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# Introduction: Becoming a Global Sport Leader

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Since the late nineteenth century, communication and information routes have connected every corner of the planet, allowing the constitution of a collective global memory composed of notable events, eminent figures, consumer products and cultural movements. Sport is another field of human endeavour that has left its mark on successive generations, as the print media, radio, television and, now, the Internet have turned exploits and records into legends. The successes and failures of sportsmen and, more recently, sportswomen have been analysed from every possible angle—technical, physical, psychological or sociological—by an ever-growing number of pundits, journalists and

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academics, while innumerable biographies and biopics dissect the lives and personalities of sporting champions.

On the other hand, the people who run international sport and control sport's biggest events, such as the Olympic Games and world championships, are rarely in the public eye, unless they or their organisations become embroiled in scandals. Frequently polyglot, expatriate, educated abroad, married to partners of other nationalities and constantly on the move, sport's top executives epitomise the globalisation of world affairs since the late nineteenth century. Sport has enabled many of them to reach career heights they could not have hoped for in other fields and allowed them to rub shoulders with monarchs, presidents, prime ministers, financiers, industrialists, media tycoons, artists and, of course, sporting champions. At the same time, ensconced within their own customs and social codes, they have become cut off from the hundreds of millions of people who participate in sport throughout the world. Because most international sport organisations are far from models of democracy, despite their "one country, one vote" voting systems, their leaders have been able to turn these bodies into closed elites. It is this transnational cast of sports executives that we focus on in this book.

## Two Models of Globalised Sport

By leaders of institutionalised sport we mean the presidents of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and international sports federations (IFs). Assisted by their management staff, they promote their sport by organising international events, introducing new economic models, and implementing new organisational methods. This book provides a glimpse into the little-known world of these highly influential people by examining the careers of fifteen leaders who have marked the history of world sport. Each portrait shows how its subject's personality, values, commitment and skills shaped his or her strategic vision, views on governance and approach to management. All but one of these leaders[1]

[1]Bernie Ecclestone, the former head of Formula 1 motor racing.

worked within and helped shape the European, pyramidal model of globalised sport, in which clubs are members of national federations, which, in turn, are members of an international federation. This model, which dates back to the 1890s, facilitates the organisation of competitions at all levels, from local to international, with a promotion/relegation system for the most successful/least successful teams/clubs/athletes at each level.

Sport in North America developed along very different principles to European sport, giving rise to a second model based more closely on private enterprise. The first international competitions in many sports took the form of challenges in which a cup is competed for every year. Such events include sailing's America's Cup, founded in 1857 by the New York Yacht Club, and golf's Ryder Cup, created in 1927 by Samuel Ryder, a London-based pioneer of mail order selling. More recently, Fred Lebow, the president of the New York Road Runners Club, devised a very different type of sporting occasion when he launched the trend for mass-participation events by creating the New York Marathon in 1970. Since then, innumerable such events have been created throughout the world, often through the impulsion of sponsors and independently of the IFs and IOC. However, the American model of sports governance is most clearly typified by the professional leagues that run the elite echelons of sports such as baseball (Major League Baseball, created in 1876), basketball (National Basketball League, created in 1898), ice hockey (National Hockey League, created in 1917 in Montreal) and American football (National Football League, created in 1920). Membership of these leagues is restricted to a fixed number of teams, each of which pays a franchise fee and is required to impose a salary cap on players. The advent of subscription television channels in the 1980s greatly increased the worldwide audiences for these leagues, leading franchises/teams to play some of their matches in Asia, Europe and the Middle East. Many IFs and the IOC are beginning to see the unstoppable rise of this American model as cause for concern.

The task we set our authors was to show how factors such as family background, training, career path, social context and technological advances impacted each leader's approach to governing and developing their sport(s). Although our authors are of different nationalities and have different academic backgrounds, they are all experts in

the institution concerned. Their portraits are based on interviews, the academic literature, sport organisation archives, newspaper articles and, in some cases, existing biographies. Some of the authors have worked within international sport organizations and were therefore able to draw upon direct observations of the leader they describe. We would like to extend our warmest thanks to all of them for meeting the difficult challenge they were set.

Each chapter starts by summarising a leader's life story and career, highlighting his or her upbringing, education, professional background, and links with the worlds of politics and business. It then analyses the challenges that leader faced and the managerial doctrine he or she adopted. In most cases, these analyses are centred round a central issue, be it a leader's autocratic management style, the intangible values of Olympism, commercialisation, professionalization and governance, marketing innovations, the development of a global spectacle, or the consolidation of a system. However, few of the chapters explore the issue of social responsibility, despite its potential to provide a new strategic framework for the development of sport organisations (Bayle et al. 2011). The final section of each chapter examines the leader's legacy for his or her organisation(s), for his or her sport, and for international sport in general.

## Management Science, Sport and History

Until now, specialists in sports management and in the history of sport have rarely combined their two perspectives. Historians have tended to focus on social history or on sport as an instrument of soft power, while management scientists have mostly examined the way sport organizations are run. Neither specialty has shown much interest in the history of international sport's governing institutions, other than FIFA and the IOC. For example, very few papers in the field's leading journal, the *Journal of Sport History*, mention the notions of sports management and the few exceptions to this rule have all been studies of professional sport in the United States. Similarly, management science journals have

given little space to the history of sport, despite being open to a wide range of transdisciplinary research. In this respect, the study of sports management has mirrored the evolution of management itself, which has gone from being a science of production mechanisms to become a science of organisations and then a science of human behaviour, most notably, the psychology of social groups.

Nevertheless, sport and management have become modern in very similar ways. For example, developments in both fields have been inspired by the desire to perfect individual performance and improve human organisations. One of the most important changes in sport was the transformation of traditional games into modern sports, a process that began in the Renaissance and accelerated during the nineteenth century thanks to the scientific measurement of records, the adoption of fixed rules for each game, and the creation of supervisory bodies.[2] In fact, the first sets of rules for sports were drawn up for golf, cricket and boxing in the eighteenth century, followed by football, rugby, athletics and tennis in the mid-nineteenth century, and then by basketball and volleyball in the early 1890s. The forms taken by international business and management follow a similar trajectory, from the division of labour and specialisation of tasks described by Adam Smith, Charles Babbage and David Ricardo between 1776 and 1817, to Frederick Winslow Taylor's Principles of Scientific Management (1911).

Another modern aspect of both sport and management is their increasingly transnational nature. Challenges between athletes and clubs were quite common as early as the 1860s, long before most national and international federations were formed. Newspapers and magazines were keen to promote new sports from different countries and create transnational sporting heroes. Hence, even before the First World War, a *lingua sportiva*, mostly based on English, had spread around the globe. In the corporate world, large companies have become increasingly

[2]For more on this point see Allen Guttmann, *From Ritual to Record: The Nature of Modern Sports*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1978, and Georges Vigarello, *Passion sport. Histoire d'une culture*, Paris, Textuel, 2000.

international in terms of their structures and management, as well as their operations. Once known as multinationals, they have now become transnational in that they exist and operate across the regulatory and fiscal regulations imposed by individual states. Performance, competition and records are the hallmark of both modern sport and entrepreneurial management. However, this does not mean that the leaders of world sport apply corporate management models within their organisations. Far from it.

## Fifteen Portraits

It would, of course, be impossible for our fifteen portraits to cover every possible career path and every approach to governance. Nevertheless, the careers of our chosen leaders are sufficiently instructive and representative for the insights they reveal to be applied to other sports, other executives or other fields of management. Although our selection took into account the state of current research and our authors' fields of expertise, it was primarily based on the extent of each leader's legacy. Because all fifteen leaders occupied highly influential positions within sport for at least ten years, they were able to leave their mark on their era, their sport and their organisation. In all cases, our authors were careful to approach their subjects with proper academic impartiality and have avoided any temptation to glorify or vilify individuals or their organisations. This was particularly important in the case of contemporary leaders, many of whose reputations have been damaged by the stream of corruption accusations that have tarnished international sport from the Salt Lake City scandal in 1999 to the on-going FIFAgate and IAAFgate affairs.

The fifteen leaders portrayed here cover a wide range of sports, from Olympic sports to motorsport, and from team sports such as football and cricket to more individual sports such as tennis, cycling and athletics. Our focus on the European model of globalised sport, means that the majority of the leaders are from western Europe, the birthplace of most international sport organisations: Pierre de Coubertin (IOC), Alice Milliat (International Women's Sports Federation),

Jules Rimet (FIFA) and Philippe Chatrier (International Tennis Federation—ITF) from France, Henri de Baillet-Latour and Jacques Rogge (IOC) from Belgium, Juan Antonio Samaranch (IOC) from Spain, Bernie Ecclestone (Formula 1) from England, Hein Verbruggen (Union Cycliste Internationale—UCI) from the Netherlands and Sepp Blatter (FIFA) from Switzerland. Nevertheless, five chapters focus on leaders who were born outside Europe.

The absence of North-American executives at the top of major IFs and the IOC (apart from Avery Brundage, who presided the IOC from 1952 to 1972) is due to the separation between the European and American models of sport outlined above. Canada's Dick Pound attempted to win the IOC's presidency on two occasions but was defeated each time, even though he was the architect of the IOC's TOP sponsorship programme and had negotiated lucrative contracts with American television networks. Pound's appointment as president of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) could be viewed as a sort of compensation for the IOC's refusal to make him its president. Brazil's João Havelange, who became FIFA president in 1974, is another exception to Europe's hegemony over the top positions in world sport. Havelange obtained his position due to the sporting and organisational strength of Latin American football and the fact that non-European footballing nations had become disaffected with Europe's attempts to monopolise power within the sport. In contrast, the elections of India's Jagmohan Dalmiya as president of the International Cricket Council (ICC) in 1997 and of Senegal's Lamine Diack as president of the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) in 1999 may augur greater representation for the Global South and the BRICS within sport's governing bodies. The final chapter charts the rise of sports executives from the oil-rich countries of the Middle East. Although these countries are becoming increasingly influential within international sport, and despite attempts to win the presidencies of FIFA and the IOC, none of their sporting leaders has yet presided a major IF.

The fifteen chapters are grouped together into four sections covering four generations of sports management: the founders of the international sports system around the dawn of the twentieth century,

the architects of the "Dassler revolution" during the 1970s and 1980s, the manager-executives of the 1990s and 2000s, and the first wave of non-European leaders. Because sport is an extraordinary "mirror on society", the changes brought about by these four generations reflect major changes within society as a whole, in rules, morals, economic structures, social interactions, the media, and technology. However, the mirror analogy oversimplifies reality, as sport can anticipate change as well as react to it. In fact, sport can be both a conservatory of traditions and an accelerator of modernity. As the actions of sport's leaders frequently show, sport sometimes lags behind the pace of economic and political change, and sometimes it sprints ahead. The international sports community has long attempted to prevent sport being used as a political tool by governments and vigorously defends the principle of "autonomy for sport", according to which sport must be protected from political interference. However, according such exceptional status to sport within the concert of nations automatically confers a degree of impunity on its leaders, whose transnational status has often allowed them to escape from national laws.

## Age No Barrier

The fifteen portraits in this book clearly show that age is more an advantage than a barrier to becoming the head of a major international sport organisation. In this respect, sport executives are no different to the presidents of multinational companies, Catholic cardinals and dictators, who often continue carrying out their functions well into their seventies. Some people see such longevity as a source of stability within fragile and controversial institutions; others see it as a source of stagnation.

FIFA typifies the tendency for IFs to favour experience over youth. Football's governing body has had eight presidents, either permanent or acting, since 1954, six of whom were over the age of 60 when appointed to the role. Rodolphe Seeldrayers, FIFA's fourth elected president, still holds the record, as he was already 73 when he was appointed to the position in 1954. A similar picture can be seen at the IOC, which has had five presidents since 1952, all of whom were at least 58 years old when

they took over. Avery Brundage was 65 when he was elected president in 1952, but he was still much younger than his predecessor, Sigfrid Edström, who was 82 when he stepped down. However, it is a misconception that these organisations have always been run by ageing men. FIFA's first president, Robert Guérin, was only 27 when he accepted the office and the federation's longest serving president, Jules Rimet, was elected at the age of 47. At the IOC, Pierre de Coubertin was 33 when he assumed the presidency in 1896, a position he held until 1925, when he was succeeded by Henri de Baillet-Latour, then aged 49.

What is more, the custom of renewing presidents' terms of office by acclamation enabled some leaders to hold onto their positions until a very advanced age. Five of FIFA's nine presidents (excluding acting presidents) remained in office until they were in their late seventies or eighties (Jules Rimet was 80 when he retired and João Havelange was 82 when he stepped down). Once again, it has been a similar story at the IOC: three of the organisation's presidents remained in office into their eighth decade—Samaranch was a day short of his 81st birthday when he stepped down, Edström was 82 and Brundage, the record holder, was almost 85. The IOC's current president, Thomas Bach, will be in his 70s at the end of his presidency, if he receives the support necessary to serve a final term.

Given the age at which these men attained their positions, it is not surprising that some of them died "in harness" (Rodolphe Seeldrayers and Arthur Drewry at FIFA, Henri Baillet-Latour at the IOC). In addition, the tendency to elect older presidents and these men's long tenures meant that until the eve of the twenty-first century the world's two largest sports institutions were led by people who were born before the foundation of the Soviet Union, in 1922. In fact, all FIFA's presidents up to and including João Havelange were born before the end of the First World War. Even Havelange's successor, Sepp Blatter, was born before World War II. Similarly, prior to 2001, when Jacques Rogge was elected president, all the IOC's presidents had been born before 1922. In fact, Lord Killanin, who was elected president in 1972, was the first IOC leader to have been born in the twentieth century.

Of course, the preference for older leaders is not restricted to FIFA and the IOC, as is shown by the IAAF, whose five presidents prior to

Lord Coe all served until they were in their 70s or 80s. Nevertheless, not all sports executives have had to wait until their sixth decade to reach the peak of their careers. Among the leaders portrayed in this book, Jagmohan Dalmiya was elected president of the ICC at the age of 57, the same age as Richard Pound when he became president of WADA. Younger still were Hein Verbruggen, elected president of the UCI when he was 50, and Philippe Chatrier, who became president of the ITF when he was 49. Both these men held onto their office for 14 years (Verbruggen: 1991–2005, Chatrier: 1977–1991), but many executives who obtained the top job later in life also kept their positions for many years. Bernie Ecclestone, for example, ruled over Formula 1 for 24 years (1993–2017), until he was 87, and Lamine Diack held onto the presidency of the IAAF for 14 years (2001–2015), until he was 82. Even then, he only stepped down because of a corruption scandal.

Although many federations continue to elect presidents in their late fifties or early sixties (e.g., David Haggerty at the ITF, Sebastian Coe at the IAAF, Morinari Watanabe at the International Gymnastics Federation), or renew the tenure of already ageing presidents (Uruguay's Julio Maglione, re-elected president of the International Swimming Federation at the age of 81 in 2017), the second decade of the twenty-first century appears to have brought a new generation of leaders. Executives in the vanguard of this trend include France's Jean-Christophe Rolland at the International Rowing Federation (elected president in 2013 at the age of 45), Switzerland's Gianni Infantino at FIFA (elected in 2015 at the age of 46), Brazil's Andrew Parsons at the International Paralympic Committee (elected in 2017 at the age of 40) and France's David Lappartient at the UCI (elected in 2017 at the age of 44).

## Long-Serving Presidents: Stability or Stagnation?

New members of the IOC are appointed by cooption, a process that enables the organisation to ensure members possess what it considers appropriate qualities. This recruitment method has many advantages for the IOC and undoubtedly helped it come through the great crises of the

twentieth century without suffering irreparable damage. However, it has also turned the organisation into an exclusive circle that has struggled to accept greater democracy, respond to a changing world, and wholeheartedly embrace the televisual and marketing age. For instance, the IOC maintained its rules on amateurism until 1980; rules it had adopted in 1894 to exclude lower-class athletes and ensure the Games remained the preserve of "gentlemen sportsmen". Another example of the IOC's frequent conservatism is provided by Avery Brundage's famous belief that there was no future for the Olympic Games and television.

What is more, the principle of cooption tends to encourage a culture of patronage, with advancement depending on obtaining support from the right people. Given the length of most presidents' tenures, it can take two decades or more to rise to the top position—Baillet-Latour, Edström and Bach all served as IOC members for 22 years before being elected president. On the other hand, with sufficient support it is possible to rise through the ranks much more quickly. This was the case for both Brundage and Rogge, who had been IOC members for just a decade when they were elected president. Brundage and Rogge were able to jump ahead of more senior members thanks to the support of an out-going president (Edström for Brundage, Samaranch for Rogge) who wanted to settle old scores and appoint someone he felt would extend his legacy. For similar reasons, João Havelange supported Sepp Blatter's bid to become president of FIFA. Patronage also plays an important role in determining which national executives are elevated to the ranks of international organizations. For example, Dick Pound, Jacques Rogge and Thomas Bach were coopted to the IOC thanks to the support of the presidents of their respective NOCs.

The commonly held view of the IOC as a club for the elderly results from the fact that, for much of its history, members were coopted for life. Even Coubertin, the IOC's founder, had no desire to adopt an electoral process for appointing members, which could have led to challenges to his position and which was contrary to his political outlook. Age limits for members were not introduced until the early 2000s, as part of the reforms implemented in the wake of the Salt Lake City scandal. Members coopted after 1999 are required to step down at the age of 70, but members coopted before 1999 are allowed to keep their

positions until they are 80. In addition, a rule adopted in 2014 as part of the IOC's Agenda 2020 allows members to petition the General Assembly for permission to serve for a further four years after their 70th birthdays.

Cooption and long terms of office give sport federations a large degree of stability, but they can also lead to conservatism and stagnation, and, in some cases, nepotism. Juan Antonio Samaranch Junior's rise through the IOC is, perhaps, the most striking example of this. Samaranch Junior, who had become vice-president of the very small International Modern Pentathlon Union in 1996, was co-opted to the IOC in 2001, when his father retired, appointed to the executive board in 2012 and elected vice-president in 2016. In another case, investigations by WADA's Independent Commission into Doping reported that former IAAF president Lamine Diack had given one of his sons a job within the IAAF and awarded consultancy contracts to another son. Such revelations have made limiting the age and tenure of sports executives a central aspect of the governance reforms being introduced by sport's governing bodies. Consequently, presidents of the IOC and half the world's IFs, including FIFA, can now serve limited terms. Such limits can deprive an institution of expertise and be used as a way for taking over power, but they are essential in order to prevent stagnation within the upper echelons of sports governance. They also help restrict the development of cronyism, whereby sports executives trade favours in order to maintain or advance their positions, rather than to benefit their sport and/or organisation. In fact, long tenures, combined with the power to appoint senior staff and to control internal and external communication, enabled executives to turn their organisations into personal fiefdoms that were subject to few true checks and balances.

## Sport's Career Ladder

The path to the most senior positions in international sport follows a career ladder that tends to be very similar from one IF to another and which culminates in cooption to the IOC. In recent years, experience

as an elite athlete has become a distinct advantage when it comes to climbing this ladder.

Apart from a few exceptions, the presidents of the world's IFs have patiently worked their way up from local administrator to international executive. Jules Rimet, for example, began his administrative career in 1897 when he founded a sports club called Red Star. He went on to become president of France's Inter-federal Football Committee, in 1906, founded the League of Football Associations, in 1910, and became president of the newly formed French Football Federation, in 1919. Two years later, in 1921, he was elected president of FIFA, which he had helped found in 1904. Hence, it took him 24 years to rise from his first administrative position to the top of world football. In comparison, Chatrier's ascent to the top of international tennis appears meteoric. After becoming president of the Tennis Club du Lys in 1965, he was appointed vice-president of the French Tennis Federation (FFT) in 1968, president of the FFT in 1973, and president of the IFT in 1977. In truth, Chatrier's rise to the top of world tennis was not as spectacular as it seems because he had been preparing the ground since 1953, through his magazine *Tennis de France*. Jagmohan Dalmiya, who began his career with the Cricket Association of Bengal in 1977, had also worked in sports administration for 20 years before he was elected president of his sport's IF, the ICC, in 1997.

This career ladder is even longer in the case of the IOC, because it only accepts as members senior national or international executives—presidents of either NOCs or IFs and chefs de mission for the Olympic Games—and former Olympians designated by their peers. IOC members must then serve on several Olympic commissions before being considered for a position on the executive board, which opens up the possibility of being elected vice-president. The evaluation, legal affairs, marketing, and digital and technology commissions are particularly propitious for advancement, as they enable members to expand and strengthen their sporting, commercial and media networks around the world. This is also the case for the Athletes' Commission, founded by Bach after Moscow 1980, and the working groups created to formulate and assess possible reforms to the IOC's governance.

Dick Pound's career within the sports and Olympic movement has been exceptionally long, as he obtained his first administrative position—treasurer for the Quebec section of his federation—at the age of 23 and he was still member of the IOC in 2017, at the age of 75. Between times he became a member of Canada's NOC, at the age of 26, chef de mission to the Munich Olympics, when he was 30, an IOC member at the unusually young age of 36, appointed to the executive board when he was 41, elected vice-president at the age of 45 and again at 54, and named WADA's first president when he was 59. However, Pound's 52 years of loyal service are eclipsed by Juan-Antonio Samaranch's 55-year career, which began in 1946, when he represented the Spanish Rink-hockey Federation at Montreux at the age of 26. He became vice-president of his IF and a member of Spain's NOC when he was 34 and appointed minister for sports by Franco when he was 46. This position allowed him to be coopted to the IOC, where he served as head of protocol, a one-off post created by Brundage to undermine the influence of his director general, Monique Berlioux, before becoming a member of the executive board at 50 and vice-president at 54. Six years later, at the age of 60, he was elected IOC president, a position he held for the next 21 years.

Even though most of sport's leaders achieved their positions thanks to their work in sports administration, this does not mean they lacked sporting prowess. Coubertin was a true sporting "all-rounder", even if he never took part in any competitions, Baillet-Latour was an enthusiastic equestrian, Milliat was an accomplished rower and Rimet was a proficient club footballer. Similarly, Samaranch was an occasional sportsman, Blatter played football in Switzerland's amateur league, Dalmiya was a decent cricketer and Chatrier was a top-class tennis player. Other leaders, including Havelange (swimming—Berlin 1936, water polo—Helsinki 1952), Pound (swimming—Rome 1960) and Rogge (sailing—Mexico 1968, Montreal 1972, Munich 1976), were Olympians. Lamine Diack, a long-jumper, would also have figured on this list if he had not missed the 1960 Rome Olympics through injury. Thomas Bach and Sebastian Coe, the current presidents of the IOC and IAAF, went a stage further, as both are Olympic gold medallists, Bach in the fencing competition at Montreal 1976 and Coe in the 1500 m at Moscow 1980 and Los Angeles 1984. However, some sports

executives, including most executives from Arab countries and former UCI president Hein Verbruggen, were not outstanding athletes, even if they are passionate about the sports they represent.

## Olympic Elitism

In June 2015 Marius Vizer, the International Judo Federation's controversial president, hit out at the lack of democracy within the IOC, claiming that "most of the IOC's members are aristocrats".[3] Vizer's attack may have been prompted by his anger at being ousted as president of SportAccord, the umbrella organisation for Olympic and non-Olympic IFs, but his accusation reflects a widely held, if increasingly untrue, belief that the IOC is a club for the aristocracy. In fact, when the IOC was founded, a quarter of its members were aristocrats; today, royal families and the nobility provide 12 of the IOC's 94 active members. Moreover, many senior sports executives were raised to the nobility in recognition of their contribution to sport. Notable examples included Juan-Antonio Samaranch and Jacques Rogge at the IOC and Sebastian Coe at the IAAF.

Not content with these national honours, sport's leaders have invented their own awards with which they can pay tribute to fellow executives, sporting champions and partners. Coubertin, who received many honours (but not the *Légion d'Honneur* he coveted) was well aware of the symbolic and strategic importance of such awards. As a result, in 1905 he created the Olympic Certificate as a way of recognising individuals with exceptional physical and moral qualities. Renamed the Olympic Order in 1975, this distinction is now awarded for "outstanding service to the Olympic Movement". In fact a worldwide "trade" in awards and distinctions has grown up between the sporting world and states, and vice versa. Avid for international recognition, many sports executives are highly susceptible to honours, foreign decorations and honorary doctorates.

[3] *Le Monde*, 22 June 2015.

Aristocrats may never have formed the majority of the IOC's members, but its members tended to be drawn from the upper echelons of society, unlike the IFs, most of whose members have more middle class origins. This was particularly the case for sports that were quick to embrace the lower classes or professionalism, such as football, tennis and golf. Consequently, the IOC has been reluctant to coopt the presidents of IFs, preferring to recruit its members from NOCs, and it was not until the reforms of 2002 that 15 seats within the IOC were reserved for leaders of international sport organisations. Despite this rule, the new presidents of two of sports leading IFs, Sebastian Coe at the IAAF (elected in 2015) and Gianni Infantino at FIFA (elected in 2016), had still not been coopted into the IOC at the end of 2017.

As part of its Olympic Agenda 2020, the IOC charged its Nominations Commission with introducing a "targeted" recruitment procedure that would identify the best candidates to fulfil vacancies (Recommendation 38). This procedure should ensure potential candidates are scrutinised more carefully, even if this is not explicitly mentioned in Recommendation 38, and thereby protect the IOC from having to accept candidates with links to dictatorships or criminal organisations. In the long term, the IOC may even include ethical criteria within its recruitment process, especially with respect to conflicts of interest.

## Lawyers, Businessmen and Athletes

Hein Verbruggen was an exceptional figure for several reasons, not least of which was the fact that he rose to the top of the UCI despite beginning his managerial career far from the world of sport, as a sales and product manager for Mars, Incorporated. In fact, sport's governing bodies have always tended to be "closed shops", impenetrable to anyone from outside sporting circles—World Rugby's appointment, in 2016, of two new board members with no particular connection to the sport was a truly innovative decision. If this approach to recruiting executives were to become widespread, IFs may one day be presided by people with no background in sports administration.

Generally speaking, the federations governing so-called working-class sports, such as football, cycling, boxing and wrestling, have been presided by men from the middle classes. The modest origins of FIFA presidents Jules Rimet and Sepp Blatter, and UCI presidents Paul Rousseau and Hein Verbruggen, are typical of the men who ran these sports. In contrast, sports associated with the middle and upper classes, such as tennis, cricket and sailing, have mostly been presided by men from the more privileged echelons of society. Former ITF president Philippe Chatrier, World Sailing (and, later, IOC) president Jacques Rogge and ICC president Jagmohan Dalmiya were all born into relatively affluent families. There are, of course, exceptions to every rule. For example, FIFA's second longest serving president, João Havelange, was a rich industrialist, and sport federation executives in the Middle East's oil-producing countries tend to be rich and often of royal blood. However, the democratisation of sport in western countries is beginning to overturn the traditional social make-up of sport's ruling elite. These changes are personified by the figure of Bernie Ecclestone, a fisherman's son, used-car salesman and motorsport enthusiast who rose to become the owner of Formula 1.

In terms of profession, a large proportion of sport's leaders have been lawyers by training, often commercial lawyers. Rimet, Havelange, Pound, Bach and Infantino all had careers in law, whereas Pierre de Coubertin and Henri Baillet-Latour, being of independent means, studied law but never went into practice. Other senior executives, including Samaranch, Verbruggen and Blatter, studied business, management or marketing, but few pursued their studies to a high level. In fact, sports executives are rarely alumni of prestigious universities or hold higher degrees: Pound, a graduate of McGill University, Rogge, an orthopaedic surgeon, and Bach, a doctor of law, are among the few exceptions to this rule. Despite his somewhat anachronistic background as an amateur sportsman and surgeon, Rogge's aim was always to bring greater professionalism to sports administration. He shared this vision with Hein Verbruggen, whose managerial experience at Mars, Incorporated, undoubtedly influenced the way he revolutionised the management of the UCI and shaped the new strategic vision he brought to the IFs through his work at SportAccord. Rather surprisingly,

given the influence of the media on the development of international sport, Philippe Chatrier, who ran a tennis magazine, is almost unique among IF executives in having worked in the media. Nevertheless, the ever-growing importance of television and digital media is likely to make familiarity with this milieu an increasingly valuable asset for future generations of sports executives.

A number of elite athletes have also risen to the top of sports administration, often after following successful careers in politics or business. Avery Brundage, who presided the IOC from 1952 to 1972, competed in the 1912 Olympics, Lamine Diack, IAAF president from 1999 to 2015, was a champion long jumper, and Sebastian Coe, the IAAF's current president, won athletics gold at the 1980 and 1984 Olympics. In fact, the most powerful position in world sport, IOC president, is currently held by a former Olympian, Thomas Bach. After winning fencing gold in Munich in 1976, Bach was so frustrated at not being able to compete in a second Olympics because of West Germany's boycott of the 1980 Moscow Games that he asked Samaranch to create an Athletes' Commission within the IOC. He later used this commission as a springboard for his election as IOC president. Measures to help former athletes develop their future careers and the increased availability of university courses in sports management, marketing and law, should enable more athletes to play an active role in sports administration. In addition, changes to the IOC's statues introduced following the Salt Lake City scandal have increased athletes' representation within the IOC. As a result, at the beginning of September 2017, 37 of the IOC's active members were Olympians.

## Political Colours

Contrary to sport's reputation for being able to rise above political, nationalistic and tribal passions, some executives have managed to combine their ascent through the ranks of sports administration with a political career. And this despite the Olympic Charter's instance that each IOC member is the IOC's representative in his or her home country, rather than his or her country's representative at the IOC.

Samaranch is, perhaps, the executive who managed this balancing act most successfully, combining his sporting functions with a political career that took him to Spain's parliament. Even though he was appointed minister for sport in Franco's dictatorship, he negotiated his way around Spain's various elites so adroitly that he emerged untarnished into Spain's new democracy. Hence, when King Juan Carlos and Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez, a Falangist linked to Opus Dei but who was given the job of wiping out Francoism, named Samaranch Spain's ambassador to the Soviet Union in 1977, they were able to present the appointment as being in the national interest. In fact, their long-term goal was to place a Spaniard at the head of the IOC in order to promote and capitalise on Spain's new, democratic image. This strategy quickly bore fruit, as Samaranch was elected IOC president in 1980 and in 1986 Barcelona was chosen to host the 1992 Olympics. At the same time, Samaranch, the heir to a textile company, continued to expand his network by, for example, founding the Barcelona Boat Show in 1961. He also continued developing his business interests, most notably by becoming president of Catalonia's largest bank, Caixia, which he headed from 1987 to 1999.

The relationship between sport and politics is even closer in the case of police states and dictatorships, whose sports executives tend to be allied to, if not members of, the ruling political class. In fact, senior appointments in sports federations and the decisions made by IFs are rarely entirely apolitical, a fact that Thomas Bach acknowledged in two speeches given in the early years of his IOC presidency: "the IOC cannot be entirely apolitical… …but we have to be strictly politically neutral" (12 September 2013) and "Sport must remain independent of politics, yet there must always be an awareness that its decisions can also have political consequences" (*Olympic Review*, 3 January 2014).

In terms of political beliefs, sport's governing bodies have tended to be very conservative and to have given greater importance to protecting traditional values and hierarchies than to addressing social issues. Nevertheless, this outlook has gradually evolved, especially during the last few decades, and sport's leaders now tend to have more centrist, Christian-democratic views.

For example, all the IOC's presidents during the twentieth century had very conservative political beliefs, in contrast to the institution's last two presidents, Jacques Rogge and Thomas Bach, who appear to have more liberal opinions. Pierre de Coubertin, an aristocrat from an anti-republican background, was a staunch conservative, as was his successor, Henri Baillet-Latour, whose belief in serving king and country had led him to consider a career as a senator or governor. The 1936 Berlin Olympics, which the Nazis wanted to turn into an instrument of state propaganda, brought to the fore the political opinions of the IOC's leaders, who had to decide whether to allow the Games to go ahead, and thereby provide tacit support for Hitler's regime, or to cancel the event. Coubertin and Baillet-Latour admired the strength of Hitler's leadership and his stance against Bolshevism, but they were also profoundly anti-German. On the other hand, Sigfrid Edström and Avery Brundage both supported Hitler. In the end, the IOC's leaders chose to let the Games go ahead, as cancellation could have caused irreparable damage to the Olympic movement. Brundage's successor, Juan-Antonio Samaranch, also had right-wing leanings, as is shown by his willingness to serve as a minister in Franco's government, so it was not until 2001 that the IOC was presided by men with, apparently, more centrist views. In fact, Jacques Rogge has always been very circumspect about his political opinions, unlike Thomas Bach, who is known to be close to Germany's liberal-democrats.

There is less certainty about the political beliefs of many other sports executives. For example, did João Havelange, who reigned over Brazilian sport from 1964 to 1985, support the country's dictators or did he just work as best he could within the system? We may never know, as this subject remains taboo for Brazilian journalists and academics. Philippe Chatrier appears to have supported the centre-right politics of France's President Giscard d'Estaing, but Verbruggen, Ecclestone, Pound, Rogge, Blatter and Dalmiya have kept their political opinions to themselves. Whatever their beliefs, nearly all of sport's top executives have been extremely artful politicians. This is especially the case for executives from more authoritarian countries, such as Sheikh Al-Sabah, Kuwait's former oil minister and head of intelligence, and Vitaly Mutko, Russia's deputy prime minister and a member of the FIFA Council.

## European Hegemony over a Male-Dominated World

Even a superficial glance at the leadership of the world's international sport organisations shows that these bodies have been presided almost exclusively by Europeans. The United States may dominate the all-time medals table for the Olympic Games, with twice as many medals as the next country in the list (the Soviet Union), but Avery Brundage is the only American to have presided the IOC. Within football, Brazil's João Havelange is the only non-European to have been elected president of FIFA. This European hegemony is even more surprising given that since the 1970s the largest sponsors of the world's biggest sports events and federations have been American and Japanese multi-nationals, the oil rich states of the Persian Gulf and China. Nevertheless, the middle-ranking powers and small, neutral countries of Western Europe and Scandinavia have provided the vast majority of the presidents of sport's governing bodies.

In fact, Europe's hegemony over the IFs and IOC is a direct reflection of these bodies' European roots. All the world's largest IFs were founded in Europe, often in France, around the turn of the twentieth century and most have since migrated their headquarters to Switzerland in order to be close to the IOC, which Coubertin moved to Lausanne in 1915. Samaranch was particularly instrumental in encouraging other institutions to congregate round the IOC's headquarters, even going as far as bestowing on Lausanne the title "Olympic Capital" as part of the IOC's centenary celebrations in 1994. The IOC's European bias is also visible in its choice of host cities for the Olympic Games. To date, 29 editions of the Olympic Games (Summer and Winter combined) have been held in Europe, compared with 13 editions in the Americas, 5 editions in Asia, 2 editions in Australia, and 1 edition each for the Soviet Union and Russia. Similarly, the football World Cup has been held in Europe on 10 occasions, in the Americas on 8 occasions and just once each in Africa and Asia. Nevertheless, the decisions to award upcoming editions of the Olympics to PyeongChang (2018), Tokyo (2020), Beijing (2022) and Los Angeles (2028), and of the World Cup to Russia (2018) and

Qatar (2022), are signs of Europe's waning influence in world sport, even if Paris was awarded the 2024 Summer Olympics.

One effect of this European bias has been to allow Europe to punch above its commercial, financial and demographic weight, protected by an image of the continent's sporting dominance. As a result, 10 of our 15 portraits are of Europeans: France's Pierre de Coubertin, Alice Milliat, Jules Rimet and Philippe Chatrier, Belgium's Henri Baillet-Latour and Jacques Rogge, the Netherlands' Hein Verbruggen, Switzerland's Sepp Blatter, Spain's Juan-Antonio Samaranch, and Britain's Bernie Ecclestone. In addition, three of the remaining five portraits are of leaders who were undoubtedly subject to European influences, despite being born far from Europe's shores: Canada's Dick Pound grew up in the Francophone and Francophile province of Quebec, Brazil's João Havelange had Belgian parents and Lamine Diack was born in Senegal when it was still a French colony, although it later gained its independence under Léopold Sedar Senghor.

The two remaining portraits look forward to the possible future of sport's administration, as they examine the rise of leaders from Asia and the Middle East. Jagmohan Dalmiya is an exception among sports executives as, despite being from India, one of the world's least sporty countries, he rose to the top of world cricket, the sport that most clearly symbolises British imperialism, even if its epicentre is now in the Indian subcontinent. India's recent announcement that it was thinking of bidding to host the 2032 Summer Olympics should mean that the world's most populous democracy will not remain on the edge of the Olympic Movement much longer.

The final chapter differs from its predecessors in that it does not describe the career of a single leader, but the rise of the oil-rich nations of the Persian Golf, which have used their wealth to create a national sporting culture from scratch, attract most of the world's largest competitions, and gain positions on the executive boards of numerous IFs. What is more, they are gradually gaining control over Asia's sporting authorities and the world's most popular spectator sport, football (acquisition of controlling interests in major European clubs, purchase of television rights, creation of the Beinsport channel, etc.). However, Kuwait, Qatar and Bahrain are not the only countries with

great ambitions within the administration of international sport. Japan, South Korea and China have substantial media and commercial interests in sport, but relatively little representation on the executive boards of the largest IFs. This will surely change in the coming decades, as demographic and economic expansion increases the weight of Asia's voice in world affairs and the region's governments, notably China, invest in sport as a tool of soft power. Africa's influence is also likely to grow, especially if the continent can set aside local rivalries in order to gain positions of power for African executives, as when Lamine Diack was elected president of the IAAF.

Eurocentrism is not the only bias within international sports administration; most sports institutions have always been run almost entirely by men. One of the first leaders in the battle to gain greater acceptance for women as athletes and sports administrators was a modest shopkeeper's daughter from provincial France—Alice Milliat. Milliat was a remarkable woman in very many ways. Not only did she organise international events for sportswomen, she founded and presided an international federation for sportswomen that was run mostly by women. A century later, it is still hard to name a major international sports federation with a female president. Sport's male ruling class long resisted the rise of women within their ranks, helped by the widespread conception that the most popular spectator sports (football, cycling, athletics, etc.) were male sports. But even as acceptance of and interest in women's sport increased, sport's ruling bodies remained reluctant to accept women executives. Women have been able to compete in the Olympic Games since 1900, but the IOC did not coopt its first female members until 1980 and the organisation is still far from achieving gender parity. In September 2017, only 26 of the IOC's 94 active members were women and only 3 members of the 12-person executive board were women. Anita DeFrantz became the organisation's first female vice president in September 2017, but it still seems unlikely that a woman could be elected IOC president. The absence of women is even more striking at FIFA, where female members of the general assembly are so rare, they are almost invisible on official photographs. In 2016, the 37-person FIFA Council included just six women, four of whom represent very small footballing nations (American Samoa, Bangladesh, Burundi, Turks and Caicos). The only

two major footballing countries to be represented by women are Italy and Ecuador. FIFA is unusual among IFs in that the last two presidents (Blatter and Infantino) were general secretary of FIFA and UEFA. If this trend were to continue, Senegal's Fatma Samoura, could become FIFA's first female president.

## The "Dassler Revolution"

The leaders of international sport are much quicker to criticize intrusions into their internal affairs when they come from governments than when they come from sponsors and financial partners. In order to truly understand sport's great presidents, it is necessary to look more closely at the contracts they signed with sponsors and the media, and with the consultancies and marketing companies that swarm around the IFs and the IOC. Examining the *curriculum vitae* of administrative directors reveals a lot not only about the management methods of sport organisation presidents, but also about the way managers, lawyers, marketers and corporate spin doctors have infiltrated these organisations. The portraits of Havelange, Diack, Samaranch and Pound provide a glimpse into the new approach to marketing that revolutionised the way FIFA, the IAAF and IOC operate. Advised and assisted by Horst Dassler, the head of German sporting goods company Adidas, these organisations began to negotiate highly lucrative contracts with major equipment manufacturers, sponsors and the media. In 1982 Dassler founded International Sport and Leisure (ISL), a Swiss-based sports marketing company that advised and negotiated contracts for the world's largest sport's federations until a series of poor investment decisions resulted in the company going bankrupt in 2001.

Professor Jean-Loup Chappelet described the new approach to marketing developed by the IOC during the 1980s as the "Samaranch revolution". However, although Samaranch oversaw these changes, they were largely orchestrated by Dassler. This was also the case for the changes made in the way FIFA and the IAAF negotiated their marketing and broadcasting contracts. For example, it was Dassler who negotiated FIFA's first contract with Coca-Cola in 1977 and, in 1981,

FIFA awarded Dassler's newly formed company, ISL, the contract to negotiate its television and marketing rights. At the IOC, Pound, with Samaranch's support, contracted ISL to negotiate marketing rights for the Olympic Games, thereby laying the foundations for the TOP programme, created in 1985. ISL was also responsible for bringing the IAAF, then presided by Lamine Diack, into the marketing era. And Dassler's influence was not restricted to marketing, as he played a central role in the election of several top executives. Hence, it would perhaps be more accurate to refer to sport's new, proactive approach to negotiating marketing and broadcasting contracts as the "Dassler revolution".

Unlike politicians and corporate executives, who regularly have to justify their actions to the electorate or to shareholders, the heads of IFs and the IOC are generally more comfortably seated in their positions and often have large electoral majorities. Because the organisations they run are international non-profit associations, they are not subject to the same degree of scrutiny as commercial enterprises and they enjoy numerous privileges, especially in the case of the IOC and FIFA, which have been given special status by the Swiss government. Consequently, most of the innumerable scandals that have tarnished sport's reputation, from the Salt Lake City scandal in 1999 to the 2015 FIFAgate scandal and the on-going inquiry into systematic doping in Russia, were initially revealed by investigative journalists. Even then, senior sports executives were (almost) never held to account for their misconduct unless the justice system, most notably the United States' Department of Justice (DoJ), took an interest in the case. This state of affairs says a lot about the ineffectiveness of the various control systems, ethics commissions and financial audits introduced by the IOC and IFs over the years.

The privileges enjoyed by sport organisations also extend to their presidents, who have a quasi-diplomatic degree of immunity. Hence, when the DoJ wanted to question Juan-Antonio Samaranch in connection with the Salt Lake City scandal, they had to summon him as a witness, not as a defendant, and provide him with a guarantee that he would be allowed to return to Europe. Nevertheless, this immunity is no longer as strong as it once was, which is why Thomas Bach did not attend the Rio Paralympic Games in 2016, a unique case in the

relations between the IOC and the IPC. Following the arrest of Patrick Hickey, then president of the Irish NOC, Bach was concerned that he might be summoned to appear before the Brazilian police.

For many years, the Swiss authorities refused to investigate the affairs of sports federations based within the country. However, the never-ending stream of scandals that have engulfed international sport over the last 20 years were beginning to tarnish Switzerland's image, which had already been damaged by the DoJ's pursuit of Swiss banks for complicity in tax evasion. As a result, the Swiss government decided it had no choice but to crack down on bribery, passing the "Lex FIFA" Act in 2014 and, at the request of the DoJ, arresting seven members of FIFA in Zurich under suspicion of corruption. FIFAgate, as this affair became known, was first revealed by a British investigative journalist called Andrew Jennings, who had uncovered widespread corruption within the IOC seven years before the Salt Lake City scandal. At the time, no action was taken in the light of Jennings' revelations, other than to hand the British journalist a five-day suspended prison sentence for slander!

Sports organisations continue to view investigations of their affairs as violations of the dearly held principle of autonomy for sport and have therefore resisted attempts to draw up an international lex sportiva to complement, if not supersede, national laws. Because sport is both leisure activity and entertainment, it has historically occupied a unique place on the boundary between the private and public spheres and therefore deserves protecting from outside interference, especially from religion, politics and financial interests. But autonomy should not mean immunity for executives who break national laws and who do not respect the legal conventions adopted by the United Nations.

## The Challenge of Increased Professionalization

Professional leagues and clubs, sports newspapers and sports equipment manufacturers have, of course, always been run by professional managers. In contrast, sport federations have traditionally been led by non-salaried executives, who have rarely been entrepreneurs of international stature and have never applied the principles of scientific management.

Until the 1970s, even major organisations such as FIFA and the IOC continued to be administered by association-style secretariats in which a small number of employees carried out basic secretarial tasks such as dealing with correspondence. Thus, when vastly increased revenues from broadcasting rights first began projecting projected the sports movement into a new era, at the end of the 1970s, most IFs were run as families rather than as major international organisations.

The large sums of money that began flowing into the coffers of the IFs were accompanied by the creation of many new annual sports competitions, with the result that the number of events controlled by the IFs exploded, rising from around 100 a year in the 1970s to more than 2000 in the 2010s. The IFs' revenues were further increased in the 1990s, when the IOC began attributing a proportion of Olympic revenues to its member federations, partly with the aim of helping them appoint professional managers and staff. In fact, it was becoming increasingly urgent for the IFs to be run on a more professional basis so they could more effectively manage the larger budgets at their disposal and the increased workload produced by administering more competitions. Larger sports institutions quickly began recruiting professional staff, with FIFA and the IOC increasing their paid workforces from around a dozen people in 1980 to over 500 employees in 2010. This lead has gradually been followed by most of the smaller IFs. The "professionalization" process has had several consequences, most notably in the way federations manage their salaried and unpaid human resources, and in the need to find a new balance in the relationship between the federations' political leaders and their administrative staff.

As federations have grown in size, they have adopted more complex legal and financial structures, with the result that the largest sport organisations can now be considered groups consisting of a "parent organisation" and "subsidiaries" (which may be commercial bodies, associations and/or foundations). In fact, it has become common for observers to talk about the IOC Group or UEFA Group. Moreover, each IF is at the head of a network of continental and national federations, which are autonomous organisations over which the IF exerts no direct control. This presents an additional challenge for an IF's leaders, who have to ensure the unity/professionalization of the

federal network/system, while pursuing the interests of the international federation as a whole. Samaranch's efforts to develop and unify the Olympic Movement (notably the IFs and NOCs) and Blatter's strategy for ensuring the continuing support of FIFA's continental confederations and national associations illustrate two approaches to reconciling these sometimes conflicting priorities.

These characteristics explain why running sport's governing bodies can be such a difficult task. Sports executives have to take into account a number of factors—sport's heightened passions, reliance on volunteers, the autonomy of "subsidiary" organisations, attempts by bodies inside and outside sport to use sport for commercial, political or geo-strategic ends, etc.—which corporate executives do not have to face. This complexity and the increased stakes explain why sport's most prominent leaders, such as Samaranch, Blatter and Verbruggen, ruled their organisations as chief executive officers, rather than as non-executive presidents, were able to hold onto their positions for so long, and felt justified in accepting substantial "compensation" for their work, in lieu of a salary. In return, they maintained the system's equilibrium with respect to:

- Internal governance, including the international body's marketing and internal management;
- Subsidiary members (the IFs in the case of the IOC, continental and national bodies in the case of the IFs), sometimes achieved at the cost of private "arrangements" with important players or internal power games.
- Worldwide governance and regulation, which has become ever more complex due to the increased number of stakeholders (sponsors, media, governments, European Union, UN agencies, NGOs, professional sport leagues, professional sport associations, social networks, etc.)

Samaranch, Verbruggen and Blatter were autocratic leaders who exercised absolute control over the organisations they presided. These men may have been charismatic, farsighted and some observers have suggested that they confounded their personal interests with those of their organisation. Shedding light onto the complex characters of the

people who have shaped international sport since its emergence at the end of the nineteenth century is one of this book's main objectives. By presenting leaders from different eras, different backgrounds and different sports, our fifteen portraits cover most of the major issues and challenges sport has faced over the last 120 years and describes the impact of the solutions they chose on both individual federations and the world of sport as a whole. As such, they provide a comprehensive overview of the history of sports governance, while looking forward to some of the changes the future is likely to bring.

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