

SERIES REPORT

SPORT IN THE COMMONWEALTH SEMINAR SERIES

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As part of the lead up to the Commonwealth Games in Manchester, I was asked to organise a series of seminars on sport in the Commonwealth by Professor Tim Shaw, Director of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies (ICS) at the University of London. The series ran from January to June 2002 at the Institute in Russell Square in London. The series was sponsored by the Association of Commonwealth Universities, the ICS and the University of Abertay Dundee.

The series marks an important development for the academic place of sport in international studies and the increasing interface between so-called mainstream areas of study and sports studies. This series was the first one to focus on sport that the Institute has hosted and included a number of exciting presentations, some by ASSH members.

The first paper in the series was presented on 8 February by David Black, who heads the international studies program at Dalhousie University, Canada. His paper focused on how sport interfaced with politics and international relations within the Commonwealth with particular relation to his own work on southern Africa. ASSH member, Malcolm MacLean, University of Gloucestershire, followed with a fascinating study of sporting nationalism and identities in Aotearoa/New Zealand drawing on post-colonial theories. His paper was followed by a revisiting of Kenyan running by John Bale of Keele and Aarhus Universities. Bale examined the first appearance of Kenyan runners at the 1954 Commonwealth Games and subsequent issues related to the framing of Kenyan runners in Western discourse. John Nauright, University of Abertay Dundee, examined gender and race issues in the Commonwealth through a case study analysis of work he and Tara Magdalinski have done on the media representation of Eric Moussambani at the Sydney Olympics. Paul Dimeo, Stirling University, presented his work on cricket, football and identity in colonial India. The final seminar in the series, which was co-sponsored by the Menzies Centre of Australian Studies at the University of London, was presented by Tara Magdalinski, University of the Sunshine Coast, and was entitled 'Reading Home/Bush: Representations of Australian Landscapes During Sydney 2000'.

While versions of some these papers are in the process of being published, we hope to be able to bring the series papers together in a single collection in the near future. Seminars dealing with sport in the Commonwealth will continue during the 2002-3 academic year at the ICS. For further information on future presentations or to offer a paper please contact John Nauright, Director, Abertay Sport and Leisure Research Group, University of Abertay Dundee, Dundee DD1 1HG, Scotland; phone: +44 1382 308146; email: j.nauright@abertay.ac.uk.