

# A Speculative Paradigm on the Birth of the Modern Sport Spectacular: The Real Madrid (Spain), Eintracht-Frankfurt (Germany) European Cup Final of 1960 at Hampden Park, Scotland.

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Allen Guttman's model on the nature of modern sports, despite some bruising challenges, stands as an ideal starting point in any analysis of the nature and function of modern sport. Thus Guttman's concepts of sacred/secular, equality, specialization, rationalization, bureaucratization, quantification, and records, are all very apparent in the emergence and evolution of what was a post World War II phenomenon, a European championship, in this case in the sphere of soccer. However, by the 1950's there was what this writer chooses to call the emergence of the "sport spectacular." In essence, sporting occasions that transcended the boundaries of expected entertainment and generated a cultural tide of appreciation for athletic performance. The 1936 Olympics has been excluded from this discussion because of the political clout of the Nazi state and the ideological barnstorming that went under the umbrella of "sport." Were the 1952 or 1956 Olympics "sport spectaculars"? Or did sports spectaculars have to wait for Pete Roselle's Superbowl?

A possible paradigm was developed and selects the setting for the 1960 European Cup Final as a testing ground for the following reasons. A European or international stage rather than a national one. The display of the professional emigre athlete. For example, there were celebrated Hungarian players who had fled their homeland as a result of the Soviet invasion (1956) and who now appeared as new athletic heroes in a land known for bullfighting and art rather than soccer (Spain). Also, these star players were recognized and in some respects adored by a European audience. Hampden Park, Glasgow, Scotland can accommodate 132,000 people. Vast crowds were in attendance for the national team. What peculiar cultural dynamic was at play when 132,000 came to watch a German and a Spanish soccer team play. There was the impact of an even greater number of spectators—a British and European television audience. Finally, the match itself was a festival of flair with many goals being scored.

This speculative paradigm argues that the crowd has an active not a passive role in the event. Guttman's *Sports Spectators* therefore adds an eighth dimension in "the spectator". C.L.R. James and his work on cricket yields the notion of the "centrality" of sport in the human condition. So, centrality is seen as a ninth dimension. Alan Metcalfe, in a 1991 NASSH presentation saw "community" as a critical ingredient in understanding North of England sport in mining communities of East Northumberland, 1800-1914. In 1960 at Hampden Park there were a series of "communities", the spectators, the actual Glasgow environment, a German contingent, a Spanish ensemble, etc. The

tenth area then is community. The final concept is the mass culture of television as articulated so ably by Roberts and Olson (1989). The model has many weaknesses. For example, the 1960 European Cup Final was not televised to the USA; it did not get a write up in *Sports Illustrated*; and for a North American audience the game was a non-event. In other words, whatever went on at Hampden park did not have the global significance of the Munich Olympics or Ali's fights for the heavyweight boxing championship in Zaire, Africa or Manilla, Philippines. Nevertheless, material was presented supporting an 11 stage paradigm on the establishment of a modern sport spectacular by 1960, albeit in a European context.