

Ueberhorst, Horst, Frisch, Frei, Stark Und Treu: Die Arbeiter-sportbewegung in Deutschland, 1893-1933, (Dusseldorf: Droste, 1973). 353 pp.

To begin with, this is a very careful, uncommonly informative and essential portrayal of one of the most important chapters of modern German Sports history; a book not to be ignored, which deals with the origins and future of sport; a historical discussion, the merit of which not least exists in disclosing the fascinating reality of the leading ideas of labour-sport, and, in an almost challenging manner, in comparing

modern sport with ideas which are seen as a task still to be carried out; an objective, scientifically accurate analysis, with a wealth of source-material, carefully detailed, but never straying from the general theme, a masterpiece of historical-scientific research.

Sports history is here described as political history. If, in the case of the labour sport movement, the political and philosophical standpoints of which were consciously aligned with those of the former *SPD*, this is immediately evident, this very example is proof of the fact that modern sports history must fundamentally not only be regarded as social history, but also, quite explicitly and more than in the past, be regarded as political history. The history of labour sport provides clear proof that sport has become directly involved in primarily political issues, and that party struggles affect sport not only in a superficial manner, but fundamentally influence its own particular policies. The difficulties experienced by labour sport did not only lie in the conflict with bourgeois sport groups, above all with athletic clubs, but just as much in the separation from communism, where the Party dictates as to what sport should or should not do. It says much for the political reasoning of the leading figures in labour sport, that they, on the basis of their own type of democratic socialism, regard themselves as the leaders of a social-democratic, self-governing sports body, and consciously incur the risk of having even the victories and defeats of their political homeland automatically put down to their sport. The same has happened in the case of the professional sport associations.

The first painful attempt to create in Germany a socialistic physical culture - (from the smallest beginnings, before the First World War, stamped with the conflicts and underhand dealings of the Wilhelminian State and its social agencies, after the War unfolding in a dynamic fashion, but shaken by the struggle with Communist opposition) - ended after a systematic and consistent development - (organizing national and international framework, strengthening of the internal structure, education, ideological grounding and literature) - with prohibition and forced dissolution by the Nazis of an association, which in 1933 had 1.3 million members.

The waiving of a rebirth after 1945 may have become hard for many in view of the history of this sport since 1893. If today's student sport groups urge that this historical sports tradition, too, should receive its rights and recognition within the *DSB*, they need only be asked if they are aware of what gigantic moral, and humanitarian commitments they would be making in this connection. The forms of bondage and pauperization change. The claim to remedy this through sport, however,

will remain undiminished if the summons to labour sport is loud enough. To have interpreted and analyzed the content and quality, and condition and consequence of this claim, rather than scientific achievement, is the real merit of Ueberhorst's work.

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