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Sporting Entertainments, Discarded Possibilities and the Case of Football as a Variety Sport, 1905 – 1906.

ABSTRACT

During the winter of 1905/06, Olympia held a series of spectacular indoor, electrically lit football matches. Organised by the showman Edwin Cleary, the purpose of these matches was to provide entertaining shows to large audiences. Using Pierre Bourdieu's theory of fields, this paper argues that such an organisation was a continuity of a longer interaction between sport and the stage that was restricted during the coalescence of the sporting and exercise field in the late nineteenth century. The ultimate failure of the venture, moreover, is attributed to the power of the Football Association in the subfield of football. The paper uses the football games as a case study to demonstrate the usefulness of this theory to the study of sport more broadly.

KEYWORDS

Football; Football Association; Olympia; Bourdieu; Fields

ARTICLE

Last Saturday I accepted an invitation from Mr. Edwin Cleary to witness the first football match at Olympia. The huge arena has been covered with a grass carpet at a cost of £5,000, which makes an excellent playing pitch, and the teams provided a very good entertainment...Football played at night under the glare of the electric light, and watched by smart people of both sexes in evening dress from the Winter Club galleries, is a phase of the game that was never dreamt of by the founders of the sport.¹

The image of football played for entertainment, indoors on an artificial pitch and under electric lights, is not one that we normally associate with Edwardian sports, but on the 23rd December 1905 such a game kicked off under the directorship of Edwin Cleary. Alfred Davis, F.A. councillor and football contributor to the *Daily Mail* and *Football Evening News*, was right when he claimed that this was a version of the sport that the Football Association had never 'dreamed of' when they codified their first rules in 1863. Since the formal allowance of professionalism in 1885, however, many members of the F.A. had been concerned about such developments, '[foreseeing] dangers of many kinds...and [visualizing] clubs playing outside the pale of the Association'.² The football matches at Olympia were those fears and visions made material.

Yet ‘football as a variety sport’,³ as one newspaper described the games, was not incongruous. Throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, many sports had retained links with the commercial stage, and the first part of this paper offers this historical context. Using Bourdieusian field theory, I suggest that the period after 1850 can be characterised as a time when a sporting and exercise field emerged, unique from other cultural spaces which sport had inhabited until this point. The Olympia football games were a continuation of this longer history. I then provide details of Olympia, its shows, Edwin Cleary and the football games that were played there. Olympia games were presented and consumed in a manner different to anything offered by Football Association or League, and as such represented a possibility for how football, and sport more generally, may have developed for the remainder of the twentieth century. As Kitching has claimed, albeit with regards to the origins of football debate:

The games we now call ‘rugby’ and ‘soccer’ ended up being the dominant forms of football played in Britain, and indeed around the world. But they might not have done so. Things might have been otherwise. And the writing of good history requires us to treat this ‘might’ as more than a mere logical formality. It is especially vital to do this – to avoid teleology – when writing the history of the period when those other possibilities (the ones that lost out and became, as a result of that losing, mere logical ‘possibilities’) were still alive – were still living, breathing, running, jumping alternatives.⁴

The Olympia games very much represented a ‘living, breathing, running, jumping alternative’, but clearly did not succeed in its attempt to become the dominant form of the game. To theorise those lost possibilities, the final section returns to Bourdieu’s fields, where I outline how the F.A. utilised existing power structures to curb the games, while positing that this model might be useful for understanding sports history more generally. This form of football, therefore, offers a ‘discarded possible’ for how the sport might otherwise have developed.

SPORTING ENTERTAINMENTS

Since the publication of Hugh Cunningham’s *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution* in 1980, an ever-clearer image of sporting culture in the first half of the nineteenth century has come into view.⁵ Contrary to the image of a sporting and leisure culture savaged by industrial capitalism, there is growing evidence that there was a vivid and often thriving commercial and professional sporting culture that was spectator and entertainment-orientated and had intimate links to the worlds of other commercial entertainments. Publicans and showmen took the opportunity to allow their stages – circuses, singing saloons, theatres, gaffs, public houses, and fairgrounds – to be used as a space to demonstrate and exhibit sporting competitions. When one begins looking for connections, in fact, one finds an intense network of related agents and institutions

with a seemingly shared set of values, ideologies, languages, capitals and beliefs. The most compelling evidence for this social world can be found in the records of prize-fighting and wrestling, examples which have been expanded upon elsewhere.⁶ Yet histories and illustrations of other forms of ‘sporting entertainment’ are emerging with ever greater frequency. In the first part of this special edition, for instance, Samantha Oldfield outlined the intriguing relationships between publicans, the circus and pedestrianism in the high Victorian period.⁷ In addition to the aforementioned pugilism and pedestrianism, cricket and horse racing also borrowed showmanship and other performance techniques, forms of display and management from the wider world of popular culture.⁸

In fact, for those looking for a good starting place to examine this sporting culture, Adrian Harvey’s work offers a detailed account, though, as always, closer examination may well yield further details. Central to Harvey’s work is the argument that by the mid-nineteenth-century, ‘there was a substantial commercial sporting culture that was almost as sophisticated as its successors of forty or so years later’.⁹ What, then, happened to this sporting culture? Harvey argues that ‘it was the onset of the “amateur” ideal that was to impede this progress. The upper and middle classes, far from promoting and fostering commercial sport, came to oppose it bitterly’.¹⁰ This is true, but it is not the whole story. The sporting culture described by Harvey was a sporting culture that was as much entwined with the world of commercial popular culture, divorced from other forms of sport being practiced elsewhere in society. As Cunningham explains,

Historians with an apparently insatiable compulsion to compartmentalise have seen...different forms of entertainment in isolation from one another – there are histories of sport, of drama, of the pantomime, and of the circus. Yet what is most striking is the connections between these different forms of entertainment, connections so strong that one can speak of this world of entertainment as part of one close-knit popular culture.¹¹

While potentially looking very similar on the surface, an analysis of the early years of the nineteenth century reveals that sport, depending on the social space it took place, had different, often competing, meanings. The sporting culture described by both Cunningham and Harvey was a very different sporting culture to that promulgated in the Victorian public school, which was a very different sporting culture that existed in the army, which in turn was a very different sporting culture to the forms of exercise recommended by those in the medical profession. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, therefore, ‘sport’ involved a variety of meanings, values and pleasures depending on the context in which it existed: sport for entertainment; sport for school discipline and pride; sport for training; sport for health. By the outbreak of the First

World War, while no uniform meaning for sporting contest existed, there were less disparate meanings than there had been one hundred years earlier.

To conceptualise these different sporting worlds, I have found useful Pierre Bourdieu's notion of *fields*. In keeping with Bourdieu's work more generally, fields are surprisingly simple concepts grounded in dense empirical work.¹² At its most basic, a field is an autonomous and unique social space, 'having its own laws of functioning independent of those of politics and the economy...endowed with particular institutions and obeying specific laws'.¹³ Bourdieu is adamant that a field cannot be understood by one-dimensional, economic readings of the base and superstructure. Changes in one field, though, may cause changes in another, functioning 'somewhat like a prism which refracts every external determination: demographic, economic or political events are always retranslated according to the specific logic of the field'. Furthermore, contained within each field are subfields which, like fields, contain a unique set of 'logic, rules and regularities' while still observing the forms of capital inherent in the field'.¹⁴ As such, we may claim that in the first half of the century 'sport', while often looking the same to outsiders, existed in very different fields adhering to many different social rules and forms of capital. Spectator sport in the field of popular culture existed to entertain, with performers often adopting costumes and theatrical characters, whereas sport in the military field concerned itself with training mind and body for war.

There were unmistakably distinct similarities, however, and as the nineteenth century continued these different forms of practicing sport began to coalesce, emerging as a distinctive and autonomous field. In so doing, it brought together the disparate sporting activities that had previously belonged to other fields and searched for commonalities and shared values. This argument has also recently been explored by Jaques deFrance. Writing about France in 1900, but recognising the earlier genesis in England, he suggests that:

As all these activities lost their original way of being performed, they tended to get closer to each other, to aggregate, to be incorporated into a common space, and to acquire some common features...gymnastics, sports and other forms of bodily exercises confronted one each other and began to search for common principles and common forms of organization. We can speak, in that case, of a field of sports and physical activities.¹⁵

During the merging of these groups into a shared space, debates, challenges and confrontations about how the field was to be structured were a common occurrence. These debates, challenges, and confrontations will not be unfamiliar to sport historians. The establishment of the field involved a divergent group of agents looking to control, dominate and legitimate the various ideological, political and social meanings of sport. Arguments about whether sport was for

health or entertainment, training or gambling persisted, most commonly taking the form of discussions about amateurism and professionalism. The period between 1850 and 1914 was a time, to put it rather simply, of great upheaval: some sports were created, others ceased to exist. Emotional and personal arguments regarding the purpose of sport persisted.¹⁶ As Mike Huggins has explained about the period, although not in relation to Bourdiesian field theory, ‘ownership of particular sports, their core values and the place of competition and winning were all debated’.¹⁷ In terms of fields, this history should not be surprising: Bourdieu conceptualises fields as being akin to a game or a battle in which actors, agents, groups, institutions and subfields compete with one another to control the field’s capitals, meanings, ideologies and boundaries. The sporting field itself competes with other fields in the wider social field or field of power. As Bourdieu claims,

[T]he social definition of sport is an object of struggles, that the field of sporting practices is the site of struggles in which what is at stake, *inter alia*, is the monopolistic capacity to impose the legitimate definition of sporting practice and of the legitimate function of sporting activity - amateurism vs. professionalism, participant sport vs. spectator sport, distinctive (elite) sport vs. popular (mass) sport.¹⁸

In this regard, much sport and social history has been interested in similar debates, framed slightly differently, and much existing work can be modified and applied to this model. The largest, most dramatic confrontation in the formation of the field existed between those who viewed sport as a commercial, audience and entertainment-orientated spectacle, and those who saw sport as a way of instilling moral and physical education for participants. Growing out of military training, private school education, and a better medical understanding of the human body, sport was openly embraced as one of the key pillars of rational recreation. The role of the Victorian middle- and upper-class, and their influence in the development of amateur sport, has been a central theme and preoccupation in sports history literature. Critically, with their combined social, cultural and economic power, these groups very quickly established control of the forming sporting field, although often these battles were not easily ‘won’ in any straightforward sense. The discursive and ideological power of amateur sport (playing sport for sport’s sake and eschewing profit and capital), though, combined with the bureaucratic power of the middle-classes organising competitions and events, was enough to set the terms and structures of the debate.

Despite continued pressure, a point to which we will return later, sport’s links to the commercial popular cultural entertainments sustained a remarkable durability. Graham Curry has described the Sheffield Zulu teams who played charity matches between 1879 and 1882

‘dressed as members of the Southern African Zulu tribe’, stressing uses of costume that would be more suited to the commercial stage.¹⁹ After the early charity match successes there is evidence to indicate that the group moved towards more regular forms of payment, a model that had been popular at the time of Cunningham’s ‘close-knit popular culture’. Curry is right to suggest that these forms of payment were a pre-cursor to professionalism later that decade, but the Zulus were clearly borrowing from an earlier form of professionalism, too. Elsewhere, Keith Gregson and Mike Huggins’ correctly highlight that sport’s relationship with music hall has been a somewhat neglected area of research.²⁰ Many sporting entertainments continued to find a home on the music hall, circus and theatrical stage, demonstrating and exhibiting the sport to paying audiences. Performers like Sandow the Magnificent found significant fame bridging the gap between circus strongman and sporting bodybuilder, setting the stage for the development of the types of hyperreal sporting entertainment bodybuilding contests of the late twentieth and twenty-first century.²¹ Likewise, boxing and wrestling, perhaps the two sports with the strongest connections to older popular cultural forms, continued links with the stage and later with film. Professional wrestling, due to the direct influence of showmen, became a fully-fledged performance in these years, completely eschewing sport as we understand it today.²²

Other cultural entrepreneurs, in less successful ways, tested the potential of a relationship between sport and the stage. Andrew Horrall has done a good job of teasing some of these multifaceted relationships, and he is right that his ‘alleyways mapped...should lead interested researchers into rewarding areas for further study’.²³ The simplest interactions saw sportsmen appear in plays or skits or other forms of public appearance. Other examples of relationships, however, could be seen: cricket and baseball provided entertaining games and spectacles whose sole purpose was amusement, often featuring stars from the wider theatrical entertainment stage, albeit often, if not always, under the guise of ‘charity’ contests. While such games were tolerated, even supported, by sporting bodies for their altruistic nature, other entrepreneurs looked to directly profit.

Despite only appearing in a single paragraph, one example given in Horrall’s book provides a fascinating case study through which to analyse how the meaning of sport is historically and structurally negotiated: in the winter of 1905 and 1906 a series of indoor football games took place at Olympia in London. Where Horrall attributes these games as a novelty, a form of up-to-dateness in a quest to constantly excite audiences in keeping with other theatrical entertainments of the day, I see these performances as being a continuity of an older form of commercial sporting contest while simultaneously existing on the fringes of the field,

offering an alternative form of performing sport in contrast to the dominant mode that had been established in the previous thirty years. First, the paper will lay out the details of the football experiment before analysing in further detail how the contest for control over the subfield of sport was negotiated and won.

FOOTBALL AT NIGHT

Originally conceived as The National Agricultural Hall, the arena opened with the ‘high sounding title’ of Olympia in December 1886. The ambitious building, with its large iron dome roof and cavernous exhibition space, was designed for ‘multifarious uses’, such as ‘agricultural shows, exhibitions of all kinds, public meetings, athletic sports, and the fetes organised for charitable objects’.²⁴ Given the size of Olympia, events that took place there were big and lavish affairs, including: the Parisian Hippodrome circus; Blondin the tightrope walker; the Irish Exhibition of 1888; P.T. Barnum’s *Greatest Show on Earth* in 1889; and *Venice in London*, a simulacrum of the Italian city complete with waterways.²⁵

Until the outbreak of the First World War, sport also featured prominently. Yet ‘sport’ was something of a loose definition. Generally speaking, sports at Olympia can be placed into one of three categories. Firstly, competitions of physical skill, speed or strength that modern observers would recognise as sport. Examples include gymnastic meetings, regular cycling competitions, or boxing and wrestling matches. Secondly, there were physical activities that were on the fringes of the sport and athletic field, most notably roller skating, the exhibition of sporting dogs, and military tournaments. Finally, there were other forms of entertainment – circus performances and other variety entertainments – that borrowed the codes and conventions of sport and reconditioned them for the stage. We might describe these events as sporting entertainments. Sporting entertainments included chariot racing, strongman performances and some hippodramatic circus performances. One hippodrama, for instance, was based around the Grand National and featured horses ‘racing’. Another performance, *Savage South Africa*, billed as offering an image of the “Briton, Boer and Black” in South Africa,²⁶ and produced by Edwin Cleary, included dramatic scenes, hippodramatic performances and war re-enactments. Sports in *Savage South Africa* comprised:

[A] mimic stick fight by Zulus, wrestling competitions between Ashantees and Soudanese, in which agility supersedes the scientific methods usually associated with the sport in this country, exhibitions of rough-riding and high and long jumping, natives races of different descriptions, an intelligent performance, and the clever “football dog”, whose own enjoyment in its performance is apparent.²⁷

At times, the dividing lines between sport and sporting entertainment became blurred. Professional wrestling, a cultural form that to this day retains the description of sports entertainment, was a popular feature at Olympia. The roots for the sport becoming a fully performed entertainment can be found in London in the 1900s, and the fights seen at Olympia occupy a bridge between sport and sporting entertainment. Performers like Hackenschmidt and Madrari, whose fight at the Royal Albert Hall in 1904 culminated in one report coining the term 'the wrestling craze', toured music halls and variety theatres offering exhibitions and caricatured characters and costumes.²⁸ In this period, moreover, they began to pre-arrange their matches to engineer the most entertaining results possible.²⁹ As we will see shortly, this vision of sport stressing entertainment and narrative would greatly influence Olympia's football games.

In terms of big arena shows, Olympia managed to meet its owners' expectations as a multipurpose leisure arena, but the building often sat unused for many months of the year, agitated by the architectural legacy as an agricultural hall. The vast central arena, with walkways round the edges, left most theatrical or entertainment ventures ill-suited to the space. Inflexible seating arrangements, meanwhile, discouraged a fast turnaround of events.³⁰ As Charles Cochran would later explain, it was only 'big arena shows' that could take full advantage of Olympia, but 'naturally [these] were not numerous'.³¹ Throughout its first fifteen years, large gaps in the season programme meant that the venture faced consistent financial pressure, culminating in a series of obstructive liquidations and re-launches during the mid-1890s.³² Allsopps Breweries appointed Pa Payne as the new managing director of Olympia in 1899, and he set out to produce a consistent and annual set of events in which to offer a more financially viable system, including an annual Motor Show and an annual military performance, in addition to creating a series of spectacles suited to Olympia.³³

To fit into this self-managed and annual shows, Payne turned to sport as an event in which to attract audiences in the difficult to fill winter season. Edwin Cleary, who had run the successful *Savage South Africa*, was appointed as the promoter for the highly ambitious Olympia Winter Club, the name given to the sporting entertainments venture in December 1905 and January 1906. Just as Olympia had been transformed into Venice a few years earlier, Cleary turned Olympia into a simulacrum sporting arena. In so doing, he looked to offer the excitement of sporting competition with the convenience and material comfort of the indoor theatre. Payne constructed 'movable seating' in order to better accommodate, and better adapt, to changing show conditions, and these were successfully used at the Winter Club events. According to a report of the Superintendent Architect for the London County Council, three quarters of the

building's gallery was to be offered to Winter Club members, of which there were 600, and their guests, with the north side being open to the general public alongside the standing space and stalls.³⁴ Seating consisted of 'chairs raised on wooden steppings' and 'divided into 16 separate blocks placed round three sides of the ground floor beneath the gallery. The blocks accommodate from 108 to 297 persons, and the total seated accommodation will be 2232 persons'.³⁵ Standing room permitted a further 4468 attendees, bringing a maximum capacity of 6700 people.

The stands surrounded a grand, artificial playing field in which numerous sports would be played. Indeed, this feature of the event garnered substantial advance publicity. Articles variously described the artificial pitch as the 'world's biggest carpet'³⁶ or 'the magic carpet'.³⁷ Digging a little deeper through the advance promotional hyperbole, a technique that had clearly borrowed from the great showpeople of the day, the carpet was produced in Sussex at a cost of £5180, weighed forty-seven tons, and was made from a mixture of 'rafin grass and cocoanut matting'.³⁸ *The Times* reported that the carpet 'has a surface as good as that of a well-kept lawn'³⁹ while *Football Chat* similarly claimed that the author would be attending 'if only to see the extraordinary carpet that is such a splendid imitation of the turf of a beautifully-kept cricket ground'.⁴⁰

Finally, to offer as grand a show as possible, further embellishments and spectacles were added to Olympia. The artificial pitch was illuminated by electrical lighting, with The London County Council, the governmental body responsible for theatrical licensing, recording that, 'two sides of the arena a large sign with the words "Robertson Lamps" in incandescent lamps has been erected'.⁴¹ While some football games had experimented with electrical floodlighting in the 1870s, the Football Association and Football League were reluctant for any competitive games to be played under such conditions.⁴² The Winter Club, therefore, invested heavily in performance technologies that would be a novelty for the vast majority of audiences. To complete the spectacle, other embellishments were added: the 'glass roof was draped in white and pale green, and the galleries in red and gold'.⁴³ The effort did not go unappreciated. One report claimed that the 'vast building [had] completely transformed' with 'nothing of the usual bareness of the Olympia was left'.⁴⁴ Another offered that the space was now 'a magnificent place – a resort for all and sundry'.⁴⁵ Much like other circus, theatre and variety entertainments of the late nineteenth century, this was a performance that stressed novelty and spectacle, of which the electric lights and carpet played an important role.⁴⁶

Away from the central arena, other spaces were created to provide a full entertainment and leisure spectacle. Five side-shows supplemented the main space, and were cordoned off

using 'canvas and timber'. Here, further entertainments, sporting and otherwise, were offered, including silhouettes, and 'a revolving platform with athletes walking in the contrary direction to which it is moving'.⁴⁷ Elsewhere, 'a series of well-carpeted and furnished smoking, general and billiard rooms, and excellent dining and grill rooms', were catered for by the Lyons Company who had exclusive catering concessions with Olympia.⁴⁸ Audiences were free to move through the space at will, though clearly the big sporting competitions in the main arena were the main attraction, with crowds of 10,000 watching the football.⁴⁹

The Winter Club, then, was certainly in keeping with Olympia's legacy as a multi-purpose entertainment and leisure space, and a highly visible promotional campaign was witnessed across the city, with 'alluring advertisements and placards everywhere'.⁵⁰ To fill the two month long event, numerous sports and exhibitions were booked. While we should be wary of puffery, the promotional press claimed that over the seasonal period, there would be 'whippet racing, fencing, rifle shooting, tennis, wrestling...Schroyer's great diving trick from his bicycle, and a score of other sports.'⁵¹ A display of pelota, the Basque racquet game, also featured prominently in the press.⁵² At other times, Winter Club members would also have the privilege of being able to use the impressive facilities and artificial lawn, on which 'croquet, lawn tennis, football, bicycle polo, putting bowls, hockey and other lawn games can be played'.⁵³ By far the biggest attraction of the Winter Club season, however, was a series of football games scheduled to take place on the carpet.

Three plans were set into motion to fill the footballing schedule. Firstly, two Olympia sides, Olympia 'A' and Olympia 'B', consisting of former professional footballers playing in strips of red and yellow, would regularly play against one another, though there appears to have been no consistency with how these sides were selected. Secondly, variations of the Olympia team were to face other professional sides, although the F.A. ultimately put a stop to this before such a match could be played. Thirdly, taking their influence from the boxing booths of the early nineteenth century or the professional wrestling challenge matches seen on the music hall stage, 'scratch' teams, made of amateur footballers, could 'try their skill' against the established 'famous Olympia team'.⁵⁴ Here, the attraction of playing in a large stadium and testing one's talent against former professionals were positioned as reasons for amateur teams to apply. In total, around 15 games – either between the Olympia 'A' and 'B' teams or between the Olympia team and scratch teams – took place over that Christmas period.⁵⁵ The matches remained 11 vs 11 and retained the laws of the game as kept by a referee and linesman.⁵⁶

Given the importance of the Olympia sides, for the venture to triumph the promoters needed professional footballers of some standing and name value, ideally drawn from the top

professional sides of the period, whose names could be distributed in the press beforehand. Approximately thirty players were engaged – enough to fill ‘two ‘Olympian’ teams’ that would supply Winter Clubs main attractions.⁵⁷ Several of these had international experience, with Hyslop (Scotland), Connor (Ireland), Trainer (Wales) and Meredith (Wales) having played for their national side.⁵⁸ Notably, Trainer left Preston North End in order to join the venture.⁵⁹ Leading up to the event, newspaper pieces attracted hype about ‘prominent footballers’, but a closer analysis of the names involved reveals that this was very much hype rather than fact.⁶⁰ Some of the footballers would not have been anonymous men, and audiences may well have recognised several of the names, either from having seen them play or having read about them in the sporting papers, but many had not played regularly since the 1890s. Though there were enough players to fill the Olympia sides, enticing active, well-known footballers at the height of their career was more complicated than Cleary had initially hoped. Frederick Wall was correct to claim that Cleary had to settle for those ‘about to close their active career and youngsters who were on the threshold and would “fall” for the salary offered’.⁶¹ As will be discussed in further detail shortly, the Football Association still held a great degree of control over professionals, and were successful in discouraging active players from joining the upstart league. Yet, despite such trials, there were enough men close to retirement who had fallen on hard times at the end of their careers and attracted by what one ex-player described as ‘good salary [which was] a great boon’.⁶²

Importantly, the showcase games, those played between the ‘A’ and ‘B’ teams, were not football in the commonly understood sense. According to Cleary, rather than ‘competition football’ contributing towards a league or cup, the events sought to offer ‘a very interesting exhibition of an hour’s duration, showing the finer points of the game’.⁶³ Such a description is supported by Cochran’s claim that the central purpose of the event was offering ‘attractive’ football matches.⁶⁴ The lack of competitive spirit, despite the advertised £25 purse, was identified by Alfred Davis who observed that while the ‘veterans were as lively as kittens’, the tackles in the game demonstrated a ‘considerable regard for each other’.⁶⁵ This is understandable, of course: retired footballers wanted to give the public their money’s worth while avoiding serious strain and injury. The exhibition and performed nature of the games was apparently identified by the footballing papers who tellingly did not provide scores or match reports.⁶⁶ As opposed to the two Olympia sides playing one another, when the Olympia sides played an amateur sides professional players had to be somewhat competitive in order to avoid an embarrassing defeat. The 8-3 victory of the Olympia professionals against a challenge side,

the only recorded score by the press, is testament to the gulf in skill between the professionals and amateur teams.⁶⁷

The manner in which football games at Olympia were played offer further evidence for a continuity with professional sporting cultures of the early nineteenth century. Like the showmen who had been involved with sporting entertainments in the Georgian and early Victorian period, Cochran and Cleary's friendship seems critical in understanding the Olympia Winter Club. Between 1890 and 1914, professional wrestling contests had emerged as sporting entertainments, freely borrowing from the circus and music hall stage. Many matches became pre-arranged, wrestlers adopted outlandish characterisations, and entertainment became the sole focus. Considering Cochran and other cultural entrepreneur's successes with turning a minority and locally organised sport like wrestling into a globally popular sporting entertainment, Cleary and Payne saw a serious opportunity for applying those same conditions to one of industrial capitalism's most popular entertainments, association rules football.⁶⁸ Indeed, this link between the two sports did not go unremarked by contemporary observers. When rumours about the planned show began to circulate in the sporting press, *Football Chat* commented that 'football promises to be the legitimate successor of the wrestling displays which have held the music-hall stage for the past few years'.⁶⁹

The Winter Club football games, like professional wrestling contests, straddled two fields, the field of popular entertainment and the field of sport and exercise. In so doing, these sports were caught between two competing sets of values and ideas. The commercial stage emphasised entertainment and audience pleasure where the sporting field stressed competition and the physical health of those who played. Which is not to say that football could not be entertaining for those who watched. Matt Taylor has summarised the difficulty in analysing the value of entertainment in competitive football matches, and concluded that entertainment should be considered 'not as the essence but a by-product of sporting competition'.⁷⁰ To illustrate his point, he quotes Raich Carter's description of the differences between actors and sportspeople.

An actor...sets out with the full knowledge that he has to hold and entertain a public audience. With the exception of one or two who deliberately play to the gallery, a footballer is never consciously entertaining his spectators. His business is to win the match with the help of his ten colleagues.⁷¹

Where the Football Association games prioritised competition with entertainment as a by-product, the 'attractive' Olympia games, in line with other sporting entertainments of the day, stressed amusement and audience pleasures as their primary goal.

The important point is that Olympia's fairly small tweak to the sporting field's structure – placing entertainment as sport's central purpose – represented a direction in which the wider sporting field could have developed. If we refuse to take a Whiggish position, as well we should, then the history of sport should be seen as a series of confrontations in the field in which moments of possibility, of doing things differently and enacting change, are perpetually negotiated. Once again, Bourdieu is useful here: writing about the development of the modern state, he has claimed that a (re)examination of history can be one of the more productive ways in which we might rediscover these lost potentials:

[B]y bringing back into view the conflict and confrontations and therefore all the discarded possibles, it retrieves the possibility that things could have been (and still could be) otherwise....it questions the "possible" which, among all others, was actualized.⁷²

In order to understand why sport developed in the mode that it did, I will now turn to examining these conflicts, confrontations and discarded possibles. In so doing, I seek to avoid that view of history which sees a national football league competing under Football Association rules of the 1930s as the only form professional football could have taken. As we will see, the indoor exhibitions posed an alternative in which 'competition' was borrowed from sport and repackaged as a narrative and structuring device in order to provide entertainment, not dissimilar to the professional wrestling contests of the twentieth century. Its lack of success helps us to sketch the power structures of the subfield of football as well as the field of sport.

SPECTACLE FOR SALE

Judging by contemporary press records, the Winter Club was a popular event demonstrating potential. The show-going public were apparently enticed by the prospect of footballing entertainment, the novelties of electrical lighting and a synthetic carpet, and the material comforts of the indoors. Enough professional players, furthermore, were persuaded by the appeal of further payments while adding longevity to what was destined to be a short career. The scheme had financial backing, supportive links to established theatrical contacts, good press, and an approved license from the London County Council. Yet any historian of the game, if they have heard of these exhibitions at all, will be able to tell you that any impact on the overall history of football is extremely limited.

To offer a theoretical model for understanding this (non-)legacy, I want to return to Bourdieu. As discussed at the start of this paper, in the period between 1850 and 1914 the modern sporting and exercise field was formed, with limitations placed on sport's attempt to entertain. At the most extreme pole of the field, even professionalism was seen to corrupt the

meaning of sport while at the other pole some limited relationships were retained with the stage.⁷³ Subfields – in this case, different sports – were positioned relationally to one another and placed on this axis, and conflicts existed within and between subfields to control the future of the field. To conceptualise this, Bourdieu describes fields as being ‘simultaneously a *space of conflict and competition*, the analogy here being with a battlefield’.⁷⁴ Crucially, particularly when studying continuities and changes, a field is a battlefield which is shaped by previous encounters. Those who have control over a field can scar and mark the field and provide advantages in future skirmishes.⁷⁵ Continuity is actively reproduced by those it already favours, and advantages in the struggles are bequeathed to those who support its structures. Field theory suggests that change can be produced by new entrances into the field, or existing agents and institutions combining their capitals to launch challenges, but transformation exists within a limited set of historical possibilities. Ultimately, control over the field is a set of conflicts or compromises mounted by different individuals or agents bringing with them all their available forms of capital, both in the field itself and elsewhere, played out in the structure and rules of the field as it exists. These battles are tactical and predominantly, though crucially not always, won by those with the most forms of capital (economic, cultural, social, symbolic and derivatives thereof). Football, therefore, offers a productive example of this theory in action.

One of the advantages of this model is that it allows us to think about power and control without falling into the simplistic trap of reductive categories of proletariat and bourgeoisie. Class is conceptualised as ownership of particular forms of social, cultural and symbolic capital. Those with similar amounts of cultural, social and economic capital (or ‘proximity in social space’) will likely, though not always, share similar interests, desires and motives.⁷⁶ Proximity in social space, however, is not enough to guarantee support or agreement. Agents and institutions seeking different directions in the sporting field or subfields, as demonstrated in the football rugby splits, can also produce conflict. Conversely, a (sub)field may find cross-class support when challenged by outside forces, as Mike Huggins has found with his study of horse racing.⁷⁷ Cochran, Cleary and Payne – influential theatrical managers – were middle class, but had a different vision for football than the established F.A. council. In this regard, they are not unique: the Olympia games came in a period of rivalries between inter and intra-class groups seeking to control the F.A., its regional associations and footballing subfield more broadly.

The Football Association may have been formed in 1863, but historians of the sport have long claimed that it is between 1890 and 1914 where the game’s central power structures were established.⁷⁸ Where the Football Association was set-up to govern the newly codified

sport, the 1870s saw a limited form of control established via compromise with the Sheffield league, and by the 1880s it was being challenged by professionalism culminating in the creation of the Football League in 1888. Following this, the Football Association and the Football League participated in a long series of battles and/or negotiations about the form in which football should exist. J.J. Bentley, then president of the Football League and writing in 1905, characterised the emergence of that institution:

For a considerable period the Football Association failed to recognise the new power in football politics, and when it did so there was an antagonistic spirit abroad, which threatened unpleasantness, but, thanks to the discriminating powers of several gentlemen who still guide the destinies of the governing body, ruptures of a serious nature were avoided, although more than once the line has been a very thin one.⁷⁹

Here, Bourdieu's battlefield analogy seems somewhat lacking. At any given time, subfields and fields may compromise in order to mutually profit; negotiations may delay or disrupt the war; and incorporation may be a key tool for survival. A field may well be a battlefield, but it simultaneously contains both guerrilla tactics and advanced methods of negotiation and peacekeeping. In the footballing subfield, compromise was of central importance in controlling the direction of the subfield. Between them, the Football Association and the Football League levied a momentous degree of power and control, and this has been well-covered by existing histories.⁸⁰ Powers included: the organisation of games, the establishment of subsidiary and local associations, regulation over the rules of the game, and control over labour. The last point was particularly relevant to the Olympia games. The Football Association, Bentley claimed modestly, had soccer in the 'palm of its hand'.⁸¹

But that is not to say there were no other groups seeking to actively limit the control the Football Association and Football League had upon the sport. The Southern League maintained its position as an important professional league in England. Operating at the same time as the Southern League's embrace of professionalism, tensions between southern amateur teams that had been present since the 1890s came to ahead in 1905 when the F.A. decreed that both amateur and professional clubs should be allowed membership to local associations.⁸² This ruling directly led to the formation of the Amateur Football Association in 1907. According to Dilwyn Porter, factors contributing to this split were complex and longstanding: Old Boys clubs were failing to compete in local and national competitions, and there was a widespread fear that the subfield was replete with shamateurism and compromises. Most importantly, however, 'what [the blue-blooded] objected to most was the growing influence of the professional clubs on football's various governing bodies, both national and local'.⁸³

Likewise in 1905, another group of dissidents established the Isthmian League, 'a genuinely amateur football league, in which competition should be clean and keen, and in which trophies and individual prizes should have no place'⁸⁴

At the other pole of the subfield, Cleary's Winter Club games can be positioned alongside other clubs and individuals who were motivated by sport's potential for economic profit, in addition to social, symbolic and cultural capital that being a club director might herald. The first decade of the twentieth century saw intense speculation and investment in professional football. In London, between 1891 and 1908 '12 London clubs — five in the Football League and seven in the Southern League — were operating as limited companies and paying their players'.⁸⁵ In 1905 alone, two London professional clubs were formed, Crystal Palace and Chelsea, while another, Fulham, moved into a new ground. The competitive London market may go some way to explaining why Olympia games were advertised as being supplementary to Saturday games. 'After the cup ties to-day,' the advertisement encouraged, 'go to Olympia to-night'.⁸⁶ Chelsea in particular is significant for being set up by Harry Mears for the benefit of renting Stamford Bridge at a high price and the catering concessions, 'the most obvious profiteer of this type'.⁸⁷ Olympia can be seen as an extension of a wider set of individuals who saw sport in general and football in particular as a profit making enterprise.

The broader point remains that in the 1900s London could be described as a 'major battleground' for the role and function of football in society, and it was those battles that Cleary's Winter Club found itself having to negotiate.⁸⁸ The ultimate direction of football was by no means set in stone, but the structure of the subfield as it existed meant the direction of the sport was heavily influenced by the Football Association and the Football League. While not operating entirely like other economic or industrial concerns, Wray Vamplew has influentially argued that football in this period, and the complex interplay between the Football Association and the Football League, operated something like a cartel. Cleary had two choices, then: he could seek the approval of the Football Association and pragmatically adapt to the structures of the subfield as it stood; or he could directly confront the authority of the F.A. and hope to create an alternative to their power. Vamplew suggests that it 'would be very difficult for a club to opt out of a sports cartel and still remain an effective producer in the industry'.⁸⁹ Cleary, needing the services of contemporary professional footballers, and not having the cultural, economic or social capital needed to sustain an all-out war with the Association, appears to have agreed with this assessment at the outset of the venture. Speaking to the press, he was quick to acquiesce to the F.A.'s existing cartel power structures:

If the F.A. give their sanction I shall meet their wishes with regard to the engagement of players. I am prepared to sign the professionals on the official forms, and not touch any players already signed for other clubs. Also to limit the wages to the maximum allowed by the F.A.⁹⁰

Yet connected commentators, aware of the ‘powerful feature of the Football Association’s controlling powers’, did not fancy the chances of the upstart group, even with such compromises made. *Football Chat* openly dismissed the possibility of success the new venture faced, claiming that if the Olympia ever made it before the council ‘their refusal is almost an assured certainty [because] the thing would have to be under the auspices of some football organisations, and the proceeds for some football body or charitable institution’.⁹¹ Frederick Wall, secretary of the Football Association at the time, also claims there were informal communications with Cleary outlining the position of the organisation. The Football Association, Cleary was apparently told, ‘would never approve of such a plan, that the players would render themselves liable to suspension and that he was likely to lose heavily’.⁹² In an attempt to persuade the F.A., Cleary took to the press to plead his case, ‘the Association game is splendidly governed, and it is my desire to co-operate with the council and meet their wishes in every possible way’.⁹³

His pleas fell on deaf ears. On Monday the 6th November 1905, the Football Association held their regular meeting to discuss the many facets of managing the national game. Of the many agenda items there featured a letter from Cleary ‘with reference to giving exhibition games of Football, at Olympia’. The minutes record that ‘the council were unable to give the required permission’.⁹⁴ *Football Chat* pleaded that younger players ‘who are being tempted to tread that beautiful imitation turf carpet [that they] should be warned of the risks they run in being suspended from playing ordinary football’.⁹⁵ When the Football Association met after Christmas on Monday 15th January 1906 they decided that ‘affiliated Clubs, Players and Officials be warned that if they take part in football matches at Olympia they will be deemed to have broken the Rules of the Association, and will be dealt with accordingly’.⁹⁶ ‘Accordingly’, in this instance, meant being permanently disbarred from playing for any F.A. affiliated clubs. This ominous show of power demonstrated the strength of the association and the security of the subfield as it stood: the institution had direct control over a vast amount of economic capital and could wield that power to resist outside challenges.

Newspapers reported that at the meeting ‘heated arguments were raised against’ the new venture.⁹⁷ One of the main issues that concerned the council was where the game was played. Some on the council objected to the game being played ‘under a roof’,⁹⁸ suggesting that the game ‘is essentially an outdoor one’.⁹⁹ Commentators, however, were quick to point

out the uniqueness of Olympia. James Crabtree, the sympathetic ex-professional Aston Villa player, claimed that there was not any other arena ‘in the whole universe’ capable of holding an event this size.¹⁰⁰ The danger was that other sporting entrepreneurs were experimenting with indoor sporting spectacles. At Madison Square Garden in New York City in the same period, entrepreneurial promoters of the six-day cycling races ‘provided a promotional model...to use indoor arenas as sporting venues rather than as generic performance and storage locations’, and this was alongside indoor boxing and wrestling matches attracting large crowds at indoor venues.¹⁰¹ A successful footballing venture would provide another incentive for speculative building of such arenas for indoor sports. Football did not have to be played outdoors, but the outdoors played an important function for how the F.A. understood the game. Concerns about industrialisation, new working patterns, and suburbanisation stressed the importance of sport being played outside.¹⁰² ‘Fresh air’ and the ability to stoically withstand all weather conditions were seen to build health and morality, with spectator comfort not being a priority.

Other objections were more economic and fundamental in nature. The F.A.’s rules about limiting shareholder dividends to less than 5% caused a problem for a project that had cost so much to produce. Besides, given the variety and entertainment nature of the events, with multiple attractions operating at the same time, how would the 5% dividend be calculated? In a statement, Cleary implored the F.A. for special consideration because the ‘Olympia will not be a football club in the ordinary sense. Our players would not meet other clubs or engage in competition’.¹⁰³ But this was the point: other professional and commercialised football clubs had organised themselves in a manner, as Holt argues, ‘not to speculate in the entertainment industry’,¹⁰⁴ yet Olympia was precisely speculating in the entertainment industry. The significance of appealing to audiences and maximising profit, factors which typify theatres in this period, helped to remove it from commonly understood economic characteristics of sport at this time and brought it closer to the economics of the music hall and other commercial entertainments.¹⁰⁵ A related economic and ideological point revolved around payment to players. Despite Cleary’s assurances to meet the Football League’s maximum wage caps – one of the strongest forms of regulating outright professionalism – the possibility that players would be drawn to the higher wages of the stage, turning sportsmen into theatrical entertainers, remained a threat, and would underline fears, held inside and outside the F.A., that professionalism was taking over the game.¹⁰⁶

The Winter Club promotion also came at a timely period in which the role of ‘entertainment’ in sport generally was being debated, and boundaries with entertainment institutions delineated. In some sports, particularly Rugby League, rules and regulations were

adopted by associations in order to appeal to audiences. At this time, professional wrestling contests, lacking the strong central governing body like the Football Association, eschewed competition entirely in favour sporting entertainment spectacles, and boxing continued its relationship with the screen and stage. Before 1914, as Taylor has demonstrated, the relationship between football and entertainment was openly debated and discussed, even if the vast majority of writers sought to distance the two fields.¹⁰⁷ Elsewhere, *Football Chat* claimed,

According to quite a little army of football writers, present-day style football is lacking novelty...One would almost think that our players are expected to turn catherine wheels and kick goals at one and the same moment...There is a possibility that some acrobatic and gymnastic tricks might lead to football getting out of its present “deadly dull” conditions, but would 100,000 football lovers take the trouble to go to the Crystal Palace to see outdoor acrobatic performances?¹⁰⁸

Horrall has suggested that ‘the Olympia project threatened the FA because it was not simply a stage representation of the game, but a profit-making rival competition run at the same time of year’.¹⁰⁹ This is certainly true, but Olympia’s arrival, in the first decade of the twentieth century, came at a time when the structure of the subfield was to some degree in flux, with the Football Association, Football League, Southern League, Amateur Football Association and other groups already involved in skirmishes about the role and function of football. While the Olympia games existed on the peripheries of those arguments, and did not necessarily pose a fundamental challenge, its existence offered a glimpse of what out-and-out professionalism might look like while serving as a fringe position that helped to frame the wider debate. Wall believed that the Olympia was a ‘serious attempt’ to offer football as a variety sport, and the association treated it as such. The F.A. had been pragmatic in their acceptance of professionalism two decades earlier, but for many of the Football Association’s members they had *already* ceded too many compromises and too much power to the Football League. Exhibitions stressing entertainment and showmanship above all else was at odds with the existing structure, capital and values of the subfield, and was a manifestation of concerns many F.A. members had of clubs ‘playing outside the pale of the Association’. ‘Uncontrolled professionalism,’ Wall continued, with a sly reference to wrestling and boxing, ‘is the bane of any sport. The game has been firmly controlled in England’.¹¹⁰

Failure to secure the support of the F.A. did serious damage to Olympia, but other problems may have hindered the Winter Club’s success. The failure may have had very little to do with sport and may merely have been economic: the size of the arena, and the costs to light, equip and decorate the space – an issue that had plagued Olympia since it had opened – may have outweighed ticketing returns. The pelota games, the second biggest attraction at the

events, were poorly received by audiences familiar with the game. Complaints about the wrong size wall, inadequate markings and even the wrong number of players were criticisms that were aired in the press.¹¹¹ The same review described the ‘lighting [as] very poor too’,¹¹² indicating that the size and scale of the project, hoping to feature numerous sports, may have meant the arena was ill suited for all events. There is the possibility that audiences themselves rejected the Winter Club football games. Alfred Davis at the *Daily Mail* claimed that ‘the teams provided a very good entertainment’, but added that the games lacked ‘the excitement of an ordinary match’, although it is difficult to say with certainty whether Davis’ opinion was shared with other spectators.¹¹³ Importantly, perhaps, the chance to perform the ‘emotional intensity and...acute feelings of community and identity’ that had characterised the expansion of football in its first fifty years was lost in the rather humdrum sounding Olympia ‘A’ and ‘B’ teams.¹¹⁴ Professional wrestling managed to retain such passions with nationalist and orientalist characterisations of its performers, but losing the established League teams meant that some of these pre-existing rivalries were lost with them. Indeed, for Cochran – a contemporary of Cleary’s but having no immediate stake in the outcome – it was the Football Association’s firm control and removal of players and clubs that did the greatest damage, claiming ‘the whole show was a fiasco’.¹¹⁵

In March 1906, the Olympia shows were cancelled and *Football Chat* featured a financial appeal for the players from the Chelsea FC manager who had taken a risk playing at Olympia.¹¹⁶ Younger players who had risked playing at the events were left with nothing, and older players who had travelled to the capital to play were left stranded. That same March, mere months after Cleary and his associates had invested over £5000 on the artificial playing surface; the carpet was sold at auction. Divided into 94 lots, the pieces were sold to other showmen for prices varying between 30s and £1, an event which the *Daily Mail* aptly titled ‘Spectacle for Sale’.¹¹⁷ The obituary for Cleary published in *The Stage* amusingly noted that for the remainder of his life he had the ‘melancholy satisfaction whenever he visited a theatre and a saw a green carpet on the stage of recognising it, or pretending to, as a portion of his own’.¹¹⁸ Like the pitch itself, the plans to turn football into a spectacular football entertainment lay in pieces.

CONCLUSION

The emergence of a sporting and exercise field in the second half of the nineteenth century involved the convergence of the education, military, medical and cultural fields. Questions about the role of sport, many of which continue to this day, emerged at this time: Is sport for

spectating or participating? If the former, are the benefits of sporting competition based around gambling, entertainment and laughter, or the latter, healthiness, morality and leadership? Should sportsmen and women receive a wage for their time and troubles or does payment represent professionalism and a threat to the amateur ideal? Utilising Bourdieusian field theory, and in particular the conflicts and compromises exerted between various agents, groups, institutions throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century, can offer a productive and adaptive model for studying of the ideological tensions and historical development of sport. While many of the contours of the sporting field had been established by the first decade of the twentieth century, the direction that football, and the wider sporting field, was going to take was by no means permanent. There still existed confrontations and challenges to the structure, values, meanings and capitals, even if those challenges were fairly easily negotiated by those in power.

On two issues, the football games pursued at the Winter Club offer a manner in which football might have been played or exhibited during the twentieth century. Football, nor 'sport' more generally, did not have to be an 'outdoor' game. If prioritising the comfort and enjoyment of spectators, a warm, indoor, catered, all-seater arena with the ability to offer entertaining matches at night throughout the week would probably have been preferred. Football might also have developed in a similar manner to professional wrestling, with a popular performed sporting entertainment sitting uncomfortably next to its competitive sporting sibling. Edwin Cleary's vision for a version of football that stressed spectacle and entertainment above everything else, and his attempt to run football in an economic manner closer to popular entertainment of the day, was at odds with much of the sporting field as it existed. The exhibitions threatened to destabilise the carefully balanced structure of the footballing subfield which managed to incorporate a degree of entertainment, professionalism and profiteering while maintaining some sense of the moral and ideological value of sport inherited from the public school system. Yet after the First World War, on both issues – entertainment and audience comfort -- football 'witnessed a subtle change in League attitudes' involving ground improvements and rule changes.¹¹⁹ After the Second World War, many sporting bodies, in their attempts to make sports more palatable and better suited to television, were willing to change rules and playing times in order to encourage more entertainment, quicker matches and more spectacle.¹²⁰ What the Olympia games in 1905 and 1906 can tell us is that a field's power structure is contingent and always subject to constant battles and negotiations, and the results of these battles can drastically alter their history.

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- ¹ Alfred Davis, 'Football at Olympia', *Daily Mail* 28 December 1905, 6.
- ² Sir Frederick Wall, *Fifty Years of Football* (London: Cassell, 1935), 19.
- ³ 'Football as a Variety Sport', *Football Chat*, 12 September 1905, 2.
- ⁴ Gavin Kitching, "'Old' Football and the 'New' Codes: Some Thoughts on the 'Origins of Football': Debate and Suggestions for Further Research", *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 28, no.13 (2011), 1742.
- ⁵ Hugh Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution c. 1780 – c.1880* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980),
- ⁶ Dennis Brailsford, *Bareknuckles: A Social History of Prize-Fighting* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 1988); Benjamin Litherland, *The Field and the Stage: Pugilism, Combat Performance and Professional Wrestling*, (University of Sussex: Unpublished Thesis, 2014); Vanessa Toulmin, *A Fair Fight: An Illustrated Review of Boxing on British Fairgrounds* (Oldham: World's Fair Publications, 1999).
- ⁷ Samantha Oldfield, 'Running Pedestrianism in Victorian Manchester', *Sport in History* 34, no.2, (2014), 233.
- ⁸ Adrian Harvey, *The Beginnings of a Commercial Sporting Culture in Britain, 1793 – 1850* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004); Tony Collins, *Sport in a Capitalist Society* (London: Routledge, 2013), 29.
- ⁹ Harvey, *Beginnings of a Commercial Sporting Culture*, 180.
- ¹⁰ Ibid.
- ¹¹ Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution*, 36
- ¹² See Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* Randal Johnson (trans.), (Cambridge: Polity, 2012); Pierre Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field* Susan Emanuel (trans.) (Cambridge: Polity, 1996).
- ¹³ Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production*, 162 -163.
- ¹⁴ Ibid, 164.
- ¹⁵ Jacques DeFrance, 'The Making of a Field with a Weak Autonomy', in Philip S. Gorski (ed.) *Bourdieu and Historical Analysis* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), 307.
- ¹⁶ Tony Collins, *Rugby's Great Split: Class, Culture and the Origins of Rugby Football League* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), 112-154.
- ¹⁷ Mike Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London: Hambledon and London, 2004), 51.
- ¹⁸ Pierre Bourdieu, 'Sport and Social Class', *Social Science Information* 17 (1978), 826.
- ¹⁹ Graham Curry, 'Football Spectatorship in mid-to-late Victorian Sheffield', *Soccer & Society*, 8, no.2-3 (2007), 189-190.
- ²⁰ Keith Gregson and Mike Huggins, 'Sport, Music-Hall Culture and Popular Song in Nineteenth-Century England' *Culture, Sport, Society* 2, no.2, (1999), 82.
- ²¹ See, for example, David L. Chapman, *Sandow the Magnificent: Eugen Sandow and the Beginnings of Bodybuilding* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2006); Dimitris Liokaftos (2014) Professional Bodybuilding and the Business of 'Extreme' Bodies: The Mr Olympia Competition in the Context of Las Vegas's Leisure Industries, *Sport in History*, Vol.34, No.2, pp.318-339.
- ²² Dan Streible, *Fight Pictures: A History of Boxing and Early Cinema*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008); Luke Stadel, 'Wrestling and cinema, 1892–1911', *Early Popular Visual Culture*, 11, no. 4 (2013), 342-364; Scott M. Beekman, *Ringside: A History of Professional Wrestling in America*, (Westport: Praeger, 2006); Litherland, *The Field and the Stage*.
- ²³ Andrew Horrall, *Popular Culture in London c.1890 – 1918* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), 106.
- ²⁴ 'Olympia. West Kensington', *The Times* 28 December 1886, 5.
- ²⁵ For a summary of Olympia in this period see John Glanfield, *Earls Court and Olympia: From Buffalo Bill to The Brits*, (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2003).
- ²⁶ 'Olympia', *The Times* 27 December 1899, 8.
- ²⁷ 'Olympia', *The Stage* 7 December 1899, 20.
- ²⁸ 'The Wrestling Craze: The Great Match at the Royal Albert Hall', *Illustrated London News*, 09 Jul. (1904): p.51.
- ²⁹ Charles Cochran, central to this transformation, claims that 'the public did not want straight wrestling – they wanted a "show" and a "show" they were given'. *The Secrets of a Showman*, 111.
- ³⁰ Charles B. Cochran, *The Secrets of a Showman* (London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1925), 135.
- ³¹ Ibid.
- ³² 'The Fate of the Olympia', *Daily Mail* 11 August 1896, 3. For a summary of these events see Glanfield, *Earls Court and Olympia*, 40-42.
- ³³ Cochran, *The Secrets of a Showman*, 135. For a description of some of these events see Margaret Shewring, 'Reinhardt's "Miracle" at Olympia: A Record and a Reconstruction', *New Theatre Quarterly* 2, no.9 (1987), 3-23.

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- ³⁴Letter from the Clerk of the London County Council, LCC Theatres Committee Papers, Olympia, 1896-1905, 14 Dec. 1905, London Metropolitan Archives. LCC/MIN/10867. See also 'Football at Night: Opening of the Winter Club at Olympia', *The Observer*, 24 December 1905, 3.
- ³⁵Report by the Superintending Architect, LCC Theatres Committee Papers, Olympia, 1896-1905, 15 Nov. 1905. London Metropolitan Archives. LCC/MIN/10867.
- ³⁶'Football at Olympia', *Football Chat*, 12 December 1905, 2.
- ³⁷'Winter Delights at Olympia', *The Penny Illustrated Paper and Illustrated Times*, 6 January 1906, 7.
- ³⁸'Football at Olympia', *Football Chat* 12 December 1905, 2; 'Winter Delights at Olympia', *The Penny Illustrated Paper and Illustrated Times* 6 January 1906, 7.
- ³⁹'The Winter Club', *The Times* 15 December 1905, 7.
- ⁴⁰'Football at Olympia', *Football Chat* 12 December 1905, 2.
- ⁴¹Letter from the Chief Engineer, LCC Theatres Committee Papers, Olympia, 1896-1905, 23 December 1905, London Metropolitan Archives. LCC/MIN/10867.
- ⁴²Matthew Taylor (2005) *The Leaguers: The Making of Professional Football in England, 1900 – 1939* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005), 258.
- ⁴³'Football at Night: Opening of the Winter Club at Olympia', *The Observer*, 24 Dec. 1905, p.3.
- ⁴⁴Ibid.
- ⁴⁵'The World of Pastime: Football', *The Penny Illustrated Press and Illustrated Times*, 30 December 1905, 294.
- ⁴⁶The classic study remains Michael R. Booth *Victorian Spectacular Theatre 1850-1910* (London: Routledge, 1981)
- ⁴⁷Letter from the Chief Officer, LCC Theatres Committee Papers, Olympia, 1896-1905, 14 December 1905, London Metropolitan Archives. LCC/MIN/10867.
- ⁴⁸'Football at Night: Opening of the Winter Club at Olympia', *The Observer* 24 December 1905, 3.
- ⁴⁹'Football at Olympia', *Daily Mail* 9 February 1906, 8.
- ⁵⁰'Pelota At Olympia', *The Times* 10 January 1906, 3.
- ⁵¹'Winter Delights at Olympia', *The Penny Illustrated Paper and Illustrated Times* 6 Jan. 1906, 7.
- ⁵²'Pelota at Olympia', *The Times* 12 January 1906, 7.
- ⁵³'The Winter Club', *The Times* 15 December 1905, 7.
- ⁵⁴'Sport at Olympia: Popularity of Football on the Turf Carpet', *Daily Mail* 2 January 1906, 6; Advertisement, *The Football Evening News* 13 January, 1906, 1.
- ⁵⁵'Olympia Players Banned', *The Football Evening News*, Saturday February 3rd 1906, p.2
- ⁵⁶'This Evening's Football', *The Football Evening News* 30 December 1905, 2.
- ⁵⁷'Football at Night: Opening of the Winter Club at Olympia', *The Observer*, 24 December 1905, 3. According to *Football Evening News*, the starting elevens for the opening games were as follows: The Olympia A team was comprised of Trainer, Hyslop, Dunlop, Coxon, Marshall, Lloyd, Meredith, Jack, Connor, J. Jones, Garfield. The Olympia B team comprised of Clutterbuck, Miller, Howarth, Keech, Moir, Gray, Marshall, Stormont, Calvey, Turnball, McInnes: 'This Evening's Football', *The Football Evening News* 30 December 1905, 2.
- ⁵⁸Players records are taken from Michael Joyce, *Football League Players' Records 1888 to 1939* (Nottingham: Tony Brown, 2012).
- ⁵⁹'Football at Olympia', *Daily Mail* 23 November 1905, 8.
- ⁶⁰'Football as a Variety Sport', *Football Chat*, 12 September 1905, 2.
- ⁶¹Wall, *Fifty Years of Football*, 17.
- ⁶²James Crabtree, 'Football at Olympia', *Daily Mail* 16 November, 1905, 8.
- ⁶³'Olympia's Novel Winter Programme', *Daily Mail* 2 November 1905, 8.
- ⁶⁴Cochran, *The Secrets of a Showman*, 135
- ⁶⁵Alfred Davis, 'Football at Olympia', *Daily Mail* 28 December 1905, 6.
- ⁶⁶*Football Chat*, *The Football Evening News*, or *Athletic News* covered these games.
- ⁶⁷'Football at Olympia', *Daily Mail* 9 February 1906, 8.
- ⁶⁸'Olympia's Novel Winter Programme', *Daily Mail* 2 November 1905, 8.
- ⁶⁹'Football as a Variety Sport', *Football Chat* 12 September 1905, 2.
- ⁷⁰Taylor, *The Leaguers*, 252.
- ⁷¹Carter in Taylor, *The Leaguers*, p.252.
- ⁷²Pierre Bourdieu, 'Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field', in George Steinmetz (ed.), *State/culture: State-formation After the Cultural Turn* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1999), 57.
- ⁷³The Olympic movement was actively against the compromises made in the sporting field. In 1894, Pierre de Coubertin wrote, 'We must uphold the noble and chivalrous character of athleticism, which has distinguished it in the past, so that it may continue effectively to play the admirable role in the education of modern peoples that was attributed to it by Greek masters. Human imperfection always tends to transform the Olympic athlete into a circus gladiator. A choice must be made between these two incompatible approaches to athletics. To defend against the spirit of gain and professionalism that threatens to invade them, amateurs in most countries have

established complex legislation that replete with compromise and contradiction'. *Olympism: Selected Writings, 1863-1937*, (Lausanne, 2000): p.299.

⁷⁴ Bourdieu & Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, 17.

⁷⁵ Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art*, p.206.

⁷⁶ Pierre Bourdieu, *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action*, (Cambridge: Polity, 2001), 10-11.

⁷⁷ Mike Huggins, *Flat Racing and British Society, 1790-1914*, (London: Routledge, 1999), 11.

⁷⁸ For a summary of these positions see Matthew Taylor, *The Association Game: A History of British Football* (Edinburgh: Pearson Education, 2008), 62.

⁷⁹ J.J. Bentley, 'The Government of Our Winter Game: An Inside Article Dealing With the Functions of the Football Association and the League' in *C. B. Fry's Magazine of Sports and Outdoor Life, Volume II, October 1904 to March 1905* (London: Geo Newnes Ltd, 1905), 157.

⁸⁰ Football is almost certainly the most researched sport in British sports history and the role of the Football Association is well-covered in this area. Classic studies remain Tony Mason, *Association Football and English Society 1863-1915* (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1980), James Walvin, *The People's Game: The History of Football Revisited* (Edinburgh, Mainstream Publishing, 1994). See Taylor, *The Association Game*, for an authoritative history and literature review of this period. For the manner in which the F.A. and the Football League negotiated power see Wray Vamplew, *Pay up and play the game: Professional Sport in Britain 1875-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp.124-138.

⁸¹ J.J. Bentley, 'The Government of Our Winter Game', 157.

⁸² Taylor, *The Association Game*, 84.

⁸³ Dilwyn Porter, 'Revenge of the Crouch End Vampires: The AFA, the FA and English Football's "Great Split", 1907-14', *Sport in History*, 26, no.3 (2006), 406-428.

⁸⁴ 'The Story of the Isthmian League' in Dilwyn Porter, 'Amateur Football in England, 1948-63: The Pegasus Phenomenon', *Contemporary British History* 14, no.2 (2008), 8.

⁸⁵ Dilwyn Porter, 'Coming on with Leaps and Bounds in the Metropolis': *London Football in the Era of the 1908 Olympics*, 34, no.2 (2009), 103.

⁸⁶ Advertisement, *The Football Evening News*, 13 January 1906, 1.

⁸⁷ Taylor, *The Association Game*, 71.

⁸⁸ Porter, *London Football in the Era of the 1908 Olympics*, 102.

⁸⁹ Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*, 113.

⁹⁰ 'Olympia's Novel Winter Programme', *Daily Mail* (London, England), 2 November 1905, 8.

⁹¹ 'Variety and Show Football', *Football Chat* 3 October 1905, 1.

⁹² Wall (1935), *Fifty Years of Football*, 17.

⁹³ 'Olympia's Novel Winter Programme', *Daily Mail* (London, England), 2 November 1905, 8.

⁹⁴ The Football Association, Limited, Minutes of the Meeting of the Council, 6 November 1905.

⁹⁵ 'Appeal for Olympia Footballers', *Football Chat* 6 March 1906, 2.

⁹⁶ The Football Association, Limited, Minutes of the Meeting of the Council, 15 January 1906.

⁹⁷ 'The World of Pastime: Football', *The Penny Illustrated Press and Illustrated Times*, 11 November 1905, 24.

⁹⁸ J.J. Bentley, 'London's Stand against Professionalism', *Daily Mail* 3 November 1905, 8.

⁹⁹ James Crabtree, 'Football at Olympia', *Daily Mail* 16 November, 1905, 8.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ari de Wilde, 'Six-Day Racing Entrepreneurs and the Emergence of the Twentieth Century Arena Sportscape, 1891-1912', *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* 4, no.4 (2012), 533.

¹⁰² Richard Holt 'The Amateur Body and the Middle-class Man: Work, Health and Style in Victorian Britain' *Sport in History*, 26, no.3 (2006), 352-369. Indeed, it is only in the last thirty years, under very particular economic and social conditions, where indoor sports have flourished – see Maarten van Bottenburg & Lotte Salome, 'The Indoorisation of Outdoor Sports: An Exploration of the Rise of Lifestyle Sports in Artificial Settings', *Leisure Studies*, 29, no.2 (2010), 143-160.

¹⁰³ 'Olympia's Novel Winter Programme', *Daily Mail* (London, England), 2 November 1905, 8.

¹⁰⁴ Holt, *Sport and the British*, 282; Vamplew, *Pay Up and Play the Game*.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. See also Taylor, *The Leaguers*, 251.

¹⁰⁶ 'Olympia's Novel Winter Programme', *Daily Mail* (London, England), 2 November 1905, 8. This was in a period of increasing agitation about performance conditions and pay. In 1906 many music hall performers created a dedicated trade union, the Variety Artistes Federation, leading to a strike in 1907. See Peter Hori, *Music Hall Warriors: A History of the Variety Artistes Federation 1906-1967* (London: Greenwich Exchange, 1997).

¹⁰⁷ Taylor, *The Leaguers*, 250-254.

¹⁰⁸ E.C. Price, 'Passing Events', *Football Chat*, 8 October 1905, 1.

¹⁰⁹ Horrall, *Popular Culture*, 158.

¹¹⁰ Wall, *Fifty Years of Football*, 19.

¹¹¹ 'Pelota At Olympia', *The Times* 10 January 1906, 3.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Alfred Davis, 'Football at Olympia' *Daily Mail* 28 December 1905, 6.

¹¹⁴ Tony Collins, 'Early Football and the Emergence of Modern Soccer, c. 1840–1880' *The International Journal of the History of Sport* (2015), 12.

¹¹⁵ Cochran, *The Secrets of a Showman*, 136.

¹¹⁶ 'Appeal for Olympia Footballers', *Football Chat* 6 March 1906, 2.

¹¹⁷ 'Spectacle for Sale', *Daily Mail* 28 March 1906, 5.

¹¹⁸ 'Obituary: Mr Edwin Cleary', *The Stage* 10 August 1922, 13.

¹¹⁹ Taylor, *The Leaguers*, 252.

¹²⁰ Garry Whannel, *Fields in Vision: Television Sport and Cultural Transformation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 81.