

Johnson, William, ed. *Sport and Physical Education Around the World*. Champaign, Illinois: Stipes Publishing Company, 1980. Pp. xiii, 615. Notes, references, tables, pictures. Paper. \$14.90.

*Sport and Physical Education Around the World* is the culmination of a project begun at the University of Illinois when the Rho Chapter of Phi Epsilon Kappa selected "Comparative Sport and Physical Education Around the World" for its 1955 program theme. The papers, which international students presented concerning their homelands during that year, became the first of seven monographs on international sport published by the Fraternity. This book, which consists of articles on thirty-six countries by forty-one authors and co-authors, includes papers from all of the monographs, either revised and updated by their original authors or with additions by others. A few were written specifically for this book. William Johnson, Associate Professor of Physical Education at the University of Illinois, was editor of all of the monographs as well as the final book. Johnson has travelled extensively and held a

variety of editorial positions concerned with international sport and physical education. Several of the contributors to the book are outstanding authorities on sport and physical education, particularly in the countries about which they have written. Among the more notable: Ion Ioannides, Greece; Daeshik Kim, Republic of Korea; Nicolaas J. Mollenijzer, Austria; and Jan Broekhoff, Netherlands.

“This book is an effort to provide background information . . . to continue the development of a ‘body of knowledge’ in international and comparative sport and physical education.” (xi). While each author was allowed considerable freedom of style, in order to facilitate area and comparative studies, all papers supposedly include the following topics:

- (1. General background or introductory information
  - (2. Historical background of education, sports and physical education
  - (3. Sports programs in-and-out of school, local, district, national, international, and Olympic games
  - (4. Physical education at various school levels
  - (5. Professional preparation of teacher-coaches
  - (6. Special characteristics such as indigenous activities, sports clubs, etc.
- (xii).

This massive undertaking includes not only the above-mentioned information but also data on all contributors and bibliographies of varying lengths. The book possesses all of the known pitfalls of multiple authorship, including uneven style and quality, lack of continuity, and overlapping and repetitive information, as well as the typical problems of certain revisions, the failure to really revise and update. Some chapters still have no date later than 1974.

Chapters vary in length from eight pages (Norway) to twenty-eight (Columbia and the Soviet Union). Some, most particularly Brazil, devote more space to geography, economics and culture than to sport and physical activities. Some writers include one or several of the following: photographs of champion athletes, stadiums and other buildings, floorplans of athletic complexes, extensive charts and graphs (not always in English), maps, poetry, and complete courses of study for physical education majors.

Obviously, the book does not lack information. However, it suffers greatly from lack of editing! There are many glaring, sometimes confusing errors which should not be found in a publication which has been in progress as long as this one. The vital statistics on Miroslav Tyrs are so completely wrong that he is credited with founding the Sokol twenty-two years before his birth. (p. 163). A Forty Million Dollar Sports Palace in Bahrain will be completed in 1890. (p. 59). Italy is misspelled in the table of contents. However, all of these problems pale compared to the shock of reaching page 615 and finding

that there is no index to all of this information. Hence, if one wishes to compare the relative popularity of soccer and swimming, or determine the influence of British education on sport, one must simply begin on page one and read, read, read. The chapters are arranged alphabetically from Australia to Yugoslavia. Finally, there is no synthesizing information whatsoever. Editor Johnson provides not a clue as how to approach this mass of data.

Surely some arrangement other than alphabetical order would help, even grouping the countries by continent, gross national product, or order of finish in the 1976 Olympic Games. Much more helpful would be an index, and some tables. One might list the population, area, average income, Freedom House Classification, and Olympic status or number of participants for each nation. Listing the page numbers on which each of the major topics is begun in each chapter would also be invaluable.

*Sport and Physical Education Around the World* should be very useful as either a reference or a textbook. However, unless one wants to know, "What's happening in Kuwait?" it is very difficult to use as a reference since it is impossible to look anything up. The difficulties of using it as a text are even greater. Not all of the chapters cover all of the six topics listed by the Editor. Some include nothing but school sport and physical education. Several give no meaningful history of sport and physical education, and some have no sport history at all. Furthermore, the authors have widely differing views as to what constitutes history of sport in their native countries. Di Donato, writing about Italy, states: "Sport developed during the second half of the nineteenth Century . . ." (p. 365), while Ioannides traces Greek sport history back to the *Illiad*. Thus the book would be impossible to use as a primary text in sport or physical education history and very difficult in comparative sport and physical education. At best it might be useful as a companion text in international physical education.

All of its pitfalls might be excused if this book were the only one of its kind, but in the twenty-five years since this pioneering project was begun, much has been written on international sport and physical education. Several scholarly and accurate textbooks, some covering large numbers of countries and some concentrating on a few politically affiliated nations, are available. Thus, it no longer fills a great void in the literature. In summary, *Sport and Physical Education Around the World*, while it does contain a wealth of information, some of it written by internationally renowned experts, is of uneven quality, poorly organized and edited, and extremely difficult to use.