

Bang-Chool Kim
The Ohio State University

**Sport, Gender and the Transnational Hero: Chan Ho
Park, Se-Ri Pak and the Korean Press**

Over the past decade, an expanding number of scholars have paid growing attention to the globalization of sport. In general these studies have examined the commodification of Western sports teams and athletes into the mass markets of Asia, Latin America and Africa. Within the context of this inquiry, scholars have also begun to look at the transnational migration of

athletes. While this scholarship has enhanced our understanding of a major recent trend within sport, the research has not paid attention to how these athletes are presented in their own country and what symbolic meanings they articulate. This paper examines how three different types of Korean newspapers (one sporting, one general interest English-language and one Korean-language) presented the trials and tribulations of baseball player Chan Ho Park and golfer Se-Ri Pak during their initial years in professional sports in the United States. For Park, it was his emergence in Major League Baseball from 1994 to 2002, and for Pak, it is her initiation to Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) from 1998 to 2002.

The examination of how the Korean press presented Park and Pak revolved around several themes: (1) how did the media discuss their respective athletic abilities in general and especially what did they believe it said about Korea's standing in the athletic community in the post Seoul Olympics years; (2) how were these athletes viewed as representatives of Korea in general and how did they represent Korea to a growingly affluent diasporas Korean community in America; and, (3) how did they present Park and Pak within Korean concepts of masculinity and femininity and did they employ similar or different vocabularies to discuss these athletes.

This study draws upon Don-a Il bo (Seoul), Korea's largest daily newspaper, the English-language Korean Herald, and Seoul Sports or Ilgan Sports. For Park, these papers were looked at during the baseball season and for Pak were examined during the times that she played in LPGA tournaments. These papers will be contextualized by a variety of secondary sources. Cited are historical works on Korea, historical, political and sociological works on sport in Korea, western countries and Japan, and Korean newspapers.
