

# Influential people and events in sports management



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Since the beginning of civilization, it has been in the nature of humans to compete with one another. In ancient Greece, the citizens trained in gymnasiums or “naked places” perfect their wrestling or boxing technique (Sweet, 1987). “Athletics were more important to the Greeks than us today” according to Sweet, like the current American society, cheating was looked down upon in ancient times. Cheating was looked at as sacrilegious; a disgrace to Zeus (Sweet, 1987).

Today cheating is not looked at as a sacrilegious act to a god, but as a shameful act of cheating. Luckily, (or unluckily whichever side the athlete) there are entities in place that all athletes have the same competitive advantage. The act of managing sport can level a playing field, negotiate a salary, relocate an athlete, advise an organization, run a facility, or teach others the topics in sport management in a college setting.

The modern field of sport management is a fairly young field that is constantly adapting to the demands required. The curriculum of sport management also adheres to the same principles of business, but is even younger than the practice of sport management. Through history, sport and sport management has shown its progressive tendencies, ideals that were ahead of common American society at the time. This leads to the five significant events and the influential minds behind the events in sport management, which are the topic of this paper. They are certainly not all the people and events that had significant contribution, but simply the top five that are deemed worthy for this assignment.

### **Thoroughbred Racing**

Since history is usually placed in chronological order, the trend continues today. Thoroughbred horse racing was a very popular sport in eighteenth century England; along with baseball, cricket, and field hockey (Masteralexis, Barr, & Hums, 2005). Positions of Albert Spalding to Earle Ziegler 3 political and social power were appointed to men with wealth; most of those positions being horse owners, track or club owners, and other various supervision roles.

Each club in the given area had its own set of rules, which were created by the owner; sometimes even to work in his own favour. Complications often arose when a rider from one track would race at another as rules varied (Masteralexis, Barr, & Hums, 2005). And by the 1830's with the innovation of railroads, horse owners wanted to compete nationally to increase profits, and breed with new horses to create faster horses.

Naturally a new management style was needed but this was only the first complication of two. The second was gambling. Gambling was a very popular event amongst the upper and lower classes at the track. The lower class was then able to wager bets at the track with the upper class because club/track owners did not charge admission to the event. The track was a social setting in which a diverse group of people intermingled for a common purpose here as a member of the upper and lower class would hardly be seen in the same place, sharing a common purpose (Masteralexis, Barr, & Hums, 2005).

The gambling itself took place during the race, which was a four-mile course broken up into three legs. The winner would have to win at least two out of

the three races. If the fans of the race suspected the jockey of throwing a race, the jockey would often be physically abused by the fans (Masteralexis, Barr, & Hums, 2005).

It was not very common for unethical behaviour to take place when bets were made, but they did occur and were dealt with promptly. Sometime after the 1830's, there became a standardized management system in horse racing which forced club/track owners to standardized lengths of the course, forced the track to time the events, and even spawned a new style of horse racing:

Thoroughbred racing with weights added to the horses (Masteralexis, Barr, & Hums, Albert Spalding to Earle Ziegler2005).

In gambling, a standardized system was also adopted as club owners started handicapping the races, ran a sweepstakes race and even started to offer tip sheets to the customers at the events. These strategical changes are viewed as the first managerial changes in club sport; while also being viewed as the successful model for club sports, which ruled the eighteenth century in the forms of boxing, cricket, rugby and soccer (Masteralexis, Barr, & Hums, 2005).

The club sport system still exists today, although it does not thrive as it once did in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. But these clubs set a precedent that would contribute to the next innovator in the sport management profession.

### **William Hulbert and the National League**

As stated in the previous section, club teams were the dominate structure for athletic teams in the nineteenth century. Baseball was no different. Most teams were around and had a small fan base, but most teams were never able to play a whole season. or keep fan interest for a whole season because of lack of funding. It was not uncommon for teams to just quit halfway through the season.

The most popular team of the 1860's was the Cincinnati Red Stockings who toured the east to play teams and because of their fan base, were able to pay for travel expenses and earn a profit while playing on the road (Masteralexis, Barr, & Hums, 2005). On a road trip at the end of 1870 season the Red Stocking lost the three games of the season, and because of that were no longer considered the champions of baseball.

The fan base for the club fell drastically and the team disbanded before the beginning of the following season (Masteralexis, Barr, & Hums, 2005). In 1871, after such hard times, remaining teams formed a union; a new league called the National Association of Professional Baseball Players.

Unfortunately, the beginning results were no different than that of their predecessors in the club system as teams would form, stop playing halfway through the season, and perhaps start operations the next season. After years of trying to gain credibility and reach stability in the league, an entrepreneur by the name of William Hulbert purchased the National League of Professional Baseball Players in 1876 and was often referred to as the National League from then on (Masteralexis, Barr, & Hums, 2005).

Hulbert made sure that all business aspects were in the open and not conducted behind closed doors as to ensure honest means of doing business. He also set guidelines for the eight teams to follow: he was going to make sure that the league would not crumble because of one team's financial irresponsibility. All teams were accountable for each other, or the league would:

fail. Hulbert made many decisions for the league. On one occasion, Hulbert canceled the final series between Philadelphia and New York as both teams were struggling and their outcome would not have affected league standings (Crosset & Hums, 2005). By doing this, he allowed the teams to shut down the operations so the team would save money for the next season and not hinder future operations.

Ethics and citizenship were staple points in Hulbert's National League as well, forcing teams to set curfews for the athletes and enforcing strict policies that meant banning players for life if they were gambling, for example. Hulbert's precedent still stands today, as over 100 years later, Pete Rose was banned from ever stepping foot into a baseball park because of gambling allegations.

He also made sure that the fans were proper citizens as well; raising ticket prices to keep rowdier, lower-class fans out and not allowing alcohol to be sold in the ball park. However, the "revolutionary idea," according to Crosset and Hums, was the implementation of a pennant race at the end of the season. The two top teams at the end of the season would play a series for the pennant, better known as the National League Championship.

Hulbert also protected teams from losing their players, as players under contract were not allowed to negotiate or be bought out by other teams without both parties being aware of it. The “player’s reservation” system was a precedent in sport management, and is still a foundation in modern sport management. After some success with the league, local newspapers started to cover the games; giving updates on injuries, interviewing players, keeping track of statistics and reporting other coaching strategies to keep the fans interested.

This also opened a new element for sports as fans who could not afford to attend games and only followed by word of mouth. The sports coverage allowed fans to follow keep track of the games played and re-enact the game through the written stories. The precedents set by Hulbert were truly astronomical; building foundations that still stand in baseball today.

His demands for class and integrity are considered sacred to the game of baseball and were followed for years; which is why steroids have been such a paramount concern in baseball for the past couple of years. For his actions he was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1995 as a pioneer of the game.

### **Albert Spalding**

While William Hulbert was a great innovator himself, accomplishing many feats, he was not alone in the formation of the new National League. Albert Spalding was a pitcher for the Boston Red Stockings, who subsequently were members of the National League of Professional Baseball Players. Spalding was a major celebrity of the game, winning 241 games, and losing only 60

between 1871 and 1876 (Lampster, 2006). An innovator himself, Spalding pitched with his own signature designed baseball. After leading the Red Stockings to the first National League Championship in 1876, he decided to create his own company named simply after himself.

That same year, Spalding was the official baseball of the National League, and baseballs were sold to the general public: therefore, becoming the first sporting good company in America (Lampster, 2006). The year 1877 proved to be Spalding's last season as a professional ballplayer. He then focused solely on managing his company and the Chicago White Stockings as their team president. After managing, he became an international promoter of baseball, spreading the game around the world in 1888.

In 1887, he created and manufactured the first American football. And in 1894, he created the first basketball. Spalding was a We innovator and strived to set precedent like Hulbert. Spalding and Hulbert fed off of each others innovations and cleverly marketed each other through each others company (Lampert, 2006).

### **Sport Management as an Academic Field**

Almost 100 years has passed since the wrinkle in time that was the beginning professional baseball. The time was the 1960's, Major League Baseball was a prevaie: organization, Albert Spalding had already been inducted into the baseball hail of and the " sports industry was thriving' (Crosset & Hums, 2005 According to Cc sse: and Hums, two men discussed the idea of a sport management curriculum in 1 95 a physical educator from



the University of Miami, James G. Mason, and owner of the then Brooklyn Dodgers, George O'Malley.

O'Malley is most recognized as the chief legal counsel for Jacky Robinson when he broke the color barrier in 1947 and for moving the Brooklyn Dodgers to Los Angeles. The two decided that to keep up with the demand in the sports industry a professional degree needed to be started to accommodate. In 1966, O'Malley and Mason started the first Sport Management graduate program at Ohio

University in Athens, Ohio. The idea of a sport management degree caught on soon thereafter as Biscayne College and St. John's University founded the first undergraduate programs in the United States (Crosset & Hums, 2005). The University of Massachusetts-Amherst followed in Ohio's footsteps, offering the second graduate program in the U. S. in 1971. As the field grew, unions of teachers started to form; mos:

of which were short lived. Today's dominant sport management scholarly union is the North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM). Sport Management is one of the most highly sought after degrees by incoming freshman (Mahoney, 2008). With massive growth however, teachers are in high demand and there are not enough people to teach the high volume of students and conduct new research to progress the field in a brand new direction. The next paragraph focuses on a man who changed the field of sport management forever. This dual citizen of the U. S. and Canada implemented his own curriculum; his name is Dr. Earle F. Ziegler.

According to the official Earle F. Ziegler website, Ziegler got his start in education at Yale University where he taught physical education and coached football and wrestling from 1943 to 1949. He began working for the University of Western Ontario in 1949 as a part-time German instructor.

Shortly thereafter, he became the department head for Physical, Health, & Recreation for the university. At the University of Michigan, Ziegler began his research for physical education and how to manage it effectively. He then conducted research at the University of Illinois, and then went back to the University of Western Ontario. After years of solely researching in the field of physical education, Ziegler intertwined physical education with other topics such as

Albert Spalding to Earle Z:-philosophy and administrative theory. In 1975, the year Ziegler returned to Western Ontario, he released six publications on various topics branching physical education out. An acquired copy of "Management Competency Development in Sport and Physical Education" written by Dr. Ziegler in 1983 is an interesting read. Ziegler explains throughout the opening chapter the different types and amounts of research he did to write his book, He opened the book with four chapters about management theories and the emerging field of study.

He then presented a strategic plan on how to implement management into sport. It is hard to comprehend that this had never been done before. Dr. Ziegler was in the field conducting research on different topics and drawing parallels between the two. There were degree programs before this at universities around the country, but Ziegler created an entirely new school of

thought with the publications that he wrote; inspiring young professionals to think proactively and engage themselves in theory.

Most of the topics discussed today in sport management courses are based off of his research and those who followed in his footsteps. Ideas that a person would just take for granted now/ere accomplished for the first time 25 years ago by an old man from New York City. Ziegler, in fact, was the first president of NASSM, and because of his contributions to the field was honoured with an award in his name in 1988. This award is given out annually to the educator in the sport management field making positive contributions in research and education sport management. :

### **Conclusion**

As clearly shown throughout the paper, the field of sport management shares a rich history like other fields of academia, even at its young existence. The models of conformity in club horse racing would open the door for the brand new league system created by William Hulbert. And without the newly renovated National League, Spalding would not have marketed his new product, as well with Hulbert.

As the field slowly grew and innovation lay dormant for sometime, that opened the door for O'Malley and Mason to create a brand new field of study to feed their vision of enhancing the field of sport management. And finally without Earle Ziegler, sport management would not be flourishing the way it is today without his teachings and theories. Again, he opened a new doorway for students to walk through. Teaching his knowledge and inspiring students then, who are the administrators of today.

The interesting thing throughout the paper is the progressiveness of society through sporting events in history: The intermingling of upper and lower classes at horse tracks, the introduction of baseball throughout the world, and O'Malley breaking down the colour barrier by signing Jacky Robinson to the Brooklyn Dodgers.

Although there may have been some differences between some, athletics has set a standard for breaking down sociological barriers between class and colour. These are the five significant events and the influential minds behind the events in sport management; they are certainly not all the people and events that had significant contribution for today's sport management, but simply the catalysts for change and progression.