

A Whole New Game: Expanding the Boundaries of the History of Sports

**Joint Conference of the German Historical Institutes of Warsaw and Washington, DC,
October 30-November 1, 2008. Venue: GHI Washington**

Historians have taken the history of sports far beyond the question of who won which competition when. Scholars have, for example, analyzed the institutionalization of sports and the role that organization and standardization have played in the development of a global sports culture. Looking at sports on the national level, they have also explored the relation of sports, race, class, and gender. This conference aims to expand the scope of sports history by considering international championship sports as a multifaceted form of global discourse.

International championship sports is a realm of images. Runners cross the finish line; the ball flies past the goalie into the net; the medal winners mount the rostrum. Such familiar imagery conveys far more the clichés of sports journalism. The ways athletes and sporting events have been portrayed and perceived over the past century have been bound up with matters far removed from the playing field. Images of athletes in action have, for example, exemplified ideas about sexuality and body aesthetics. Advertising and popular culture are infused with sports imagery. Sports has been invoked in defining modernity as well as in defining political values and political communities. This world of images and perceptions associated with international athletic competition has not yet been addressed by the history of sports.

This conference aims to explore the cultural system of sports by focusing on international competition as network of communication and cultural transfer. Specialists

in all fields are welcome to participate. We especially welcome contributions on international championship sports that deal with the following themes:

1. Conceptions of lifestyle, sports performance, and the culture of competition
2. Representations of science, medicine, and technology
3. Ideals of beauty, race, health, and body
4. Discourses on gender and sexuality
5. Leisure-time and consumption practices

We plan to publish a collection of essays based upon this conference. Abstracts (1 page max.) should be submitted along with a short C.V. by February 15, 2008 to Dr. Uta Andrea Balbier (balbier@ghi-dc.org) or Dr. Stefan Wiederkehr (wiederkehr@dhi.waw.pl).

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