

Abstracts

London 2012 – The Olympics as a means to pursue other purposes, hard costs, soft benefits, and the difficult route to the Olympic legacy

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The article discusses the efforts of London to form the legacy of the 2012 Olympic Games. The first part reviews the political rationale for the Olympic Games as a means to pursue a set of political goals. This part ends up in an overview of the elements that constitute the legacy. The next section discusses the economic perspectives of hosting the Games. The point of departure is the initial cost-benefit calculus which is followed by a review of the later corrections and the uncertain estimates of possible longer term benefits. Then, we focus on two of the most important forms of legacy: the regeneration of four boroughs in East London and the promises to increase the number of people in sports or other forms of physical exercise. It is concluded that the regeneration project appears to be a partial success whereas there is nothing that indicates that the promises to increase mass sport is anything but hot air. One of the reasons is the increasing priority of short term concerns initiated by the economic crises.

The Olympic Games' Opening Ceremony in Beijing 2008 – An Essay

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All opening ceremonies are, of course, a form of cultural propaganda on behalf of the host nation. However, it is also something unique that a one-party state with serious human-rights issues and with severe ethnic-border conflicts is given the right to make use of the Olympic opening ceremony. The Beijing opening ceremony very much played on the great wealth of China's history and culture. The aim was to demonstrate that present-day China was far from being the »sick man of Asia« of former days. The current political elite, therefore, were displayed as the flower to several thousand years of Chinese national cultural Confucian tradition, in which the roots of Maoism, the catastrophic »Great Leap Forward« and the Cultural Revolution were nothing but momentary flashes.

The Worst Business in the World: Why Soccer Clubs (Don't) and Shouldn't Make Money

Simon Kuper, Financial Times

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Whichever way you measure it, no football club is a big business. Football is not only small scale business. It is also bad business. This is partly a problem of appropriability: football can't make money out of (can't appropriate) more than a tiny share of our love for football. The way clubs hire their key employee, the manager, is a good example of incompetent business practice. It is done by means of nonsensical and illegal methods and in a mad rush. However, football clubs are incompetent because they can afford to. Most football clubs run with losses but they survive anyway and the structure is remarkably stable compared to other industries. It is almost impossible to run a club as a profitable business and they should ditch the fantasy of making profits. But that does not mean that they continue to be run so badly

Modernization and Sport: Sport England and UK Sport

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This article evaluates the impact of New Labour's »modernization project« on two key non-departmental public bodies for sport, Sport England and UK Sport. The analysis concentrates on identifying the sources of the

general momentum for modernization in the sport sector, how it has been interpreted by government in relation to the two organizations, and the nature and consequences of modernization for both organizations. The analysis is informed by a range of public documents produced by government and by the two sports agencies, together with a series of interviews. The conclusions suggest that modernization has resulted in a narrowing of the two organizations' objectives, the adoption of business-like principles and a »command and control« regime in relationships with key frontline delivery partners. Another consequence has been the emergence of a democratic deficit as an effect of the marginalization of sports interests.

The importance of the local government reform in Denmark for municipal sports policy

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In Denmark, sport policy is primarily the responsibility of the municipalities. Local sport policy has hitherto been marked by a clear division whereby the municipalities provide a broad policy framework, while the sports associations are responsible for defining, and offering, the activities themselves. Furthermore, the area of sport policy has been marked by corporatist governance and weak local governance.

These practices are changing, however. In recent years, many municipalities have defined formal sports policies; municipal support for sports clubs is complemented by the activities of self-organized sports and projects for specific target groups; prevention and health

promotion have been given a more prominent role. Municipalities have also strengthened their own administrative capacity in the area of sports policy.

Local government reform – with larger municipalities and new preventive and health promoting tasks – has been a catalyst for these developments. These changes have also been facilitated by a systemic shift away from communitarian governance ideals, and toward management ideals inspired by New Public Management.

The anatomy of the sports scandal Initiation, process and effects: Towards a theoretical model

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As the economic and political significance of sport seems to grow in correspondence to the development of globalization, the call for a sociological understanding of the downsides of sports becomes imperative. So far, scholars have pointed to »sports scandals«, but have not provided any theoretical understanding of this phenomenon. By deploying a communication-theoretical framework (Niklas Luhmann), combined with insights from discourse theory (Laclau og Mouffe) and the

understanding of ideal types provided by Max Weber, this article aims at developing a theoretical model of the sports scandal, its outset and effects. The scope of the model is tested in the analyses of two cases. Finally four focus points are outlined for future research.

Hot alliance in a cold war. Danish sports cooperation with East Germany until Denmark's recognition of the German Democratic Republic

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In 1973 Denmark officially recognized the German Democratic Republic (GDR) but before that time there had been a long-term cooperation between Danish Youth- and Sports organizations and East German sport. The most important players were Denmark's Communist Youth, Danish Workers Sports-Federation, Danish Handball-Federation and Danish Football Association. The article examines the character of the cooperation between Danish sport and the GDR sport and analyses the importance of cooperation for East Germany's fight for recognition as an independent state. One important punch line in the article is that the sports cooperation with East Germany until 1973 makes up an exception compared to the normal praxis relying on a harmony between Denmark's official politics and Danish sports international cooperation.