

that the book is a sponsored by AMP, a company that according to the book's back cover, has 'the unmatched privilege of being the sole presenting Partner of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Torch Relay'. For their part, AMP receives a few pages of corporate hyperbole, highlighting their involvement in the 'Ignite the Dream Tour' that travelled throughout Australia in 1999. Regrettably, this section is now already out of date. In addition, AMP's involvement raises the spectre of the book's integrity, just like the torch and the Olympics, being compromised by commercial interests.

Perhaps the most interesting chapter concerned itself with the torch relay for the 1956 Olympics. The chapter is an excellent showcase for those interested in a comparison between Australia's two Olympic-host experiences. This chapter includes a number of first-hand recollections of those who carried the torch in 1956 including one account from the current UNSW vice-chancellor, John Niland.

Scholars who are already well read on the Olympic Games, Olympism and the various rituals and ceremonies that surround the event are not likely to derive tremendous benefits from Cahill's work. Those who do stand to benefit from the book, are those like myself, whose curiosity on matters Olympic exceeds their existing knowledge.

Geoff Dickson
School of Health and Human Performance
Central Queensland University

Douglas Booth, *The Race Game: Sport and Politics in South Africa*. Frank Cass, 1998 (250 pp.)

South Africa was the last major sporting nation to end racial discrimination in sports. During the 1950s, when most other countries were making efforts to dismantle 'colour barriers', South Africa's white-supremacist apartheid government intensified them, forcing the black majority into vastly unequal 'separate development' on the basis of pigmentation and culture, and enforcing those dubious distinctions by brutal state repression. In heroic response, the leaders of the oppressed black majority sought international support for the economic, political, cultural and sporting isolation of apartheid South Africa, as a means of bringing pressure for change.

These tactics slowly began to pay off, especially in sports. By the mid-

1980s, apartheid South Africa had been expelled or suspended from every major international sports body in the world, and athletes from the privileged white sports organizations could only compete internationally by travelling incognito, and by bribing 'rebel tours' to South Africa. The sports boycott demonstrated the world's abhorrence to apartheid in an inescapable way—on the front pages of the sports pages. When South African frustration forced the government to allow a limited measure of integration, the international campaign only stepped up the pressure, calling for the complete eradication of apartheid altogether. By 1990, mass opposition within South Africa forced the cancellation of the last of the 'rebel tours', led by British cricketer Mike Gatting, and presaged the dramatic release of Nelson Mandela the next day. With the repeal of the legislative basis of apartheid in 1991, South African sports began to reorganize into integrated associations. In 1995, led by President Mandela, who wore a Springbok jersey to the final game of the tournament, blacks and whites seemed to rejoice together as the South African team won the world cup of men's rugby.

The tumultuous, race-obsessed story of South African sport during the 20th century is the subject of Douglas Booth's well researched and argued book. Booth contends that the racism that confounds South African sport well preceeded the institution of apartheid in the 1950s, and may continue well into the future. While others have written about the creation of apartheid sports, the opposition to it, and the debates and strategic twists and turns of apologists and militants in the context of the international campaign, he provides an invaluable summary of this history. He ably blends events on the ground in South Africa with the international context, particularly developments elsewhere in Africa. It is likely to be the standard interpretation for years to come.

Booth covers much fresher ground in his analysis of the post-apartheid years. In the heady days following Mandela's release, the success of the sports campaign gave many to expect that the election of a black majority government, achieved in 1994, would usher in a more democratic, non-racial and non-sexist sporting culture in South Africa. Yet Booth is not convinced. He shows that many of the newly 'integrated' sports associations are still controlled by whites, cater exclusively to whites, and have no serious plans for extending programs and facilities into the 'disadvantaged' communities. Ironically, the anti-apartheid movement's historic insistence upon 'merit' for selecting representative teams has

now come back to haunt it, making it difficult to argue for special circumstances for those victimized by apartheid. He suggests that Mandela's affirmation of the Springbok symbol, so deeply hated by many blacks, constituted a capitulation, however politically necessary, to the unequal status quo.

As this critique of Mandela illustrates, Booth spares no one in his analysis, even those he so clearly admires, such as the leaders of the South African Council on Sport to whom he dedicates the book, whose slogan 'no normal sport in an abnormal society' kept the sports boycott intact in the face of the apartheid regime's cosmetic reforms in the 1980s. I take a more forgiving view, convinced that economic, political and cultural structures can constrain even the most brilliant of human actors. Booth himself explains the limited progress of the non-racial sports movement in the 1990s in the same way, arguing that the collapse of the anti-apartheid movement's traditional support from the socialist bloc countries, and the betrayal of its timetable for taking down the boycott by Olympic leaders Jean Claude Ganga and Juan Antonio Samaranch and track and field czar Primo Nebiolo made it all but impossible for the non-racial sport leaders to win further concessions from the white sports' establishment. I wish he had paid them more due for what even in these circumstances has been an enormous accomplishment.

But that's a point of emphasis not substance. Overall, this is a very fine book, a deserved recipient of the 1999 Book Prize of the North American Society for Sport History.

Bruce Kidd
Faculty of Physical Education and Health
University of Toronto, Canada.