


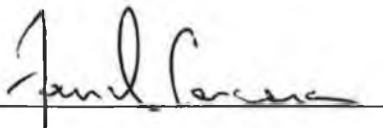
Declaration

I, Raymond Boyle, being a candidate for the degree of Master of Arts as awarded by Dublin City University, declare that while registered for the above degree I have not been a registered candidate for an award at another University.

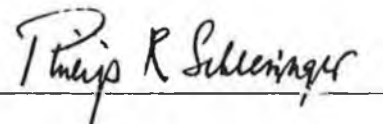
Secondly, that none of the material contained in this thesis has been used in any other submission for any other award. Further, that the contents of this thesis are the sole work of the author except where an acknowledgement has been made for assistance received.

Signed 
Raymond Boyle

Date 19/2/90

Signed 
Professor Farrel Corcoran Ph. D.
Head, School of Communications,
Dublin City University.

Date 6/6/90

Signed 
Professor Philip Schlesinger Ph. D.
Head, Dept. of Film and Media Studies,
University of Stirling

Date 6/6/90

Acknowledgements

Many people have helped in the completion of this project. RTE provided access to personnel, as well as tangible support in the form of financial assistance. In particular I would like to express my thanks to Mr. Tony Fahy. The GAA obliged by allowing an interview with their commercial manager, the FAI were less forthcoming.

The content and textual analysis work on television's treatment of the 1988 European Nations Championships involved much taping and transporting of material. Thanks are due to both Brian McDermott and Martin McLoone for their help and ideas on that chapter.

Many friends at the Dublin City University provided support and ideas during my period of research. Thanks in particular to Niall, Marcus, Tanya, Barbara, Pat, Luke, Stephanie, Celia and all in the School of Communications.

Special thanks are due to the Head of the School, Professor Farrel Corcoran for his enthusiastic support throughout, and his constructive comments on the first draft. My supervisor Professor Desmond Bell deserves much credit for his prompting, encouragement, and constructive criticism which allowed this project to be completed on schedule. No mean achievement. Thank you.

Finally I would like to express my gratitude to my colleagues within the Communications Department at Glasgow College who allowed me the time required to complete this project.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Introduction	Page 1
Chapter 1 Popular Culture, History, Ireland: Problems of Theory	Page 3
Chapter 2 From Our Gaelic Fields: Mediated Sport and National Identity. The Press and Radio.	Page 23
Chapter 3 Television, Sport and the Nation: The 1988 European Soccer Championships.	Page 49
Chapter 4 A Sporting Triangle: Television, Sport and Sponsorship.	Page 73
Chapter 5 Sport in the Age of Satellite	Page 102
Conclusion	Page 124
Appendix 1	Page 127
Footnotes	Page 133
Bibliography	Page 139

List of Figures

- 1 ITV's New Field of Vision, The Observer, 23/9/88 Page 52
- 2 Watched, Assessed, Selected. And that's just the players
Radio Times, 11-17/6/88 Page 86
- 3 World Cup Corporate Soccer Hospitality, FAI News, Spring 1989 Page 94

List of Tables

- 1 Percentage of newspapers given to sports coverage during the period
1932-1962. Page 31
- 2 Television viewing figures for the 1988 European Soccer
Championships. Page 55
- 3 1988 Television Viewing Figures for sport, Marketing Week, 7/4/89 Page 82
- 4 Fees (in dollars) paid by American Network Television for USA rights
to Olympic Games. Page 83
- 5 Late Late Showing, Aspect, May 1989 Page 118

Over the past year, many men and women in all branches of sport have done much to raise our spirits and morale and made us proud to be Irish. The effect on national self-esteem brought about by the victory of Stephen (Roche) and indeed our qualifying for the European Soccer Championships, extends beyond the arena of sport and persuades us all that we can successfully compete in other areas as well.

Charles Haughey, Irish Premier, 1988

The other category, sport, is of course one of the very best things about television; I would keep my set for it alone.

Raymond Williams, The Listener, 1968

A truly international field, no Britons are involved.

David Coleman, BBC TV Athletics Commentator, 1988

It may prove useful to state what this project is not, before introducing what exactly I have set out to look at. It is not a history of Irish broadcasting, nor a social history of Irish sport; both projects remain tasks for another day.

What I will attempt is to examine some of the impulses that have helped shape the contours of modern sport. What will be argued throughout, is that any examination of sport is incomplete without an accompanying, and intergrated, study of its relationship with the media. The main thrust of my argument is that sport has been transformed as a cultural form through its interrelationship with the media. In turn both the media and sport are constrained by wider political and economic forces which set up the parameters within which this relationship can evolve.

Mediated sport is an important arena in which ideas and representations of the social order can be displayed. The perception that this area of cultural activity is apolitical, or neutral, is of central concern. It is this pretence of neutrality that makes mediated sport such a key ideological arena. It is the validity of this neutrality that is challenged in this thesis.

Chapter 1 will review some of the theoretical debates that have informed discussions of sport as a popular cultural form. Emphasis will be drawn to the dearth of work on media sport, particularly with regard to Ireland.

The construction of representations of identity through the media will be discussed in the two subsequent chapters. Chapter 2 will look at the role of the press and radio in helping to build a sense of community through its coverage of sport. Attention is focussed on the post-1922 Irish State, and this chapter will raise some of the wider issues about identity formulation that will be addressed later in the thesis. The following chapter looks specifically at the way that television has transformed our perceptions of sport in society. By using Irish and British television's treatment of a major international sporting event as the focus of a case study, it allows us to examine, using a concrete study, some of the

wider questions about the relationship between television, sport and understandings of national, and international identities.

Analysis of television representations of sport are, however, academically inadequate when viewed in isolation. Our understanding of these representations must be grounded in the political and economic environment from which they originate. Chapter 4 maps out the political and economic pressures that are shaping the structure of modern sport, and emphasises the central role that television plays in this continual restructuring process. Both these chapters also raise important theoretical issues, not directly addressed here. These are the problems of connecting methodological approaches that are too often treated in isolation: on one hand an approach that stresses the importance of textual and content analysis, and on the other, an approach that emphasises the need to develop a framework of analysis based on political economy. This problem is not specific to this project, but symptomatic of a wider theoretical division within the field of media studies. Thus while Chapter 3 and 4 are separate sections, they have to be viewed together as the core of this work.

This investigation is extended in the final section, when attention is turned to the changing international broadcasting environment. What are the factors that are shaping the future of broadcasting, and what effect will this have on the relationship between television, sport and the representations of national identities ?

With such a broad sweep of investigation, lacunae will exist. Much work remains to be done as technological innovation, which in turn responds to the economic and political pressures of the day, increases in the sphere of broadcasting. This project attempts to contribute to that ongoing work.

Chapter 1

Popular Culture, History, Ireland: Problems of Theory

Introduction

As it is discussed here the term sport will encompass not only the codified games themselves, but also the institutional structures in which they are embedded. Sport, as will be evident from the following discussion, has shown a marked resistance to the albeit limited academic theorising that it has been subjected to. As an area of study it has been treated until recently, by historians and sociologists alike, as both apolitical and trivial. Sport has been viewed as a component of the leisure industry, an aspect of popular culture, or, in the most reductive instance, as a cultural activity that provides an antithesis to the concept of work.

In reviewing the theoretical debates that have informed the sociology of sport, a number of points need to be noted. Much of the work has taken place within the framework of British sociology which has treated the study of sport as marginal in relation to other areas of mainstream sociological investigation. Also, the work that has attempted to break new theoretical ground has only evolved in the last number of years, predominately from within the emerging Cultural Studies approach. The origins and development of this distinctive multi-disciplined approach will be examined with regard to sport.

By looking at a number of key texts and assessing both their strengths and weaknesses, an attempt will be made to provide a broad critique of sociologically inspired work on "sport and society". This review of the literature will allow us to highlight some of the theoretical and empirical problems that are encountered in critically engaging with sport as a cultural activity.

In the latter part of the chapter when our attention is turned to Ireland, it will become evident that the problems that are faced in critically examining sport are related to the nature

of Irish historiography. In turn this has led to the lack of a base, both theoretical and empirical, from which to work. It will be during this review of the shifts in Irish history writing that my own position will be articulated. Initially however we turn to sociological encounters with sport.

Leisure problems.....

As Elias (1986) notes,

..it remains true to say that few mainstream sociologists have yet engaged in systematic research into sport, theorized about or discussed it in their textbooks and other works, or integrated the study of sport into the courses they teach. (Elias and Dunning, 1986: 2)

Much of the work of British sociologists that touches on sport is located within broader debates about leisure. It thus becomes necessary to work through some of the issues and problems raised in these debates. The work of Parker (1976,1983), and Roberts (1978,1981, 1983) engages with the key theoretical problems associated with this British sociological approach. Their work constituted the basis for the sociological consensus on leisure that existed in Britain during the late 1970s and early 80s. Thus it becomes a useful starting point when discussing approaches to sport as a social activity. One of the central problems lies in the categorising of leisure, and with it the systematic division of human activity. Leisure is treated as an unproblematic social entity that can be juxtaposed and contrasted with other activities. Hence, their work deals with leisure and work, leisure and the family, and leisure and youth. Leisure is treated as being divorced from the social forces and conditions that shape the contours of an industrial capitalist society.

Concomitant with this is the treatment given to the term "leisure" itself. No attempt is made to analyse, or even accept, the social and historical construction of leisure. There is a tendency to view leisure as the natural antithesis of work, thereby obliterating the tensions and struggles that shape both spheres. This criticism can also be levelled at American sociological work on sport which will be looked at later.

Both these traditions deny any historical dynamic, and the struggles between dominant and subordinated groups, endemic in capitalist society, is replaced, as Gruneau argues, by a view of industrial society

as a natural boundary-maintaining system of action wherein individuals are shaped to existing patterns by virtue of the roles they are expected to play. (Gruneau, 1976: 32)

Much the same lack of historical insight and sociological incisiveness has been evident when social science has turned specifically to sport.

Sporting problems...

From within British sociological thought, sport, as an area of study has constantly been marginalised. To date studies of sport have tended to be subject, as Dunning argues, to

...reductionist and dualistic thinking, sport is perceived to be a trivial, pleasure-oriented leisure activity which engages the body rather than the mind and is of no economic value. (Dunning, 1986: 4)

The pioneering work of Dunning (1971) and Bourdieu (1978), cut against the sectionalising and academic division of labour that pervaded sociological encounters with sport. Dunning recognised the need to connect sport, as a cultural activity, to wider social structures. However, problems persist in his analysis of this relationship.

...(sports) are not socially detached and free-floating, unconnected with the wider structure of social interdependencies but closely, often intricately, interwoven with the fabric of society at large and with the manner in which that fabric is woven into the structure of international interdependencies. (Dunning, 1986: 207)

Dunning thus suggests a figurational process of sporting evolution. He talks of institutions being "organised and controlled", but fails to analyse by whom and with what effect. This views sport taking place within an enclosed spatial arena, which in turn links with larger and progressively more complex arenas. This approach draws on the work of Norbert Elias (1978), in which he defines a "figuration" as, "a structure of mutually orientated and dependent people." (Elias, 1978: 261) This dependence and interdependence of individuals on each other remains problematic. There is no material analysis of the social structures that shape the environment in which these individuals are located. This denial of class struggle within the social framework, and the failure to pinpoint the unequal economic

weighting that groups experience ultimately lead to a flawed "sport and society" thesis.

Dunning's work did provide sociological investigation into sport with an academic credibility and a legitimacy that was important. The early 1970s in Britain also saw the setting up of the Leisure Studies Association which would eventually engage critically with sport. However, as late as the mid 1980s, sustained academic work on sport remained minimal.

In total then, approaches to the sociology of leisure remained partial and fragmented. It is also notable that there was relatively little integration of work on leisure and work on sport. The ideological role of sport and leisure in wider relations of power was barely considered. (Horne et al, 1987: 4)

Elsewhere the situation was similar.

The driving themes behind American sociological work on sport viewed it as an activity that played a central role in integration of the social system. At an individual level its function was one of personality formation and development (Jokl and Simon, 1964 and Edwards, 1973). While this work was modified in Britain, its functionalist orientation was retained.

Recently, the "Leisure and Recreation Study Group", connected with the British Sociological Association, has attempted to widen the brief of social scientific investigation into sport. This work remains at a tentative stage of development. (See Horne et al, 1987).

Paradoxically sociology has failed in the past to view sport as a social process and a human construction. In so doing it has failed to make the wider connections between sport and the economic, political, and cultural forces at work in any specific society. At the core of this has been a lack of historical perspective. Where history has been engaged, it has been treated in a unproblematic, linear and evolutionary fashion. Time marches on, society progresses, and the past is over and done!

To re-dress this imbalance requires a re-examination of the shifts that have occurred in the writing of social history. In tracing the attempts to synthesise such seemingly disparate academic elements as, "history" and "sociology", we see research approaches developing (theoretical and empirical) which view sport as an important mechanism in the reproduction of cultural relations. This draws on the Cultural Studies approach, central to which has

been the expansion in the study of social history.

History in the making...

For though abstract discussions about theoretical premises have a limited value, it matters very much, in history as in other social sciences, what starting points are chosen. (Johnson, 1979a: 41)

As Johnson (1979a) argues, much of the most incisive writing about the English working class has not been sociological in nature, but historical. The development of the "labour history movement" sprung from the attempts to reflect upon the fundamental re-shaping of social relations caused by the economic development of industrial capitalism which occurred in Britain during the nineteenth century (Deane, 1979) (Mathias, 1983). The processes of industrialisation and urbanisation created new work rhythms and environments. The 1880s

...began to burst with the growth of socialism, the New Unionism and the industrial militancy of the pre-war period... it became meaningful to talk of the "labour movement" and, indeed, to start to write its history. (Johnson, 1979a: 44)

The historians writing such histories during this period were drawn from the bourgeoisie. They had grafted themselves onto the labour movement, and certainly couldn't be viewed as springing organically from within the working-class.

The study of economic policy and the role of institutions was a central focus of these histories. This interest in institutions emphasises the links between the writers and the leadership of both the trade unions and the newly formed Labour Party. Thus while "labour history" redressed an imbalance in documenting working class movements, it also specifically lacked any cultural dimension. This discrepancy was noted by later historians such as Edward Thompson.

The notion of labour history may entail certain dangers - the confinement of our study within boundary walls of our own making. Too narrow a concern with the institutions of the labour movement may exclude from our view larger problems of social context and cultural climate. (Thompson, 1964: 4)

This lack of a cultural dimension within the emerging social history was a reflection on the relationship between the writers and the urban working class. Institutions were in many cases the only common terrain on which these writers and the working classes met. There

was a lack of the "lived" history, the creation of an atmosphere in which the feeling and impulses of the working class could be placed in a historical context. Any treatment of sport, as will be evident from the skeletal framework outlined above, was absent from this writing. It would enjoy a greater degree of prominence in the social histories that would appear from the 1960s onwards. This period would mark a significant break in the writing of history, and in the avenues down which historians would choose to pursue their work.

Changing history...

What was popular yesterday is not today for the people today are not what they were yesterday. (Brecht, 1974: 51)

In such a brief tracing of the evolution of social history it is impossible to fully bring out and develop the complexities of the debates and issues involved. That is not what is being attempted here. Rather I will highlight some of the movements, within the realm of history academia, that mark a significant break with the past and enable us to locate the work that is occurring at present. With regard to the study of sport and its positioning within a wider socio-economic framework, the period during the 1960s is crucial. It was within the developing epistemology of popular culture that sport was examined, moving ultimately from the realm of social history, through the specific study of popular culture, to its incorporation within the multi-disciplined Cultural Studies approach. There will be a focussing on a number of significant moments in this development. There will also be an attempt to clarify the key terms that will be used to inform this debate.

A "historiographical revolution" occurred in Britain during the late 1950s and early 1960s. As Johnson notes,

The most important change was that historians began to write seriously and with sympathy about the beliefs and behaviour of the mass of historical populations; they actually did, in an important sense, "give their hearts to the people". (Johnson, 1979a: 58)

While E.P. Thompson's, The Making of The English Working Class (1963), remains a seminal work within the cultural history field, there were also converging influences from outside the history discipline that would play a part in profoundly shaping its new direction. Both Hoggart's Uses of Literacy (1957) and Williams' Culture and Society

(1958) helped break new academic ground. This in turn had been influenced by the shifting debates on the British Left which had been prompted by the Hungarian rising of 1956, and resulted in an academic alliance which converged around the New Left Review journal.(1)

Despite the mass society critique which informed Hoggart's work, the attention given to working class culture involved an important shift in academic focus.

In its emphasis on culture as the reception and recreation of shared meanings, the book transcends its own implicit theory by demonstrating the nature of cultural struggle as a specific and dynamic process, rather than an eternally sedimented relationship. (Crichter, 1979: 20)

Hoggart's work was important in that it helped focus attention on the cultural aspects of social relations. Much of the theorizing about this area emerged from the work of Raymond Williams. From within Williams' work, the dynamic of culture and cultural activity was of central political concern. Williams' work viewed culture not only as a set of rituals, customs and practices, in every sense a lived experience; but also as shaped by the relations of production and the struggle for control within that arena. This approach emphasises the location of cultural struggle within specific material conditions of existence.

The debates within British Marxism during this period were part of a wider post-war European debate prompted by Marxian attempts to analyse the seemingly impregnable nature of the capitalist system in western Europe, and a coming to terms with the political systems that existed in the socialist countries. Rojek notes how these debates had, nucleated around a preoccupation with the new mechanisms of capitalist cultural integration. (Rojek, 1985: 107)

From within this re-examination there emerged a re-thinking of empirical and theoretical history writing. This body of work was informed by the influence on the British Left of European marxist writers such as Althusser and Gramsci. Indeed Western Marxism had increasingly focussed on the workings of civil society at, it may be argued, the expense of analysing the nature of the capitalist mode of production during the twentieth century. As Anderson comments,

..it was not the State or Law which provided the typical objects of its (Western Marxism) research. It was culture that held the central focus of its attention. Above all, it was ART that engaged the major intellectual energies and gifts of Western Marxism. (Anderson, 1984: 75/76)

Gramsci attempted to give a political dimension to the analysis of culture by elucidating its key role in maintaining the existing structures of capitalism. He also portrayed this arena as an area of struggle and possible revolutionary resistance to the dominant groups in society. Gramsci's influence will be discussed later when we turn specifically to look at the academic study of popular culture.

With regard to the emphasis in the writing of social history at this time, it should be noted that this wasn't a narrow academic transformation. Samuel comments,

The plebeian subject matter favoured by the new social history corresponds to other cultural manifestations of the 1960s, as for instance "new wave" cinema, with its cockney and provincial heroes, "pop art" with its use of everyday artefacts or the transformation of a "ghetto" beat (Liverpool Sound) into a national music. (Samuel, 1985: 35)

A key point was the increasing fluidity, not always in both directions, between elements of the social sciences. Sociology, social anthropology and history attempted to make connections with each other. It has been argued that the interrelationship between sociology and history has not always been advantageous to the historian. Stedman Jones has argued that,

...academic sociology is no more a science or even the approximation of one than academic history...The history of history and sociology as subjects must be treated as part of a single ideological terrain. (Stedman Jones, 1976: 300)

It was from within these debates that the History Workshop Journal: a journal of socialist and feminist historians emerged in 1975. It became a forum for discussion about the relationship between history and other disciplines, while also concentrating its academic energy on the examination of "everyday" life, attempting to make connections between cultural struggle in the past and its influence on the present. From within these strands emerges the political importance of popular cultural activity. Connected with this movement in history was the increased interest in aspects of popular culture that was coming from similar academic and political origins, but manifesting itself in different institutional locations.

Politicizing the popular...

Culture is a site of struggle, and negotiations which constantly re-define (and

usually reproduce in a new form) the existing relations of domination and subordination in society. (Jones, 1975: 3)

An important institution that acted as a base for theoretical and empirical work in the area of culture was The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham University. In 1964 it was initially located within the English Department of the University. Under the Directorship of Richard Hoggart, and later Stuart Hall and Richard Johnson, it would provide institutional support for work located within the realm of popular and sub-cultures.

The central positioning of class analysis as a theoretical tool in dissecting aspects of cultural activity soon became evident.

(The Centre)..was to distinguish a number of class-defined youth cultures, indeed to make class itself the determining category for any investigation of this field as against American derived theories of youth as either a temporary "generational" category or as a class in itself. (Dunn, 1986:73)

Important also was the realisation that not only class, but gender and race were central forces in accounting for cultural configurations. Thus while the initial work focussed on youth and sub-cultures, later work began to embrace and theorize on more general aspects of popular culture while developing Marxist theorizing on culture.

From within the Cultural Studies approach there emerged

...a joint concern with the interaction between culture and politics in a way that has seriously challenged the conventional boundary lines between disciplines... (the relative autonomy of culture means)..that it actively influences and has consequences for economic and political relationships rather than simply being passively influenced by them. (Bennett, 1981: 6/7)

It is specifically the work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies on popular culture that brings into focus the social positioning of sport and its relationship with the media.

In the next section we will examine the significant characteristics of this work, and the extent to which the CCCS approach broke important new ground in the area of cultural analysis.

Breaking with the past...

Up to and including the 1950s, the "culture and civilisation" critique of cultural activity remained the dominant paradigm that shaped and mapped out much of the academic terrain

on which popular culture was intellectually engaged. The influences of both Arnold (1971) and Leavis (1930) permeated much of the academic writing about cultural relations.

Much of the work attempted to "analyse" the effect of industrialisation on "traditional" popular culture. The human displacement caused by the initial stages of industrial capitalism presented a political threat to the traditional hegemony (based on the rural moral economy) of the ruling classes. Hall claims that this period of "democratisation" was in fact a problem of social re-structuring.

The leading social classes and their interests had to sustain their position of dominance - yet, somehow, within a state which claimed that political power had been equalised and "democratised". The question then, was how to contain democracy while, at the same time maintaining popular consent a problem, in short, not of democracy: but of hegemony ! (Hall, 1986: 39)

The "culture and civilisation" critique originated from within a "high" cultural position that viewed the commercialisation of culture as a political threat, expressed in the cultural arena.

Paradoxically, some of the perceptions of the working class which underpinned this analysis were also shared, although coming from within the marxist tradition, by the work of the Institute of Social Research located in Frankfurt during the 1920/30s. In attempting to explain the rise of fascism, and the lack of class struggle and resistance to the capitalist system, the Frankfurt School writers turned their attention to the psychological function of the media. Their work is too complex to examine in detail here, however they viewed the commercialisation of culture by the capitalist "culture industry" as having transformed popular culture into a commodified, indoctrinational form of mass entertainment. Both the Leavisite tradition and the marxism of the Frankfurt School, viewed the majority of people as "cultural dopes" (See Hall 1981), inoculated against, on the one hand the true forms of "traditional" culture, or on the other, socialist ideas and an understanding of their class position.

The breaking with these two broad strands of intellectual thought which has occurred since the 1950/60s, has transformed the treatment of popular culture. The viewing of culture as a site of struggle between dominant and subordinate groups has placed the terrain of popular culture at the centre of this critical theorizing:

...what is essential to the definition of popular culture is the relations which

define "popular culture" in a continuing tension (relationship, influence and antagonism) to the dominant culture. (Hall, 1981: 235)

Bennett too has argued

in favour of an approach which keeps these terms (popular culture, the people) definitionally empty or, at least relatively so - in the interest of filling them politically in varying ways as changing circumstances may require. (Bennett, 1986: 8)

This emphasises the key concept of historical specificity in theorizing about cultural activity. It moves away from the exhaustive search for a "once and for all" definition, instead focussing on the political usage of these terms over a period of time.

This approach also notes the need to make connections between the political, economic and cultural structures of social formations. At an ideological level, the subjective process of understanding is governed (to varying degrees) by the social relations that inform economic organisation. Ideology does not simply reside in the concrete structures of institutions. They may act as sites in which ideologies are produced. However, to view these as pre-determined is to deny the creative agency of human activity.

The influence of European structuralist thought, and the tension between it and "culturalist" thinking, was in part the dynamic that crystallised the renewed interest in Gramsci's work on hegemony (Hall, 1981). If structuralism

..tends to focus on the compositional and structural properties which govern the internal formal organisation of particular cultural forms. (Bennett, 1981: 25)

then problems arise in its inability to locate, or make sense of these forms, within a socio-historical framework. It is the culturalist paradigm that stresses the element of human struggle.

(Culturalism)..insisted, correctly on the affirmative moment of the development of conscious struggle and organisation as a necessary element in the analysis of history, ideology and consciousness. (Hall, 1981: 33)

Perhaps the most productive analysis of popular cultural activity is one which focusses on Gramsci's work on cultural hegemony and political order in capitalist society.

Living its subordination...

Hegemony works through ideology but it does not consist of false ideas, perceptions, definitions. It works primarily by inserting the subordinate class into key institutions and structures which support the power and social authority of the dominant order. It is above all, in these structures and relations that a

subordinate class lives its subordination. (Gramsci, 1971: 164)

Popular culture was viewed as a key area in the struggle for leadership in this process. It is vital to view hegemony as such; a process, rather than a concrete entity. Hegemony has to be continually worked for within the realm of civil society. The cultural arena, linked as it must be to the economic and political structures of capitalist society, becomes a central terrain in the establishing of moral, cultural and political leadership by the dominant social bloc. This process of negotiation means actively winning the consent of subordinate groups. As Hargreaves highlights, hegemonic power also encompasses the ability to disorientate opposition,

..so that major forces in society are unified behind the hegemonic group and forceful, coercive measures against opposition..acquire legitimacy as well.
(Hargreaves, 1986: 7)

Popular culture is therefore an area of negotiation in which dominant and subordinate groups forge an unequal alliance, and the relations of production become naturalised, and in part de-politicized.

The historical dimension of the hegemonic process is also highly significant. History is not viewed as a linear evolution, with the academic discipline of history dealing in the past, and the present being left the sole prerogative of sociology. There is a drive to make connections between past and present; also a need to examine significant moments (a favoured word within Cultural Studies) that mark fundamental breaks, and re-structuring of the hegemonic project. At this point the links become evident between this strand of theorising and that of the History Workshop movement. There is a rejection of the academic division of labour involved in the disconnected study of economic, political and cultural activity.

The purpose of studying any particular element of the social order is to connect
- to understand the ways in which one particular element is shaped by other structures and ways in which one area affects and contributes to the development of the rest. (Clarke, and Critcher, 1985: Preface XIII)

Any analysis of popular culture must have an historical grounding. In Britain the last quarter of the 19th century witnesses the initial structuring of many sporting institutions. The organisational legacy of these structures is evident in British sport today (Whannel, 1983: 34-53). Not only was this period crucial in the consolidation of the structures and

power networks of industrial capitalism but, it can be argued, that sport and popular cultural activity (a seemingly apolitical terrain) played a key role in this process of consolidation and re-structuring of the urban working class (Hargreaves, 1986: 57-94).

This was a vital moment that saw, through capital commercialisation and the fostering of negotiated class alliances, the demarcation lines of leisure activity being drawn up within the parameters of industrial capitalism.

The Victorian heritage of leisure is not the music hall or football, but the overall definition of organised leisure as segmented, specialised and institutionalised. Leisure was made in the image of Victorian capitalism. It was to change as capitalism changed, not without difficulty or contestation, but always within the limits of moral, political and economic control established in the 1880s. (Clarke, and Critcher, 1985: 71)

The work/leisure division of time and the capital intensive structure of the leisure industries were all human configurations of this period later viewed as unproblematic, linear and above all natural. These processes were part of a wider movement to help facilitate the expansion of the new social structures of an embryonic industrial capitalist society.

The strength of the Cultural Studies approach brings together theoretical clarity and strong empirical research. In the area of sport and its role within the wider dimension of cultural relations little specific work has been done.(2)

Attempts to critically analyse the relationship between the media and sport have been even fewer in number.(3) Thus despite the interest that has been shown in this area of cultural production, the work is only beginning. Richard Johnson suggests that, ..cultural studies is about the historical forms of consciousness or subjectivity, or the subjective forms by which we live or the subjective side of social relations. (Johnson, 1986: 280)

What are both the theoretical and empirical problems associated with trying to use this approach, developed in part to explain English popular culture, in a different economic, political and cultural milieu ?

Popular culture, Ireland: Questions of Theory.

A major problem facing any work that attempts to analyse aspects of popular culture in the development of Irish nationalism, is the lack of critical work available. When attention is turned to sport the lacunae become more pronounced. Histories of Irish sport have tended

to lack any socio-economic grounding, focussing on the "great" games and players of the past. In part this has been due to the lack of a critical cultural dimension in the writing of Irish history. The attention of historians has been on the political sphere, at the neglect of the social and economic wings of the discipline. Within the last quarter of a century there have been distinct moves within the academic realm of Irish history. As Inglis comments,

Irish historiography has concentrated on politics and personalities as the causal factors in Ireland's development (since the 1960s). There has been a concomitant shift away from politics and personalities as the key explanation of historical change and a greater emphasis placed on economic and social factors. (Inglis, 1987: 187)

Within this shift the study of popular culture in Ireland has enjoyed a limited degree of attention. Any work that has been done tends to be rooted in 19th century Ireland, and much remains to be developed in the connecting of popular cultural forms of this period to the social structures that shape cultural activity today. Academic interest in Irish popular culture has been limited for a number of reasons. Popular culture, particularly during the 19th century, was viewed by the Catholic Church (and many nationalists) as being evil, and alien to Ireland. This equating of popular cultural forms with foreignness was also evident in the early years of the State. The banning and censoring of many forms of cultural products was common-place in the 1920's and 30's (Brown, 1981). Associated with the disdain in which popular cultural activity was held by intellectuals, was the strong literary tradition that this group drew upon. The theatre, not popular film or television, was viewed as the primary vehicle for the transmission of Ireland's cultural heritage. There has been an elitist prejudice that has resulted in a dearth of material on Irish popular cultural forms within academia.

Thus while source material is limited, this in turn must be viewed as symptomatic of the wider structural problems that have inhibited the social and cultural aspects of Irish history writing. While I have drawn attention to some of the major theoretical debates that have informed the writing of social history in Britain (especially England), it should be noted that no such evolution took place within Irish academia. Irish historiography has been strongly empiricist in nature, with a resulting neglect of any critical engagement with wider questions of social theory. Thus the social scientist is not simply faced by a dearth

of critical material on which to draw, but is also constrained by the lack of theoretical paradigms in which to locate any such material, specifically any theoretical framework that has been constructed primarily with the Irish experience in mind.

While aware of this problem, what I want to do is to engage with some of the recent work from a "social history" perspective on popular culture in Ireland during the 19th century, and briefly sketch out some of the features that mark the relationship between popular culture and Irish nationalism.

Popular Politics

It is at the intersection of nationalism and popular culture in the 19th century that a thesis has emerged that attempts to integrate the political and cultural sphere. It casts light on the development of the "re-discovered" forms of Gaelic cultural activity that were prominent during this period, while also emphasising the connections that existed between Britain and Ireland within the cultural arena.

Malcolm (1983) traces the central role that festival and carnival played in early modern European culture. In Ireland the importance of the "fair" is noted, as is the underlying pattern of excess (food, drink, sex) that punctuated this communal gathering. In a predominantly agrarian society there was a close interrelationship between seasonal work and the festivals. However,

...by the beginning of the nineteenth century patterns were under attack from both the Church and the civil authorities because of their accompanying excesses. (Malcolm, 1983: 43)

In Britain similar attacks on popular culture, both by the Evangelical Church and the State, had resulted in the destruction of many forms of pre-industrial recreation. While attacks in Ireland had been interlinked with nationalism, the attacks in Britain were motivated by the need of the bourgeoisie to discipline the new labour work force in a way that was conducive to their interests within the new parameters of industrial capitalism. The resistance to these attacks forced a realisation that alternative modes of leisure activities would have to be provided. They would also have to be in compatible with the new work

rhythms of the urban environment. Thus the "rational recreation" movement

was an attempt to forge more effective behavioural constraints in leisure. Popular recreations were to be improved, not through repression, but through the operation of superior counter-attractions. (Bailey, 1978: 170)

In Ireland the main perpetrators of attacks on popular cultural activity were the clergy.

It is important to view these attacks as part of a wider process; that of the attempted "civilising" of the Irish people. Inglis traces the origins of this process back to 16th century Europe, claiming that the Church's success was such that

eventually farmers in the remotest part of Ireland...began to behave in a manner similiar to the aristocracy of the sixteenth century. (Inglis, 1987: 165)

Furthermore it is argued that the failure in Ireland of the Protestant evangelicalising that occurred in Britain lead to the civilising of the populace becoming the sole prerogative of the Catholic Church.

Malcolm also cites the role of the Church as being important, but points as well to the structures of policing, education and transport that developed in Ireland during the 19th century. Indeed the Church's role in shaping and constraining popular activity is far from linear in its development, or monolithic in its practice. Connolly (1982: 277/278), notes that the famine played a key role in allowing the post-famine Church to enjoy a greater degree of confidence, strength and control than it had previously displayed.

The crucial element in Malcolm's thesis is the role that these attacks had on the popular nationalist movements of this period. Movements such as the Daniel O'Connell lead Catholic Emancipation Association, and later the Repeal movement offered a recreational as well as a political focus to the population. Malcolm argues that it is thus wrong to view the popularity of such movements purely in political terms, but also as channels that provided a recreational outlet in a culture increasingly devoid of such opportunities. The attempts by members of the Young Ireland movement, such as Davis, to expose their followers to the forms of "rational recreation" lends credence to the argument that within the cultural arena, there were close links between Victorian cultural forms and those used by Irish nationalist movements. This becomes increasingly evident when we turn our attention to sport in Ireland.

The Sporting Irish

..to reconstruct or even invent a national culture was not unique; the use of the historical or even the non-historical past to create a new and partly mythical national identity was, and is, an almost universal characteristic of nationalist movements. (Garvin, 1981: 103)

It was the 1880's that saw sport in Ireland mirror the wider political splits and divisions that were occurring throughout the country. The Home Rule movement and the resurgence of nationalism were reflected in the sporting activity of the period. The diffusion of the English class oriented ethos of "gentlemanly amateurs" and its assimilation by the Irish landed classes was evident through such sporting organisations as the Dublin based Irish Amateur Athletic Association. During the latter half of the 19th century, the Gaelic Literary revival and the increasing nationalist awareness of the anglicisation of cultural habits lead to a re-examination of the popular sporting activity of the majority of the population. De Burca (1980:23) suggests that Cusack, a central figure in the formation of the Gaelic Athletic Association, was more interested in securing nationalist control of Irish athletics than "the revival of Irish hurling and football". What is clear is that against the political backdrop of both constitutional and agrarian nationalist agitation, the GAA, unlike its more elitist contemporaries (The Gaelic League) filled a void in popular recreation, with a flocking of "nationalist Ireland" to the new organisation (de Burca, 1980: 25).

The GAA embodied a particular view of what constituted Gaelic culture. Cultural nationalism presumes that any culture is completely unified in its acts and thoughts. This process of propogating the myth of the unitary nation would be an area in which the new mediums of mass communications would play an important part.

Mandle (1987) highlights the critical role that the Irish Republican Brotherhood played in the organisational structure of the GAA, and of this faction's struggle to wrest control of the organisation from clerical influence. An indicator of how intertwined the GAA was with the political movements of the time was evident in the effect of the fallout of the Parnellite split in the Irish National League which "nearly killed the G.A.A." by splitting the organisation along pro and anti Parnell lines (Mandle, 1987: 91). Its re-structuring by

1894 was along the lines of a popular spectator sport, which owed much to similar models that emerged during this period in Victorian Britain.

While adopting hostility to all England, and particularly English sport, stood for, the Association was forced, unconsciously as it may be, to imitate the features of Victorian sport - its emphasis on morality, on health, on organisation, codification and competition. There are uncanny parallels between the development of the G.A.A. and that of sport in Great Britain (not to mention developments throughout the whole Empire). (Mandle, 1987: 14)

What separated out the G.A.A. from other sporting organisations was its explicit alliance with Irish nationalism. Yet in the forms that it re-constructed Gaelic pastimes, it drew from the value system of the "muscular Christians" which had originated in Victorian Britain.(4)

Another characteristic was the strict gender divisions that operated within the organisation. Like sporting organisations in Britain it was a male preserve, with the accompanying values of aggression and competitiveness associated with constituting "manliness" embedded in the games.(5) In other areas it was unique. Despite its nationalist links, it was open to all classes of males to participate in. By organising at parish level it gained a vital foothold in the rural community, playing a central role in helping to establish localised parish identities, as well as reinforcing the central role of the Catholic Church in demarcating cultural boundaries. As Mandle points out, by the formation of the State in 1922,

The Gaelic Athletic Association had fulfilled its mission - to revive the native games of Ireland, and to awaken the nationalist spirit. (Mandle, 1987: 221)

Thus the nationalist inflexion of popular culture played a key role in the stimulating of a national consciousness. If similar sporting models evolved in both Britain and Ireland, they took on specific characteristics that related to their different environments. If the values embedded in sporting discourses can be traced to their bourgeois origins, in-Ireland the nationalistic impulses generated by their location complicated this process.

In the remaining work there will be an attempt to analyse the way that cultural activity can help to construct an understanding of both individual and collective identity. This will also emphasise the relationship between cultural forms and the economic structures of capitalist society. The interrelationship between two distinct cultural forms, that of television and sport, will constitute the bulk of the work. In the light of what has been

sketched above a clarification of the broad framework within which this work will be located needs to be stated.

Marking the pitch

What I have argued above is that sport can only be explained as a cultural form by viewing the cultural arena as a terrain of meaning exchange and identity formation. Sport as a cultural activity has a dynamic role within this area in its transmission of values and understanding of identity. In turn this arena is shaped by wider economic and political structures. It is in viewing cultural forms as a central arena in which ideas and an understanding of social relations are assimilated, that sport must be located.

This position has been arrived at after a number of theoretical engagements with the evolving study of popular culture. Much of this evolution, through the writing of labour history, social history and cultural history, has taken place within the realms of British historiography and various other areas of the social sciences. However fundamental problems arise if one attempts to take these theoretical frameworks, evolved around the British (English?) experience, and superimpose them on Ireland.

While these paradigms draw on a class based analysis of society, they do not take on board (and why should they have) the important role that nationalism, and the nationalist struggle has had on the shaping of the cultural forms that have evolved in Ireland. As noted earlier, Irish academia has not attempted to address this major theoretical deficiency, instead they have busied themselves with re-writing and revising the work on major political figures in Irish history.

I do not propose to provide a solution to this lack of theoretical insight, however by drawing attention to it I hope it highlights some of the inherent problems in the subsequent examination of the interrelationship between sport, the media and national identity.

The interrelationship between the media and sport has altered our understanding of the latter by, in part, displacing and re-structuring our spatial relationship with sport. This

process did not simply begin with televised sport. The role played by the press and radio broadcasting in the evolution of sport in Ireland is crucial.(6)

In looking at televised sport the role of the media, specifically television, in constructing images and perceptions of Irish identity will be examined. This will be analysed in the light of the development of Irish broadcasting, looking at the role of the State in regulating the broadcasting environment.

Today the leisure industry has become an important segment in the economies of capitalist countries, with television being used as a multi-faceted component in its development. By examining the nature of the capitalist economy in Ireland, the integration of sport into the television/sponsorship/commercial nexus will be investigated.

What we turn to first is the development of broadcasting in the new Irish State of 1922. This raises questions about what impact the new media in Ireland had on perceptions of sport, and its ability to encourage a communal identity within the new State. To what extent for instance did the State gain political capital out of the media representation of Irish sport as a cultural form and as political ritual? It is to this investigation that we now turn our attention.

Chapter 2

From Our Gaelic Fields: Mediated Sport And National Identity.

The Press and Radio.

State Building

Nation and state need each other: the nation needs the power of the state, the state needs the community of the nation. (Cronin, 1980: 3)

The role of broadcasting in Ireland can only be understood by examining the socio-political environment in which it was conceived. The formation of the 26 county Irish Free State in 1922 had not been uniformly accepted by all nationalists. The republican element was dismayed at the failure to secure and consolidate the unitary nation-state. It is important to note that the influence of cultural nationalism was such that it was broadly accepted that as the nation had always existed, it was thus the political state that had to be forged. This perception of the antecedent nation would help shape the cultural policy of the state, specifically with regard to broadcasting.

The role of the state was to be one of protecting the "nation". The indigenous cultural energies of the nation would be provided with channels through which they could freely flow, it was the state that required immediate attention. As Hutchinson notes,

The aim of cultural nationalists is rather the moral regeneration of the historic community...Since a civilisation is a spontaneous social order, it cannot be constructed like a state from above but only resuscitated from the bottom up. (Hutchinson, 1987: 16)

This resuscitation would also reflect the religious composition of the state, and the influence that the Catholic Church would attempt to exert over the new political structures.

The prominence of official nationalism in post-partition Ireland was at the expense of the separatist tradition which had been responsible for the creation of the state itself. In part this process was legitimized by its connecting with the Gaelic Literary tradition that had also influenced the separatist movement. Allied with this was the Church's rejection of English popular cultural activity which it viewed both as anti-christian, and as part of an insidious anglicization process.

The Church's reaction to what it saw as the undermining of the Gaelic nation (and thus its power base), struck a chord with the political needs of the new state to assert its independence, political strength, and identity on an international stage. This expression of an insular, protectionist view of Irish culture would find its clearest political articulation in the Fianna Fail governments under Eamon de Valera during the 1932-47 period. He would strive on a broad front to pursue the regeneration of the Irish nation through his domestic policies. The broadcasting structures of the state would already be in place by the 1930's. These structures and the mode of broadcasting that evolved were in turn influenced by the nation-state assumptions discussed above, as well as the realisation of the economic limitations of the Irish post-colonial economy.

Broadcasting to the Nation

The economy of the Irish Free State after 1922 was shaped by the structural weakness of native capital. When allied with the post-colonial dependent nature of economic development in Ireland, it becomes evident that these factors played a key role in determining the nature of the broadcasting structures that evolved. As has been noted,

..it was in the context of political difficulties experienced by the native bourgeoisie in securing the legitimacy of the newly independent post-partition state in the 1920's that a so called public service broadcasting system emerged.
(Bell, Meehan, 1989: 92)

The need for the corporate state to intervene in the economy was consensually agreed upon. At an ideological level, the institution of radio broadcasting was envisaged as a central instrument in both "fostering" the native culture, as well as acting as an antidote to the "harmful" characteristics of British popular culture. The term "fostering" is crucial in understanding the role allocated to radio within the cultural domain of the state. Gibbons argues that,

The state derived its legitimacy from the existence of an antecedent nation, and thus the function of broadcasting was not to establish but to revitalise this nation, realising the cultural energies which, it was believed, had accumulated over centuries. (Gibbons, 1988: 222)

Thus while the legislation which brought into existence 2RN in 1926 emphasised the

importance of its role in promoting "national culture", the subsequent lack of funding by the state was to prove inconsistent with its intended aims. Public service broadcasting in Britain was initially given shape by the "high cultural" motivation of its first Director - General John Reith. It was accepted that as a result of this mission to inform, educate and entertain, that commercial viability was unlikely. The Irish State believed, however, that as the "national culture" was organically embedded in the hearts and minds of the Irish people, that there was no obvious reason why related radio output wouldn't be popular and thus capable of being funded by commercial (advertising) means. What you had in Ireland was a state controlled public service broadcasting infrastructure, which through lack of state funding, found itself dependent on commercial advertising while also expected to be financially solvent.(1)

It is against this backdrop that we wish to examine the relationship between the media and sport in post-partition Ireland. The economic protectionist policies of the Fianna Fail governments during the 1930/40s were part of a wider project to regenerate a gaelic civilisation that wished to sever its cultural links with Britain. In this process the Catholic Church would play a central role in defining the cultural parameters of the nation. This intertwining of Catholicism and cultural nationalism was such that

..cultural life in the new state was dominated by a vision of Ireland, inherited from the period of the Literary Revival, as a rural gaelic civilisation that retained an ancient pastoral distinctiveness. (Brown, 1981: 98)

In turning to sport, (looking specifically, but not exclusively at gaelic games) what were the cultural and political dimensions of its relationship with radio? Also, how did the new sport/radio/press nexus of the 1930s help both to reflect and shape the cultural environment of the formative years of the new state? Initially let us turn to radio sport.

Radio Sport

Radio is influenced by the cultural impulses of the environment in which it is located. In post-colonial Ireland, these impulses were shaped by the continual need of the state to assert its political independence and acquire a legitimate power base. Radio sport would be

an important area in the development of national activities that the state seemingly presided over. The specific characteristics of radio broadcasting, its immediacy and "actuality" audio quality, when allied with the nature of live spectator sport, has proven to be a popular substitute with spectators when unable to attend the live event. The siting of the receiver within the domestic environment also connected with the family/home centred pattern of cultural activity encouraged by the Catholic Church.

The 1926 Kilkenny - Galway All-Ireland hurling semi-final is generally recognised as being the first live sporting radio transmission in Europe. (Gorham, 1967: 40) However Irish radio wasn't unique in its desire to draw upon sport as an area worthy of broadcasting. Both the BBC in Britain, and the state funded Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC), saw sport as a central area in their broadcasting output. While in Britain and Ireland the BBC and 2RN enjoyed a broadcasting monopoly, this was not the case in Australia. To ABC the attraction of sport lay in its ability to,

(attract)...large numbers of listeners whose usual preference lay with the commercial stations...sporting broadcasts were known to be very popular, and the ABC was as keen as any broadcasting body to attract listeners. (Thomas, 1980: 37)

In Australia, sport was a vital component in a station's portfolio as it engaged in a rating battle with rival networks.

In America, where commercial radio broadcasting had started in the 1920's, sport on radio was used as a means of encouraging people to buy receivers. It soon became obvious to the radio producers that sport was capable of securing large listening audiences. The 1938 World Heavyweight boxing contest between American Joe Louis, and the German Max Schmeling was covered by radio and heard by an estimated three quarters of the American public.

Advertisers quickly became involved in directly sponsoring a sporting event that was going to be covered by radio. The Ford Motor company paid \$100,000 to secure the rights to sponsor the 1934 Baseball World Series which was covered by the three major radio stations in the U.S., ABC, CBS and NBC.

In Britain the emphasis given to sport on the radio was within a different cultural context. It was viewed as an important area in nation building and the portrayal of a

common British culture. The "high cultural" ground that Reith envisaged radio operating from soon began to shift onto a more populist terrain. By the 1920's professional spectator sport was well established, popular, and engrained in working class culture. Radio, and radio sport in particular, played a vital role in the wider ideological battle to construct the "nation". As Stevenson notes,

..the radio could be seen as a homogenizing force both culturally and nationally. It soon defined a calendar of sporting events familiar to most people between the wars. (Stevenson, 1984: 410)

This fostering of national cohesion was not the sole prerogative of the radio. The developments in mass schooling, the national press, and the extending transport system were all crucial in this process. Radio with its immediacy, its "actuality" quality and its domestic location did however find itself playing a key role in nation building.

A crucial point is the mediating role played by radio. Radio is not a neutral agency that simply relays the event to the listening audience. It is an active process that alters the relationship between spectator and event. The listener doesn't see the game (naturally), but is given a verbal image of the sport. In other words a feeling of what the game is, its significance and substance, is transmitted via the medium. While obvious, it is worth stating that this image of the game, constructed entirely by sound is being engaged with out-side the environment from which it originated. In the case of early Irish radio, such was the scarcity of receivers, especially in rural areas, that communal gatherings in "wireless" households for specific broadcasts were a frequent occurrence.(2)

The creation through this communal experience, allied with the nationwide audience construction of the actual sporting commentary, helped to provide a lived, shared experience. As Hall comments,

This is the first of the great cultural functions of the modern media: the provision and the selective construction of social knowledge, of social imagery, through which we perceive the "worlds", the "lived realities" of others, and imaginarily reconstruct their lives and ours into some intelligible "world-of-the-whole", some "lived totality". (Hall, 1977: 340/341)

In America the actual re-creating of sporting events on radio was also common. Rather than have the cost of sending a crew, equipment and a commentator to a sporting venue, the station simply built a match around the telegraph morse code reports that they received

from "Western Union". They then gave a "live" commentary on the event armed with the bare facts that they were receiving down the line. (Rader, 1984: 27/28)

Radio sport also involved the developing of a common national memory. Great games and players became engrained into the national psyche. In Ireland the coverage of what were presented as being the "native games" of the country was increasingly mediated by the voice of one individual: Micheal O'Hehir. Tim Pat Coogan, in discussing his disappointment at finding out what it was like to attend an All-Ireland final "live", as opposed to listening to it on the radio, noted that,

Micheal O'Hehir had made it all seem much more patriotic, large-scale, significant somehow. (Coogan, 1976: 52)

This is a typical reaction of people whose sole access to the sporting event was through the medium of radio.

Coverage of Gaelic Games was seen to be of paramount importance to the GAA, who as custodians of Ireland's "native games" expected a new Irish medium to devote substantial time to these activities. Indeed such was the powerful position of the organisation that it also wanted to tell 2RN who could, and couldn't, commentate on its matches. Between 1933-7, the two organisations remained at loggerheads over the situation, which resulted in a number of matches not being covered. By 1938, with the arrival of Micheal O'Hehir, the situation calmed, and radio projected gaelic games to a new national audience.

GAA results had been carried on the radio since 1930. Tension between the GAA and the broadcasters again came to the fore when soccer results were carried alongside those of the organisation. The launch, in 1930, of a Sunday night sports programme, provided the GAA with a national platform from which to project their activities. This was at a time when national press coverage remained scant. Radio did not simply hand these games to the audience, but played a key role in helping to construct and amplify the games to the extent that they enjoyed a central position within what seemingly constituted a national culture. In so doing radio helped make the GAA a truly symbolic national organisation in the minds of its listeners. This was achieved not just through the intrinsic qualities of the games themselves, but by the building and fostering (through the mediating process of

radio) of identities and social groupings based around the parish, the county, and ultimately the country.

Newspapers and Sport: 1922-1962

There exists no substantial critical work on the development of sports journalism in the Irish national press. In Britain a recent book (Kelly, 1988) has helped to redress some of the imbalance that has existed in critically examining this area of newspaper output. While no major body of work exists on this aspect of Australian media production, a number of historians have recently turned their attention to the area of newspaper coverage of sport (Cunneen, 1980).

What we wish to do in this section is to briefly map out some of the major characteristics of newspaper sports coverage during this period 1922-62. This timespan allows us to focus on the crucial period during the 1930's which helped shape the nature of Irish sporting journalism. In conjunction with this there will be an attempt to expand on some of the issues raised above by qualitatively examining the content of the sports reporting, measured as it has to be, against the prevailing economic, political and cultural backdrop of the developing Irish state. The papers examined are the Irish Independent, The Irish Times and The Irish Press.

Our Daily Sport

The Irish (Daily) Independent was a descendent of the Irish Freeman's Journal which had been broadly supportive of the old Irish parliamentary party. It was broadly conservative in editorial outlook, attracting a pre-dominantly urban lower-middle class readership. The political orientation of the Independent Newspapers Organisation, which is supportive today of Fine Gael, could in the early years of the state be identified as pro-treaty and anti-republican in stance.

The Irish Times was the voice of the protestant community in Ireland, thus finding its readership among the urban middle/upper classes, especially within the professional sector. The Irish Press, was founded in 1931 by the leader of the Fianna Fail party Eamonn de Valera. The aim of the paper was to provide a platform for the views of the Fianna Fail party, and particularly to articulate their brand of Irish republicanism. Much time had been spent in examining the techniques used in the newspaper industry abroad, with the American industry providing many of the ideas for the new paper.

It was more populist in both layout and content than the other national dailies of the time, securing and helping to create a rural readership which to a large extent had been bypassed by the urban orientation of the Times and Independent. Both the political and class loyalties of these reading publics would be reflected in the nature of the coverage given to sport.

In quantitative terms The Irish Press devoted more space to sport than any other Irish newspaper (See Table 1 overleaf). It is important to note that in Britain during the 1930's sports coverage in the popular press played a vital role in attracting and helping to secure a readership in the newspaper circulation war. In Ireland, the popularity of The Irish Press was in part a result of its political affiliations, but also as a result of its catering for an increasing public interest in sport, especially indigenous activity.(3)

It has been widely perceived that The Irish Press

..is credited with having given the first decent coverage in an Irish newspaper to Gaelic games. (Oram, 1983: 173)

There is no doubt that the Press did devote a large amount of space within its sports section to coverage of Gaelic games.(4) However to view this in isolation gives a misleading picture. During the soccer season, the "Irish Free State League" was extensively covered as were a host of other sports including horse racing, rugby, athletics and boxing. Thus while The Irish Press did improve the coverage given to Gaelic games, this was just a segment of their sports coverage, with the paper providing more coverage of Irish sport than any other Irish national daily newspaper. Let us expand on this by examining the sports that were covered in the papers, and asking to what extent their sports coverage

	<u>1932</u>	<u>1942</u>	<u>1952</u>	<u>1962</u>
<u>The Irish Press</u>	16-19%	10-12%	18-23%	24-32%
<u>Irish Independent</u>	12-16%	5-8%	12-16%	14-18%
<u>The Irish Times</u>	10-12%	5-8%	12-15%	16-18%

Table 1 Percentage of newspapers given to sports coverage during the period 1932 - 1962

reflected and helped consolidate the political and class orientations of their readerships.

The Sporting Press

In qualitative terms both the Irish Times and the Independent gave prominence to sports which had been introduced into Ireland as a result of the British presence there.

The Irish Times devoted space to rugby, or "Rugby Football" as they called it, as well as "Association Football", cricket, polo, hockey, show-jumping and tennis. While coverage varies over the year as the sporting seasons overlap, The Times during the 1930's and up until the early 1960's gave little sports prominence to Gaelic games. Their coverage could amount to as little as a few column inches compared with a full page spread in the Press and the Independent's three quarters of a page devoted to Gaelic games. The Times also ran in its Monday edition a feature entitled Week-End Sport In Pictures. This would consist of action (sic) photographs of soccer, rugby as well as such quintessentially upper-class pursuits such as lacrosse, show-jumping and golf.

During the summer months the sports of cricket, yachting and lawn tennis would dominate the sports pages of The Times. Quite clearly reflected in this coverage were the pastimes and the sports of the Anglo-Irish middle/upper class, and as such the paper provided a central focus of identity for this group against an increasingly changing political and cultural environment.

A common characteristic of all three newspapers was the large amount of space

(usually at least one third of their entire sports coverage) devoted to horse and greyhound racing (results, full race cards and tips). Most of the race meetings were English, and the extent of the coverage mirrored the relationship that existed in both Britain and Australia between the popular press and organised gambling. This was accompanied by the English and Scottish League soccer results and pools information that all three newspapers carried.⁽⁵⁾ This suggests that gambling was popular in Ireland, despite the disdain with which the Catholic Church viewed such activity.

The Independent did offer more coverage of Gaelic games than the Times.

However, especially during the 1930/40's, it was rugby, golf and soccer to which most sports coverage was devoted. Boxing was also popular with all three papers, again The Press providing the most comprehensive coverage of the sport. The Independent's sports coverage did shift in its emphasis during this period. As Gaelic games became more popular, partly due to press and radio exposure, so the amount of space devoted to them in the paper increased.

Gaels and Goals

What we wish to do now is turn our attention to some of the specific discourses that can be discerned in The Irish Press's treatment of sport.

As already noted, Gaelic games were allocated a status within the sports output of the newspaper that reflected the cultural orientation of the political party that supported it. As also already mentioned, to view this coverage in isolation can lead to a distorted and unbalanced impression of the paper's overall treatment of sport. As early as 1932, The Press carried extensive coverage of the Irish soccer scene. Typical was the coverage of the 11th of January 1932, when the paper's major sporting feature was the "Free State Cup", with the headline, Cup joys and sorrows being given a higher status than Gaelic games, rugby and boxing. While it is noted that the height of Gaelic games activity took place during the summer months, while the soccer season was at its height during the

winter, it would be wrong to view The Press as simply a Gaelic games sports paper.

The sports pages of January 18th 1932 lead with the headlines,

Shamrock Rovers Smashing Win: Rugby Full Back Problem Solved.

Here were two "foreign games" given major newspaper status, and being discussed within a specifically Irish context (Irish league soccer and Irish international rugby). Quite simply, The Irish Press gave better coverage to soccer and rugby than both the Irish Independent and The Irish Times. As The Press devoted proportionally more newspaper space to sport, it may be argued that regardless of the connotations associated with the sports covered, the editor realised that extensive sports coverage played an important part in selling newspapers.

When attention is turned to the Press's treatment of Gaelic games, the process of nation-building becomes evident. What we see is an effort to construct through language, a symbolic political and cultural entity: the Irish nation-state. The "native games" of the country are portrayed as having always existed in their present form and of being part of a traditional culture. This regeneration of tradition, and the grafting of Gaelic games to this wider ideological construction of a Gaelic civilisation, was one of the key mediating roles played by the press and radio during this period (1930/40's). Here was a youthful state, the cultural parameters of which were inexorably linked to an unbroken thread of customs and beliefs that stretched back into the past, and seemingly pointed the way to the future.

Tradition, as Hall argues,

.. is a vital element in culture, but it has little to do with the mere persistence of old forms. It has much more to do with the way elements have been linked together or articulated. These arrangements in a national-popular culture have no fixed or inscribed position, and certainly no meaning that is carried along, so to speak, in the stream of historical tradition, unchanged.

He also notes how these "traditional elements" can be re-arranged, even re-invented, so that they articulate with different practices and positions, and take on a new meaning and relevance. (Hall, 1981: 236)

It can be argued that this was the case with the "traditional sports".

Both the press and radio helped establish and map out a tradition for Gaelic games, while at the same time being active agencies themselves in a process that was creating, re-constituting and perpetuating the mythological connotations associated with these

activities. Before turning to the relationship between the press and radio, we will firstly examine more closely newspaper coverage of gaelic games.

A Sporting Nation

I will argue that there are three specific discourses (interrelated) that can be discerned in the sports coverage of the newspapers looked at. With regard to the Australian press, Cunneen (1980), suggests that the sporting role of a newspaper was two-fold. It elevated sport while also contributing to the building of the country's national passion for sport. In the Irish Free State this is also evident, however this role is given a cutting edge by the political and cultural overtones attached with the embryonic stage of state development in a post-colonial country. During the state building years of the Fianna Fail governments of the 1930's, and the associated economic problems that this entailed, sport was an important arena in which a collective-popular identity could be expressed. This nation-building, the cultivating of the individual sporting hero, and the continual re-affirming (construction) of "traditional" identities of parish and county, are the areas that we now turn to.

If, as it has been argued, that sports journals and sports reporting in newspapers in Britain and America during the 19th century created "the mythologies of "golden eras" and operated as

publicists, literary chroniclers and philosophers for the new codified games.
(Goldlust, 1987: 70)

to what extent were the Irish daily newspapers simply re-producing this process?

Newspaper/journal coverage of sport in Ireland during the 19th century was, due to the political situation, closely linked to sports coverage in Britain. In Ireland, both the Sport (1886-1931), and the Sports Mail And Irish Weekly Mail (1821-1939), focussed on British soccer, racing and rugby. The Sport, published by the Freeman's Journal, did carry listings and reports from what it called "Gaelic Pastimes", and this coverage did increase after 1922. However as a weekly newspaper it was interested in attracting the anglo-Irish reader, and thus reflected their sporting interests in the sports that it chose to

cover.

The Sports Mail And Irish Weekly Mail (6), was unashamedly British and imperialistic in outlook. Published by the "Dublin Express and Mail Ltd" in Dublin, it was affiliated to Fleet St's "Express Newspapers". It carried little or no GAA news. Coverage of northern soccer and rugby (with cross-channel results and reports) dominated the sports pages, while the remainder of the paper was a hybrid of English and Irish news stories, Press Association and Reuters releases, short stories and editorial comment. Interestingly after 1922 it dropped its news (sic) section in favour of concentrating its energies to covering anglo-Irish sports which were accompanied by a token allocation of space to Gaelic games. Both newspapers (published every Saturday) folded during the 1930's. The reason for their demise can be explained by the improving sports coverage of the daily national papers which helped erode their readership.

The nature of the coverage given to Gaelic games by The Irish Press during the 1930's clearly displays the nation-building and tradition establishing use of language discussed earlier. Headlines such as

"More playing fields are necessary for Ireland's Athletic Gaels" (2nd Jan. 1932),
as well as

"Ireland must see to the needs of her national athletes" (2nd Jan. 1932)
were typical of the treatment given to GAA matters in the paper. In January of that year a major story that ran throughout the month on the sports pages of the Press concerned the refusal of the Irish Rugby Football Union to fly the tricolour at the international match between Ireland and South Africa. The IRFU, an all-Ireland body, preferred to display the four provinces flag. The Irish Press called this move an,

"Insult to Ireland, Fly the Flag" (25th Jan. 1932)

Neither the Times nor the Independent carried or commented on this story.

While the Press also covered soccer and rugby, it did view itself as the watchdog or constructive critic of the GAA. On one occasion it carried a feature on its sports pages with the banner headline,

"Neglect of National Games is first stage of decline" (13th Jan. 1932)

In the article the GAA and the paper's readers were warned that a failure to nurture and promote Gaelic games at the grass-roots level could and would lead to an erosion of Irish cultural pastimes and identity. While this type of reporting was quite domestic in its sporting outlook, the 1932 Tailteann Games provided an opportunity to integrate domestic Irish sport with that of other nations through an international Gaelic cultural festival.

The Times and the Independent both covered the games although not giving the same quantitative degree of coverage nor employing the same verbal panache as The Irish Press. The following extract from the Press gives a flavour of the emphasis that was placed in its coverage of the international nature of Gaelic sport and culture. Ireland were playing an American select team at Gaelic football.

"America's Football Challenge"

The football challenge which this third Tailteann Games has brought to the worth of native football at Croke park to-morrow has aroused the interest and attention of all Ireland...We are confident in the freshness and fitness of Ireland's selection to maintain our supremacy against the world. (9th July, 1932)

Such was the "unity" of the Gaelic world, that the paper could extend a warm welcome to

"Our Gaelic Friends from South Africa" (22nd July 1932)

This story related to a touring South African hurling team. It appeared that Ireland's Gaelic cultural influence was unimpeded by mere geo-political boundaries.

In partitioned Ireland, the question of cultural and political boundaries was particularly pertinent. In the Northern Ireland state, the nationalism of the south was refracted in part through the Unionist newspapers and their construction of the "foreignness" of the Free State. The reporting of sporting issues was one area through which this process took place. The removal, in 1938, of President Douglas Hyde from the list of GAA patrons by that organisation on the grounds that he had attended a soccer match (Ireland v Poland) gave The Northern Whig the opportunity to emphasise to its readers the extent to which a sporting organisation was,

symptomatic of the spirit of primitive tribalism that passes current for enlightened nationalism in Southern Ireland. It is a travesty of patriotism and of culture; it engenders sectional hatreds, restricts and distorts the outlook of thousands and makes its advocates the laughing stock of more advanced and progressive nations. (21/12/1938, cited in Kennedy, 1988: 229)

Meanwhile, The Irish Times devoted little attention to the Tailteann Games, although it did

cover the Ireland versus America football match. In general however The Times continued to concentrate on what it perceived to be the "traditional" summer sports, namely cricket, golf, tennis and athletics. The Independent did offer a wider range of sports coverage than The Times, again however, never in the same quantity nor quality. It tended to lack the lyrical language that the Press employed when dealing with indigenous sporting activity.

Before focussing on the other prevalent discourses that were embedded in newspaper coverage of sport in the period 1922-1962, we will briefly examine some of the changes that took place in sports journalism in the years discussed.

Changing Sport

The assertion of Irish national sovereignty that percolated the sports pages of The Irish Press was symptomatic of the wider political energies displayed by the Irish state's involvement in European affairs during the 1930's. The test to the state's political independence that remaining neutral during the world wide conflict of 1939-45 posed, would ultimately be passed successfully. Rationing and general shortages resulted in a reduction in the size of Ireland's national newspapers. Sport in Britain was severely disrupted during the war, and as this activity constituted much of the material that filled the Irish sports pages, coverage was substantially reduced.

Despite the success in remaining neutral during the second world war, the "emergency" drained the Irish Free State not only economically but also culturally. The post 45 years were ones of economic and social stagnation, with emigration running high and in office, a Fianna Fail government whose political energies were beginning to ebb after thirteen years in power.

By the 1950's a number of specific changes had occurred in the nature of sports journalism in Ireland. The Irish Press had begun to use less overt "nation-building" rhetoric in their language. For instance the use of terms such as "native games" and "Gaels" had all but disappeared from their sporting vocabulary. In many respects the

nature of sports reporting began to take the shape of the sports journalism that exists today in Ireland. Specialised commentators on different events assumed a style of writing that enabled readers to increasingly identify with individual columnists, as much as with the sports discussed.

Although less flamboyantly pro-Gaelic in emphasis and more factual in content The Irish Press still covered both Irish soccer and Gaelic sport more extensively than any other newspaper. Sport also found itself newsworthy enough to occupy the front pages of The Press. Such a typical newspaper sports story was one that would highlight a famous sporting individual who was visiting Ireland. It was here, rather than on the sports pages, that a distinctly gaelic self image of a "Gaelic" Ireland was projected. When the American tennis player Maureen Connolly visited the country to take part in the Irish Tennis Championship in 1952, The Irish Press ran a front page story that emphasised the Irish links of this international sporting star. This was accompanied by an elaboration of the country's physical and mythological image.

Her delight at seeing Ireland's trees and fields newly washed by the afternoon thundery rain was enhanced by the knowledge that her father's father came from somewhere in Ireland (he is now dead) and her mother Jessamine Gillen, has also Irish ancestry. (7th July, 1952)

What is interesting is that much of this image conjuring had in fact moved out of the sports pages and re-appeared when sport was engaged with by journalists outside the sports department.

In contrast the Independent, being involved in a circulation battle with The Press, had become more populist in sports reporting. With regard to the Maureen Connolly story, the paper had a page five story (the Independent still carried advertising on its front page) which was headlined

"Little Mo: Proud of Irish Blood" (7th July, 1952).

It provided a factual account of her visit to Ireland. Clearly sporting stories that appeared outside the sports pages were subject to a consensual view as to what was perceived as newsworthy.

While the Independent's coverage of Gaelic games had expanded the GAA never

enjoyed quite the same degree of attention given to it by The Irish Press. The most popular sport covered by the Independent during the summer months was golf. Here was a middle-class sport that reflected in part the class composition of its readership.

The Irish Times still gave cricket, rugby and soccer at least equal exposure and coverage as it gave to Gaelic sport. Again golf was heavily covered although the range of sports that were found in the sports pages did witness a shift away from the elitist pastimes such as lacrosse and yachting to more popular pastimes. GAA news and coverage of its sports remained marginal right up until the 1960's.

It is impossible here to catalogue all the shifts that have occurred in sports journalism during this period. Against the backdrop of some of the characteristics that have been highlighted above there are two areas that we will pursue here: the development of the sports "star", and the building of regional identities. By expanding on these themes we will also examine the role that radio, through its symbiotic relationship with the press, played as a mechanism in these processes.

Sporting Heroes

Both the press and radio created the sporting star. The nature of newspaper coverage during the 1930's was such that while individualistic sports were covered, the emphasis was on team games. With the growing interest in sport, due in part to the coverage it was receiving in the media, the focussing of the papers on the individual sportsperson increased. This was aided by the developing art of photo-journalism in the national press. The Irish Press pioneered the use of action shots to accompany their written reports. By the early 1950's, the Independent had started running their "Sports Star of the Week" feature again helping to amplify the individualistic nature of sport. By listening to radio sport you could now hear (and see in your mind's eye) the individuals and "stars" that you read about in the press during the week.

While the press and radio initially saw themselves in competition with each other, it soon became obvious that interaction between them could be mutually beneficial. The

newspaper increasingly provided the background information to sporting events that would be listened to on the radio.

The structural changes in newspaper sports layout also played a part in this process of individualisation. Rather than purely factual accounts of matches, the journalists began to build a persona around their own style of reporting. This became increasingly prevalent during the 1950's and 60's. In The Irish Press, Peador O'Brien and Padraig Puirseal become associated not just with reporting GAA matters, but commentating on them. In the Independent John D. Hickey toured with the Down Gaelic football team during their summer tour of America in 1962, sending back his thoughts in diary form to the Irish readers. On radio, Micheal O'Hehir became synonymous with Gaelic games and Irish sport.

It can be argued that the legacy of this process of individualisation has in fact helped fuel its own "culture industry": a proliferation of books, television programmes, newspaper articles and the like that have all charted, and in their own uncritical way, propagated this nostalgic recreation of a "golden past". An era of great games and great individual players etched in the collective memory of the nation!

The period from the 1930's to the 1950's has proved a fertile ground from which to draw upon in the construction of a national sporting tradition. The media played a central role in this process. They also helped develop the cult of the sporting hero, as well as defining regional identities and characteristics.

Radio, through its mediation of Gaelic sport helped to give shape to the character of the rural community. The emphasis on parish and county, and the identification of individual star players from particular parishes was important.(7) There was also a clear gender division in the media coverage of sport. Sport was a male dominated cultural activity in Ireland. Women were not encouraged to participate, and the media coverage given to camogie was scant in comparison to the resources devoted to male sports. Connotations of manliness were attached to both the written and spoken coverage given to sport. This reflected the prevailing social attitudes towards the role of women in society

which were heavily shaped by the Catholic Church. Indeed sport played an important role in the process of reproducing and naturalising the gender divisions that existed in Irish society. It perpetuated the view that a woman's role in society was essentially passive, and certainly not one that allowed her to express herself on the sports field.

As radio listening gained in popularity its sporting output increased and diversified.

In 1949 Sports Stadium was launched providing,

a weekly round up of views and reports (and) became a regular feature of the Radio Eireann programmes. (Gorham, 1967: 185)

The relationship between radio and the press also became increasingly interactive during this period. The 1947 All-Ireland final was held in the Polo Grounds New York with Radio Eireann (formely 2RN) relaying the match live in Ireland. The game has become ingrained in the national-popular sporting memory of the country. Micheal O'Hehir, the match commentator, reporting from New York, had promised the listeners that,

It will be a great day for the Irish over here and I trust the radio will make it so for the folks back at home. (Radio Review, Sept 13-19th 1947)

The first radio wave photograph that was sent across the Atlantic was of the 1947 match.

The action photograph appeared the following morning in The Irish Press. According to the Radio Review it gave,

a home touch to the historic game taking place so far away.
(Radio Review, 20-26th Sept. 1947)

The mediation of sport was part of a wider consensus building project which helped facilitate and consolidate the socially conservative strand of nationalism which the state embodied up to the 1960's. Through both the press and radio, a self image of the country was held up that emphasised that Irish culture was not only rich in regional variation, but through its sporting traditions Ireland was a nation bound together by a common sense of collective identity.

The language used to describe sport, be it on radio or in the press, was the language of totalities. "We", "our" and so on all encouraged the individual listener/reader to identify with the event as one member of a wider national community. Media sport was an uncritical projection of what Irish culture supposedly was (is), and what it wasn't. It was a process of cultural "exclusion" as much as "inclusion". To view this complex process as

solely media imposed is of course too simplistic. Communal identities are lived out in actual social relations and not simply dumped upon the recipients by the ubiquitous media. What I am arguing here is that the media played a key role in not simply relaying a popular cultural activity, but as active agencies, shaped and re-structured the readers/listeners understanding of the activity. In Ireland this process was influenced by the political and economic environment in which it was located. Television would initiate a new set of conditions between sport and its audience. The Ireland into which indigenous Irish television arrived was one undergoing fundamental economic and social change.

Before turning to the relationship between sport and Irish television, we must initially examine the origins of Irish television itself.

The 1960's: Economic and Social Change

The economic stagnation in the Irish economy during the 1950's had in part prompted the Fianna Fail government to formulate a major shift in economic policy. The increasingly international orientation of Irish economic policies, the attraction of foreign capital and multi-national investment, was accompanied by a drive to "modernise" Ireland in line with other European countries. The Irish Republic joined the United Nations in 1956 and five years later applied unsuccessfully for membership of the EEC. T.K Whitaker's First Programme For Economic Expansion in 1958 encouraged an industrial move away from purely domestic markets to those of an expanding international nature.

This meant in effect the abandonment of protection and its replacement by a strategy of export-led growth based on a policy of trade liberalisation.
(Boylan et al, 1988: 193)

This new economic prosperity, supported by the state and underwritten by multi-national capital, was the environment into which Irish television emerged towards the end of 1961.

As has been commented,

Ireland, thrust with the help of state intervention and multinational capital into a belated industrial revolution, was meeting the future with a new self-assurance.
(Meehan, Bell, 1986: 13)

Under the 1960 Broadcasting Act the responsibility for broadcasting in the Irish Republic was placed in the Radio Eireann Authority (since 1966 the Radio Telefis Eireann

Authority). While this statutory body was a move away from the government's civil service control, the board was still appointed by the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs.

The nature of the television service itself was to be of a "public service" nature, funded by a mixture of licence fees and advertising revenue. Niall Sheridan, sales manager of Telefis Eireann, writing in 1962 commented that,

Although Telefis Eireann will be maintained by both licence and advertising revenue, it must be primarily considered as a public service rather than an advertising medium similar to the independent television contractors in Britain. (RTV Guide, Jan.12th 1962)

Also enshrined in Section 17 of the 1960 Act was the role that television was to play in "preserving and developing the national culture", thus RTE has been bound to contain a high percentage of indigenous programmes. This has proven difficult, and by 1985 the ratio of home produced to imported material was 30:70. This put RTE

into the "Third World" category in terms of cultural dependency. (Gibbons, 1988: 231)

Here was a public service organisation which found itself financially dependent on its ability to maximise audiences and thus secure advertising revenue.

In the remaining part of this chapter we will map out some of the central moments that mark the transition of sports broadcasting from radio to television in Ireland. In emphasising how debates about cultural identity have informed the relationship between sport and television in Ireland this section will provide a historical backdrop against which the debates in later chapters will be situated.

Televised Sport in Ireland

The move to televised sports broadcasting involved an influx of personnel from the medium of radio. People such as Micheal O'Hehir, Philip Greene and Noel Andrews would find themselves in television having established themselves in radio broadcasting. In much the same way as both the BBC and ITV before them, there was considerable debate and uncertainty about how the medium of television should be used with regard to sport, for as Williams observes,

..the technology of transmission and reception developed before the content.

(Williams, 1974: 29)

Initially television was used as if it were radio, with sports results and information being read out at set times during the day. Eventually this service was moved to the more suitable medium of radio and new forms of sports programmes (or adapted imported forms) appeared on television.

As in other areas of television production, the modes of presentation and forms of televisual content were heavily influenced by both American and British television (having predated the Irish service). As Gibbons (1988) argues, this was not necessarily a regressive step if the forms were inflected and re-worked "in terms of local cultural idioms." (Gibbons,1988:229) This was also true of sports presentation. Televised sport was relatively cheap in relation to other areas of home produced television output. It was viewed as a central area of national cultural activity, and was also very popular (helping to secure advertising revenue). In America, Australia and Britain sport had become an important part of a television station's output.

As early as January 1962 Telefis Eireann was running its mid-week Sports Desk with Micheal O'Hehir and Phil Thompson providing, "a mid-week look at Irish sports and sportsmen." (RTV Guide, 5th Jan. 1962) This programme provided a link with the radio sports show, Sports Stadium, which had begun in 1949.

Micheal O'Hehir became the first Head of Sport at RTE. He was helped by the BBC's Phil Thompson, who was heavily involved in the early years of sporting coverage on Irish Television. Sport became an important part of the station's portfolio. Live All-Ireland finals were relayed as early as 1962. By 1968, the GAA got a TV programme devoted totally to the organisation, Gaelic Report. More recently in 1979, RTE TV introduced the popular Sunday Game which gave extensive coverage to the All-Ireland Gaelic Games Championships. This programme drew heavily in its presentational modes from the BBC's soccer programme Match of the Day. Here was a programme using the techniques and conventions of British television, but within a specifically Irish context. However, as with radio, in the age of television the relationship between the sporting

bodies and the broadcasters was to be far from harmonious. The GAA in particular felt that as the custodians of Ireland's "national and traditional" games that Irish television should provide blanket coverage of its activities.

This highlighted a tendency that was evident in a number of cultural organisations that evolved within the Irish State. From broadcasting, through the GAA and in the institutions of the state itself, there is a continual process of cultural "exclusion" as well as "inclusion". Each organisation attempts to define what it represents and stands for, while in so doing it constructs the parameters that define what it views as unacceptable in that same culture. As it includes, it erects barriers that exclude. These parameters are not fixed, and can shift over time. Nor does each organisation necessarily share the same criteria in drawing up such boundaries, thus tensions arise when these demarcation lines are contested or threatened.

In the case of the GAA for example, they have shown a considerable degree of hostility towards television. In many instances there has been a failure to recognise the role that radio played in helping to create and expand the popularity of the games. While some members of the organisation saw television as an opportunity that provided a platform on which the games could expand, others viewed it as a threat on a number of fronts including a potential erosion of Gaelic games through the introduction of sporting material from abroad (specifically English League soccer), and a rupturing of the economic relationship between live sport and paying spectators.

Typical of the treatment given to television's influence on the GAA by historians of the organisation is that which is expressed by Marcus De Burca (1980).

Television: The Enemy Within

De Burca cites the fall in attendances at GAA fixtures as being directly linked to television's coverage of the major matches. By so doing he travels down a similiar "cause and effect" path that sport's critics of television have trodden throughout the world. They argue that, television's presence at sporting events has been solely responsible for the decline in

attendances at games. In addition he adds,

..despite the appointment of Micheal O'Hehir as first head of television sports programmes in RTE, it was many years before Gaelic games got the prominence to which most GAA members felt they were entitled. (de Burca, 1980: 246)

His attack on television is twofold. On one hand he argues that attendances at matches fell due to television coverage, while he also states that by RTE showing "non-Irish" sports, they have collaborated in the erosion of Irish national culture. In particular, he cites the coverage given by RTE to the 1966 soccer World Cup Finals that were held in England.

In apparent breach of its statutory obligation to "bear constantly in mind the national aim(s) of ...developing the national culture", RTE effectively saturated the viewing public with soccer at peak viewing times for the greater part of a month. (de Burca, 1980: 249)

He correctly argues that this coverage helped increase the popularity of soccer in Ireland, however there is no evidence to suggest that this was at the expense of the support given to Gaelic games.(8)

By examining some of the criticisms levelled at television's coverage of Gaelic games we will be able to tease out some of the issues that will be expanded on in the later chapters.

In relative terms the attendances at major GAA fixtures during the 1960's did decline, as did soccer attendances in England. To attribute this decline solely to television is to ignore the wider shifts that were occurring in leisure patterns. As a degree of economic prosperity was embarked upon, the range of goods and services on which people could spend their discretionary income increased. I would argue that far from being an erosive agent in Gaelic sport, television exposure of the sport played a key role in constructing a nationwide image for the sports, players and venues throughout the country.

De Burca contradicts his exhaustive reliance on figures when he notes that the combined attendances of the football semi-finals in 1968 was 68,000 and that between 1971-9 this rose to an average of 73,000. (When Dublin were involved it was as high as 86,000). Television, it could be argued, had brought a new urban audience to a predominantly rural sport. While many of this audience may have been armchair viewers, they felt the urge to go to the event itself when Dublin were involved.

The visual nature of the medium and the perception of the sport being covered by

television was a fundamentally different experience from attending a live match. As early as 1962, Gerard McCreesh in his TV column in the Irish Independent noted how television's coverage of Wimbledon had changed forever our perception of those who participated in sport.

Some of the x-ray close ups have told illuminating stories of fear, exultation and heartbreak disappointment. (Irish Independent, 16th June 1962)

He was also aware of the different skills needed to mediate sport through the visual medium of television.

Soccer commentators seem to be confined to the use of about half a dozen cliché adjectives....(they need to realise) that a TV commentary can be as eloquent in its silences as in its words. (Irish Independent, 16th June 1962)

In the case of the successful Dublin Gaelic football team of the 1970's, the media played a central role in the building of a specific persona around "Heffo's Army". Television coverage of the team (accompanied by press and radio exposure) helped to amplify the characters in the team and in turn generated an interest in the team and their matches that extended beyond the committed fan. This process both enhanced the sport, and also by generating pre-match interest, maximised the television audience.

A Whole New Ball Game

Television coverage of sport has been a key area in the building of national audiences and the pulling together of the unitary nation. Nowhere is this more evident than in the coverage of the All-Ireland Finals. Here we see television give a political legitimacy to the state through a media sporting ritual that revolves around the portrayal of a unitary national culture.

The media, and television in particular have altered our perception and understanding of sport in society. In Ireland this process has been informed by wider cultural debates involving national identity and the political development of the state.

Sport on television is a representation of actuality. What we wish to do in the next chapter is to examine the way that this representation is constructed by television. We will

also examine the role that this transformation of sport plays in the wider ideological construction of national identity in the Irish Republic.

Chapter 3

Television, Sport and the Nation: The 1988 European Soccer Championships

We are the boys in Green, We're on your TV screen.
(Official Rep. of Ireland Euro 88 song.)

Introduction

What I wish to do in this chapter is to examine how television has transformed sport as a form of popular culture. In discussing the various aspects of this process there are a number of areas that we wish to explore in detail, these include: sport as a form of political ritual, and sport as an arena in which representations of nation and nationhood are continually being worked through.

I propose to elucidate on these themes by focussing on a specific television event which will allow us to examine this process in more detail. By moving through RTE Television's coverage of the 1988 European Soccer Championships, the codes and conventions that television brings to bear in its treatment of sport can be highlighted. It will be against this backdrop that the more general discussion on the relationship between television, sport and "nation building" can be played out. Before turning to our investigation of the soccer Championships, an introductory discussion of the influence of television on sport is required.

Television Sport

Television does not simply reflect the world, providing as it were a "window on the world". Television programmes involve the arranging of a complex set of visual and verbal codes that are refracted through a technical and institutional process of selection and organisation. In covering sport, television does not just represent and signify images of the

event, (although of course it does do this) but it also anchors and makes sense of these events for the viewer. As an initial point of departure, this approach cuts against the view held by many television sports producers that the medium acts as a neutral channel through which the event is simply relayed.

To most people today spectator sport means televised sport. Such is the critical position that television has in the sporting "world" that it is becoming increasingly difficult to separate and unravel the economic strands that bind them together (See chapter 4). Television is the primary medium disseminating ideas about sport as a form of popular culture today. The medium has brought its established codes and conventions to sport and superimposed them on the cultural form. It would be wrong to view this process as purely uni-directional. Sport has its own characteristics that are embedded in its rules and conventions, however television has amplified these indigenous traits and brought to sport on TV its own dynamic. Television perceives sport as a form of light entertainment or drama which has the ability to attract large audiences outside peak viewing time, while at the same time being capable of holding a moderate viewership over an extended period. Thus television has to minimize what it sees as viewer boredom in its sports coverage. In short, sport on TV must offer entertainment, excitement and above all provide the television producers with what they perceive as being "good television". (1)

Televised sport is a hybrid of televisual codes and practices. Coverage of soccer comprises of a mixture of studio based material, filmed reports and interviews, graphics, music, visual aids and the actual match itself which may be live, or consist of edited highlights. Televisual codes such as lighting, editing, camera placement all act as filters through which the sporting event is structured and mediated. What is of particular interest here, is the verbal interpretation given by television to an event, in this case a major international soccer tournament, for television, despite being a visual medium, is also a medium of the spoken word.

Televised sport revolves around stars, stories and action. A narrative structure, both visual and verbal is imposed on the sporting event that allows television to make sense of it for the viewer. This process of selection and interpretation is portrayed as natural and

unproblematic by television. In so doing it constantly underplays its mediating role in the process, and attempts to convince the viewer of the apolitical nature of the seemingly hermetically sealed "world of sport". Embedded in both the visual and verbal discourses of televised sport are assumptions and ideas that articulate particular ways of seeing and understanding the society in which both sport and television operate. The role of the individual within society, the "natural" division of gender activities, the legitimation given to the dominant views on law and order, and the construction of national identity through sport, are all strands that run through television's treatment of sport. These discourses are underpinned by the continual pseudo-separation of sport from the "real" world. Thus the structural division of the "news" and "sport" is extended to frame debates about racism in football, drugs in athletics, rather than attempting to place these issues within a wider social framework of reference. As Frank Keating has commented,

Sport is either clean-limbed sport or schmaltzy showbiz. Current affairs it ain't.
(The Guardian, 7/10/86)

This trait of television will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter when our attention is turned to the European Soccer Championships.

Birrel and Loy (1979), highlight five areas in which television has transformed sport into a light entertainment spectacle. They highlight the reduction in the size of the image received by the spectator, the compression of time (edited highlights), the stopping and slowing of time (replays and freeze frames), the isolation of individual events (post match analysis) and the provision of additional information (commentary) as the core transformations that have occurred. Thus by the use of televisual technology the medium presents the world, through sport, within its own institutional framework and provides a fundamentally different experience to the viewer than that which the spectator has at the "live" event. All the time television is legitimizing and naturalizing this process and blocking out alternative interpretations of the event.

In the following discussion of RTE TV's coverage of the tournament and by comparing it to the treatment it received on British television (BBC/ITV) it will be obvious that the station has been heavily influenced by the British mode of sports presentation.

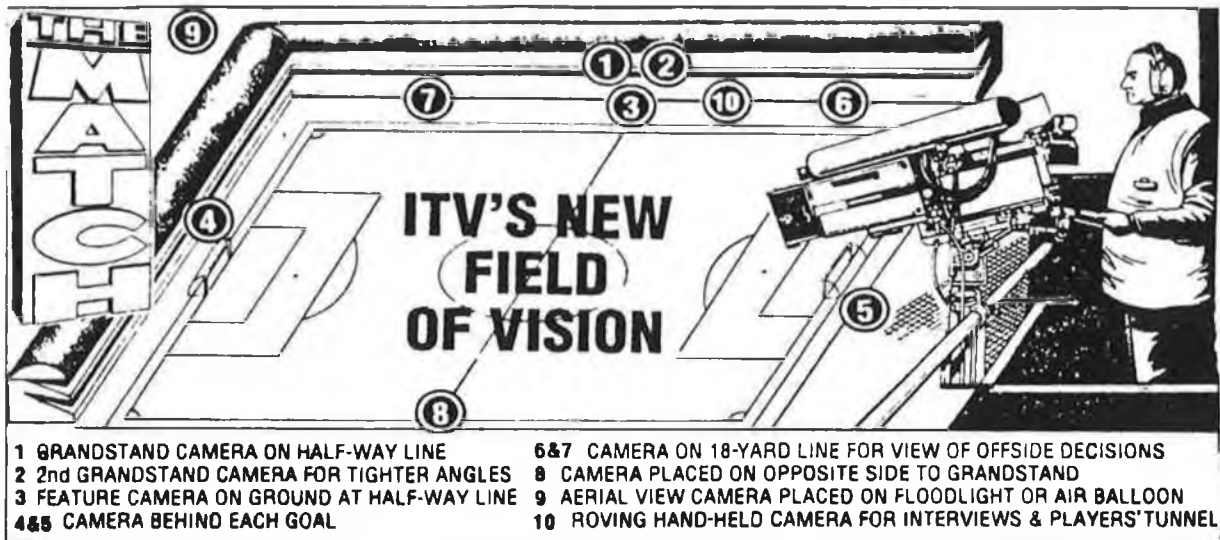


Figure 1 The Observer 23/9/88 In 1988, ITV's The Match began to cover football using ten cameras, (as opposed to the previous maximum of eight cameras) in order to provide a snappier more exciting coverage. ITV had just secured exclusive TV rights to cover English league and Littlewoods Cup football for four years at the cost of £11 million pounds a season.

Goldlust (1987), has noted that the two major types of sports presentation fall into either the more journalistically orientated coverage given by public service organisations such as the BBC, or the show-biz sensationalism of the commercial networks, specifically the American stations. In recent years however the distinction between the two systems has become less clear cut. The adoption of the American style treatment of sport, with its rapid cutting, overbearing commentary and show-business hype, has become increasingly evident as television stations attempt to maximize their share of a fragmenting audience. The economically driven desire to present sport in such a way as to attract the "floating" viewer, and thus secure advertising revenue has resulted in an insatiable desire for television to show action sequences using a multiplicity of camera angles (See figure 1). In turn this has increased the differences that exist between spectating at a sporting event, and viewing the mediated spectacle on television where a visual and verbal narrative is continually being structured. The world wide Americanisation of sports presentation on television seems to have accelerated in the wake of the coverage of the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles and looks set to continue.(2)

By using RTE TV's coverage of the competition it is hoped to expand on the discussion above, not only by highlighting the way that television has transformed the representation of sport, but also by focussing on two interrelated aspects of this process in particular. They are televised sport as a site of secular ritual, and how this in turn plays a key role in the process of constructing and reproducing a sense of communal and national identity within Ireland.

In examining the treatment given to the tournament on British television (BBC/ITV) it allows us to compare and contrast the extent to which TV coverage of the same sporting event may vary from country to country. By using the Republic of Ireland versus England match as a case study, many of the themes mentioned above can be examined in concrete terms, while themes such as the portrayal of the Irish on British television can also be placed against this backdrop. Before turning to the coverage itself some background information about the tournament is required.

Euro 88

The European Soccer Championship is an international soccer competition played between the countries of the continent. The final stages of the tournament consists of the eight countries who had qualified through their respective groups. In international European soccer terms the competition is second in importance only to the World Cup. The 1988 finals were held in the Federal Republic of Germany between the 10th-25th of June. The Republic of Ireland had qualified for the final stages for the first time and had been drawn in the same group as the Soviet Union, The Netherlands and the tournament's second favourites, England. It was the first time that the Irish Republic had played England in the latter stages of any international soccer competition.

For RTE Television it was also the first time that they had covered a major international soccer tournament in which the Irish Republic were actively involved. British television had long been used to covering a tournament in which at least one of the "home

countries" had been involved.(3)

Previous scheduling problems between the BBC and ITV which had resulted in simultaneous broadcasts of the same matches had by this competition been resolved, with England's games been screened alternatively between the channels. In part this agreement was in recognition of the declining viewership for soccer on British television, with further fragmentation of the audience being particularly harmful to the size of ITV's share of advertising revenue.(4)

Sport is also used by television as an important weapon in a station's armoury in the increasingly competitive battle to secure advertising revenue. While sport rarely features at the top end of the rating charts, it can attract respectable viewing figures outside peak viewing time. As was evident from the Tam ratings achieved by RTE's coverage of the European Championships, sport can get and hold large audiences for major events. In Britain however the ratings for the competition were in general very disappointing for the television producers (See Table 2 overleaf).

Both countries received identical pictures of the tournament from Germany. While BBC and ITV did use their own crews at the England matches (these were used to insert shots of England players into the main transmission and carry out post match interviews), by and large the visual material was identical. RTE, not having the resources of the British channels, relayed a large number of the games from both BBC and ITV. Thus for matches not involving the Irish, and unable to be covered by RTE's second commentator, the station simply transmitted the game carrying the British commentary. Let us now turn to the broadcasts of the Republic of Ireland and England match.

Pre-Match Entertainment

The technology now available to broadcast television both changes our experience of drama inherent in the live event and creates an entirely new dramatic event. (Morris and Nydahl, 1985: 101)

Table 2

Television Viewing Figures For The 1988 European Soccer Championships

RTE Television: Tam Ratings

	Position	Tam Rating	No. of homes in thousands
RTE 2 v England, week ending 12th June	1	42	391
RTE 2 v Soviet Union, week ending 19th	1	51	477
RTE 1 v Holland, week ending 19th	1	47	449

BBC/ITV Coverage of England Matches

National Top 100 Ratings

	Position	Millions	TVR
ITV v Rep. of Ireland, Fri/Sun, 12th	43	6.5	13
BBC 1 v Holland, 15th June	58	5.1	10
BBC 1 v Soviet Union (Highlights) Rep. of Ireland v Holland (live) 18th June	83	3.7	7

Analysis. BROADCAST. 8th July 1988

"ITV attracted the largest football audience of the week, (12th-19th) with 7.9 million viewers tuning in on Wednesday evening to see highlights of the England v Holland match. Although this was 1.3 million viewers more than the BBC 1 football achieved, it is still two million viewers fewer than ITV attracted with a "normal" schedule...

However given England's current prowess on the football field it is possibly not surprising the (sic) Emmerdale Farm and Coronation Street have greater appeal."

The opening game of Group 2 between the Irish and the English teams was broadcast live on RTE and ITV on the afternoon of Sunday June the 12th. The BBC carried edited highlights later in the evening. Television continually underplays its own mediating role in

the coverage. The need for television to legitimize its presence at the tournament is of central concern in the pre-match build up. This need to justify the station's coverage of the event results in a barrage of superlatives that describe the atmosphere, and amplify the grandiose nature of the spectacle the viewer is about to witness.

All the stations began their respective programmes with their own opening titles. In televised soccer these tend to consist of a montage of action shots of goals being scored, near misses and over exuberant tackles. This cavalcade of action is accompanied by fast rhythmic music giving the opening titles at times the feel of a pop music promotional video! Television has highlighted what it defines as being the important parts of soccer, and the viewer is promised excitement, drama, spectacle and the prospect of a "good show".

Both live broadcasts (RTE/ITV) opened with their respective anchormen (for in TV sport it is invariably a man) setting the scene. The anchorman performs a vital multi-functional role in televised sport. He naturalizes both the language that is used and the televisual techniques that are incorporated by the medium. He becomes not only a TV professional, but a sports fan, friend and supplier of facts, figures and information. He provides the avenue of access into the programme and continually works to keep these channels of contact open. The use of we, meaning production team, is balanced with you, the recipient audience. He also crosses the spatial divide as he becomes like us a sports fan: "We can now join our commentator.."

On RTE, Bill O'Herlihy commented that the game was,
The most important soccer international played by the Republic of Ireland. (RTE 2
12/6/88)

While on ITV Nick Owen introduced a discourse that would enjoy varying degrees of prominence within the hierarchy of discourses evident in television's coverage of the tournament, that of the threat of potential crowd trouble in Germany.

A big day for Irish football, a crucial one for the English. If our footballers fail to perform on the pitch it could be the end of our hopes in the European Championships. If our supporters fail to behave off the pitch we could become the outcasts of world football. (ITV 12/6/88)

The presenters display two of the characteristics of television's treatment of sport, that of audience building by forging points of identification with the viewer, and the legitimization of TV's presence at the match. O'Herlihy continued,

(It is) a great historic moment for Irish football...(a)..marvellous moment for the whole of Ireland. (RTE 2 12/6/88)

On ITV Nick Owen informed the viewer that

the eyes of the nation are focussed on events in Stuttgart. (ITV 12/6/88)

An historic dimension is attached to the event. We are, it appears, going to see history unfold before our very eyes. The event is framed for the viewer by television in a particular way that offers drama and excitement.

Political and cultural tensions in Ireland and Britain disappear as television helps build on the myth of a unitary culture through the ritual of a shared cultural experience. As Chaney (1986) has noted there is a tendency for secular rituals to link the social order to notions of assumed social stability.

..the essence of ritual performance is to affirm the experience of a collectivity which would otherwise have only an ambiguous cultural location. (Chaney, 1986: 116)

What televised sport achieves, is the presentation of sport as a form of ritual that heightens the sense of communal links between individuals, and the collective identification of these individuals with the political and cultural community of the "nation".

If, as Anderson (1983: 15) suggests, the nation, "is an imagined political community", then television sport, especially at an international level, is an arena where individuals who have never met can feel part of a wider community. We will be returning to this as we move through the analysis of the coverage.

From television's standpoint the need to "hook" the viewers and keep them watching is of the utmost importance. The fostering of the partisan viewer, who identifies with a particular individual or team, helps to facilitate this institutional requirement. In TV's coverage of international soccer, the framing of the event is in part completed by the panel of experts who appear before, during and after the match.

Expertly Speaking

..the expert is to lend us his framework, we are to see through his eyes. He is to tell the story and we are to listen. (Tudor, 1975: 153)

Nick Owen was joined in the ITV studio by Brian Clough, the Nottingham Forest manager

and experienced football TV pundit. Also there was Ian St John, ex-Liverpool player now turned ITV football presenter. BBC TV also drew heavily on the established "media culture" of footballing experts, with Tottenham Hotspur's manager Terry Venables and former Manchester United and England player Bobby Charlton (brother of the Irish manager Jack) in the studio being quizzed by anchorman Des Lynam.

RTE's Bill O'Herlihy was joined by the former Irish international player and manager John Giles, accompanied by another former Irish international of more recent years, Don Givens. These respective line ups emphasise the symbiotic ties between the "world" of football and the "world" of television. We are presented with the seemingly unitary world of televised football, with its familiar faces and agreed rules on what constitutes a football "expert".

In turning to the actual pre-match discussion the superior tactical analysis was carried out on RTE. Both Giles and Givens drew attention to specific areas of the England team that they thought would cause the Irish problems. Giles was particularly astute in his highlighting of the relative strengths and weaknesses of the two teams involved, concluding that rationally England should win.

ITV in contrast devoted little time to a tactical analysis of the game. In keeping with television's desire to secure the largest possible audience, not just the committed sports fan, ITV promised an entertainment show. Stars, action, human drama and it appeared, with the potential crowd trouble in Germany, the possibility of some violence thrown in for good measure. When the station did turn to the match in hand it attempted to personalize the game by focussing on the two managers, Jack Charlton of the Republic of Ireland, and England's Bobby Robson. It was during this part of the broadcast that we saw one of the themes emerge that was to run throughout British TV's coverage of the tournament. This was the way that the Irish team was continually referred to, and made sense of, in terms that emphasised its English connection through its English born manager. "Jack Charlton's Ireland" became in effect England's adopted team, consisting as it did of some players who had in fact been born in England and with the majority playing their football in the Scottish

and English Football Leagues. This process of adoption had been evident in the pre-tournament build up. The Radio Times of the 11th-17th of June began an article on the Irish as follows,

From the upper reaches of the English and Scottish leagues, with scarcely an Irish born player among them, comes the Republic of Ireland squad. Tony Gubba looks at the pack to be shuffled by Jack Charlton.....they do provide a wealth of self inflicted comic relief....Indeed the hardest thing to find is an Irish accent.
(Radio Times 11th-17th, June, 1988)

This theme was one that also established the links between the two countries. On ITV, club teammates who would be opposing each other were highlighted. It appeared that what separated the Irish and English was minimal, when contrasted with what they had in common.

ITV also gave prominence to the potential "hooligan" problem involving travelling English supporters. Owen presented the issue as a clearly defined "law and order" problem in football. Brian Clough ruptured this treatment by noting the social nature of the problem, claiming that,

(any trouble that occurs) is no different to what is happening throughout the country. (ITV 12/6/88)

However any possible discussion of the social nature of the problem was swiftly by-passed with the framing of the debate by the British Minister of Sport Colin Moynihan. He was himself at the tournament in Germany and his main concern seemed to be with the potential damage that violence would have on Britain's image abroad. Back in the studio Ian St John, a Scot, was extricating himself and his fellow compatriots from this English problem by telling Nick Owen,

If your fans don't behave, you could get kicked out of Europe. (ITV 12/6/88)

It was obviously time to reconstruct the unitary nation and move onto the football.

ITV's pre-match discussion of the Irish team consisted of a filmed report from Elton Welsby who had travelled with the Irish squad for ITV. His report consisted of a series of hackneyed and cliched terms informing the viewer that the Irish were relaxed, carefree and obviously here to enjoy themselves. This stereotyping of international teams and national characteristics will be picked up in more detail later in the chapter.

In the London studio the lack of Irish accents among the players interviewed was

joked upon. (Depends on who you ask !) As ITV took a commercial break, Nick Owen told the viewers that,

The atmosphere is really building up at the Necker stadium, and we will be right amongst it - next!. (ITV 12/6/88)

Television it seemed was going to bring the excitement into our living room. Having promised us action, drama and history in the making all we had to do was: keep watching.

The Main Event

A key element in television's transformation of sport into a televisual spectacle is that of narrative construction.(6) As in other areas of television production, televised sport loves to tell stories and impose a narrative order on events that, as in the case of live sport, are inherently unpredictable. Having looked at the initial framing of the event by the stations, we now turn to the match commentary itself.

ITV had deployed their senior commentator Brian Moore who was accompanied by former Manchester United manager and ITV Sport regular Ron Atkinson. RTE's coverage saw George Hamilton provide the verbal interpretation of the match in Stuttgart. With Hamilton the "Irish day out" began as the teams came out onto the park. Although impossible to tell from the video tapes I've listened to, Hamilton assured the viewers that the Irish fans gave a louder cheer to their team than their English counterparts gave to theirs. As the camera panned the crowd, he continued to discuss the fans and how they, ..have come from all parts of Ireland...to be part of this historic occasion...it seems that nothing else matters in Ireland but this match. (RTE 2 12/6/88)

Hamilton then pulls in the discourse of potential/actual crowd trouble.

There were arrests last night, the vast majority were of English supporters who had been misbehaving...there has been precious little trouble from the Irish as predicted by the police chief. He reckoned that the Irish were here to enjoy themselves and that certainly is the story. (RTE 2 12/6/88)

The distancing of the Irish from the English, both as a team and a country was a recurring theme in the RTE television coverage. As already mentioned, British television tended to emphasise the links between the teams and place the Irish and English together opposite the rest of Europe.

As if to emphasise this division, Ron Atkinson on ITV told the viewers that the continentals,

..are going to get a typical British game played on their own soil, (ITV 12/6/88)
(the word continentals being a television "soccerspeak" term used to help differentiate the English from the rest of Europe.)

What we witness is the ability of television to transform an international sporting event into a wider ideological process. It attempts to construct a sense of social stability by offering a focal point with which individuals can relate and use as an index that marks out one country from another. Televised sport can help on certain national and international occasions to,

establish a public consciousness of collective identification through the creation of secular public rituals celebrated by a set of ceremonial events that will symbolise the validity of the social order and reconfirm the collective identification of the populace to the principles upon which it is based. (Goldlust, 1987: 130)

The importance that television places on the ceremonial ritual of the national anthem is one such example.(7) For the moment however we return to the commentary.

Domestic soccer commentary either in Ireland or England tends to be impartial in nature. The commentator occupies a neutral position, but this changes at coverage of international events. Both the Republic of Ireland and England became unproblematically described by their respective commentators as us or we. Pretensions of neutrality are dispensed with as the commentator becomes a fan along with the partisan viewer that television attempts to encourage. This was particularly evident in Hamilton's commentary, yet unconsciously he managed to highlight some of the contradictions running through "the Irish day out" when commenting on the Irish goal scored by Glasgow born Ray Houghton whom he called,

..the little Scot..we are one nil in front, can you believe it? (RTE 2 12/6/88)

Over on ITV Brian Moore described the goal as,

..a shattering blow for Bobby Robson's men...a shock lead. (ITV 12/6/88)

Throughout the opening half Atkinson had commented on the no-nonsense style of the Irish team, explaining the pattern of the game in a spurious pseudo-scientific language

of tactical analysis that television legitimizes as both authoritative and accurate. The English players were referred to at times by their nicknames as used by the tabloid press in Britain. Again we witness television helping to construct the unitary world of football: a place with its own stars, nicknames and language.

By half-time Hamilton was ecstatic, Moore concerned. Back in their respective studios the "experts" made sense of it all. ITV's Nick Owen simply asked, "What's happening?" The half-time discussion centred on the non performance of a number of English players. On RTE Giles gave an accomplished structural (tactical) appraisal of the half, noting the disciplined and technically competent nature of the overall team performance.

ITV and BBC did eventually comment on the disciplined and professional character of the team. This cut against their portrayal of the Irish off the pitch as a happy-go-lucky, fond-of-a-few-drinks-type group of players. This contradiction and the seemingly miraculous transformation that came over the Irish when they took to the park was never resolved throughout television's coverage of the competition. The breaking down of national stereotypes was to prove as difficult for the TV pundits as the Irish defence would prove for the English team in the second half.

During this half George Hamilton became fully intergrated into his role as the Irish fan,

..we are concerned..we can thank our lucky stars..we come away with the ball.
(RTE 2 12/6/88)

With the final whistle, and an Irish victory, televised sport once again became the site of dreams and stories (in this case fairy stories) and we could all celebrate. Hamilton continued,

Jack Charlton schemes the victory we all dreamed of, but few of us believed would happen..the whole of Ireland rejoices. (RTE 2 12/6/88)

However on ITV a "day of great sadness" was already being reworked as Brian Moore helped create the framework within which the English viewer could adopt the Irish, and thus keep watching the tournament. It was, we were reminded, an Englishman who had masterminded the victory with a team full of familiar Scottish and English league players.

In the ITV studio the result was greeted with dismay and disbelief. A sporting superpower (in the eyes of the British media) had been humbled: "How can it be?" asked Owen. England, the viewer was assured, could still qualify and we would just have to wait for the next match. On RTE Giles gave an even headed analysis of the result, putting it in context by noting that while it was nice to beat England it was more important that they had won their opening group match.

Televised sport helps to make sense of the event when it is over. In the case of major sporting events such as the Olympics and the World Cup which run over an extended period of time (in the case of the football World Cup this can be four weeks), the story reaches an open ended interim climax which will be resolved in subsequent broadcasts. While the Irish-English match was now over, the important effect that the result would have on each team's chances of reaching the semi-finals meant that the match would be continually referred back to as the tournament progressed. What we wish to do now is to turn our attention to some of the general trends that were evident in television's treatment of the fifteen day tournament, while also expanding and developing some of the issues raised above.

The Continentals

..the Soviet Union are always dark horses, disciplined and strong, and the Republic of Ireland will come here to enjoy themselves.

(Bobby Robson, England manager, The Guardian, 13/1/88)

Throughout the competition all three channels attempted to find the ethnocentric hook that they hoped would keep the elusive "floating" viewer watching. Wherever possible the other six European teams were placed within a framework of reference that connected them to the Irish or English teams. ITV employed ex-Italian league player Trevor Francis as their European expert, while BBC's Terry Venables, having once managed the Spanish club Barcelona, was portrayed as their "Euroexpert".

Both stations displayed televised sports tendency to stereotype and personalize

when dealing with international sporting teams. It appears that assumptions about the characteristics of European countries are deeply embedded in the "cultural capital" that television carries with it to these sporting occasions. Thus the Danes are "brittle", the west Germans "methodical and organised", the Soviets "dark and unsmiling" and the Italians and the Spanish are "fiery and unpredictable". On one occasion during the Italy-Spain match, ITV's Ian St John suggested that the poor form of one of the Italian players was due to the fact that he must be eating too much pasta !

In the build up to the Irish Republic's second group match against the Soviet Union, ITV's Elton Welsby began his filmed report by stating,

We think we have found a Russian spy. (ITV 15/6/88)

What followed was an interview with Irish international Tony Galvin who has a degree in Russian Studies. RTE was also guilty, although not to the same extent, of simply reproducing accepted myths and prejudices about other countries. George Hamilton's reports before the Soviet Union match were riddled with "cold war" rhetoric and references to the unsmiling and unfriendly Soviets. Admittedly the Soviets did little to enhance their image by refusing to conform to the demands of the western media for interviews, photo-opportunities and the like. The Dutch were also annoyed by the intrusive nature of the media, however they did not receive the "bad" press that was given to the Soviet Union team.

British television's tendency towards an arrogant and English centred view of the sporting "world" was also evident with regard to their analysis of the football played in Germany. It was only when it became obvious that the Dutch would reach the final that it was admitted that they could "teach us a thing or two". Little attention or analysis was paid to the variety of diverse footballing cultures that exist throughout Europe. RTE's Giles and Givens did examine patterns of play, and the role of the individual within a collective structure. The emphasis on individualism, even in team sports, is one of the major discourses articulated in television's treatment of sport.

Television sport always attempts to justify its initial framing of the event even if, as

is often the case, this proves to be wildly inaccurate. Individual players who have been highlighted before the event, and then in the eyes of the experts fail to live up to their pre-match billing, are heavily criticised. The coverage given to the Dutch player Ruud Gullit was one such example. His overall contribution to the team was ignored, except by Giles and Venables, with the other experts claiming that he had never fulfilled his potential. It appears that by nominating and highlighting "stars" television creates a story for itself even if the player "fails", and if the individual is outstanding then television has a success story. This nominating of players in the pre-match analysis becomes not simply a personalizing of the game, but a central technique in providing televised sport with the opportunity to do what it likes most, which is to tell stories that it hopes will keep the viewer watching.

Sportspeople exist, or so television would have us believe, in a classless environment. This group is portrayed as individuals who have achieved success through hard work and dedication, they are the rule, not the elite exceptions. The idea that anyone can achieve or attain the level of success that this group personify is of course a fallacy, yet in the classless "world of sport" anyone, regardless of background, can reach the top. We will return to this topic when we examine the increasing commercialisation of sport in the following chapter.

England Out

With the ending of England's chances of qualifying for the semi-final stages, the adoption of the Irish as surrogate sons of England was pursued with vigour by both ITV and BBC. The fact that most of the squad played their football in England was highlighted, and the anglicization process was completed by the fact that manager Jack Charlton was himself English.

When the Irish played the Dutch in their final group match, still in with a chance of reaching the semi-finals, it was this match and not the English game that was carried live by BBC TV. Both British stations were unequivocal in their support of "Jack Charlton's

Ireland". Once again the need for television to encourage the viewer to take up a partisan position, in the hope of securing and holding their attention, becomes a vital strategy in the competitive rating war. What we will turn our attention to now is the treatment RTE and BBC/ITV gave to the civil disturbances involving English supporters that occurred during the tournament, and place this within the wider constructions of national identity that was evident in all three stations' coverage.

Panic On The Streets

Prior to the competition much space had been devoted by the press, both in Ireland and Britain, to speculating on the possibility of crowd trouble in Germany involving travelling English fans. Following the Heysel stadium disaster in 1985 in which thirty nine Juventus supporters were killed when a wall collapsed as a result of crowd violence involving Liverpool fans, all English clubs had been banned from European competition. Supporters of the English national team had acquired a reputation as trouble makers following numerous incidents on mainland Europe, the most recent having occurred in Spain, Denmark and Switzerland.(8)

As Nick Owen's opening comment had made clear, the possibility of English clubs being allowed back into European club competitions was clearly on the line. As is the pattern of most hooligan incidents at football today, and was the case in Germany, the trouble has been displaced from inside the stadium to outside. Fighting involving English supporters occurred throughout the tournament in a number of German cities.

The coverage of the hooligan problem by British television was typical of TV's treatment of violence that occurs in or around sporting venues. These incidents were defined as a problem inherently exclusive to football, and as a sporting problem. There was no attempt to place the problem within a wider social context, all that was heard was the political call for stiffer penalties for those involved. There was certainly no examination

of the role that the media itself play in helping to amplify the problem, nor their ability to characterise what is generally perceived as being the irrational behaviour of "the football hooligan".(9)

BBC TV gave much prominence to the Minister of Sport, Colin Moynihan, who stressed that if the football authorities did not deal with the problem then the British government would have to step in themselves. This has subsequently proven to be the case.(10) The disturbances also made prime time national news in Britain and Ireland. The reporting was factual, however the underlying theme was one of incomprehension at the apparently irrational and violent behaviour of the English fans. The debates were framed by the government official who once again would call for the introduction of even more stringent power to punish the offenders.

Televised sport seems incapable of treating any issue as a social problem. Such is the insular nature of television's "world of sport" that much of the debate actually centred around the likelihood of the English national team being banned from international competition.

RTE, while perhaps feeling that the problem was not of their concern as no Irish supporters had been involved in the trouble, did provide a classic example of televised sport's tendency to separate the fictional "world of sport" from reality. (11) Bill O'Herlihy;

..and for six hours there was no talk of football at the European Football Championships..(There followed an ITN report of fans involved in street fighting)...those are the images that will isolate British soccer even more..it is a terrible commentary on English football and the supporters they have.
(RTE 2 15/6/88)

Here then was an English footballing problem that the Irish did not have, and that for six hours had stopped the football talk. It was clearly illogical, anti-social and not Irish.

Having dealt with the problem and emphasised another difference between the Irish and the English, they could now turn our attention to the really important matter in hand, Ireland's progress in the tournament.

Men only

A woman should be in the kitchen, the discotheque, or the boutique - not in football. Football is a man's game. There aren't any women managers and I can't

see there being any. They'd be slaughtered. (Ron Atkinson, Sheffield Wednesday manager and ITV Sport expert, The Guardian 10/6/89)

Another theme embedded in television's coverage of sport in general, and soccer in particular, is the construction and reproduction of masculine and feminine characteristics that are conducive to the continuing of a patriarchal society. Sport, as portrayed on television is a male world where women's sport is treated as being of secondary importance. Women in sport are made sense of by continually attaching supposedly feminine connotations to their activity.

Both in production and content, football on television is a male dominated arena. The sexual division of labour is clearly articulated: men play, women watch. If women are accommodated into the discourses of televised football they are treated in both a marginal and trivial manner. Football as portrayed on television remains a bastion of male identity. Television's coverage of the tournament simply reproduced aspects of what supposedly constituted masculine characteristics such as competitiveness and aggression.

Speaking on the role (or lack of it) of women in the production side of televised soccer, John Bromley, then Controller of Sport on ITV commented,

I can't see a woman fronting The Match (ITV's live soccer programme) on a Sunday afternoon because the audience would be uncomfortable..women, with great respect do not play soccer at any level, in the park maybe, but not at any level and the audience would not accept it...(women) shouldn't be involved in a major (soccer) presentation on television. (Fairplay, Channel 4, 12/3/89)

In stating that male values are reproduced in this area of television output, there is a realisation that many of the values are embedded in the sporting activities themselves, and the sub-cultures that have evolved around them. However television does not simply relay these themes but brings its own institutional codes and value system to bear on the sports that it covers. These values have increasingly found themselves converging with those that exist in the sports coverage of the popular press both in Britain and more recently in Ireland.

During television's coverage of the tournament there was evidence of an increasing trend towards the penetration of (and legitimate status given to) the tabloid press's treatment of sport. This section of the press has become a reservoir of language from which television can draw, and an agenda setter which defines the most important sporting issues

of the day. The press have become the primary definers of television's sporting news values. Both ITV and BBC panels displayed this tendency in the importance they attached to the tabloid press's coverage of football. The assimilation of this "tabloid talk" into the mainstream of television discourses plays a crucial role in limiting the agenda to that which exists on the back pages of the popular press.(12) The interrelationship between the press and other broadcast media has always been evident. A developed analysis of the symbiotic ties between the sports coverage of the press and television would reap fruitful dividends.(13)

In general terms RTE's panel discussions did manage to expand on the limited agenda that pre-occupied British television. As the coverage of the competition finished on RTE TV, the panel congratulated itself for providing a cliché free environment. However as both the tabloid section of the Irish newspaper market increases, and the competition from other sports programming stations on RTE intensifies, the station may find itself under increasing pressure to conform to the dominant TV sports values of British television in order to secure its share of a fragmenting audience.(14)

Having highlighted some of the themes that ran through television's treatment of the championships, including their tendency to "nation-build", we turn our attention specifically to this aspect of televised sport.

A Nation Once Again

A sense of unity conferred by the feeling of belonging to the nation, cutting across class, ethnic, gender and other loyalties is, perhaps, the very lynchpin of a hegemonic system, and the media are, arguably, the most important institution reproducing national unity today. (Hargreaves, 1986: 154)

The quarter of a million or so people who took to the streets of Dublin to welcome the return of the Irish soccer team (who had failed to qualify for the semi-final stages) were not primarily motivated by an interest in football. These people had not been to Germany. They had witnessed the matches in various locations throughout Ireland via television and

radio, yet the out pouring of national pride was as strong as if they had attended the matches in person.

Political leaders have never been slow to tap the resurgence of national pride that accompanies individual or team success on an international stage. The Taoiseach, Charles Haughey was on hand to welcome the team at Dublin airport, as he had been at the finishing line of the Tour de France cycle race to congratulate Irishman Stephen Roche on his winning of the competition. The links between the political elite and sport has a long history that is not of direct concern here.⁽¹⁵⁾ What is of interest is the way that television has taken aspects of sporting competition and reconstituted them into a wider cultural and ideological construction of national stability.

Within a domestic arena, the pinnacle of the Gaelic games season is the All-Ireland Hurling and Football finals that take place in Croke Park during September. It is an occasion that television portrays as the coming together of the Irish nation to participate in its national games. In the absence of royal patronage, as in the English Cup final, there is the presence of an array of dignitaries including the President, the Taoiseach, leading members of the Catholic Church and members of the main political parties. The pageantry of the pre-match band and the playing of the national anthem all help to create a concrete image of a national community.

Television mediates, legitimizes and amplifies aspects of this complex process that symbolically unites the rural and urban community, as well as pulling together the cultural nation around a focus of national stability. The All-Ireland finals have of course pre-dated television. Radio coverage has been available since the 1920's, with the finals only becoming regular fixtures with the formation of the State in 1922. Through the televised sporting ritual a feeling of history and unbroken tradition is invoked: a national way of life.

As Chaney notes,

Rituals are a representation of the collectivity, a collective performance in which certain significant aspects of social relationships are given symbolic form and force.(Chaney, 1986: 122)

In the Republic of Ireland televised national sporting events can provide an arena through which nationalistic feelings can be vented in an unproblematic manner. The political

channelling of this nationalistic energy proves more problematic for the populace. Sport seems to provide an essentially "safe" channel of national self expression: "safe" in terms of political stability because it tends to mask the political and structural changes that need to occur within the whole of Ireland if subordinate groups are to exercise more power over their own lives. While not putting forward a "bread and circuses" scenario, it is important to understand the role that the media play in constructing sport as part of a national psyche that ultimately reinforces the dominant political system.

The role of television in transforming specific sporting events into national spectacles and political (in its widest sense) ritual is of course not unique to Ireland. The American Superbowl Final has been described as a marriage between the electronic media and sport that,

..structurally reveal(s) specific cultural values proper to American institutions and ideology; and it is best explained as a contemporary form of mythic ritual. (Real, 1977: 92/93)

Ann Karpf, writing about the BBC coverage of the Wimbledon Tennis Championships, notes how the economic structures which underpin a major sporting event are ignored by television in order to preserve the mystique of the event.

The BBC's Wimbledon is like part of the heritage industry, inducing a glow of cultural cosiness...its an icon of unchanging continuity and social cohesion. For two weeks in summer..its the thirties again (with)..the BBC as cultural authority and keeper of the national social calendar. (Karpf, 1988: 5)

What has become evident from our discussion is that the vast global communications network has not eroded television's ability to foster a particularly insular view of national importance. The key point being the ability of the country that is receiving the pictures of the event to control the verbal interpretation of these images. These images are increasingly being selected by American television as they use their economic power to secure television rights for sport around the world.

Televised sport is not the apolitical arena that TV likes to portray it as. Embedded in it are values and ideas about the social organisation of society. Television has increasingly transformed our own perceptions of sport at both a domestic and international level. Due to the nature of the medium, television offers a representation of "actuality". As Whannel comments,

These processes of transformation cannot be grasped through analysis of representation alone, but require also analysis of the alarmingly direct relation between economic relations and cultural production that have come to characterize this sphere. (Whannel, 1984: 107)

It is to this analysis that we now turn our attention.

Chapter 4

A Sporting Triangle: Television, Sport, and Sponsorship

The pre-eminent place held by television in the minds of governing bodies looking for sponsors, may be explained because to them, the ten letters of the word sound like money. (The Howell Report, 1983: The Media, 8.5)

Introduction

The television/sport/sponsorship axis dominates the way that sport is developing today.

The interrelationship between the media (especially television), sport and the business and commerce sector, is both complex and global. What I wish to do in the next two chapters is to attempt both to tease out some of the major characteristics evident in this relationship, and to highlight some of the implications for the future development of sporting activity of such a process. By briefly tracing the evolution of this nexus, we can examine how it has come to restructure both professional and amateur sport throughout the world.

In investigating the explosion that has taken place in sports sponsorship in recent years, and the central role that television has played in this development, we will initially turn our attention towards Britain. Due however to the global nature of this phenomenon, reference will also be made to developments both in America and Australia. In the latter part of this chapter our attention will focus on the Republic of Ireland, where we can examine how many of the global trends and alliances that have evolved over the last twenty-five years or so are just now becoming evident. We can not understand the nature of sports sponsorship in the Irish Republic today, without tracing its international evolution. Initially it is to the development of the commercial television/sport/sponsorship alliance that we turn.

A Word From Our Sponsor

A triangular relationship has developed in recent years that has come to dominate the

economic structure of modern sport. Sports governing bodies, sponsors and television have become intertwined in an alliance that has transformed sport in Britain and Ireland. Professional sport in Britain today relies on commercial sponsorship for its financial survival. Sponsors are keen to secure media exposure, the most desirable being television, thus sports are desperate to achieve a television space, for their sport and their sponsor(s). As this pattern develops it seems that sport is increasingly becoming an adjunct of the advertising industry. Why has this come about?

Sporting activity has always had a contact of sorts with commercial sponsors. Initially this took the form of aristocratic patronage. By the 19th century it involved members of the landowning classes becoming involved in popular recreation through patronage. This was perceived as a means towards the promotion of social order, as well as providing an opportunity to increase the standing of the landowner among the lower classes.

In Britain, the later part of that century saw a fundamental reorganisation of sporting activity along both professional and commercial lines. Mass spectator sport as we understand it today evolved during this period, although not without class conflict and tension (1). Many of the sporting bodies that exist today were founded during this period. As the commercialisation of popular activities increased, reflecting the commercial opportunities that the new industrial urban environment offered to some, so capital's penetration of sport deepened. As patronage declined due to the economic and social dislocation caused by the development of industrial capitalism, so commercial sponsorship increased. Two of the most popular spectator sports, football and cricket, enjoyed varying degrees of contact with commercial sponsors (2). However, this level of sponsorship would seem miniscule when compared with the expansion in this area that was to occur during the 1960's.

A number of currents and cross-currents were responsible for the sudden growth in the level of sports sponsorship that was to occur from this period onwards. (One major factor was the financial crisis that professional sport found itself in as a result of the falling

revenue that accompanied the decline in attendances. During the early 1950's over 40 million people regularly watched professional football in Britain. By the 1960's this had declined to under 30 million, and despite a brief resurgence after the English World Cup victory in 1966, attendances continued to drop. This pattern was repeated in all the major spectator sports in Britain.) Gate receipts provided the main source of revenue for these sports. The shift away from spectator sport was part of a wider shift in the leisure pattern of post war Britain. Leisure was becoming increasingly domestically orientated and withdrawing from the public sphere. As the British economy enjoyed a period of relative buoyancy the increase in discretionary income resulted in the development of a more aggressively commercial pattern of leisure activity.

By the 1960's, the capacity of the leisure public to pay, and what it could pay for, had been extended still further. (Clarke, Critcher, 1985: 79)

Sport suddenly found itself competing for the public's attention in an increasingly competitive market place.

Allied with this was the internal structure of the sports governing bodies themselves. Most of the organisations were still run along amateurist and paternalist lines and incapable of dealing with the problems that the changing nature of leisure activity posed to their sports. Against the backdrop of these changes, it was the banning by television of cigarette advertising in 1965 that provided the incentive needed for major corporate involvement in sports sponsorship. Many of the initial corporate sponsors of televised sport were those companies who viewed sponsorship as a way of securing television exposure, not only on commercial television, but also on the "advertising free" public service BBC TV. During this period sport was particularly vulnerable to the overtures of the commercial sponsor. A sport's ability to secure television coverage thus became a key factor if it wished to attract potential sponsors.

Television has always viewed sport as an important part of its schedules. Sports programming proved to be cheap, popular and easily scheduled. (3) The relationship between sport and television has always tended to favour the medium, although there have of course been numerous benefits for particular sports. Television has come to dominate

the relationship. Sport tends to need television rather more so than the medium feels it needs sport. Professional sport has become financially dependent on commercial sponsorship, and this means securing television coverage. The fees that sport receives from television, although initially disproportionately small, can now be considerable and provide an important source of income (See chapter 5). Sports governing bodies will go to any lengths to accommodate television.

In 1966, sports sponsorship accounted for less than one million pounds of the revenue received by sport in Britain. By the mid 1970's this figure had risen to £16 million (1976) with a further growth to £46 million by 1980. In 1987 the amount of money generated by commercial sponsorship had jumped to over £150 million, and is continuing to spiral. As already mentioned cigarette sponsors such as Benson and Hedges, (cricket and snooker), and John Player (cricket and motor racing), had used sponsorship of televised sport as a means of evading the television ban on cigarette advertising, and obtaining "piggy-back" exposure on BBC television. Such was the success of these arrangements for the sponsors involved, that the range of sponsors began to grow.

The reasons why companies choose to sponsor sport vary. They can be looking to achieve an increase in the public profile of the company, as well as increasing public awareness of the product/services that the company offers. The association of the company/product in the minds of the consumer with a particular sporting image is also a factor in determining which sport companies may choose to sponsor (4). Durex became involved in the sponsorship of motor racing as part of the company's strategy to "normalise" their product! Sports sponsorship has also proven a very cost effective means of achieving these aims. Major corporations also use sport as a place at which clients can be entertained. The growth of corporate entertainment through the "tented villages" that now accompany major sporting events is another manifestation of the increasing links between business and sport.

Derek Etherington, then consultant on sponsorship to the British Sports Council, told delegates at a Sponsorship/Sport Seminar in 1982 that,
sport is, in its own right, a communications tool...sponsorship is a marketing

tool, therefore it should be of use to all involved in marketing (and used)..as an extension of marketing and public relations. (Etherington, 1982: 4/5)

Corporations have clearly defined aims in sponsoring sport. As capital penetration of sport has increased, there has been a corresponding growth in the consultancy agencies who link the sponsor with the sport. These agencies have become the new power brokers in the alliance between sport and commerce, helping to provide the linkage points in the television/sport/sponsorship axis. As Hargreaves has noted,

These institutions are a vital ingredient in the process of fusing sport with business interests, and their spokesman are among the most vigorous and vociferous proponents of commercializing sport. (Hargreaves, 1986: 119)

Worldwide the largest of these agencies is Mark McCormack's International Management Group (IMG). McCormack's initial interest in sports management evolved around golf. Gary Player, Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus were three of his first clients. Soon his organisation began to diversify into other sports such as tennis, while he used his sporting and business contacts to help facilitate the development of the television arm of his empire, Trans World International. This company is now the largest independent producer of sports programming in the world (5). Today IMG is a global marketing and management consultancy operation. Not only does it manage top sportspeople, but through its TV arm, TWI, it creates televised sporting events for over a hundred corporations world-wide. In 1984 it was estimated that IMG's income was in excess of \$200 million.

Sports governing bodies employ such agencies to find sponsors for their sporting events, and to sell both the television and arena advertising rights to potential clients. West Nally is another of the major broking agencies in world sport specialising in the selling of television rights of sporting events to the American networks. Television becomes of central importance in these increasingly protracted financial arrangements.

Running Money

They (television and sponsorship) have created a situation where you have on the one hand a handful of millionaires and on the other thousands of paupers. (Ron Pickering, Athletics coach and BBC TV commentator, Irish Independent, 6/6/87)

In Britain during 1984, ITV outbided the BBC to secure the exclusive television rights to cover domestic British athletics. The deal was worth £10.5 million pounds to the British

Amateur Athletic Association (BAAA) over a period of five years, and ended the BBC's monopoly of domestic athletics coverage. An important element in ITV's bid to secure the rights was the change in the IBA's directive on advertising during coverage of sponsored events. This now allowed sponsors of the televised event to advertise during the commercial breaks that pepper ITV's coverage. Sponsors were also allowed to buy advertising space on the perimeter hoardings that surround the athletic track and enjoy prominence in the televised coverage. This decision was seen by the BAAA as vital in securing the interest of major sponsors, while ITV benefited by obtaining crucial advertising revenue from the event sponsors.

What was interesting was that ITV insisted on there being a clause in the contract, which suggested that the organisers of the events should offer "financial inducements" to the top athletes in order to guarantee their appearance for the TV cameras. (Thus maximising ratings and advertising revenue for ITV). Athletics, in theory an amateur sport, was willing to be dictated to by television in order to secure exposure. This demand by ITV was later changed to read that the "best endeavours" should be made to attract the top stars. However the intention was clear, television having paid out a substantial fee, was determined to guarantee a return on its expenditure, even if this meant undermining the integrity of a supposedly amateur sport (6).

As a result of the new television deal, the AAA employed a relatively new marketing consultancy group, Alan Pascoe Associates, to attract and liaise with companies interested in sponsoring televised athletics. With the now guaranteed television exposure the attraction of sponsors was not difficult. Kodak, Pearl Assurance and Peugeot-Talbot were some of the major sponsors who got involved with the sport.

In 1985 the Pascoe group helped put together the staging of the most hyped athletics "head to head" running event since the Steve Ovett, Seb Coe clashes at the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games (7). Zola Budd and Mary Decker who had met in the L.A Olympics were to meet in a staged for television re-match at the Peugeot-Talbot games held at Crystal Palace. The meeting was extended to two days to accommodate television

coverage, TV rights were sold to the USA, and Ms Budd was promised £90,000 regardless of her performance in the 3000 metres (which was a poor 4th). The Olympic champion was not invited to take part because television was only interested in staging the first track meeting of the two athletes, Budd and Decker, since their controversial clash in the Olympic final.

ITV, anxious to launch a new era in televised athletics, were clearly attempting to attract the largest possible audience, by hyping a staged mis-match, which had little to do with athletic ability and everything to do with television, ratings, money and show-business.(8)

By 1987, Alan Pascoe Associates, under the wing of the publishing group Wight, Collins, Rutherford and Scott, had an annual turnover of £3.5 million and a profit margin of approximately half a million pounds. Little of the money that moves between sponsors, consultancy groups and governing bodies filters to the grass roots of the sport. Increasingly sport is just one more area of human activity that is seen as a purely economic relationship. It is not a process unique to athletics.

For Men Who Play To Win

Barry Hearn's Matchroom organisation has been at the forefront of the development of snooker around the world.(9) Hearn manages eight of the world's top snooker players, including the six times World Champion Steve Davis. In conjunction with television production companies such as Trans World International and Trillion, he moves around the globe putting together tournaments for television. Matchroom supply the players, the referees, the match commentators, the sponsors, and through contractual agreements, the tables: the complete package. This form of corporate commodification of sport has little to do with sporting aesthetics, it's about selling. The Far East was an untapped market ripe for the selling of snooker accessories especially with the market in both Britain and Ireland having reached saturation point. The battle is on to penetrate new markets around the

world and Hearn leads the way. Hearn's transformation and dominance of the snooker scene has drawn him into long and protracted legal battles with the sport's governing body the WPBSA. In the last year the WPBSA has attempted to wrestle the initiative from Hearn by employing IMG to market and set up WPBSA sanctioned tournaments abroad, with varying degrees of success. Matchroom and Hearn, having diversified into boxing management and promotion, remain undeterred,

..our job firstly is to go into the country with the sport. On the back of that we will obviously intend to sell sports related products and related products which we (Matchroom) market ourselves which are not necessarily sporting. This is a very simple plan. (Barry Hearn, from interview with author, April 1987)

We will be returning to these ever closer linkages that are evolving between sport, sports "stars" and consumer capitalism later in the chapter.

Dictating Sport

Increasingly television dictates when, where and in what form sport can take place. The list of such examples of the economic stranglehold that television has over some sports would prove exhausting if reproduced here. Some brief examples are required to highlight this growing trend. The 1988 World Heavyweight boxing title fight between Frank Bruno and the American Tim Witherspoon which took place in London, was staged at midnight in order to suit the American networks who were showing the fight live. In the global fight to secure the television rights for sport, the American networks dominate. (10) The east coast of the USA is the most densely populated part of the country, thus offering the audience that advertisers are anxious to reach, and television to provide.

Major sporting events are staged to suit American television anxious to secure a return, through advertising revenue, on their capital outlay used in buying the television rights. In the case of the football World Cup, it has been up to now European television that has called the tune. The 1986 finals in Mexico saw some of the matches being played during the hottest time of the day in order to provide European television with prime time live football. In cricket, television's insatiable appetite for more "entertaining" forms of sports programming resulted in the development of the one day game, to the detriment

some would say of the longer more traditional Test matches.(11)

Such is the importance that sports place on their ability to secure television exposure that rules are changed or altered to suit the needs of television. American Football is overtly tailored to fit neatly into the pattern of advertising breaks on American television. Indeed, such is American television's desire to guarantee a resolution of the sporting contest, that a number of rule changes in various sports ensure that the matches can't end in a draw.

Snooker matches are now shorter to suit television, cricket has one-day internationals, a one-day World Series, and a limited overs Sunday League competition initiated by television. During the 1988/89 English soccer season, the Football League lengthened the half time interval of league matches that were being shown live and exclusively on ITV's Sunday programme The Match. This allowed ITV to maximise the amount of advertising space it could sell during its coverage. Sponsors can now pinpoint exactly the type of audience that televised sport attracts, and target their sponsorship accordingly (See table 3).

Before turning our attention specifically to the effects that these trends are having on sport in the Republic of Ireland, it may prove helpful to examine on an international plane the extent to which the economic alliance between television and sponsor has transformed major sporting events into multi-million pound (dollar!) corporate advertising extravagances. Let us examine the Olympic Games.

The Hamburger Games

Listen buddy we're ABC Television. We bought the Olympics, and we can do what the hell we like.

(ABC cameraman, The Winter Olympics, Sarajevo, February 1984)

The growth of televised international sport is inexorably bound up with the developments in satellite and video technology, and how the medium has used these developments to enhance the spectacle of sport on television. With the launching, in 1962, of the first communication satellite Telstar, a new era of international sport was about to be embarked

1988 TV VIEWING FIGURES FOR SPORT

Sport	Total viewers (000s)	% of viewers made up by men	% of viewers made up by women	% of viewers made up by AB adults *	% of viewers made up by 18-24s †
American Football	81578	50.96	36.76	13.20	15.26
Athletics	208003	43.56	46.73	13.54	7.73
Badminton	3446	48.43	39.29	15.99	14.68
Baseball	4738	52.72	34.63	11.06	20.50
Basketball	14426	47.21	40.52	14.81	13.83
Boating	17768	46.29	43.76	17.14	10.39
Bowls	93343	47.81	48.03	11.64	3.88
Boxing	86940	48.78	42.93	8.70	9.92
Cricket	230375	55.25	38.71	13.81	6.74
Curling	3895	46.26	44.42	13.97	13.45
Cycling	32000	48.32	38.81	17.41	14.18
Darts	88609	46.75	46.01	7.55	8.62
Equestrian	37172	39.66	53.40	12.28	7.59
Football	320675	51.47	38.17	11.82	10.21
Golf	119023	50.67	44.45	17.67	6.28
Gymnastics	13554	33.57	45.64	10.33	11.94
Hockey	3684	42.59	42.92	9.17	8.71
Horse Racing	181489	48.80	45.97	10.89	5.92
Ice Skating	71567	36.29	57.15	12.84	8.00
Modern Pentathlon	855	36.26	46.08	10.18	16.61
Motor Racing	58269	49.05	38.56	14.27	11.48
Olympics	652375	42.23	48.11	12.40	10.21
Roller Skating	2021	35.77	47.15	6.68	12.82
Rugby	57847	55.69	35.27	21.69	8.14
Skating	25775	44.69	39.74	21.64	10.29
Snooker	697834	45.00	40.00	11.94	5.89
Street Hockey	3334	45.80	38.12	10.50	13.65
Sumo Wrestling	25262	42.79	43.50	10.83	14.85
Swimming	1745	40.63	39.60	13.81	16.68
Table Tennis	2336	47.47	31.93	17.04	15.07
Tennis	159417	38.60	55.48	17.81	8.89
Various	1123458	48.05	42.48	12.08	8.48
Volleyball	5983	40.10	34.65	8.54	12.07
Windsurfing	595	34.96	55.80	13.61	10.25
Wrestling	107448	45.75	41.34	5.91	10.13

Source: AGB Sports Watch BARB * 8% of UK population † 14% of UK population

Table 3 The above appeared in Marketing Week (7/4/89), as part of the research findings of an investigation into sport on TV.

upon. The 1964 Tokyo Olympics were received, via satellite, in 39 countries. Developments in colour television during the 1960's, and video technology also enhanced the quality of picture that television could offer the viewer thousands of miles from the event.

The battle between the American television networks to secure the rights to screen these major events has resulted in an upward spiral in the amounts of money each network is willing to bid for the event (See table 4). Linked with this rivalry has been the growth in the corporate sponsorship of major televised events, guaranteeing as they do a world wide audience of millions. The 1986 World Cup Final was watched around the globe by a television audience of 500 million. This capital penetration of international sporting events reached its apex with the holding of the 1984 summer Olympic Games in Los Angeles. Such are the massive costs involved in staging the games (Montreal is still paying off the

Summer Games

Winter Games

1960	CBS	0.4m	ROME	CBS	0.05m	SQUAW VALLEY
1964	NBC	1.5m	TOKYO	ABC	0.6m	INNSBRUCK
1968	ABC	4.5m	MEXICO	ABC	2.5m	GRENOBLE
1972	ABC	7.5m	MUNICH	NBC	6.4m	SAPPORO
1976	ABC	25m	MONTREAL	ABC	10m	INNSBRUCK
1980	NBC	87m	MOSCOW	ABC	15.5m	L. PLACID
1984	ABC	225m	LOS ANGELES	ABC	91.5m	SARAJEVO
1988	NBC	300m	SEOUL	ABC	309m	CALGARY

Table 4 Fees (in dollars) paid by American network TV for USA television rights to the Olympic Games

debt it incurred during the hosting of the 1976 Games), and with the realisation that the spiral in television fees was levelling out, the organisers targetted alternative sources of revenue. These would be found in the private sector.

Select corporate sponsors would become official Olympic sponsors marketing their products/services under the Olympic logo. In L.A. there were 30 official sponsors paying between \$4 and \$15 million for the privilege. Among the largest of this elite group were, Coca-Cola (official Olympic drink), MacDonalds (official caterers), Kodak (official film), Levi-Strauss (official clothing), Visa (official credit facilities!), Anheuser Busch, (Budweiser, official alcoholic drink!) and so on.

Allied with this, the sponsors involved also bought much of the advertising space available throughout ABC's television coverage of the games. For instance Coca-Cola and Levi-Strauss between them bought \$70 million worth of air time in addition to their sponsorship deals. The Olympic stadia are one of the few international sporting arenas that do not carry perimeter advertising. (12) While the International Olympic Committee (IOC) feel that this helps to preserve the "pure" athletic atmosphere within the stadium, one wonders how long the IOC can resist the pressure from sponsors to relenquish this policy.

This contradiction between overt commercialism, and the mythical aura of sporting activity presents an interesting dilemma for television, governing sports bodies and potential sponsors. The apolitical "world of sport", full of mythical heroes, that television likes to portray becomes increasingly difficult to substantiate as capital penetration of sport becomes more overt. The 1984 L.A Games were a celebration of corporate capitalism, an

area where human activity was transformed into an economic process that fuelled the consumption of corporate goods and services. It was a process that television both mediated and played a crucial role in sustaining. Sport has become synonymous with corporate image, television entertainment and consumer capitalism.

The Olympics have become an elite forum that reproduces the dominant ideals and values associated with a consumption orientated social system. In turn this brings unforeseen problems for those involved in this process. As Whannel has commented,

The dilemma faced by the IOC is that in the very act of selling the Olympic image they inevitably dilute its veneer of purity and hence its commercial value.
(Whannel, 1988)

The 1988 Olympics held in Seoul, South Korea, highlighted another problem associated with this commodification of high performance sport by television. NBC, having paid \$300 million to secure the USA television rights, then found that audience figures were not as high as those they had promised to the advertisers. As a result of the reduction in the cost of advertising, NBC increased its advertising slots, with a corresponding decrease in Olympic action. By the end of their coverage, NBC had carried over 3,500 adverts. During the final of the men's 5000m NBC managed to miss half of the race by continually leaving for commercial breaks. (Six minutes out of approximately thirteen) The result: viewers switched off, thus lowering advertising rates and increasing the amount of commercial breaks carried by NBC, thus causing more viewers to switch off (or over) and so on. While NBC did make an \$80 million profit, not every one was happy with the coverage.

The critics complain that too much of it (NBC coverage) was choppy, repetitious, overtly orientated toward American dominated events. Whatever one's opinions, raw economics as always had a lot to do with what was shown and when. The point of TV coverage is to bring the Olympics to as large an audience as possible. The need now is to make sure the intended audience does not flee in boredom or frustration. (Los Angeles Times, 4/10/88)

Much of what L.A. achieved through its private selling of the Games has been adopted by other organisations around the world. The 1988 European Football Championships, discussed in the previous chapter, had eight official corporate sponsors (See figure 2). The global marketing strategies of these multi-nationals have become an integral part in the staging of an international sporting event. Such is the size of the

financial undertaking involved in staging these events, and the inability of the organizers to find alternative sources of funding, that this concentration of a cluster of corporate sponsors involved in sport will continue.

Expenditure on such events is not deemed a legitimate area for state involvement, especially in the prevailing economic climate where market forces dominate, and there are considerable reductions in state expenditure on welfare provision. Sports organisers have firmly set out their stall (and are being encouraged by government to do so) to woo the private sector.

In the second part of this chapter we will examine the impact of this global process of corporate sponsorship and capital penetration of sport on a number of areas: the sports involved, the spectators, and the possible impact (if any) of this process on the nurturing of national identity and nationalistic fervour that television coverage of sport helps to foster. What we wish to examine now is how the trends discussed above effect the relationship between sport, television and society in the Republic of Ireland.

Sponsorship in Ireland

Due in part to its economic and demographic structure, the Republic of Ireland does not have an environment that is conducive to professional sport. It lacks the populated urban centres needed to sustain spectator sport at a professional level. The nature of sport that has evolved in the Irish Republic has been influenced by the cultural and economic legacy of the British colonial occupation. Sport has evolved within the parameters of amateurism and paternalism.

The major sports played and watched in the country are Gaelic games, and soccer. Gaelic games, administered by the Gaelic Athletic Association, are amateur sports. They are played within the boundaries of parish and county, with each county having club and league championships, and the representative county teams playing in a national league and

JVC HI-FI & VIDEO JVC

OPEL

FUJI FILM

ITALIA

Vini

Carlsberg Beer

PHILIPS

Canon

Coca-Cola

Gillette

SEIKO SEIKO

WATCHED, ASSESSED, SELECTED. AND THAT'S JUST THE PLAYERS.



Have you ever thought for a moment how your team gets selected?

There are 3,258,000 players in the country, yet only eleven will be on the pitch for England.

SELECTING THE BEST

The final selection comes after months of looking, checking and testing the brightest prospects.

It's a similar story with the sponsors of EURO 88.

The organisers have picked companies who have the financial stamina to support the Championship right through to the final whistle.

A supply of quality products to keep everything running smoothly. And human resources to substitute, if it doesn't.

OFFICIAL SPONSOR LINE-UP

Their line-up can be seen at every EURO 88 match: Canon, Carlsberg, Coca-Cola, Fuji Film, Gillette, JVC, Opel, Philips, Seiko and Vini Italia.

These days, sporting events the size of the European Championship rely on sponsorship. It's better to have John Barnes on the wing. Rather than a prayer.




Figure 2 Advert which appeared in the Radio Times 11-17/6/88

cup competition which culminates in the All-Ireland finals held annually at Croke Park.

This amateur organisation has become closely interwoven into the fabric of local village and town life especially in rural Ireland.

Soccer in the Republic of Ireland is either amateur or semi-professional (League of Ireland). Gate receipts are minimal as attendances at league matches average well under a 1,000. The international team does however receive substantial revenue from attendances for home matches. Since their successful qualification for the 1988 European Football Championships, the team played in front of full houses during the run up to their successful qualification for the World Cup in Italy.

With the lack of an adequate spectator revenue base, and in the absence of state

assistance, commercial sponsorship is a crucial financial pillar in the economic infrastructure of Irish sport, be it Gaelic games, soccer, basketball, athletics, rugby union, snooker or whatever. Another influence on the structures of sport in Ireland is the close proximity of Britain. Soccer in particular suffers, with the attraction of professional league football on offer in England or Scotland. Clubs in both these countries view the League of Ireland, and the northern Irish League as a rich source of potential footballing talent. This process has been aided by the identification that exists with the English game in Ireland. In turn this has been fostered via television and newspaper coverage of the sport, especially in the urban centres such as Belfast and Dublin.

Both the Football Association of Ireland's (FAI) and the GAA's attitude towards sponsorship and television will be examined later, first however we turn to the more general area of sport and sponsorship in the Irish Republic. Sponsorship here operates in a different sporting environment to that which exists in Britain, and the pattern of sports sponsorship in Ireland is changing.

Between 1985 and 1988 commercial sponsorship of the arts and sport in the Republic of Ireland increased by 50%. (13) The majority of this was directed towards sport. As elsewhere the deals involve either televised or non-televised sports. The reasons why companies get involved in sports sponsorship are universal, including a host of corporate strategies linked with image, sales, public awareness and public perception. The increase in sports sponsorship in this country has facilitated the development of consultancy agencies such as those discussed earlier.

In the Irish Republic the largest such agency is Media Sports and Leisure Ltd, whose managing director is Trevor O'Rourke. He views the expansion of leisure time and the increased expenditure on leisure activities such as the sports health boom as the major reasons for the increasing interest of corporate sports sponsorship in this country. What is occurring in the Republic of Ireland is the mirroring of trends that have become evident in the British leisure economy during the 1980's.

High rates of unemployment have helped generate an oasis of "free time" for

certain sections of the population. Those sections of the work force that have enjoyed a relative increase in their discretionary income are willing to spend more of it on certain leisure activities. The linking of "lifestyles" to sports related products has coincided with the expansion of leisure services, available for those who can afford to pay. These play on the accompanying narcissistic fascination with the human body that is encouraged by advertisers. The growth of gyms and health clubs has been symptomatic of the cultural shifts in tastes that have occurred among the young professional classes.(14)

Television remains a key component in the packaging of any major sports sponsorship deal. In recent years as the advertising market has become increasingly competitive, there has been a policy shift among companies in Ireland towards the use of sport as a marketing tool.

In 1984 Datsun, the Japanese car manufacturers, changed their name to Nissan. They found difficulty, even through extensive advertising, in raising public awareness of the company and in establishing their new corporate identity in the minds of the public. By sponsoring the Tour of Ireland cycling race and changing the event into the Nissan Classic, they also received four hours of live television exposure on RTE. Such was the success of the company's venture into sports sponsorship, that by 1988 their sponsorship expenditure had risen to £500,000 punts, and through television coverage the event had secured a place in the medium's annual sporting calendar. Nissan consider it money well spent.

Some of the larger sports sponsorship deals in Irish sport owe their origins to the cigarette advertising ban mentioned earlier. Carroll's are involved in the Irish Golf Open, Rothman's in the Circuit of Ireland rally, and Benson and Hedges in the major invitational snooker tournament held annually just outside Dublin. A total in excess of one million punts is generated through these three deals, all of which receive extensive national television and press coverage. Other deals have more recent origins and witness the splitting of corporate funds between televised and non-televised sporting events. Anheuser-Busch, through Budweiser, sponsor the Irish horse racing Derby which has developed into both a media event and an elite social occasion. The event has become a

meeting place for the "great and the good" to be seen at a sort of Irish Ascot (!)

Budweiser also sponsor the Irish Universities Soccer League as well as two League of Ireland teams. A major advertising campaign has accompanied these deals, as Budweiser attempt to capture a slice of the not inconsiderable lager market in Ireland. Guinness, Heineken and Irish Distillers all sponsor a variety of sports teams and events. Digital have sponsored the home Irish Rugby Union internationals since 1984, to the tune of £400,000 punts. In July of 1989 they announced a deal with the Irish Rugby Federation Union (IRFU) that will carry this sponsorship through until the 1992-3 season at an additional cost of half a million punts. Irish rugby internationals enjoy extensive television and press coverage not only in Ireland, but also in Britain.

There have also been unforeseen benefits for the tourist industry of televised Irish sport. The Nissan Classic cycling race is shown in Europe and has almost become a Bord Failte promotional video. The Irish scenery provides the backdrop to the race, providing an image of Ireland abroad that tourist chiefs find conducive to their own marketing of the country. The Budweiser Irish Derby, also shown abroad, presents a picture of an affluent Ireland, and an economy ripe for the development of the leisure sector. The idea that in expanding the leisure economy of the country, through private capital, the Republic's economic ills can be remedied holds, it seems, much sway in government and business circles.

It appears that the Republic of Ireland is in a catching up process with Britain with regard to the capital penetration of popular activities, especially sport. Due to the lack of an indigenous professional sporting base this process has been uneven and highly selective. The increasing growth in commercial sponsorship has convinced sports that this is a profitable route down which to travel. Especially when this is viewed in conjunction with the opportunities that Irish sports have in providing material for the developing sports channels both in Britain and the rest of Europe (See chapter 5).

The multi-national companies in the Republic of Ireland, that government policy helps to entice, view sports sponsorship as a process that allows integration into the local, and national, community. Television coverage is important in this process as it helps the

sponsor reach the widest possible audience. RTE are only too happy to cover Irish sport, not simply because of its public service remit, but because it needs to attract the advertising revenue that such coverage generates.

The evolution of one of the largest sports sponsorship deals in Irish sport involving the FAI, Media Sports and Leisure Ltd, and General Motors (Opel) serves to illustrate the fusion of multi-national capital and sport that is now occurring in the Republic of Ireland.

Opel's Ireland

In 1985 the FAI was on the brink of financial collapse. Its expenditure had outstripped its incoming revenue and it seemed that an Irish sporting organisation could, quite simply, go out of business. Four years later and the FAI's annual accounts show a profit of £641,000 punts, having made a profit of one million punts on the national team's World Cup qualifying matches. With the qualification of the national team for the 1990 World Cup Finals in Italy, the organisation stands to receive up to £3.5 million punts from prize money, television rights and various commercial spin offs. In purely monetary terms, the FAI has never had it so good.)

Linked with this change in the organisation's financial health, has been the internal restructuring of the FAI. In 1986 Donie Butler was appointed commercial manager with the task of bringing business know how to the beleaguered Association. Perhaps however it has been the sponsorship deal struck with General Motors (Opel) in that same year that has really sparked the recent cash bonanza enjoyed by the organisation. The success of the Republic of Ireland national team has resulted in increased revenue accruing from prize money and gate receipts. In turn, the team's success has been due to the new team manager Jack Charlton, who was appointed in 1986, an appointment not unconnected with the Opel deal. As Peter Byrne of The Irish Times notes, the £400,000 punts deal which was spread over 5 years,

was to finance, among other things, Charlton's appointment and that of his assistant Maurice Setters. (Byrne, The Irish Times, 24/4/89)

In order to understand the recent commercialisation of the FAI we need to examine the background to one of the biggest sponsorship deals in the history of Irish sport.

In 1985, the Irish government lifted restrictions on car imports into the Republic of Ireland, with the result that the market became increasingly vulnerable to Japanese penetration. General Motor's European sales began to be adversely affected in Ireland. To counteract this trend G.M.(Ireland) drew up a corporate strategy that would attempt, in their words to, "achieve a deep level of integration into the community, socially, culturally and economically". G.M.(Ireland) saw a need to increase the public awareness of what the company perceived as their key role in the Irish economy. This strategy to emphasise success and increase community identity with the company was an integral reason for the movement of G.M.(Opel) into the sponsorship of Irish sport.

The move was facilitated and arranged through Trevor O'Rourke's management consultancy agency, Media Sport and Leisure Limited. With Ford Motors already involved in a GAA sponsorship deal, as part of its public relations drive to undo some of the P.R damage inflicted on the company with the closure of its Cork assembly plant, Opel looked elsewhere. The deal they were looking for had to be one which in their eyes highlighted the, "social responsibility of industry", a multi-national phrase that was viewed internally as particularly important in the light of the Ford/Cork closure.

While Opel turned to soccer, they made sure that the FAI would be capable of dealing with the money involved by encouraging the setting up of a commercial division within the organisation. The eventual deal with the FAI was worth at least £400,000 punts up to 1989, and has been extended up to and including the 1994 World Cup Finals in the United States, with the additional revenue amounting to half a million punts. Not content to sit back and watch their money being spent, Opel have encouraged the FAI's commercial manager in his drive to commercialise and rationalise the Association's outlook.

The 1988/9 World Cup qualifying matches which have taken place in Dublin have witnessed some of the new (to Irish soccer) marketing strategies of the FAI. The selling of tickets for the home matches in block form has brought in much needed cash before any of

the matches took place. (Gate receipts now exceed £450,000 punts per home game.) The introduction of a tented corporate hospitality village at these matches, which take place at the home of the I.R.F.U. (who receive 15% of the gate receipts), helps raise this figure for each game to £600,000 punts.)

The growth in the use of sport as a form of corporate hospitality has been one of the more overt examples of the forging of links between business and sport (See figure 3). Smurfits, together with the major banks and brewers, are all represented at these elite gatherings as the FAI attempt, in the way that some of the larger English soccer clubs have, to give soccer a more up market image. This involves moving the game away from the class origins of the majority of its supporters. Commercial manager Donie Butler (15),

It is our intention to cultivate this particular market (corporate backers) and the initial response has been encouraging. The perception of soccer in this country is changing. It is now seen as moving up market and, for all the variables, we intend to maximise that situation. It's a challenge, but one we aim to master. (The Irish Times, 24/4/89)

Central to the new regime is profit maximisation. Soccer it appears, must compete for its share of the sponsorship cake in the increasingly competitive market place. (Recent protests from fans about the allocation of tickets to corporate sponsors and clients, at the expense of other less powerful supporters, as well as questions about the exact distribution of the massive increase in FAI revenue have largely gone unaddressed. The danger looms that as the FAI becomes increasingly dependent on its sponsors, it is likely that it will be to them, not the fans, that they will have to be accountable.) Within this new sport/sponsorship axis television exposure is crucial.

The national television rights to show the Republic's international matches also generates substantial revenue for the FAI. In 1989, the Association increased the amount of money that it expected RTE to pay in order to secure the television rights (See chapter 5). Foreign television rights also boost revenue, while perimeter advertising space provides a substantial income thanks to the television exposure. At a recent friendly international (Sept. 1989) perimeter advertising generated up to a quarter of a million punts.) (A host of merchandising arrangements involving videos, books, football strips and T-shirts (carrying Opel's name), the pre-match selling of souvenir programmes and the like are all

part of the commercial process.)

In the first three months of 1989, car sales in the Rep. of Ireland rose by 27%. Sales of Opel vehicles increased by 69%. Irish soccer success on the pitch had, it seemed, been accompanied by a corporate success story of another kind.

Selling Games By The Pound

The GAA as an organisation has distinctive cultural origins (See chapter 1). They administer the amateur games of Gaelic football and Hurling. In the Irish Republic, the GAA have become ingrained in the fabric of rural life. They have become part of the Irish establishment: an institution. However the organisation is changing, and in recent years both sponsorship and commercialisation have been embraced by the Association (although not universally accepted). Rule 12 of the Association's Official Guide is highlighted in their

Directive on Sponsorship and Licensing, and states,

The Association is an Amateur Association. No player, team, official or member shall accept payment in cash or in kind or other material reward in connection with his (sic) membership of the Association, nor shall he be associated with any commercial enterprise in connection with membership of the Association... This rule shall not prohibit the payment of salaries or wages to employees of the Association.

The Association also refuses to accept sponsorship from political parties, tobacco companies and only in certain circumstances, brewers.

In 1988 the GAA appointed Ciaran O'Neill as their Commercial Manager and head of their newly created commercial division. He sees no danger to the organisation's status as an amateur association (and as self appointed custodians of Ireland's national games) coming from the commercialisation process which has been undertaken. The games can, he claims, be exploited for the good of those who run them throughout the country on a voluntary basis.

A new set of offices, costing a million punts, has been built at the GAA's headquarters at Croke Park. Extensive refurbishing is taking place at the stadium itself with current costs (July 89) running at one and a half million punts. There are also plans to build executive boxes at the ground along the lines of those that exist at a number of top



World Cup Corporate Soccer Hospitality



• WORLD CUP GROUP SIX •

Republic of Ireland V's Spain

Wednesday 26th April 1989 (Kick-off 5.00 pm)

Corporate Entertainment is the fastest growing activity for sporting events and the FAI in association with Camcorp offer you the opportunity of inviting your clients, colleagues and friends to the first ever Soccer Corporate Entertainment Facility at Lansdowne Road.

The Exclusive Luxury Marquee inside the grounds of Lansdowne is within easy reach of the covered east stand and provides an ideal venue for corporate and private entertainment.

Package Includes:

- Reserved Seated Tables (10 Guests) Complimentary Bar;
- Reception on arrival;
- Superb 4-course Luncheon with wines;
- Official Match Programme;
- Colour Television Facilities (If televised live);
- Return to Marquee for refreshments after the match;
- Seated reserved match ticket in East Lower Stand;
- F.A.I. News (Quarterly Magazine)

Cost: Reserved Seated Area £110 plus VAT per person (Minimum booking of two required)

Facilities offered subject to availability.

Closing date for bookings — 15th April 1989

WORLD CUP CORPORATE SOCCER ENTERTAINMENT BOOKING FORM

Republic of Ireland v's Spain
26th April 1989
Lansdowne Road, Dublin.

Please reserve facilities for persons

Reserved seated table — including Complimentary Bar (Minimum 10 guests)

Individual reservations (Minimum Two)

Cost: Reserved Seated Tables — £110 plus Vat per person

Name

Position

Company

Address

Telephone: Fax:

Booking Deposit enclosed £

Cheque payable to CAMCORP — FAI
10 Lower Mercer Street
Dublin 2.

Enquiries: Tel: 714211

Reservations guaranteed on receipt of 25% Deposit of total cost. Full amount payable six weeks prior to Event.

Figure 3 Advert that appeared in FAI News, Spring 1989

English football league clubs. While those involved in these projects (and the commercial merchandising of related GAA products) see no contradictions between this process and the aims and origins of the amateur games, not everybody is convinced.

As elsewhere, when money flows into any amateur organisation problems are bound to arise. The players who are playing at the highest level, sacrifice much in order to attain success, however their reward is not financial. Increasingly top players look at other

sporting codes and see the financial rewards players receive in return for their skilled labour. Sean Kilfeather comments,

There are many good reasons why amateurism should be protected in the GAA and the most potent reason is that the strong point of the GAA is its parochialism in the purest meaning of the word. Parish rivalry, extended to country boundaries, is what gives the games of Gaelic football and hurling their special appeal. Professionalism would very quickly destroy that and with it the games themselves. (The Irish Times, 10/6/89)

Commercial manager Ciaran O'Neill feels that the sense of county pride that is felt by the players will always be the overriding reason for playing at the highest level. However as the problem of GAA players playing for financial gain in the US remains unresolved, one wonders if by embarking down the road of commercialism the GAA may have made one of the most important decisions in its history.

Television and radio coverage are of immense importance to the Association. Not only do they provide the games with a national platform, but they ensure that sponsors, such as Bank of Ireland and Royal Liver, receive adequate exposure. With television coverage, the perimeter advertising at Croke Park brings in over £200,000 punts annually. The relationship between the GAA and RTE is also changing as another potential Gaelic games buyer looms on the horizon in the shape of the new national commercial television network (TV3), due to come on stream in 1991. This development will be discussed in the next chapter, for the moment it is sufficient to say that the increased competition to secure the TV rights to the audience pulling games, has strengthened the GAA's financial bargaining position with RTE.

The Association are also looking for a major sponsorship deal with an Irish company that would involve them in presenting the All-Ireland Gaelic games semi-finals and finals (all of which receive live television and radio coverage). The sponsor would also advertise during the commercial breaks in the broadcasts and have extensive name checks and perimeter advertising. The cost would be one million punts over three years, and plans are under way to attract a sponsor for the 1990 All-Ireland series. Such a suggestion 10 years ago would have been viewed as an act of heresy, (in some quarters it still might be!). Today it is just another example of the ever closer links that exist between sport and business in the Republic of Ireland.

Where Only The Sponsored Survive

We are winners, we win in a very professional manner, we intend to keep on winning. Exactly what you want your company to be.
(Barry Hearn, Sports Entrepreneur, April 1987)

What I wish to do now is to examine some of the implications for sport of the developments that have been outlined above.

Commercial sponsorship wants to be associated with success. Sponsorship of this type is not patronage and companies expect a commercial return on their involvement in sport. Despite the claims made by many "socially responsible" companies that they sponsor non-televised community events, this aspect of commercial sponsorship remains minimal when compared with the total revenue allocated to sponsoring televised sport. In Britain it has been estimated that sponsorship of youth sporting events accounts for 0.5% of the total sponsorship budget.

One wonders what would happen to the FAI/Opel deal if Irish soccer success should stop, or the team and its supporters attract some unpleasant publicity. What the sponsor gives, the sponsor can take away. Money tends to follow the successful high profile sports. Image becomes all important to the sport, with their financial survival becoming dependent on their ability to attract favourable media coverage.(16) As the sponsor becomes more important, the need to sanitise the televised image of the sport increases. This can also effect individual sports people. The recent withdrawl of a number of sponsorship deals from Scottish middle distance runner Tom McKean, followed tabloid press revelations concerning his private life. Athletic ability alone is no guarantee of commercial backing.

Sport, along with television, are keen to avoid any hint of controversy. At the 1986 Commonwealth Games held in Edinburgh, the local council was forbidden by the organisers to fly a flag that displayed their support for the black nations who, as a protest against apartheid, had boycotted the Games. At televised athletic meetings in London, the now dissolved Greater London Council found it impossible to buy perimeter advertising

space to display their "Ban Apartheid" message. Sponsors and television want any trace of "politics" kept out of their packaged televised events.

As money flows into Gaelic Games and Irish soccer the need for the organisations involved to openly inform the public as to the uses that this money is put to becomes vital if suspicion and misunderstandings are to be avoided. Sports organisations have never seen themselves as purely profit maximising businesses, however this is changing. As the importance of commercial sponsorship increases so does the ability of the sponsor to, if not push, then certainly nudge the sport in particular directions. There appears a need to restate who exactly sport is being run for.

Purchasing Sport

At an international level we also see the major sporting sponsorship deals increasingly becoming concentrated in the hands of a number of trans-national companies. To these companies the sponsorship of sport and the arts is part of a wider strategy to diversify into new markets and seek new areas of profitability. Television and sports sponsorship have helped pull elite performance sport into the mainstream of consumer capitalism.

Sporting cultures involve the consumption of related products that offer a way into these sub-cultural groups. It is a lifestyle that is up for sale. The images and ideas that television and the press offer about sport (as discussed in chapter 3) are transformed into the economic activity of production and consumption.

For instance, the snooker and boxing management agency Matchroom, market, among other things, a range of toiletries which carry the logo, "For men who play to win". The emphasis on winning, masculinity and individualism are presented in a product that allows you to be part of that lifestyle offered by the televised sports stars. If you want to be like them, you start by smelling like them! As has been noted,

The masculine image itself becomes a commodity which can be acquired through a series of exchanges between sport and advertising images, the linked product and the consumer. (Morse, 1983: 61)

It is important to emphasise the way that the advertising image is constantly reinforced through television coverage of the sport.

While the positioning of the viewer vis a vis the sporting event is structured by the nature of the medium, the purchasing of goods and services endorsed by the televised sports "star" provides almost an interim stage of contact. By purchasing, and of course you may not, the viewer is making a psychological as well as a seemingly physical contact with the "star" and the sport. A system of production and consumption is not only endorsed, but naturalised. Your "freedom to choose" and ability to buy into certain lifestyles is of course determined by a number of constraints, not the least of which is your financial status (See footnote 14).

The recent jogging boom has facilitated the growth in sales of related merchandise that advertisers attempt to convince the runner that they must have. Yet while this has been the commercial aspect of the marathon/running phenomenon there have been a number of positive dimensions in this development, one of which has been the attempt to move away from the overriding preoccupation that dominates sport today: winning at all costs.

While winning has always been an aspect of sporting activity, the increasing commercialisation of sport has amplified the importance that has become attached to success. Sporting success has become equated with financial solvency. Television's thirst for "entertainment" has also led to an infatuation with elite and successful sporting individuals and teams. Sponsors target their resources towards the top of the sporting tree. The concern over the use of drugs in sport has tended not to connect this alarming growth industry with the increasing commercial incentives on offer to the top sportspeople who succeed.

The increasing linkages between sport, television and commerce has also witnessed a convergence of the values that are supposedly held to be dominant in sport. The close relationship between sport and television also inhibits the space available for critical debate about the effects on sport and sporting subcultures of television's commodification of this aspect of popular culture into another area of light entertainment. As Tony Mason points out, with regard to British television and sport,

It is not merely the task of the sports departments at the BBC and ITV to celebrate sporting achievement, it should also be their job to treat sport with the same degree of inquisitiveness that they would apply to the National Health Service or the British aerospace industry. (Mason, 1988: 57)

In an earlier debate on sport on television, Mason had succinctly noted that,

Anything on which BBC TV is prepared to spend half its summer budget on deserves the sort of penetrating analysis never found on Sportsnight.
(The Listener, 5/6/86)

Television's treatment of sport as an activity that occurs in some apolitical vacuum is increasingly being challenged by the very process it has helped facilitate. As links between the "world" of business and the "world" of sport become more overt, so the separation of these worlds becomes more difficult to sustain. Rather than being an arena free from the economic structures that dictate our working environment, sport is also seen as being subject to these self same influences. While sport has always operated within the economic parameters of the social system that it finds itself in, television has denied this in its representation of sport. As capital penetration of sport, both amateur and professional increases, this facade becomes more apparent.

With sport becoming more subservient to the demands of capital, does this detract from its ability to act as a national focal point around which ideas of the nation can be constructed? In the next chapter we will discuss the impact on this process of the fragmentation of national television audiences that is occurring in the new broadcasting environment. For the moment it should be clear that sport, especially indigenous sport, is a crucial element in a national broadcasting network's portfolio, as it attempts to maximise its audience. Despite the increasing dominance of American television in the coverage of major international events, the ability of national stations to control and provide the verbal interpretation is absolutely crucial. For it is this process that plays a key part in transforming televised sport into a wider ideological construction.

While people become ever more cynical of sport as an arena of unsullied heroes and moral integrity, there is no reason to believe that sport will not remain an area in which a fostering of nationhood and national identity is one of the prerequisites of its coverage on television and in the press. Sport as a projection of the nation, remains an area of stability in an ever changing world.

In the Republic of Ireland, despite its unique sporting structures, sport is becoming more commercialised. However there remains in that country an opportunity to develop sport without severing the cultural roots of the activity from its indigenous base. In Britain, the US and elsewhere this process has been embarked upon and is at varying stages of development. The recent moves at the FAI and the GAA suggest that the lessons to be learnt from other countries who have placed sport firmly within the television/business axis have been ignored. With regard to recent developments in Australia, John Goldlust notes that,

In the process they (TV and Business) arrogantly sweep aside any consideration of the organic significance of these games (cricket and Australian Rules Football), as collective social and cultural resources, representing to many people deeply meaningful community traditions, identities and relationships. To those who appropriate sport as their own property, it is just another potentially lucrative entertainment commodity.
(Goldlust, 1987: 171)

What would be the cultural implications of such a process on Gaelic Games? Will what little say spectators have in the running of the sports that they have helped to sustain through their paying custom, continue to be eroded as sport is ever more forcibly pulled into the orbit of business and commerce?

Television views sport as another part of their entertainment programming that offers potential audiences to the advertisers. The economic environment that television finds itself in helps to shape the nature and character of the programmes it broadcasts. It also dictates what sports should be shown and how they should be presented. It is to the changing relationship between sport and television in the "new" age of broadcasting that we finally turn.

Against the backdrop of the developing satellite broadcasting stations and the accompanying erosion of public service broadcasting both in Britain and the Republic of Ireland, we ask what does the future hold for televised sport? What effects will these developments have on television sport's ability to provide a point of collective social stability? As sport enters the "3rd age of broadcasting" does the future offer an age of plenty for sport, or an era which will see the final dislocation of sport from the sporting

sub-cultures that have sustained it over the years?

Chapter 5

Sport in the Age of Satellite

The action never stops on Eurosport, the station where the fan is the winner.
All mainstream sports are covered. (Sky TV Promotional literature)

In this final section we intend to develop some of the points made in the previous chapter, by examining the shifting relationship between television and sport that is emerging in the changing broadcasting environment of the 1980's. We will briefly highlight some of the key political and economic impulses that are shaping the present broadcasting climate. The development of the satellite and cable delivery systems has been accompanied by a sustained attack on the concept of public service broadcasting. These attacks tend to have originated from the protagonists of a market driven broadcasting structure. We will be examining this process both in Britain and Ireland and locating changes in the sport/TV nexus against this backdrop.

The 3rd Age of Broadcasting

In Britain the post 1945 consensus which existed on a range of economic and social issues has been ruptured, in part, by the rise in the New Right. The concept of the public sphere be it in broadcasting, health or education has continually been attacked by the ideologues of the Conservative Party who found their position strengthened with the ascension to power of the party in 1979 under Margaret Thatcher.

In the case of broadcasting, this ideological attack has been driven by a wider economic hypothesis that has helped speed the re-regulation of broadcasting throughout Europe. This process has been underpinned by a belief in the primacy of market forces and laissez-faire economics.

The key to economic recovery in the crisis ridden economies of the western world lies, it is believed, with the high technology and information manufacturing and service industries. These sections of the economy will provide, it is hoped, the basis for economic recovery. As traditional industries have declined, and the manufacturing base of these economies has been eroded, the "information economy" has been presented as the cure to all ills. Broadcasting has become a key area in this economic project. The broadcasting industry is viewed as a primary user of these technologies, and thus a stimulating source of demand for the manufacturing base. It is hoped that the advent of satellite and cable delivery systems will help to kickstart life into an economic recovery based on a post-industrial, high-technology orientated economy.

One off shoot of this tenuous economic blueprint has been the shift towards viewing broadcasting in purely economic terms as opposed to placing it primarily within a cultural context. The future economic development of the EC has been placed in pan-European projects, with television identified as part of the information and technology sector.

As the market place becomes the sole arbiter in deciding the ownership of various media, the 1980's have also witnessed the growth in global multi-national media conglomerates. As Rowland and Tracey note,

This process signals a fundamental shift to a globally orientated multinational broadcast enterprise that is answerable to no government nor any national, or even international policy authority. The forces of commercialisation and privatisation are everywhere and nowhere, making them increasingly beyond check. (Rowland and Tracey, 1988: 36)

The new television entrepreneurs have been encouraged by government policy to move into this particular area which they view in terms of profit maximising industries. The de-regulation and re-regulation of the broadcasting sphere in Europe has been heralded as a new age. As Murdock notes,

These initiatives have enabled new entrepreneurs to enter markets they were previously locked out of and helped them to exploit the opportunities offered by new technologies relatively unhampered by many of the traditional public interest requirements. At the same time, public broadcasters have been obliged to become more market orientated. (Murdock, 1989: 31)

It is these multi-nationals, aided and abetted by government, who are setting the broadcasting agenda for the 1990's.

Later I will turn my attention specifically to the changing broadcasting climate in the Republic of Ireland. For the moment however let us examine the impact of pan-European televised sport (which has been available since 1984) on television's ability to foster national identity through sporting coverage.

Broadcasting To Europe

Pan-European satellite broadcasting has been a financial disaster. Rupert Murdoch's Sky Channel closed its European offices in January of 1989. By this time Murdoch had turned his attention towards the British broadcasting market which was in the process of being fundamentally restructured. It also marked a move towards a DTH (direct to home) system of delivery. By 1989, the then Chief Executive of Sky Television, Andrew Neil, could declare,

We see Sky as a British popular entertainment channel. (cited in Collins, 1989: 367)
It appeared that while the pan-European dimension in broadcasting held much appeal to advertisers, the publics of Europe responded with less enthusiasm.

Despite the programming schedules of the ITV backed SuperChannel and such like stations, language remained a key cultural barrier that hindered the creation of an homogeneous European viewing public. Sky TV, launched in 1982, had experienced the same resistance, as cultural and linguistic tastes varied from country to country. As Mulgan comments,

Europe remains a continent of heterogeneity, of violent struggles over meanings, languages and histories. (Mulgan, 1989: 34)

One area of pan-European television programming that seemed to offer the best possibility of transcending cultural differences that existed between countries was that of sport.

The major pan-European sports channel was Screensport, which was first transmitted in 1984. The parent company is W.H. Smith TV. Its footprint covered northern and western Europe and it was relayed along with Superchannel and Sky Channel via cable throughout Europe. Despite Sceensport being the most popular of the new channels it

wasn't a success story. With ESPN, the American sports cable network, having a 25% stake in the venture, and the ABC Network also being a supplier of programmes, much of the channel's output was of U.S. sport. The majority of the channel's nine hour daily output consisted of an uneven mixture of quality events, such as live Spanish first division soccer, and, more often than not, substandard sporting events such as a seemingly endless stream of American truck racing. Quite simply, Screensport did not offer anything that was not already available on the terrestrial stations. With the launch in February 1989 of the Murdoch funded Eurosport, and the proposed launch in March 1990 of BSB's (British Satellite Broadcasting) sports channel, both of which will be beamed direct to your home via private satellite receiver, it appears that the rules are about to change.

Sporting Battles: Games Without Game Shows

The launch in February 1989 of the Astra satellite carrying Rupert Murdoch's DTH Sky channels, supposedly heralded a new age in consumer choice for the television viewer. As the battle to entice people to buy an Amstrad built dish receiver got under way (amid a chronic lack of dishes in the shops), it was first run movies that were held up as the major enticement to the potential viewer. Sky's all sports channel, Eurosport also featured prominently in Murdoch's promotional material.(1)

BSB who have secured the British DBS franchise will begin beaming down from its satellite in the spring of 1990.(2) Included in its initial five channels is a sports channel that will begin broadcasting thirteen hours of sport a day. Unlike Eurosport which like Screensport beams across north west Europe, BSB will be aimed (literally) at Britain and Ireland. The existing terrestrial channels provide 2,800 hours a year of sports coverage. When BSB is up and running this figure will rise to an astounding 16,500 hours per annum.

Suddenly the governing bodies of sport have found themselves with a number of potential clients for their product. The competition between the terrestrial channels and the

satellite stations has also seen an intense rivalry develop between BSB and Eurosport, as each attempts to build up its sporting portfolio. However to view this as a straightforward fight between the channels on the ground and those in the air is to misunderstand the situation. There is no simple dichotomy of terrestrial and satellite sport, the picture is more complex. The background to the recent (Sept. 1988) English soccer TV deal helps to illustrate this point.

The marriage between English soccer and television has always been an uneasy relationship. With the decline in the TV ratings for football on television that occurred during the late 1970's being accompanied by a feeling among football's governing body that television was getting soccer at too cheap a price, the two partners fell out completely in the early 1980's. Football disappeared for a while from Britain's television screens. When it returned a new arrangement had been reached. BBCNTV paid the disgruntled Football League £3.1 million a season for the rights to screen soccer. For the first time television would allow shirt advertising, and there would be a move away from showing recorded highlights to screening "live" matches.

When the contract came up for renewal in 1988 the broadcasting environment had changed. BSB, under their chief of sport Bob Hunter, were interested in securing the rights to televise English soccer, and were prepared to offer more than the terrestrial channels. The summer of 1988 found football, not for the first time, making the front pages of the national press as each party outbid the other. At this stage the BBC had joined forces with BSB in an attempt to secure exclusivity, this resulted in the final termination of the Corporation's uneasy arrangement with ITV.

Greg Dyke, then Chairman of ITV Sport, attempted to negotiate directly with the first division clubs that he thought would be the biggest audience pullers. This would involve television paying the major clubs directly, and thus deny the rest of the league a piece of the television cake. The threat of a breakaway "super league" involving the twelve biggest clubs in the first division seemed a real possibility. The alarmed Football League took out a high court injunction preventing ITV signing a separate deal with the clubs involved.

By the end of the summer the Football League accepted the ITV offer of £44 million

over four years. This gave the network exclusive rights to league and Littlewood cup matches. Having previously been in receipt of just over £3 million a year, the League now found their coffers swollen by £11 million per season. While ITV now had twenty-one live matches a season, the BBC and BSB had, at a cost of £30 million spread over five years, secured the rights to cover F.A. cup games and England's home internationals. This deal had been negotiated with the Football Association.

ITV, having spent that amount on securing the television rights to football, launched their live Sunday soccer programme The Match amid a blaze of publicity. It was felt that the programme needed to attract an audience of eight million viewers to justify the financial outlay. After one season in which the league title hung in the balance until the very last minute of the very last match (which ITV covered) the TV ratings averaged out at about seven million.(3) The coverage has offered nothing new to the armchair supporter, but has ensured a screen monopoly for the five big first division clubs with little being seen of the rest of the league. Many within the network would like to extricate themselves from a deal that has meant financial cutbacks in other areas of programming, however season 1988/89 saw ITV secure £22 million worth of advertising revenue for its Match slot, a profit of £11 million.

Since that deal, BSB has bought the rights, although not exclusive, to screen twenty Scottish league and cup matches, as well as the international team's home games. This has been at a cost of £12.25 million which will be spread over three years.

What we see is a BSB policy to work with terrestrial channels with regard to its sports programming. Andrew Croker, head of sports programming at BSB and Adrian Metcalfe, former commissioning sports editor at Channel 4 and now head of Murdoch's Eurosport channel, both view their stations as not being in direct competition with the terrestrial channels. Adrian Metcalfe explains that

..terrestrial television has become much more concerned with ratings. (Sport) is being pushed to the margins..(Eurosport) will not be competing (with),but complementing the Beeb and ITV.. (The Independent, 2/2/89)

This highlights another change in sports programming. No longer is sport guaranteed a place in the schedules, if the ratings are not deemed high enough, it will be dropped. ITV

have axed a number of sports from its portfolio, among them darts, which, while having good viewing figures, did not attract the type of viewer that advertisers were interested in. ITV Sport is concentrating on providing boxing, football and athletics as the backbone to its sporting schedules. Channel 4 has also trimmed its sporting coverage. It stopped covering snooker because it felt that it didn't attract the viewer with the social profile that the station wished to sell to advertisers. (See Table 3 page 83).

There are not only changes in programming. At ITV, their Head of Sport John Bromley left the network in 1989 after twenty five years to work in the independent sector. The network is also dismantling its sports department and moving towards the Channel 4 policy of commissioning sports programming from individual companies. ITV has also stated that it will not be covering the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona as a result of its inability to capture a large section of the audience, despite the sizable investment in its coverage of the 1988 Games in Seoul.

Section 14 of the new Broadcasting Act (1990) will lift restrictions on the securing of exclusive rights to what have become known as the "six sacred cows". These national events were the boat race, the F.A. cup final, Wimbledon, Test matches, the Grand National and the Derby. For a number of reasons, most of these events have been covered almost solely by the BBC, however section 14 of the Act now lifts any restrictions on satellite companies buying the exclusive rights to any of these events and thus gaining a foothold in the market. (4)

As a result of the new competition, terrestrial broadcasters are also forging alliances with their satellite rivals. Eurosport, with an annual budget of £31 million, is a consortium consisting of fourteen members of the EBU and Murdoch's Sky TV conglomerate. The former supply the programmes, the latter the cash. With the public service broadcasters having a foot in both satellite camps, it looks like it is Screensport which will find itself being squeezed. Despite this flurry of activity in the sky, the most interesting changes are taking place on the ground.

Sport for All?

Governing bodies of sport have found their sport being courted by a number of suitors. Cricket, which receives £1.2 million a year from the BBC and in return provides the station with 400 hours of programming, is a sport of particular interest to BSB. It is English, it attracts a small audience (but one attractive to advertisers), and it fills out schedules by providing hours of airtime. It also may just entice certain people to buy a satellite dish.

The Test and County Cricket Board (TCCB) has long felt that television has got the sport too cheaply. However the prospect of an immediate satellite windfall is also tempered by the dilemma facing all sports attracted by the lure of satellite riches. Do you stay on terrestrial television, unhappy with the TV fee, but satisfied with the television exposure which guarantees lucrative sponsorship deals? Or, do you take the money and disappear from the screens of a large section of the public, with the danger that sponsors, denied the public exposure they desire, may pull out of the sport?

One of the strengths of the terrestrial channels is their universality in reaching the audience. The BBC in particular has stressed this in its response to the competition that it now faces by stating that it reaches 95% of the population of Britain. It argues that while its share of the audience may be 48%, its reach is higher with 95% of the population watching something on BBC TV during any one week. It is this universality that the satellite channels can not offer, and which the BBC view as one of their strengths.

However it appears that this may not be enough. Sky TV announced in October 1989 that it would be carrying live coverage of the England cricket tour of the West Indies during the Winter of 1989/90. This coverage, supplied by Trans World International, thus breaks the BBC monopoly in televising test cricket, with Murdoch carrying the matches not on his sports channel, broadcasting to Europe, but on his British aimed Sky 1 channel. With the TCCB still unhappy about the amount of money that it receives from the BBC, the removal of test cricket from the screens of the terrestrial channels remains a distinct possibility.

So large are the amounts of money that satellite companies are prepared to pay in order

to secure exclusivity (BSB are putting together a £25 million pound bid to secure domestic test match coverage) that many governing bodies of sport feel compelled, in the short term, to take the money and attempt to renegotiate with the terrestrial channels at a later date. What may be available to all today, may be gone tomorrow if you choose to remain dishless. There are also other problems.

The Changing Nature of Sport

Whether beamed from above or below it appears that the criteria that sport must fulfil before television becomes interested in it remain the same. Andrew Croker of BSB says he looks for four qualities in televised sport. They are, spectacle, atmosphere, genuine competition and recognisable personalities. With 55 hours a day of sports programming available on the satellite and terrestrial channels one wonders whether these qualities will be sustainable over a period of time.

What one fears is that saturated coverage of sport will result in much sub-standard sport (dressed up and portrayed by TV as quality), and the dilution of truly quality events. With ITV paying £11 million a season for football action every match is billed as being of crucial importance. The commentators can spot a bad match, but the constraints of TV packaging demand that the commodity be of the highest order. As we saw in chapter 3, this has also led to the increasing Americanisation of sports coverage. As the ratings become the yardstick against which success or failure is measured, the temptation is to use every "quantal" trick in the book to make the event more accessible to the widest audience.

As the commodification of sport by television continues, so the control exercised over it by a number of production companies increases.⁽⁵⁾ Despite the claims by advocates of "free market" television that more de-regulation will help stimulate the independent production sector, in sport at least this has not been the case. As discussed earlier, the concentration of media ownership also affects the area of sports production.

Mark McCormack's television arm Trans World International (TWI), has secured the contract to supply BSB with all its sports programming. The deal is worth £31 million to

TWI. The company not only sells the TV rights for sporting events, but also tenders out sports production work, while also having substantial in-house production facilities itself. If you want to purchase sport worldwide, you do business with TWI.(6) This concentration has led to a number of discernible trends in sports production.

Paving Your Way

There has been an alarming increase in sponsor driven sports programmes. Many of TWI's programmes are backed by a large sponsor. As discussed in chapter 4, televised sport offers an advertising slot for multi-national companies. This leads to the sponsor having an increasing say in how the sport is organised and presented on television. (7) Advertisers and sponsors use sport as a means of reaching a particular audience. American Football (Channel 4) has proven popular among males aged between 16-24, traditionally a hard audience for TV advertisers to reach. As Keleher comments,

It could be that this is attributable as much to their slick TV presentation, complete with popular music and trendy graphics, finding favour among younger viewers, as to the games themselves which have yet to catch on in Britain's parks and playgrounds. (Keleher, 1989: 42)

Sports that fail to attract the right kind of viewer find a place in the schedules hard to acquire, or in the case of darts, hard to hold onto. TWI are also helping to reshape what is or is not carried on terrestrial television, quite simply it appears that they sell to the highest bidder. The case of the European television rights to the 1989 Wimbledon Tennis Championships serves to illustrate this point.

The All-England Tennis Club employed TWI to sell the European television rights of the championship. BBC TV deals directly with the All-England club. The European public service consortium, the EBU, usually purchase these rights, however it was UFA, the television arm of the German publishing giant Bertelsmann, who outbid the EBU and secured the exclusive European rights. The consortium had offered between £15-20 million pounds, higher than it had ever bid before but was outgunned by UFA.

In turn the Germans then offered to sell the rights to certain public service stations at an

inflated price, but they refused to do business. Having failed to reach agreement with this group they turned to the private sector and sold the rights to private TV companies and cable networks throughout Europe. In effect this meant that the vast majority of the German population did not see a major sporting event in which two Germans nationals, Becker and Graef, triumphed in their respective tournaments. Despite a public outcry and intense lobbying of politicians the five year contract remains intact.

A similar outcry has accompanied the exclusive deal in America that has resulted in the national baseball matches becoming the property of cable companies, and thus disappearing from the national networks. The matter has been raised at Senate level with pressure being brought to bear that would make illegal, exclusive deals involving the national baseball and football authorities and individual TV stations. However this would be viewed as a restriction on free trade and thus seems unlikely to succeed. It is feared that American football may shortly also fall into the hands of the private cable companies.

Increasingly to enjoy TV access to a major sporting event you must have the financial ability to buy yourself a satellite receiver, or subscribe to a cable network. Even those who can afford to avail of the new sports networks may find that what they have paid for does not offer an increased range of choice, but simply more of what was already available.

This is a general criticism of satellite television programming. As Murdock has noted,

This cultural system promotes multiplicity. It doesn't guarantee diversity. More does not mean different. It means the same ideas and images in a variety of forms and packages. Because it does not increase the range of voices or perspectives in play, it provides only a limited extension of choice. You can consume more of what you know you already like (providing you can afford the equipment and subscriptions) but you are less likely to come across something unfamiliar or challenging.
(Murdock, 1989: 32)

The cost of watching sport may not be complete even when receiver and decoder have been paid for, BSB plan to eventually make a number of its big sporting events subscription based. This they will be able to do by virtue of the fact that they will be on the more technologically advanced D-Mac system of transmission. Eurosport, which is on the PAL transmission system will have more difficulty introducing subscription sport.

In Europe subscription sport is already a reality. Canal Plus, one of the commercial French television stations whose development has been facilitated by a de-regulated

broadcasting system, has the exclusive rights to screen live French league football. While you can watch most of the channel's output on an ordinary TV set, the signal is scrambled as the match kicks off. A decoder and subscription fee are required to watch the game.

In America cable sports networks are geared towards a pay-per-view system of sports watching. It isn't cheap for the armchair fan. W.J. Weatherby comments that, ..you need roughly an extra \$60 (about £40) a month to pay the cable fees plus the occasional \$20 or \$30 for a ticket for exclusive coverage of a major event - usually boxing - by closed circuit television. It makes sport an expensive hobby even if you never leave home. (The Guardian, 10/9/86)

At the moment public service television offers the sport, and the sponsors, access to a potentially large audience. It also guarantees that the viewer can see major sporting events for the relatively minimal cost of a license fee. As the costs of securing TV rights to sport spiral, sport must address itself to examining the reasons why it wishes to secure a place in the "sky revolution". Can cricket and football truly claim to be Britain's national games when they are only available to a select television minority? While this remains to be seen, there is no doubt that the increased competition to secure sport for television is having a marked effect on the sports programming policies of all the terrestrial channels.

Changing the Rules

As noted above, ITV's sports programming policy is undergoing fundamental change as the network itself enters a period of uncertainty with the proposed changes that will be contained in the Broadcasting Act (1990). (8) The BBC appears in a stronger position. Traditionally noted for its superior sports coverage, it has secured a number of contracts, which while costing the Corporation more than it would have liked, guarantee a degree of stability in its sports programming. However the fallout from a "freer" broadcasting market place are being felt everywhere.

No longer is sport guaranteed its place in the schedules. It has to produce the viewing figures to hold its position. This also leads to a curtailment in the sports television chooses to cover. Take British TV's coverage of athletics for example, which tends to focus on the

glamour events of the track (television having helped to create that aura of glamour!) In contrast other European countries tend to show an equal interest in the more technical field events, with television the ideal medium for transmitting and enhancing the viewers' understanding of the technical skills involved. However in Britain, athletics meetings staged for television in many cases do not have a field events programme, because sports producers do not feel that the audience is interested enough in the events. This is also the case with the European athletic Grand Prix that is staged purely for television.

Another effect of the drive by both sports and mixed programming channels to secure sporting exclusivity is the corresponding shift in sporting news values. For example, a boxing match shown exclusively on Sky TV is given top billing in their sports coverage, as well as a mention in their news programmes (in most cases in inverse proportion to its actual importance); while channels that do not have pictures of the fight either ignore it, or relegate it to a footnote in their sports round up. The recent (August 1989) athletics controversy surrounding the illegal payments offered by the promoters to certain amateur athletes centered on allegations made by Steve Ovett about promoter Andy Norman. He made these allegations during ITV's exclusive Sunday afternoon coverage of a national athletics meeting. ITN led with the story in its main evening news bulletin that night. BBC TV news, without pictures of the interview, did not mention the story. While it raises wider issues about the nature of news gathering, it is also symptomatic of the increasingly blinkered and unequal weighting that channels are giving to sporting news.

Allied with this linking of news values to a channel's sporting output, is the decrease in the already limited range of programmes on wider sporting issues. Garry Whannel has noted that,

for 30 years, television has presented sport very professionally, but its ability to report the affairs of sport has been abysmal. Issues such as drugs, apartheid, the growth of sponsorship, football hooliganism, the re-organisation of the Sports Council, and indeed the central role played by television itself, have invariably been reported poorly or neglected. (Broadcast, 17/2/89)

While encouragement may be drawn from the announcement from Channel 4's new commissioning Head of Sport Mike Miller, that a number of journalistic sports programmes are to be commissioned in 1990, the future remains bleak.

At RTE Sport, the Head of Sports Programming Tim O'Connor claims, that while he personally would like to devote more airtime to programmes that examine some of the wider issues that relate to sport today, he is financially constrained and feels that the level of sporting output would suffer if resources were re-allocated. Quality sports journalism costs money, while "action" footage can be cheaply purchased from the TWI catalogue! (see Appendix 1)

Economic pressures on the public service broadcasters dictate the programming policy of the sports departments, while the new satellite sports channels in search of an audience, are not going to stray from a path of tried and trusted sports presentation and programming.

What will be the impact of these changes in the broadcasting environment on television sport in the Republic of Ireland? It is to this area that we now turn.

Broadcasting in Ireland

Global trends in the field of telecommunications are having a direct effect on the domestic broadcasting climate of individual countries. The Republic of Ireland is no exception. Both the Irish government and the business sector view the integration of broadcasting into the sphere of the "information" economy as part of a wider government programme that will transform an economy in crisis. This has been allied with a drive to shift investment from the public to the private sector. To view this movement as a "rolling back of the state" is too simplistic. As Bell and Meehan (1989) have commented, the dichotomy of state versus market denies the complexities that exist as the state actively encourages the penetration of private capital into the broadcasting arena. It is not so much de-regulation, as re-regulation.

The development of the cable sector in Ireland is then a classic example of a "managed monopoly" in which the corporate state regulates or deregulates (manages would be a better term) a sector of the national communications industry in such a way as to promote its integration into an international marketplace for television products and advertising dominated by multi-national capital. (Bell and Meehan, 1989: 105)

The Republic of Ireland has one of the highest degrees of cable penetration in Europe. One third of Irish homes are cabled, with over half the population receiving television

channels from abroad and the British channels achieving considerable penetration. RTE still enjoys a monopoly of television broadcasting in the Irish Republic. It is funded through a license fee as well as advertising revenue. In 1988, the company's annual report showed that 45% of its income of £134 million punts came through advertising sold by the channel. RTE a public service organisation, is not only under political attack, but is also in the midst of a financial crisis.

This crisis (see Bell and Meehan, 1988), reached its apex in 1985 with the publication of the findings of the Stokes, Kennedy, Crowley investigation into the financial state of the company. The report advocated the privatisation of sections of RTE in order to ease the financial pressure on the company. This position had not been helped by the refusal of the government to increase the licence fee. While any increase would have proved unpopular with the electorate, it also gave notice to any politically adventurous broadcasters, that it was ultimately the politicians who controlled the purse strings. Government decided that the television sector in Ireland was in need of domestic competition.

In 1988 the then Minister for Communications Ray Burke, introduced a Broadcasting Act, which was accompanied by the setting up of the Independent Radio and Television Commission (IRTC), which would oversee the allocation of franchises. The country was to have a new national television service, which would be transmitted via a microwave multipoint distribution system (MMDS). There would also be changes on the radio front, with a host of local radio stations (as opposed to the plethora of illegal pirate stations that previously existed), and also a new commercial national radio station that would be in direct competition with RTE radio (Century Radio began broadcasting in September 1989).

TV3, whose franchise was secured by a consortium backed by Windmill Lane and the Smurfit group, would be solely supported by advertising revenue. To survive TV3 must secure a percentage of RTE's audience. To achieve this it must invest in home produced programming, which even in multi-channel areas manages to hold a respectable audience. (See Table 5). As has been argued,

What success RTE has in multi-channel land is confined to post 9 pm. It revolves around a handful of stars and programmes: The Late Late, the News, Glenroe, Bibi,

Late Late Showings

W/E	Tam Rating	Top Ten Place	T.R. Single Channel (multi)*
Jan 22	61	1	64(54)
Jan 29	57	1	60(53)
Feb 5	58	1	62(58)
Feb 12	59	1	64(54)
Feb 19	62	1	66(63)
Feb 26	47	2(1)	53(42)
Mar 5	57	1	66(56)
Mar 12	61	1	67(62)
Mar 19	46	4(2)	52(46)
Mar 26	55	1	61(51)
April 2	55	1	62(53)
April 9	55	2(3)	61(55)
April 14	57	1	62(58)
April 21	46	2(4)	56(49)

(1) Glenroe = top Slot

(2) Beaten by Glenroe (55), Dalas (49), Bibi (47)

(3) Beaten by Glenroe

(4) Beaten by Glenroe (People in Need Show)

*These 2 sets of figures represent the highest Tam Ratings achieved in both multi and single channel lands during the course of the Late Late.

Table 5 Late late Showings, Aspect, May 1989.

The figures in brackets show the Tam rating in multi-channel areas

Kenny Live, Sunday Night at the Olympia, Today Tonight and to a lesser extent Live at Three. The success of these shows is also Montrose's achilles heel: They are too few in number; they are cushioned against home competition.. and their success is based on an insatiable Irish preference for good "home" produced programmes not satisfied by foreign stations. (Aspect, May 1989)

Major international events which include an Irish interest and domestic sporting coverage can be added to this list. It appears that when given a choice, the Irish viewer prefers quality home produced programmes to imports. Despite the claim by TV3 Chairman James Morris, that the station will produce 30% of its output, doubts remain over the station's ability to do so. The costs involved in television production are high, especially when one can buy in relatively cheap programmes from abroad.

Sport on Irish television remains the cheapest source of home programming. It can

cost as little as £10,000 punts per hour, as opposed to £400,000 for a corresponding hour of drama. Sport also dominates a large section of RTE's programming schedules. In 1987, 12% of the station's TV output was devoted to sport, and by 1988 this had risen to 15%. Many Irish viewers have also been in receipt of sport via satellite for a number of years.

By 1987, many of the cable networks were carrying, on a year's trial, a number of pan-European satellite channels, including Sky, SuperChannel, Screensport as well as the British channels and both indigenous Irish stations (RTE 1 and RTE 2, relaunched as Network 2). Thus for over two years many Irish homes have been in receipt of up to ten channels. The results of the year's free trial were not good for the satellite stations. When extra payment was demanded for the channels, consumers refused to pay for something they did not watch, and did not want. While it appeared that there was a sizeable appetite for the British channels, demand was limited for the pan-European stations. The most popular of these was the sports channel Screensport. The development of satellite television was not, it appeared, as unproblematic as had been forecast.

Gaelic World

Much of the sport carried on RTE television is not of Irish origin, but is purchased "downstream" from whoever is selling the TV rights (usually TWI). Since RTE is a member of the EBU, the coming onstream of another national television station would in fact cut its expenditure in purchasing international events. With TV3 in tow, the cost to RTE of buying through the EBU cartel would be halved, in much the same way as BBC/ITV share the costs of major events. Any threat to RTE's superiority comes at a domestic level, in its coverage of domestic sport.

TV3 has targetted indigenous Irish sport as an area of programming that could allow it to capture the sizable segment of the audience that it will need to attract advertisers. While TV3 has had to delay its launch date, now scheduled for 1991, RTE has been busy attempting to consolidate its sports portfolio. Contracts with the Irish FA (soccer), and the

GAA (Gaelic games) have been secured. However it is interesting that despite the best efforts of the broadcasters, both contracts expire in 1991. Both sporting organisations are keen to keep their options open.

RTE TV has also secured the world rights to market both major codes of Gaelic games, football and hurling, in the international television market. With the new sports channels desperate to fill their schedules, the opportunities look promising. A deal has already been reached with Channel 4 that has seen Gaelic games return to British screens after a lapse of a number of years. While trouble may lie ahead, by and large RTE Sport is in a strong position. While acknowledging that in terms of resources it cannot compete with the major British channels, it aims to provide coverage of Irish sport and the major international sporting events. As Head of Sport Fred Cogley comments,

To film adequately a big event in this country requires a huge input of equipment and personnel. A tape in the post on the other hand can provide us with coverage of American football at relatively little cost. (The Irish Times, 24/1/89)

But what type of sport will RTE be showing, and can it be viewed as an area where Irish identity will continue to be both expressed and reinforced? If, as has been argued, mediated sport has played a key role in the construction of national identities, does the satellite era which promises to transcend national borders and fragment audiences, mark a period that is about to witness an end to this process? It is to these issues that we finally turn.

A nation once Again?

In Ireland, as elsewhere, debates about the future of broadcasting are being dictated by the prevailing economic and political climate. Even in Ireland, where traditionally questions of cultural identity have been high on the broadcasting agenda (although not always on the agenda set by the politicians see chapter 2), these are being swept away to be replaced by debates on the economics of broadcasting. Accountants, not programme makers, have assumed centre stage. James Morris, Chairman of TV3, recently unveiled his blueprint for the new station. Programme content did not merit a mention.

We will be alive to introducing a better service and new ideas in the areas of sponsorship, promotions and product placement. TV3 will introduce a buyers' market by increasing competition and will grow (sic) the market by investing in programmes. That translates into better value and lower costs.
(Irish Management and Advertising Journal, June, 1989)

RTE's future policy is being dictated by the economic and political context that it finds itself in. Cost effective sports programming is the central concern within the RTE's sports department. With both Eurosport and the BSB sports channels available to dish holders in Ireland, armchair fans, if they can afford it, will have sport available on up to nine channels. Most of the sports programming will however be supplied by TWI. In reality the viewer will have more of the same sport available in their homes. Eurosport, BBC, ITV, and RTE, are all taking their programmes through the EBU cartel, while BBC and BSB are working together, and ultimately all the channels are selecting from the TWI sports catalogue.

The coverage itself will also tend to move towards a more homogeneous American mode of presentation, a process that is already under way. The distinction between the more journalistically orientated PSB mode of presentation, and the more commercially favoured style of the American networks, is becoming increasingly blurred. As mentioned above, this also leads to a shrinking in the sporting discussion agenda. The responsibility of a PSB sports departments should include the provision of journalism that goes beyond the front line reporting of sport. However in the age of television economic realism, this area of programming, not as potentially lucrative in terms of rating figures, will be among the initial casualties. What we see is the representation of sport on television converging in both style and content, and being purged of any potential analysis of sport as a cultural form.

As sponsored sports programmes increase, and the commercialisation of sport becomes more overt, so the portrayal of sport as an apolitical cultural event, untouched by the constraints and demands of economic structures, becomes difficult for television to sustain. The Olympics no longer hold the aura of sporting purity that television would like to present. The age of satellite sport will also be the era in which the links between

business and sport will become clear for all to see.

The hold that TV exerts over sport, as discussed in chapter 4, will increase in the new broadcasting environment. As the financial crisis in professional sport deepens, it will appear that television and sponsors offer a short term solution to the problem. In taking the television shilling, many sports will find themselves set on an irreversible course.

Television's commodification of sport will increase, as the medium finds itself awash with sub-standard events made and packaged for television. In America, Rader claims that,

Television, more than any other single force, has transformed spectator sports into trivial affairs. Sports will never again be an arena populated by pristine heroes. No longer are sports as effective in enacting the rituals embodying traditional American values, and no longer do they invoke the same intensity, the same loyalty, or the same commitment. For sports are no longer transcendent in American life.
(Rader, 1984: 210)

While taking to task Rader's romanticised view of sports in the past, one must acknowledge that he raises a number of valid points. How applicable are they to sport in Europe?

There is no reason to suppose that the projection of nationhood, and a wider national community, will not remain an integral part of television coverage of both domestic and international sporting events. As Collins notes, with regard to the recent failure of pan-European television:

The transnationalisation of television, dissolution of national identities, and loss of the power of states and para-statal bodies (such as the public broadcasters) anticipated as a consequence of technological change have yet to be realised.
(Collins, 1989: 307)

The verbal interpretation of the sporting event remains all important. As the need to secure and build an audience becomes more important, with the increased competition, the desire and temptation to foster the partisan viewer through the use of jingoistic rhetoric will increase. As discussed in chapter 3 this also highlights the close links between televised sport and the popular press. The representations of nations and nationhood that television sport presents can't be viewed as unconnected to those images that appear in the other media industries.

Just as the press and radio played a central role in the promoting of a sense of communal identity throughout the 1920/30's in Ireland, so today much of our understanding of our own position within the social system is refracted through the media.

In both Britain and Ireland, the PSB's draw their legitimacy from their ability to reach the vast majority of the population. There is no evidence to suggest that the internationalisation of television will erode the level of national consciousness that television has helped to promote and foster. This is particularly true in the area of televised sport. Forecasting future television trends is a notoriously hazardous business. While an argument can be made that the viewer's perception of modern sport is changing, it is equally true to state that the All Ireland Gaelic games finals, as mediated through the press, radio and television, will remain events that evoke a deep emotional response among much of the Irish population, and show no sign of losing their cultural and political importance.

As the 1992 EC lifting of trade barriers among member states attempts to create a mass European market place, TV sport will remain an arena in which individual countries can parade and assert their national identity in full public view. The possibility remains that this competition between countries may in fact increase as each state attempts to differentiate itself from its European neighbour. As Anderson argues,

The reality is quite plain: the "end of the era of nationalism", so long prophesied, is not remotely in sight. Indeed, nation-ness is the most universally legitimate value in the political life of our time. (Anderson, 1983: 12)

This process will continue to be mediated by a plethora of television stations, all in search of an audience.

Television coverage of national and international sport, both in Britain and Ireland, remains an arena in which many people, who would not consider themselves particularly patriotic in a political sense, find a feeling of national pride being articulated. Television helps to focus that sensibility. As the new structures of broadcasting begin to fall into place, one sees nothing that will prevent this process from continuing, or even accelerating.

While sport remains unsure of what it wants from television, the medium knows exactly what it wants from sport. Sport is another form of relatively cheap light entertainment. Somewhere in the middle, the spectator, who attaches a symbolic importance to sport that outweighs its significance as a rule governed game, is about to find out that what is here today, may not be available, without a dish, tomorrow. The television sporting audience is not sufficiently large enough to sustain all the sports channels. There

will be casualties, one of which may turn out to be sport itself.

Conclusion

Future Games

Both television and sport are embarking on a period that will see fundamental changes occur in the institutional structures of these popular forms. With the amount of sport available on our television screens about to increase, it is reasonable to suggest that on that basis alone, it is an area worthy of more attention from those critically engaged in the study of cultural activity.

As I have argued above, televised sport is not an apolitical arena, but one of the key sites in which perceptions of nationhood and national identity (among a range of other themes), are continually being worked through.

I mentioned in the introduction that any further study in the area of media sport must engage with problems of methodology and theory. There is also the need to focus on the specific concept of media sport, rather than the examination of the media and sport. For too long academia has treated both spheres as separate areas of investigation, and divided their academic labour correspondingly. Any attempt to synthesise both spheres faces a number of problems, not the least of which is the creation of theoretical frameworks in which to locate the work.

There still exists a very real tension between the approach that focuses on cultural representations, and that which emphasises the importance of political economy. Despite my own division of chapters 3 and 4, I hope that an attempt has been made to at least acknowledge this theoretical problem. In an era of rapid political, economic and cultural change in Europe, this continual separation of the study of the media text from its political and economic production base will look increasingly archaic.

I have argued that the interrelationship between symbolic cultural representations and wider political and economic structures is vital to our understanding of both the evolution of modern sport, and the construction of particular understandings of communal identity.

Any future research into the media/sport/national identity nexus must not allow itself to become so engrossed with questions of representations, that it neglects the political and economic analysis required to understand and place these images. It will be no easy task.

Dictating Policy

RTE Television finds itself in a relatively strong position with regard to its future coverage of sport. On the domestic front the ability of TV3 to challenge the station's position does not seem particularly strong. In turn RTE can utilise the spaces offered by the satellite sports channels to sell its Irish sports coverage, particularly Gaelic games. RTE is however constrained by the fact that it purchases much of its sport "downstream" from other producers. The cost of such coverage will inevitably rise as competition increases. The financial constraints on the organisation also militate against its ability to deliver a depth of sports coverage and analysis, that as a public service it should be obliged to transmit. Where on television do you find the wider issues associated (or in some cases not) with modern sport being addressed?

What we do witness is the erosion of the distinction that exists between sport covered by national public service broadcasting, and that presented by commercially driven television, be it terrestrial or satellite.

Much of this project has focused on the media text. Future work needs to examine the interaction between the audience and its negotiation with the text. In what ways do people engage with media sport, and is there a universal European pattern of consumption? As I have argued there is at present little evidence to suggest that the internationalisation of television is about to erode the level of national consciousness among the populations of Europe. Nor is there any reason to believe that the role which media sport plays in this process will become any less important. Indeed as the drive to secure national audiences increases with additional competition in the broadcasting sector, I expect to witness an increase in the nationalistic rhetoric of media sport, as it attempts to reflect, inflect and utilise

for its own ends the upsurge in national feelings that has become so evident throughout much of Europe. Indeed here lies the paradox; as the ability of political states to exercise economic sovereignty over their own affairs has decreased, so the expression, in the cultural sphere, of nationalistic impulses has intensified.

The internationalisation of television, via satellite, has not steamrolled towards an inexorably predetermined destination. There are many shifts and changes in direction it may yet take. What I hope that this project has shown is that the future of sport, and its ability to articulate and project symbolic representations of national identity, is being directly dictated by its relationship with the media, and the political and economic forces that are shaping the current international broadcasting agenda.

Appendix 1

**Trans World International: Television Sports Inventory of Events For Sale.
(overleaf)**



TRANS WORLD INTERNATIONAL

THE INTERNATIONAL SALES DIVISION

THE PIER HOUSE · STRAND ON THE GREEN · LONDON W4 3NN ENGLAND

TELEPHONE: 01-994 1444 FAX 01-994 9606 CABLE MARKSMEN TELEX 8955303 & 267486

TELEVISION PROGRAMMING

available from

TRANS WORLD INTERNATIONAL

as at

1st April 1989

TRANS WORLD INTERNATIONAL (U.K.) INC. IS A MEMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT GROUP
(A LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY INCORPORATED UNDER THE LAWS OF OHIO U.S.A.)

Cleveland · New York · Los Angeles · San Francisco · Boston · Philadelphia · Bradenton · Minneapolis · Washington D.C. · London · Stockholm
Monte Carlo · Paris · Barcelona · Munich · Milan · Geneva · Toronto · Tokyo · Hong Kong · Auckland · Sydney · Melbourne

DIRECTORS: MARK H. McCORMACK (U.S.A.), ARTHUR J. LAFAYE Jr. (U.S.A.), BARRY FRANK (U.S.A.)
REGISTRATION NUMBER IN ENGLAND F7896

128

INDEX

'TRANS WORLD SPORT' - NEWS AND FEATURES FROM AROUND THE WORLD.....40

TENNIS

AUSTRALIAN OPEN TENNIS.....	Page 37
BARCELONA OPEN.....	Page 32
BELGIAN INDOOR.....	Page 36
BELGIAN LADIES CHAMPIONSHIPS.....	Page 25
BMW GERMAN OPEN.....	Page 18
CITIZEN CUP - ladies tennis.....	Page 17
GENEVA BARCLAY OPEN - ladies tennis.....	Page 31
HOPMAN CUP.....	Page 36
SHOOT-OUT.....	Page 34
ITALIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS - ladies tennis.....	Page 18
LIPTONS INTERNATIONAL TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIP.....	Page 13
LUTHANSA CUP - ladies tennis.....	Page 19
MILAN INDOOR TENNIS.....	Page 9
STOCKHOLM OPEN.....	Page 34
TENNIS LEGENDS.....	Page 9
U.S. OPEN TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIP.....	Page 30
UNITED JERSEY BANK CLASSIC.....	Page 29
VIRGINIA SLIMS CHAMPIONSHIPS - Madison Square Garden.....	Page 35
VIRGINIA SLIMS CHICAGO.....	Page 35
VIRGINIA SLIMS OF FLORIDA.....	Page 12
VIRGINIA SLIMS OF HOUSTON.....	Page 16
VIRGINIA SLIMS OF LOS ANGELES.....	Page 28
VIRGINIA SLIMS OF NEW ENGLAND.....	Page 34
VIRGINIA SLIMS OF NEWPORT.....	Page 25
VIRGINIA SLIMS OF SAN FRANCISCO.....	Page 10
VIRGINIA SLIMS OF SAN ANTONIA.....	Page 11
VIRGINIA SLIMS OF WASHINGTON.....	Page 10
WITA HIGHLIGHTS 1989 - ladies tennis.....	Page 17
WIMBLEDON LAWN TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS 1989.....	Page 23
WIMBLEDON LAWN TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS 1990-1994.....	Page 37

MOTORSPORT

CART 1989.....	Page 16
SUPERCUP - EIFELRACE.....	Page 17
SUPERCUP - SILVERSTONE.....	Page 19
SUPERCUP - 200 MILES OF NUERENBERG.....	Page 22
SUPERCUP - DIEPHOLZ.....	Page 28
SUPERCUP - BILSTEIN SUPERSPRINT.....	Page 32
SPEEDWAY WORLD FINAL.....	Page 30

Contd/.....,

ATHLETICS

NEW YORK MARATHON.....Page 35
TEXACO MILE.....Page 33
NICE TRIATHLON.....Page 20
5TH AVENUE MILE.....Page 34
NIKAIA - International Track and Field.....Page 20
YOMIURI INTERNATIONAL INDOOR TRACK AND FIELD OSAKA MEET.....Page 8

GOLF

AUGUSTA MASTERS.....Page 15
AUSTRALIAN MASTERS GOLF.....Page 9
AUSTRALIAN SKINS GAME.....Page 8
BRITISH OPEN GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS.....Page 26
DUNHILL CUP.....Page 32
DUNHILL CUP QUALIFYING 1989.....Page 7
MIDNIGHT SUN CUP - Skins game golf.....Page 27
JOHNNIE WALKER HONG KONG OPEN.....Page 9
PGA EUROPEAN TOUR GOLF HIGHLIGHTS - The Volvo Tour 1989.....Page 11
SENIOR OPEN GOLF 1990.....Page 37
SUNTORY WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIPS - golf.....Page 33
UNITED STATES OPEN GOLF CHAMPIONSHIPS.....Page 21&37
UNITED STATES SKINS GAME - golf.....Page 35
U. S. SENIORS GOLF.....Page 22
U. S. SENIOR SKINS GAME.....Page 38
U. S. PGA GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP.....Page 29&38
U. S. WOMENS OPEN GOLF.....Page 25&37
U. S. WOMENS SKINS GAME.....Page 20
WPG EUROPEAN Tour Highlights - ladies golf.....Page 16

OTHERS

555 ASIAN OPEN SNOOKER.....	Page 28
AUSTRALIAN OPEN SNOOKER.....	Page 29
BADMINTON WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS.....	Page 19
CHAMPIONS CUP FOOTBALL.....	Page 14
CHINA CUP GYMNASTICS.....	Page 17
CONQUER THE ARTIC.....	Page 12
DUBAI SNOOKER CLASSIC.....	Page 34
IBF PROFESSIONAL BOXING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (WELTER-WEIGHT).....	Page 10
JEFF FRENCH VS. MARCOS VILLASANA.....	Page 14
KENTUCKY DERBY.....	Page 18
NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE SEASON 1989/90.....	Page 32
NCAA BASKETBALL.....	Page 13
NFL SUPERBOWL 1990.....	Page 37
NUTRASWEET CHALLENGE OF CHAMPIONS - Ice Skating.....	Page 35
NOBEL AWARDS.....	Page 36
MONTREUX JAZZ FESTIVAL.....	Page 24
PROBOWL.....	Page 37
SCOTTISH FOOTBALL LEAGUE 88/89.....	Page 6
SCOTTISH FOOTBALL LEAGUE 89/90.....	Page 27
SNOOKER/POOL CHALLENGE.....	Page 25
SNOOKER WORLD MATCH PLAY CHAMPIONSHIPS.....	Page 36
STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL HORSE SHOW.....	Page 27
USA CUP VOLLEYBALL (Men's).....	Page 22
WELTMEISTERSCHAFT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP POLO.....	Page 29
WORLD EQUESTRIAN GAMES 1990.....	Page 38
WORLD PROFESSIONAL FIGURE SKATING CHAMPIONSHIPS.....	Page 35
WORLDS STRONGEST MAN.....	Page 30
WORLD INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONSHIPS.....	Page 20

CURRENT INVENTORY PRODUCT

AUGUSTA MASTERS GOLDEN MOMENTS.....	Page 46
BEST SHOTS OF THE MASTERS.....	Page 49
BRITISH OPEN GOLDEN MOMENTS.....	Page 48
BRITISH OPEN GOLF 1988 - Official Film.....	Page 51
BORIS BECKER DOCUMENTARY.....	Page 44
CLASSIC AID.....	Page 49
IN THE EMPERORS NAME.....	Page 42
INTERNATIONAL SUPERCROSS - INDOORS.....	Page 45
KARATEMANIA.....	Page 45
MOSCOWS MAN.....	Page 42
PGA EUROPEAN TOUR GOLF HIGHLIGHTS.....	Page 52
R & A VIDEO LIBRARY 88/89 and 89/90.....	Page 53
STOP WORKING OUT.....	Page 43
THE SPIRIT OF CALGARY.....	Page 43
U. S. OPEN GOLF OFFICIAL FILM 1988.....	Page 45
VIRGINIA WADES CLASS.....	Page 43
WIMBLEDON GOLDEN MOMENTS.....	Page 47
WIMBLEDON 1988 - Official Film.....	Page 50
WIMBLEDON VIDEO LIBRARY 88/89 and 89/90.....	Page 54
WIMBLEDON THE OTHER 50 WEEKS.....	Page 51
WINNING EDGE.....	Page 45
WORLDS GREATEST ATHLETES.....	Page 44
WORLD MATCHPLAY CHAMPIONSHIPS 1964 - 1988.....	Page 50
WRESTLING/JIM CROCKETT PROMOTIONS.....	Page 44
18 TOUGHEST HOLES IN AMERICA.....	Page 49
A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF IAN WOOSNAM.....	Page 49

Footnotes

Chapter 1

Popular Culture, History, Ireland: Problems of Theory

- (1) For a detailed account of the New Left movement see, Anderson, P. (1980) Arguments Within British Marxism, N.L.B. and Callaghan, J. (1987) The Far Left in British Politics, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- (2) With regard to soccer in Britain see Critcher (1974) and more recently Wagg (1984). By attempting to place sport in a wider socio-economic context important work has been carried out by Hargreaves (1987), Mason (1988) and Whannel (1983).
- (3) Most work has looked at television and sport. While the BFI monograph Football on Television Buscombe, (1975) was primarily concerned with the visual aspect of television coverage of sport, and lacks a wider historical critical edge, it was important in helping to give this area of study an academic legitimacy. Recent contributions in this area include Goldlust (1987) and Critcher (1987).
- (4) Muscular Christianity was an evangelical ideology that had originated from within the public schools of Victorian England. The Church viewed it as a process that would spread christian values to the "uncivilised" lower classes, the emphasis in sport being on, "success, aggression, ruthlessness and the need for leadership combined with an altruistic courtesy in triumph, compassion to the defeated and stress upon fair play." (Whannel, 1983: 41)
- (5) This is despite the fact that one of the recognised Gaelic sports is camogie, a sport that has been continually viewed within the organisation (and by the media) as of secondary importance to the male games.
- (6) The relationship within the press/radio/sport nexus in Ireland has been subject to no critical investigation. See chapter 2 for a brief examination of the period after 1922.

Chapter 2

From Our Gaelic Fields: Mediated Sport and National Identity The Press and Radio

- (1) This attitude towards the funding of 2RN and later Radio Eireann was also evident under the Fianna Fail governments. In 1933, the then Minister of Finance Sean MacEntee redirected the import duties from wireless sales away from the broadcasters and to the exchequer. Two thirds of the station's revenue was lost, and dependency on commercial advertising subsequently increased. See Gibbons (1988).
- (2) Today the marketing drive of the half British/Irish tabloids on sale in Ireland, such as The Star and The Mirror, is focussed on the ability of each to offer a superior Irish sports section. This is a recognition that sports coverage remains one of the main reasons that newspapers are purchased, especially among the male urban working class.

- (3) Ironically neither the paper's sports editor nor deputy editor were Irish. Joe Sherwood was English and Herbert Moxley was Welsh, both having a proven track record in knowing what was needed in sports coverage to sell newspapers.
- (4) In Britain during this period gambling was both popular and highly commercial. In 1931, 18 million people attended greyhound racing in Britain. In 1938 the total stakes placed on the football pools was £40 million pounds. "To an extent ...interests in sport and inevitably gambling did cross class frontiers. A big race winner or the result of a major football match was national news which was made increasingly part of a common culture through newspapers, newsreel and radio. (Stevenson, 1984: 386)
- (5) The Sports Mail went under a variety of names over the years. From 1821-1880 it was as mentioned above, and after a number of name changes it was, by 1919, the Irish Weekly Mail And Warder.
- (6) The role of the provincial press was particularly important in this respect. Again little critical work has been done in this area of sports journalism and its function at a community level in helping to focus attention on the local Gaelic football/hurling team.

Chapter 3

Television, Sport and the Nation: The 1988 European Soccer Championships

- (1) The introduction of action replays which marked the early days of Match of the Day were in order to attract "the mums and girlfriends" who may have had only a passive interest in watching football on television.
- (2) This has involved the demise of the 180 degree cutting line rule that was held to be of central importance when televising sport. See Buscombe (1975). The Americanisation of coverage is linked to the economic development of the sport/television nexus which is examined in subsequent chapters.
- (3) See Buscombe (1975), for a detailed account of how a pre-dominantly English audience is encouraged to identify with Scotland, the only British representative at the 1974 World Cup Finals.
- (4) Ratings for English domestic soccer have been falling in recent years. The 1988 Littlewoods Cup Final attracted a national audience of only 4.7 million on ITV. The FA Cup Final is no longer covered by ITV but is now the exclusive right of BBC TV. ITV's The Match has failed to average the 8 million viewers that were promised to advertisers, this despite the closest finish to the league championship race in recent history. At an international level large audiences can still be drawn. A combined BBC/ITV viewership of 23.7 million watched England play Argentina in the World Cup quarter final in 1986.
- (5) Ratings vary from sport to sport. Despite the disappointing figures for BBC TV coverage of the European Championships, the following week the Womens' Wimbledon Tennis Final secured 14th place in the national Top 100 rating figures with 9.7 million.

- (6) For a detailed analysis of the narrative structure of televised sport see Garry Whannel's "Narrative and Television Sport: The Coe and Ovett Story", (1982) Sporting Fictions, University of Birmingham.
- (7) This also causes problems for television. The Hillsborough disaster of April 1989 resulted in the death of 95 Liverpool fans due to a crush caused by inadequate crowd control. The 1989 post Hillsborough disaster FA Cup Final between Liverpool and Everton saw the national anthem being booed and sung over, much to the disgust of the television presenters. Similarly at Scottish Cup Finals, the British national anthem has ceased to be played due to its unpopularity, with "Flower of Scotland" being played at both Scottish finals and international games involving the Scottish national team.
- (8) For an ethnographic account of English supporters travelling abroad see, Williams, J. Dunning, E. and Murphy, P. (1989) Hooligans Abroad, 2nd Edition, Routledge, London.
- (9) A detailed account of this process appears in Dunning, E. Murphy, P. and Williams, J. (1989) The Roots Of Football Hooliganism: A Historical and Sociological Study, Routledge, London. See also Stuart Hall, "The treatment of football hooliganism in the press", in Ingham, R. (1978) Football Hooliganism: the Wider Context, Inter-Action Imprint, London.
- (10) The 1989-90 English League season would have seen, despite strong opposition from the Football League, the clubs and the supporters, the introduction of a government approved full membership supporters card scheme. However as a result of the strong condemnation of the scheme that appeared in Lord Justice Taylor's report into the Hillsborough disaster (published February 1990), this has been "shelved".
- (11) Such is the insular nature of the televised "world of sport" that disturbances such as those which occurred in Birmingham in 1987 at the England v Pakistan cricket Test match were described as "football hooliganism at cricket". The fact that the disturbances were racially motivated and symptomatic of the racial tensions that exist in multi-cultural Britain went unnoticed in television news reports.
- (12) Television tends to uncritically reproduce this agenda. This tendency will increase with the proliferation of channels devoted largely or exclusively to sport. Critical sports debate on TV is already limited, as viewer choice superficially increases with the advent of all sports channels, this space may disappear completely as the need to deliver high ratings to advertisers becomes a central concern. See chapter 5.
- (13) This research is beyond the scope of this project. Looking at the press coverage of the European Championship a number of themes were reflected in the television coverage. The stereotyping of the Irish and other foreign teams, the continual construction of the football hooligan, and the amplification and sensationalisation of events in Germany. Headlines included, World War III, The Sun, 13/6/88, German Skinheads Gas Brits, The Star, 14/6/88.
- (14) See chapter 5.
- (15) Examples include the presence of royalty at the FA Cup Final in England, the presidential phone call to the captain of the winning team in the American Superbowl Final (initiated by J.F. Kennedy), Harold Wilson's close association with the English national soccer team after their 1966 World Cup win and more recently another Labour PM, Australia's Bob Hawke, has been anxious to

associate himself with that country's successful boat crew which won the America's Cup.

Chapter 4

A Sporting Triangle: Television, Sport and Sponsorship

- (1) See Hargreaves (1986) and Whannel (1983).
- (2) Sponsorship deals involving touring cricket teams stretch back to the late 19th century, while Bovril sponsored Nottingham Forest when they appeared in the 1896 FA Cup Final. Today however sponsorship deals involving cricket are larger and more complex. Many of these arrangements involve brewers, something that has proven embarrassing in the light of the contributory role that alcohol plays in crowd trouble. In 1989, Tennants sponsored the FA Charity Shield (£600,000), while Bass announced a £1.5 million deal with the Yorkshire county cricket club, who will now have their test match ground called Bass Headingley.
- (3) BBC Television costs (1989) for an hour of sport were £27,000, compared with £86,000 for a corresponding hour of documentary, and £408,000 for an hour of drama. Both RTE and BBC/ITV find sport one of the cheapest forms of television programming.
- (4) Ford Motors involvement in Gaelic Games in 1984 was an attempt to limit the PR damage caused by their decision to close their Cork factory.
- (5) TWI also specialise in producing made for TV sports programmes such as the BBC's Superstars. They will provide over £30 million worth of sports programming to BSB when it is finally launched. See chapter 5.
- (6) For an account of the Coe/Ovett hype see Whannel, G. (1982) "Narrative and Television Sport: The Coe and Ovett Story", in, Sporting Fictions, University of Birmingham.
- (7) A trust fund was set up in 1982 into which appearance fees (called subventions by the sport) and endorsement money would be paid. While expenses could be drawn out, an athlete would only receive the money on retirement.
- (8) See "Take The Money And Run", a 1986 television programme on the Decker/Budd event. It was part of the Channel 4 series Open The Box.
- (9) For a more detailed account of the development of snooker and television see, Boyle, R. "Television, Snooker and Culture", unpublished thesis, University of Ulster at Coleraine, 1988.
- (10) The sport of professional boxing has become totally subservient to the demands of American television. Boxing relies on television for its financial survival. Terry O'Neill executive producer of CBS Sports notes, "As far as CBS is concerned boxing is one of many programming tools that make up our sports anthologies, that's all. My job is to find the proper mix that brings in a show under budget and attracts an audience for the sponsor". (cited in Hauser, 1988: 83) For an account of the economic dependency of boxing on TV see Hauser (1988).

- (11) Not all agree that this is so, see Benaud (1985). Australian and world cricket was rocked a number of years ago by the Packer Affair. When Kerry Packer, media tycoon, couldn't secure the TV Test cricket rights for his commercial Channel 9 Television station, he hired the top players from around the world (decimating teams in the process) and set up his own televised World Series. The Australian Test Cricket Board capitulated and Packer secured his TV rights. See Blofeld, H. (1978) The Packer Affair, Collins, London.
- (12) The Wimbledon Tennis Championships do not carry arena advertising, however at the 1989 Championships the Coca-Cola logo under the umpires chair was on prominent display.
- (13) See, The Cash Behind the Glory, The Irish Independent, 30/9/88.
- (14) There has been a recent explosion in the growth of commercially orientated private leisure centres in the Republic, especially in and around Dublin. The Pavillion Leisure Complex group are just one of the companies involved in expanding this sector. They are receiving the blessing of both the government and the Tourist Board. The provision of leisure by private capital is viewed as desirable, both by government and Bord Failte, as a means of making Ireland more attractive to tourists. The Irish company (in name only) Leisure World, is building leisure and bowling centres in Dublin, Cork City and throughout Europe. The projects in Ireland will cost £5.7 million punts, and will include gym facilities, restaurants and shopping arcades. These centres are profit maximising operations, and located accordingly. Increasingly one's ability to "enjoy your leisure time" is being dictated by the corresponding ability to purchase one's way into the leisure market.
- (15) Despite numerous attempts to contact and arrange an interview with Mr Butler, he remained unavailable.
- (16) The recent changes that have been occurring at Glasgow Rangers football club help emphasise this. As the club becomes transformed into a large business organisation any acknowledgement of the sectarian and racist elements that are linked to the club, are by and large glossed over. Having just finalised a £4 million sponsorship deal with Admiral Sportswear the club announced that by 1990, only 1/3rd of its income would be coming from gate receipts, the remaining 2/3rds (£12 million) coming from commercial enterprises.

Chapter 5

Sport in the Age of Satellite

- (1) Sky TV secured the live UK TV rights to the heavyweight boxing world title fight between Mike Tyson and Frank Bruno, at a cost of £200,000. They carried the fight on Sky Channel, as opposed to Eurosport, in an attempt to maximise interest.
- (2) The BSB backers include, Bond Corporation (Australia) 22.5%, £50m; Granada TV 15.7%, £35m; Pearson 13.5%, £30m; Virgin 11.2%, £25m; Chargeurs (France) 10.8%, £24m; Reed International 9%, £20m; Anglia TV 5%, 11.5m; London Market Securities 4.5%, £10m; Next 4.5%, £10m; Invest International Holdings 2.25%, £5m; Trinity International Holdings 0.9%, £2m. Due to technical and

financial difficulties, the launch of BSB has been put back until the spring of 1990. In the first five months of transmission, Sky TV lost £75m.

- (3) The figures for The Match, ranged from 4.3m (9/5/89) to 10.3m (26/5/89), averaging out at about 7 million. Advertisers are not happy as research has shown that many viewers only tune for the last 15 minutes, thus missing the advertising that is carried during the half time interval.
- (4) This part of the Bill may be changed as it comes under pressure from Tory backbenchers who are uncomfortable about having to explain to constituents that their government has been responsible for removing major sporting events from their screens. See, Climbdown on TV Sport, The Observer, 17/12/89.
- (5) In the case of English football the game seems to be losing control to ITV. The network, unhappy with the fixture list which was unsuitable for television, is to have a say in the drawing up of the 1990/91 season fixtures.
- (6) Trans World International are the largest producers of sports programming in the world. See Appendix 1 for catalogue list of events with which they are involved.
- (7) This also effects terrestrial TV, with ITV looking for a major sponsor for their coverage of the 1990 World Cup Finals in Italy.
- (8) Part of this Bill entails the selling of the ITV franchises to the highest bidder and replacing the IBA with the Independent Television Commission (ITC) who will regulate with "a light touch".

Bibliography

- Allison, L. (ed) (1986) The Politics of Sport, Manchester University Press.
- Althusser, L. (1971) Ideology and the State, in Lenin and Philosophy and other essays, New Left Books, London.
- Anderson, B. (1983) Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism, Verso Books, London.
- Anderson, P. (1984) Considerations in Western Marxism, Verso, London. 2nd Edition.
- Arnold, M. (1971) Culture and Anarchy, Bobbs-Merrill (org. publ. 1869)
- Bailey, P. (1978) Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control. 1830-1885, RKP, London.
- _____ (1989) Leisure, culture and the historian: reviewing the first generation of leisure historiography, Leisure Studies, Vol. 8 No. 2, May 1989.
- Barthes, R. (1972) Mythologies, Jonathan Cape Ltd London. (Publ.1957)
- Bell, D. and Meehan, N. (1989) Cable, Satellite and the emergence of private TV in Ireland: from public service to managed monopoly, Media, Culture and Society, Vol 11, No 1, January.
- Benaud, R. (1985) On Reflection, Fontana, Glasgow.
- Bennett, T. (1981) Popular Culture:History and Theory, in Popular Culture: Themes and Issues 2, Block 1 Unit 3, Open University.
- _____ (1986) The politics of "the popular" and popular culture, in Bennett, T. et al (eds) Popular Culture and Social Relations, Open University Press.
- Birrell, S. and Loy, J. (1979) Media Sport: Hot and Cool, in International Review of Sports Sociology, Vol.14 No.1
- Boylan, T. Curtin, C. et al (1988) A Changing Society: Ireland Since the 1960's, in Barlett, T. et al (eds) Irish Studies, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.
- Bottomore, T. (1984) The Frankfurt School, Tavistock Publ. Ltd, London
- Bourdieu, P. (1978) Sport and Social Class, in Social Science Information, 17 (6).
- Boyce, D. G. (1982) Nationalism and Ireland, Croom Helm, London
- Brecht, B. (1974) "Against George Lukas", New Left Review, No.84 March/April.
- Briggs, A. (1979) The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom Vol. IV: Sound and Vision, Oxford University Press.
- ×Brodie, M. (1980) 100 Years of Irish Football, Blackstaff Press, Belfast.
- Brown, T. (1981) Ireland: A Social and Cultural History 1922-1979, Fontana, Glasgow.
- Burke, P. (1980) Sociology and History, Allen Unwin, London.
- ×Burn, G. (1987) Pocket Money: Bad Boys. Business Heads and Boom Time Snooker, Pan Books, London.
- Buscombe, E. (ed) (1975) Football on Television, BFI Monograph No. 4, London.
- Cardiff, D. and Scannell, P. (1987) Broadcasting and National Unity, in Curran, J. et al (eds) Impact and Influences: Essays on Media Power in the Twentieth Century, Methuen, London, New York.
- Chaney, D. (1986) The Symbolic Form of Ritual in Mass Communication, in Golding, P. et al (eds), Communicating Politics, Leicester University Press.
- Clarke, A. and Clarke, J. (1982) Highlights and Action Replays: Ideology, sport and the media, in Hargreaves, Jen. (ed) Sport, Culture and Ideology, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.
- Clarke, J. Critcher, C (1985) The Devil Makes Work: Leisure in Capitalist Britain, MacMillan, London.

- Colley, I. and Davies, G. (1982) Kissed by History: Football as TV Drama, in Sporting Fictions, Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, Birmingham.
- Collins, R. (1989) The Language of advantage: satellite television in Western Europe, Media, Culture and Society, Vol. 11, July 1989.
- _____ (1989) White and Green and not much Read, Screen, Vol. 30, No. 1-2, Winter, Spring 1988/89.
- Connolly, S.J. (1982) Priests and People in Pre-Famine Ireland 1780-1845, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.
- Coogan, T.P. (1976) Ireland Since the Rising, Greenwood Press, Westport Conn. (Orig. publ. 1966)
- Critcher, C. (1974) Football Since the War: Study in Social Change and Popular Culture, Occasional Paper, CCCS, Birmingham.
- _____ (1987) Media Spectacles: sport and mass communications, in Cashdan, A. and Jordin, M. (eds) Studies in Communication, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- _____ (1979) Sociology, Cultural Studies and the Post-War Working Class, in Clarke, J. et al (eds) Working Class Culture: Studies in History and Theory, Hutchinson, London.
- Cronin, S. (1980) Irish Nationalism: A History of its Roots and Ideology, The Academy Press, Dublin.
- Dayan, D. and Katz, E. (1987) Performing Media Events, in Curran, J et al (eds) Impacts and Influences: Essays in Media Power in the Twentieth Century, Methuen, London, New York.
- Deane, P. (1979) The First Industrial Revolution, Cambridge University Press, 2nd Edition.
- ✗ de Burca, M. (1980) The GAA: A History, Cumann Luthchleas Gael, Dublin.
- ✗ Deeley, P. (1987) Sport and TV, Sportsweek, no. 20, 29/1/87.
- Dowling, J. Doolan, L. Quinn, B. (1969) Sit Down and Be Counted, RTE/Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.
- Dunn, T. (1986) The Evolution of Cultural Studies, in Punter, D (ed) Introduction to Contemporary Cultural Studies, Longman, London.
- ✗ Dunning, E. (1986) The Dynamics of Modern Sport, in Elias, N. and Dunning, E. Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilising Process, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- _____ (ed) (1971) The Sociology of Sport, Cass, London.
- ✗ Edwards, H. (1973) The Sociology of Sport, Dorsey Press, Illinois.
- Elias, N. (1978) The Civilising Process Vol. 1: The History of Manners, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- Elias, N. and Dunning E. (1986) Quest for Excitement: Sport and Leisure in the Civilising Process, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
- ✗ Etherington, D. (1982) Sports Sponsorship Today, in, Report of a Seminar on Sponsorship and Sport, University of Stirling.
- Farrell, B. (ed) (1984) Communications and Community in Ireland, Mercier Press Ltd.
- Garvin, T. (1981) The Evolution of Irish Nationalist Politics, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.
- Geraghty, C., Simpson, P., Whannel, G. (1986) Tunnel Vision: Television's World Cup, in Tomlinson, A. and Whannel, G. (eds) Off The Ball: The Football World Cup, Pluto, London.
- Gibbons, L. (1988) From Megalith to Megastore: Broadcasting and Irish Culture, in Bartlett, T. Curtin, C. et al (eds) Irish Studies, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.
- Golding, P. and Murdock, G. (1989) Pulling the Plugs on Democracy, New Statesman Society, 30/6/89.
- Goldlust, J. (1987) Playing For Keeps, Sport, the media and Society, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne.

- Coogan, T.P. (1976) An Old Lady and her Pupils, in McRedmond, L. (ed) Written on the Wind, RTE/Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.
- Gorham, M. (1967) Forty Years of Irish Broadcasting, Talbot Press, Dublin.
- Gramsci, A. (1971) Selections from the Prison Notebooks, Lawrence and Wishart, London.
- X Gruneau, R. (1984) Commercialism and the modern Olympics, in Tomlinson, A. and Whannel, G. (eds) Five Ring Circus: Money, Power and Politics at the Olympic Games, Pluto Press, London.
- X Gruneau, R.S. (1976) "Sport as an area of Sociological Study: An introduction to major Themes and Perspectives", in Gruneau, R.S. and Albinson, J.G. (eds) Canadian Sport: Sociological Perspectives, Addison-Wesley Don Mills, Ont.
- Guttman, A. (1978) From Ritual to Record, Columbia University Press, New York.
- Hall, S. (1981a) Cultural Studies: Two Paradigms, in Bennett, T. et al (eds) Culture, Ideology and Social Process, OpenUniversity Press, Milton Keynes.
- _____ (1977) Culture, the Media, and the "Ideological Effect", in Curran, J. et al (eds) Mass Communication and Society, Edward Arnold, London.
- _____ (1981b) "Notes on Deconstructing the popular", in Samuel, R. (ed) People's History and Socialist Theory, RKP, London.
- _____ (1986) Popular culture and the state, in Bennett, T. et al (eds) Popular Culture and Social Relations, Open University Press, Milton Keynes.
- _____ (1975) Television as a medium and its relation to culture, Occasional Paper CCCS, University of Birmingham.
- Hargreaves, J. (1986) Sport, Power and Culture: A Social and Historical Analysis of Popular Sports in Britain, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Hauser, T. (1988) The Black Lights: Inside the World of Professional Boxing, Pan Books, London.
- Hodgson, P. (1989) Public Service Values - passport to the future, EBU Review, Vol. XL, No. 3, May 1989.
- Hoggart, R. (1957) The Uses of Literacy, Chatto and Windus.
- X Horne, J. et al (eds) (1987) Sport, Leisure and Social Relations, Sociological Review Monograph No. 33, RKP, New York, London.
- X Howell, D. (1983) Committee of Enquiry into Sports Sponsorship, Central Commission of Physical Education.
- Hutchinson, J. (1987) The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism: The Gaelic Revival and the Creation of the Irish Nation-State, Allen and Unwin, London.
- Inglis, T. (1987) Moral Monopoly: The Catholic Church in Modern Irish Society, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.
- Jones, B. (1975) The Politics of Popular Culture, Occasional Paper, CCCS, Birmingham.
- Johnson, R. (1979a) Culture and the Historians, in Clarke, J et al (eds) Working Class Culture: Studies in history and theory, Hutchinson, London.
- _____ (1986) The Story so far: And further Transformations, in Punter, D. (ed) Introduction to Contemporary Cultural Studies, Longman, London.
- _____ (1979b) Three Problematics: Elements of a Theory of Working Class Culture, ibid.
- Jokl, E. and Simon, E. (eds) (1964) International Research in Sport and Physical education, Thomas Springfield, Mass.
- Keating, F. The medium and the message, The Guardian, 7/10/86.
- Kelly, S.F. (1988) Back Page Football: A Century of Newspaper Coverage, MacDonald Queen Ann Press
- X Keleher, R. (1989) Getting to grips with a question of sport, Marketing Week, 7/4/89.
- Kennedy, D. (1988) The Widening Gulf: Northern Attitudes to the Independent Irish state, Blackstaff Press, Belfast.
- Leavis, F.R. (1930) Mass Civilisation and Minority Culture, Cambridge.

- Lyons, F.S.L. (1979) Culture and Anarchy in Ireland 1890-1939, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Malcolm, E. (1983) Popular Recreation in Nineteenth Century Ireland, in McDonagh, O. et al (eds) Irish Culture and Nationalism, Macmillan, London.
- Mandle, W.F. (1987) The Gaelic Athletic Association and Irish Nationalist Politics 1884-1924, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin.
- Marsh, P. et al (eds) (1978) The Rules of Disorder, RKP, London.
- Martin-Jenkins, C. (1984) Twenty Years On: Cricket's Years of Change, Willow Books, London.
- Mason, T. (1980) Association Football and English Society 1863-1915, The Harvester Press, Sussex.
- _____ (1988) Sport in Britain, Faber and Faber, London and Boston.
- Masterman, L. (1988) Teaching About Television, Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- Mathias, P. (1983) The First Industrial Nation, Methuen, London and New York 2nd Edition.
- Meehan, N. and Bell, D. (1986) Public Service Versus The Market. A False Polarity ? The Case of Irish Broadcasting, A paper presented to the International Television Studies Conference, London, 1986.
- Morris, B.S. and Nydahl, J. (1985) Sports Spectacle as Drama: Image, Language and Technology, in Journal of Popular Culture, Vol 18:4, Spring.
- Morse, M. (1983) Sport on Television: Replay and Display, in Kaplan, E.A. (ed) Regarding television: Critical Approaches - an anthology, American Film Institute.
- Mulgan, G. (1989) A Thousand Beams of Light, Marxism Today, April.
- Murdock, G. (1989) Tearing down the wall, in New Statesman and Society, 25/8/89.
- Nowell-Smith, G. (1981) Television-Football-The World, in Bennett, T., Boyd -Bowman, S. et al (eds) Popular Television and Film, BFI, London.
- O ceallachain, S. (1988) Sean Og: His Own Story, Brophy Books, Dublin and London.
- O'Farrell, P. (1975) England and Ireland Since 1800, Oxford University Press.
- Oram, H. (1983) The Newspaper Book: A History of Newspapers in Ireland, Mo Books, Dublin.
- Parker, S. (1983) Leisure and Work, Allen and Unwin, London.
- _____ (1976) The Sociology of Leisure, Allen and Unwin, London.
- Pegg, M. (1983) Broadcasting and Society 1918-1939, Croom Helm, Kent.
- Peters, R (1976) Sport on Television, Occasional Paper, CCCS, Birmingham.
- × Rader, B.G. (1984) In Its Own Image: How Television has Transformed Sport, The Free Press, New York.
- Real, M.R.(1977) Mass-Mediated Culture, Prentice-Hall, New Jersey.
- Roberts, K. (1978) Contemporary Society and the Growth of Leisure, Longman, London.
- _____ (1981) Leisure, Longman, London 2nd Edition.
- _____ (1983) Youth and Leisure, Allen and Unwin, London.
- Rojek, C. (1985) Capitalism and Leisure Theory, Tavistock, London and New York.
- Rothenbuhler, E.W. (1988) The Living Room Celebration of the Olympic Games, in Journal of Communication, Autumn.
- Rowland, W. and Tracey, M. (1988) The Breakdown of Public Service Broadcasting, Intermedia, Vol.16 No. 4-6, Autumn 1989.
- Samuel, R. (1985) What is Social History, in History Today, March 1985
- Scannell, P. (1989) Public Service Broadcasting and Modern Public Life, Media, Culture and Society, Vol. 11 No. 2, April.
- Sendall, B. (1983) Independent Television in Britain Vol.2 1958-68, Macmillan, London.
- Stedman Jones, G. (1976) From historical sociology to theoretical history, British Journal of Sociology, 27 (3) PP. 295-305

- Stevenson, J. (1984) British Society 1914-45, Penguin, London.
- Thomas, A. (1980) Broadcast and be Damned, Melbourne University Press, Victoria.
- Tomlinson, A. (1989) Whose side are they on? Leisure studies and cultural studies in Britain, Leisure Studies, Vol.8 No. 2, May 1989.
- Thompson, E.P. (1980) The Making of the English Working Class, Penguin, London (Originally published 1963)
- Thompson, E. (1964) Bulletin of the Society for the study of labour history, August 1964.
- Tierney, M. (1984) The Public and Private Image of The GAA - A Centenary Appraisal, in The Crane Bag, Media and Popular Culture Vol 8 no.2.
- Tracey, M. (1988) Popular Culture and the Economics of Global Television, in, Intermedia, March Vol 16 No 2.
- X Wagg, S. (1984) The Football World: A Contemporary History, The Harvester Press, Sussex.
- Walton, J.K. and Walvin, J. (eds) (1983) Leisure in Britain 1780-1950, Manchester University Press.
- Walvin, J. (1978) Leisure and Society 1870-1939, Longman, London.
- X Whannel, G. (1983a) Blowing the Whistle: the politics of sport, Pluto Press, London.
- _____ (1984) Fields in Vision: Sport and Representation, Screen, 25 No 3, PP. 99-107.
- _____ (1983b) Sit Down With Us: Sport as Armchair Theatre, Leisure Studies Conference Paper No. 16, in Glyptis, S. (ed) Leisure and the Media, Leisure Studies Association.
- _____ (1986) The Unholy Alliance: notes on television and the remaking of British sport 1965-85, in Leisure Studies, 5, PP 129-145.
- Willis, P.E. (1974) Performance and Meaning: A socio-cultural view of women in sport, Occasional Paper CCCS, Birmingham.
- Williams, R. (1963) Culture and Society 1780-1950, Penguin, London. (Originally published 1958)
- _____ (1974) Television. Technology and Cultural form, Fontana, Glasgow.
- Wilson, N. (1989) Sport through a Sky Light, The Independent, 2/2/89.
- Yeo, E. and Yeo, S. (eds) (1981) Popular Culture and Class Conflict 1590-1914, The Harvester Press, Sussex.