

The Role of Italian Sports Societies in Trenton, New Jersey

by

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Recent urban studies of ethnic communities in Chicago and St. Louis have said little or nothing about the role of sports in community life. This, I feel, is a great oversight, and has left blank an important dimension of urban and social history. My paper will study the history of Sport Societies, in particular, the Kent Athletic Association, in the Chambersburg ("The Burg") section of Trenton, New Jersey. The population of this large "neighborhood" has been, and still is, very heavily Italian and the geographic boundaries of "The Burg" have remained essentially the same since the 1920s. Sports have been, in all ethnic communities, an important element of structured community life. There were ties between the Church (the Catholic Church, especially) and organized sports, and between industry and the development of community sports organizations. The role that the Kent A.A., one of the earliest and largest of the Italian "social clubs" played in the process of assimilation and acculturation for immigrants, and for first generation Italians, will be examined, and speculations on the degree, if any, that sports contributed to the "melting pot" of American Society will be offered.

The reasons for the founding of the Kent A.A., its goals and programs, and the change over a period of time, from its emphasis on sponsoring semiprofessional caliber teams, in the industrial leagues of Trenton and surrounding Mercer County, to its more recent policy of supporting Little League and other "young adult" sports programs, will be examined. Finally, the paper will offer an over-view of the role and place of ethnic sports organizations within the framework of the large sports community of a northern city.



Observations on the Use of Sport as a Diplomatic Tool in the Cold War

by

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International Sport is a form of direct competition between nations, yet the mass public does not expect its leaders to go to war to redress either athletic defeats or disputed rulings by sporting officials. Sport is, therefore, *peripheral* to global intergovernmental (political, economic, military) relations.

Modern communications technology, however, makes matches of national interest immediately available to anyone who wants to watch or listen. It enables the *mass public*, which identifies with the athletes, to take instant notice of contests against individuals or teams from friendly or hostile states. National governments can use sporting events to demonstrate the temper of relations between nation-states. Sport, due to its peripheral political status and mass public audience, assumes an active role in the expression of the international political climate.

Sport is also used as an expression of national strength. National programs for physical culture are often promoted in order to maximize the use of human beings for whatever the "National Effort" is designed to be.

The United States and Soviet Union use both the public/peripheral political nature of sport and the linkage between physical culture and national defense and in the struggle between them. Sport is one of the favorite arenas for the demonstration of the prowess of the "New Soviet Man" and the "All-American Boy."

The Sport System of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: An Illustrated Analysis

by
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In the U.S.S.R., the dependence of sport on the political system has always been explicit, where this institution is regarded as an extension of the state politically and ideologically. The Soviet sport program has always had specific socio-political objectives affixed to it as evidenced by a Party resolution appearing in 1925:

"Physical culture must be considered not only from the point of view of physical training but should also be utilized as a means to rally the broad working masses around various Party, Government and trade union organizations through which the masses of workers and peasants are drawn into social and political life . . . Physical culture must play an integral part in the general political and cultural training of the masses."

Some sources conservatively estimate that \$2.2 billion is spent annually in fulfilling an axiom attributed to Lenin that "a nation cannot be strong, unless it is strong in sports." It is significant to note that the organization, supervision, financial support, selection of leaders, construction of facilities, control of award systems, and selection of athletes for international competition is considered just as important as any other function of government. Beginning with the establishment of the Supreme Council of Physical Culture in 1923, the Soviet Union became the first country in the world to establish a ministry of sport and physical education as a regular department of the government. This tradition has continued