

## Book Review

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*New Horizons in the Economics of Sport series*

### Sport through the Lens of Economic History

*Edited by Richard Pomfret, Professor of Economics, University of Adelaide, Australia, and Adjunct Professor, The Johns Hopkins University Bologna Center, Italy and John K. Wilson, School of Commerce, UniSA Business School, University of South Australia*

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Sport was a main element in writing history of strong countries. This book, edited by Richard Pomfret and John K. Wilson analyzes the economic evolution of sports over the last 150 years, from a pastime activity to a big business enterprise. It begins at a time when entrepreneurs and players first started making money from professional sports leagues, through to the impact of radio and TV in the twentieth century, and onto the present day. The book describes professional team sports and the impact of international events such as the Olympics in comparison with the modern sports industry. Pomfret and Wilson synthesize why sport as a profession continues to attract a large number of spectators and participants. The editors collected papers that reflected good the impact of sport on issues as players migration, labor market restrictions, stadium arrangements and the rise and fall of workplace provisions; which are related to socio-economic influence.

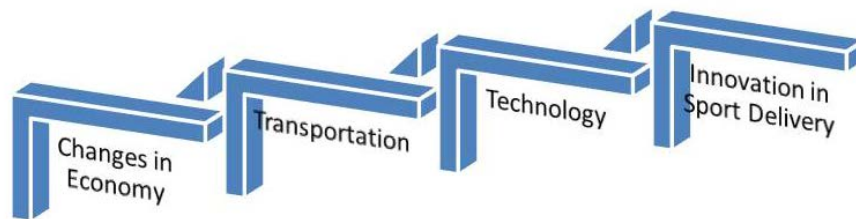
The book covers history practices and policies peculiar to the sport industry which developed over time. This historical perspective casts light onto the development of specific practices such as labor market regulations and public policies, which have become more prevalent in the modern age.

Starting with a strong statement “Sport is a multi-billion dollar industry”, we believe that the book failed in giving enough review why it is so and would even increase in the future from both socio-economical and even psychological point of view.

The Sports Economics is good starting chapter however the chapter on foreign players in Japanese professional baseball we believe undermines the importance of the theme of the book and the first chapter. We felt that the fourth chapter on Economic History of the Tour de France was out of context or misplaced. The book makes a clear link between Sports Economics and the development of transportation which help to reflect on the increase in the players' wages, especially after the industrial revolution. Improved transportation allowed players and spectators to travel for long distance. Changing focus of sporting competition from regional to global.

The book also shows how the technological changes increased the economic significance of professional sports in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore is a good reference for researchers whom looking to understand the transformation of this field from participatory to spectator sports and how the popularization and commercialization of team sports was a direct consequence of the industrial revolution. It would help anthropologists to dig further how the development wages allowed discretionary spending beyond food, shelter and clothing (Pomfret, 2011). Specially that we still have in certain countries the same situation, i.e. it is still about food and shelter.

Therefore our synthesis of the researches edited in this book shows that innovation of sport today, as illustrated in Figure (1) came along way based on the changes on the economy, the transportation and the ICT.



**Figure (1).** Shows how the Innovation in Sport Delivery today Developed

The authors show how the opportunity cost of players is being lost due to the high wages and not willing to play the game for fixed wages. Much of the revenue is economic rent, i.e. greater revenue don't generate increased output. Monopoly power is pervasive, due to demand for undisputed champion and the need for central body that organize schedule. This shift coincided with the shift of the sport moving from spectator to wider audience through development of the media and Air transport.

The relationship between crowd attendance and competitive balance reflect also a great importance to the economics of sport and same ground sharing between cricket and football in Australia, however this could've been more illustrated in discussing in the beginning of the book in what ways. The seventh chapter on Workers' Playtime: developing an explanatory typology of work-associated sport we felt is an important subject that would open lots of possibilities of relevant research in the future. The last chapter, chapter nine, we felt it is out of context again since Ethnic Inequality in Professional Sport is not directly related to the subject of the book, besides it is an issue that started to go back on the list of the many problems that sport is facing today.

Over all we believe the book is an important reference to researchers on the subject of Sport Economics how it's not easy to read or synthesis if we consider it one work with clear message.