

## Book Reviews

Macintosh, Donald, and Hawes, Michael, *Sport and Canadian Diplomacy*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's, 1994. Pp. vii, 234. Notes, bibliography, index. \$34.95 (Canadian).

North Americans are often shocked to learn that their governments have intervened in sports to pursue international political or economic ends. One line of argument I've often heard is that governments learned the lesson from the widely condemned U.S.-led boycott of the 1980 Olympics in Moscow and now generally stay out of sports.

Yet as Queen's University professors Donald Macintosh and Michael Hawes show from an examination of government records and extensive interviews, Canadian governments have long sought through sports to improve the interests of Canadians abroad and to gain advantage for the Canadian state, and they continue to do so.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the concern was overcoming the negative publicity created in Europe by "brutish" and "reprehensible" Canadian hockey players. The "hockey diplomacy" which ensued led to the 1972 Canada-USSR series. (The authors make a point of showing that former hockey czar Alan Eagleson is not entitled to the credit for bringing about this series that he has always claimed.) Canada's story-book comeback win not only repaired the country's image abroad, but by contributing to closer relations with the Soviets enabled Ottawa to develop a measure of foreign policy independence from the U.S.

In the years that followed, fresh challenges kept the External Affairs sports officers hopping. Much of their activity was necessitated by the staging of international games in Canada, which both sports and political leaders sought as a means of stimulating and showcasing domestic sports development.

It was not always easy to reconcile the needs of sport with other government ambitions. In 1976, the Trudeau Government's last-minute application of its one-China policy to the Montreal Olympics—which led it to refuse entry to athletes and coaches from the Taiwanese "Republic of China," in violation of Olympic rules—almost precipitated the cancellation of the Games. (In the end, a compromise was reached. Canada agreed to allow them entry, as long as they competed in the name of Taiwan. At that point, the Taiwanese withdrew.)

In 1980, the government's decision to support the Moscow Olympic boycott provoked the lasting bitterness of most athletes and coaches. Yet, even for Trudeau, there was a limit to Canada's independence from the U.S.

Macintosh and Hawes draw two conclusions from their analysis. The first is that government interests are so varied that it is often impossible to get consensus, even among those on the inside. The Ministries of External Affairs and Fitness and Amateur Sport often disagreed. In the simple case of international sports exchanges, which grew considerably over the period, External Affairs wanted partnerships to advance foreign policy objectives, such as favorable dealings with the developing world, while FAS sought countries which would provide the best athletic competition. As a result of these conflicts, policy-making was endlessly delayed if not paralyzed altogether.

Secondly, Macintosh and Hawes argue that the sports diplomacy of states like Canada is often necessitated and usually complicated by the actions of transnational bodies such as the International Olympic Committee and the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa, whose energetic interventions often forced Canada into taking a tougher stand against apartheid South Africa than otherwise might have been the case. The authors provide further evidence for the argument increasingly heard in discussions of economic policy that the power of the nation state is decidedly on the wane, and for John Hoberman's contention that the international sport federations are autocratic and unaccountable.

The strength of this book is the behind-the-scenes account it provides of developing policies and internal debates. Many of the endnotes acknowledge "confidential sources." I took an active role in lobbying government on many of these issues and still learned a great deal from what the authors uncovered.

At the same time, their preoccupation with government has left their analysis—and their vocabulary—too closely tied to the federal government. A case in point is their analysis of the long campaign against apartheid sport, into which Canadian governments were drawn in the 1970s, and to which almost half of the book is devoted. While they recognize the efforts of sports activists like myself, they virtually ignore the widespread protests of organized labor, the churches, and the solidarity organizations which made the overall issue of combatting apartheid one of national politics.

But, on the whole, *Sport and Canadian Diplomacy* breaks important new ground in its description and analysis of the international activities of the Canadian government and ably complements Macintosh's two earlier books on sport and the state.

After a long and courageous struggle, Don Macintosh was taken by cancer on June 21, a few weeks after the book was released. The dean of physical education at Queen's University for many years and one of Canada's most widely respected sports leaders, Don gave vital encouragement to the sociocultural study of sports and contributed a large number of insightful articles and books on his own. He was a giant in our field and will be sorely missed.