

SPORT, RACISM AND URBAN POLICY IN SOUTH AFRICA: PIETERMARITZBURG, A CASE STUDY¹

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It is generally accepted that sport is a major component of the way of life of white South Africa: it has often been referred to as a national religion, and it remains to this day a form of political expression. Rugby, in particular, is a metaphor for white virility and political power;² and during the isolated days of high apartheid, used for the purposes of escapism and defiance against the anti-apartheid movement, it attained quasi-mystical stature for the Right. Just as white South Africa expropriated labour, space and other resources, so it has appropriated sport and used it unashamedly as a political tool, most notably in the area of urban policy.

Colonialism and apartheid rewarded whites with health, wealth and leisure at the expense of the majority of the population.³ The twentieth century history of South Africa has been characterised by the elimination of the last vestiges of political opportunity which blacks might have had to rectify this situation. Such circumstances resulted in the understanding in resistance circles that sport was indeed a political issue which could not be divorced from the general liberation struggle; and resulted in the growth from the 1960s of the non-racial sports movement and the international boycott.

This article explores the parallel growth of black (after 1970 non-racial) and white sports facilities in a medium-sized city during this century. Pietermaritzburg is the capital of Natal, although in terms of population it has been subordinate to Durban since the late nineteenth century. Natal is often referred to as the 'last outpost of the British Empire' although many of those who voice this sentiment omit to say (or are too ill-informed to realise) that this involves the survival of some of the less

savoury, and often perverted, attitudes which accompanied British imperialism. Suffice it to say that any student of surviving British colonial Victorian values would consider Natal fertile terrain for research. Colonialism and segregation were strongly entrenched in Pietermaritzburg during the first half of this century; and on to this was grafted, from 1948, formalised apartheid, which took a grip on the town from the late 1950s onwards and did not begin to fall apart in a legal sense until 1990. The purpose of this article is to look at the ways in which segregated sports facilities in Pietermaritzburg reflected national social norms and white political strategy during this century. Central to this purpose will be the idea that sport was used as a tool of political and economic control of blacks by whites.⁴

Imperial Segregation: Urban Policy

The desire of Natal whites for formal urban segregation was reflected as early as 1856 in an ordinance permitting the establishment of African locations. From 1874 regulations required the registration of African servants, and the Togat Labour Act of 1902 tightened control over African labourers generally.⁵ The Native Locations Act of 1904 allowed the establishment of areas in which Africans might be compelled to live (if they were not freehold land owners, exempt from Native law, or employed as domestics); and the Native Beer Act of 1908 encouraged local authority monopolies over the sale of so-called 'kafir' beer as a source of revenue for the maintenance of such areas.⁶ Thus the bizarre idea that African welfare and recreational facilities should be financed from the profits derivative of potential inebriation was established at an early stage.

The Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 was inspired by the Natal example and reinforced local custom with central government enabling authority. 'One of the most complex pieces of control legislation ever devised anywhere',⁷ it satisfied a white desire for regularity, order and control over Africans throughout South Africa, disguised by slum clearance

and health control measures. Part of a white search for wealth and security,⁸ it established in law the assumption that towns were a white preserve, and that Africans were thereon sufferance as long as their labour was required. The concept of the 'redundant native' was much in vogue: such Africans were described more explicitly as professional agitators, liquor sellers, prostitutes or general undesirables.⁹

The plea of the South African Native National Congress (forerunner of the ANC) at its conference in Bloemfontein in 1923 for recognition of black sacrifices on the mines, the black contribution to the building of towns and communication infrastructure, and the fact that the land of South Africa had been forcibly alienated¹⁰ was predictably treated with contempt and has still not been properly acknowledged. If blacks were not required in towns, they would be returned to what was commonly and erroneously assumed by whites to be a viable economic base in the reserves, at a time when the rural foundation of the black economy was being deliberately destroyed by legislation and economic forces. Ironically, Pietermaritzburg, like most Natal towns, was to become progressively less 'white' as the century progressed whites have not been in the majority since the Great War, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Population of Pietermaritzburg, 1902-1980

Year	(percentage)			
	White	Indian	Coloured	African
1902	56.3*	13.5		30.2
1920	49.0	21.1	3.7	26.2
1939	48.5	19.4	4.7	27.3
1960	29.6	20.0	4.2	46.2
1980	30.0	28.0	6.7	35.3

* Includes Coloured population

Under the 1923 Act, proclaimed urban areas were used to establish separate African locations to be financed by an autonomous, self-balancing 'Native Revenue Account'; and administered by Native Affairs Departments (often as it turned out run by ex-policemen) with the aid of Advisory Boards. Mixed areas were to be abolished and Africans denied the right to freehold tenure which might, in time, have led to municipal voting power. Political and geographical exclusion was compounded by revenue dependence upon rents, fines and the sale of beer. The resultant immiseration was noted by some local authorities during the slightly more enlightened days of World War II¹¹ when they made transfers from the general rates fund; but there is no evidence of this happening in Pietermaritzburg, and the practice was in any case stopped at the end of the war. Indeed, Pietermaritzburg's location, known as Sobantu from 1946, was required to pay a fee to the municipality for 'administrative services'.

Pietermaritzburg had a municipal beer monopoly and a separate Native Revenue Account as early as 1923; and the proclamation requiring registration of Africans within the borough came into effect on 1 January 1924. A referendum of white municipal voters drew an 18 per cent turnout on 29 June 1925, which decided¹² that the location should be placed on the East side of the town at a considerable distance from the African peri-urban area of Edendale. The main attraction was the lower cost of this site, next to the sewage works (today's municipal dump), a position whose symbolism was not lost on the largely middle-class Africans required to move there. Thus 'over the years, South African towns acquired a characteristic dual form'¹³ in which a modern town was juxtaposed with a poorly served location, carefully divided by buffer zones.¹⁴

White Sports' Facilities

This was the context in which sports facilities developed in Pietermaritzburg. White sportspeople have enjoyed permanent facilities since 1863 with the founding of Alexandra Park,¹⁵ whose Jubilee Pavilion, a famous local landmark, was built in 1898. The Pietermaritzburg Sports

Association, an autonomous management body, was set up in 1901 and in the same year it acquired the Scottsville Racecourse. In 1904 further improvements to Alexandra Park included a bowling green and the clearing of five kilometres of the Msunduze River for boating. In 1908 the Scottsville Golf Course was awarded rent free to the Maritzburg Golf Club (MGC), and by the Great War Alexandra Park had been extended north of the river to accommodate hockey.

The post World War I period was a time of considerably improved white facilities: 'the towns were expanded and beautified, and the amenities of modern life were introduced'.¹⁶ In Pietermaritzburg's case white sporting amenities enjoyed massive expansion by calling on the public purse in various ways: by development funding; granting of loans for erection of buildings and land improvement; annual grants in aid; and municipal facilities.

Private white clubs benefited enormously: for instance Kershaw Park (Maritzburg Lawn Tennis Association [MLTA] founded 1917); Maritzburg East Bowling Club (1917); Maritzburg West Bowling Club (1921); Maritzburg Croquet Club (1921); and Victoria Bowling Club (1922). Between 1925 and 1927 rugby grounds were established at Woodburn (at a cost of £3000) and an open air swimming pool at Alexandra Park (over £36 000). Also in the mid 1920s £1000 was spent on a polo ground and nearly £3500 on a golf club house. During the 1930s a grant of land was made to the Country Club at Ketelfontein to the north of the city.

All of these facilities remain well established today and in each case land and considerable financial aid were provided. In some instances the loans were large: by 1929 the MGC and MLTA were in debt to the city to the tune of £3250 and £2900 respectively. Some loans were granted with such zeal that no security was provided (far example, rugby and golf) and on 27 December 1934 the City Treasurer was threatened with surcharge under provincial ordinances for £3500 (loans of £3000 to the country Club

and £500 to the Municipal Golf Club). A rectifying, retrospectively valid ordinance was passed in 1935, 'to validate and sanction advances to sporting and other bodies out of loans raised for estates development purposes'.¹⁷ This came into effect on 8 August 1935. Loans were justified as a means of improving derelict land;¹⁸ but, in the opinion of the Auditor,¹⁹ the definition of improvement was left conveniently vague and this resulted in undistributed tenure and pre-emptive rights²⁰ at public expense.

The key provincial ordinance of 1924,²¹ allowing for the power to grant or alienate land or buildings for the endowment of public institutions (*s* 160), made grants for the establishment and maintenance of sporting bodies 'whose objects are not of a private character' (*s* 188a,x), and established sports grounds with apparatus and equipment (*s* 280), would appear to have been consistently contravened. In an era in which racism, subservience to authority and paternalism were flaunted with pride, it would have occurred to few to confuse anyone with a black Skin with 'the public'.

The history of loans was one of extremely slow redemption (only 0.8 per cent overall in 1930 for instance), deferments of interest payments, extensions, and failure to pay off the principal (for five years in the 1930s, the MGC repaid none of its principal). During World War II repayments were suspended or reduced on the grounds of depressed membership: unpaid interest in 1944 amounted to £842. Looming large in the City Auditor's reports were the debts of Kershaw Park and the now defunct Mountain Rise Golf Club. The latter was founded in 1932, initially for white municipal employees, and by 1956 it was so in arrears with interest repayments that at the current rate it was reckoned that it would be fifteen years before any principal was repaid.²² In 1961 its debt of £10 855 plus £61 unpaid interest was liquidated by a council grant-in-aid and the lease was cancelled, after years of adverse auditory comment. Kershaw Park's original loan of £3000 had been reduced to only £2865 9s 8d after twenty-

three years by 1946. In the same year a portion of its arrears was capitalised, earning a rebuke from the auditor to the effect that this was contrary to the spirit of the ordinances which prohibited the granting of loans for the repayment of interest.²³ The capitalisation was reversed the following year, when the MLTA, the Country Club, the Maritzburg Rugby Sub Union (MRSU) and the Municipal Employees Golf Club all defaulted on interest payments. In 1948 all but the MRSU repeated the performance. In the post-war period large loans were extended to almost all the white sports clubs in Pietermaritzburg.

Figure 1 (and Appendix 1) shows some of these trends, while contrasting the continued indebtedness of white clubs with the decreasing debt of the Coloured Sports Grounds Association (1930-48) and the Indian Sports Association (1932-46).

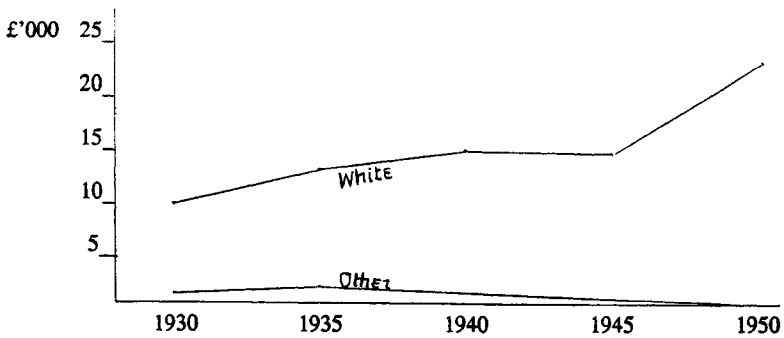


Figure 1 Loan indebtedness, 1930-50 (£)

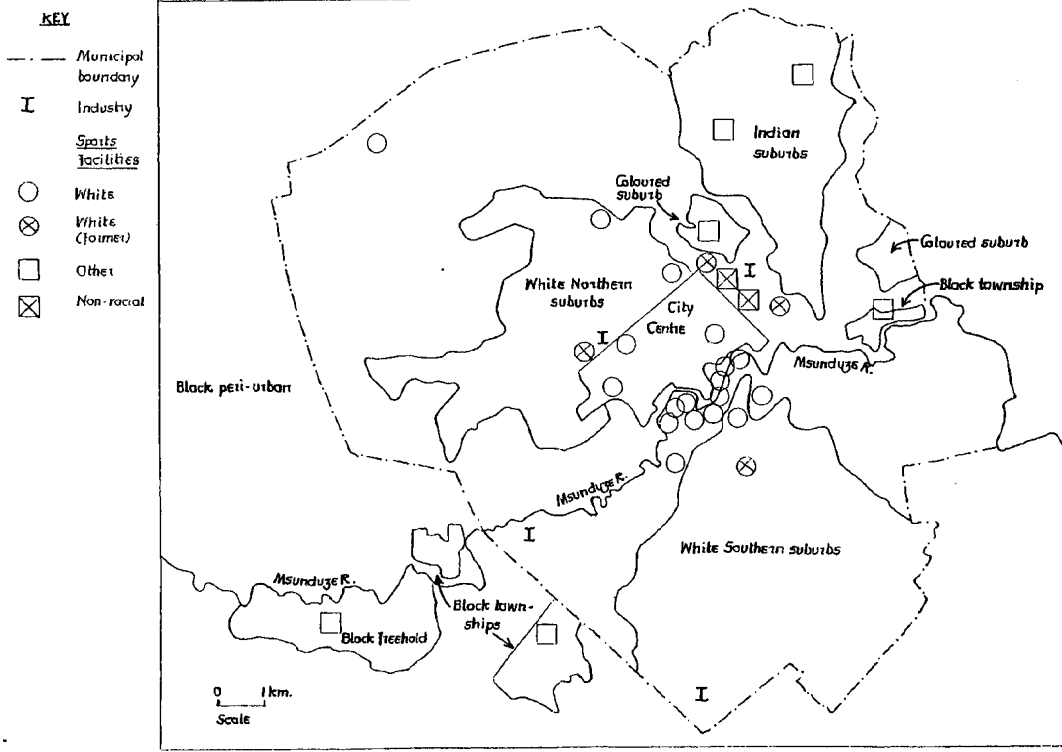


Figure 2 Map to show distribution of sports facilities in Pietermaritzburg, 1990

White clubs also received regular, if modest, grants-in-aid which were used to maintain facilities. The major recipients were boating and water sports, cricket and tennis as shown in Table 2. Of the total grant-in-aid awarded from 1920-60, 85.3 per cent went to white facilities; 7.9 per cent to Indian, 6.8 per cent to Coloured, and a negligible amount to African.

Table 2 Municipal Grants-in-aid to Sport, 1920-60

	(£)	(percentage)
White*	21256	85.3
Coloured	1057	7.9
Indian	1700	6.8
African	<u>5</u>	<u>Neg.</u>
Total	24 918	100.0

(*Broken down as follows [£]: Boating and watersport, 5658; cricket, 4172; tennis, 3930; polo, 2244; rugby, 1408; shooting, 960; bowling, 889; golf, 670; croquet, 290; athletics, 227; soccer, 150; motor sport, 137; Olympic sport, 50; hockey, 21; cycling 10; other 440).

Genuinely public facilities during the same period (see Table 3) were financed to the tune of nearly £1 million. Only 2.1 percent of this benefited the Sobantu location. Africans were not permitted to use municipal baths and their freedom to enjoy the city's parks was extremely circumscribed: all the facilities provided were of course for the use of whites alone.

Table 3 Running Expenses of Municipal Facilities, 1920-60

	(£)	Per cent
Parks	775 953	79.7
Baths	176 879	18.2
African facilities	20 346	2.1
	973 178	100

The municipality's basic agenda was the transfer of land and capital into the private control of a racially defined, politically dominant elite. Most of this remains entrenched today, mainly in a zone of recreational activity in pleasant surroundings alongside the Msunduze River. A few facilities have been overtaken by development: two polo grounds (by housing and industry), and two golf courses (by industry and the university) as shown in Figure 2.

The Maritzburg Croquet Club with a disingenuousness born of arrogance, itself summed up the system at the time of its golden jubilee in 1971. Boasting of the best lawns in the country it received congratulations from the Mayor for 'fifty years of service to our community'. Acknowledging loans from the City Council in 1921, and again in 1969, the Club stated that 'from the beginning, the City Council of Pietermaritzburg has shown its appreciation of the value of the club as an amenity for the citizens and for visitors'. Referring to the loans, it expressed the opinion that 'the terms of repayment are very generous'. It goes without saying (because it is assumed by those quoted) that community, citizens and visitors would all be white. The only mention of blacks in its anniversary brochure relates to their role as labourers.²⁴

Facilities for Other Groups

By contrast, in the colonial era, the development of sports facilities for those residents of Pietermaritzburg not considered white²⁵ shows startling contrasts. No thought was given to the provision of municipal facilities for the population as a whole (as was beginning to be the trend in urbanised countries); although some were developed for the 'poor white' fraction which became a topic for concern in the inter-war years. 'Non-white' facilities, where they existed, were under-capitalised and impermanent; and were provided for reasons which cannot be described as altruistic.

In 1896 it was reported that Africans were not permitted to use Pietermaritzburg's footpaths,²⁶ and it is consequently hardly surprising that the only contact between blacks and Pietermaritzburg's sports facilities at the turn of the century should be that of labourers tending them for white use. The Park's Curator complained in 1902 of the scarcity of 'native' labour;²⁷ but it was complimented six years later as being twice as productive as white.²⁸ In this way and in many others, black labour subsidised the white town. In the opinion of the TB commissioners of 1908, the black urban dweller 'is really there for the use and benefit of the town, and personally he derives very little, if any, advantage from any municipal improvements. Parks, baths, entertainments and such amenities do not benefit him in the least.'²⁹

This was illustrated in 1913 when the Buchanan Street baths were being repaired and the head of the Waterworks Section expressed the opinion:

I would like to see some provision made for the practice of this healthful exercise [swimming] by the coloured section of the community, even if it were only by adapting a portion of the Umsindusi river for this purpose. The cost would not be much.³⁰

Clearly even this proved too much because there is no evidence that proposals for a riverside shelter were ever followed up. By contrast, within ten years whites had a second swimming pool, the open air facility in Alexandra Park. Suggestions that the Buchanan Street pool be handed over to the black residents were followed in 1929 by its reservation for the use of white schoolchildren. Swimming pools evoked particular emotions and even private philanthropy was allowed little latitude. In 1937 H V Marsh JP donated £1000 towards a coloured swimming bath, but the offer was rejected because 'the cost of erecting and running a Bath would be too great a burden on the City'.³¹ In the 1920s the Council had raised £36 000 for the white pool at Alexandra Park; and in 1936 the Council had no difficulty raising a £500 loan for a bowling green at the white Country Club.

'Native' and 'Indian' sports grounds – in blunt terms mere patches of waste ground – were provided in the 1920s on the edge of the industrial area at Chatterton and Fitzsimmons roads, later to be subject to considerable pollution and encroached upon by the town's ring road. In 1930 the Indian Sports Association, like the Native Football Association, received the derisory annual grant of £10; and it and the Coloured Sports Ground Association were granted loans of about £600 each.

In 1933 the Native Affairs Department of the municipality spent the princely sum of £35 17s 11d, or 0.3 per cent of its revenue, on recreation. The population of the Native Village could by this time be described as settled working class with middle class elements, largely married people with families and in employment. Its Advisory Board lacked the power to improve the lot of residents, who had no right to land and were all rent paying tenants of the City Council. The latter liked to describe the location as a 'model village', but its temporary soccer pitch dated only from 1934 and it was not until 1951 that a new sports ground with facilities for soccer and tennis was provided. For reasons unrecorded, attempts to fund a swimming pool in 1948 were unsuccessful. This paucity of facilities is particularly interesting because Sobantu was a suburb for the 'right kind of native', in other words the Westemised petit bourgeoisie; a pointer to the attitude of whites, and an indicator of the insecure financial structure of black locations.³² In the case of Durban there is evidence that the City Council swindled the Native Revenue Account such that its income was actually diverted for white benefit,³³ but it is not known if similar fraud occurred in Pietermaritzburg.

The gradual extension of minimal sports facilities to black residents of Pietermaritzburg in the 1930s was connected to white complaints about the use of the Market Square near the centre of town on Sunday afternoons for 'political meetings, rough and ready cycle races and footballmatches'.³⁴

'Native dancing' was encouraged on open ground next to the Berg Street Men's Hostel and the Berg Street Native Recreation Ground was opened in 1938. The Tatham Memorial Ground was equipped with a pavilion in 1937 to serve two soccer pitches, athletics and cycling.

Facilities for Africans emerged from a colonial, segregationist paternalism, and a desire to divert energies away from political issues. Sports days were arranged with true imperial aplomb to celebrate Royal Weddings and Coronations; and annual jamborees were held well into the 1950s. The 1950 occasion was described thus: 'The meeting was well attended and the Natives were very well behaved'.³⁵ Self satisfaction was heaped upon paternalism with a report from the same department the previous year:

When conducted around the various Municipal Native Institutions in the City visitors are loud in their praise of the amenities offered, and say that it is not hard to see why this city should have earned such a good reputation for inter-racial harmony.³⁶

Municipal departmental reports make constant reference to the contentment of local blacks and their 'good behaviour'. More to the point, and closer to the true nature of imperial ideology, is a view from the time when the first Defiance Campaign was underway against the carrying of passes by blacks: 'The Council has continued to give its full support to sport to entertain the Natives in their leisure hours, and so keep them from drifting to political meetings'.³⁷ The Council might have been horrified to know that it shared a point of view with Trotsky who, according to C L R James, 'said that workers were deflected from politics by sports'.³⁸ White fear of educated, organised black South Africans was voiced in the mid 1950s:

Although the behaviour of the Natives in the City has been excellent one can sense a strained atmosphere, particularly among the educated and semi-educated group of Natives who have of late taken to reading both European and Native papers avidly.³⁹

The municipality played off one community against another, increasing the state of impermanence of black facilities. The 'native' sports grounds at Fitzsimmons and Berg streets were designated for Indian and Coloured use respectively. As a metaphor for municipal concern for the sporting needs of its fellow citizens, the municipal dump at Chatterton Road was levelled for the Coloured community in 1948 and handed over in 1952 as a bare field.⁴⁰ In the same year another addition to white facilities at Alexandra Park, Jan Smuts Stadium, was completed and twelve months later a floodlit soccer match was held at the Oval. Financial statistics sum up the situation: in July 1947 £14 424 was owed to the city by sports bodies and all of them were white except for the Coloured Welfare (Sports) Association which owed £219, or 1.5 per cent (see Figure 1).

Apartheid: African Facilities

The Croup Areas Act of 1950 was primarily designed to effect the urban segregation of the three non-African population groups. Operative from 29 September 1950, it halted municipal plans to expand Sobantu to cater for growth at the neighbouring industrial area at Willowton; and in 1956 the government gave notice that Sobantu was to be removed by 1986 to the west side of the town. Sobantu in the end proved more durable than the apartheid bureaucrats but in the meantime development was frozen: by 1963 the soccer pitch was in a state of disrepair. Africans were excluded from towns by the 1952 Urban Areas Act, which tightened influx control by allowing a work-seeking grace period of only three days, rather than the fortnight permitted under the 1937 Act. Africans lacking section ten rights (gained by fifteen years continuous residence or ten years continuous employment) were 'endorsed out' to the bantustans.

The short era of sports facilities for Africans within the municipal boundary thus ended. They were either expropriated for building purposes or handed over to other racial groups. The Native Laws Amendment Act of 1957 made the administrators of African areas jointly responsible to

local and central authority; and on 1 August 1973 the city's responsibility for urban black affairs was handed over to the Drakensberg Bantu Administration Board (DBAB). The latter was thus responsible for developing the new black suburb of Imbali, proclaimed in 1965;⁴¹ rudimentary facilities for boxing, netball and soccer were provided by 1971. In 1986 Sobantu reverted to the control of the Natal Provincial Administration (NPA) with the Mayor of Pietermaritzburg as administrator.

The founding of the Administration Boards led to the hardening of the boundaries of apartheid. While to a slow but growing extent Africans were made more welcome as spectators at sports events, their residential and recreational facilities were pushed as far as possible from the city centre at the end of bus routes maintained by a government-sanctioned monopoly. The control of space by the government and the local authority created more inequalities and placed African recreation at even greater disadvantage.

The timbre of African lives made sporting achievement remote. They spent long hours commuting from dormitory townships, which were themselves deliberately set up to be self-financing from rents, beer hall profits and labour regulation. Wealth created by Africans in white urban areas made little contribution to black residential areas, including recreational provision. Recreation was allotted a mere 1.5 per cent of the DBAB budget whose main source of funding in the early 1980s was beer hall income.⁴² From 1981 to 1983 the DBAB made no capital expenditure on recreational facilities. Thus Imbali Stadium reached a state of decay by the mid 1980s, able to accommodate only a fraction of its supposed 5000 capacity on rotten stands with no protection from the weather. Soccer was (and is) the dominant township sport, but no floodlights were provided as existed for at least four municipal white venues for rugby, tennis, hockey and cricket. Sobantu had 8180 people in 1980 and one soccer pitch, a tennis court and a children's playground (built in 1965).

The greater Pietermaritzburg area encompassing the outer African suburbs fared even more poorly. Wadley Stadium and two other grounds catered for fifty-three teams from the Edendale Football Association in the mid 1980s. Wadley had no showers, security fence, nor shelter for spectators; but the whites of Pietermaritzburg lobbied successfully to deny the use of Woodbun Stadium in Scottsville to black soccer players. Similarly the desegregation of municipal swimming pools was a contentious issue in the early and mid 1980s. A straw poll in the City Council in 1982 saw a majority in favour of continued segregation; and the evading tactic of a referendum was frequently suggested.

Thus a familiar sight in the African townships and freehold areas which make up greater Pietermaritzburg is a stony piece of veld set with precarious looking goal posts which appear that they will blow away in the first strong wind. This is the local recreation ground, and sometimes the school soccer pitch. Leading white schools each have a wider range of sports facilities and equipment than the entire African suburbs of Pietermaritzburg. Indeed, there can be no better illustration of the material effects of apartheid than a comparison between the sports fields of white schools, which look as if they have been manicured with scissors; and the bare ground surrounding African schools.

In 1983 the government spent R9.84 on sports facilities for each white schoolchild, compared with R0.42 on each African schoolchild;⁴³ and a quasi-government report found that in 1982 79 per cent of all school sports facilities were possessed by whites.⁴⁴ In Pietermaritzburg, whites controlled 89 per cent of all school sports' facilities in 1971, but by 1985 this had declined to 63 per cent,⁴⁵ as provision was made at Coloured and Indian schools. Maritzburg College, a white boys' school, catered for eighteen sports in the mid- 1980s, including, appropriately enough, shooting, a skill its old boys were to put to good use in the black townships during the Emergency. Raisethorpe, an Indian school, had eight sports and Georgetown High, an African school, one. The disparities were even

greater when quality as well as quantity is considered. For instance, one of the problems faced by black schools is that their sports facilities are often the only ones in the area. Consequently, and particularly at weekends, they are invaded by local residents who use them in uncontrolled fashion.

Indian and Coloured Municipal Facilities

Within the municipality, apartheid social engineering required the removal of Indians from the Camps Drift and other dispersed areas, and Coloured people from Pentrich and Plessislaer, to the northern suburbs. The imprint of apartheid on the city hardened, but rigidly defined group residential areas were provided with improved sports facilities. Indian and Coloured residents were now seen as potential middle class allies of the ruling caste, and were rewarded materially. The municipality constantly offered inducements to local communities provided that facilities would be controlled by management committees dominated by conservatives who accepted racial separation and were linked to the much despised Indian and Coloured Local Affairs Committees, set up 1967-8.

The first substantial sports complex within the municipality outside white group areas was opened at Northdale in 1960, six years before the Berg Street recreation ground (near the city centre and declared a nuisance in 1963)⁴⁶ was closed. Woodlands Sports Centre and the R G Pilditch swimming pool were commissioned in 1968, but deteriorated at the hands of vandals in the 1970s. An Olympic size pool at Northdale was handed over in July 1978 and in the late 1980s a new sports complex was developed at Khan Road in the Indian group area.

The Non-racial Challenge

One of the most celebrated challenges to the apartheid order in South African sport was made by the Aurora Cricket Club of Pietermaritzburg. In the face of government blustering,⁴⁷ and the vacillation and embarrassment of the local controlling body, it played as a mixed club in the local league from 1973 to 1978 in spite of police harassment.⁴⁸ 'Normal

cricket' made a fleeting appearance in the 1976-7 season but it soon collapsed under the intrusion of apartheid. Aurora found, for instance, that no other club was willing to follow its lead, the Liquor Act made normal social relations impossible, and racism both institutional (e.g. selection policy) and personal (e.g. insults) intempered.⁴⁹ In 1978 Aurora joined the non-racial fold.⁵⁰

Facilities used by actively anti-apartheid (i.e. non-racial) sports bodies, which had succeeded the old racially defined 'non-white' controlling bodies, were granted only impermanent facilities (often those used by Africans just before and after the World War II) on the margins of the central business district: Chatterton, Brookside and Tatham were constantly threatened by road and bus station development as well as subsidence. Such impermanence was used to avoid capital investment. By contrast, £100 000 had been spent on Jan Smuts Stadium opened on 21 May 1958 and in 1980 thousands of Rands were required to install floodlights for night cricket: the first such major match in South Africa was played there on 13 January 1981. Non-racial cricket officials pointed out that while whites played in the dark, their counterparts had difficulty playing a decent standard of cricket during daylight, so poor were their facilities.

Through this expropriation of economic and social resources 'sport [became] the object of civil struggle in the name of social justice',⁵¹ either through sports bodies affiliated to the South African Council on Sport (SACOS) from the mid 1960s, or civic associations linked to the United Democratic Front (UDF) from 1983. Belated attempts by white controlled sports bodies to entice blacks into their ranks failed for the most part as discrimination in sport was linked indissolubly to political, social and economic inequity. SACOS's message 'No normal sport in an abnormal society' was no mere slogan.

To any student of white political and social mores at the local scale in South Africa, the 'Club' will immediately strike a chord. It is the underlying and surviving unit of white sport in Pietermaritzburg, having flourished under colonial segregation and apartheid authoritarianism; and now in conditions of neo-apartheid. It is a ubiquitous feature of the local sporting landscape, usually based on rugby, cricket, tennis, bowls, golf or hockey; and remains an important symbol of white political power, economic dominance, and racism. Immaculate buildings and facilities in the choicest locations are founded upon cheap black labour, and by a complex amalgam of legal, social and economic sanctions they remain a bastion of conservatism and whiteness. Their officials and members have frequently been well placed in both municipal politics and local business, and there is considerable evidence that this has continued to be used to their financial advantage.⁵² In the 1980s when South Africa was effectively ruled by the securocrats through the techniques of low intensity conflict which are still evident, many 'Club' members would have been participants in sinister Joint Management Centres, part of the National Security Management System which brought together the security forces, civil service, business and local government to plan and enforce strategy to destroy the liberation movement.⁵³ This strategy to retain the status quo involved, in extremis, detention without trial, disappearances and extra-judicial killing.

Conclusions

To this day a racial elite effectively controls both the raising of municipal revenue and the allocation of funds. The current distribution of sports facilities still clearly represents a geography of control,⁵⁴ the outcome of social, economic and political policy during the eras of segregation and apartheid (as shown in Figures 2 and 3). In fact so much common wealth has been invested in private sports facilities that there is good reason to argue for their transformation into public facilities. Up to the early 1970s the process of expropriation of the public wealth was

Space Here for Figure 3
Models of Sports Facilities

blatant and well publicised. Significantly, since then detailed figures are hard to acquire, yet another example of the use of secrecy (usually described as confidentiality) to hide the moral corruption at the heart of the South African system. A particularly topical example is the scheme to develop the Camps Drift area of the Msunduze River into an up-market water sports area. This has no relevance for the mass of Pietermaritzburg's citizens and is R9 million over budget. It forms one of the items on the agenda of the Imber Commission of Enquiry set up on 6 May 1993 to look into irregularities, contraventions and maladministration by the Pietermaritzburg City Council.⁵⁵

Up to 1990, given acute perceptions of the gross inequities of apartheid explained above, sport was a politicising and mobilising factor. The process of unity in which white controlled sports bodies have effectively swallowed up their non-racial counterparts has, however, led to the abandonment of this legacy. Acceptance of a neo-apartheid state of affairs in which the glitter of international competition, the gloss of the public relations industry and the continued dominance of whites (with the exception of a few sports such as soccer and road running) should not be confused with progress. Cricket in Pietermaritzburg, for instance, is again the preserve of whites who have benefited from superior facilities. A few black administrators adorn the scene and give legitimacy to the new order but the cricketers who supported the non-racial cause are forgotten. The rescinding of apartheid legislation has abetted this process. The abolition of the Separate Amenities Act in 1991 allowed a few prosperous blacks to participate where this had formerly been forbidden. Municipal swimming pools and parks are now open to all, but form a small fraction of the total sports infrastructure for the reasons explained in this paper. Economic factors and social conservatism keep the mass of sportspeople at bay and the South African statute book has yet to see measures which promote

social justice. The indecent haste with which the international boycott was lifted, in response to the government's political manoeuvring of 2 February 1990, has little connection with, or relevance to, the realities of local experience.

Grassroots development and community involvement are neglected. After eight years of low intensity conflict and significant periods of outright civil war in the townships surrounding Pietermaritzburg there are no plans for using recreational facilities as a catalyst for social regeneration.⁵⁶ The question of who plays what and where⁵⁷ (and to what standard) is still central to the question of South African sport and in the Pietermaritzburg area it seems destined to continue its traditional role as the preserve of the dominant elite.

Appendix 1 Loan indebtedness, 1930-1950

(£)

Year	White clubs	Others*	Total
1930	9072	711	9783
1931		Not available	
1932	9166	1210	10376
1933	12489	1164	13653
1934	13444	1127	14571
1935	13139	1077	14216
1936	13202	1021	14223
1937	13140	990	14130
1938	13684	937	14621
1939	14010	879	14889
1940	15848	859	16707
1941	15471	838	16309
1942	15973	746	16719
1943	15111	685	15796
1944	14682	619	15301
1945	14197	550	14747
1946	13905	268	14173
1947	14205	219	14424
1948	14644	168	14812
1949	16702	NIL	16702
1950	23871	NIL	23871

*Coloured Sports Grounds (1930- 48) and
Indian Sports Association (1932-46)

NOTES

1. The original research for this article appeared in C E Merrett, 'Problems of Black Sport in an Apartheid City', in J Laband and R Haswell, *Pietermaritzburg, 1838-1988: a New Portrait of an African City*, University of Natal Press Shuter and Shooter, Pietermaritzburg, 1988, pp. 246-50.
2. A recent example occurred at Ellis Park, Johannesburg on 15 Aug. 1992 at a Rugby Test match between South Africa and New Zealand when a section of the crowd disrupted the one minute's silence for the victims of violence (in particular the recent Boipatong massacre) by flaunting the (white) South African flag and singing the (white) national anthem, Die Stem, in a 'symbolic V-sign at black people'. The behaviour of these political neanderthals (the 'naartjie and Castle brigade') at their shrine was applauded by government ministers and Louis Luyt, President of the Transvaal Rugby Football Union. D Forrest, 'Why the Wallabies Must Win', *Weekly Mail*, 21 Aug. 1992.
3. R Archer and A Bouillion, *The South African Game: Sport and Racism*, Zed, London, 1982, pp. 1-11.
4. Although the dividing line between segregation and apartheid is usually assumed to be 1948, When the National Party came to power, the effects of legislation passed in the early 1950s were evident in the spatial and social development of Pietermaritzburg only from the late 1960s.
5. L P Green, *History of Local Government in South Africa: an Introduction*, Juta, Cape Town, 1957, pp. 41-2.
6. This was an idea which originated with the Durban Borough Police.
7. TRH Davenport, *South Africa: a Modern History*, Macmillan, Braamfontein, 3d ed, 1987, p. 548.
8. L Thompson, *A History of south Africa*, Radix, Sandton, 1990, p. 157.
9. T R H Davenport, *The Beginnings of Urban Segregation in South Africa: the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1923 and its Background*, Institute for Social and Economic Research, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, 1971, p. 14.
10. TRH Davenport, *Beginnings of Urban Segregation*, p. 21.
11. Deneys Reitz (Minister of Native Affairs, 1939-42) briefly relaxed the pass laws in 1942.
12. 'The voting was 843 for the Bishopstowe Road site; and 378 for Mason's Mill to the West.
13. L Thompson, *A History of South Africa*, Radix, Sandton, 1990, p. 170.
14. T Wills, 'The Segregated City' in Laband and Haswell, *Pietermaritzburg*, p. 41.
15. J F Ingram, *Story of an African City*, Shuter and Shooter, Pietermaritzburg, 1951, pp. 54-5.
16. C W de Kiewiet, *A History of South Africa Social and Economic*, OUP, London, 1941, 1975 printing, p. 229.
17. *Pietermaritzburg Financial Adjustments and Extended Powers Ordinance 12, 1935 of the Province of Natal*.
18. City Treasurer, *Corporation Yearbook 1931-2*, p. xxiv.
19. City Auditor, *Corporation Yearbook*, 1932-3, p. xvi.
20. City Auditor, *Corporation Yearbook*, 1929-30, p. xv.
21. *Borough Ordinance 19, 1924 of the Province of Natal*.
22. City Auditor, *Corporation Yearbook*, 1955-6, p. xii.

23. City Auditor, *Corporation Yearbook*, 1945-6, p. x.
24. All quotations taken from Maritzburg Croquet Club, *Golden Jubilee Brochure, 1921-1971*, Maritzburg Croquet Club, Pietermaritzburg, 1971. In 1922 black labourers were paid £3 10s a month, and the monthly rent paid to the City Council was 1s.
25. In the language of colonialism, segregation and apartheid the population of South Africa was divided into 'Indian', 'Coloured' (mixed) and African (sometimes known as Natives, Bantu and other less polite terms; and from the 1980s as blacks).
26. *Mayor's minute*, 1896-7.
27. *Corporation Yearbook*, 1901-1902, p. 42.
28. Borough Engineer, *Corporation Yearbook*, 1907-1908, p. 31.
29. *Report of the Tuberculosis Commission*, 1914 (UG34), para 251, p.140. The commissioners used this statement to reject the notion that there should be a charge on locations for general municipal expenditure.
30. Waterworks Department, *Corporation Yearbook* 1913-14, pp. 76-7.
31. *Corporation Yearbook*, 1938-9, p. 55.
32. L Torr, 'Lamontville: Durban's Model Village: the Realities of Township Life, 1934-1960', *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, vol. 10 1987, 103-17.
33. P. Maylam, 'Municipal Fraud: the Operation of Durban's Native Revenue Account, 1908-1953', *Journal of Natal and Zulu History*, vol. 11, 1988, pp. 69-92.
34. *Corporation Yearbook*, 1938-9, p. 136.
35. *Corporation Yearbook*, 1949-50, p. 92.
36. *Corporation Yearbook*, 1948-9, p. 86.
37. *Corporation Yearbook*, 1951-2, p. 92.
38. C L R James, *Beyond a Boundary*, Pantheon, New York, 1984, p.151.
39. Native Affairs Department report, *Corporation Yearbook*, 1955-6, p. 74.
40. Even in the 1980s it remained bare with a single tree, and lacked toilet facilities. After the vociferous protests in 1983 at the visit of a boycott-busting Sri Lankan cricket team, portable toilets were provided. Subsidence in the outfield, as the origins of the ground became progressively more obvious, again provided cricketers with severe problems.
41. Government notice 545, *Government Gazette* 1090, 23 Apr. 1965.
42. *Reports of the Auditor General on the Accounts of the Drakensberg Bantu Administration Board ... 1982-3 (RP35/1984) and the Natalia Development Board... 1984-5 (RP75/1986)*.
43. *Rand Daily Mail*, 8 May 1984.
44. Human Sciences Research Council, *Report of the Committee on Legislation Hampering the Normalization of Sports Relations in the Republic of South Africa*, chaired by J C van der Walt, HSRC, Pretoria, 1980.
45. *Pietemaritzburg: a Town Planning Report for the Borough, Thorington-Smith*, Pietermaritzburg, 1973, table 9.6; *Pietemzaritzburg: Apartheid and Sport in a South African City*, PRECOS, NEUSA and MICRU, Pietermaritzburg, 1985, p.7.
46. *Corporation Yearbook*, 1963-4.
47. The government even went to the length of amending the provisions of the Group Areas Act in order to prevent Aurora playing mixed cricket (Proclamation R228, *Government Gazette*, 4037, 5 Oct. 1973).

48. Aurora played its first league match against University of Natal at Alexandra Park on 13 Oct. 1973. Policemen were spotted lurking in the bushes and watching the match through binoculars during the day. At 5.15 p.m. they took the names of the players, the scorer (age 12) and some spectators, confiscated the film of a press photographer and had to be restrained from removing the scorebook. After this inauspicious start Aurora adopted a habit of depositing a team list with the police after each to keep them away from play. *Sunday Tribune*, 14 Oct. 1973; *Daily News*, 3 Jan. 1974).
49. Same of these issues are reflected in Peter Dawson's 1983 unpublished play, 'Baboo and the Weasel'.
50. M Hickson, 'The Aurora Cricket Club and South African Cricket since Isolation', *Reality*, vol. 11, no. 4, 1979, pp. 7-9; C E Merrett, 'Aurora Cricket Club' in Laband and Haswell, *Pietermaritzburg*, p. 248.
51. R Archer and A Bouillon, *The South African Game: Sport and Racism*, Zed, London, 1982, p. 302.
52. F. Bate, 'Pmb clubs get low interest bonus', *Maritzburg Mail*, Nov./Dec. 1984.
53. For further information on this topic see A Truluck, *No Blood on our Hands: Political Violence in the Natal Midlands, 1987-mid 1992*, and *the Role of the State, White' Political Parties and Business*, Black Sash, Pietermaritzburg, 1992.
54. DM Smith, *Geographical Perspectives in Inequality*, Barnes and Noble, New York, 1979, p. 355.
55. *Natal Witness*, 7 May 1993, p.1.
56. John Aitchison speaking at the Black Sash National Conference, Pietermaritzburg, 2 Apr. 1993.
57. J Bale, *Sport and Place: a Geography of Sport in England, Scotland and Wales*, Hurst, London, 1982, p. 1.