

The Demise of the Oxford and Cambridge Achilles Club (1920-1985)

PETER TREADWELL

South Glamorgan Institute of Higher Education

The paper looks at the foundation, zenith and nadir of the famous athletics 'club' which emanated from Britain's major academic and sporting universities, Oxford and Cambridge. Images of public school athleticism and muscular christianity are portrayed by the early undergraduates of that social and academic elite as are the democratizing and proletarian influences of the contemporary sport and society. In essence, what is monitored is not only the passage of history of the club and its famous members, but the dominant mainstream values that came from the institution and the athletes as it was affected by the social constraints and cultural influences of the time.