

that the ambitious objectives initially set by the authors produce as many frustrations as satisfactions for the reader.

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(translated by Win Hayes)

JOSE, COLIN. *American Soccer Leap, 1921-31: The Golden Years of American Soccer*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1998. Pp. x + 544. Illustrated. Index, appendices. \$70.00 cb.

To date the American Soccer League (ASL) has held a rather enigmatic place in the history of soccer. We have known for some time that it was significant—both as a forerunner of later professional leagues like the NASL and an early example of the international migration of athletic talent—but knew relatively little about its own history and structure. The outline was clear, but the details needed filling in. Colin Jose's book does this job admirably.

Like his earlier work, this is essentially a statistical account of the competition, but Jose provides a much broader context for the data by including short essays on the ASL's overall history and yearly accounts of its progress. He has gleaned some important information on the eventual failure of the league, explained by the perennial problem of internal conflict with the more amateur-inclined national association along with the economic impact of the 1929 stock market crash. However, the reasons behind the ASL's fairly rapid rise from small beginnings into "a league of international renown" (9) are less clear. Why were certain businessmen suddenly prepared to invest unprecedented sums of money in soccer clubs? Were they motivated by the prospect of financial gain, prestige, social control, or some combination of these factors?

The most fascinating feature of the ASL was its attempt to import foreign professionals in large numbers, a policy which brought it into conflict with clubs and national associations in Europe and even threatened the United States' membership in FIFA, the world governing body. As such, the history of the ASL is part of a wider story of footballers as labor migrants. Jose is clearly aware of this international dimension, even including a short two-page section called "The American Menace" on Scotland's reaction to the loss of players. Indeed, he has unearthed some tantalizing details about the offers made to European players and the European attitude towards American soccer that should provide a basis for further analysis. However, although Jose has utilized some European sources and consulted with historians and statisticians across the Atlantic, an academic study of the ASL's importation policy would need to consider its effect on both donor and recipient countries in more depth.

Jose's statistical record of the ASL, drawn mainly from the patchy coverage of local newspapers, can hardly be faulted. He has pieced together every fixture, goal scorer and appearance in the league schedule as well as documenting other important competitions of the period as they affected ASL teams, particularly the United States Open Cup, the International League of 1926, and North American tours by foreign clubs. Most impressive of all are the Player Register and Biography sections, which will undoubtedly come to

serve as a rich mine of information and data for soccer historians. The biographies of British professionals are particularly well researched and informative, and seem to suggest that not all imports were opportunists after a quick buck (the parallel with the NASL here is not unnoticed). Many settled in the States, became citizens, remained involved in American soccer, as coaches or administrators. For every sojourner who stayed a summer or less there was a Malcolm Goldie, who after his playing career worked as soccer coach at the MIT, or a Harold Brittan, who bought an automobile dealership and later an ASL club. The handful of Austrians, Hungarians, Czechs, and Swedes who moved to the ASL, most of whom had reached international status, are also covered extensively. Ironically, but perhaps not surprisingly, much less is known about the majority of native North American players, with the exception of "stars" such as Archie Stark and Billy Gonzales or others like Joe Kennaway and Barney Battles who made their name in British soccer.

This book is much more than a statistical history. It provides the best account of the ASL and the so-called "Golden Years" of American soccer to date and, as such, is invaluable to the professional historian of the game as much as the soccer enthusiast. But it is also testament to the long years of research by Jose, and other historians, who in a very real sense have managed (to borrow E.P. Thompson's famous phrase) to rescue the ASL from "the enormous condescension of posterity." With no official records and little reference to the league in contemporary (or subsequent) writing, Jose should be applauded for meticulously piecing together such an authoritative record of these "forgotten years of American soccer" (ix).

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LADD, TONY, AND JAMES A. MATHISEN. *Muscular Christianity: Evangelical Protestants and the Development of American Sport*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999. Pp. 288. Notes. \$20.99 pb.

Rational standards of acceptability are often defined by the religious ethos of a society. In nineteenth-century America, in large part evangelical Protestants defined the religious ethos. A gradual change in the theology of these evangelicals had dramatic effects upon the broader culture. Tony Ladd and James Mathisen recognize this important element that shapes social history, but has been ignored by most historians. In their book *Muscular Christianity: Evangelical Protestants and the Development of American Sport*, Ladd and Mathisen argue that evangelical Protestants were one of the driving forces in the growth of physical culture in the latter half of the nineteenth century. When part of their accepted theology changed, they withdrew from their role as leaders and promoters of sport, until they learned to find usefulness for sport that matched the objectives of their new theology.

Ladd and Mathisen demonstrate how muscular Christianity quickly diverged from its British parent, evolving into a social movement that was uniquely American in culture and evangelical and postmillennial in its theology. Most evangelical Protestants of the nineteenth century held a postmillennial theology. If sport participation really improved a person's character, it could be used to improve the human condition. These nineteenth-century