

Games Northerners Play – The Arctic Winter Games and the Northern Games – Reflections of One or Several Canada Norths?

V. A. PARASCHAK

H. A. SCOTT

University of Alberta

Edmonton, Alberta 26G 258

The hypothesis that a society's culture will be strongly reflected in its sport has gained acceptance almost to the point of becoming a cliché. Presumably, a close examination of sport should tell us something about its macrosocietal base. What insights, if any, could study of sport in dynamically changing societies such as those in Canada's North provide us with about the underlying cultures? Originally divided along the Arctic treeline into Dené and Inuit lands, the North subsequently experienced colonization by European churches and fur merchants, and is currently struggling for some new form of pluralistic equilibrium. Whether this struggle will eventuate in some further neocolonialism, a truly multicultural plural society, or a "multinational" federation remains to be seen. How, if at all, would sport reflect these changing cultural realities? Two focal points for Northern sport are the Arctic Winter Games comprised almost exclusively of "Euro-Canadian" sports and the Northern Games composed entirely of aboriginal activities. What are their similarities and differences - and do they support, or refute the contention that games reflect culture? An historical examination of each of these sports festivals-how they came to be, how they are administered and what they include - will provide the data for the analysis of these questions.



NASSH members got to see first-hand the perils of the rodeo bareback rider.