

Sport in Capitalist Society

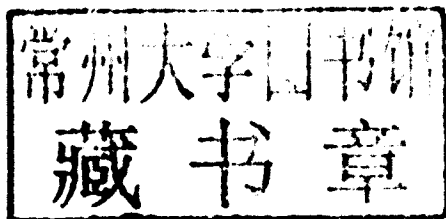
A short history

Tony Collins

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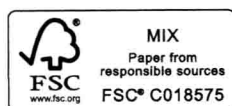
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SPORT IN CAPITALIST SOCIETY

- Why are the Olympic Games the driving force behind a clampdown on civil liberties?
- What makes sport an unwavering ally of nationalism and militarism?
- Is sport the new opiate of the masses?

These and many other questions are answered in this new radical history of sport by leading historian of sport and society, Professor Tony Collins.

Tracing the history of modern sport from its origins in the burgeoning capitalist economy of mid-eighteenth-century England to the globalised corporate sport of today, the book argues that, far from the purity of sport being 'corrupted' by capitalism, modern sport is as much a product of capitalism as the factory, the stock exchange and the unemployment line.

Based on original sources, the book explains how sport has been shaped and moulded by the major political and economic events of the past three centuries, such as the French Revolution, the rise of modern nationalism and imperialism, the Russian Revolution, the Cold War and the imposition of the neo-liberal agenda in the last decades of the twentieth century. It highlights the symbiotic relationship between the media and sport, from the simultaneous emergence of print capitalism and modern sport in Georgian England to the rise of Murdoch's global satellite television empire in the twenty-first century, and it explores, for the first time, the alternative, revolutionary models of sport in the early twentieth century.

Sport in Capitalist Society is the first sustained attempt to explain the emergence of modern sport around the world as an integral part of the globalisation of capitalism. It is essential reading for anyone with an interest in the history or sociology of sport, or the social and cultural history of the modern world.

Tony Collins is Professor of History and Director of the International Centre for Sports History and Culture at De Montfort University in Leicester, UK. He is the author of several books, including *Rugby's Great Split* and *A Social History of English Rugby Union*, and was a lead consultant for the 2012 BBC Radio 4 series *Sport and the British*.

INTRODUCTION

Why did modern sport emerge first in Britain? What forces propelled it around the world? Why has it become a vehicle for nationalism? What made sport such a bastion of masculinity? How did the spirit of amateurism rise and eventually fall? Why have major sporting events in the twenty-first century become synonymous with authoritarian control and corporate excess?

Sport in Capitalist Society seeks to answer these and other questions by examining the history of sport over the last 300 years. It argues that modern sport is as much a product of capitalism as the factory, the stock exchange or the unemployment line. Modern sport emerged in eighteenth-century Britain as part of the growth of a commercial entertainment industry, and sport's binary world of winners and losers matched perfectly the cultural dynamic of capitalism.

The emergence of amateurism in the mid-nineteenth century provided sport with a moral mission that would allow it to spread across the globe as an ideological underpinning of imperialist expansion. At the same time, the emergence of an industrial working class in the towns and cities of Europe and North America powered the development of professional mass spectator sport, most notably soccer and baseball.

Spurred by its symbiotic relationship with the media, commercialised sport extended its appeal around the world as a vital cultural component of modern capitalism. Yet despite the gradual extinction of the amateur ethos, by the start of the twenty-first century sport combined its eighteenth-century commercial imperative with the disciplinary impulse of its nineteenth-century amateurism, a perfect simulacrum of the reality of the capitalist 'New World Order'.

This book aims to investigate these broad historical trends which have shaped modern sport from the eighteenth century to the present day. Its focus is on Britain, Europe, North America and Japan, the regions in which sport acquired huge cultural and commercial significance in the early years of the twentieth century and

which, as the major capitalist powers, have dominated the rest of the globe ever since. It does not seek to be exhaustive in its coverage of countries, sports or tournaments, but to explore the underlying dynamics that have driven the expansion of sport. As well as being a work of synthesis it also includes new and original research on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Sport in Capitalist Society rejects the idea that sport's development can be explained by the teleological concept of 'modernisation' – after all, one generation's modernity is another's antiquity – or by reference to an equally vague 'civilising process', which carries with it the assumption that the modern era is more 'civilised' than the past. Instead, the book takes a historical materialist approach, which sees modern sport as a product of capitalism, shaped and moulded by class society and its consequent oppression of women and non-white peoples.

It neither dismisses sport as a perversion of play nor believes that all would be well if it were not for club owners or administrators. Men and women play sport but not under circumstances of their own choosing, one might say – and it is that relationship between sport and the social, economic and political circumstances under which it is played that this book seeks to explore. To borrow from Spinoza, the goal of *Sport in Capitalist Society* is neither to cheer nor to jeer sport, but to understand it.

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1

CAPITALISM AND THE BIRTH OF MODERN SPORT

The whole human species may be fairly considered and treated as jockeys, each running his race to the best advantage.

Anon., 1793.¹

Men and women have always played games. The impulse to play is as vital to human culture as the desire to sing, the urge to draw or the need to tell stories. As a form of physical exhilaration, group solidarity or downright sheer pleasure, games are common to almost all societies in almost all periods of history. Few things in everyday life have been taken quite so seriously as play.²

Games developed from humanity's efforts to master nature and sustain life. Throwing contests emerged from the hunting of animals or the need to repel enemies. Running races evolved from tracking animals or maintaining communications between settlements. Combat games were derived from military skills. Often the dividing line between work and leisure was unclear and sometimes non-existent. For most people throughout most of human history, life was work and work was life. Games happened when this relationship was temporarily suspended, for example, after the completion of a harvest, and enjoyment could fleetingly take precedence over necessity.³

This pattern was replicated around the world and across all pre-industrial societies. Early games were sometimes non-competitive, occasionally non-physical and often intertwined with ritual activities. With rare exceptions, such as the games of the ancient Greek Olympics, it would be anachronistic to use the modern term 'sport' to describe them. The methods of play and meanings ascribed to these games were very different from today. They may have had a ceremonial, religious or ritual purpose. The idea of specialist players would almost certainly have been unknown. And winning was often not the purpose of play.⁴

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For the great mass of the people, games and their role in society changed little over the centuries. But by the sixteenth century, three general categories of games had emerged. Some were adjuncts to military training, as can be seen in combat or equestrian sports such as archery or jousting. Others were linked to religious or other ritual events, for example, the community feasts and games known in Britain as Church Ales or the football matches staged on religious holidays such as Christmas or Shrove Tuesday. And there were games played at fairs or festivals, such as Maypole dancing or smock racing, as women's running races were known.⁵ Of course, there were also many games that were played when people simply had spare time on their hands, some more spontaneous and ad hoc than others.

These categories were not mutually exclusive. They overlapped and sometimes merged into each other. Medieval elites often used their extensive leisure time to develop sophisticated contests, and the richest could afford to employ professional practitioners and coaches of fencing, real tennis, horsemanship and other games.⁶ But all of these activities differed from the modern sports in that they were not generally codified, organised on a commercial basis nor seen as separate from everyday life. Gambling would sometimes take place and pub landlords, on whose land sports were often staged, could capitalise on the opportunities for increased drink and food sales. Yet before the eighteenth century these were largely incidental factors and did not provide the impetus nor the structure for the development of games as a separate and distinct sphere of cultural life.

But from the start of the 1700s, the nature of the most prominent games in Britain began to change. By the 1750s a fundamental and qualitative shift in the nature of the three most prominent British sports – horse racing, boxing and cricket – was taking place. Although they had their roots in the rural sports of the past, these games began to differ markedly from their predecessors. What now distinguished them from their rural antecedents was the emergence of generalised rules of play and their ability to systematically and regularly generate revenue. In short, these sports were becoming commodities, which one might pay to watch, be paid to play or upon which one could gamble significantly large amounts of money. Modern sport as we know it today was beginning to emerge.

How therefore do we explain the fact that modern sport developed first in what George Orwell described as 'a cold and unimportant little island' on the north-west coast of Europe?⁷ And why at this moment in history?

It was not because the British were more sports-loving than their European neighbours. Other European nations had similar strong traditions of games. Local sporting customs can be found in almost every region of early modern Europe, from *Calcio*, the elaborate Italian football game of Florence, to simple running and jumping games found across the continent. Bull-fighting in Spain reflected the popularity of blood sports across the western world, which in Britain was highlighted by cock-fighting and bull-baiting. France in particular had a strong tradition of games similar to that of Britain. *Soule*, a ball game played between parishes and other local communities, was common in northern France. *Savate* was a popular form of combat not unlike modern kick-boxing. *Jeu de paume* was

a medieval forerunner of tennis.⁸ *Jeu de mail* used a mallet to propel a ball in a similar way to croquet.⁹ Moreover, like the British nobility, the French aristocracy were keen and conspicuous gamblers. An observer in the early seventeenth century would have noticed little difference between sporting habits on either side of the English Channel.

Yet neither France nor any other nation would see their traditional games provide the basis for the sporting revolution that swept Europe and the rest of the world in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Only those sports that originated in their modern form in Britain, or that were based on the British model, played this role. Even those American games that were to become major sports of the twentieth century – the rugby-derived American football, the traditional English game of baseball and the Muscular Christian-invented basketball – had their roots in Britain.¹⁰ In contrast to Europe, American sport was chronically underdeveloped and anaemic until the middle decades of the nineteenth century, if played at all.¹¹ Britain's centrality to the birth of modern sport can be seen in the way that previously rural traditional games were transformed by the economic and social changes that were taking place in the British Isles in the eighteenth century.

In the eighteenth century Britain was an emerging capitalist, but not yet industrial, economy.¹² The last vestiges of feudalism in the countryside were being extinguished. Over the previous two centuries, the nature of the economy and society had changed dramatically. In contrast to the rest of Europe, agriculture was in the main no longer organised according to the fixed hierarchic traditions of feudalism but run on a profit-driven capitalist basis by its aristocratic landowners. The English revolution of the mid-seventeenth century had disposed of the remaining economic detritus of feudalism. Competition for leases, land and work became the norm. Unlike their European cousins, English aristocrats now measured themselves not by the size of their retinue but by their wealth. This was an economy organised to generate profit, whether in town or countryside, at home or abroad, or in leisure and recreation.

Due to the different trajectory that the economic development of agriculture had taken in Britain, and especially in England, the aristocracy's attitude to money differed sharply from that of the European nobility. The British had much more of it, not only from agriculture but also from war profits, government contracts, stock market speculation and overseas investments in the newly acquired British Empire. Moreover, the long and deep-rooted tradition of extravagant aristocratic gambling dating back at least to Elizabethan times dovetailed with the new mania for financial speculation. As Lawrence Stone highlighted, for the aristocracy there was 'no psychological difference between placing £100 on the throw of the dice and investing it in a risky voyage of exploration, between buying a share in the Virginia Company and backing a horse'.¹³ Aristocratic status in Britain was demonstrated not only by conspicuous consumption but also by flamboyant disposal, especially by the younger scions of the aristocracy for whom gambling was a symbol of inexhaustible wealth, masculine excess and endless leisure time. In 1750 the Duke of Cumberland lost £10,000 on the disputed fight between Jack Broughton and

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Jack Slack.¹⁴ This was by no means unusual nor, by a long way, the largest sum to be lost on a sporting wager.

In contrast to Europe, where the aristocracy still stood firmly on its feudal, pre-capitalist foundations and did not share the monetary imperative found across the Channel – the French aristocracy's love of gambling had been severely tempered by the shocking collapse of John Law's speculative Mississippi Company in 1720 – British aristocratic patronage of sport grew enormously in the eighteenth century.¹⁵ Until the end of the Napoleonic wars much of sport was effectively controlled by 'The Fancy', an informal network of aristocrats, gentry and their hangers-on. By 1751 Henry Fielding was noting that 'to the upper part of mankind, time is an enemy, and ... their chief labour is to kill it'.¹⁶ The aristocracy's abandonment of militaristic feudal recreations such as archery, jousting and the tournament sports so beloved by Henry VIII was not because the aristocracy had become peace-loving. With the exception of the 1730s, eighteenth-century Britain rarely had a year without an overseas war, and some sporting aristocrats combined both military and sporting interests, most notably the Duke of Cumberland, known as the Butcher of Culloden for his bloody retribution on the Scots in 1746. Rather, feudal militaristic sports no longer reflected the culture of the aristocracy. To compete, to win, to profit. As in business, these were now the goals of the sport-loving British aristocracy.

This transformation of Britain into a capitalist economy was reflected by the emergence of ideas of self-interest and competition in political and cultural life. During the late seventeenth century the idea that human nature was inherently selfish and competitive came to dominate philosophical and economic discussion. Its greatest advocate was Thomas Hobbes, who argued in *Leviathan* (1651) that the natural state of humanity was a 'war of all against all'.¹⁷ This belief broke sharply with older conceptions of human nature based on Christian ideas of unchanging hierarchy, duty and obligation. Indeed, the term 'human nature' itself did not enter common usage until the eighteenth century. By 1700 economic theory was squarely based on the assumption that individuals acted in their own self-interest.¹⁸

This became the dominant view of social life in the eighteenth century. It was perhaps most elegantly conveyed by Alexander Pope in his 1733 *Essay on Man*: 'Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul/Reason's comparing balance rules the whole'.¹⁹ Its rawest exposition could be found in the work of Bernard Mandeville, who in his *The Fable of the Bees* and other works outlined a vision of society governed only by the self-interest of individuals. Without the guiding principle of self-interest, 'society must be spoiled, if not totally dissolved,' he wrote in his 1723 'Search into the Nature of Society'.²⁰ Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) owed much of their popularity to the timeliness of their discussions of this changing relationship between the individual and society. Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722) offered a rather more rambunctious exploration of the same issue as Moll seeks to profit from her body. By 1776, Adam Smith's assertion in *The Wealth of Nations* that 'it is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest,' would have appeared to be completely uncontentious to the majority of his readers.²¹

Sport, an activity that was by its very nature a competitive win–lose binary, therefore underwent a social amplification of its importance. Man against man (women were rarely considered), whether in the prize-fighting ring, on the race-course or in the cricket team, was no longer merely a recreational pleasure. It was now also a metaphor for, and a reflection of, everyday life in capitalist society.²²

The novel idea that sport was analogous to life itself – unthinkable in any previous age when games were merely diversions from life’s cares – was summed up by an anonymous author of doggerel in the early nineteenth century:

Now, life to me, has always seem’d a game –
Not a game of chance, but one where skill,
Will often throw the chances in our way ...²³

Drawing this analogy between sport and life became increasingly common for writers and journalists. The very first sporting monthly, the *Sporting Magazine* (1792), proclaimed itself to be the journal for ‘the Man of Pleasure and Enterprize [sic]’ on its masthead. ‘The whole human species may be fairly considered and treated as jockeys, each running his race to the best advantage,’ wrote the author of *The Jockey Club, or A Sketch of the Manners of the Age* in 1793.²⁴ Pierce Egan, the Regency journalist whose talent for penmanship and self-promotion reshaped sports writing into something more than a mere narrative of events, argued in *Pancratia*, his 1812 outline of boxing history, that explorers had discovered that ‘those in continuous hostility, cherished with ardour every gymnastic sport’.²⁵ And the 1824 version of *Boxiana*, his grandiloquent chronicle of prize-fighting, even began with a quotation from *The Wealth of Nations*.²⁶

Sport was merely one example of the way in which leisure in general was being commercialised in the eighteenth century. For the first time, leisure activities offered extensive and regular opportunities to make money – a nascent entertainment industry was emerging.²⁷ Spending power and leisure time expanded for the middle as well as the upper classes. The theatre, music and the arts all expanded greatly throughout the century. In the reign of Charles II not a single theatre existed outside of London, yet by 1775 every major town in England had one. Similar points can be made about libraries, music venues and art galleries. Shops and consumer goods became an important part of the urban economy. One of the most prominent signs of this rapid expansion of commercial leisure was the growth of the press. The repeal of restrictions on publishing at the end of the seventeenth century stimulated the development of national and provincial newspapers and magazines. The first daily newspaper, the *Daily Courant*, was established in 1702, followed by many others. Over thirty provincial newspapers were founded between 1695 and 1730. Periodicals were also established; the *Tatler* in 1709 and the *Gentleman’s Magazine* in 1730 being the most well-known examples.²⁸

Print capitalism and sport therefore developed a symbiotic, mutually interdependent relationship from the early eighteenth century. Indeed, sport would not and could not have been commercialised or codified without the simultaneous development

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of newspapers and magazines. This would become an iron law of sport. As we shall see, in eighteenth-century Britain, nineteenth-century USA and twentieth-century France and Japan, the press was both the driver of commercial sport and also its beneficiary – as would be the case for radio and television in the twentieth century. Even in the first half of the eighteenth century newspapers raised revenue from sport through advertising, but also generated significant column inches from reporting on sport. Conversely, sport received publicity for events but also, just as importantly, became part of everyday discourse. The *Weekly Journal* advertised prize-fights as early as 1715 and by the late 1720s advertisements for sporting events were commonplace.²⁹ Moreover, the reporting of sport in the press both reflected and shaped its relationship with the wider culture of society. This can be seen in the challenges issued by boxers and the announcements of forthcoming fights. In 1727 John Whitacre described himself as the ‘famous Lincolnshire Drover’ who was ‘as brave and hardy a man whoever mounted a stage to box’. His opponent, John Gretton, responded that he would ‘hit this impudent spark such knocks that will make him forever hereafter not even think of a challenge of the like kind on me, the champion of the universe’.³⁰ This narrative of challenge, contest and competition – so central to the development of a capitalist society – thus became embedded in this newly emerging sporting world of the eighteenth century.

The development of sport as part of this wider commercial entertainment industry was neither uniform nor evenly distributed around Britain. It was focused largely in and around the dynamic capitalist economy of eighteenth-century London and its south-eastern hinterland. By 1700 London was the biggest city in the world, having grown from 200,000 inhabitants in 1600 to well over half a million. It dominated the trade and industry of Britain and its embryonic empire, handling 80 per cent of England’s imports and almost 70 per cent of its exports. In 1750 London was home to 11 per cent of the English population and it has been estimated that one in six Englishmen and women lived there at some point in their lives.³¹ The wealth of the city underpinned its rich cultural life, the growth of commercial leisure and the nascent consumer culture. As Dr Johnson famously remarked, ‘when a man is tired of London, he is tired of life; for there is in London all that life can afford’.³² London and the south-east was the crucible in which modern sport emerged from rural, unorganised recreation. Just as the theatre, music, literature and many other leisure industries were revolutionised by the development of capitalism, so too was sport. These economic changes not only made sport a commercial enterprise, they also led to fundamental changes in the ways that sport was played, organised and regulated. This process can be seen in the development of the three most important sports of the period: horse racing, boxing and cricket.

Before the commercialisation of sport in the eighteenth century, the idea of commonly agreed, national, written laws governing the playing of sport did not exist. Although occasionally some games did have written rules, these were neither generally accepted by all players nor vested with any regulatory authority.³³ The introduction of codes of rules that were accepted by all players and for all major

contests were a direct consequence of the commercial development of sport. This itself was an extension of the way in which the law in the eighteenth century was itself acquiring a new significance. Britain was a society that was moving away from religious and monarchical authority and asserting the centrality of an impersonal and 'objective' rule of law based on property rights.³⁴ Transparency and formal equality before the law were essential for the smooth transaction of business, just as they were for the regulation of gambling and the playing of games. This was reflected in the fact that these rules were often drawn up as part of the 'articles of agreement' for a match, which also laid down the amount of money to be won and other conditions of the contest. It is therefore not coincidental that this period of the evolution of the law also saw horse racing evolve its first general code of rules, as well as the first rules of boxing, drawn up in 1743, and the first generally accepted rules of cricket, formulated in 1744.

Horse racing occupied a symbolically important role in the cultural life of the British monarchy and aristocracy. The centrality of breeding and bloodlines to horse racing reflected the genealogical obsessions of ruling-class families. As Karl Marx pointed out:

we find in the aristocracy such pride in blood and descent, in short, in the life history of their body. It is this zoological point of view which has its corresponding science in heraldry. The secret of aristocracy is zoology.³⁵

Until the end of the seventeenth century, an average horse race was literally a two-horse race, in which two horse owners would ride against each other for a wager. Race meetings were primarily social events – so much so that Newmarket sought to discourage lower-class spectators from attending its races – and irregularly organised. But from the 1680s, professional jockeys began to be employed and the first professional trainer, Tregonwell Frampton, was engaged at Newmarket. Over a hundred towns in England staged races by the mid-1720s. Racing, because of its links with royalty and the highest echelons of the aristocracy, was both more organised than other sports and more bound by convention than other commercial sports, and so retained many of its more traditional aspects. For example, it was unusual for a race-course to charge all race-goers for admission to the ground, as opposed to the grandstand, until 1840.³⁶

Yet the publication of what was to become the *Racing Calendar* by John Cheyney in 1727 – with its lists of runners, races and jockeys – signalled for the first time the embryonic organisation of a sport on a national basis. The *Racing Calendar* also carried a set of rules for horse racing which, due to its wide circulation, helped to standardise the conduct of meetings. By 1751 these appear to have become largely accepted and a set of formal 'Rules Concerning Horse-Racing in General' were being published in the *Racing Calendar*. Cheyney's *Racing Calendar* also recorded the winners of the previous seasons' races, making comparisons easier and therefore ensuring fair competition between horses. Cheyney was explicit in the reasons for publishing the *Calendar*: 'there was no regular account kept how the horses etc,

came in; but as I have taken pains to inform myself, in the best manner I could, I hope that what is published may be depended upon'.³⁷ The *Racing Calendar* could also be said to mark the beginnings of what would become known as sports statistics. Again, this was propelled by the growing commercial needs of sport. Like the economy itself, transparent competition required clear and verifiable information, especially for the purposes of gambling. Indeed, this same impulse was behind the emergence of record-keeping in other sports. Baseball, perhaps the most anally retentive sport of all when it comes to statistics, developed its arcane categories of measurement in the 1860s and 1870s when irregular fixtures and huge travelling distances meant that objective means of evaluating players were developed in order to facilitate their transfer between clubs.³⁸

The formation of the Jockey Club in 1751–2 (its actual date of foundation is unclear, as perhaps might be expected from what was essentially a semi-secret society) took this process a step further through the establishment for the first time of a governing body for a sport, albeit self-proclaimed and unelected. Underpinning these developments was the quickening economic development of horse racing. The emergence of sweepstake gambling in races meant that the returns on betting increased (because bets were no longer restricted to wagers between individuals), thus reducing the financial risks for owners, who could potentially win more money for a lower stake. Returns on bloodstock investment were raised by racing horses at a younger age. Races became shorter, jockeys lighter and handicapping brought a measure of equilibrium to contests, thus offering greater possibilities for owners to win races and punters to beat the odds. As the century progressed, horse racing therefore became increasingly organised and, consequently, increasingly profitable. The creation of what became known as the 'Classic' flat races – the St Leger (1776), the Oaks (1779) and the Derby at Epsom (1780) effectively established the framework of the sport which lasts to this day.

The clearest example of this relationship between commercialism and codification of sporting rules was boxing.³⁹ Although combat sports are probably as old as humankind, such contests in Britain up until the early eighteenth century involved a combination of hand-to-hand fighting, wrestling and weapons such as swords and wooden clubs known as 'cudgels'. In 1710, James Figg, a well-known swordsman and 'cudgel-player' declared himself the British champion and opened an 'academy of arms' in London's Tottenham Court Road, which both staged fights and offered instruction to students wishing to master the 'noble science of self-defence'. The inspiration for Figg's 'amphitheatre' was probably the 'Bear Garden', an arena for bear-baiting and other blood sports that had existed in London for a hundred years or so from the late sixteenth century. Figg had earned his reputation fighting in booths at fairgrounds but his establishment of a permanent base for the sport reflected the increasing financial viability of London's sporting culture. In 1725 Ben Whittaker fought an Italian, known in the press as 'the Gondolier' at the amphitheatre in Oxford Road for prize money of 20 guineas. This was not an inconsiderable amount, yet the *Daily Post* confidently assured its readers that wagers on the fight totalled 'many hundreds of pounds'.⁴⁰

Figg died in 1734 and his mantle both as champion fighter and boxing's leading businessman was assumed by his former pupil and self-proclaimed 'professor of athletics', Jack Broughton. He felt that boxing had suffered because it did not have a suitably prestigious venue that offered both reasonable admission charges and segregation of the classes. Current venues, he thought, did not differentiate between 'persons of the first rank and condition, and those of the meaner and lower class'. In 1743 he opened his own amphitheatre in central London – 'contrived as entirely to prevent the gentry's being incommoded by the populace' – at a cost of £400, the capital for which came from aristocratic backers. He also insisted that boxers who wanted to fight there had to pay him to stage their fights.⁴¹ Thus the twin pillars of British sport for the next century were established: rigid class differentiation and a drive for profit.

Just as importantly, Broughton understood that sport could not be commercially successful without a commonly accepted code of rules that facilitated an uncertainty of outcome in contests. 'The public may not be imposed on by any fictitious or unequal battles,' he pointed out. Only fighters who have 'signalled themselves to the satisfaction of the spectators' were therefore allowed to appear at his venue.⁴² This desire for transparency led him to draw up a code of rules for all boxing matches staged at the amphitheatre. These outlawed hitting a man when he was on the floor or grabbing him below the waist. Crucially, they clearly defined when a fight had been won or lost and appointed umpires for the settling of disputes. Broughton's rule five even insisted that money won in contests had to be distributed in view of the public at the end of a fight to demonstrate the integrity of the contest. As with horse racing, Broughton designed his rules to ensure open and clear competition, not least to enable gambling to take place free from ambiguity.

The same concern for competitive transparency and the requirements of gambling shaped the development of the third major commercial sport of the eighteenth century, cricket. Bat and ball games known as cricket, creckett and other similar names had been recorded since the sixteenth century, but in the absence of detailed descriptions, we have no way of knowing how far these games resembled anything that could be regarded as modern cricket. But it is clear that from the early eighteenth century cricket had acquired a prominence and status that far outstripped other bat and ball games. The social tenor of those leading cricket is attested to by the names of the aristocrats involved: the Duke of Cumberland, the Duke of Dorset, Lord Mountfort and, perhaps most importantly, the Duke of Richmond. The game's elite nature can be seen in a report in the *Daily Journal* about a match that took place at Berry Hill in July 1725:

between a set of gamesters of the West of this county headed by his Grace the Duke of Richmond on the one side, and a set from the east of the county, headed by Sir William Gage, Bart. and Knight of the Bath, on the other side ... His Grace the Duke of Norfolk gave a splendid ball and entertainment that night at the Castle.⁴³