympics was not the only reason, but it was a part of the historical development of the security and defence partnership between the United Kingdom and Japan.

Conclusion

Despite its idea of the separation of sports from politics, in reality, the Olympics is closely tied to politics. Success and safety of the Olympic games require political effort. It is important for host cities and states to relay experiences, including security. Such a relay can contribute to developing bilateral relationships. As seen in this article, for the United Kingdom and Japan, the Olympics was a significant part of the development of security cooperation and partnership. The Olympics is not just a sports event, it is about a philosophy of Olympism. According to the Olympic Charter, “[t]he goal of Olympism is to place sport at the service of harmonious development of human kind, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity”. Of course, political abuse of sport is undesirable, but certain political efforts are needed in the Olympics.

About the Author

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Sports and Diplomacy: From Hard Power to Soft Power

Hao Zhang

Introduction

Sports have historically and in the present continued to be a means of bringing people together by unifying them across different borders. This phenomenon has continued to evolve since the time of the ancient Olympics in Greece. It is a tool which allows the fostering of mutual respect, and understanding between different cultures and nations. In modern times, sports diplomacy has become increasingly popular as a means to strengthen relations between nations. Through sports, countries receive the opportunity to showcase their cultural identity and engage in peaceful competition between each other. This article sheds light on the significance of sports diplomacy by examining how table tennis has been utilized as a tool for fostering diplomatic relations between China and the US.

Sports Diplomacy Defined

Public diplomacy is a tool which allows nations to advance their foreign policy objectives by influencing public relations abroad, and thus, the term sports diplomacy becomes a subset of public diplomacy.

Sports diplomacy becomes a strategy to gain soft power which can subsequently allow nations to exert influence through means of cooperation, and action. Due to their reliance on cultural and societal linkages, it becomes an attractive prospect for nations to rely on the soft power approach of sports. This can include actions such as cultural exchanges, mutual participation in sports events, and sports as a means of building relationships and promoting goodwill. One example of soft power in sports diplomacy is the use of ping pong diplomacy between China and the United States in the early 1970s to help break down political barriers and improve relations between the two countries.

Hard power” refers to the use of tangible and coercive means to achieve diplomatic goals through sports. This can include actions such as boycotts, sanctions, and the use of sports as a tool for propaganda. One example of hard power in sports diplomacy is the boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics by the United States and several other countries in protest of the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan.

In recent years, there has been a shift towards soft power in sports diplomacy as countries have started to realize the potential for sports to foster more goodwill and promote better cultural understanding. However, political tensions between countries still continue to impact sports diplomacy efforts. For example, attempts to ease the conflict between South and North Korea using sport have come to naught. It appears, therefore, that sports diplomacy could be a double-edged sword, depending on how the country uses it.

For the positive part, most countries have decided to apply sports diplomacy to achieve mutual participation in sporting events, sharing of information, resources and knowledge. The author has focused on three such instances which have applied this approach in international relations, politics, conflict resolution and social diplomacy.

- **International relations:** The Olympic Games are a classic example of how sports diplomacy can be used to build relationships between nations. Countries from all over the world come together to compete in the games, and this can be an opportunity for diplomatic meetings and negotiations.
- **Politics:** In 2018, North and South Korea marched together under a unified flag at the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea. This gesture was seen as a symbol of reconciliation between the two countries, which have been divided since the Korean War in the 1950s.
- **Conflict resolution:** In 1995, the Rugby World Cup was hosted by South Africa, which had only recently emerged from apartheid. The tournament was seen as a way to promote reconciliation between the different racial groups in the country and to build a sense of national unity.

In 1956, the Soviets invaded Hungary. At the Summer Olympics in Melbourne, Australia, during a water polo semi final between Hungary and the Soviet Union, there was blood in the water. The match mirrored what was going on in the real world in sport. For some, sport like this is simply “war by other means”. In order to avoid this, each country should try to make good use of this power tool and make it always politically, economically positive.

The common language of sports provides a non-verbal means of communication and transcends language barriers. By bringing together athletes, coaches, and fans from different countries, sports diplomacy can help to build bridges and foster mutual respect and cooperation. Sports diplomacy can be used as a tool to break down barriers and promote peace between nations. It is used to create a sense of unity and shared goals. The common objective of winning creates a positive atmosphere, where participants have a shared interest in achieving a common goal. In non-sports context, this diplomacy can also be used to promote trade and economic relationships between nations. This is because sports provide an opportunity for nations to showcase their products and services or promote tourism.

For instance, when the United States sent a delegation of basketball players, including NBA stars, to Cuba as part of a cultural exchange program in 2016, the players held basketball clinics and played against Cuban teams, which helped to build relationships between the two countries and promote a positive image of the United States in Cuba.

Visiting the Ping Pong Diplomacy

Ping Pong diplomacy refers to the exchange of table tennis players that took place between the United States and China in the early 1970s. The exchange led to a thawing of the icy relationship between the two countries and ultimately led to the establishment of diplomatic relations.

The visit was seen as a gesture of goodwill by the Chinese government, and it helped to break down the barriers that had existed between the two countries. The American team's visit to China was widely covered in the media and captured the imagination of the American public, which had been largely hostile to the Chinese government in the past. As a result of the visit, diplomatic channels opened between, leading to a series of high-level visits and negotiations. In 1972, President Richard Nixon visited China, marking the first official visit by an American president to the country since 1949. This visit led to the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries and helped to pave the way for greater cooperation in trade, culture, and other areas.

The origins of ping pong diplomacy can be traced back to the 1960s. In the late 1960s, after more than a decade of the Vietnam War, which cost the United States at least \$250 billion in military expenditures, and a relative decline in its international standing compared to the Soviet Union, the United States objectively needed to seek a counterweight to the Soviet Union. On the other hand, the new China also wanted to resume diplomacy with the U.S. in order to improve its international political image and to regain its legal seat in the United Nations. But years of political and ideological divide left the two countries without a reasonable opportunity. On January 20, 1970, the two-year gap between the U.S. and Chinese ambassadorial talks resumed at the Chinese Embassy in Warsaw.

This was the first ambassadorial-level meeting between the U.S. government and China since Nixon took office. The U.S. Ambassador to Warsaw, Walter Stossel, and the Chinese Chargé d'affaires, Lei Yang, were sitting face to face across a table. In fact such ambassadorial talks have been held intermittently for fifteen years totaling 136 times, but have never achieved anything significant, yet have lasted the longest. For U.S.-China relations and issues between them, the point of ambassadorial talks is to maintain contact rather than to achieve success.

In 1971, the US table tennis team was in Japan for the World Table Tennis Championships. During the championship, they were invited by the Chinese team to visit China. This was the first time that American athletes had been invited to China since the communist revolution. This invitation was seen as a significant diplomatic breakthrough, as the United States and China had been estranged since the communist revolution in 1949 and had no official diplomatic relations. The Chinese hoped that the visit would help to bridge the gap between the two nations and pave the way for future diplomacy and cooperation.

The Americans were welcomed with open arms and were shown around the country. What's more, Nixon believed that by engaging with China, the United States could strengthen its position in the Cold War.

At the time, the United States was locked in a tense standoff with the Soviet Union, and Nixon saw China as a potential ally that could help to counterbalance Soviet influence in the world. By establishing diplomatic relations with China, Nixon hoped to create a new strategic partnership that would enhance America's security and influence on the world stage. Besides, Nixon had a personal ambition to be remembered as the American president who opened up dialogue with China. Nixon was keenly aware of the historical significance of the moment, and he believed that by engaging with China, the United States could advance its foreign policy objectives, while also creating a legacy for himself as a leader who had the vision and courage to pursue a bold new course in foreign relations.

During the world championship, Chinese table tennis player Zhuang Zedong was reported to have talked to a member of American team Glenn Cowan, who was late for his team bus and got a ride by the Chinese team. The two men exchanged gifts and the Chinese offered an arrangement of Chinese-American table tennis meeting. They were even invited to meet with Chairman Mao Zedong, which marked a significant moment in the history of China-US relations. The visit was reciprocated in 1972 when the Chinese table tennis team was invited to the United States for a friendly match. This was the first time that Chinese athletes had been allowed to visit the United States since the communist revolution.

The visit was a huge success and helped to create a positive atmosphere between the two countries. It was seen as a turning point which paved the way for the establishment of diplomatic relations.. It helped to break down barriers between the United States and China and created a sense of goodwill between the two countries. It also paved the way for greater cultural and economic exchange between the two countries. Ping pong diplomacy showed how sports can be used as a tool for diplomacy. It created a platform for dialogue between the United States and China, where previously there had been none. It also showed how a common interest in sports can break down political barriers and lead to peaceful relations.

The Impact of Ping Pong Diplomacy: The Why?

Today, sports diplomacy continues to be a vital tool in promoting peace, fostering cooperation, and addressing societal issues. It provides a non-threatening way for countries to engage with each other and can help to break down barriers and build trust. By focusing on sports, countries can find common ground and work towards shared goals. This can help to reduce tensions and build bridges between nations. Christopher Nixon Cox, grandson of former U.S. President Richard Nixon considers ping pong diplomacy as an embodiment of the awareness and exchange between the two countries. This is the best way to look forward and build a solid foundation through cooperation.



Cox believes that despite the many challenges facing the relationship between the two countries today, it is hoped that through communication and exchange, the two sides can understand each other's common concerns, strengthen the consensus and work together to resolve differences.

The road ahead for sports diplomacy is full of opportunities and challenges. As the world becomes more interconnected, the potential for sports diplomacy to make a positive impact is greater than ever before. However, there are also new challenges to overcome, such as the politicization of sports, the commercialization of sports events, and the need to address human rights issues in sports.

In order to address these challenges, it is important to continue to promote the soft approach in sports diplomacy. By focusing on building personal connections, promoting cultural exchange, and addressing societal issues, sports diplomacy can continue to make a positive impact on the world stage.

The impact of ping pong diplomacy on previous US-China relations is a powerful example of the potential of sports diplomacy, and it serves as a reminder of the importance of a soft approach in international relations, however after almost 50 years, at a time when national relations and the international situation are changing rapidly, we should think about how to use sports diplomacy wisely to improve relations between China and the U.S. at a time when the two countries' relations are stagnant.

In recent years, the relationship between China and the US has become increasingly tense due to a variety of factors, including trade disputes, geopolitical tensions, and human rights issues. Despite attempts at sports diplomacy, such as the US sending a delegation of basketball players to China in the 1970s and the recent NBA games played in China, these efforts have not been enough to fully ease tensions between the two nations.

One reason for this is that sports diplomacy, while it can serve as a useful tool for building relationships and fostering goodwill between nations, is not a panacea for solving complex geopolitical issues. In many cases, underlying issues and tensions between nations cannot be resolved through sports alone. Furthermore, sports diplomacy can sometimes be used as a means of soft power projection, where nations use sports as a way to enhance their own image and influence on the world stage. This can sometimes lead to tensions and even conflict, as other nations may feel threatened or undermined by such efforts.

In the case of China and the US, while sports diplomacy has helped to build some level of goodwill between the two nations, it has not been enough to fully address the underlying tensions and issues that exist between them. Instead, a more comprehensive approach that addresses the root causes of these tensions is needed in order to truly improve relations between the two nations.

The Impact of Ping Pong Diplomacy: The How?

The impact of ping pong diplomacy can be seen in the way that it opened doors for communication and diplomacy between countries that were previously at odds with one another. However, it is worth noting that while ping pong diplomacy was successful in its time, it may not be as effective in today's political climate. While some countries continue to use sports diplomacy as a tool for building relationships, others have adopted similar stances that may not be as successful.

One of the most notable examples of sports diplomacy was the Olympics in the past two decades. In both the 2012 and 2016 Olympics, the concept of "sportswashing" was present, as the host countries, the UK and Brazil respectively, used the games as an opportunity to showcase their nations and deflect from negative issues.



Similar to the 2008 Beijing Olympics, both events utilized cultural displays and hospitality to create a positive image of their countries and to distract from issues such as human rights abuses, political controversies, and economic disparities. In the case of the 2012 London Olympics, the games were used as a tool to promote national pride and unity, while downplaying issues such as budget deficits and social inequality. Similarly, the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics were used to showcase Brazil's natural beauty and cultural heritage, while deflecting from political corruption scandals, social unrest, and economic inequality. It is important to acknowledge and recognize the use of sportswashing in these events, as the promotion of a positive image through sports events can often be used as a distraction from more significant issues that require attention and action.

Despite the potential limitations of sports diplomacy, there are still many examples of its effectiveness in building relationships and promoting positive change. The use of sports events to showcase a nation's culture and identity can provide a platform for diplomacy and can help to bridge divides between nations. The World Cup is the most-watched sporting event in the world and provides a platform for nations to showcase their culture and identity. The World Cup has been used as a tool for diplomacy in the past. For example, during the 1966 World Cup, the North Korean team defeated Italy in a shock victory.

The victory was seen as a propaganda advance for North Korea, and it helped to advance the country's image on the world stage. As such, it is important to continue to explore the potential of sports diplomacy as a tool for promoting positive changes on the global stage.

Conclusion

Sports diplomacy has become an increasingly important tool for achieving diplomatic goals. It provides a platform for nations to showcase their cultural identity and engage in peaceful competition. Sports diplomacy has been used successfully in the past to achieve diplomatic goals, such as the ping pong diplomacy between the United States and China in the 1970s.

Sports diplomacy has also had a significant impact on international relations. It has been used to promote peace, create cultural understanding, and promote trade and economic relationships. The Olympics and the FIFA World Cup are examples of how sports can be used as a tool for diplomacy. However, we should also bear in the mind sports could also be used as political tools like “sportswash”, and sometimes it can be seen as a distraction from more pressing political issues and can be criticized for being superficial or not addressing the root causes of conflict, even used as a tool for propaganda or political gain by certain governments or leaders.

In conclusion, sports diplomacy has the potential to be a valuable tool for promoting international relations and achieving diplomatic goals. However, it is important to recognize that there are potential downsides to using sports as a diplomatic tool, such as the risk of it being used for propaganda or as a distraction from more pressing political issues. Therefore, policymakers must approach sports diplomacy with a clear understanding of its potential risks and benefits, and make informed decisions about its use in any given situation. Politicians should be well served with the understanding of how to use sports to fit their aims.

About the Author

Hao Zhang is a master student in International Institute of Social Studies-Erasmus University Rotterdam, he majors in Master of Development Studies, specializing in governance and development policy. He holds a bachelor degree in English Language and Literature, he writes his bachelor thesis with the title “On the Influence of Diplomatic Language Translation in Political Discourse from the Perspective of International Relations. He is currently a guest writer for “The United Nations Association Youth Platform of the United Kingdom”, he is also a co-authorship team member in “European Horizons” which he is now working on “Energy and Environment Policy”, he serves as the Public Policy Fellowship Candidate in the “Institute for Youth in Policy”, learns how to do the public policy design and discovering his interested topics. In his leisure time, Hao Zhang plays volleyball, table tennis, badminton and tennis. He also leads the volleyball team as a captain and now he is vice chair of the Sports Committee in ISS-EUR.



Cricket Diplomacy: A way forward for the regional rivals (India and Pakistan)

Muhammad Rauhan Rasheed

Introduction

India and Pakistan have always been gripped in contentions, primarily due to territorial and nationalistic reasons. The Kashmir border issue and ideological differences, such as India's emphasis on secularism and Pakistan's emphasis on the Two Nation Theory, have been the backbone of the conflict since the independence of the two states in 1947. However, mutual enmity has not restrained numerous attempts to melt the ice during any stalemate in the history of Indo-Pak rivalry. It is on record that both countries took several confidence-building measures to enhance tranquillity between them. For example, Indian dramas and movies were popular among Pakistani audiences during the 2000s. Similarly, India and Pakistan also granted each other the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status, which implies that the MFN status provider state may not treat any state that has been granted MFN status less favourably than another state that has been granted MFN status.

Later, in 2019, India regrettably scrapped the MFN status for Pakistan after the Pulwama attack that killed 40 Indian CRPF troops. It is important to note that despite several direct and indirect measures to diffuse tensions between the two nations, this resulted in mixed outcomes.

The relationship between the South Asian giants Pakistan and India is currently looming on the horizon. Both countries came to the brink of war in 2019 and sabotaged their cultural, diplomatic and economic ties. There is almost certainly an urgent need to mitigate a security threat to the region, as both states are nuclear powers. Any war between the two nations can have detrimental implications for the region's population, environment and future. Based on this background, pursuing sports diplomacy primarily using cricket seems the most feasible solution. You may be wondering, why cricket? Cricket is a familiar sport in both countries, with so much love and passion being showered on cricket by the majority of populations in both India and Pakistan.

The two nations are typically termed two cricket-crazy nations because whenever their two respective cricket teams clash, a unique aura is generated both in and outside the match venues. So, it is imperative to capitalise on a sport that is already loved by both nations. Incorporating some elements of diplomacy in that sport seems to be a masterstroke of a strategy. The success of President Obama's baseball diplomacy in breaking the deadlock between Cuba and the USA is a crucial case study that can serve as an inspiration and a positive precedent that can be emulated to give similar or relatively superior outcomes and potentially provide an unofficial reason and location for Indian and Pakistani PM to begin a dialogue.

A tense and very fearful situation can easily be converted into a more friendly outcome by cricket's role as a catalyst to trigger peace talks between South Asian neighbours like India and Pakistan.

History of Cricket Diplomacy in Sub-Continent

Cricket diplomacy refers to a political tool of using the game of cricket, often called the gentleman's game, to enhance or worsen the diplomatic ties between two or more cricket-playing nations. This term was first coined in 1987 by General Zia-ul-Haq in the Test match between India and Pakistan in Jaipur (Crick, 2005). This era was a period of intense tension between the two arch-rival nations.

Since then, cricket encounters have worked as ice-breakers and political signals in India-Pakistan bilateral relations. Residents of both countries are crazy about the game as this game brings happiness to the public even in the worst of times. This craze can be traced back to the 1990s when cricket became the centre of attraction. From elites to paramilitary forces of both countries, everyone liked and followed the game. The prime reason for this increased following of the sport of cricket was the political conflict that ensued in the background in the Kashmir region in those days.

The rise in viewership of cricket in the 1990s gave cricket diplomacy new heights between the two cricketing nations. The love for quality cricket played its magic into the hearts of the Pakistani public. The quality strokes of Sachin Tendulkar mesmerised the eyes of Pakistani audiences. In the same manner, the Indian audience admired the "reverse swinging" deliveries of Wasim Akram and the heroic performances of Imran Khan. This beauty of cricket gradually turned these top-class cricketers into ambassadors of their respective countries whenever they crossed the border to play on neighbouring soil. The fans also interacted in the stadiums, even though it was a tense interaction that can be perceived as unfavourable of each other. The peaceful engagement that followed allowed peacekeepers to unite people, and thankfully, the residents of both sides mirrored the emotions.

Later on, in 2004, cricket diplomacy reached maximum appeal as then-Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee boosted the newly-born friendship when he granted the green light to the Indian Cricket team tour of Pakistan. This tour became the first by an Indian cricket team in 19 years. It was an ingredient of what became known as the Peace Initiative by Indian PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Before the team departed for the tour, the PM invited them to his residence, where he emphasised the need "to not only win the matches but also to win the hearts of the Pakistani public". This was not just about cricket but more about cricket diplomacy, as the government of India was determined to spread peace through sport in its Peace Initiative.

The series was a resounding success and a new experience for both the Indian cricketers and their fans. The tour was headlined by bonhomie, as crowds supported the Indian cricket team wherever they went to play in Pakistan. Indians returned home from the tour with incredible stories, especially about the Pakistanis' hospitality. This made the series a hit both on the cricketing and political front because it brought people from either side of the border close together.

In response to the Indian team tour, the Pakistan team also toured India the following year, in 2005. The Pakistani cricketers and their spectators were met with a reciprocal heart-warming reception in India.

Signages and posters that read "bat and ball are better than an assault rifle and grenade", "Dil Dil Pakistan, Jaan Jaan Hindustan", and "Indo-Pak Friendship forever" were spotted in the cricket-crazy crowd. Unfortunately, the friendship saga got into shackles soon after the notorious November 26 attacks (26/11 attacks) in Mumbai, after which India called off all scheduled bilateral series with Pakistan and barred Pakistani players from playing in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

Cricket as Multi-track Diplomacy

Considering the state's past experiences and lessons, Pakistan and India can mitigate their animosity and reinforce the present by using cricket as a multi-track diplomacy tool to sway public perception. The gentleman's game can provide a set-up for sub-continent nations to influence public opinion, which is crucial for preventing enemy imaging. Moreover, cricket can offer the opportunity for Multinational Corporations to associate themselves with cricket through sponsorship deals, which can bring them revenue by reaching out to the broader population in the region.

In addition, cricket fans can become citizen diplomats who can play the role of essential activists who intervene to act as a catalyst for social change which can eventually positively transform a conflict. This way, this world can be much more pleasing and safer if countries start to settle scores not on the battlefield but on the sporting field.

Rather than nursing wounded soldiers and burying slain heroes, there will be delighted people celebrating sporting victories while the losing team's fans, despite the sorrowfulness of the losses, will be backing their team to pack a punch in the next match.

India and Pakistan can offer a coup de grace to any animosity between them without violence or spilling blood by shifting the theatre of war performed on land, air and sea to packed stadiums. The 2004-2008 period set a precedent that signifies that Cricket Diplomacy could work between the two countries and showed signs of being a successful tool for bringing the public of both states closer to each other through the mutual love for cricket.



Cricket Diplomacy 2.0: A Way Forward

The political clout governing the sports industry in Pakistan must seriously consider the prospect of reviving cricket between the two countries. Both countries can also take inspiration from the North and South Korea archrivalry, which saw the two countries jointly bidding to co-host the Summer Olympics 2023.

Although the governments of India and Pakistan may not need to move towards such a tall-order step, a possible scenario can still emerge where the prime ministers of both countries join hands to sit together for a cricket match on any shore; who knows what that can lead to? In that case, Cricket Diplomacy 2.0 can ensure the right step in moving towards a peaceful future.

Cricket Diplomacy has the potential to be the suitable course of action under the current circumstances as the deadlock between two nuclear giants cries out for a new communication medium. The failure of conventional diplomacy because of the futility of conventional peace measures and the intransigent foreign policy of both states has mounted enmity in the South Asian region, threatening peace and security. This has left the game of cricket as the only commonality that can ease the tension-ridden situation in the region.

Cricketing ties can improve relations and form undercurrents that can lead towards further cooperation on multiple fronts, such as economic cooperation. This can finally promote an environment that can make it safer and more comfortable for political leaders to take risks for peacebuilding.

Conclusion

The maintenance of continuous efforts for engagement on the cricket field needs to be kept in place by successive governments. Otherwise, the positive result will not last long, considering that cricket diplomacy has always been vulnerable to strategic surprises such as terrorist attacks, border clashes and the aggressive political behaviour of the right-wing Shiv Sena political party.

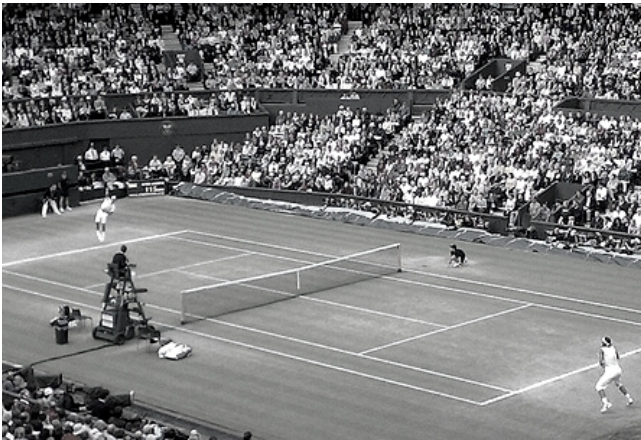
However, there exists a solid chance that constituencies supporting such disgraceful acts will shrink if both states schedule frequent on-field engagements and increase people-to-people contact. The increased engagement between the teams and fans will eventually spread positive perception and peace between the two nations, as happened earlier in the mid-2000s. One can only hope that the leadership of both countries provide another chance to cricket diplomacy and, this time, stick with it against the emerging obstacles.

About the Author

Muhammad Rauhan Rasheed is an early career researcher with a Bachelor's in International Relations from National Defence University, Islamabad. During his Bachelor's he wrote a thesis titled Wolf-Warrior Diplomacy: Origins, Conduct and Impact. Previously, he has worked with Pakistan's oldest and most prestigious media organisation, Pakistan Television Corporation (PTV), where he produced daily content and scripts for a show related to International Affairs. In addition, he has worked in the Pakistan Air Force Directorate of Media Affairs, which strengthened his understanding of military affairs. He is interested in China's foreign policy and South Asian politics. Apart from being an IR afficionado, he is a cinephile and holds an extensive understanding and knowledge of popular sports such as football and cricket.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE ON SPORTS

1.



Hint: Greatest tennis match and the last of the trilogy series at Wimbledon

2.



Hint: Racehorse that won the Belmont Stakes and Triple Crown; (first horse to win the Grand Slam of Thoroughbred racing)

3.



Hint: Most iconic goal in the NHL history ever

4.



Hint: The game where which country won after 24 years since their last world cup

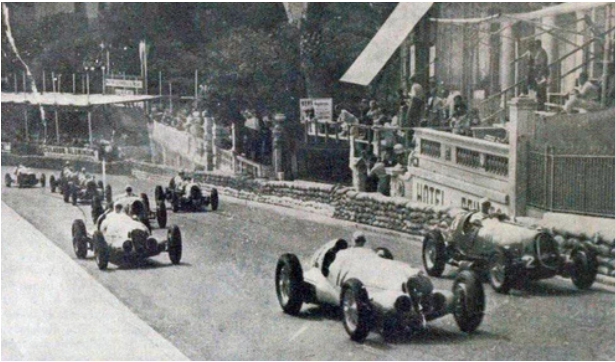
5.



Hint: These games are considered to be one of the most iconic games between two universities (The 1964 rivalry is best known)

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE ON SPORTS

6.



Hint: He won the 1937 French motor race held at Monaco

8.



Hint: A cycling event that happens in France; one of these fellows won the race times - 1957, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964

Hint: FIFA worldcup between two European countries with an alleged rumor of the match being fixed

7.



Hint: Robert Hayes winning the 100-metre dash in the Olympics that were first ever held in Asia

9.



Hint: The year where women were finally allowed to become athletes in 2 sports

10.



IGE SPRING ISSUE BOOK REVIEW

Running for My Life: One Lost Boy's Journey from the Killing Fields of Sudan to the Olympic Games by Lopez Lomong

Reviewer: Valentina Koumoulou

One would think that sports and diplomacy would not easily be linked to one another, especially when reading a book. However, "Running For My Life: One Lost Boy's Journey from the Killing Fields of Sudan to the Olympic Games" by Lopez Lomong certainly manages to combine the two concepts in a way that renders the reader speechless. It is the ultimate story of how an Olympian found glory in athletics despite having survived deeply traumatising experiences in his life. A story of hope and courage.

Reading through this book was a truly inspiring adventure that is worth sharing with the world.

How It All Started?

Lomong was six years old when he was abducted by rebels in Sudan with the aim of being recruited to fight for them if he survived. It was during a Sunday service that the rebels burst into the church, snatching all the children, both boys and girls, from their parents' hands.

Along the first chapters, he describes with incredible detail not only what happened during the transportation of the children to the detention camp of the rebels but also his thoughts and feelings. The most shocking revelation of his narration was that as a six-year-old boy, he was separated from the girls and was already aware that their fate would be much worse than his.

Life With The Rebels

After a few days passed in the camp, Lomong understood that he needed to establish a routine, otherwise he would not survive. He came across death daily watching other children not being able to survive the harsh conditions but he held on to his childhood innocence as much as he could. As the children were being divided into the strong and the weak ones, training started to take place that would be quite appealing to the older boys who had an idea of what was happening. Lomong was not one of them because he was too young not only to train and hold a gun but also to understand that this was the only way for him to endure his fate.

Escaping

He describes the experience of escaping the rebels as an act of God. Indeed, he was helped by three older children that were from the same village as him and it was their initiative to make the effort. They succeeded in escaping and their next adventure was to try and go to their village in Kimotong. However, this never happened because they lost track of the way back and their journey made them reach the border of Kenya, after which they found their way into Kakuma instead of their home, the site of UNHCR refugee camp, which would later allow him to fulfil his future dreams. After reaching the site, to his surprise, he never saw his three angels again and was left with the question of whether they had actually existed.

The Relationship with God

Lomong was religious since a little boy and it was his faith that helped him survive and accomplish his greatest achievements. When he reached Kakuma and received secular as well as religious education, he decided to get baptised. After this, he emerged even more dedicated to God than before and he did not leave his path once.

Running

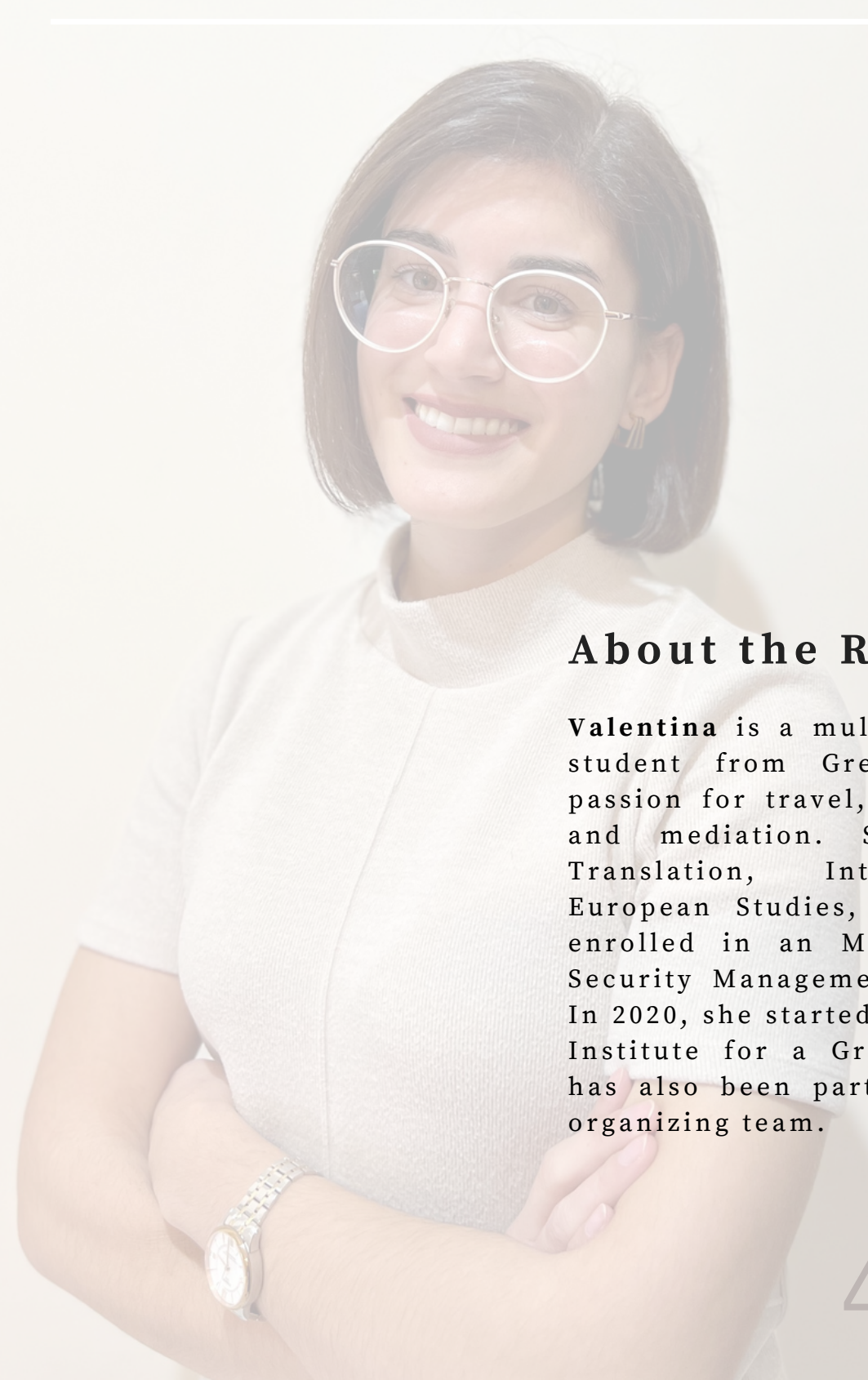
Running has been a second nature to Lomong ever since he was born. He was running to help his parents with chores, he was running a game with his friends, he was running to save his life away from the rebels.

He was running in Kakuma because it was the only stable thing in his life.

In the end, it was running that allowed him to make his dream come true and compete in the Olympics representing the USA. He fought very hard to make it to the US with the UN refugee program and was very lucky to enter the States right before 9/11 happened when these UN programs took a hit due to fears of terrorist attacks. Running was what provided him with a life he had never imagined he could have.

Why Diplomacy and Sports

Diplomacy can take many forms, one of which can be seen through its relation to athletic activities. Lomong was from a war torn African country whose dream was to represent the USA, his adopted home, in the Olympics winning the ultimate title and becoming a Nike sponsored athlete in the process. It was because the UN gave him the chance to change his life and overcome his traumatising past. Ever since he was six years old, he was running for his life and in the end, it was the UN's diplomatic efforts through refugee programs and his own resolve that allowed him to not only survive but thrive. He managed to win a gold medal for the USA during the Olympics of 2008 in Beijing. That is the reason why today, after having participated two times in the Olympics, he keeps running to help others through his philanthropic work aiming to provide clean water, education, health care, and nutrition to the people in South Sudan.



About the Reviewer

Valentina is a multilingual graduate student from Greece who has a passion for travel, foreign cultures, and mediation. She has studied Translation, International and European Studies, and is currently enrolled in an MSc in Crisis and Security Management in The Hague. In 2020, she started as a writer in the Institute for a Greater Europe and has also been part of a few events organizing team.

IGE'S READING LIST SPRING 2023

From fiction to memoirs to academia

- Rory Smith: Expected Goals: The Story of How Data Conquered Football and Changed the Game Forever
- Stuart Murray: Sports Diplomacy Origins, Theory and Practice
- J. Simon Rofe (ed): Sports & Diplomacy: Games within Games
- Heather L. Dichter and Andrew L. Johns (eds): Diplomatic Games: Sport, Statecraft, and International Relations since 1945 (Studies In Conflict Diplomacy Peace)
- Daniel James Brown: The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics
- Robert Peterson: Only the Ball Was White: A History of Legendary Black Players and All-Black Professional Team
- Craig Esherick, Robert E. Baker & Steven Jackson, and Michael Sam: Case Studies in Sport Diplomacy
- Calum Jacobs: A New Formation: How Black Footballers Shaped the Modern Game
- Michelle M. Sikes, Toby C. Rider & Matthew P. Llewellyn: Sport and Apartheid South Africa. Histories of Politics, Power, and Protest

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

ANSWERS

1. Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal at the 2006 Wimbledon Championships
2. American Pharoah & jockey Victor Espinoza win the Belmont Stakes and the first Triple Crown since 1978 at Belmont Park (New York)
3. Bobby Orr with the Boston Bruins getting tripped before scoring "the goal" during the Stanley Cup playoffs against the St. Louis Blues on May 10, 1970
4. Brazil vs Germany, FIFA 2014 at Belo Horizonte
5. Harvard vs Yale Football Game (Iconic Rivalry 1964)
6. Grand Prix de Monaco 1937, dans la rampe de Sainte-Dévote: The 100 lap event was won by Manfred von Brauchitsch
7. The American sprinter Robert Hayes won the 100-metre dash in front of Enrique Figuerola and Henry Jerome at the Tokyo Olympics. Tokyo, October 1964
8. Jacques Anquetil and Charly Gaul at Tour de France; Jacques won in 1957, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964
9. Before the Olympic games of 1900 in Paris, women were not allowed to participate in the competition. In that year, the disciplines of lawn tennis and Golf were declared women athletes.
10. 1974 FIFA World Cup: Germany vs Netherlands



S O U R C E S

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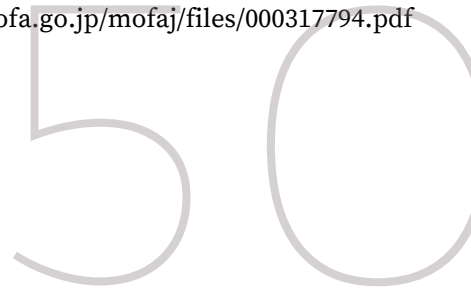
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IGE's Book Review

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