

Shin Guards and Scrums: British Sport in Nova Scotia

By

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Canada

Abstract

Shin Guards and Scrums: British Sport in Nova Scotia

By Peter Walker

Soccer is widely referred to as the “world’s game” yet it is hardly ever referred to as Nova Scotia’s game of choice, even though it is currently one of the most widely played sports in the province. Still, soccer has come a long way in the past century, from a sport played only by white men with British backgrounds to a sport played by anyone who can kick a ball. Soccer in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was identified as a British pursuit and widely ignored by the general Canadian sporting public. Along with rugby and cricket, soccer was singled out for its “Britishness” and was noted for its attachment to the ideals of respectability and gentlemanly amateurism. Soccer’s British roots should not be forgotten, as it was on the backs of British immigrants that Nova Scotia’s soccer community was built, however foreign that concept may seem today.

February 14, 2006

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First and foremost I would like to thank Dr. Colin Howell for his guidance and support these past two years. Soccer may not have been his best sport growing up but it wasn't obvious from the amount he has contributed to this thesis. If it were not for his continual encouragement this thesis would not even have been possible. Also, I'd like to thank Dr. Stretton, Dr. Vance, Dr. Twohig and Dr. Poulter for their helpful suggestions as well as their critiques. A number of graduate and honours students at Saint Mary's also provided insight as I've struggled through numerous versions of this thesis before settling on the current edition.

On another note, I would like to thank my parents for introducing me to this wonderful sport. They stood behind me from the beginning; cheered my every move during my earliest days on a team called the Beavers, drove me to random games in various provincial hot spots like Colchester and Hebbville and have even tried not to laugh as my skills continue to deteriorate to this day. I don't know if those long sessions in the back yard necessarily helped me write the definitive thesis on soccer, but they certainly instilled me with a love for the sport that will last long beyond my own playing career. My grandparents, Jean and Dave Inkpen, have always supported my academic pursuits – in more ways than one – and since they will almost certainly be reading this thesis, I would like to thank them at this time. Their passion for history surpasses even my own, and I can only hope that the history of soccer in Nova Scotia makes for an interesting read. Lastly, I would like to thank Erin Penney, who once again kept me sane (just as she did at Acadia) throughout this entire ordeal. I could never have faced the deadlines, the many 3 am editing sessions and finally the thesis defense, on my own. Consequently she probably knows this paper better than I do myself. This was an experience I'll never forget, thank you to all that helped me along the way.

The Kickoff

Growing up playing soccer in Dartmouth United's youth system, I was only vaguely aware of soccer's British roots.¹ Like others my age, I tuned into Soccer Saturday on TSN to watch the weekly highlights from the English Premier League. Although I always found myself entranced by the latest Alan Shearer strike or Eric Cantona header, there was always the nagging voice in the back of my head that wondered where all the Canadians were. Paul Stalteri and Jim Brennan were hardly household names, yet most Canadian soccer fans were familiar with the latest exploits of international stars Ronaldo and David Beckham.² Canada's absence from soccer's world scene troubled me. I wish I could say I chose to research this topic right then and there, but it was not to be, as my teenage mind quickly drifted elsewhere. Throughout high school and university, as Canadian soccer coverage increased, it quickly became apparent why Canadians – Canadian men, at least – were not featured on the world stage. To put it plainly, they were awful! When compared to the English, the Italians, the Brazilians and even the Americans, Canadian soccer was unattractive, uninspired, and ineffective. Canada's most recent World Cup qualification came in 1986, where they failed to score a goal, let alone win a game. This is in contrast to the Canadian national women's team, which has had much more international success, including a 4th place finish at the 2001 Women's World Cup. However, it is men's soccer that is still the marquee attraction and as a result, it is the Canadian men's team that is most often subject to criticism.

¹ For the sake of simplicity, all forms of soccer, association football and football will simply be referred to as "soccer". This will enable the reader to easier differentiate soccer from various other forms of football mentioned in the essay.

² For those unfamiliar with the names, Stalteri and Brennan have both played for Canada on numerous occasions in the past decade. Full player biographies can be found at www.canadasoccer.com.

I was aware of the reasons why Canadian men were absent from the world scene, but I was still clueless as to how this came to be. Nova Scotia had a strong youth soccer system, although Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia and Alberta were much further along, both technically and in terms of participation.³ So how was it that a country from the British Commonwealth with a decent population base, a solid infrastructure for minor sport and the technology and wealth to train elite athletes could perform so poorly on the world stage? Well, to be honest, you won't find the answer here, but these questions certainly piqued my interest and inspired this study.

Soccer has not really been given a fair treatment in comparison to other sports; hockey and baseball in particular have been covered extensively by both amateur historians and academics. To be realistic, soccer's popularity is relatively recent in comparison to hockey and baseball – soccer was only a minor sport prior to World War Two, when it was still primarily the domain of recent British immigrants and persons of British descent. Although soccer is still only a relatively minor spectator sport, today its participation levels – particularly among youth – are sky-rocketing.⁴ The scholarship is only just beginning to catch up with this popularity, and it is my hope that this thesis will serve as the forerunner to a number of useful studies of the vast history of soccer in Nova Scotia.

³ It was apparent in 1997, based on my team's 6th place finish at the Under 15 Nationals, and it shows today as well. A quick look at the current Canadian men's roster indicates a reliance on players from Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia and Alberta, and only one current player from Nova Scotia, Ante Jazic. For more information on the 1997 Under 15 Nationals just talk to me, I'd be glad to relive my glory days on the soccer pitch.

⁴ There were 825,323 soccer players registered in Canada in 2004, up from 400,130 in 1994 and 198,927 in 1980. Nova Scotia was home to 29,320 soccer players in 2004, including myself. For more detailed statistics, see www.canadasoccer.com. All figures were obtained from CanadaSoccer.com: Official Site of the Canadian Soccer Association, <<http://www.canadasoccer.com/eng/docs/index.asp?sub2=12>> (23 January 2006).

In the following chapters I will uncover a soccer culture built on a solid British foundation that eventually paved the way for the middle class adoption of the sport in the mid to late twentieth century. It is this British foundation that I am primarily interested with. Soccer in Nova Scotia can trace its roots to a devoted, mostly British, following that promoted and played the game of soccer in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Although there were a number of native born Nova Scotians that eventually took up the game, the fact remains that prior to World War Two soccer was still a predominantly British pastime.

Chapter 1 will explore the roots of soccer in Nova Scotia. Soccer was part of a collection of British team sports that included rugby and cricket, all of which were shaped by British notions of respectability and gentlemanly amateurism. Soccer's association to the British Empire may have actually hurt its chances at more widespread success in Canada, as it was soon overshadowed by an emerging North American sporting culture. The chapter will also uncover the theories behind the development and spread of soccer worldwide, and how these theories applied to the case of soccer in Nova Scotia.

Chapter 2 will uncover the various leagues, teams and competitions that crowded the soccer landscape in the early twentieth century. Support for these teams in Halifax came from a variety of different sources: the military, the newspapers (the *Herald* sponsored several different competitions), a number of businesses (NS Car Works, Moir's, Ropeworks) and amateur sports clubs (Wanderers) were all involved in either promoting or playing the sport to some degree. Halifax may have been the center of soccer in the province, but it was not the only area in which the sport was played. By the

1930s Cape Breton was home to a thriving soccer league, although the participants, as well as the style of play, were much rougher around the edges than in Halifax. New Glasgow, Truro, Windsor and Kentville, amongst others also fielded soccer teams prior to World War Two, although the lack of opponents and the problems associated with transportation meant they did not compete on a regular basis.

Chapter 3 will unearth the archetypal soccer body, where speed and skill are emphasized above all else. Descriptions of soccer games are filled with adjectives praising players for their “skillful” play, whereas rugby players were congratulated for their strength and tackling ability. Besides their physical abilities, typical soccer players in Nova Scotia were known for three things: they were almost entirely male, white and British. Obviously this excludes a vast portion of the population; women in particular were unwelcome on the soccer field, although their presence in the stands was thought to bring a level of respect to the sport. The chapter will also explore the manner in which gender and sexual identities were constructed within the soccer community, and the importance of women in an otherwise male-dominated sport.

Surveying the Field

Although sports history is a relatively new sub-discipline in the historical community, a number of excellent works have been written within its academic boundaries. It will be important to comment upon the discipline of sports history as a whole to provide an adequate starting point for the study, and a brief description of some of the major works in the field of sports history will allow my work to be placed in a broader context. At the same time, I hope to show where the historiography is lacking,

and identify where I will make my contribution to the field. I will confront the theories that attempt to explain the spread and development of modern sport, including the modernization model, the diffusion theory and the conflict approach. I will lay out the merits and drawbacks of each as they relate to the development of soccer in Nova Scotia. Throughout the explanation of the models I will also incorporate a brief history of soccer, from its unlikely mythical beginnings to the relative modernism of the late nineteenth century.

Allen Guttman, Mel Adelman, Mark Dyreson, John Hargreaves and Richard Holt each provide an entry way into the field of sports history.⁵ Guttman, an American, is known for his “modernization” approach to sport, while Hargreaves and Holt are British sports historians who have raised issues of sport and identities and sport and class. Dyreson, also an American, explores the notion of sport as a social technology and addresses the relationship of sport to America’s “republican” identity in his book, *Making the American Team: Sport, Culture, and the Olympic Experience*. Their work, amongst others, will serve as an effective starting point.

The body of sources narrows considerably as the study turns its focus towards Canada. Alan Metcalfe’s book, *Canada Learns to Play: The Emergence of Organized Sport, 1807-1914*, serves as a foundation for any research in Canadian sport history.⁶

⁵ Their work includes: Richard Holt *Sport and the British: A Modern History*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); Richard Holt ed., *Sport and the working class in modern Britain*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990); John Hargreaves, *Sport, Power and Culture: A Social and Historical Analysis of Popular Sports in Britain*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1986); Mark Dyreson, *Making the American Team: Sport, Culture, and the Olympic Experience*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1998); Allen Guttman, *From Ritual to Record: The Nature of Modern Sports*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978); Mel Adelman, *A Sporting Time: New York City and the Rise of Modern Athletics*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986).

⁶ In this book Metcalfe explores the roots of organized sport in Canada, eventually concluding that “by 1914, organized sport had spread to every corner of the Dominion and had become a visible part of life to all Canadians, although access and choice were limited by local conditions, in particular one’s proximity to

Bruce Kidd, Colin Howell, Don Morrow and Mary Keyes, Maxwell L. Howell and Reet A. Howell and Henry Roxborough are other notable Canadian authors in the field of sports history.⁷ Kidd grapples with the complex issue of professionalism versus amateurism in sport, and also provides an excellent account of the rise of the National Hockey League as a major sporting body. Colin Howell, like Dyreson, explores the notion of sport as a social technology, but his time line does not end in the early twentieth century like Dyreson's. In *Blood, Sweat, and Cheers*, Howell covers the progress of sport in Canada until the waning moments of the twentieth century. Consequently, many of the broad themes in Canadian sport are addressed, including the value of amateurism, the role of traditional British sport, commercialization, the rise of a global sporting culture, and the place of women and minorities in sport.⁸

an urban centre". Alan Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play: The Emergence of Organized Sport, 1807-1914*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1987), 21. Metcalfe is recognized as one of Canada's leading sports historians.

⁷ These include: Bruce Kidd, *The Struggle for Canadian Sport*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996); Don Morrow and Mary Keyes, *A Concise History of Sport in Canada*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1989); Nancy Howell and Maxwell L. Howell, *Sports and Games in Canadian Life: 1700 to the Present*, (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1969); Maxwell L. Howell and Reet A. Howell ed., *History of Sport in Canada*, (Illinois: Stipes Publishing Company, 1981); Henry Roxborough, *Great Days in Canadian Sport*, (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1957) and *One Hundred-Not Out: The Story of Nineteenth-Century Canadian Sport*, (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1966); Nancy B. Bouchier, *For the Love of the Game: Amateur Sport in Small-Town Ontario, 1838-1895*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003); Gerald Redmond, *The Sporting Scots of Nineteenth-Century Canada*, (London: Associated University Presses, 1982).

⁸ Colin D. Howell, *Blood, Sweat, and Cheers*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 28. Howell has written extensively on a number of topics in the field of sports history. In addition to *Blood, Sweat, and Cheers*, Howell has written about the history of baseball in the Maritime Provinces in *Northern Sandlots: A Social History of Maritime Baseball*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995). For more from Howell see: "Two Outs; or Yogi Berra, Sport and Maritime Historiography", *Acadiensis*, XXIX, 1 (Autumn, 1999), 106-12, "On Metcalfe, Marx and Materialism: Reflections on the Writing of Sport History in the Postmodern Age" *Sport History Review* 29 (1998) 96-102, "Modernization Theory and the Traditional Sporting Practices of Native People in Eastern Canada," *Journal of Comparative Physical Education and Sport*, XIX, 2 (1997), 79-84, "Baseball and Borders: The Diffusion of Baseball into Mexican and Canadian-American Borderland Regions, 1885-1911," *NINE: A Journal of Baseball History & Culture*, Vol. 11, Spring 2003, Number 2, 16-26 and "Borderlands, Baselines and Bearhunters: Conceptualizing the Northeast as a Sporting Region in the Interwar Period", *Journal of Sport History*, Vol. 29, Number 2, Summer 2002, 251-267.

Throughout this thesis the discussion will be weighted in favour of soccer, but where relevant, other British sports will be touched upon. An exhaustive history of soccer can be found in Bill Murray's book, *Football: A History of the World Game*.⁹ It provides a wealth of information on the sport, as well as an account of the spread of soccer around the globe. Tony Mason has devoted an entire chapter of his book, *Sport in Britain: A Social History*, to soccer. Mason's essay covers approximately a century of British soccer history; of particular importance to this thesis is the struggle between amateurism and professionalism that dogged British soccer in the early part of the twentieth century. Nicholas Fishwick has also contributed to the relatively crowded field of British soccer histories with his book, *English Football and Society, 1910-1950*. Fishwick sought to understand the reasons for the sport's phenomenal growth during the first half of the twentieth century where it quickly became the principle sport in England.¹⁰

For a different take on the role of soccer worldwide, Vic Duke and Liz Crolley have crafted a useful study of the relationship between soccer and the nation state in various locations around the world. The book, *Football, Nationality and the State*, points out that soccer is not only the national sport of choice for many countries around the world (with Canada and the United States as notable exceptions), but also a way of life. Richard Giulianotti has also weighed in on the global impact of the sport in his book, *Football: A Sociology of the Global Game*. In many ways soccer transcends borders in its role as the 'world's game', but there are still many inequalities that exist even as the

⁹ For more from Bill Murray, see *The Old Firm: Sectarianism, Sport and Society in Scotland*, (Edinburgh: J. Donald Publishers, 1982). Murray looks at the compelling rivalry between two of Scotland's biggest soccer clubs, Celtic and Rangers.

¹⁰ Nicholas Fishwick, *English Football and Society, 1910-1950*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), ix.

sport moves into the twenty-first century. These studies are still largely Eurocentric however, and it is often difficult to find a history of soccer that does not focus completely on Britain. Peter C. Alegi looks at “the transformation of soccer in South Africa from a mission-school pastime for the 'amakhholwa' (Christian, educated) elite to a popular form of urban African leisure in the segregation era” in an article entitled, “Playing to the Gallery? Sport, Cultural Performance, and Social Identity in South Africa, 1920s – 1945.”¹¹ Soccer gave poor South Africans the opportunity to form an identity outside of the oppressive, white culture that dominated the era. Alex Bellos’ book, *Futebol: The Brazilian Way of Life*, details the arrival of the sport in Brazil in the late nineteenth century, roughly the same time the sport first made an appearance in Canada.¹² He confronts questions of colonization through sport and the creation of a uniquely Brazilian character of soccer. Today, Brazil is a renowned soccer power, known for its flamboyancy as much as for its unquestioned skill. Yet Canada is nowhere near as strong as Brazil in terms of its soccer ability. One could also argue that Canada has still not carved out its own soccer “identity”, as Brazil so clearly has.

Much has been written on the reasons for soccer’s lack of popularity in North America. Nathan D. Abrams and Andrei S. Markovits and Sam Whitsitt have all written enticing articles on the “strange fate” of soccer in the United States – although their arguments are also applicable to the state of the game in Canada.¹³ In his article, “The

¹¹ African Studies Centre, < <http://opc4-ascl.pica.nl/DB=3/CMD?ACT=SRCH&IKT=1016&SRT=RLV&LNG=EN&TRM=ppn+252280121>> 1999-2006 (14 March 2006).

¹² Alex Bellos, *Futebol: The Brazilian Way of Life*, (New York: Bloomsbury, 2002), 1.

¹³ See Nathan D. Abrams, “Inhibited but not ‘Crowded Out’: The Strange Fate of Soccer in the United States,” *International Journal of the History of Sport*, (1995), 12(3): pp. 1-17; Andrei S. Markovits, “The Other ‘American Exceptionalism’: Why is There No Soccer in the United States?” *International Journal of the History of Sport*, (1990), 7(2): pp. 230-264; Sam Whitsitt, “Soccer: The Game America Refuses to Play,” *Raritan*, (1994), 14(1): pp. 58-69.

Other ‘American Exceptionalism’: Why is There No Soccer in the United States?”

Andrei Markovits points to the American bourgeoisie as the reason for soccer’s failure.

Making Men: Rugby and the Masculine Identity, a compilation edited by John Nauright and Timothy J.L Chandler, explores the complex relationship between masculinity and sport.¹⁴ Although it deals primarily with Great Britain, this collection also addresses the cultural role of rugby in the British colonies.¹⁵ A large volume of work has also been written on cricket, a sport that has found little support in Canada. Peter Wynne-Thomas’s book, *The History of Cricket: From the Weald to the World*, is a basic, yet incredibly detailed history of the game.¹⁶

British Sporting Traditions

Despite the fact that sport history has only been recognized as a legitimate academic pursuit for a short period of time, there are a number of theories used to explain the spread and development of modern sport. I will primarily make use of three models, the modernization model, the conflict model and the diffusion theory. In the following pages I will lay out the merits and drawbacks of each as they relate to the development of British sport in Nova Scotia. Throughout the explanation of these models I will incorporate a history of soccer, from its unlikely mythical beginning to the relative modernism of the late nineteenth century. While occasionally clumsy and anachronistic – and not to mention often contradictory – the three models in question are not without

¹⁴ John Nauright and Timothy J. L. Chandler, ed., *Making Men: Rugby and the Masculine Identity*, (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1996), 1.

¹⁵ Nauright, 2.

¹⁶ For more on cricket and the British Empire, see C.L.R. James, *Beyond a Boundary*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993). Although James does not deal specifically with the spread of cricket to Canada (he is looking at the West Indies), his account of the game’s spread from colonial center to colonies is masterful.

value. By using the history of soccer as a backdrop, I hope to illustrate the usefulness of the various models of sport development. This section will conclude with a brief history of soccer in Canada which should help launch a discussion on the nature of soccer in Nova Scotia prior to World War Two.

The modernization model, supported by historians Allen Guttman and Mel Adelman assumes that modern sport has evolved from, and is indisputably superior to the backwards rural sporting practices of the nineteenth century.¹⁷ There are numerous holes in this explanation (which Guttman readily admits), but it does provide a basic set of characteristics of modern sport. According to Guttman, modern sports can be identified by their secularism, equality, bureaucratization, specialization, rationalization, quantification and obsession with records. The modernization model is most useful when serving as a description of the differences between traditional and modern sporting forms.¹⁸

Another popular explanation for the development of sport can be found in the conflict model. Essentially, different eras of sport were born out of class antagonism. Overall, the transition from traditional “blood sports” to modern sport was not nearly as smooth as the modernization model proposes. It seeks to understand the reason for the transformation from traditional to modern, not merely describe the characteristics of

¹⁷ For a detailed explanation of the modernization model, see Allen Guttman, *From Ritual to Record: The Nature of Modern Sports*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978). It was in this book that Guttman championed his modernization thesis, partially to explain the development of modern sports, but also as a reaction to Marxist and sociological descriptions of the nature and development of modern sport.

¹⁸ Daniel A. MacDonald, *Gridiron and Coal: The Making of Rugby Football in Industrial Cape Breton: 1900 – 1960*, Masters Thesis, (Saint Mary’s University 2001), 16. Mel Adelman is another well-known proponent of the modernization thesis. Similar to Guttman, Adelman argues that characteristics of modern sport include organization, formal and standardized rules, national and international competition, superimposed on local interests, role differentiation, increased media coverage, and an obsession with statistics and records. From Mel Adelman, *A Sporting Time: New York City and the Rise of Modern Athletics*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 6.

modern sport.¹⁹ Lastly, and perhaps most important to this paper, is the diffusion model which is used to explain the spread of sport worldwide.²⁰ Diffusion theorists argue that sports travel outward from their point of origin to the periphery, in this case from Great Britain to its colonies. This transmission was seen as primarily top-down, as sport was first passed to the colonial elite, and then downwards through the social hierarchy.²¹ Ideally British sports would penetrate all of society's enclaves, eventually replacing any traditional sports that still existed, although in Canada it is obvious that the diffusion process was never completed. As Colin Howell has argued, in Canada, British sports were used to reinforce Anglo-Canadian hegemony and to foster allegiance to the Mother Country.²² The promotion of soccer, rugby and cricket, as well as golf, curling and tennis, came as a result of this colonial sporting movement. The diffusion model is certainly not the perfect approach to the spread of sport in Canada; if that were so, Canada would have an international cricket team competitive with India and Australia.

The World's Game

The global origins of soccer are a subject of considerable debate. Shrouded in mystery and shaped by myths, it is likely that the true beginnings of the game will never be determined. Tales of "kicking games" can be traced back to ancient Greece, Rome, and even China during the Han dynasty. Not to be outdone, the English have a legend

¹⁹ For more on this see Robert Malcomson, *Popular Recreations in English Society, 1700-1850*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973). Malcomson explores the bourgeois assault on plebian sporting practices. He argues that as early as 1750, changing class relations helped dictate changes in England's sporting community.

²⁰ For more on the diffusion model, see J.A. Mangan, *The Games Ethic and Imperialism: Aspects of the Diffusion of an Ideal*, (Middlesex: Viking, 1985) and Ying Wu, "The Pilgrims Come to America: A Failed Mission of British Cultural Imperialism", *Sport History Review*, 1998 29(2): pp. 212-224.

²¹ Howell, *Blood, Sweat, and Cheers*, 40.

²² Howell, *Blood, Sweat, and Cheers*, 30.

that the first ball dribbled on British soil was the head of a slain Danish soldier.²³ In *The Story of Soccer in Canada*, Colin Jose and William F. Rannie identify the “probable first game” in North America as having taken place in 1586, when sailors from the HMS *Sunneshine*, on a voyage in search of the Northwest Passage, played the Inuit of Gilbert Sound on the west coast of Greenland.²⁴ Nearly 150 years later, there is evidence that a form of soccer was played in British North America at the Prince of Wales Fort in Churchill, Manitoba, on 1 January 1734.²⁵ Although questionable in their historical accuracy, what is perhaps most significant about these two early accounts is that there is a consensus that the presence of soccer in Canada was the result of British influence. It is unlikely that any of these early versions of soccer closely resembled the modern game, and ultimately, in the context of this essay, the origins of the game are not nearly as important as the development and spread of soccer around the world.

It was not until the nineteenth century that the modern game of soccer began to take shape. For centuries, various forms of soccer (or “folk football”) were popular in the British countryside, although a lack of standardized rules meant that the number of players and the size of field differed from town to town. Needless to say, these games bore little resemblance to a modern day clash between Manchester United and Real Madrid. Despite this apparent lack of organization, Richard Holt cautions against the assumption that traditional games were “childish or primitive.”²⁶ He points to Richard Carew’s *Survey of Cornwall* in 1603 as providing a detailed description of a soccer game

²³ Colin Jose and William F. Rannie, *The Story of Soccer in Canada*, (Lincoln: W. F. Rannie, 1982), 9.

²⁴ Jose and Rannie, 13.

²⁵ Amis, 3.

²⁶ Richard Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 13.

that revealed the “complex rules and strategies for deceiving the opposition.”²⁷ The blurring between the traditional and the modern is further evidenced in Morris Marples’ description of what folk soccer games represented to the participants and to the community. Marples argued that folk games were “an occasion for young men to display their masculinity, a means of expressing communal solidarity, an excuse to settle old debts, and an event to be remembered until the following year.”²⁸ These values were central to the soccer experience in Britain, and did not fade in the nineteenth century when the rules of the game were standardized.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the popularity of traditional games and amusements in the British countryside was in a state of decline. In the first decades of the nineteenth century, an emerging British middle class sought to eliminate immorality in society, and this included attempting to abolish violent blood sports. Soccer was not exempt from this movement, and there was a genuine attempt to rid the game of some of its more brutal aspects, along with the drinking and gambling that accompanied the sport.²⁹ Supporters of the conflict theory of sport development could point to the rise of the British middle class as the catalyst that propelled soccer into the modern era. Bill Murray encapsulates this argument when he states:

Many of the new middle-classes played football, and for those who wanted to pursue their new professions and continue to play football at the same time it was necessary to create a more civilized game: one that eliminated its worst excesses and allowed them a better chance to play it without having to appear before their clients with a black eye or a broken arm. But while they might have reshaped the game, they did not re-invent it.³⁰

²⁷ Holt, 13.

²⁸ Bill Murray, *Football: A History of the World Game*, (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1994), 11.

²⁹ Murray, *Football: A History of the World Game*, 12.

³⁰ Murray, *Football: A History of the World Game*, 12.

A crucial moment in the civilizing process of soccer came in 1848, when the “Cambridge Rules” were drawn up at Cambridge University. The standardization of the rules allowed the game to achieve widespread popularity in Britain, but the rules developed at Cambridge were by no means the only set in existence. The next significant development came in 1863 when the newly formed Football Association (FA) opted for the Cambridge Rules as their choice to administrate the game. Although inconsequential at the time (initially the FA was only one of several governing bodies, and only in the late 1870s did it become the sole authority for the game in England), these developments eventually revolutionized the game of soccer.³¹

When considering the usefulness of the modernization model, it is important to recognize the difficulty of crowning a “historical winner”.³² It would be false to assume that modern soccer is infinitely superior to folk football; indeed how can the two versions of the sport even be compared? Gate receipts? Attendance? Skill of the participants? It is virtually impossible to attempt such a comparison. Instead, it would be beneficial to look at the different forms of soccer and to determine what they reveal about the societies that played them. The conflict model is helpful in explaining the rise of modern sport, but it remains to be seen if its uses can be transferred to a study of British sport in Nova Scotia. If nothing else, the conflict model disputes the static, Anglo-Saxon bourgeois hegemony proposed by the modernization model. Nova Scotia has been home to a dynamic and constantly changing sporting community since the nineteenth century.

The modernization model is not without its faults. While Guttmann offers a description of the differences between traditional and modern sport, he fails to provide an

³¹ Murray, *Football: A History of the World Game*, 15.

³² Daniel A. MacDonald, *Gridiron and Coal: The Making of Rugby Football in Industrial Cape Breton: 1900 – 1960*, Masters Thesis, (Saint Mary’s University 2001), 17.

explanation for the change. Dan MacDonald articulates this argument when he writes that the model “favours and celebrates the *historical winner* and obscures moments of genuine resistance, negotiation and accommodation that contributed to the making of sporting culture”.³³ The modernization thesis supposes that the modernization of sport was inevitable, and fails to distinguish between “change” and “progress”. In this respect, the modernization model takes a deterministic approach to sport development, making it much easier to justify hegemonic authority, often at the expense of much of society.³⁴ Guttman’s detractors argue that by celebrating the superiority of modern sport, the model glosses over continuing struggles for equality.

In Canada this translated into an Anglo-Saxon bourgeois ruling class that dictated the fate of a large portion of the organized sporting community, often at the expense of various minority groups. Colin Howell has criticized the modernization model as it has been applied to Native peoples. Howell writes that the “‘common sense’ application of the modernization model provided a rationale for ignoring the plight of native people: their difficulties were considered to be simply a product of their own inability to adjust to modernization”.³⁵ In reality, Natives were excluded because of a conscious decision made by a bourgeois ruling class not because they were unable to adapt to changes in the sport. Even today, the ongoing struggles of First Nations, women and other minorities to gain an equal place in the modern sporting world are not resolved, although significant progress has been made. According to Howell, “equality on the basis of ability may be

³³ MacDonald, *Gridiron and Coal*, 17.

³⁴ MacDonald, *Gridiron and Coal*, 17.

³⁵ Colin Howell, “On Metcalfe, Marx and Materialism: Reflections on the Writings of Sport History in the Post-modern Age”, *Sport History Review* 29 (1998), 100.

an ideal worth advocating, but equality is by no means an uncomplicated issue in our contemporary sporting culture”.

Dan MacDonald addresses some of problems that arise when applying the modernization model to the history of rugby in Cape Breton in his Master’s Thesis, *Gridiron and Coal: The Making of Rugby Football in Industrial Cape Breton: 1900-1960*. According to MacDonald, if one were to apply the modernization model to rugby in Cape Breton, it would reveal a “linear development from an intrinsic, traditional, amateur form of rugby to a performance oriented, calculative, professional sport like Canadian football”.³⁶ This view suggests that the brand of rugby football played in the Maritimes was somewhat dated in comparison to the professional football played in central Canada. Although MacDonald skillfully deconstructs this argument by identifying the progressive character of football in Cape Breton, he nevertheless highlights the dangers the modernization model presents to the periphery; in this case, the Maritimes. The version of football played in Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal was celebrated as football played “the Canadian way”, while the Maritimes were known for a decidedly conservative and pre-modern approach to the sport.³⁷ This treatment of the Maritime Provinces, along with Newfoundland, is not merely confined to the sporting community. The importance of the Atlantic region in Canadian history has often been downgraded by scholars who regard it as a fringe player in the Canadian success story.

It is the hope that my work will significantly add to the growing field of sports history, and serve as a form of regional analysis. However, I must caution that I am not trying to right the wrongs of a perceived regional disparity; rather I am merely filling a

³⁶ MacDonald, *Gridiron and Coal*, 17-18.

³⁷ MacDonald, *Gridiron and Coal*, 21.

void in the scholarship. The assertions that Toronto and Montreal were and are the cradle of organized sport in Canada are safe – at least for now.³⁸ Additionally, the goal of this thesis will not be to uncover the great teams and memorable games throughout the history of soccer in Nova Scotia – I will leave that for the Nova Scotia Sports Hall of Fame. Rather, I will seek an understanding as to why soccer was not given the proper attention by historians and sports enthusiasts alike.

³⁸ The discussion over which Canadian city or region deserves title of the “cradle of organized sport” is wide-ranging, with numerous sports historians offering their own interpretation of Canada’s sporting past. Alan Metcalfe, Bruce Kidd, Gerald Redmond, Don Morrow and Kevin Wamsley have all chimed in on this debate and at the present time Central Canada, particularly Montreal and Toronto, has the most support while the Western provinces and the Atlantic region are often relegated to the sidelines. In *Sport in Canada: A History*, Don Morrow and Kevin B. Wamsley argue that Montreal’s position at the forefront of the sporting world was hardly surprising: “That Montreal became a kind of Mecca for Canadian sport in the nineteenth century was logical in view of its geographical, economic, cultural, and commercial advantages.” Don Morrow and Kevin B. Wamsley, *Sport in Canada: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 54.

Chapter 1: Shin Guards and Scrums: British Sport in Nova Scotia

17 September 1927

R.C.R. Win From R.C.A. At Soccer Soldier Teams Battle at Wanderers Grounds on Saturday Afternoon – Keen Game

This past Saturday, on a reasonably warm fall afternoon, R.C.R. and R.C.A. squared off in a Halifax, Dartmouth and District Association Football League game at the Wanderers Grounds in Halifax. A close game was expected as these teams were considered to be relatively evenly matched. Play started quickly from the opening whistle with R.C.R. immediately finding itself on its heels. Duffy, the R.C.R. keeper was forced to make three quick saves before his team was able to clear the ball. After weathering the initial storm, R.C.R. was able to strike back with a goal after only five minutes of play. A corner kick from the wing by Tanner was met in the air by Sullings who promptly scored the first goal of the game. Despite the setback, R.C.A. kept pressing, although it would be R.C.R. that would score next. In a near carbon-copy of the first goal, a cross from Tanner found Sullings unmarked in the center for his second goal of the game. Down 2-0, R.C.A. was finally rewarded for its effort: a long rush down the field eventually led to Jackson fooling Duffy with a hard shot that grazed the keeper's fingertips before finding the back of the net. Heading into half-time it was R.C.R. leading 2-1, thanks largely in part to the deadly crossing of Tanner and the clinical finishing of Sullings. R.C.A.'s players must have considered themselves unlucky to have only scored one goal in a hotly contested first half.

The second half started with the same furious pace of the first; Sullings and Tanner were connecting brilliantly as R.C.A. still had no answer to their partnership.

After a series of passes Sullings was able to free himself from the defense long enough to fire a shot past R.C.A.'s keeper, Soutter, his third goal of the day. Shortly afterwards R.C.R. got its fourth goal of the day when Lolley converted a penalty after some sloppy R.C.A. defensive play. Artillery frantically tried to get back into the game, but the play of half-back Washings, and Sullings, who was adept in the defensive end as well, slowed R.C.A.'s advances. With the game well in hand Sullings scored two more goals, his last goal the result of sheer individual skill where he dribbled through the entire defeated and listless R.C.A. backfield before slotting the ball home. The final whistle brought relief to R.C.A. and elation to R.C.R., who found themselves deservedly on the winning end of a 6-1 final score.

Without question Sullings was the star of the game; his work in the air was exceptional. Service from the wing players, Tanner especially, kept him dangerous all day long. Duffy played well in goal when he had to, especially early on when he thwarted numerous R.C.A. attacks. R.C.R. was never really threatened however, because R.C.A.'s defense simply could not cope with the speed and skill of their attack, magnificently spearheaded on this occasion by Sullings.³⁹

Soccer: Ageless Beauty

The preceding game summary described a match that took place in 1927, but it very easily could have taken place in 2005. There is a timeless aspect to soccer that shines through in this match description. Teams and players have come and gone, playing formations have taken a turn for the defensive, the rules have been tweaked, but the fundamentals have not changed. A flat patch of ground with goals at each end, eleven

³⁹ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 19 September 1927.

players aside and a ball made out of any number of materials is all that is needed for a game of soccer. Because the sport emphasizes speed and skill over size and strength, soccer has not changed nearly as much over the past century as hockey, basketball, baseball and football – all sports that are much more dependent on these physical attributes. The technological revolution of the twentieth century has also barely affected the way soccer is played. Player equipment is so minimal (basically only cleats and shin pads) that there is not really much room to enhance performance on the field. Organized soccer in the twenty-first century may have flashier jerseys, longer shorts and shinier soccer balls, but the game is still the same. Soccer played in an unorganized manner – kickarounds or scrimmages for example – where equipment, the number of players and a regulation-sized field are not concerns, is perhaps even more timeless than its organized cousin. Unorganized soccer is soccer in its “purest” form, where there are few restrictions and creativity is allowed to flow more freely. Soccer in this form is relatively unchanging, but it is also difficult to track because of its spontaneity. In general, soccer has changed very little over the last century, as even minor changes have not been able to diminish the sport’s beauty and worldwide appeal.

British Values & Respectability

Thus far soccer and Britain have been discussed as if they were two separate entities – Britain acting as a stage upon which soccer could evolve, and allowing the game to change as its participants saw fit. Essentially this explanation sees Britain as a passive bystander in the development of soccer, and according to this way of thinking, soccer would have evolved in relatively the same manner, no matter the location.

Therefore, theoretically Britain could be exchanged for any other country; be it Denmark, China or the United States, the game would stay relatively the same. Now this is obviously overstated, but amidst the sarcasm, the point should be clear: soccer's development was influenced by its participants and surroundings, in this case, both British. According to Bill Murray, "The alumni of the English public schools not only gave the world the rules of association football; they also fostered the spirit in which they hoped it would be played, that of an amateur game unsullied by material reward."⁴⁰ The game was not played in a vacuum as British values mixed with and eventually helped shape soccer's entire culture.

Although much could be written on the role of the British state in the development of soccer throughout the Middle Ages and even into the twenty-first century, I will limit myself to a discussion of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and specifically, the British notion of respectability. From the diffusion model of sport development, we know that sports travel outward from their point of origin to the periphery, in this case from Britain to Canada. The model has its flaws, most notably that the diffusion process was never fully completed in Canada, but there is more to the story than this. The diffusion model explains the replication of certain sports, including soccer, based on the fact that knowledge of their rules and guidelines were carried to Canada by immigrants from Britain. According to this reasoning, soccer can be re-created and played anywhere, simply by adhering to the rules. However, this does not take into account immigrants' built-in values and beliefs, which would, along with the rules, shape the way they viewed and played soccer. The model is somewhat two-dimensional in this regard, as it does not allow for the cultural transmission that accompanied the transfer of

⁴⁰ Murray, *Football: A History of The World Game*, 5

soccer from Britain to Canada. In the late nineteenth century organized soccer games in Canada drew on much more than just the Cambridge Rules, as games were heavily influenced by the dominant British values of the day. As we shall see, the concept of respectability became just as important as individual skill and proper knowledge of the rules in the development of soccer in nineteenth century Canada. Unfortunately, even though respectability was a source of British pride, it was also seen as a drawback by those interested in creating a distinct Canadian sporting community that did not rely on established British sporting traditions. According to Alan Metcalfe, soccer was part of a group of sports that were “always recognized as being British and therefore were rejected as such by the Canadian leaders of amateur sport and by the Canadian media.”⁴¹ For better or worse, British traditions helped shape the manner in which soccer was played into the twentieth century.

Respectability was an ideal that originated in Victorian-era Britain but eventually made its way to Canada.⁴² The concept of respectability was obviously not limited to the sporting world, but rather was an all-encompassing ideal that was supposed to guide an individual through life. That it did extend to the sporting world shows just how comprehensive it was; likewise, it reveals that sport was considered a part of a balanced lifestyle. Jean Barman writes that British sports – team sports in particular, like soccer, rugby and cricket – were prized as much for their character-building value as for their physical benefits.⁴³ Colin Howell adds that

⁴¹ Metcalfe, 85.

⁴² John Douglas Belshaw, *Colonization and Community: The Vancouver Island Coalfield and the Making of the British Columbian Working Class*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 189.

⁴³ Jean Barman, *Growing up British in British Columbia: Boys in Private School*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1984), 73.

team sports were considered more effective than individual sports in promoting fair play, physical hardiness, teamwork, efficiency, self-restraint, innovation, competitiveness, and respect for others. All of these qualities were perceived as essential characteristics of leadership in the new industrial age.⁴⁴

Winning and losing became secondary as participants in British team sports were urged to compete in a gentlemanly manner and demonstrate their allegiance to the British Empire. Of course, there was an obvious dark side to the notion of respectability, as Howell points out:

to talk of respectable sport was to imply that rowdyism existed...In Canada, 'respectable' sports were more likely to involve men rather than women; the English rather than the French, whites rather than Blacks and Native people, Protestants rather than Catholics, and middle rather than working-class athletes.⁴⁵

Soccer demonstrated a number of these exclusionary characteristics in Canada. For instance, soccer was played almost entirely by white men of British ancestry. British sports had little or no purchase in French Canada, and soccer was no different in this regard.

Soccer in Nineteenth Century Canada

The introduction focused on the state of soccer in Britain, while barely touching upon the role of the game in Canada. The reasons for this are twofold: The history of Canada is very much intertwined with that of Britain, and, at an indeterminate point in time, soccer was brought to Canada from Britain. However, unlike Great Britain, there has only been a modest amount of scholarship on the subject of soccer in Canada. In particular, a study of the game in the period from 1867-1939 is often neglected by the country's leading sports historians. Of course this could be attributed to the continuing

⁴⁴ Howell, *Blood, Sweat and Cheers*, 31.

⁴⁵ Howell, *Blood, Sweat and Cheers*, 28.

lack of success of Canadian (men's) soccer on the international level, but this is not an entirely satisfying explanation. As well, it would be naïve to assume that a genuine lack of interest in soccer by Canadian sports historians has contributed to the insufficient treatment of the sport. The extensive coverage of major sports such as hockey, baseball, lacrosse and Canadian football is well justified, but there must be some explanation for the absence of soccer in Canadian sports history.

In their book, *The Story of Soccer in Canada*, Colin Jose and William F. Rannie assert that in 1880 “the lively interest in the game in the settlements of Atlantic Canada and the vast expanses west of Ontario made soccer the principal recreation in this land.”⁴⁶ But was this actually the case? In *Canada Learns to Play: The Emergence of Organized Sport, 1807-1914*, Alan Metcalfe argues that “soccer and cricket experienced uneven development, ebbing and flowing in popularity. They depended on a continuing supply of British immigrants...In fact, cricket experienced significant decline while soccer experienced ups and downs.”⁴⁷ Metcalfe adds that “by 1914 there were only two truly Canadian sports – ice hockey and baseball.”⁴⁸ Although this is somewhat later than the period Jose and Rannie were referring to, Metcalfe's study suggests that soccer was never the “principal recreation in the land”, but was continually overshadowed by sports like hockey, baseball, lacrosse, and by the early twentieth century, Canadian football. In addition to their erroneous claim about the widespread popularity of soccer, Jose and Rannie's book has many other deficiencies. It provides a detailed history of soccer in Canada, but it lacks a sophisticated analytical approach, and fails to address some of the larger issues that accompany the discipline of sports history. A closer examination of

⁴⁶ Jose and Rannie, 21.

⁴⁷ Metcalfe, 98.

⁴⁸ Metcalfe, 97.

soccer in Canada in the nineteenth century will reveal much about the true nature of the game, as well as lead into a discussion of soccer in Nova Scotia.

Prior to Confederation, soccer was played sporadically in garrisons, as well as by students and sailors throughout Upper and Lower Canada, although as Alan Metcalfe points out, “it was often difficult to differentiate between different forms of the game.”⁴⁹ Even as late as the 1880s soccer matches in Canada did not distinguish between the Football Association rules and the Rugby Union rules.⁵⁰ Games were often hybrids of soccer and rugby, with both kicking and carrying allowed. This shows that although Canadians were aware of developments in British soccer, they were often slow in implementing some of the more recent rules and regulations. Additionally, since Canada lacked a national governing body, teams, leagues and organizations operated independently with very few guidelines. Because of the varied manner in which early soccer was governed, the date of the first modern soccer game in Canada is subject to argument, and likely will never be confirmed.⁵¹

The popular view out of central Canada is that the first organized soccer match took place on 21 October 1876 between the Carlton Cricket Club and the Toronto Lacrosse Club.⁵² Whatever the merits of this claim, by the late 1870s soccer matches were played with regularity, especially in Toronto where the game was rapidly growing

⁴⁹ Metcalfe, 76.

⁵⁰ Jose and Rannie, 17.

⁵¹ “Origins” debates are nothing new to the sporting world. Consider the numerous arguments from cities and towns all across North America claiming to be the birthplace of hockey. Windsor, N.S., Montreal and even Dartmouth, Nova Scotia have stated all stated their case with a considerable body of literature devoted to the subject. Baseball and basketball are not without their own controversies as well; basketball in particular is subjected to an exorbitant amount of Canadian pride because James Naismith and number of the earliest competitors were Canadians. The question that begs to be asked is that does any of this really matter? Would the game of hockey play any differently today if the game originated in Windsor instead of Montreal? (Not that I’m backing Montreal, this is just an example!) It is much more important to study the way in which the game developed, instead of constantly trying to one-up the other side.

⁵² Jose and Rannie, 16.

in popularity. The formation of the Western Football Association (WFA) in 1879-1880 was a huge boost for the sport, and it eventually comprised over one hundred teams from Detroit in the west to Norwood in the east.⁵³ In 1888 the WFA embarked on a memorable tour of Britain that enabled a squad of seventeen Canadians to showcase their soccer ability. The team played many of the top professional clubs in Britain, and came away with a respectable record of nine wins, nine losses and five draws.⁵⁴ By the 1890s intra-city leagues were in operation in many of the country's urban centres, including Toronto, Montreal, Winnipeg, Brandon and Victoria, although Maritime cities were notably absent from this list.⁵⁵ These foundations were crucial, and they eventually served as the framework for provincial organizations. However, as Metcalfe points out, soccer also took hold in rural areas across the country, but was "significantly different from its urban counterpart".⁵⁶ The impact of modernization in Canadian soccer was not uniform; rural soccer was characterized by a lack of organizations, few leagues and little or no stability.

Nova Scotia Historiography

As the focus shifts towards Nova Scotia, a good starting point is the work of A.J. "Sandy" Young, a local sport historian.⁵⁷ His two volume, *Beyond Heroes: A Sport*

⁵³ Metcalfe, 76.

⁵⁴ John Matthew Amis, *The History of Soccer in Nova Scotia*, (Nova Scotia, 1997), 3.

⁵⁵ Metcalfe, 77.

⁵⁶ Metcalfe, 77.

⁵⁷ In addition to *Beyond Heroes*, Young was responsible (along with Heather Harris) for putting together the compilation entitled *Maritime Sports Stars on Parade: Highlighting Nova Scotia's Golden Age of Sports*, (Hantsport: Lancelot Press, 1989). The series, detailing the exploits of Maritime sports stars, was initially published in the late 1930s and was reprinted in this collection. The athletes in question included both men and women from a number of sports, including hockey, baseball, rugby, softball and track

History of Nova Scotia, traces the “development and, in some cases, the ultimate demise” of the many sports in Nova Scotia’s rich cultural history.⁵⁸ Young’s work is perhaps most useful as a celebration of Nova Scotia’s sporting history, but is nevertheless an important read for those interested in further acquainting themselves with the field.⁵⁹ In contrast to Young’s celebratory tone, Colin Howell takes a much more scholarly approach to Maritime sporting traditions in his book, *Northern Sandlots: A Social History of Maritime Baseball*. This source chronicles the social history of baseball in the Maritime Provinces. Howell explores “the way that baseball was implicated in broader discourses involving respectable behaviour, masculinity and femininity, regionalism and nationalism, and class, ethnicity, and race.”⁶⁰ Like baseball, soccer’s rise came during an era when the sporting world was becoming increasingly commercialized; where vigorous debates took place over the role of professionals in sport, the evils of gambling and rowdy spectatorism.⁶¹

Additionally, there are a number of articles and theses that have dealt with sport in the region. John Matthew Amis’ book, *The History of Soccer in Nova Scotia*, as well as D. D. Joos’ unpublished thesis, ‘A History of Soccer at Acadia University in Nova

and field. The compilation provides an idea of which sports were popular in the 1930s in the Maritime Provinces.

⁵⁸ A. J. “Sandy” Young, *Beyond Heroes: A Sport History of Nova Scotia: Vol. 2*, (Hantsport: Lancelot Press, 1988), 8.

⁵⁹ Another important contributor is Charlie Ballem, who has written two books detailing Prince Edward Island’s rich sporting history. See *More Than Just a Game: One Hundred Years of Organized Sport in Prince Edward Island, 1850-1950*, (Charlottetown: The Acorn Press, 2004) and *Abegweit Dynasty, 1899-1954: The Story of the Abegweit Amateur Athletic Association*, (Charlottetown: The Prince Edward Island Museum and Heritage Foundation, 1986). Ballem includes a brief history of soccer in Prince Edward Island in *More Than Just a Game*. Soccer’s origins in PEI can be traced to the 1930s, when the Eastern Prince County league was organized, with middling success. From Ballem, *More Than Just a Game*, 186.

⁶⁰ Colin Howell, *Northern Sandlots: A Social History of Maritime Baseball*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), ix.

⁶¹ Howell, *Northern Sandlots*, xii.

Scotia, Canada,' are both useful sources.⁶² Amis has crafted a concise provincial history of the sport, while Joos uncovers the history of collegiate soccer in the Atlantic region. There is plenty of material available about the sport of rugby on a provincial level, including work from Ralph Davies and Daniel MacDonald. MacDonald addresses the working-class nature of Cape Breton sport in his Master's Thesis, *Gridiron and Coal: The Making of Rugby Football in Industrial Cape Breton: 1900-1960*. He correctly argues that rugby was in fact the dominant sport in Cape Breton's mining communities because of several "indefinable qualities" that the sport possessed which made the game appealing to working class players from the collieries.⁶³ Citing an argument from Neil Hooper, who suggested that "the rough nature of the game may have appealed to the coal miner", MacDonald theorizes that rugby thrived somewhat at the expense of soccer.⁶⁴ There is much less available about cricket, at least in terms of recent academic scholarship. Nancy MacDonald's Masters Thesis, *The Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club of Halifax, 1882-1925: Its Contribution to Amateur Sport*, provide an early history of cricket in the province. The Halifax Wanderers represented the city's middle class, and

⁶² See D. D. Joos, "A History of Soccer at Acadia University in Nova Scotia", Canada, Masters Thesis, (San Diego University 1973). Other theses include: Wilfred Hoare, "The Development of Amateur Soccer in Kings County, Nova Scotia, 1968-1983", Masters Thesis (Acadia University 1985); Ralph M Davies, "A History of Rugby in Nova Scotia", Masters Thesis, (Dalhousie University 1979); Daniel A MacDonald, "Gridiron and Coal: The Making of Rugby Football in Industrial Cape Breton: 1900 – 1960", Masters Thesis, (Saint Mary's University 2001); Nancy Kimber MacDonald, "The Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club of Halifax, 1882-1925: Its Contribution to Amateur Sport", Masters of Science Thesis, (Dalhousie 1974); John M. McFarland, "A History of the Role Played by the Military in the Development of Competitive Sport in Nova Scotia, 1930-1969", Thesis, (Springfield College 1978).

⁶³ MacDonald, *Gridiron and Coal*, 42

⁶⁴ MacDonald, *Gridiron and Coal*, 42. There are problems with this explanation, which MacDonald makes clear in his thesis.

teams regularly participated in soccer, rugby and cricket, as well as popular North American sports like baseball and hockey.

British Team Sports in Nova Scotia

Along with soccer, both rugby and cricket generated only lukewarm enthusiasm in nineteenth century Canada. In *The History of Soccer in Nova Scotia*, John Amis points to three distinct groups, all falling under the general heading of “British”, as having the greatest impact on the early history of soccer in the province: British militiamen based in Halifax, Scottish miners in the various Nova Scotia coal fields, and British sailors visiting the various ports of the province.⁶⁵ However, this only represents a small portion of Nova Scotia, and to assume that a homogenous sporting community would take hold in a province that had an industrial garrison town as its capital, a large Acadian population, a Scottish working-class population that toiled in many of the province’s mines, and various ethnic and religious denominations in between, would be preposterous. Daniel MacDonald comments on the fragmentary nature of British sport in Nova Scotia when he writes:

the elite families of Halifax held little sway over the colliery districts of Cape Breton where rugby football was so popular. Working class players set themselves in opposition to the middle class teams in Halifax such as the Wanderers. It is unlikely, moreover, that English conservatism had much of an impact upon a Cape Breton workforce that was predominantly Scottish and Catholic.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Amis, 4.

⁶⁶ MacDonald, *Gridiron and Coal*, 18.

British sports, like rugby, cricket and soccer were more likely to be played in areas that had a strong British presence in the form of recent immigrants or the military. Sports popular in Halifax may have been unfashionable in Truro, Amherst, Wolfville or Sydney, and vice versa. An article in *The Halifax Herald* on May 26, 1917 reinforces this argument, as the paper suggests that baseball was the only sport that commanded a large audience all over the province, while tennis, golf, hockey, lacrosse and football were limited to niche audiences (or as the *Herald* described it, “class followings” versus the “mass following” of baseball).⁶⁷ In the late nineteenth century a number of different sports were characterized as being “British”, although soccer, rugby and cricket were the only British team sports of note played in Nova Scotia during this time period. This thesis will focus mainly on team sports as opposed to individual sporting events. In terms of the sporting community, a study of team sports serves as the most effective means in which to convey the influence of British culture in Nova Scotia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Soccer

Soccer games in Halifax were played between military teams as early as the 1840s on an informal basis. Sport was seen as a way for soldiers in the British army to build character, stave off boredom, and stay physically fit. For those soldiers raised in English public schools, knowledge of cricket, soccer and later rugby was second nature.⁶⁸ Soccer in nineteenth century Halifax was characterized by a lack of scheduling, as well as almost no continuity amongst teams from year to year. Games were infrequent,

⁶⁷ Howell, *Northern Sandlots*, 148; *The Halifax Herald*, 24, 26 May 1917.

⁶⁸ Amis, 4.

especially amongst civilian teams, but as M. Huggins points out, this was common in Britain as well. Because of transport costs “most clubs preferred to play practice games on their own field, and played only a limited number of friendly matches, preferably with teams close at hand”.⁶⁹ If most of the games played in Halifax were only intra-squad scrimmages, this may account for the lack of newspaper coverage.

There were occasional newspaper articles that covered soccer during this period, such as the piece identified by Amis that appeared 2 May 1874 in the *Morning Chronicle* that reported of a game “to be played on the Common this afternoon between Civilian and Garrison teams.”⁷⁰ This article is significant because it identifies that soccer had spread to the civilian population, although to what degree is still uncertain. Though limited, there is further evidence of civilian participation in soccer. In 1877 the Halifax Foot Ball Club joined the recently formed Canadian Foot Ball Association, although this union appeared to be short-lived.⁷¹ The next year the *Morning Chronicle* reported that a series of games between the Halifax Foot Ball Club and the Bankers Foot Ball Club was drawing “considerable interest”, yet reports like this were rare.⁷² Any impact the military had on the civilian population of Halifax during the nineteenth century, in terms of soccer, was only short-lived. It would not be until the 1910s that soccer enjoyed solid civilian support in Halifax.

⁶⁹ M. Huggins, “The Spread of Association Football in North – East England, 1876-96: The Pattern of Diffusion”, *The International Journal of History of Sport*, 6 (3) (December 1989), 318.

⁷⁰ Amis, 5; *The Morning Chronicle* 2 May 1874. Interestingly, this game precedes the Toronto – Carlton game by two years.

⁷¹ Amis, 5.

⁷² Amis, 5; *The Morning Chronicle* 3 May 1874.

During the late nineteenth century Nova Scotia went through the process of industrialization, creating a multitude of new jobs.⁷³ The province's mines, relatively underdeveloped for much of the nineteenth century under the General Mining Association, were crucial to the economy as the century drew to a close. The growth of mining provided the grounds for a massive influx of British working class settlers, particularly Highland Scots who settled in areas of eastern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton.⁷⁴ There is no question that many of the newly arrived miners were familiar with soccer, and as Amis points out: "many of the British mining communities from which these expatriates were drawn had produced a vigorous soccer culture".⁷⁵ Mining communities in Cape Breton, as well as Pictou, New Glasgow, Stellarton, Amherst, Joggin Mines and Springhill all fielded soccer teams at various points in time.⁷⁶ Jose and Rannie identify the influx of miners to Vancouver Island from the British Isles as a crucial step in the evolution of soccer in British Columbia. According to Jose and Rannie, "their presence gave the game a tremendous boost from Alberni to Victoria, but especially in the mining towns of Nanaimo, Cumberland and Ladysmith".⁷⁷

⁷³ A number of well-known regional scholars have contributed to the discussion surrounding Nova Scotia's – as well as the Atlantic Provinces in general – entrance into Confederation and subsequent industrialization in the decades that followed. For more on this consult the work of David Frank, E.R. Forbes, D.A. Muise, T.W. Acheson, Ian McKay, Larry McCann, Colin Howell, Judith Fingard, amongst others. As can be seen, the Atlantic region is blessed with a rich historiography which may at times seem even overwhelming, especially to those new to the scholarship. In such cases, E.R. Forbes' and D.A. Muise's excellent compilation of essays, *The Atlantic Provinces in Confederation*, (Toronto: Toronto Press Incorporated, 1993) should serve as a beacon to guide those that wish to venture east.

⁷⁴ For an introduction to Nova Scotia's sizeable mining operations and the working-class immigrants that fueled their rise, see David Frank, "The Cape Breton Coal Industry and the Rise and Fall of the British Empire Steel Corporation", *Acadiensis*, (Autumn 1977), Vol. VII, No. 1: pp. 55-86. Also, see David Frank, *J.B. McLachlan: A Biography*, (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company Ltd., 1999). Arguably, the biography of McLachlan serves as Frank's seminal piece of work; using McLachlan as his centerpiece, Frank takes an unflinching look at life in Cape Breton's coal mining towns, the working-class, union life and the devastating strikes of the early twentieth century.

⁷⁵ Amis, 7.

⁷⁶ Amis, 7

⁷⁷ Jose and Rannie, 26.

The final group who had an impact on the early development of soccer in Nova Scotia was the numerous British sailors who visited the province. While docking at various ports, particularly Sydney and Halifax, sailors often sought out competition and according to Amis, “games were usually easily arranged against either a shore-based team, a team from another ship, or a military representative team”.⁷⁸ Unfortunately since these games were played on an irregular basis, coverage from local newspapers was scarce. It could also be argued that the transient nature of these games restricted widespread exposure of soccer in Nova Scotia’s port towns.⁷⁹ Certainly the impact was not nearly as lasting as in the military and mining communities, but the importance of British sailing vessels should not be discounted in the development of soccer in Nova Scotia.⁸⁰

Rugby

Like soccer, rugby in Nova Scotia was “definitively a British white, male sport”.⁸¹ However, rugby more so than soccer, was heavily defined by the class structures of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Rugby in Nova Scotia was, in many ways, characterized by the disparity between industrial Cape Breton and middle-class Halifax,

⁷⁸ Amis, 8.

⁷⁹ Amis, 8.

⁸⁰ Colin Howell explores the impact of visiting ships on the Maritime sporting community in *Northern Sandlots*. Touring baseball teams from New England regularly visited Nova Scotia in the interwar period, and although most traveled by land through New Brunswick, a number of US warships, including the U.S.S. *Tampa* and the U.S.S. *Milwaukee*, provided squads to play against local clubs from Halifax. While baseball was already well-established in Nova Scotia by the 1930s, soccer was still in its infancy during the initial ship to shore games (although they would continue into the 1930s as well). Although the US warships may not have introduced baseball to Haligonians, there were still similarities between the two cases: According to Howell, “The touring clubs provided a standard by which local clubs could judge their abilities, and helped raise the level of play... Those that returned over the years could also assess the progress of Maritime baseball in general.” (Howell, *Northern Sandlots*, 167). The British ships that visited Nova Scotia ports half a decade earlier did much the same thing, although the game of soccer was not nearly as developed as baseball was in the 1930s.

⁸¹ MacDonald, *Gridiron and Coal*, 51.

although New Glasgow, Pictou and Truro were also involved in the sport.⁸² According to Dan MacDonald, Canadian rugby was the domain of working class teams by the First World War. Exceptions to the rule were, amongst others, Montreal and Halifax, where “rugby was played by young bourgeois males, sons of merchants, clerks, and university students.”⁸³ Of Cape Breton, MacDonald writes, “in the early years in Cape Breton the game had also been dominated, in terms of representation and championships won, by middle class teams from Glace Bay and Sydney.”⁸⁴ After 1906, however, working class teams from Reserve, Sydney Mines, Dominion No. 6, and Caledonia each shared the championship.⁸⁵ Rugby quickly became an integral component of working-class culture in many of Cape Breton’s colliery towns. The most successful of Cape Breton’s rugby teams was Caledonia, who made a name for itself by winning the MacTier cup of Eastern Canada numerous times between 1929 and the outbreak of World War Two.⁸⁶ Caledonia’s arch-rival in Nova Scotia during this period was the Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club of Halifax, who exemplified the upper-middle class nature of Halifax’s rugby community.⁸⁷ Prior to World War Two, Nova Scotia was also home to a competitive university rugby league, which contained a revolving list of teams, of which Dalhousie was by far the most consistent contributor. Additionally, as with cricket and soccer, the military also provided a number of teams to compete in Halifax-based leagues.⁸⁸ Commenting on the state of the game in Nova Scotia in the early twentieth century, Ralph Davies noted that “rugby in the Province thrived in the 1930s both at the

⁸² Ralph M. Davies, *A History of Rugby in Nova Scotia*, Masters Thesis, (Dalhousie University 1979), 16.

⁸³ MacDonald, *Gridiron and Coal*, 28.

⁸⁴ See pages 36-37 of *Gridiron and Coal* for a description of the Glace Bay and Sydney players.

⁸⁵ MacDonald, *Gridiron and Coal*, 28-29.

⁸⁶ MacDonald, *Gridiron and Coal*, 68.

⁸⁷ For more on the Wanderers, see Nancy MacDonald’s detailed study of the W.A.A.C.

⁸⁸ At different points in time Acadia, Kings, University of New Brunswick and Mount Allison all fielded rugby teams, although Dalhousie was without a doubt the most successful of the group.

grass roots and senior levels.” Although it faded as the century progressed, the heightened class consciousness and the heated rivalry between Cape Breton and Halifax that defined the sport in the early twentieth century left a lasting impression on the province’s sporting history.

Cricket

In Nova Scotia, cricket remains somewhat of an enigma. The modernization thesis suggests continual progress (or at least a comfortable existence), yet cricket’s presence in Nova Scotia has declined steadily since the early twentieth century. An examination of newspaper articles in the *Acadian Recorder*, a Halifax based newspaper, in the early twentieth century reveals this trend. Between 1900 and 1910 cricket’s popularity was rivaled only by baseball in terms of outdoor team sports.⁸⁹ Cricket was valued for its unique blend of physical play and gentlemanly behaviour; although in some cases the latter was seen as a fault. Increasingly dismissed as just a game for the social elite and the military, the Halifax-based cricket league seemed to support this way of thinking, as it was composed of a team from the Halifax Wanderers and several garrison-based clubs. Colin Howell disputes this notion however, as he notes in *Northern Sandlots* that “working-class involvement sustained interest in cricket in industrial towns such as Stellarton, Pictou, Londonderry, Oxford, Springhill, Amherst, Westville, Glace Bay, and Sydney until after the turn of the century”.⁹⁰ In addition to local competition,

⁸⁹ Colin Howell explores the impact that visiting cricket clubs had on the development of sport in Nova Scotia in *Northern Sandlots*. In 1874 a visiting team from Philadelphia won the “Halifax Cup” after defeating the Canadian, British and Halifax teams. The visit was particularly memorable because of the lavish treatment the visitors received, serving once again to highlight the aristocratic nature of cricket. From Howell, *Northern Sandlots*, 32.

⁹⁰ Howell, *Northern Sandlots*, 33-34.

cricket teams from the United States visited Nova Scotia frequently, including clubs from Boston and Philadelphia.⁹¹ This popularity would not last however, as baseball, and to a lesser extent soccer, had firmly supplanted cricket as the summer team sports of choice by the 1920s. In the twenty-first century there is virtually no trace of cricket in any of the province's major newspapers. Cricket is still played on the Halifax Commons, yet there are no formal leagues or competitions still in existence. Although the rules remain the same as in the nineteenth century, it could be argued that cricket in Nova Scotia lost many of the characteristics of a modern sport.

A Question of "Britishness"

Although it may seem obvious that in early twentieth century Nova Scotia, soccer was primarily played by British immigrants and persons of British descent, this statement can occasionally be taken for granted. Before proceeding any further with this analysis, the very meaning of the word "British" should be revisited, especially in the context of early twentieth century Nova Scotia.⁹² What I suggest is that "Britishness" meant "not North American", so any former resident of the British Isles should be considered British. This is hardly a new idea, as the concept of a North American versus British sporting world was regularly bandied about by sports writers of the day.⁹³ More specifically, a

⁹¹ *The Acadian Recorder*, Various Editions, 1900-1910.

⁹² The concept of a "simplified Britishness" is not new to Canadian historiography, nor is it confined to Nova Scotia. Jean Barman and Cole Harris both explored the idea that British cultural beliefs and institutions were diluted when they were brought to British Columbia. Regional differences were glossed over as "British" became an all-encompassing term used to define anyone who happened to be connected to Great Britain.

⁹³ For an insightful look into the contrasting ideologies of British and North American sport, see Ying Wu, "The Pilgrims Come to America: A Failed Mission of British Cultural Imperialism", *Sport History Review*, 1998 29(2): pp. 212-224. Wu explores the cultural impact of Pilgrims, a British Amateur soccer team who toured the United States in September and October 1905. According to Wu, "the Pilgrims aimed to demonstrate the superiority and the advantages of soccer to the American public...to [their] British

simplified notion of Britishness was subscribed to, where country lines did not matter and regional and cultural differences hardly figured in the discussion. Scottish miners from Cape Breton and English seamen from Halifax were still British soccer players in the minds of North American athletes. Class, location and as we shall see, civilian as opposed to military background, all played a role, but it was their Britishness for which soccer players were identified.⁹⁴ British athletes were not necessarily looked down upon – as was the case with French, Black or First Nations athletes – but they were certainly looked upon as different when compared to their North American counterparts. Soccer players were more often than not defined by their Britishness as opposed to any other characteristic.

Conclusion

The adoption of soccer as the sport of choice by Nova Scotia's middle class was relatively recent, coming in the last few decades of the twentieth century. Prior to this, soccer was traditionally a game of immigrants. According to Bill Murray, in "Canada and the United States, [soccer] remained the game of the recent immigrants: the British before World War II and Europeans (particularly southern Europeans) thereafter."⁹⁵ To reiterate a quote from Alan Metcalfe, in the early twentieth century, soccer was seen as part of a group of sports that were "always recognized as being British and therefore were

promoters, soccer was a superior game. It depended on scientific manipulation of the ball rather than the sheer weight and strength required in the American college game." Ultimately, and not surprisingly, the Pilgrims' mission was a failure, as college football continued to thrive while soccer, even today, is still only a second-tier sport in the United States.

⁹⁴ See: *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 26 June 1913, 21 November 1913, *The Halifax Herald*, 19 April 1919. Each will be discussed in greater depth in later chapters.

⁹⁵ Murray, *The World's Game*, 17.

rejected as such by the Canadian leaders of amateur sport and by the Canadian media.”⁹⁶ Soccer’s inherent Britishness was not necessarily seen as “anti-Canadian”, but it ensured that soccer would not be actively promoted in the new, dynamic Canadian sporting scene of the twentieth century.

It would not be until the 1970s and 1980s that soccer’s popularity rose dramatically in Nova Scotia, eventually displacing baseball as the summer sport of choice. Soccer’s rising status was by no means unique to Nova Scotia, but rather reflected a trend that was sweeping the country. Slowly, soccer emerged as a viable summer sport. A viable, *Canadian* summer sport. In Nova Scotia, soccer is hardly ever identified as a British sport any more. In fact, it is questionable how many soccer players today are even aware of the sport’s strong British past. For many Nova Scotians, soccer is a sport like any other; soccer, hockey, baseball, football, basketball, rugby – they are all part of Nova Scotia’s vast sporting cornucopia. Certainly it has shed its status as a sport only pursued by recent immigrants. There is no denying that immigrants still play a healthy role in the development of soccer in Nova Scotia, but it is fair to say that the sport does not rest on the shoulders of immigrant participation like it did in the past.

⁹⁶ Metcalfe, 85.

Chapter 2: Soccer Bodies Part I

This chapter will focus on the numerous leagues that were the basis for competition in Nova Scotia's soccer community prior to World War Two. In an effort to decipher and uncover the significance of the early competitions – beyond the fact that they were milestones because they were the first of their kind in the province – this section will look at the development of soccer from the early twentieth century until just prior to World War Two in Nova Scotia. As well, I will attempt to compare and contrast the experience of soccer in Nova Scotia with the rest of Canada. The title, “Soccer Bodies”, alludes to the various organizational and institutional bodies that composed soccer's hierarchical structure. I will investigate the impact that different companies, schools, the military, the media, and even the league's governing officers had on Nova Scotia's soccer community. A detailed analysis should allow me to gauge the amount of institutional support that soccer received, and ideally, to determine where British sports in general were most popular in early twentieth century society. Also, this chapter will seek to uncover where British sports had the greatest following in the province. The role of the press will also be examined in an effort to determine how soccer was portrayed by the media and whether or not soccer was seen as a legitimate sport. This will lead into a discussion of James Power, a pioneer in the field of sports-writing. Power's articles offer much insight into the early history of soccer in Nova Scotia and will also serve as an exposé on the problems with “football” terminology that plagued early sports writers. Finally, this section will leave the realm of fact and wrap up with a wide-ranging discussion on the indefinable – and undeniable – appeal of soccer in an attempt to comprehend the sport's massive world-wide following.

Soccer struggled to find an identity within the Nova Scotia sporting community in the early twentieth century. A strong British presence in the form of military personnel, visiting sailors and the working-class occupants of mining towns gave Nova Scotia soccer a solid foundation, but the sport could progress no further without intervention from the general public. Prior to 1910, public interest in soccer was limited to curiosity and as a result, organized competition rarely took place outside of the military. It would not be until 1912 that public curiosity translated into popularity, with the formation of the first civilian soccer club in Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Car Works Association Football Club. Within the next few years a series of rapid developments, including the creation of several leagues and a province wide cup competition, helped propel soccer into Nova Scotia's popular sporting culture. By the 1930s soccer had emerged as an alternative to some of the more popular team sports of the day, although it would not be until the post-World War Two era that soccer was able to position itself as a serious threat to Nova Scotia's sporting hierarchy.

James Power: Pioneer in Sports Writing

Soccer had achieved some popularity in Nova Scotia amongst the three groups discussed in the previous chapter – British militiamen based in Halifax, British miners in the various Nova Scotia coal fields, and British sailors visiting the various ports of the province⁹⁷ – but by the early twentieth century it had still largely failed to bridge the gap that existed with the province's civilian residents. Soccer struggled to find participants and spectators alike, and it was regularly eclipsed by rugby, cricket, boxing, hockey,

⁹⁷ Amis, 4.

rowing, yachting, horse racing and baseball.⁹⁸ However, in the 1910s soccer was given a much needed boost, particularly in Halifax and its surrounding areas. Much of the evidence for this comes from the work of James William “Jim” Power, the first individual in the Maritimes to publish daily sports items, and a pioneer in early sports writing.⁹⁹

Power was born to the Hon. Michael Joseph and Ann Sophia (Kent) Power on 13 December 1864. He was educated at St. Mary’s School and College in Halifax, and St. Joseph’s College, Memramcook, New Brunswick. Power began work with the *Acadian Recorder*, a Halifax based newspaper, when he was only seventeen. He eventually joined the *Halifax Herald* in 1930, when the *Recorder* ceased publication and would write for the *Herald* until just prior to his death on 9 July 1940.¹⁰⁰ The *James William Power Collection*, available at the Nova Scotia Archives & Records Management, provides adequate coverage of the Nova Scotia sporting community from 1900-1940.

Power’s collection does not include many articles about soccer prior to 1913, although this may have been partially due to cataloging difficulties. Soccer was referred to at various points in time as association football or simply, football.¹⁰¹ Combined with

⁹⁸ *The Acadian Recorder*, various editions, 1902-1903.

⁹⁹ *The James William Power Collection*. Located at the Nova Scotia Public Archives & Record Management, 6016 University Avenue, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, B3H 1W4.

¹⁰⁰ *The James William Power Collection*.

¹⁰¹ Although it may appear tangential to the main thrust of this study, a brief discussion of the confusing nature of the term “football” is in order. As rugby gained popularity in the early twentieth century, media coverage became extraordinarily ambiguous as to which game was in fact being played. This is directly related to the similar origins of rugby and soccer: rugby’s legendary (and false) birth took place in 1823 during a soccer game, when William Webb Ellis, a schoolboy at Dr. Thomas Arnold’s school was frustrated over his lack of kicking ability and shocked both opponents and teammates by picking up the ball and running with it. From Eric Zweig, “Playing Football the Canadian Way”, *Beaver*, (October/November 1995), 75(5), 115. Whatever the true origins of rugby, the split between soccer and rugby was very real. The Cambridge Rules and the subsequent formation of the FA alleviated some of the difficulty, as did the formation of the Rugby Football Union in 1871; however rule changes were often slow to be implemented. From Zweig, 116. This was especially true in Canada, where as late as the 1870s soccer games were often

trying to identify rugby football, American football and Canadian football, it is no wonder the catalogers had problems. The problem of identifying the various forms of football is front and center in Power's occasional piece entitled "Football Items". Although Power referred to "soccer" more frequently in the 1920s and 1930s, "Football Items" was consistently problematic. In the 9 October 1921 issue of the *Acadian Recorder*, scores from the Cape Breton colliery soccer league were mixed in with Canadian and American football scores. Additionally the score from an unidentified university sport was included (UNB 2 – St. John 0), leaving the reader to guess whether it was soccer, rugby or Canadian football that was played. Often one must discern from the game's score which sport was played, as soccer often, though not always, suggests low scoring. A description of a player "heading" the ball is often a giveaway as well. Thankfully there are plenty of reliable accounts of games that were obviously soccer to ensure Power's collection is a useful historical source.

The etymology of "soccer" has an interesting history as well, although it may only serve to further confuse the ambiguity of Power's writing. *Socca* was first used as an abbreviation for Association Football in 1889, and by 1895 the spelling "soccer" was in use.¹⁰² Gradually "soccer" became the name of choice in most of North America while the rest of the world still referred to the sport as "football". While it is tempting to portray the struggle over the name solely as a conflict between British influence and North American influence, it is not that simple. The appropriation of the word "soccer" took place over a long period of time and was by no means uniform across North

still played under a mix of FA and Rugby Union rules. It is then no surprise that newspaper editors had such trouble identifying what sport was being reported; Power himself was not innocent of this ambiguity.

¹⁰² David Wilton, "Etymologies & Word Origins", 15 August 2004
<<http://www.wordorigins.org/wordors.htm>> (26 February 2005).

America.¹⁰³ Even by the 1930s Power had not completely phased out “football” in favour of soccer, though this could be indicative of Power’s age and the fact that he had been reporting the sport for over thirty years. He may have been less likely to completely adopt a new name for the sport than a member of a younger, more North American-oriented generation.

Early League and Cup Competition

Prior to 1912, organized soccer existed in the form of a Garrison League that was comprised of several teams from the military.¹⁰⁴ However, 1912 saw the formation of the first civilian club in Halifax, the Nova Scotia Car Works Association Football Club.¹⁰⁵ Of note, the Car Works team referred to itself as an “association football” club, not a “soccer” club. That they chose to align themselves with Britain, as opposed to taking a more North American approach, is significant; it reinforces the notion that soccer was clearly identified as a British sport in early twentieth century Nova Scotia. At any rate, the club performed well against the military teams, leading to increased civilian interest. In September of that year came the announcement that the newly created Halifax Association Football Cup competition was open to all clubs in the metropolitan Halifax area. Several more civilian teams were formed in order to compete, including the Banks AFC, the Dartmouth Ropeworks, and perhaps the most influential amateur sports club of

¹⁰³ Further evidence that supports a North American versus British approach was the continued use of “football” when reporting the results of British soccer games well into the 1930s. British soccer games were never referred to as “soccer” although local games were with increasing frequency by the 1930s.

¹⁰⁴ Amis, 9.

¹⁰⁵ *The Halifax Herald*, 2 April 1913. Located at the Spring Garden Road Memorial Public Library, 5381 Spring Garden Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, B3J 1E9.

its time, the Halifax Wanderers Club.¹⁰⁶ Perhaps due to its newness, James Power reported very little on the competition, although in 1913 there would be a marked increase in the number of soccer articles he would write.

The year 1913 marked a turning point in the history of soccer in Halifax, and also perhaps of Nova Scotia as well. It could be argued that at this point the game finally completed its transition from traditional to modern according to the Guttman model of sport development. The reasons for this will be explained in detail throughout this section, though I will not limit myself solely to Guttman's relatively strict explanation of what constitutes a modern sport. The instability and irregularities of military competition had not completely disappeared, but rather were supplemented by regular civilian participation. As we shall see, the creation of a civilian-based league did not happen overnight and there was considerable disagreement in how such a league would be run. If nothing else, the success of the Halifax Association Football Cup in the fall of 1912 set the stage for a tumultuous off-season. In an opinion piece entitled "Association Football Gaining Favour: President Wilkinson Discusses the Situation from Standpoint of Expert – An Intelligent, Readable, Resume", appearing in the 1 April 1913 issue of *The Halifax Evening Mail*, the newly crowned president of the Nova Scotia Football Association, T.J. Wilkinson provided his rationale for the formation of a civilian soccer league in Halifax.¹⁰⁷ In addition to his comments on a civilian league, Wilkinson offered his thoughts on the general state of soccer in Canada. Interesting, informative and at times controversial, there is no denying the significance of Wilkinson's piece. Because

¹⁰⁶ Amis, 9. The Wanderers did not actually compete in a Halifax based league until 1924, but it is possible that a team was formed with the intention of playing in 1912 yet was disbanded before the season began.

¹⁰⁷ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 1 April 1913. Located at the Spring Garden Road Memorial Public Library, 5381 Spring Garden Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, B3J 1E9.

there are very few primary sources available beyond the usual factual newspaper reports, Wilkinson's insight is especially valuable. Wilkinson's position as president of the N.S.F.A. meant his opinions would not have gone unheard and were likely shared by at least a portion of Nova Scotia's soccer community.¹⁰⁸

Before addressing the specifics of what should constitute a civilian soccer league in Nova Scotia, Wilkinson commented on the sport's increasing popularity on a national level:

There is manifestly a most gratifying and widening interest in Association Football throughout the Dominion. In fact, it bids fall to become the national game of the country. This expanding interest is most credibly represented in Halifax where we have some of the most capable and enthusiastic supporters of the game.¹⁰⁹

As a supporter of the game and as someone intimately involved in the promotion and maintenance of soccer's well-being in the province, Wilkinson had reason to highlight its merits. Although it was perhaps an exaggeration when he claimed that soccer had the potential to become Canada's national sport of tomorrow, there was no denying Wilkinson's optimism in soccer's future. Narrowing his attention to Nova Scotia, Wilkinson stressed that the future of soccer in the province lay with civilians, not the military. Wilkinson asked, "Where may we look for further development? Only among civilians is there room for further advance, for that reason they need an exclusive competition and it will promise the largest possible returns for the investment."¹¹⁰ This is significant because at the time he was writing the article, the majority of the province's soccer players still belonged to the military. Wilkinson had no desire to take over the

¹⁰⁸ The governing officers of the N.S.F.A. were elected each year in a vote that usually took place in late March or early April.

¹⁰⁹ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 1 April 1913.

¹¹⁰ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 1 April 1913.

existing Garrison League, but instead wanted to form a brand new league which would be entirely civilian based. Additionally, Wilkinson singled out the Nova Scotia Car Works team for its contribution to Nova Scotia soccer and for paving the way to success for future civilian teams. The Car Works squad was expected to be one of many civilian-led soccer teams that would usher in a new era in Nova Scotia's sporting scene, where soccer would hold a much more prominent position.

The civilian league that Wilkinson had in mind for the spring of 1913 was to be an exclusive endeavor. It was Wilkinson's wish to form a league composed solely of civilian competitors. According to Wilkinson, military and naval players would "obtrude" upon the league, hindering the skills of prospective civilian players and generally interfering with the development of the game in Nova Scotia. Wilkinson argued that "in Great Britain the civilian player is conceded to be stronger than the military and in no need of encouragement."¹¹¹ In Wilkinson's belief, the competitive soccer leagues in Britain were models on which the senior circuit in Nova Scotia should be based. However, the desire for exclusivity that Wilkinson proposed was apparently not shared by all within Nova Scotia's soccer community. There were obviously detractors in the military who argued vehemently against their exclusion, but there were also many civilian opponents as well. In fact, Wilkinson's article was originally written as a response to an article that appeared in *The Daily Echo* earlier in the year. The author of the *Daily Echo* article attempted to define what actually constituted a "civilian" soccer club. Like Wilkinson, he or she saw the value of a civilian-based soccer league. The *Echo* writer recommended that all teams in the new civilian league be "organized by

¹¹¹ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 1 April 1913. In Britain there were already highly competitive – and successful – civilian soccer leagues at this point in time.

civilians, [have] officers [that] are civilians and whose name is of civilian origin.”¹¹² In his/her opinion it did not appear to matter whether players from the military participated or not – as long as the league was built on the backs of civilians. Military players were still to be valued for their playing ability and were expected to contribute to the new civilian league, but in a supporting role.

T.J. Wilkinson was not satisfied with this solution; as we already know, he considered the presence of military players in a civilian league to be thoroughly unacceptable. Clearly Wilkinson wanted to encourage the growth of soccer amongst Nova Scotia’s civilian population, but there was more to it than this alone. Wilkinson had no intention of opening up the new league to all civilians as playing ability remained secondary to class and racial concerns. Wilkinson’s rhetoric was steeped in the elitist notions of British respectability and gentlemanly amateurism. While noble for promoting fair play and sportsmanship, British sporting traditions were also highly exclusionary and discriminated against women, non-whites, French Canadians, Catholics and the working-class. His qualms with the military also become much clearer. According to Wilkinson, in addition to stunting the growth of civilian players, the military’s willingness to accept men from all walks of life (and in turn, letting them play soccer) would undermine the respectability of the new civilian league.¹¹³ Wilkinson complained that military clubs “lay no claim to be strictly civilian, but choose their players on their merits and not on any class, trade or professional distinction.”¹¹⁴ Additionally, in a rebuttal aimed at the

¹¹² *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 1 April 1913.

¹¹³ For more on the history of Canada’s military, see Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada: From Champlain to Kosovo*, (Toronto: Hurtig Publishers, 1985).

¹¹⁴ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 1 April 1913. Although Wilkinson may have disagreed, it was the military’s willingness to accept “players on their merits and not on any class, trade or professional distinction” that was responsible for their excess of skilled players.

Daily Echo writer, Wilkinson added that “a club or regiment may be organized by white men and bear a white man’s name and be a black man’s regiment.” If it was left to his discretion, the civilian soccer league on the horizon in Nova Scotia would have been free of military players and closely followed the twin ideals of British respectability and gentlemanly amateurism. As the president of the N.S.F.A. he made sure his voice was heard, but, as we shall see, not all of his recommendations were followed.

In The Beginning: 1913

A number of significant developments took place in 1913 beginning with the formation of the province’s first governing body of soccer, the aforementioned Nova Scotia Football Association, on 7 February 1913. Seventeen teams, representing a number of locales, were immediately affiliated. They included military teams (HMCS Niobe, the Artillery Regiment, the RCR, the RCE, the ASC, and the COC), metropolitan Halifax teams (Nova Scotia Car Works, Nova Scotia Rope Works, Clan Thistle, Halifax City, the Deaf and Dumb Institute, and Trinity Young Men’s Association), and five teams from mining towns (New Glasgow, Stellarton, Amherst, Joggin Mines and Springhill).¹¹⁵ In April four more teams joined as well, three from the Halifax area (Dartmouth North Star, Sons of England, and Clan McLean) and one from Westville, another mining town.¹¹⁶ Once again the absence of Cape Breton, as well as any teams from southern Nova Scotia should be noted. Towns from southern Nova Scotia simply do not figure into a discussion of soccer at this time, whether due to a lack of records, or a genuine lack of popularity of the sport in these areas.

¹¹⁵ *The Halifax Herald*, 8 February 1913.

¹¹⁶ *The Halifax Herald*, 9 April 1913.

On 8 April 1913 the governing officers of the N.S.F.A. came to a decision on the military content of the new civilian soccer league. Against the wishes of Wilkinson, it was decided that teams would be allowed to keep as many military players on their rosters as they saw fit, as long as no more than four were on the field at once. This move was designed to encourage interest amongst civilian players in the hopes that talent and a love for the game would eventually spread throughout the province. It was thought that a league dominated by the military might scare off aspiring soccer players. Additionally, this move ensured that the military would not be used as a crutch forever, as soccer would be allowed to grow throughout the province's civilian population. While it might not have been fair to ban military players entirely from participating in the league (as Wilkinson had wished), limiting the number of players clearly meant the league was to be identified as civilian soccer competition. The military already had its own regular competition in the fall with the Garrison League, and usually played exhibition games year round, so it was not surprising the league's new governing officers wanted something they could call their own. It was also possible that some of the league's other governing officers shared Wilkinson's views on the inferiority of some of the military's players, based on class and racial assumptions, but they were still not willing to adopt an entirely military-free policy.

Throughout the 1913 season civilian clubs scrambled to attract the top military players to fill out their rosters.¹¹⁷ The new civilian soccer league, which was eventually

¹¹⁷ *The Halifax Herald*, 9 April 1913. In the 3 May 1913 issue of the *Halifax Evening Mail* there was a letter from the Halifax City Football Club that angrily disputed charges that they played a game with more than four servicemen in their lineup. The club's Secretary-Treasurer, J.H.W. Beach, argued vehemently that they were a respectable side and that they only played three servicemen in the match in question. To Beach this accusation insulted the character and integrity of his club. He argued: "We are not a rich organization. We have neither jobs nor other inducements to offer players. They gain nothing but the privilege of assisting the club in the Saturday matches and any friendly games which may be arranged."

christened the Halifax, Dartmouth and District Association Football League, was closely monitored by the N.S.F.A. throughout the first season to ensure teams did not go over the quota of four military players on the field at the same time. It is impossible to determine whether this ruling had the intended effect, or whether it had much of an impact in the long run; indeed it is unknown for how many years the league actually maintained the four servicemen per team quota. Nevertheless, there is no denying that 1913 was a turning point for soccer in Nova Scotia as the game started to make inroads amongst the province's civilians.

The creation of the N.S.F.A. and the subsequent formation of the Halifax, Dartmouth and District Association Football League was only the beginning, as the province's soccer community made yet another major stride towards modernization, which John Amis describes in *The History of Soccer in Nova Scotia*:

The Halifax, Dartmouth and District Association Football League was established, and the Nova Scotia Challenge Cup was created. The Nova Scotia Challenge Cup, donated by the Chronicle-Herald newspaper group, marked the first attempt at providing a unified competition for soccer players throughout the province. Conducted under a knockout format, the Challenge Cup was open to any team in the province and provided a clear indication of the burgeoning popularity of the sport. In a well scripted first season of play, the final pitted a service team, the COC, against the century's first civilian club, the Nova Scotia Car Works.¹¹⁸

Car Works won the championship game, 3-1, interestingly held in Truro and not Halifax.¹¹⁹ This can be somewhat explained by Truro's central location in the province

From this statement it appears as though Beach is alleging that other clubs in the league have offered jobs or financial benefits to servicemen for joining their squads. Beach claims that since the Halifax City Football Club was only a soccer team and had limited funding and no connections to the workforce, they had nothing to offer servicemen but the chance to pursue glory and honour on the soccer pitch. Spoken like a true believer in gentlemanly amateurism.

¹¹⁸ Amis, 10. The Nova Scotia Challenge Cup was open to all teams, not just civilian-based clubs.

¹¹⁹ A list of rules and regulations that all teams entering the Nova Scotia Challenge Cup were subject to was printed in the 26 March 1913 issue of *The Acadian Recorder*. Prior to entrance, teams had to provide the name and colours of their club, the name and postal address of the club's secretary, the condition of the

and its status as a railway hub; playing the game in Truro gave the sport exposure in an area of the province that may not have appreciated soccer on the same level as Halifax. The victory gave Car Works a chance to compete for the Connaught Cup, which was first offered by the Dominion Football Association in 1913 to determine a national champion in soccer. The inclusion of the Car Works showed that Maritime clubs received at least some attention on a national scale; likewise, the organization of the new league and cup in Nova Scotia meant the province was in tune with national developments in soccer.¹²⁰

Although there is no doubt that the year of 1913 was a significant date in the history of Nova Scotia soccer, we must seek to understand the meaning of these early competitions. First of all, they serve as milestones, since they were the first official soccer competitions in the province. Secondly, the introduction and subsequent success of the Nova Scotia Challenge Cup demonstrated the growing popularity of the sport. It is likely that the sponsor of the cup, the Chronicle-Herald newspaper group, recognized the burgeoning popularity of soccer and wished to be a part of its development. Prior to 1912 only military teams played regularly – civilian competition would have been limited to informal (and unreported) games. However, in just two short years the number of civilian teams playing soccer went from none in 1911 to over fifteen in 1913. It is probable that both the Challenge Cup and the new leagues were formed only after gauging public support. Although many of these teams lasted for only a season or two, their very existence implied that there was an interest in soccer in their respective locales. While soccer may have been building in popularity in the early twentieth century, it was not until the developments of 1913 that soccer gained a sense of legitimacy.

club's home field and the location of the nearest railway station, as well as having paid the \$2 entrance fee. Games were to be 90 minutes long and overtime if necessary, but no shootouts.

¹²⁰ Amis, 10.

The competitions described in 1913 stayed relatively consistent until the Second World War, although with ever-changing teams and varying fan support. The soccer season was broken up into two distinct competitions, the Halifax, Dartmouth and District Association Football League (referred to by several names by Power) in the spring/summer session, and the Halifax Association Football Cup and the Garrison League in the fall. Numerous exhibition games and tournaments also took place between visiting ships and shore based teams. Although World War One disrupted league play, the 1920s saw a renewed appreciation of soccer after it had faded slightly during the war years. Indeed this decline even caused one sports writer, Gee Ahern, to lament in 1917 that “football was a bitter disappointment in Nova Scotia, the games being poorly attended in all towns”.¹²¹ Perhaps this was true when compared to the continuing success of hockey, baseball, boxing and other sports that had an established fan base in Nova Scotia, but perhaps it would have been a shock for Ahern to learn that over 3,000 spectators attended the final of the North Atlantic Squadron Championship on 8 October 1921, between the HMS Constance and the HMS Cambrian at the North Commons field.¹²² Soccer was alive and well in the 1920s, as this tournament would indicate. Championship games regularly drew 2,000-3,000 spectators in the Halifax area. Despite the intrusion of the Great Depression in the 1930s, soccer’s progress remained relatively uninterrupted until the outbreak of World War Two.

¹²¹ *The James William Power Collection*, Vol. 159 folder 7.

¹²² *The Acadian Recorder*, 8 October 1921. This may have been an entirely military-based crowd, although 3,000 spectators is certainly a large crowd, no matter the event.

Soccer in the Rest of the Province

Halifax was arguably the center of soccer activity in the province by the 1920s, but there were numerous other teams and leagues across Nova Scotia that deserve consideration. Power's reports are mostly of games in Halifax, although he does include scores from places such as Kentville, Truro, Windsor, and Cape Breton on occasion. A closer examination of some of the many other soccer leagues in Nova Scotia would do much to illuminate the period. This should once again identify the heterogeneous sporting culture that existed in Nova Scotia.

Just as soccer rose in popularity in Halifax in the 1920s, Cape Breton saw an increased interest in the game as well. Prior to WWI, teams from Cape Breton did not often leave the island for competition, although this changed slightly in the years that followed. For example, Power reported on a game played 20 November 1927 for the Nova Scotia soccer championship (although it is not certain exactly what championship Power was referring to) between R.C.N. and the Aberdeens of Glace Bay.¹²³ The formation of the Cape Breton Colliery League in the 1920s demonstrated the growing popularity of the game, with teams based in Florence, Glace Bay, New Waterford, the steel plant, and Sydney.¹²⁴ Amis interviewed several of the Colliery League players for his study, and came away with the conclusion that "the league was dominated by British players. However, by the end of the 1920s, under the strict tutelage of the imports, the local players were starting to make more of an impact..."¹²⁵ Although the Colliery League folded in the 1930s, teams from Cape Breton still competed in provincial competitions.

¹²³ *The James William Power Collection*, Vol. 139. RCN won the two game total goal series, 6-5.

¹²⁴ Amis, 12.

¹²⁵ Amis, 12.

Soccer in Cape Breton was representative of the hardscrabble, Scottish working-class mining towns. The lack of equipment was always a problem, as was the state of the local fields. Although it was possible these problems existed in Halifax, they were unreported. To paint the Cape Breton players as violent brutes would be entirely inaccurate, but there existed an “edge” to the game that was not present in Halifax. An article in the 1 September 1930 issue of the *Halifax Herald* appears to support this claim. The *Herald* reported that in a recent game, Martin Borden of the Old Country Club of Glace Bay was taken to hospital after breaking his leg. The article did not include the score of the game, yet the writer still felt compelled to report Borden’s injury. Injuries to soccer players were rarely reported in Halifax, as the sport was more known for its speed and skill than for strength and aggression. Horrible injuries were commonly reported in rugby matches, but were completely out of character in Halifax’s soccer leagues.

Kentville was also home to competitive soccer prior to World War Two. There were only three teams – Sons of England, the Commercials, and Kings County Academy – but they battled hard throughout a league that began in the spring, took a break in mid-summer for baseball, and resumed play in the fall before hockey took over in the winter.¹²⁶ Kentville did not have nearly as large a pool of players to draw from as Halifax, but made do with what it could. The Kentville league attracted some attention in Halifax newspapers but was not reported with much regularity, reinforcing the notion that newspapers were not the best source of information for tracking the popularity of soccer outside of Halifax. Other areas of the province may have had people who played soccer

¹²⁶ *The Halifax Herald*, September 5, 1930. Located at the Spring Garden Road Memorial Public Library, 5381 Spring Garden Road, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, B3J 1E9.

on a regular basis, but without a league or formal competition, the games went unreported by the press.

New Glasgow's soccer community in the 1920s serves as the ideal example of the comparative failure of soccer in Nova Scotia outside of Halifax prior to World War Two. An article in the *Halifax Evening Mail* from 17 May 1924 underlines the difficulty that teams in smaller towns like New Glasgow had in attracting interested (and talented) soccer players. Entitled "New Glasgow Men Form Strong Soccer Club", the article went on to say that "a number of Old Country men living in New Glasgow have organized a Soccer team. This game has been more or less neglected the last few years, but there are some exceedingly good players living in Westville, Stellarton, Thorburn and New Glasgow."¹²⁷ It is immediately apparent that there was no organized soccer league in the New Glasgow area in 1924, but what is also noticeable is that it sounded as if there had not been much soccer played at all in the preceding years. As it was, New Glasgow and the surrounding areas only yielded eleven quality players – or just enough for a starting lineup.¹²⁸ This may have been the plan all along, that is, to form a competitive team of eleven of the very best players that could play against top senior squads from elsewhere in the province.¹²⁹ Still, it is disheartening that only one team could be formed from a pool of players that was unfortunately shallow in talent, that a league was out of the

¹²⁷ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, May 17 1924.

¹²⁸ For a list of the players and their positions, see *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 17 May 1924.

¹²⁹ While there is no information available on interplay between soccer teams from the New Glasgow area, there is evidence of teams from other sports interacting. In Ralph Davies thesis, "A History of Rugby in Nova Scotia", he mentions that "The Pictou team (founded in 1883) would play New Glasgow on a regular basis, but was somewhat isolated from other rugby playing areas especially in the early years when transportation was often a problem." (Davies, 17). Davies went on to mention that rugby clubs from this area of the province preferred boat trips to Prince Edward Island to play teams in Charlottetown as opposed to the lengthy journey to Halifax. (Davies, 18). This is hardly conclusive that a full-fledged soccer league existed in New Glasgow and the surrounding areas, but serves as further evidence of separate sporting communities existing within Nova Scotia.

question for the time being, and that all of the players were British expatriates. Nevertheless, it must be said that by taking the initial step of forming a team, New Glasgow's soccer community has at least made a move in the right direction. Finally, if nothing else, the tale of New Glasgow reinforces the notion that prior to World War Two, soccer in Nova Scotia was identified primarily as being a British sport.

Unfortunately since there is little information available on soccer throughout the rest of the province prior to World War Two, it is difficult to make any conclusive statements on the condition of the game outside of Halifax. Therefore, we must turn to alternative sources in an effort to shed some light on the subject. An interesting letter entitled, "Crescent Gives His Opinions on Sports as it Applies to Halifax", appeared in the sports section of the 19 April 1919 issue of the *Halifax Herald*.¹³⁰ The author, a local sports enthusiast known only as "Crescent", voiced his opinions on a wide variety of subjects, including hockey, the current state of amateur sport, and the superiority of rugby to American football amongst them.

On the topic of soccer, Crescent wrote "it appears to me to be too slow to ever catch the popular fancy here, and am of the opinion it will not draw much outside of the English element."¹³¹ Whoever Crescent may have been, he or she was clearly not a soccer fan, as his or her disdain for the game is obvious throughout the letter. Still, at least part of Crescent's observations about the status of the game in Halifax rang true, as soccer in 1919 was still not widely played outside of the military and a relatively small band of civilian supporters. Of course, it should be noted that soccer's growth in the province had to overcome the interruption of World War One, and at the time of

¹³⁰ *The Halifax Herald*, 19 April 1919.

¹³¹ *The Halifax Herald*, 19 April 1919.

Crescent's letter, was only beginning to find its feet again. Nevertheless, Crescent continues his letter with the assertion that a city league will survive (but not flourish, because the sport is too slow): "A city league is alright here where there are so many 'chappies', but you cannot induce the country boys to take it up, and city competition alone gets monotonous – you have to have the outside towns here now and then to make things interesting in any line."¹³² Not only did Crescent comment on the boring nature of competition in the city, he clearly states his belief that soccer's popularity in the rest of the province was lacking. In Crescent's opinion, there was not enough out of town competition for Halifax clubs to keep play interesting. Soccer-hater he or she may have been, Crescent had a point: exhibition games, or if they were lucky (and sufficiently talented to progress far enough in the competition), the Nova Scotia Challenge Cup, were the only way for clubs from Halifax to play out of town squads.

Prior to World War Two, there was still not much opportunity for soccer clubs from Halifax and Dartmouth to mix with teams from the rest of the province. The reasons for this are varied, and range from the simple (e.g. the lack of available teams which has already been thoroughly explained), to the exceedingly complex. If there had been enough teams, transportation in itself would not have been a major problem, at least not by the 1930s.¹³³ Regular trips to Cape Breton may still have been out of the question for most teams from Halifax (they are still uncommon in the twenty-first century), but Truro, Kentville, Pictou, Antigonish, and New Glasgow – virtually anywhere on Nova

¹³² *The Halifax Herald*, 19 April 1919.

¹³³ By the 1930s inter-community competition was commonplace in Nova Scotia. In *Northern Sandlots*, Colin Howell details the importance of local rivalries to the province's baseball scene in the chapter "Baseball as Civic Accomplishment". Halifax, Yarmouth, Liverpool, Springhill, Windsor, Westville, – the list goes on – carried their community loyalties with them whenever competing at the provincial level. This was not the only example – hockey, rugby, and even intercollegiate sports (driven by school, not community pride) all competed at a province-wide level.

Scotia's mainland where there was soccer should, in theory, have been accessible from Halifax after only a few hours of travel. Yet, as we already know there was no province-wide soccer league; outside of a few exhibition games and the Nova Scotia Challenge Cup, there was no opportunity for teams in Nova Scotia to meet. If baseball and hockey teams were regularly able to travel throughout the province for games, why was the Halifax, Dartmouth and District Association Football League the top soccer league (and at times the only league) in the province? Unfortunately, soccer's status as a minor "British" sport may have hurt its chances of having a province-wide league. Even if there had been enough teams, soccer still lacked the spectators, press coverage and financial backing to warrant an inter-provincial league (and the subsequent transportation costs that accompanied such a league). Of course the argument could also be made that the limited number of soccer players in the province and the large concentration in Halifax meant a provincial league was redundant, especially with the Nova Scotia Challenge Cup already in existence. However, it is likely that a league would have promoted soccer around the province in a much more effective manner than the Challenge Cup – in theory, a team would only need to organize itself long enough to play its handful of Cup games. An inclusive provincial soccer league – while not entirely feasible prior to World War Two – would have encouraged the development of the sport in areas of the province that showed only a lukewarm interest in soccer like New Glasgow.

School Soccer

Prior to World War Two, soccer was not nearly as prominent in the school system as it would become in the second half of the twentieth century, but it was present

nevertheless. Amis identified a photograph of the 1909 King's College School (later King's-Edgemoor School) rugby team as the first proof of school soccer. He argued that the number of players and presence of a soccer ball made it clear the team played soccer, not rugby.¹³⁴ Amis found that it was not until the 1920s that school soccer was played on a regular basis in Halifax, when sport came to occupy a much more central role in the school curriculum.¹³⁵ Although only in its infancy, the framework for a competitive school soccer league began in the 1920s. Reports of games in the fall months between schools from Le Marchant Street, Morris Street, Quinpool Road, Oxford Street and Chebucto Road were common in James Power's writing. An article from the fall of 1921 identifies the *Halifax Herald* as the league's benefactor, as Power wrote that Le Marchant Street School was the "[winner] of the Southern Section of the Herald soccer league".¹³⁶ The 1930s saw the formation of the Birk's Schoolboy Soccer League, which by 1937 consisted of seven teams, including the School for the Deaf, Bloomfield, Chebucto Road, Alexander McKay, Alexandra, Quinpool Road and St. Patrick's.¹³⁷ Perhaps of even greater importance, this league illustrates that soccer was played in Nova Scotia by people other than recent British immigrants, in this case, youth.

The importance of Halifax's schoolboy league to the broader development of soccer in Nova Scotia was crucial, although newspaper coverage of the games remained secondary to those of the province's various senior leagues. That soccer was able to attract enough support amongst youth to justify the formation of a schoolboy league was extremely significant. Regrettably, the inner-workings of the schoolboy league largely

¹³⁴ Amis, 38.

¹³⁵ Amis, 38.

¹³⁶ *The James William Power Collection*, Vol. 128.

¹³⁷ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 10 April 1937.

remain hidden, as do the motivations and values that guided the players. While links to Britain were not nearly as overt in the 1930s, long-established notions of fair play and good sportsmanship still drove the soccer community, influencing youthful schoolboys and aging senior league veterans alike. Unfortunately, research on schoolboy soccer is severely lacking in Nova Scotia. For a closer look at the impact of boy's school soccer on the early twentieth century Canadian sporting community, we must turn our attention to a leading historian in British Columbian history.

The pivotal role of sport in boys' private schools in British Columbia serves as a striking example of the importance of sport and leisure to the continuation of British ideals in Canada. Jean Barman's book, *Growing up British in British Columbia: Boys in Private School*, stresses the importance that was placed on physical training in the upbringing of "small boys with well-to-do parents" as they were molded into "gentlemen" and "acceptable members of the upper-middle class."¹³⁸ While a proper education was certainly valued, it was expected that boys at school would take part in exercise in order to maintain a balanced lifestyle.¹³⁹ The Vernon Preparatory School offered "sound moral, mental, and physical grounding."¹⁴⁰ Any boy who spent too much time sitting at his desk was thought to be at risk of developing a "stooping position";

¹³⁸ Barman, *Growing up British in British Columbia*, 2.

¹³⁹ Although this would be more at home in Chapter 3, it should be noted that "vitalism" was an essential concept to nineteenth and, to an extent, early twentieth century sporting culture. According to commonly held Victorian beliefs, sport was not an essential component of the average person's life, and it was therefore unnecessary to promote physical fitness amongst the masses. It was thought that an individual only had a certain amount of "vital energy" to expend over their lifespan, and to excessively partake in sports or leisure activities was seen as a waste. At heart, this principle was a moral one. Individuals were encouraged to remain fit, but to maintain a balance between body and mind was crucial. Engaging in activities detrimental to one's moral constitution was just as damaging as exercising too vigorously. Still, in spite of the moderation proposed during the Victorian era, it was obvious that by the late nineteenth century a popular sporting culture existed in North America. For more on the nature of vitalism and the shaping of sporting bodies, see J.A. Mangan and James Walvin, ed., *Manliness and Morality: Middle-class Masculinity in Britain and America, 1800-1940*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987).

¹⁴⁰ Barman, *Growing up British in British Columbia*, 66.

likewise, those who studied too much were at risk of having a “morbid imagination” because of too much “accumulated energy.”¹⁴¹

While all kinds of sports and activities were available to the students, including tennis, badminton, swimming, golf, archery, skiing, skating, shooting, sailing, riding, fencing, the list varied from school to school. However, it was British teams sports that were most respected because of their character-building value.¹⁴² Jean Barman writes that “according to a 1900 British government report, the prime gain from compulsory organized games was ‘to be willing to sink the personal in the public interest...to be English-like, or so we fondly imagine.’”¹⁴³ Transplanted British values guided the sporting culture in British Columbia’s private schools as team sports like cricket, rugby and soccer were thought to instill notions of team work and cooperation in the name of the British Empire. Soccer and rugby were played in the fall while cricket was played in the spring and summer. According to Jean Barman, soccer games were usually scheduled against other private schools, although occasionally matches were scheduled against local amateur teams comprised of young British settlers. More rarely, it seems

¹⁴¹ Barman, *Growing up British in British Columbia*, 73. To illustrate that the principles of physical training covered by Barman were not merely a West Coast phenomenon, consider the 1937 Dalhousie Yearbook. Dalhousie’s Physical Director, W.E. Sterling, expounded the merits of proper exercise and a healthy balance of body and mind. According to Sterling, “The object of physical exercise is the production of a state of health and general physical fitness in order that the body may be enabled to withstand the strains of daily life and to perform the work required of it without injury to the system. The ordinary daily work of a student develops some parts of the body and neglects others. If the brain alone is worked the body suffers, and vice versa. The positions adopted by the student during his or her studies are apt to be cramped and crooked, certain muscles are used more than others and the range of movement is frequently very limited. The result of this is inharmonious development.” From *Dalhousie Yearbook*, 1937, 102.

¹⁴² For more on British public schools, refer to J.A. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public School: The Emergence and Consolidation of an Educational Ideology*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

¹⁴³ Barman, *Growing up British in British Columbia*, 74.

that games were scheduled against local public schools; it appears as if they were not considered respectable enough to compete with the private schools.¹⁴⁴

Although soccer was considered important because of its character building value, it was not regarded quite as highly as rugby and cricket.¹⁴⁵ According to Jean Barman, “the various team games were ranked for character-building value”; “the three principal team games were, in order of increasing importance, soccer, rugby, and cricket.”¹⁴⁶ The reason for soccer’s lower stature came as a result of its increased popularity with the working-class in Britain – the very same reason that soccer was popular in British Columbia’s mining towns. Although soccer was still played in private schools, the sport’s links to professionalism and the working class were causing an increasing number of British gentlemen to turn their backs in both Britain and British Columbia.¹⁴⁷ Barman points to the comments from a British headmaster in 1929 as proof of soccer’s declining role in private schools: “[soccer lacks the] speed, endurance, courage, or chivalry [of rugby]” and (in regards to the increasing number of professional athletes playing soccer)

¹⁴⁴ Barman, *Growing up British in British Columbia*, 75. Barman notes that “North American games such as baseball were forbidden, in the words of a former pupil, as ‘fit for public school brats.’”

¹⁴⁵ Soccer did not always lag behind rugby and cricket because it was not always associated with the working-class. According to Varda Burstyn, “By mid [nineteenth] century, the public schools were actively cultivating football to help them express the interests of the social stratum they directly served.” From Varda Burstyn, *The Rites of Men: Manhood, Politics, and the Culture of Sport*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999). Alan Tomlinson writes, “Through soccer, through team games in schools, these young men of the new ruling generation were being taught very specifically certain codes of leadership alongside codes of loyalty, the ability to accept defeat, the ability to group together to get a particular result, sometimes without asking too many question about the sense of what you were doing. And so soccer was very much a breeding ground for the new generation of the established elite.” From Alan Tomlinson, in Varda Burstyn, “Play, Performance and Power,” transcript 2.

¹⁴⁶ Barman, *Growing up British in British Columbia*, 75.

¹⁴⁷ Consider the well-known saying that “Soccer is a gentlemen’s game played by louts while rugby is a lout’s game played by gentlemen.” Although soccer may have been known as a skilled, non-violent sport, it was tainted by its working-class associations. There have been a number of studies done on the role of class in the development of soccer in Britain. For more on the subject, refer to the work of Bill Murray, Nicholas Fishwick, Dennis Brailsford, John Hargreaves, Tony Mason and Richard Holt, to name only a few.

“professionalism is the complete antithesis of the English tradition of sport.”¹⁴⁸ The private school was one such example in which the aristocratic game of cricket and the rough, yet honorable, game of rugby were favoured. It was the inverse in British Columbia’s working-class mining towns, where there was a vigorous sporting community which rejected cricket in favour of rugby and soccer. The working-class association did not appear to negatively affect soccer’s popularity in British Columbia’s cities, where the sport was played by all different types of British immigrants and persons of British descent.

University Soccer

Men’s intercollegiate soccer did not really take hold in Nova Scotia until after World War Two, although games were still played in the inter-war period. Power reported the occasional university soccer game, though details were usually kept to a minimum. In the fall of 1921, there was apparently evidence of an inter-faculty league at Dalhousie, though Power does not mention this again.¹⁴⁹ University soccer lived a sheltered life, appearing in the athletics section of university yearbooks, but going almost entirely unreported by the newspapers. In the case of Acadia University, it was because of the very same problems that plagued all soccer clubs located outside of Halifax: not enough players, few teams and no formal competition. Soccer was not a marquee sport at Acadia prior to World War Two. It maintained a low-profile, as competition was usually limited to an inter-class league composed of six teams (Seniors, Juniors, Sophomores, Freshman, Academy, Engineers). With the exception of one year, soccer did not gain

¹⁴⁸ Barman, *Growing up British in British Columbia*, 75.

¹⁴⁹ *The James William Power Collection*, Vol. 128.

varsity status, and was forced to play second-fiddle to rugby, track and field, hockey, baseball and basketball. However, in 1928 the *Acadia Yearbook* wrote that “Association football, long a neglected game at Acadia is gaining popularity each year...For the first time in the history of the game at Acadia, a University team was placed in the field.”¹⁵⁰ Unfortunately the team was only able to play one game that year, a 5-4 victory over a visiting squad from Windsor.¹⁵¹ There was simply not enough competition for it to be worthwhile for Acadia to field a team year in and year out. The University’s athletic program likely saw it this way as well; the 1929 season saw the varsity soccer team axed as once again interclass competition was the only form of soccer played at Acadia University prior to World War Two.

It was a different story in Halifax, as the soccer programs at Dalhousie and St. Mary’s faced an entirely different set of problems. Dalhousie University was the largest and most influential academic institution in Nova Scotia prior to World War Two, and during the first decade of the twentieth century when they were virtually unbeatable, their exploits on the rugby pitch became legendary. Although Dalhousie’s dominance waned somewhat in the 1920s, the 1930s saw them wage a series of epic battles against the Halifax Wanderers for the city championship.¹⁵² In addition to rugby, which was unquestionably the university’s number one sport, Dalhousie students could participate in hockey, basketball, tennis, boxing, gymnastics, swimming, boxing and badminton; additionally, women could participate in basketball, hockey and field hockey.¹⁵³ Conspicuously absent was soccer, which only made a brief appearance in the Dalhousie

¹⁵⁰ *Acadia Yearbook*, 1928, 63.

¹⁵¹ *Acadia Yearbook*, 1928, 63.

¹⁵² Davies, 51.

¹⁵³ *Dalhousie Yearbook*, various editions, 1927-1938. Located at the Dalhousie University Archives & Special Collections, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, B3H 4H8.

sporting program during the fall of 1932. The *Dalhousie Yearbook* seemed optimistic at first, as it mentioned that “a number of students interested in Soccer met at an early date in the fall term to discuss the possibilities of forming a Soccer Union.”¹⁵⁴ The team warranted a full page in the yearbook, just like any other sports team, but there were ominous signs that the soccer team did not have a bright future. The team met with a number of problems early in the season which they were never truly able to overcome. Practices were at 7 am, because the more high-profile Dalhousie rugby team already had the field booked solid in the afternoon, and, on top of that, the practice field lacked regulation goal posts, meaning they were forced to play all of their games away from home.¹⁵⁵ Despite all of these setbacks, there was still hope of forming an Inter-Collegiate League with Acadia and Mount Allison for the coming year. This optimism was all for naught however, as the 1933 fall season came and went without an intercollegiate soccer league. Although it is likely that we will never know the full story behind Dalhousie’s short-lived men’s soccer team, there is no denying that a general lack of interest from the student body, as well as indifference from the university’s athletic association helped usher in the end of the end of the soccer program; or, at the very least, did nothing to prevent its demise. Despite a dedicated core group of players, soccer was still a minor sport at Dalhousie prior to World War Two, and perhaps not coincidentally, throughout the entire Nova Scotia intercollegiate sporting circuit.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ *Dalhousie Yearbook*, 1933, 109.

¹⁵⁵ *Dalhousie Yearbook*, 1933, 109.

¹⁵⁶ For a more recent example of a university canceling its soccer program, despite the team’s continual success and unwavering commitment on the field, see the Acadia Men’s 2001 soccer team.

St. Mary's College in Halifax was home to a thriving soccer community for a period in the 1920s, although a variety of circumstance forced an end to this by 1927.¹⁵⁷ On occasion St. Mary's entered a team in the City Intermediate League, but it was the self-contained Intramural Leagues that drew the most attention in the St. Mary's yearbook. Competition was fierce as there were multiple divisions, including Senior, Intermediate, Junior levels, as well as an Inter-Class league. Just as the Halifax, Dartmouth and District Association Football League was heavily steeped in the values of fair play and gentlemanly behaviour, so too were the soccer leagues at St. Mary's, which can be evidenced by an excerpt in the November 1925 issue of *The Collegian* that stated,

The first episode of the 1925-26 sporting activities of St. Mary's came to an end when the schedules of the three Soccer Leagues were completed. All through these leagues, a spirit of sportsmanship and valiant effort was apparent; and the good-natured manner in which the players accepted the results, whether for or against themselves, is well worthy of mention.¹⁵⁸

Soccer was only a small part of the vibrant sporting culture that St. Mary's was home to in the pre-World War Two era. Baseball, basketball, track and field, hockey and rugby were all played at different points in time. Unfortunately, soccer's demise came about in 1927 when rugby was chosen to be its replacement. According to the *Collegiate*, "rugby has at last been introduced and supplanted Soccer in the Senior division, but the Intermediates and Juniors still continue to play by Association rules". Popularity was cited as a factor – the *Collegiate* mentioned that St. Mary's was "forsaking soccer for the more popular English Rugby" – but money also may have influenced their decision. When hockey became a permanent fixture in the sporting curriculum in 1926, it drew much of the St. Mary's Athletic Association's attention because of the huge costs

¹⁵⁷ St. Mary's had grades 8, 9, 10, as well as Matriculation and Arts & Engineers levels.

¹⁵⁸ *The Collegiate*, (November 1925), Vol. 2 (2), 5. Located at the Saint Mary's University Archives, Patrick Power Library, Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, B3H 3C3.

required to maintain the sport. By 1935 the Athletic Association was running a deficit of \$200, and several sports were cut from the program as a result.¹⁵⁹ It may not be a stretch to suggest that rugby was brought in because it was seen as having a better chance to turn a profit than soccer. Ultimately the reason for soccer's demise at St. Mary's is irrelevant; whether it was money, popularity, or a combination of both that saw rugby replace it on the curriculum, there was no denying that soccer had a dedicated following amongst Halifax's young males.

Youth Leagues and "Kickarounds"

Although no official youth leagues existed there were intermediate and junior leagues available for prospective soccer players in Halifax. Teams like St. Mary's, the YMCA and Moir's were able to participate in leagues separate from the city's elite. It is not clear from James Power's writing whether "junior" and "intermediate" denoted age or skill, however the presence of St. Mary's suggests that at least some of the players were relatively young men. The presence of the YMCA also suggests there was support for soccer in the civilian population of Halifax.

Despite the numerous examples of organized soccer in early twentieth century Nova Scotia presented in this essay, it is still incredibly difficult to fully gauge the popularity of soccer in the province. Unorganized games of soccer – "kickarounds" in the park, for example – would not have been reported by newspapers, yet unorganized sport often serves as an entryway into the world of organized sport; meaning for those

¹⁵⁹ The *Collegiate*, (1935). Rugby was actually one of the sports that found itself on the chopping block in 1935. The sport was shuffled aside – although not yet dropped completely – in favour of Canadian football for the very same reasons that soccer was dropped in favour of rugby in 1927. St. Mary's still fielded a rugby team for several more years, but the writing was on the wall: rugby was seen as a "traditional" sport – meaning old-fashioned – while Canadian football was the way of the future. From Davies, 57.

people that enjoy kickarounds in the park but want something more in the way of competition, league soccer was the obvious next step.

Historically, the accessibility of the game has served as one of its main drawing points. Theoretically soccer can be played by anyone with access to a ball (made from any number of materials) and a flat surface, regardless of class, gender, ethnicity and financial standing. According to Bill Murray, soccer has the potential to act as a powerful unifying force: “Of the great comforters of humankind, at least among males, soccer is less dangerous than drink, less illusory than religion, and it provides a closer sense of community than any political party does.”¹⁶⁰ Like Murray, I must offer up the qualifier that prior to World War Two, soccer in Nova Scotia was still predominately a sport played by white males. It would not be until later in the century that soccer was able to successfully break down gender and ethnic barriers. Currently soccer is one of the most widely played sports in the province, and has come a long way since it was played almost entirely by British immigrants.

¹⁶⁰ Murray, *The World's Game: A History of Soccer*, xix.

Chapter 3 – Soccer Bodies Part II

Leaving the bureaucratic body behind in favour of the physical and social body, I will discuss how sport contributed to creating and maintaining a healthy, respectable society in early twentieth century Nova Scotia, and what role, if any, soccer played. British sporting traditions helped dictate proper behaviour on and off the field, and in the case of the 1913 cricket match between England and the United States, which will be covered in this chapter, served as an important contrast to the win-first attitude of the United States. British and American influences fought for control of the Canadian sporting scene in the early twentieth century, and arguably, both had a profound impact on the manner in which Nova Scotia's athletes chose to hone their craft. The struggle for superiority between British and North American influences on the sporting pitch will also help foster a discussion on the heated debate over amateurism and professionalism that gripped the sporting world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Nova Scotia was not exempt from these troubles, as the struggle against professionalism crept into the soccer community on a number of occasions. This chapter will look at "who" played soccer as much as possible, moving beyond just a simple study of the names (which would likely only reinforce the notion that most soccer players were of British descent), and into an analysis of the type of individuals who played soccer – and those who were subsequently excluded as well. This will include a description of body types based on records from the local newspaper in search of what constituted the "ideal" soccer player. Taking this one step further, I will look at how soccer players were viewed by their contemporaries; were they revered for their skillful play, or were they less appreciated than athletes from other sports? Likewise, was soccer an acceptable sport for

men to play, or were they considered less masculine than rugby players, for example. The construction of gender and sexual identity on the soccer field will be explored throughout this chapter. Other than as spectators, women were mostly absent from the soccer community in Nova Scotia prior to World War Two. It was thought that as spectators they brought a certain amount of dignity and respectability to an otherwise male-dominated sector. It will be interesting to see whether the British sporting community resisted women's involvement as participants for longer than some of the newer North American sports, like hockey, baseball, and basketball. This chapter will uncover the role of women in Nova Scotia's – and Canada's – sporting culture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and determine what place – if any – women held in the soccer community.

“The Sports of Englishmen and the Americans: Why the Latter are so Often Leaders”

In June 1913 the United States defeated England in an international polo match. The Nova Scotia newspapers followed the event with some interest and there was a considerable amount of shock when the English lost. To many, the sport of polo and Britain were synonymous, so it reasoned that the English would have had the stronger squad.¹⁶¹ The alarming result of the polo match actually led one writer to question the

¹⁶¹ According to <http://www.argentinapolo.com/polohistory.html>: “Polo is arguably the oldest recorded team sport in known history, with the first matches being played in Persia over 2500 years ago. Initially thought to have been created by competing tribes of Central Asia, it was quickly taken up as a training method for the King's elite cavalry. These matches could resemble a battle with up to 100 men to a side. As mounted armies swept back and forth across this part of the world, conquering and re-conquering, polo was adopted as the most noble of pastimes by the Kings and Emperors, Shahs and Sultans, Khans and Caliphs of the ancient Persians, Arabs, Mughals, Mongols and Chinese. It was for this reason it became known across the lands as “the game of kings”. British officers themselves re-invented the game in 1862 after seeing a horsemanship exhibition in Manipur, India. The sport was introduced into England in 1869, and seven years later sportsman James Gordon Bennett imported it to the United States. After 1886, English

current state of British sport. In an article published 26 June 1913 in the *Halifax Evening Mail*, entitled “The Sports of Englishmen and the Americans: Why the Latter are so Often Leaders”, the unnamed author lamented the recent lack of success of British athletes on the world stage. The United States was threatening to usurp the British as the world’s leading sporting power and Canada, it seemed, was caught in the middle.

According to the writer:

...we Canadians, who get an outsider’s viewpoint, which though affected by influences from both sides, is as near impartial as can be. Here we have both English and American ideals in sport, the one flourishing in one sport, the other in another, while in some a vain effort is made to combine them both. It comes down to this, the essential character of English sport is sport; the essential character of American sport is business.¹⁶²

In the early twentieth century Canada was torn between following two very different sporting authorities. British traditions dictated Canadian sport and recreation patterns until well into the nineteenth century. Sports that were popular across the Atlantic Ocean found their way into Canadian popular culture; soccer, rugby, cricket, rowing, golf, curling, tennis and rifle demonstrations were a major part of the sporting scene well into the twentieth century (and in some cases, still thrive today). The reign of Britain as the sole influence on Canadian sport was not uncontested however – if it can be said that Britain ever had an “uncontested” reign. First Nations and North American influences had been steadily chipping away at the British dominance of the Canadian sporting community throughout the nineteenth century. Lacrosse, hockey, baseball and Canadian and American football all emerged as viable, North American alternatives to established British sporting traditions. In fact, by the early twentieth century, North American sports

and American teams occasionally met for the International Polo Challenge Cup. Polo was on several Olympic Games schedules, but was last an Olympic sport in 1936.”

¹⁶² *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 26 June 1913.

– particularly hockey and baseball – threatened to overwhelm existing British sports as their respective seasons’ game of choice. In Nova Scotia, the battle was still raging year round between British sports and North American sports. Hockey and baseball were the mainstays of the sports pages, but the province’s various newspapers still found room to report on sports that were considered to be traditionally British. Cricket, for example, which steadily waned in popularity as the twentieth century progressed, still contested with baseball for media coverage and popularity, at least for awhile.

To an uneducated observer, baseball and cricket might appear to be similar – or at least distantly related cousins: a ball is pitched (or bowled) at a batsman who attempts to strike it and run. Experts who play and follow the sports (indeed, likely any casual fans as well) would probably disagree with this statement, but the point of this paper is not to debate the mechanics of baseball and cricket; rather it is to discuss the reason the games were played, and what each meant to those who were involved. This was also the manner in which the author of the 13 June article compared British and American sports: “The Englishman enjoys sport as a relaxation from business, comparatively speaking the American man of business does not engage in sport.”¹⁶³ According to the author, for the British, sport was a recreational activity; something to be done in one’s own free time at a leisurely pace. Americans, on the contrary, likened sport to battle, where no quarter was ever given to the opposing side. Americans shunned the ideals of gentlemanly amateurism in favour of the pursuit of victory. The will to win at all costs was frowned on by the British: “To the Englishman this sort of thing is seen as an intolerable bore. He simply doesn’t see the use.”¹⁶⁴ The article’s author was afraid of losing the “idea of

¹⁶³ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 26 June 1913.

¹⁶⁴ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 26 June 1913.

sport for sport's sake, and the substitution of the idea of sport to win."¹⁶⁵ To him, Canadians were drifting away from the noble ideals of sportsmanship and fair play which the British espoused, towards the harshness and the take-no-prisoner approach of American athletes.¹⁶⁶

Returning to what prompted the outburst in the first place, the author maintained that Americans who played polo were not to be automatically considered "gentleman". In fact, even though the British lost the match, the author still considered them to be the superior team. Americans lacked the skill in riding of the British; instead, according to the author, they emphasized speed, grit, overkeenness, discourtesy, and harshness. It would be easy to just dismiss the author for having a case of sour grapes, but there was at least some truth to his words. More importantly, he believed in his claims that there was a fundamental difference between British and American approaches to sport. This is an attitude that can still be seen today. Even in the twenty-first century the American men's soccer team still endures heavy criticism for its purportedly unskillful, gritty – though fast and physical – and generally unattractive style. England is still considered by most – experts, players and fans alike – to be the better side, and is generally revered for its skillful play and excellent team work. Yet, as of September 2005 England was only ranked eleventh in the Fifa World Rankings, four spots below the United States.¹⁶⁷ The United States has made considerable strides towards respect in the soccer community, but it is still only thought of as a second-tier soccer power at best. And where is Canada in the middle of all of this? Canada is currently ranked 84th in the world, so they hardly

¹⁶⁵ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 26 June 1913.

¹⁶⁶ For more on the win at all costs attitude that has pervaded American sporting culture, see Warren Goldstein, *Playing for Keeps: A History of Early Baseball*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999).

¹⁶⁷ "Fifa.com The Official website of the Federation Internationale de Football Association," September 2005 <<http://www.fifa.com/en/mens/statistics/index.html>> (12 October 2005).

figure into this discussion – most Canadians would be happy if the senior men’s soccer team emulated Finland or Jamaica, let alone the United States or Britain. In 1913 however, the dilemma was quite real. Not only in soccer, but in all sports Canadians were torn between American and British influences. The author recognized this ongoing battle, and concluded his 13 June article by lamenting the decline of British sporting ideals and making an impassioned plea to the Canadian sporting community:

If we can in Canada, where the influence of both ideals is great, combine them in our sport we shall have the very best character builder there is, but already the American “don’t lose” spirit is showing too strongly and is likely to overwhelm the English ideal...¹⁶⁸

Sport in Canada was continually renegotiated, with British and American influences each vying for an edge over the other. Each camp had its own showcase sports, outstanding athletes and legions of supporters, but it was clear that pressures from south of the border were threatening to overcome existing British values and sporting traditions. Soccer in Nova Scotia was very much a part of this struggle, and while it faced competition from a number of different sports, it continued to find support amongst British immigrants and persons of British descent until the outbreak of World War Two.

Amateurism vs. Professionalism

To effectively frame the discussion of what constituted the ideal soccer body in Nova Scotia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, this thesis first must turn its attention westward. On the surface, the situation in Nova Scotia in the early twentieth century was remarkably similar to what was happening in British Columbia at the same time. As was already established in Chapter 2, the popularity of soccer in Nova Scotia,

¹⁶⁸ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 26 June 1913.

Halifax in particular, rose steadily even while it was plagued by an ever-changing roster of teams. A detailed study of soccer across Canada might yield similar results, but for now a comparison between Nova Scotia and British Columbia will have to do.

Narrowing the focus even further to the municipal level, Halifax and Victoria were very similar, at least on the surface. In particular, both had a large British contingent, a strong military presence, and faced the regular comings and goings of visiting ships.

The British background in Nova Scotia provided a foundation for soccer to get off the ground in the early twentieth century, although for the game to flourish, the support of the general public would be required. The situation in British Columbia mirrored this to an extent, as initially there was still a divide – at least in the soccer community – between newly arrived British settlers and resident British Columbians. This can be witnessed by the annual exhibition game that took place between the “Old Country” and the “Native Sons.”¹⁶⁹ Also, a glance through British Columbia soccer historian Dave Unwin’s research reveals a number of soccer clubs, particularly in the first two decades of the twentieth century that chose team names which deliberately invoked comparisons to Britain, such as Sons of England, Sons of Scotland, Western Scots, and Clan Thistle.¹⁷⁰ While these names did not entirely disappear in the pre-World War Two period, by the 1930s the blatant references to Britain (i.e. Sons of England) had faded, although less obvious names still remained, such as the Saanich Thistles, or the New Westminster Royals.¹⁷¹ This shows that soccer was gradually moving away from its British past, albeit very slowly and not all decisively. New names reflected a more North American

¹⁶⁹ Dave Unwin, *From the Sidelines: A 100 Year’s View of Vancouver Island Soccer and the Victoria West Athletic Association, 1896-1996*, (Trafford Publishing, 1997), 30.

¹⁷⁰ Unwin. The team names come from pages 58, 58, 34 and 28 respectively.

¹⁷¹ Unwin. Team names come from pages 98 and 110.

approach, like the Vancouver Northern Lights, although such names were not necessarily in the majority.¹⁷² Consider the list of teams from the 1931-32 junior loop, a mix of British names, neutral names and names that were distinctly British Columbian: Duncan Native Sons, Victoria Jr., Jr. Jokers, Royal Oak, Saanich Thistles, Oaklands, YMCA, Esquimald, 5th Regiment.¹⁷³ Although soccer's popularity had spread to resident British Columbians, the game still rested on a decidedly British foundation. Still, it can be said that in both Nova Scotia and British Columbia, soccer's popularity prior to World War Two came about when the sport bridged the gap from recent British settlers and the military to the general population. British Columbia was just like Nova Scotia in that it was only one small cog in the world-wide British sporting community.

Despite the similar experiences (at least in terms of soccer) of British Columbia and Nova Scotia, one very important difference remained. The debate over amateurism and professionalism that pervaded the Canadian sporting community in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was relatively absent from Nova Scotia soccer. The situation in British Columbia, as we shall see, was much more troublesome. Amateurism is directly associated with the notion of respectability, and it is for this reason that in British sport, amateurs were valued for their gentlemanly behaviour and fair play as much as for their skill. Whereas amateur athletes were supposed to place fair play and healthy competition above personal glory (enter the old saying: "it's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game"), it was thought that because they were driven by money, professional athletes sullied the reputation of the game. This

¹⁷² Unwin, 86. This team name first appeared during the 1927-28 season.

¹⁷³ Unwin, 98.

debate over amateurism and professionalism was wide-ranging, and certainly not new to Canadian sport. Colin Howell weighs in on this issue when he writes:

According to the traditions of gentlemanly amateurism, sport was to be played for the love of the game and in keeping with the standards of gentlemanly behaviour. There was thus a strong aversion to cheaters, ringers, and those who placed winning, personal achievement, and financial gain above fair play.¹⁷⁴

The debate over amateurism and professionalism did not spare the British Columbia soccer scene either, as according to Dave Unwin, “prior to the start of 1907-08 season there was a great deal of talk about professional and amateur sports.”¹⁷⁵ In this case the debate was over the right of professionals from other sports to play soccer with amateurs, although Unwin did not elaborate any further. It is not known whether this particular dispute was resolved, but the amateur – professional argument did not disappear immediately from the newspapers.

During the 1909-10 season, the British Columbia Amateur Athletic Union (the provincial governing body for all amateur sport) clashed with athletes from many sports all over Vancouver Island because the Nanaimo and Ladysmith soccer teams were rumoured to have pro players in their lineups.¹⁷⁶ The B.C.A.A.U. warned the other two teams in the soccer league, Victoria West and the Association of Foresters that “Playing against [Nanaimo and Ladysmith] would result in team suspensions.”¹⁷⁷ Victoria West and A.O.F. did not heed the warning, and continued on with the soccer season. Pro players were not only forbidden to play amateur sport, but were almost looked on as if they carried a disease that had the potential to infect amateur players. To further illustrate this point, Dave Unwin makes note of an article that appeared in the *Sunday Colonist*, a

¹⁷⁴ Howell, *Blood, Sweat and Cheers*, 63.

¹⁷⁵ Unwin, 14.

¹⁷⁶ Unwin, 21.

¹⁷⁷ Unwin, 21.

BC paper that warned “Anyone participating with or against these players would also be suspended from all amateur sport.” This may have had a greater impact than the B.C.A.A.U. intended, as Unwin points out that since “many of the suspended players participated in other sports, the ruling spread all over and many other players were *tainted*” [italics mine].¹⁷⁸ Besides the disruption of the Vancouver Island soccer league, the Victoria city basketball schedule had to be cancelled.

Although noble, the concept of the amateur athlete was an ideal that ultimately could not stand up in the face of the rising commercialization of sport. Howell writes that “for those who had athletic skills with market value, but who worked and struggled just to make a living, the price of maintaining one’s amateur status was often too high.”¹⁷⁹ Howell also points out that the term “respectable” implied that “rowdiness” existed in the sporting world as well.¹⁸⁰ In Canada, gentlemanly amateurism limited professionals from participating in sports, but it also limited the access of the disreputable elements of the sporting community. This self-righteousness limited access to respectable sports, including soccer; as Bruce Kidd writes, “The earliest ‘amateur codes’ restricted participation on the basis of class and race, reflecting the upper classes’ desire to reproduce the social hierarchies of Victorian England and the British Empire and to maintain the primacy of sports as an expression of manly honour and elegant display”.¹⁸¹ The amateur – professional debate declined somewhat following the First World War,

¹⁷⁸ Unwin, 21.

¹⁷⁹ Howell, *Blood, Sweat and Cheers*, 65.

¹⁸⁰ Howell, *Blood, Sweat and Cheers*, 28.

¹⁸¹ Bruce Kidd, *The Struggle for Canadian Sport*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 27. For more on the battle between amateurism and professionalism see the work of Alan Metcalfe, Gerald Redmond, Nancy Bouchier and Don Morrow and Kevin B. Wamsley. The chapter, “Control of Sport: The Amateur Ideal and Professionalism”, in Morrow and Wamsley’s book, *Sport in Canada: A History*, is particularly effective at laying out the background which framed the debate in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

and eventually faded away during the Depression, but its impact on the BC soccer scene should not be discounted.

In Nova Scotia the debate over amateurism and professionalism rarely made its way into the newspapers, but that does not mean it was entirely absent from the province's sporting scene. This may be due to the fact that a civilian-based soccer league was not formed in Nova Scotia until 1913, well behind most of the major cities in central and western Canada.¹⁸² The amateur – professional debate diminished somewhat as the twentieth century wore on, so this may partially explain why it was not as prevalent in Nova Scotia – but this alone is hardly a satisfying explanation. There was an article that appeared in the 30 April 1913 issue of *The Halifax Evening Mail* that brought to light accusations from the Amateur Athletic Union of Canada directed at the N.S.F.A. for not strictly enforcing the rules of amateurism. According to the A.A.U.C., "Association Football as governed under the auspices of the N.S.F.A. is not in accordance with the laws governing their amateur sports."¹⁸³ Furthermore, the A.A.U.C. encouraged players and teams to pull out of the N.S.F.A. in order preserve their status as amateurs. The A.A.U.C. appeared to be heading on a collision course with the N.S.F.A. based on their allegations, but inexplicably nothing further came from the struggle hinted at in the 1 April 1913 paper. In fact, the author of the article appeared willing to brush it aside completely and wondered aloud whether the A.A.U.C. was misinformed about the situation from the beginning. At any rate, no players or teams were reported to have

¹⁸² From Colin Jose and William F. Rennie we know that Montreal's first soccer league was formed in 1878, Toronto's in 1880, Regina's in 1903 and Edmonton's in 1909. The authors make it clear that "the game was not played on the same level in the Maritime provinces or Newfoundland as was the case in central and western Canada." From *Jose and Rennie*, 30.

¹⁸³ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 28 April 1913.

dropped out of the Halifax, Dartmouth and District Association Football League during its inaugural season.

There could number of reasons why nothing ever came from the A.A.U.C. allegations. The simplest explanation could be that there were no professionals playing in the Halifax, Dartmouth and District Association Football League in 1913. The A.A.U.C. may have investigated the situation and came to the same conclusion. Or, perhaps the A.A.U.C. decided it was not worth the trouble to follow through with their accusations; after all, the league in Nova Scotia was in its first year of existence and there were bound to be a few hiccups along the way.¹⁸⁴ Additionally, since the A.A.U.C. was based in central Canada, it would have been easy for A.A.U.C. members to simply place their trust that the N.S.F.A. would rectify the situation instead of making the relatively lengthy journey to the Maritimes. Whatever the reality may have been, there was no hiding the fact that the A.A.U.C. and the N.S.F.A. were hardly on the same page when it came to the debate over amateurism and professionalism. Although the A.A.U.C.'s charges were rather vague, and did not single out individual teams or players, the N.S.F.A. obviously still did not share the same concern over the threat of professionalism as the A.A.U.C. There are a variety of plausible (but not conclusive) reasons for this: the

¹⁸⁴ For more on the history of the A.A.U.C., see Bruce Kidd, *The Struggle for Canadian Sport*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996). Kidd does not focus on the Maritimes in his book, but there are a few instances where Kidd makes clear the region's opinion (or lack thereof) towards the amateur-pro debate. In 1926 the A.A.U.C. held its annual meeting in Saint John for "the explicit purpose of reviving the moribund and virtually bankrupt Maritimes association – a casualty of the strapped economy and virtually years of neglect". Kidd reported mixed results, as the Maritime branch was offered assistance and elected new leaders, but still only "limped" along. From Kidd, 53. The A.A.U.C. once again traveled to the Maritimes in 1935, where this time the meeting was in Halifax. Delegates were torn over whether or not existing amateur rules should still be strictly enforced. While the Toronto Globe continually advocated tough amateur rules, the Halifax Herald (as Kidd puts it, "perhaps basking in the success of the Maritimes hockey loop, where players were brought in from all over the country") scoffed at the old rules and suggested it was time for a broad movement towards professionalism. From Kidd, 87. These examples are slightly later than the A.A.U.C.–N.S.F.A. debate of 1913, but they suggest a sense of ambivalence – if not outright rejection – towards the rapidly aging notion of strict amateurism.

league was new and perhaps the N.S.F.A. was still unsure of itself and the various rules regarding amateurism (somewhat unlikely considering president T.J. Wilkinson's stance on British respectability and gentlemanly amateurism); Nova Scotia was on the periphery of the Canadian sporting scene and because of this it did not operate entirely according to the A.A.U.C. rules (once again, somewhat unlikely since there were a number of different well-established sports leagues in Nova Scotia that were not threatened by the A.A.U.C. and additionally, soccer teams playing in the Nova Scotia Challenge Cup had the chance of competing for the Connaught Cup, where professionals would surely have drawn the ire of the A.A.U.C.).

Soccer and Class: The Halifax Wanderers

In Nova Scotia the struggle over amateurism and professionalism was not nearly as pronounced as elsewhere in Canada, as it really only reared its head a handful of times in the pre-World War Two era. The N.S.F.A.'s problems with the A.A.U.C. in 1913 were one such example, but there were no mass suspensions of players or league cancellations because of rampant professionalism like those that occurred in British Columbia. Despite the lack of conflict in the province, Nova Scotians were still very much aware of the guidelines, pressures and exclusivity that amateurism represented. In Nova Scotia, the Wanderers Amateur Athletic club, based in Halifax stood at the forefront of the amateur sporting scene for most of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Wanderers were the embodiment of gentlemanly amateurism in Nova Scotia. Along with regularly producing competitive sports teams, they championed the positive aspects of amateurism, such as fair play and team work; yet they were still not

able to free themselves from the harmful baggage that was associated with this way of thinking.

Nancy MacDonald's thesis on the history of the Wanderers, entitled "The Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club of Halifax, 1882-1925: Its Contribution to Amateur Sport", provides valuable background information on the formation of the club, along with the rules and guidelines that helped characterize early competition. MacDonald was aided in her research by the personal letters of one of the founders of the Wanderers, and the club's first secretary, William A. Henry. Henry recalled the fateful summer in 1882 when the Wanderers arranged the first Amateur Sports Programme in Halifax to mark the opening of the club.¹⁸⁵ According to Henry, "the Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club was the first Athletic Club formed in Halifax to develop interest in all sports, in 1882. Previous to its foundation there were several small Cricket and Football Clubs."¹⁸⁶ Prior to the Wanderers, the military was the dominant sporting body in the city; the presence of the Wanderers meant ordinary Haligonians – meaning white, upper-middle class males – had a chance to play a wide variety of sports in an organized setting.¹⁸⁷

MacDonald outlined the Wanderer's membership policy but did not really investigate the negative connotations that accompanied the definition of amateurism: "The founders of the Wanderer's Amateur Athletic Club saw as its objectives, the promotion of athletics and the physical improvement of its members. Membership was open to any Haligonian of sixteen years and older, but was limited to amateurs."¹⁸⁸ The definition of amateur put forward by the Wanderers was as follows: "one who had never

¹⁸⁵ Letter, William A. Henry, 26 June 1940.

¹⁸⁶ Letter, William A. Henry, 26 June 1940.

¹⁸⁷ Letter, William A. Henry, 26 June 1940.

¹⁸⁸ Nancy Kimber MacDonald, *The Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club of Halifax, 1882-1925: Its Contribution to Amateur Sport*, Masters of Science Thesis, (Dalhousie 1974), 4.

competed for a money prize, or staked or bet with or against any professional for any prize, or who had never taught or assisted in the practice of athletic exercise as a means of obtaining a livelihood".¹⁸⁹ This was a relatively straightforward description that coincided with regulations put forward by amateur athletic clubs all across Canada.¹⁹⁰ On the surface it appears to be noble; a simple deterrent to keep professionalism from encroaching upon the sporting community, a domain that was thought to be an escape from the pressure and evils of the business world – at least by those that were comfortable with their financial situation. Ralph Davies' examination of the 1888 Wanderers rugby team supports this theory. According to Davies, "The type of people who were members of the Club in the early years is illustrated by the rugby team of 1888, which had a surgeon, a banker, a supreme court justice, doctors and a member of the provincial legislature in its ranks."¹⁹¹ It is almost unnecessary to point out that these individuals were all members of Halifax's social elite, and there was nary a working-class player on the squad.

MacDonald notes in her thesis that the members of the Wanderers generally came from Halifax's upper-middle class: "during 1882-1925 it was generally only the wealthy that had time to debate athletics. Since the Wanderers gave considerable time and effort

¹⁸⁹ MacDonald, *The Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club of Halifax*, 4. From "By-Laws of the Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club", Article IV, 11 May 1886.

¹⁹⁰ Don Morrow and Kevin B. Wamsley explored the origins of the rigid and exclusionary definitions of amateurism in *Sport in Canada: A History*. Notice the similarities in the description above to the definition put forward in the late 1870s by the National Association of Amateur Oarsmen in the United States: "An amateur is any person who has never competed in an open contest, or for a stake, or for money, or for gate money, or under a false name, or with a professional for a price, or where gate money is charged; nor has ever at any period of his life taught or pursued athletic exercise as a means of livelihood." From Keith L. Lansley, "The Amateur Athletic Union of Canada and Changing Concepts of Amateurism", PhD dissertation (University of Alberta, 1971), 17. These definitions followed a distinct pattern; according to Morrow and Wamsley they held "notions that amateurs competed for 'pleasure' and that they were not employed as athletes since they were to have their 'usual business or occupation'." From Morrow and Wamsley, 72.

¹⁹¹ Davies, 9.

promoting sport, it is justifiable to suppose that they were the more affluent citizens of Halifax". An excerpt from the 21 November 1913 issue of the *Acadian Recorder* reinforces MacDonald's claim. The exhibition game between R.C.R. and the Nova Scotia All-Star team held at the Wanderers Club served as a fundraiser for the Children's Hospital. A minimum donation of 10 cents was required from most spectators, although Wanderers Club members were allowed to donate privately into a box.¹⁹² To further separate the masses from the Wanderers elite, the Club members had their own grandstand in which to view the action on the field. Of course wealth was only one characteristic that distinguished Wanderers Club members from other athletes. MacDonald did not fully explore the exclusivity of the Wanderers Club; she was more concerned about the Club's contribution to the province's sporting community. MacDonald only briefly acknowledged the lack of women's sports offered by the Wanderers, although there was perhaps a touch of sarcasm to her writing. According to MacDonald, "Ladies could be elected privileged members but their privilege extended only as far as the tennis court." Unfortunately her analysis did not delve further into the class, religious or gender composition of the Wanderers, but based on her research and what is known about amateur sport clubs across Canada during the same period, it was likely that the Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club subscribed to the same elitist attitude.¹⁹³

Clearly, MacDonald is correct in her assessment of the Wanderers, but is perhaps a little short-sighted in saying that "only the wealthy" had time for sports. Nova Scotia's soccer community serves as direct proof that it was not only the middle to upper classes

¹⁹² *The Acadian Recorder*, 21 November 1913.

¹⁹³ In MacDonald's defense, she had numerous problems tracking down useful sources of information about the Wanderers. A fire swept through the W.A.A.C. clubhouse in 1938, destroying all of the documents the Club had stored there. As a result, MacDonald was forced to rely on newspaper articles as her chief source of information.

that participated in sports; Cape Breton's working-class soccer players in particular contrasted heavily with the wealthy, gentlemanly amateurs of the Wanderers. In fact, the Wanderers did not even enter a soccer team in the Halifax, Dartmouth and District Association Football League until 1924, or roughly eleven years after the league's inception.¹⁹⁴ Despite the notable absence of a team from the Wanderers Club, the top league in Halifax managed to survive with players from the military, British immigrants and civilians of indeterminate backgrounds. The presence of the Wanderers and their status as the social elite of Halifax's sporting scene did not make or break the league; rather things continued much as they were prior 1924. There were no big announcements in any of the province's newspapers of the arrival of the Wanderers. The 17 September 1924 issue of the *Evening Mail* mentioned that "the Wanderers and Royals [were] newcomers to the league...both clubs will have fast sides..."¹⁹⁵ Beyond these introductory remarks, the article did not dwell on the Wanderers or their status as newcomers.

Little is known about these early Wanderers teams; the newspapers did not give them much coverage beyond the obligatory game reports and in her analysis of the Wanderers Club, Nancy MacDonald relegates soccer to "minor" sport status, instead choosing to focus on what she called the "major" sports. Of course her study ended in 1925, which left her with only two years of soccer action to cover – compared to roughly forty years of cricket, for example. Still, MacDonald's description of what constitutes a "minor" sport deserves further explanation. MacDonald identifies track and field, cricket, rugby football, ice hockey and baseball as "major" sports, so what did she mean

¹⁹⁴ MacDonald, *The Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club of Halifax*, 42.

¹⁹⁵ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 17 September 1924.

by minor sports?¹⁹⁶ According to MacDonald, the three reasons sports were identified as “minor” were:

- a) their life-span within the club was short-lived (lacrosse, rowing);
- b) the W.A.A.C. had only played the game for a short time until 1925 although it later became more important (basketball);
- c) the sports received little newspaper coverage (quoits)¹⁹⁷

According to these guidelines, soccer’s status as a minor sport came as a product of the relatively short time the Wanderers played the sport during the time period in MacDonald’s study. More research could be done on the role of soccer in the Wanderers club in the years following 1925, but the scope of this thesis does not really call for such measures. The motives, values and traditions of the Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club and how they contributed to assumptions of sport and the body is what is most important. Soccer figures very little in the history of the Wanderers Club – at least in the history provided by Nancy MacDonald – but the presence of a team from the Wanderers Club in the Halifax, Dartmouth and District Association Football League added yet another social dimension to the soccer community.¹⁹⁸

The Halifax Wanderers were the epitome of gentlemanly amateurism in early twentieth century Nova Scotia, and were also at the forefront of the middle-class sporting movement, but by no means were they the only soccer club in the province. In fact, the Wanderers influence on the soccer community was relatively limited, considering the team only began league play in 1924. The soccer leagues in Halifax were populated by

¹⁹⁶ MacDonald, *The Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club of Halifax*, iv.

¹⁹⁷ MacDonald, *The Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club of Halifax*, 40.

¹⁹⁸ The Wanderers were losing money as early as 1904 but, according to MacDonald, the Club continued to field teams for “the good of sports”. From MacDonald, *The Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club of Halifax*, 62. The Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club was on the decline for decades by the time it eventually closed its doors in 1958, although MacDonald did not really explore the Club’s demise. She was, just as this thesis is, interested in the Wanderers Club during its heyday; where the values of gentlemanly amateurism still outweighed the rising forces of professionalism and commercialism.

players from all different backgrounds and social standings, but most notably all were defined by their “Britishness”. The Wanderers, the military, workplace-based teams like the Car Works and additional clubs such as the Dartmouth Soccer Club, and Halifax Soccer Club, all came together to play soccer, regardless of class. It should be noted that Halifax was much more cosmopolitan than Cape Breton in terms of its soccer teams, where working-class teams from coal-mining towns were the norm. Class was not a defining attribute in who did or did not play soccer. Players were not limited because of their class associations; in fact, players swapped teams so much it hardly made a difference. True, a blue-collared Haligonian would not have found himself playing for the Wanderers, but there were a variety of possibilities for all prospective soccer players. Consider the case of a player named “Chick” McLeod, who appears in the picture of the first Halifax Wanderers soccer team in September of 1927.¹⁹⁹ Only four months earlier McLeod had suited up for the Casinos, another Halifax-based team competing in the spring session of the league.²⁰⁰ Clubs folded, players bounced around from team to team, and as a result, loyalties were not clearly defined. In the end, the sport was the only thing that mattered.

R.C.R vs The Nova Scotia All-Stars

When James Power reported on 21 November 1913 that R.C.R. had captured the Halifax Cup, a subtitle revealed that a charity game for the Children’s Hospital would be held the following week. The game would take place at the Wanderers Ground in Halifax, between the R.C.R. and an assembled Nova Scotia all-star team. According to

¹⁹⁹ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 23 September 1927.

²⁰⁰ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 19 May 1927.

Power, the game was a success, netting \$216.90, although deductions for traveling expenses, policemen, etc. meant the donation was reduced to \$183.70. The usefulness of this source does not stem from a game description (which was one of the lengthiest Power ever wrote about soccer), but rather from the brief biographical sketches of the participants, provided by the secretary of the NSFA, F.J. Farley, that was included in Power's article.²⁰¹

According to Farley, most players from the all-NS team were from military clubs, and amongst those that played elsewhere, many had served in the military earlier in their lives. Hence, the players were most likely influenced by the sporting traditions that developed in British public schools. According to J.A. Mangan, British public schools promoted athleticism and encouraged participation in manly, character-building sports, all the while molding yet another generation of "responsible, honourable boys, willing to give their lives unquestionably to the preservation of the Empire".²⁰² It is probable that the players carried these traditions to Nova Scotia where they continued to have an impact. Nearly every member of the All Nova Scotia Team had at one point played either pro or semi-pro in Britain: R. Day from Halifax City played for the Sheffield W[ednesday] Reserves, L.C. Fillmore from the CPASC Club played for the Arsenal Reserves, W. Williams from Halifax City was from Wales, and had played for Wrexham in the past.²⁰³ The team was comprised of not just Halifax players, but players from other parts of the province as well (once again, Cape Breton and southern Nova Scotia were excluded). It would appear that even though the game was making inroads amongst the

²⁰¹ *The Acadian Recorder*, 21 November 1913.

²⁰² J.A. Mangan, *Athleticism in the Victorian and Edwardian Public Schools: The Emergence and Consolidation of an Educational Ideology*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 62. From E.C. Mack, *Public Schools and British Opinion since 1860*, (1941), 8.

²⁰³ *The Acadian Recorder*, 21 November 1913.

civilian population, players competing at the highest levels were often recent immigrants from Britain or military personnel. This serves as further evidence that when league soccer in Nova Scotia began it was heavily influenced by British players.

The players' height and weight were included in their biographies, although age was conspicuously absent. In all, measurements of height and weight were recorded for thirteen players. When averaged out, the All-NS team stood at 5'8 ½ feet and weighed 155 pounds.²⁰⁴ Although there are no other measurements available for soccer teams in 1913, it should be noted that the size of these players is comparable to three teams in 2004-2005. Players from Arsenal Football Club, a professional soccer club in England, average 6'0 feet and 167 pounds; the Canadian Men's National Team averages 5'11 feet and 171 pounds, and (to inject a bit of local flavour) the Saint Mary's University men's soccer team averages 5'10 feet and 170 ½ pounds.²⁰⁵ Although the players from the 2005 teams are slightly larger, it should be noted that the averages from the All Nova Scotia Team are somewhat skewed by the presence of two "midgets" (F.J. Farley's words, not mine) on the roster.²⁰⁶

The speed and relatively small size of soccer players in the early twentieth century is even more pronounced when they are compared to athletes from other sports.

The difficulty in obtaining data from this period makes a direct comparison to the 1913

²⁰⁴ *The Acadian Recorder*, 21 November 1913. The data comes from averaging out the height and weight of thirteen players from the All Nova Scotia Team. These players include 1 goalkeeper, 2 defenders, 6 midfielders, and 4 forwards. No data existed for W. Williams (Reserve Back) and G. Kinch (Right Half).

²⁰⁵ These numbers were obtained by studying the current rosters for Arsenal FC, Team Canada and Saint Mary's. To obtain consistent results, the same number of players (13) was examined on each team. Like the All-NS team, the samples come from a collection of 1 goalkeeper, 2 defenders, 6 midfielders and 4 forwards. The rosters for these three soccer teams can be viewed at:

<<http://www.arsenal.com/stats.asp?clid=3&lid=Player+Files&title=First+Team+Squad>>;

<http://www.canadasoccer.com/eng/nationals/roster.asp?top=header_legs&sub=3>;

<http://www.smuhuskies.ca/SMU_ATHLETICS/teams/m_soccer.asp>.

²⁰⁶ The All Nova Scotia Team had two players that were considerably smaller than the rest: J.C. Cosier (5'4, 120 lbs) and L. Tidwell (5'1, 128 lbs). By removing Cosier and Tidwell from the total, the All-NS team averages 5'9 ½ feet and 161 pounds.

All-NS soccer team almost impossible (at least at this point in time), and it would not be for another twenty years that reliable figures for athletes from other sports in Nova Scotia became available.²⁰⁷ In 1931 the Dalhousie Yearbook recorded the height and weight of a few of the university's sports teams, including rugby, hockey and basketball – soccer did not become a part of the program until the 1932 season. As to be expected, the basketball team stood the tallest, with an average height of 5'11 $\frac{3}{4}$ feet, closely followed by the rugby team at 5'11 $\frac{1}{2}$ feet, while the hockey team brought up the rear at 5'10 feet.²⁰⁸ The rugby team was the heaviest team on average by a significant margin, weighing in at an average of 170.4 pounds, while the average basketball player tipped the scales at 164.4 pounds, followed once again by the hockey team, with an average of 157.5 pounds.²⁰⁹ The Dalhousie athletes were quite a bit bigger than the 1913 All-NS soccer team, but eighteen years is probably too large of a gap for a comparative analysis to hold much value. Athletes have been growing for the past hundred years, so it would not come as a surprise that soccer players in 1931 were larger than in 1913. Of course, soccer players in 1931 were still likely to be smaller than rugby and basketball players from the same year, but without definite proof there is no way to say conclusively.

Besides the statistics for height and weight, the physical descriptions of the players from the 1913 All-Star game allow further insight into what constituted the ideal soccer player of the day. The All-NS team competing in 1913 was in good physical condition, at least by today's standards. The peak condition of the players was often

²⁰⁷ In all likelihood there are other figures available between 1913 and 1931, but unfortunately because of time constraints my search has not yielded anything else. Newspapers, yearbooks and sports game programs are still the most likely sources for this type of statistical information and anyone following in my footsteps would benefit from a lengthy search of these materials.

²⁰⁸ *Dalhousie Yearbook*, 1931.

²⁰⁹ *Dalhousie Yearbook*, 1931.

stressed in their individual biographical sketches; W. Hill was described as a “fast dashing player”, R. Jenkyns was a “strong dashing player and hard worker” and J. Manners was a “dashing player”. Like today, soccer players in 1913 were apparently valued for their speed and fitness, as opposed to strength and brawn. Looking at the roster of the 1931 Dalhousie Men’s Rugby Team it is clear that the players were valued for an entirely different set of characteristics. According to the yearbook, Baird “plays a tireless, rugged game”, Murray “adds weight and pep to the scrum”, MacDonald was a “sure tackle” and, like a good policemen; Maxwell always “gets his man”.

Despite their shared historical experiences, rugby and soccer are obviously completely different sports, with different objectives, rules, methods to score, and as can be seen in the descriptions above, entirely different concepts of the ideal sporting body. Soccer players were recognized for their skillful play, but rugby players, despite the violence associated with their sport, were revered for their hardy play and unabashed masculinity. Although no one suggested that soccer players were any less masculine than rugby players outright, there were hints that this may have been the case.²¹⁰ Consider “Crescent’s” disparaging remarks about soccer in the *Halifax Herald*, or the abundance of photographs of Nova Scotia’s rugby stars in the newspapers, while soccer players could only be found in team photographs, if at all (more on this later). Perhaps most striking is the total absence of soccer players from the Sandy Young and Heather Harris edited compilation of *Maritime Sports Stars on Parade: Highlighting Nova Scotia’s*

²¹⁰ See John Nauright and Timothy J. L. Chandler, ed., *Making Men: Rugby and the Masculine Identity*, (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1996). The book is a collection of essays that attempt to understand the place of rugby as a “male-dominated and male-defined activity in wider male-dominated societies of the British Isles and settler empire of the past 150 or so years.” From Nauright and Chandler, 12. Rugby was unquestionably a “bold and manly game” that cultivated traits like courage, endurance and chivalry amongst its participants. From Nauright and Chandler, 17.

Golden Age of Sports. The book is a collection of profiles of well-known Maritime athletes from the inter-war period, which ran in the *Halifax Herald* from 1937 to 1938. The brainchild of the series was the *Herald's* sports editor, Alex Nickerson, who along with cartoonist Robert Chambers, worked diligently to bring their idea to life. Nickerson's *Stars* included athletes (three of which were women) from the following sports: baseball, hockey, track and field (six each), rugby (four), golf (three), tennis (two), football, rowing, boxing (one each). Consider what Nickerson wrote about Les Topshee, a star rugby player at St. Francis Xavier University in the 1930. When describing Topshee's playing ability, Nickerson painted a menacing figure: "he'll speed down the line for the Xaverians, arms swinging, legs pumping, threatening to take off at any time."²¹¹ With descriptions like this serving as evidence, rugby's masculinity was never in question. Soccer was slightly more ambiguous, as players were lauded for fast and skillful play, but were never really complimented for physical or aggressive behaviour. This does not mean soccer players were looked down upon; there were just not many overt references to their masculinity.

Women in Soccer

The role of women in soccer did not become participatory in nature in Nova Scotia until after World War Two, although that does not mean they were entirely absent from the narrative.²¹² This section will seek to understand the contribution of women to

²¹¹ A.J. "Sandy" Young and Heather Harris, ed, *Maritime Sports Stars on Parade: Highlighting Nova Scotia's Golden Age of Sports*, (Hantsport: Lancelot Press), 44.

²¹² A significant body of literature exists as to why women athletes were exceedingly rare in nineteenth and early twentieth century. According to Colin Howell, "When women played [baseball], they contradicted the image of feminine decorum that promoters and social reformers employed for their own purposes. Even worse was playing the game for money, which placed women's baseballists on the same level as bawdy theatrical performers, or even prostitutes, willing to barter their femininity for filthy lucre. As

the development of soccer in the province, which prior to World War Two, was most often in the role of spectator. Women as spectators were expected to function as much more than mere observers of the game; rather their presence was closely monitored as it was constructed along strict and clearly defined gender lines. In addition, the reasoning behind the exclusion of women as active participants of the sport will be examined, both in Nova Scotia and on a broader scale. Unfortunately there is not much material available that pertains specifically to Nova Scotia; the almost complete absence of women from soccer in both primary and secondary sources speaks volumes in itself.

Within the last few decades of the twentieth century there has been a profound increase in the number of female soccer players worldwide. Some regions fared better than others – North America, for example, was at the forefront of this movement – but a growing number of countries today have strong women’s international teams, where even fifty years ago they would have been non-existent. In *Football: A Sociology of the Global Game*, Richard Giulianotti explains that the alienation of women from soccer is a relatively recent movement as the history of women’s involvement in the sport dates back many centuries:

From the twelfth century onwards, women took a very prominent role in the ‘ludic turbulence’ of folk football. On some occasions, teams of women were pitted against each other according to marital status; their play was no less hardy than the men’s and they suffered the same injuries.²¹³

women barnstorming teams toured the country, the press routinely referred to women ballplayers as ‘Amazons’, ‘freaks’, or ‘frauds’, while at the ballpark women players had to put up with verbal and physical assaults that belittled and degraded them.” From Howell, *Northern Sandlots*, 78. For a similar argument, although this time in the soccer world, see *The World’s Game* by Bill Murray. Murray recounts the tale of the Kerr’s Ladies soccer team, founded in 1917 in Britain. Kerr’s regularly drew crowds in the thousands, but in 1921 the FA declared a ban on women’s soccer because the game was found “to be ‘unsuitable’ for women and their participation ‘not to be encouraged’: clubs were forbidden to allow their grounds to be used for such purposes.” From Murray, *The World’s Game*, 46.

²¹³ Richard Giulianotti, *Football: A Sociology of the Global Game*, (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 152.

Women's involvement only began to decline in the nineteenth century, after the creation of association football.²¹⁴ By the twentieth century, the place of women in Britain and North America was primarily in the stands.²¹⁵

There has been a considerable amount of discourse surrounding the role of women as spectators at sporting events. Colin Howell visits the subject in his book, *Northern Sandlots: A Social History of Maritime Baseball*, in a chapter entitled, "Gendered Baselines: The Tour of the Chicago Blackstockings". Women were thought to bring a certain amount of respectability and moderation to sporting events; their presence in the stands would theoretically serve as a counter-balance to the vigorous physical exertion that took place on the field. According to Howell, "women were spectators rather than players, and as such were expected to serve as agents of respectability and control."²¹⁶ Bill Murray argues that, "in the early days women had been encouraged to come to soccer matches to lend an air of dignity to the occasion and to help to tone down the rougher aspects of male behaviour."²¹⁷ It was thought that in the presence of women, men would be less likely to resort to violence on the field, and generally carry themselves in a distinguished and respectable manner. Howell adds that the image of women as spectators was often appropriated by the male portion of society

²¹⁴ Alethea Melling has written extensively on women's involvement in the sport in early twentieth century Britain. For more see "Charging Amazons and Fair Invaders": The 1922 Dick Kerr's Ladies Soccer Tour of North America – Sowing Seed", *European Sports History Review*, 2001 (3): pp. 155-180, "Plucky Lassies", 'Pea Soup' and Politics: The Role of Ladies' Football during the 1921 Miners' Lock-out in Wigan and Leigh", *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 16 (1) (March 1999): pp. 38-64 and "Wartime Opportunities: Ladies Football and the First World War Factories", *European Sports History Review*, 2003 (5i): pp. 120-141.

²¹⁵ Giulianotti, 152.

²¹⁶ Howell, *Northern Sandlots*, 78. The term "agents of control" was actually derived from Warren Goldstein's book, *Playing for Keeps: A History of Early Baseball*. Goldstein argued that rules, umpires and women all sought to keep players in check. According to Goldstein, women were to "domesticate the ballfield", keeping men from getting too boisterous – in a sense "legitimizing" the competition. From Goldstein, 38-39.

²¹⁷ Bill Murray, *The World's Game*, 45.

for their own purposes; says Howell, “promoters, reformers, and journalists found the idealized notion of the ‘lady-like’ spectator a useful ideological construct in their struggle against ‘rowdiness’.”²¹⁸ Because of this perceived helpful contribution to the action on the pitch, women often found themselves able to attend soccer games free of charge in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, as the twentieth century wore on, and soccer gradually became a sport of the working class, the presence of women in the stands declined. According to Giulianotti, although many clubs in Britain had traditionally admitted women free of charge, “as professionalization struck by the mid-1890s, admission fees were introduced, often at half of the men’s price.”²¹⁹ Although women were still welcome in the stands at British soccer games, it is a popular belief amongst British soccer historians that the dramatic rise in working-class crowds gradually eased out the respectable female spectator.

In Britain soccer was rapidly becoming a sport of professionals. Soccer in Nova Scotia however, was still considered to be an amateur sport. Many of the barriers that women spectators faced in Britain in the early twentieth century would have been absent this side of the Atlantic – that, and the average soccer crowd in Nova Scotia hovered around 300, not 30,000. It was not uncommon for sports writers in Nova Scotia to go out of their way to mention the presence of women at sporting events. Consider an article written by James Power on 3 October 1903 which describes the crowd for a Halifax rugby league game: “many of the fair sex [were in attendance] in dainty airy garments”.²²⁰ This was obviously secondary to what took place on the field, yet Power still felt the need to include a rather detailed description of the women in the stands.

²¹⁸ Howell, *Northern Sandlots*, 77.

²¹⁹ Howell, *Northern Sandlots*, 152.

²²⁰ *The James William Power Collection*.

Despite rugby's reputation as a rough sport, women in "dainty airy garments" voluntarily attended games with no misgivings about the violence they might witness on the field. The image of a woman sitting in her Sunday best clashes heavily with the thought of two-hundred pound men smashing into each other at full speed, yet it was for this difference that women were wanted at sporting events in the first place. Their femininity provided the perfect balance to the unabashed masculinity of the sporting community.²²¹

Further proof that women's inherent feminine characteristics, or what were believed to be inherent, were borrowed to suit the needs of a higher social objective comes in the form of an advertisement in the *Acadian Recorder* on 21 November 1913 for the charity game between R.C.R. and the Nova Scotia All-Star team (see above). The writer, James Power, implored women to be exceptionally generous with their donations to the Children's Hospital.²²² Power did not feel the need to target men for their donations, they could give as they saw fit. It was the maternal instincts of women to which Power was appealing. The well-being of children was generally considered women's work, and even though it may not have been their own children who were sick, it was considered an extension of child-care, and was therefore seen as a concern for all women.²²³ In an effort to raise more money for the Children's Hospital, Power appealed to the maternal instincts of women. Likewise, women were valued spectators for their perceived daintiness, respectability and restraint; it was thought that they brought a certain amount of balance to sporting events. Whether James Power was actively aware

²²¹ For more on sport as a site of hyper-masculine male bodies versus diminished female bodies, see Varda Burstyn, *The Rites of Men: Manhood, Politics, and the Culture of Sport*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

²²² *The Acadian Recorder*, 21 November 1913.

²²³ For more on women's prescribed roles in the community in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Nova Scotia, see Janet Guildford and Suzanne Morton, ed., *Separate Spheres: Women's Worlds in the 19th-Century Maritimes*, (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1994).

of it or not, the style in which he described female spectators was part of a broader movement that was not unique to Nova Scotia or even soccer. Still, it is important to realize that women occupied a carefully prescribed role within Nova Scotia's soccer community. Although women's soccer would not enter the sporting scene with any authority until well after World War Two, a woman's position in the stands at a sporting event was highly structured, and was considered a fine compliment to the male-dominated action on the field.

Portrayal in Photographs

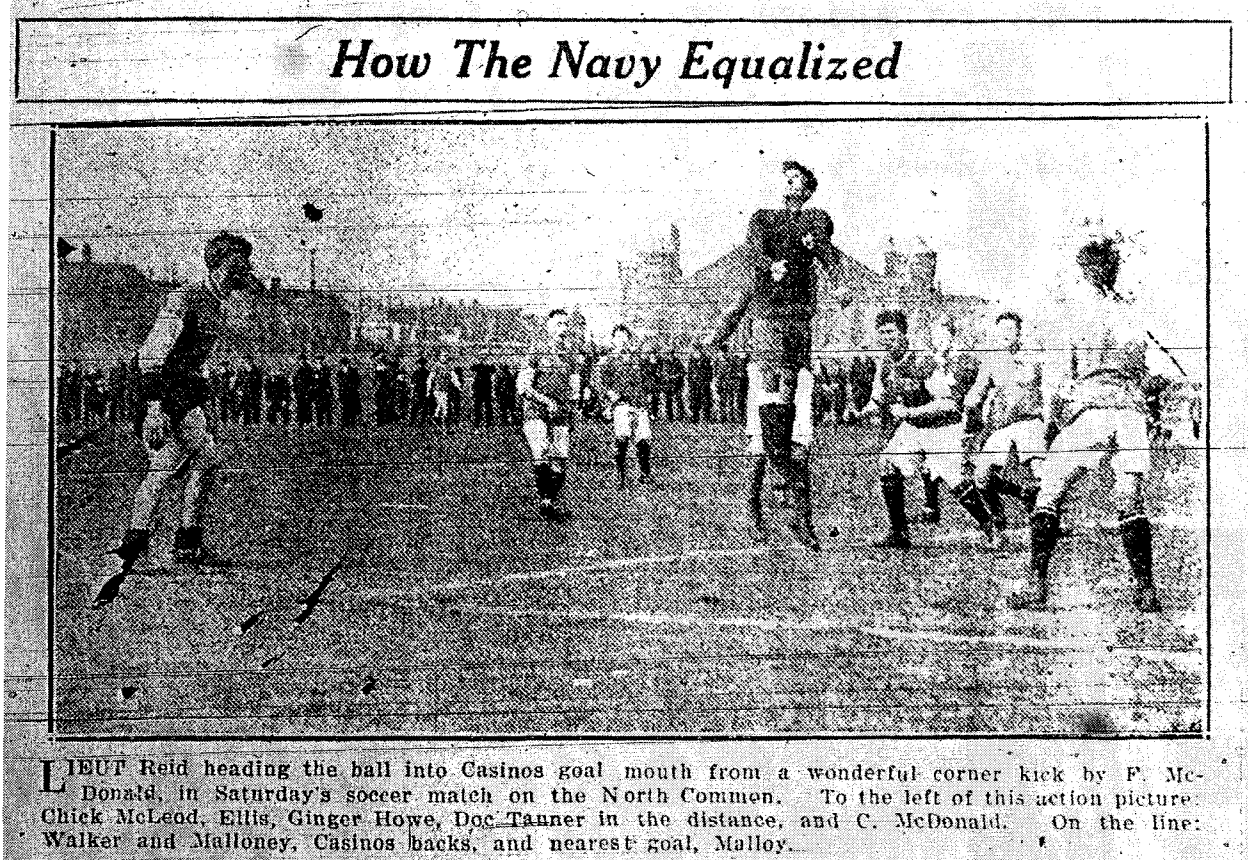
Although we have a reasonable idea of the appearance of soccer players from the pre-World War Two period based on documentary evidence and a general knowledge of amateur athletics, there is a distinct lack of photographic confirmation to go along with this material. Newspapers remain the best source of photographic material during this time period, although soccer definitely took a back seat to hockey, baseball, rugby, Canadian football, boxing and even track and field in this department. Because of the nature of soccer photography – which was generally scattered and unreliable – it would be incredibly time-consuming to track down every single photograph published from the late nineteenth century until the outbreak of World War Two. Such a search would be comparable to finding the proverbial needle in the haystack, and, in any case, a handful of pictures in roughly forty years of organized soccer in the province suggests that such a search would be futile. It is likely that more than a few pictures were overlooked in this search, but the fact remains that there simply were not many pictures taken of soccer players, teams or games from the pre-World War Two period in Nova Scotia.

The pictures which are available for study do not break any new ground in the field of Nova Scotia soccer; rather they serve as a form of confirmation of several aspects of the sport which were already relatively clear from the literature. Documentary evidence (mostly in the form of newspapers) has painted a relatively clear picture of the physical appearance of soccer players in the early twentieth century. Adjectives such as fast, skillful, athletic, and fit were most often used to describe the physicality of soccer players, but that was really only half the story. That soccer players in Nova Scotia were predominantly young, white males and British was essentially a given in this time period. The team photographs that are available confirm these traits (although, to be fair, it is not really the photographs that confirm British descent; it is the player names that appear beneath) beyond much doubt, although additional photographs would do much to corroborate this assessment.

The exception to the norm would have to be the photograph that appeared in the 19 May 1924 issue of the *Evening Mail*. The photograph, which came with the caption, “How the Navy Equalized”, was prominently displayed on the front page of the paper.²²⁴ This was somewhat surprising, as it was only on rare occasions that sporting events were featured on the front page, such as the World Series or the Stanley Cup, for example. Furthermore, that a local sporting event – let alone a soccer game – attracted this much attention is noteworthy. That the photograph was of game action, and not a staged team photograph, is even more intriguing. Taken from behind the net, it depicts a stunning goal by a Navy forward. Lieutenant Reid leapt to meet the ball with his head and nodded

²²⁴ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 19 May 1924.

Fig. 1: "How The Navy Equalized"²²⁵



it past the diving keeper. The photographer captures this exact moment, a remarkable achievement for sports photography in the 1920s. In fact, it was likely the spectacular nature of the photograph that brought it to the newspaper's attention. That it was a soccer game would have meant very little to the *Evening Mail*, especially since it was only a regular season game from the Halifax and Dartmouth District Association Football League. Nothing about the game itself was out of the ordinary, in fact, the spectacular nature of the photograph threatened to overshadow the entire game itself. That it appeared on the front page of the paper instead of the sports section only reinforces this notion. Quite clearly, the photograph fell more into the realm of entertainment than

²²⁵ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 19 May 1924.

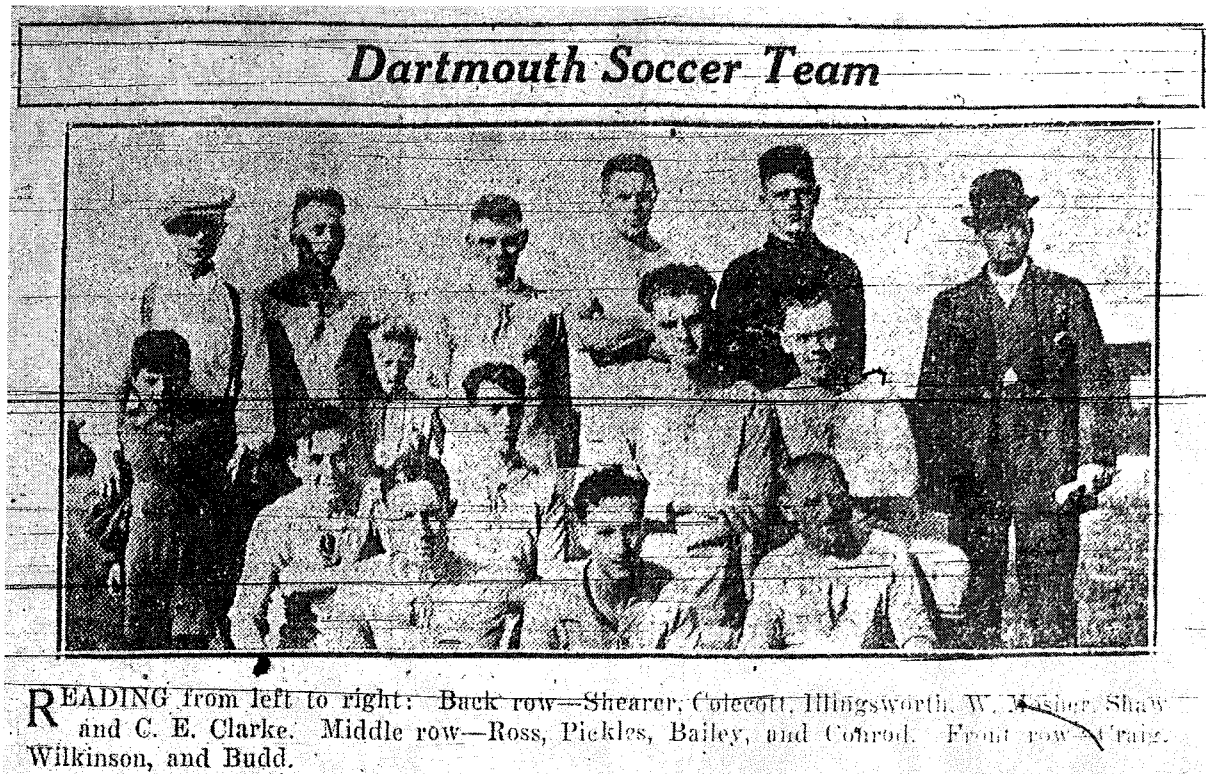
actual sporting news. Although it may not add much to the discussion of soccer bodies (other than reinforcing the commonly held belief that soccer players could jump), it is certainly impressive that such a photograph exists to document the history of soccer in Nova Scotia.

Dave Unwin's book, *From the Sidelines: A 100 Year's View of Vancouver Island Soccer and the Victoria West Athletic Association, 1896-1996*, serves as further evidence of the preponderance of soccer players of British descent elsewhere in the country prior to World War Two. Unwin's book contains a number of team photographs of soccer clubs in British Columbia from the pre-World War Two era (Unwin had no problem tracking down material as there were apparently many more photographs available in British Columbia than in Nova Scotia) that presented nearly the same information which was already culled from the Nova Scotia photographs. Still, the photographs from Unwin's book are not without analytical value; they reinforce the notions of Britishness, youth and athleticism which characterized soccer players of the day. Also, the prevalence of team photographs – and the subsequent lack of individual photographs – supports the notion that teamwork was necessary to succeed on the field.

In soccer, individual brilliance pales in comparison to the cohesiveness of eleven players working together as a unit – at least in theory. This may have been the reason that newspapers favoured the use of team photographs, although this might be giving the media more credit than it deserves. Since Unwin's focus was entirely on the history of soccer, there was no need for him to mention additional sports. In Nova Scotia, however, we know that the province's newspapers regularly included photographs of athletes from

a number of sports in action or posing. Soccer players were seldom photographed on their own, possibly because they were only rarely singled out for acts of individual

Fig. 2: Dartmouth Soccer Team, 1924²²⁶



brilliance, but much more likely because soccer “stars” were not recognized due to the sport’s minor status in Nova Scotia. The general public would only have been vaguely aware of the exploits of leading soccer players like Sgt. Sullings (from Chapter 1), whereas hockey, baseball, and boxing boasted plenty of provincial, national and international stars to follow and, in some cases, worship. Soccer was a niche sport, with a dedicated following among British immigrants and the military, but it had hardly broached the mainstream. It did not have the fan support required to create sporting idols; only dedicated fans would have been able to identify with individual players. It would be ideal – but also naive – to think that Nova Scotia’s newspapers did not carry

²²⁶ *The Halifax Evening Mail*, 23 September 1924.

photographs of individual soccer players because they recognized the importance of teamwork over individual play. It was much more likely that soccer players were not celebrated as individual sporting heroes because soccer did not have a large enough fan base to warrant this type of coverage. The media was comfortable identifying successful soccer teams prior to World War Two, but successful individuals were not singled out in print or photograph until later in the twentieth century.

Soccer as a Ritual

Throughout this chapter I have discussed what constitutes a “soccer body” in Nova Scotia prior to World War Two. Young, athletic, male and British described the typical soccer player in Nova Scotia and more often than not, this description was entirely accurate, although there were occasionally exceptions. “Young” and “athletic” were easy enough to bypass, but “male” and “British” were much, much tougher to get around. Although women did not actively participate in soccer games, it was thought that as spectators’ women brought a certain amount of respect and restraint to the game, effectively counter-balancing the hyper-masculinity of the male competitors on the field.²²⁷ It was not until after World War Two that Southern and Eastern Europeans started having an impact on the Nova Scotia soccer scene; prior to this soccer rested on a British foundation. Early soccer competitions in Nova Scotia depended heavily on a ready supply of British immigrants and military personnel. There was a concerted effort to bring the game to civilians in 1913 with the formation of the Halifax and Dartmouth

²²⁷ For more on masculinity, hyper and otherwise, see Varda Burstyn, *The Rites of Men: Manhood, Politics, and the Culture of Sport*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

District Association Football League, but the fact remains that soccer was still heavily identified as a British sport prior to World War Two.

British males were by far the most likely soccer players in the pre-World War Two era, which, unfortunately, excluded a large portion of the population. However, unlike the Wanderers Amateur Athletic Club, membership to the soccer community did not rest on quite the same level of exclusivity as the private club. True, there was not a wide variety of body types amongst Nova Scotia's soccer players, but it was not necessarily because of any active restrictions put in place by the soccer community.

Gentlemanly amateurism – the unofficial governing policy in Nova Scotia prior to World War Two – *frowned* on the inclusion of women, First Nations, blacks, Catholics, lower-class (basically anyone that fell outside of the white, Protestant, British, middle-class target group), but did not completely bar the door. Women were forbidden from playing soccer in men's leagues, but theoretically any able-bodied man could still participate if they desired. Although this seemingly contradicts what was said in the previous paragraph – that it was unlikely for anyone except British immigrants and military personnel to play soccer – there is truth to both statements. Theoretically, any non-British man could play soccer if they wished; that they did not in vast numbers was further proof that soccer had not fully overcome the stigma that was associated with British sports. An invisible barrier composed only of assumptions and stereotypes was perhaps an even more effective deterrent than any existing rules or regulations. For better or worse, a self-sustaining cycle of exclusion governed the Nova Scotia soccer community prior to World War Two.

Although it has already been established beyond much doubt that the vast majority of Nova Scotia's soccer players had ties to Britain in one form or another, there are certain aspects of their personality that soccer players – all soccer players – share, in spite of class, age, gender or ethnicity. Whether British or not, all soccer players bring with them a certain amount of ingrained knowledge – or “soccer intangibles” – to the field. This not only includes a person's knowledge of *how* to play the game, but also of their individual role within their team's system, proper conduct towards opponents and teammates alike, deference to the referee, and respect for their own captain; essentially anything and everything that constitutes a soccer player. Without going into too much detail about the intricacies of a soccer game, there are a number of different factors – beyond playing ability – that govern a player's performance on the field. Although it may be going too far as to call this “instinct”, it is clear that not everything can be taught through practice. Soccer is a ritual with its own values.²²⁸ In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries there was a clearly defined soccer community in Nova Scotia, just as there is today. Although it never would have appeared in the province's newspapers, a soccer culture existed with its own code, and its own set of unwritten rules that enveloped all of Nova Scotia's soccer players. More so than anything else, it was the intangibles that united soccer players in the pre-World War Two era. Regardless of age, ethnicity, background or class standing, soccer players shared a common experience on the field which should have helped them overcome any differences they may have had. It may be naïve, but sport has the power to unite, and there is no reason to believe that it

²²⁸ For more on sport as a ritual, see Mike Oriard, *King Football: Sport and Spectacle in the Golden Age of Radio and Newsreels, Movies and Magazines, the Weekly & the Daily Press*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2001). Oriard argues that football is not only a game, but a part of the “American Way of Life” and a guiding ideal for the country's middle-class. From Oriard, 163-170.

was any different for soccer players in Nova Scotia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Conclusion: Golden Goal

My findings make clear that although soccer had support in areas of the province where there was already an established population of British immigrants or military personnel, it was generally considered a second-tier sport. It lagged behind hockey, baseball, rugby, track and field, boxing and Canadian football in participation levels, fan support and media coverage. Respectability and gentlemanly amateurism defined the sport in its early years though these standards were relaxed by the 1930s. White males were by far the most likely individuals to play soccer in Nova Scotia, and women were almost entirely absent from the field – although they did have an important role as spectators. Whether it was R.C.R., Nova Scotia Car Works, Saint Mary's University or New Waterford, similarities existed between all of Nova Scotia's soccer teams.

However, soccer did not take off as a participatory sport in the pre-World War Two era. It would not be until the 1980s that soccer was seen as a viable alternative to baseball. Soccer did not lay dormant for the entire twentieth century however; the soccer community grew, changed, transformed and continually redefined itself, eventually settling into its position today as the premier summer sport in Nova Scotia. The last sixty years have seen an influx of eastern and southern Europeans wrest the sport away from the British dominance of the pre-war era. Men's soccer has seen its share of highs and lows, whether it was the optimistic but short-lived existence of the Nova Scotia Clippers, the prolonged dominance of Halifax King of Donair in the 1990s, the emergence of Ante Jazic as a bona fide national team member, or the gradual decline of my own soccer skills to the point where I am now a regular in the beer leagues, there have been enough memorable moments for even the most casual soccer fan. Although women's soccer did

not fully catch on until the 1970s and 1980s, Nova Scotia senior women's teams are currently amongst the strongest in the country and participation amongst youth females is virtually equal to that of males.²²⁹ University soccer, school soccer, intramural soccer and even parking lot soccer have all taken off to the point where most Nova Scotians have at least kicked a ball around once in their life. Whether they kicked it straight or kicked it without falling over is another matter entirely.

It is the hope that my thesis has enlightened the reader to Nova Scotia's rich soccer history. From the star striker on Saint Mary's varsity soccer team to the 4 year old running the wrong way on a team called the Chickadees, all of the province's soccer players can associate with the events discussed throughout this paper, whether they are aware of them or not. Soccer in Nova Scotia, as well as Canadian soccer in general, deserves much more attention from the academic world, the media and the general population. Perhaps then we can come to some conclusions about Canada's sub-par performances on the international stage. Then again, maybe skill cannot be taught and Canada has no hope of catching up to Brazil. Either way, it'll be fun.

²²⁹ The 2004 figures show that 15,025 (51%) males were registered in Nova Scotia compared to 14,295 females (49%). All figures were obtained from CanadaSoccer.com: Official Site of the Canadian Soccer Association, <<http://www.canadasoccer.com/eng/docs/index.asp?sub2=12>> (23 January 2006).

Appendix

All Nova Scotia Team – 1913

Sergeant Burty – Goal Keeper, RCGA Club

5'11, 168 lbs; played for RA Plymouth, against Devon County, also played for Devon County and 31 Co. RA winners of the RA Cup three years in succession; a splendid goalkeeper and is playing as good as ever; excelled himself versus RRR on Thanksgiving Day.

Sgt. F. Grimes – R Back, RCGA

Native of Isle of Wight, height 5'11, 159 ½ lbs. Played for Freshwater Ramblers previous to joining RCGA. A good consistent and versatile player. Represented Halifax City vs Pictou and Colchester Counties this spring.

E Ryan – L Back, RCGA

6'1 ½, 163 ¼ lbs. A product of the army and a real Irishman by birth. Credited with being the best left back in Halifax.

R Day – R Half, Halifax City Club

5'10, 165 lbs. Usually called "Bob"; a general favourite and good player to boot. Played for Sheffield W Reserves, Ripley Athletics and Mansfield Mechanics.

J Wilson – C Half, New Glasgow Rangers Club

5'10 ½, 160 lbs. "A wee Scitch bairn". A very consistent and valued player of New Glasgow.

H Warner – L Half, Captain, CPASC Club

5'8 ½, 162 lbs. A heady player, modest, upright and true to the core. A player who deserves this the greatest honour ever given to a player in Nova Scotia. Played for Leicester Fosse Reserves, Leicester Nomads and his first club was St. Andrew's Sunday School A F Club. (These church clubs turn out a wonderful number of first class players).

W Hill – Out Right, NS Car Works Club

5'7, 153 lbs. A fast, dashing player and reputed to be as good a forward as there is in Nova Scotia, a native of Sheffield and played Sheffield Boys vs. London Boys.

J Manners – Inside Right, Truro C Club

5'5 ½, 149 ½ lbs. A dashing player, the life and soul of Truro's forwards a native of Lancashire.

R Jenkyns – Centre, Niobe Club

5'8, 164 ½ lbs. A strong dashing player and hard worker. Played for Torpoint Naval Depot, Plymouth, and Cornwall County. Represented Navy vs Army three times and Halifax County vs Pictou and Colchester Counties.

LC Fillmore – Inside L, CPASC

5'7, 157 ½ lbs. An army product, played for AS Corps, Woolwich, and Woolwith Arsenal Reserves also London city 3 times, and South Sub League vs. South E League.

JC Cosier – Outside L, Niobe Club

5'4, 120 lbs. The midget of the team. Played for Pompey Boys vs. Southhampton Boys and his school club previous to joining the Navy. Represented Halifax City vs. Pictou and Colchester Counties last spring.

W Williams – Reserve Back, Halifax City

A good player and a hard worker, commonly known as “Chick” and played for Wrexham and several other Welsh schools.

G Kinch – R Half, Niobe

A thorough sport and gentleman, everybody knows Kinch.

FJ Neyland – R Half, RCGA

5'11 ½, 169 lbs. A splendid and robust player, his first season in Halifax. A native of Blackburn, learnt his football in the Army, and played for Egypt XI vs. Civil Service, Army vs. Navy, Malta, Shoburness vs. Kent County. Owing to so many candidates for half line, he was squeezed out by a small majority. His turn will come, and soon.

L Tidwell – R Forward, Niobe Club

Another midget, 5'1, 128 lbs. Played for Watts National School, Pompey, previous to joining navy. A veritable glutton for work and no man is too big for him to tackle. Popular opinion is that he should be on the team.

The referee, Col Sergt F Naish

An old player of Fembroke Dock, Cardiff, For Hill, Dundee, and represented Army vs Naval Depart, Plymouth. Recently passed for referee at Halifax and promises to become a most useful, satisfactory and efficient knight of the whistle.

Linesmen, FH Gardner and H Woolley

President and Vice-President of the NSFA, two enthusiastic and useful devotees of the game.

The Acadian Recorder, 21 November 1913

Dalhousie 1933 Men's Soccer Team

J. Malone
J. Gladwin
R. Cooke
G. Howell
F. Squire
A. Johnston
R. Cousins
L. Petrie
G. Howse
E. House
R. Squires
S. Parsons
R. Walton

Dalhousie Yearbook, 1933, 109.

Dartmouth Soccer Team – 1924

Shearer
Colecoff
Illingsworth
W. Mosher
Shaw
C.E. Clark
Ross
Pickles
Bailey
Conrod
Craig
Wilkinson
Budd

The Halifax Evening Mail, 23 September 1924.

Photograph of the Halifax Wanderers – 1924

Wanderers' Soccer Team



READING from left to right: Back row—P. J. Young, Jacobs, Jackson, Heppenstall, Bunny, Doig, Wier, J. Hickey, and T. Milne. Front row—Timothy, B. McCoy, Chick McLeod, R. McCoy, Bark, and Birnie.

The Team:

P.J. Young
Jacobs
Jackson
Heppenstall
Bunny
Wier
J. Hickey
T Milne
Timothy
B. McCoy
Chick McLeod
R. McCoy
Bark
Birnie

The Halifax Evening Mail, 23 September 1924.

Photograph of a visiting British soccer team, 27 September 1927

Soccer Football Team Of H. M. S. Cairo



MEMBERS of the soccer teams of the wireless section of H. M. S. Cairo, who played the Calcutta players on Saturday afternoon at the Garrison Grounds. Rear—W. Galley, A. A. Watson, V. Adams, C. Stokes, W. Moss, C. Roe, C. Winter. Front—R. Bengord, G. Parker, G. Chamberley, J. Wilson.

The Halifax Evening Mail, 27 September 1927.

Photograph of a visiting British soccer team, 26 September 1927

Defeated Canadian Comrades At Soccer



SAILORS from H.M.S. Calcutta who scored a narrow victory over the Royal Canadian Navy on Saturday afternoon.
TOP ROW—Perret, Tylesley and Cole. MIDDLE ROW—Beeley, Bellamy and Condon. FRONT ROW—Cottingham, Whittaker, Blackburn, Johnson and Snow.

The Halifax Evening Mail, 26 September 1927.

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