

THE LOSS OF PROFIT?

THE RISE OF PROFESSIONALISM IN THE OLYMPIC MOVEMENT AND THE CONSEQUENCES FOR NATIONAL SPORT SYSTEMS*

by Christoph Bertling

The professionalization of international high performance sports has led to high physical, psychological and social pressure on top athletes. Increased training loads, busy compact competition schedules as well as the double burden of sport and job are only a few areas in which tensions and conflicts have appeared in the past few years. Simultaneously one can observe that this impact on the athletes can hardly be absorbed by the national sport systems. Subsidies and affirmative actions are limited and in many cases athletes are left alone with their burden.

An international comparison highlights the fact that the German sport system in particular has encountered difficulties dealing with these emerging problems. In contrast to other successful sport nations - for example Great Britain or France - it is rather an exception for top athletes in Germany to receive a grant from one of the sport organisations. Subsidies and affirmative action are scarce. As a consequence, German athletes have to make themselves interesting for the mass media and market themselves in the advertising industry. Doing so, they earn extra money, which in a following step can be used to reduce their pressure. This enables athletes to purchase expensive auxiliary materials and aids - like physiotherapy, special training, sport massages, sport medicine. The necessity to concentrate not only on high performance sport but simultaneously on the requirements of mass media and industry becomes evident in many different types of sports - including traditional Olympic sports.

A number of studies clearly indicate this. A survey on the pressure felt by German athletes participating in Olympic Games shows that these athletes feel under stress considering the psychological as well as social loads they have to bear.¹ These tensions can hardly be solved or eased by national projects promoting sports. Furthermore ALFERMANN/STOLL², BUSSMANN³, ALFERMANN/SICHART/DLABAL⁴ point out that there is a high dropout rate and STEINBICHLER⁵ emphasises that there is also a similar high rate of burnouts. DIGEL refers to the fact, that the appearance of depression, alcoholism, drug addiction, job failure and social decline, especially after a top athlete's career, is a logical consequence arising from the disparities of the national sport systems.⁶ These results beg the

following question: Why are national sport systems (especially the German one) not capable of solving the problems concerning their top athletes? An answer to this question is quite urgently needed. This paper attempts to discuss these questions from the perspective of sport policy.

The chosen approach assumes that the above mentioned problems are related to decisions made by the IOC in the period between 1971 and 1988. Numerous IOC resolutions concerning the eligibility code for athletes failed to provide a clear position concerning the question of amateurism or professionalism. This left national sport systems in great uncertainty. As sport organisations were left unsure whether the IOC permitted professional structures or not, they had difficulties in taking a clear position themselves. Therefore national sport systems could not offer their athletes a methodical, systematic political concept for promoting high performance sport, either. The long term effects can still be seen in many national sport systems to this day.

Relating to these thoughts, the coherence between the IOC-resolutions and the regulation of the German sport system will now be examined. In order to do this (1) the IOC-resolutions, leading to the admission of professional athletes to the Olympic Games, are presented as well as (2) the attempts of the German sport system to deal with these resolutions and (3) the problems, which emerged from these attempts and still can be observed in the German sport system.

1. The Process of modifying the eligibility code of the Olympic Games

Professionalism and commercialism in the Olympic Movement were preceded by a long and difficult process of transformation. The history of the modern Olympic Games had been tightly linked to the idea of amateurism since its beginning at the end of the 19th century and the IOC were quite reluctant to let this inheritance go. The founder of the Games, Baron Pierre de COUBERTIN, had already integrated amateurism into the Olympic idea in his very first communications with leading sport federations.⁷ The amateur paragraph was developed in 1894 and implemented in the first modern Olympic Games in 1896.⁸ In the following decades the section of the charter concerning definition of an amateur

* The article includes various research results which are essential part of the author's Ph.D. dissertation at the German Sport University Cologne.

was modified by the Olympic Movement again and again, but its function was never seriously questioned.⁹ Rather one might speak of the great almost essential meaning of amateurism for the Olympic Movement as the various rules of amateur sports were only able to be brought together in an international agreement within the Olympic framework.¹⁰

It is important to consider this development for the proposed question, as this might explain why the *International Olympic Committee* (IOC) stayed in favour of amateurism despite sincere opposition for more than half a century. Breaking with this understanding of sport meant breaking with the own traditions and history at the same time. From this point of view it seems far less astonishing that IOC members only started modifying the amateur rules very late and reluctantly. Even though many non-Olympic sports admitted professional athletes, the Olympic Movement consistently ignored the development of professionalism for decades. Instead of loosening the eligibility code, it was even tightened in the 1960s when Avery BRUNDAGE was IOC president. The most important passages of article 26, part of the IOC Charter from 1962 to 1971, show just how rigid the regulations were.¹¹ The bylaw even enabled the IOC to deny an athlete admission to the Olympic Games if he/she intended turning professional. These very strict rules stayed valid until April 1971 - with only slight modifications.¹² The IOC vehemently refused to adopt any tendencies of professionalism in world sports.

This policy caused severe consequences. The IOC's strict and self-preservative policy caused a constant assault of the amateur paragraph. Article 26 was not only repeatedly violated in protest against its rigid application but also as there were very few athletes actually fulfilling these expectations. *"Many felt that the rules were so rigid, restrictive, and aristocratic that there were in actuality very few, if any, amateurs participating in the Olympic Games during that period"*.¹³ Today's perspective offers two main tendencies within the undermining of the amateur paragraph: firstly on a state level and secondly on a personal/individual level.

(1) State Level: Various states planned schemes offering athletes professional conditions, while officially remaining committed to the idea of amateurism. In Eastern Europe the concept of the "state amateur" developed, supporting world class athletes with numerous professional support mechanisms. *"In the socialist countries of Eastern Europe, the state subsidized every elite athlete, converting them in practise into state professionals, although the term state amateur was the designated terminology"*.¹⁴ The characteristics of state amateurism in Eastern Europe became obvious as early as at the end of the 1940s. The participation of the Soviet

team in the Olympic Games and its immediate world class results increased the IOC's critical situation. As a new member of the Olympic Movement the Soviet Union came second in the medals table (another concept forbidden by the IOC charter) behind the USA in Helsinki in 1952.¹⁵ The USA could only survive this invasion of state amateurism by responding with a system of its own, no less subversive when it came to the IOC amateur rules.

*"In the U.S.A., outstanding athletes received university scholarships worth ten thousands of dollars. Commercial sporting goods firms, such as Adidas, Puma, Nike, and others engaged athletes as marketing consultants and added large, under-the-table bonuses and subsidies. The result was that Olympic competitors remained amateurs on the paper, but in practice, they were professionals."*¹⁶

But not only the two super powers undermined this regulation. Similar practices were common in other parts of the world.

*"In Africa, Asia, and much of Western Europe, governments also supported athletes financially and materially. In the Federal Republic of Germany, a private, nongovernmental foundation, Sporthilfe, assumed the same role. In Canada, Sport Canada supported athletes."*¹⁷

At the end of the 1960s hardly any sport system truly complied with the amateur paragraph. Amateurism was a concept in name only

(2) Personal/Individual level: The violation of the amateur paragraph was not only organised within the federations' work, but individual athletes also increasingly rebelled against the regulation. As a consequence of sport's growing professionalism and popularity, top class athletes received more and more financial offers. One of the first athletes to be suspended from the Olympic Games for accepting a salary was Jim THORPE, two times Olympic gold medal winner in Stockholm in 1912. THORPE lost his medals after accepting a salary of \$ 60 to \$ 100 as a baseball player. The Finnish long distance runner Paavo NURMI experienced a similar fate. The multiple Olympic champion was deprived of his amateur status because he had accepted rewards for taking part in competitions. In addition to bonus payments for tournament participation and salaries paid by the clubs, the number of violations due to arrangements with commercial firms increased. A large number of athletes signed contracts with manufacturers of sports goods and thereby lost their amateur status. Other athletes such as the swimmer Johnny WEISSMULLER were prevented from taking part as they had competed against professional athletes. Weissmuller had not even accepted any money.



Well-known victims of the amateur paragraph Jim Thorpe, Johnny Weissmuller, and Paavo Nurmi (from: *100 Years of the Olympic Games of Modern Times. Heroes of the Games, Munich 1996, pp. 26,28,29*)

The list of athletes having breached the amateur paragraph is a long one.¹⁸ However the list of expelled athletes only exposes the pike of the amateur problems. As the athletes thrown out of the Olympic Games were often only those athletes who breached the regulations openly. Many athletes participated in competitions using false names and were therefore able to compete for money without fearing prosecution. The list of disqualifications by no means reveals all offences against the amateur code. One must rather assume that disobeying amateurism on a personal level was just as well planned and widely spread as that at state level. Further one must assume that by the end of the 1960s the situation had developed in such a way that it was impossible for a 'true' amateur to gain a medal at the Olympic Games. An explosion in top level performances had already caused higher training and competition loads and therefore increasing physical, psychological and social burdens for the athletes in the 1960s. Trying to solve these problems athletes increasingly had to access expensive and time-consuming measures. Such aids were usually only possible by turning professional.¹⁹ MADER'S work shows how well the training of high performance athletes was organised in the 1960s and 1970s. To start off with, scientific knowledge especially medical information was included

in the 1950s. Equipment and measurement procedures were developed in order to evaluate the performance of the heart, cardiovascular circulation, respiration and metabolism. In the 1960s this area was extended by also assessing sport specific performance. By the 1970s scientific results gained in field studies were already applied.²⁰

The strict regulation did not restrict the growth of professionalism but rather to supporting its uncontrolled development. The IOC had to finally realise this. And even the amateur apologist BRUNDAGE had to admit:

*"We are trying to do the impossible. It's about time to recognize that some sports and events cannot be kept amateur at international level."*²¹

In spite of this admission that the amateur paragraph no longer suited contemporary sport, the IOC was not able to bring itself to offer a distinct position. Instead, the amateur paragraph was modified step by step beginning in the early 1970s; until professional athletes were finally allowed to compete without restriction for the very first time at the Olympic Games in 1988.²² An explicit approval of professional athletes has never been published by the IOC. It took 17 years from 1971 to 1988 to modify the amateur paragraph.

The thin line from amateurism to semi-professionalism and finally to professionalism is evident when taking a closer look at the IOC resolutions concerning the amateur question from 1971 to 1988. Four phases of modification are found, with only the final phase allowing professionalism without limitations - but once again professional athletes were not welcomed in the Olympic movement *expressis verbis*.

A **first modification** of article 26 was applied after one year of intensive discussions about the amateur problem in 1971. By doing so the IOC responded to the gap between the amateur paragraph and the reality of high performance sport. This first amendment, however, only meant a small liberation of the rule. The strict prosecution of offences was maintained and only *"the term 'amateur' [was eliminated] from Article 26 of the IOC Charter, which henceforth defined status in terms of eligibility"*.²³

The **second modification** was decided in 1974, when the IOC approved another Eligibility Code.²⁴ Athletes were now merely allowed to receive an allowance for the time they spent in training camps or travelling to competitions. This new regulation effectively gave tacit approval to the practises of state amateurism. However, this should not be seen as the main innovation which can rather be noted in the fact that the international federations were granted more autonomy in amateur matters.²⁵ The sport federations were now to play a key role in deciding whether an athlete was permitted to take part in the Olympic Games or not. These new regulations were adopted in the eligibility code within the *Olympic Charter* during the IOC Session in Vienna in 1974. By doing so the IOC had responded to the increasing pressure on athletes as a result of growing training and competition loads.

"The new rule marked another major step towards liberalizing the concept of amateurism, and it deals in a positive way with the modern practises in sports".²⁶

The **third modification** came at the 11th IOC Congress held in Baden-Baden from 23 to 28 September 1981 which decided to further liberalise the amateur paragraph.²⁷ The athletes themselves played a key role as they were invited to participate for the first time and called for such a liberalisation.²⁸ Under the new presidency of Juan Antonio SAMARANCH, the delegates - representatives of the IOC, the National Olympic Committees (NOC) and international sport federations - decided to modify article 26. The decision was made that the IOC was no longer to determine who fulfilled the eligibility code. This was delegated to the Olympic sport federations.²⁹ In the final statement this modification was classified as such:

"Open or professional competitions have no place in the Olympic Games. The principles of article 26 should be preserved and the bye-laws should be adapted to the necessities of each Olympic sport. However the consideration of this rule should not cause any inequality".³⁰

In his closing speech IOC President Juan Antonio SAMARANCH made the following the statement:

"The Olympic Games will only remain Olympic Games if all athletes from all over the world participate except for the real professionals".³¹

The IOC resolution of 1981 *cannot* therefore be seen as the opening of the Olympic Games for professional athletes. They were still officially excluded. Severe control mechanisms were established against professionals. Direct payments or contracts between athletes and companies were still not allowed. The state or sport federations were to set up central funds in order to keep an eye on financial deals.³²

Subsequent to the 11th IOC Congress in Baden-Baden the **fourth modification** immediately came into force and finally opened the Olympic Games for all athletes. At the IOC Session from 29 September to 2 October 1981, two professional sports tennis and table tennis were accepted for the Olympic Games in 1988. This made it obvious to the sport federations that the IOC *"agreed to taking the path of professionalisation"*.³³ October 1985 brought the decision to replace the liberalised article 26 with the *athletes' code*. This code was, however, postponed by the IOC until 1990 due to difficulties with the final wording.³⁴

The phases of modification clearly show that it was a long and winding process to professionalism in Olympic Games. This took 17 years in four phases. No clear statement was ever made concerning professional sport. The modification phases 3 and 4 even follow a double strategy. The IOC quite explicitly argued for the idea of amateurism in phase 3. However the 11th IOC Congress already set a basis to prepare for professionalism. The responsibility was deliberately given to the sport federations. In phase 4, only a couple of days later, professionalism was already strongly advocated. Again the sport political actions were highly subtle as both sports, tennis and table tennis, were only granted a preliminary admission.

These political tactics brought far reaching consequences to world sports that are still to be seen today. On one hand the idea of amateurism was kept as an ideal in a moral sense and professionalism was only accepted. This set the distinct definition and the moral integrity of an amateur - as for example BRUNDAGE had expressed³⁵ - in contrast to a professional athlete competing for the profit

motive.³⁶ In many cases this led to the fact that in various areas - to this day - a professional athlete is still seen as somewhat mercenary whereas an amateur is seen as someone noble and upright.³⁷ On the other hand the IOC's own undermining of the amateur paragraph *without* clear commitment to professionalism caused insecurity among the national sport federations. Clubs and federations could not officially agree to professional structures but had to provide very subtle regulations of a political nature so as not to be expelled from the Olympic Movement and yet not be left trailing behind other (more professional) competitors at the same time.

2. Arising Consequences for the German Sports System

The comments so far can lead to the conclusion that the long and winding process of professionalisation with its four phases of modification and ambiguous statements concerning professional athletes, had severe impact on the national sport systems, that are still noticeable today and remain an encumbrance to top class athletes. For almost two decades national federations were not able to formulate their activities on any clear IOC statement. Although the guidelines had been quite precise in the 1960s, the regulations began to blur from the 1970s onwards. Despite the tendency towards liberalisation the line of impact seemed to cover the idea of amateurism until 1981. After that the point at which dispute occurred became less clear due to the IOC's double strategy. This made it increasingly difficult for national confederations to provide guidelines. Up to phase 3, which is when we can assume that the IOC had already decided on

professionalism in Olympic Games, the national federations were only able to establish vague new structures. At least, IOC President Juan Antonio SAMARANCH stated a clear attitude towards amateurism in his closing speech.

Severe areas of conflict and tension appeared and a precise sport policy became constantly more urgent as the physical, psychological and social burdens for athletes increased and this led to a growing demand by the athletes for sufficient funding and action.

Klare Mehrheit für das Werbeverbot

Hauptausschuß des Deutschen Sportbundes verabschiedet Leitlinien

Frankfurt — Mit der passablen Mehrheit von 313:43 Stimmen verabschiedete der Hauptausschuß des Deutschen Sportbundes bei seiner 13. Sitzung am vergangenen Samstag im Frankfurter Römer Leitlinien, die künftig „Fehlleitungen der werblichen Unterstützung im Sport verhindern sollen“. Dieser gemeinsame Nenner, den der Vorsitzende des Deutschen Basketballbundes, Hans-Joachim Höfig, für Art und Inhalt der Einigung in treffender Kurzform fand, drückt kaum die Schwierigkeiten aus, mit denen sich die Delegierten trotz Vorabsprachen auf den verschiedensten Ebenen konfrontiert sahen.

Noch einmal reichte die Spannbreite der Diskussion vom ethisch-moralischen Bekenntnis bis hin zu der provozierenden Feststellung, daß durch die Einbeziehung der Ethik in die Überlegungen bestimmt kein Klingeln in der Vereinskasse bewirkt werden. DFB-Vizepräsident Hermann Neuberger nannte sich selbst einen *Advocatus diaboli*, als er nach den einleitenden Appellen des DSB-Präsidenten Willi Weyer („Dies ist die Stunde der Wahrheit. Hier wird festgehalten werden, ob die Gesinnung der freiwilligen Leistung dem materiellen Zeitgeist unterlegen ist oder nicht“) Gegenposition bezog. Mit seiner Rede, die die Not kleiner Vereine in den dunkelsten Farben malte, blies er zum Großangriff auf die Moralapostel. Joseph Neckermann und seine Sporthilfe sahen sich in Bedrängnis, als der starke Mann des Fußballs mit genauen Zahlen darlegte, wie wenig die uneigennütigen Milizenaten als die von den Werbetrittbrettfahrern am meisten verprellten Sporthelfer zum Jahresetat der Stiftung in Wirklichkeit beitragen (1974 374 000 Mark von 8,7 Millionen Mark).

Neuberger meinte, ein absolutes Werbeverbot sei nur in der Optik gut, und etwas für Sektierer, solange, bis die Mittel wirklich aus anderen Quellen fließen. Eine wöchentliche Sportlotterie hielt er für eine der Möglichkeiten, die die Unabhängigkeit des Sports garantieren könnte. So viel spontane Zustimmung der DFB-Sprecher auch für seine äußerst geschickt gewählten Worte bekam, so ganz auf Bilanzsicherung wollten sich die Delegierten der Fachverbände und Landessportbünde denn doch nicht festlegen lassen. DSB-Vize und Reiterpräsident Graf Landsberg-Velen drückte sogar sein Erschrecken gegenüber der Neuberger-Philippika mit dem Satz aus: „Sie haben die Ethik zur Tür hinausgeschleudert, reden nur noch von Zahlen und Finanzen“ und lenkte die Sportführer von buchhalterischen Gedankengängen ab.

Man erinnerte sich wieder seiner eigentlichen Aufgaben und damit war der Boden bereitet für die Abstimmung. Daß sich hierbei Fußball und der ebenfalls von Hermann Neuberger repräsentierte Saarländische Landessportverband in ihrer Frontstellung plötzlich mit dem Allgemeinen Deutschen Hochschulsportverband vereint sahen, war eine Kuriosität am Rande. Die Studenten, die eine idealistische Leitlinie zwar gut gemeint, aber unrealistisch sehen und auch Neuberger Gesichtspunkte mit einem Ausverkauf

des Sports gleichsetzen, sehen die wahren Spalter im Bereich des Berufssports. Da ihrer Alternative aber keine besondere Aufmerksamkeit geschenkt wurde, hoben sie konsequent ihre Nein-Stimmen.

Es galt bei der Abstimmung, zwischen zwei Möglichkeiten auszuwählen. Die Fachverbände hatten die vom DSB-Präsidium vorgeschlagenen Leitlinien noch einmal im Sinne der Unbedenklichkeit auch für den Deutschen Fußballbund überarbeitet und brachten schließlich ihre Vorstellung von Werbeverboten durch. Daß dann ausgerechnet die Fußballer ihre eigenen mitgefertigten Vorschläge nicht mehr akzeptierten, macht deutlich, daß man Hermann Neuberger's Auftritt als persönlichen Profilierungsversuch einstufen und nicht überbewerten sollte. Willi Weyer jedenfalls hat die Fußballer noch nicht aufgegeben. „Wer Frauen, Schiedsrichtern und Jugendlichen die Werbung verbietet, kann die Ethik noch nicht völlig aus den Grundsätzen gestrichen haben“, meinte er. „Was das Gesamtproblem angeht, so weiß er aber auch, daß er trotz vernünftiger Mehrheitsverhältnisse an der Werbefront nur Empfehlungen in der Hand hält, deren Verwirklichung in nicht unerheblichem Maße vom guten Willen abhängig ist.“

Die Hauptausschußsitzung war im übrigen ein gutes Beispiel dafür, daß die Sportoffiziellen auf der Suche nach anderen Umgangsformen sind. „Diese Zusammenkunft mit ihren harten Diskussionen zeigte ein sich langsam durchsetzendes neues Demokratieverständnis im Sport“, wertete DSB-Generalsekretär Karl-Heinz Gieseler das Aufeinanderprallen der Meinungen positiv. Willi Weyer kündigte den nächsten sportlichen Profilierungsversuch witzig an. Gemünzt auf Zeitungsmeldungen, die die Geldforderungen für sein Präsidentenamt anprangerten, sagte er: „Ich bin zwar nicht der teure Willi, aber auch kein billiger Jakob.“ Harald Pieper

Illustration 2: Report on the DSB resolution concerning the ban of advertisement in 1974, in: Süddeutsche Zeitung (2 December 1974)

Therefore athletes increasingly lobbied for the loosening of the amateur regulations in order to reduce the pressures they now felt. On the other hand national sport systems also had to take care of not falling back too far behind other national systems in terms of results as this could affect how much state financial assistance they would receive for high performance sport. The difficulties of such a mission become obvious when analysing the (professional) support concepts of the USA and the Soviet Union. What kind of consequences the IOC resolutions brought about, and how these affected the sport policy of national sport systems will now be analysed using the sport system of the Federal German Republic as an example.³⁸

In the German system of high performance sport, tendencies against professionalisation are observable within its structures reaching into the 1990s. An understanding of *performance/achievement and economic relevant reward/consideration* only reluctantly found its way into modern German top level sport. The umbrella organisations *Deutscher Sportbund* (DSB - German Sports Confederation), *Deutsche Sporthilfe* (DSH - German Sport Fund) and the NOC for Germany strictly followed the idea of amateurism as suggested by the IOC. However this had the effect that no faultless concept for top class athletes exists even today and that many athletes can not be supported in solving situations of high pressure. It seems quite astonishing from today's point of view, how uncompromising the German sport federations acted as they already faced financial problems in the 1960s which they only seemed to be able to solve by undermining the amateur paragraph.

In the 1960s it was already evident that the German sport system did not possess the required funds to stay in competition with the leading sporting nations. In order to compete on an international level without allowing commercialisation - in compliance with the IOC statutes - the *Deutsche Sporthilfe* was founded in 1967. Even if the amateur status was officially emphasised, German sport became more and more dependent on financial support from commercial sources. At this time the DSH was little more than an institution sitting "on the border between sport and its surroundings".³⁹ Financial support was made available from external groups - namely companies - and distributed among athletes. The athletes themselves, however, were *not* allowed to have direct contact with these companies. This is how the idea of amateurism could be preserved - at least superficially. For the athletes, however, this was a kind of emasculation as they grew dependent on the DSH's decisions and could not plan their financial support themselves.

Even though the DSH was capable of raising 171 Million German Marks over a twenty year period, it became evident that this sum was not enough

in order to stay competitive internationally in the long run. While greater financial support was possible in the USA in its collegiate system and in Eastern Europe due to the so called state amateurism, the situation became increasingly serious for Western German athletes. Among others the then-NOC President Willi DAUME complained that 70 percent of all Olympic medals were won by athletes coming from countries with state organised high performance sport. The German sport system stuck to its attitude towards amateurism despite this unfortunate situation and prevented any kind of commercial opportunities for athletes over the following years. This had further consequences for the athletes as their work loads also increased.

The 1970s are characterised by an official attitude opposing professional sport. The NOC, DSB and DSH vehemently argued against any kind of commercialisation. In 1973 these three organisations supported a ban on German competitors wearing advertising on their shirts. Athletes violating this ban were not allowed to participate in Olympic Games. Such a rigorous approach had become necessary as the foundation had started to crumble. In 1973, 4,000 of 41,000 gymnastic and sport clubs already had connections to companies and the German Football Association (DFB) had agreed to advertisement on football shirts in the same year. These opposing actions did not bring about a loosening of regulations but rather led to an enforcement of the advertising ban that strongly prohibited athletes from raising further sources of income. In 1974, the DSB passed new guidelines for advertising in sport. It was defined in seven points. It allowed fixed position and perimeter boarding but still prohibited advertisement on football shirts and jerseys. This meant that clubs and federations could then contact advertising companies (in a limited way) but athletes were still not allowed to have any contacts to companies (see Illustration 2).

In 1979, the NOC published a new resolution which again emphasised that athletes breaching the advertising guidelines would be banned from the Olympic Games. Therefore one can not speak of a loosening within the German sport system until the beginning of the 1980s. The modification processes on an international level hardly emerged on the national level. Professional sport is vehemently turned down by the sport organisations NOC, DSB and DSH. Athletes wanting to take part in the Olympic Games were by no means allowed to appear publicly in advertisement.

The decisions of the 1980s show how insecure and cautiously the German sport system again reacted to the resolutions of Baden-Baden. One can observe that the German sport organisations rather tended to cling onto regulations of amateurism than to

allowing professional structures. Had they embraced commercialism this would have helped relieve the pressure on athletes. They would have been able to invest their own money earned through advertising in their sport performances. As a reaction to the liberalisation of the amateur rules, the DSB unanimously passed a resolution in 1983 to abolish the advertising guidelines from 1974. At the same time, however, it decided that the DSH still had control of any advertising done by West German athletes. The DSH founded a support society in the same year that was placed between athlete and investor. Proceeds were paid into a trust fund that stayed closed until the end of the athlete's career. These actions can be interpreted as an obvious indication of the uncertainty in dealing with amateur matters even two years after the resolutions of Baden-Baden. An important relaxation came with the foundation of the *Deutsche Sportmarketing GmbH* by the NOC and the DSH in 1986. The focus was now set on an understanding of performance and economic relevant reward.⁴⁰ However it wasn't until 1994, that the *Federal Committee on High Performance Sport* (BAL - Bundesausschuss Leistungssport) demanded a closer link between sport and commerce with the intention of then being able to reduce state support. Looking at the situations in which sport and economy (and therefore professionalism) grow closer to or away from each other in chart form shows that the curve progression is mainly regressive up to 1983. It is then followed by a progressive curve that continues exponential after 1993 (see illustration 3).

The chart only shows these developments in rough movements and only considering a few vi-

tal points but it clearly points out that the German sport system approached the new IOC resolutions with great delay and only very cautiously. The IOC resolutions are marked with the blue line. After the daring measure of founding the *Deutsche Sporthilfe*, the German sport organisations reacted hesitantly to the tendencies of professionalisation in the following years. It was not until the mid 1990s that an explicit decision was made by the federal committee for high performance sport.

3. Today's Structural Problems in the German Sports System

The consequences of this development are still visible in today's German sport system. Currently the support institutions of German sport are only of limited help to top class athletes. Three main problem areas are apparent:

Insufficient structure: Federations are very limited what they can do to support top class athletes as the structures of federations and clubs were originally intended for amateur sport⁴¹ and these were not basically reorganised following the differentiation of high performance sport.⁴² Many clubs' and federations' structures are not designed for high performance sport but rather for leisure and mass sports.⁴³ This internal organisation structure is especially evident in the German sport system that does not have a standard fund system for the high performance sector but is rather organised as a "facility/manufacturing network based on the division of labour and cooperation".⁴⁴ Top class athletes are supported by various institutions such as clubs,

federations, sport boarding schools, Olympic training support centres, *Deutsche Sporthilfe*. All were established in order to overcome acute difficulties. As these support institutions are not well coordinated or linked, the system is not easily navigated by top class athletes and the consumption of all available resources is very difficult and requires immense bureaucratic effort (see illustration 4).

Subsidies' budget: Even with an ideal consumption of the funds the financial support remains low and the athlete's situation in high performance

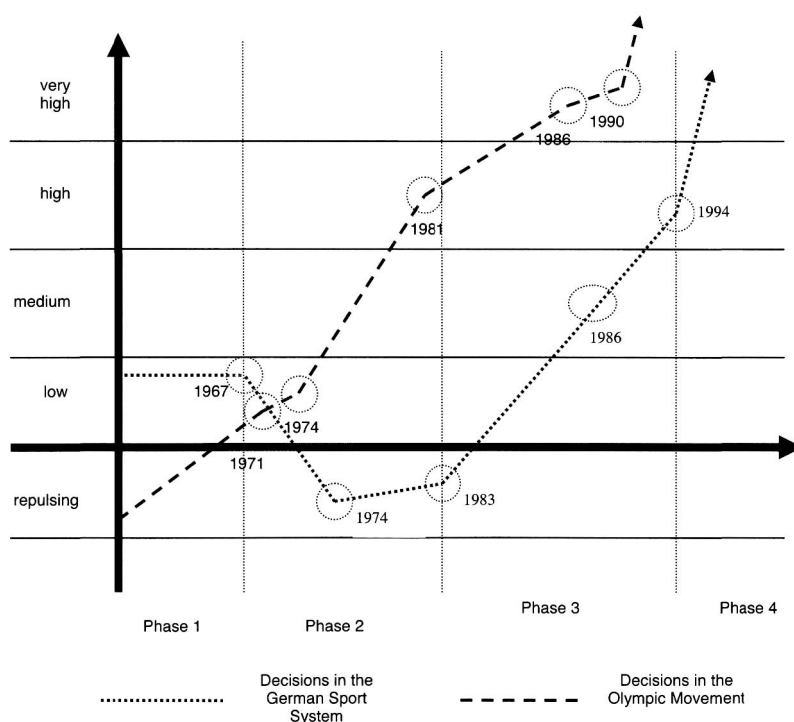


Illustration 3: Points in which sport and advertisement grow closer to or away from each other due to resolutions by the IOC or the German sport system

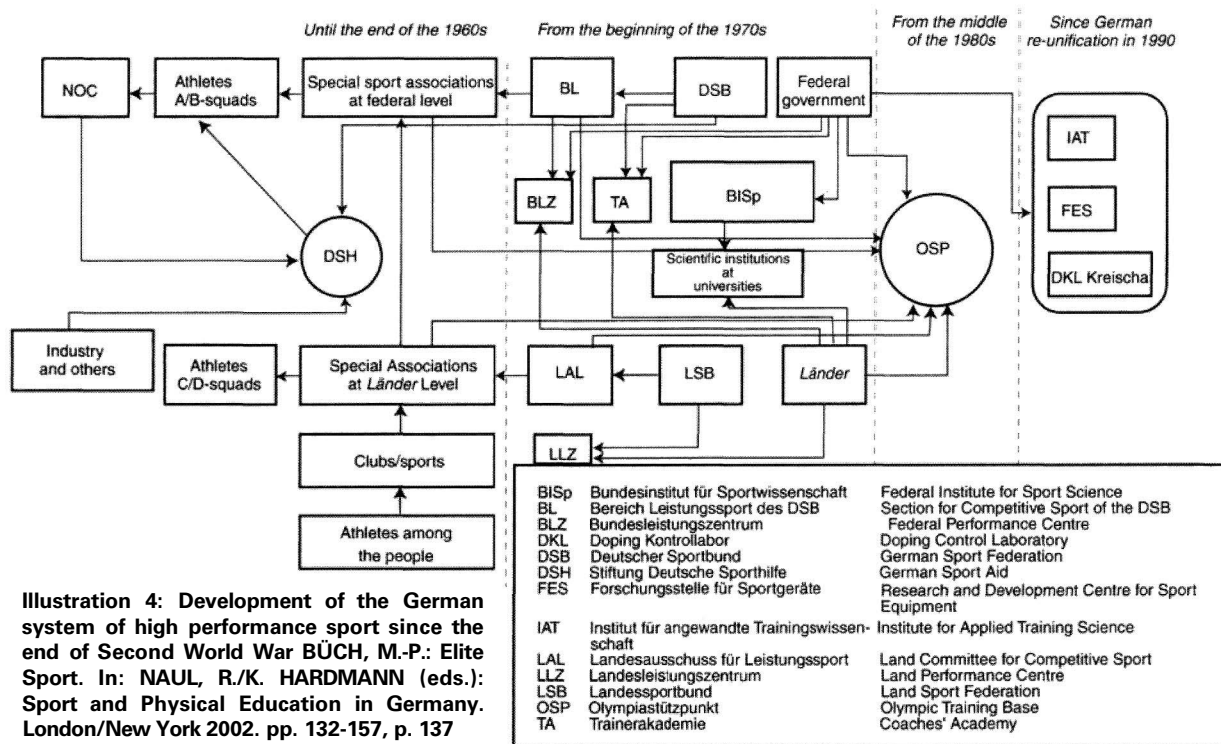


Illustration 4: Development of the German system of high performance sport since the end of Second World War BÜCH, M.-P.: *Elite Sport*. In: NAUL, R./K. HARDMANN (eds.): *Sport and Physical Education in Germany*. London/New York 2002. pp. 132-157, p. 137

sport cannot be regarded as adequate. Studies by CONZELMANN/GABLER/NAGEL⁴⁵ have shown that German Olympic participants are only funded to about 50 percent by their club and to 1/3 by the federation. The standard costs for mentoring - these costs vary - can only be partially addressed with the help of the funds' financial support. In addition travelling and accommodation expenses are increasing due to the geographical expansion of competition venues.

Avoidance of conflict and tension areas: If the financial support funds that are meant for high performance sport are divided according to time slots of each subsidisation, it becomes evident that some areas of conflict and tension for athletes are neglected. Subsidies are meagre in the area of job training/education and career development. Significant deficits are found especially in the support of an athlete's post-sport career.⁴⁶

In the 1980s an efficiency analysis of the German high performance sport system let BETTE/NEIDHARDT concluded that problems were not being solved sufficiently at an institutional level and therefore "have to mainly be solved on an individual/personal level by those that were at the 'lowest' level of the sport system, namely the athletes and coaches".⁴⁷

Currently there are limited possibilities for a sporting career promising success, if athletes decide to focus on their sport performance and institutional support by the sport system. The merger of the National Olympic Committee (NOC) and the German Sports Confederation (DSB) has not brought any significant changes, yet. The director of the high performance sport sector within the German Olympic Sports Confederation, Bernard SCHWANK, has demanded a new system that would centralise and increase cooperation. In his opinion the main problems appear

in imprecise assignments of tasks, insufficient agreements about cooperation, and too few professional training/education possibilities for top class athletes, double loads due to sport and university.⁴⁸

4. Conclusion

This paper has taken the line that the unfortunate situation of many athletes hardly being able to manage with extreme pressure yet only receiving insufficient support by the sport organisations, mainly relates to the IOC's resolutions in the 1970s and 1980s. These IOC resolutions were linked with the development of the German sport policy. It has been shown that the German sport system reacted to these IOC resolutions tentatively and with great uncertainty. It was not until the 1990s that it finally agreed to professional structures in sport. The insecurities are connected to the long and winding modification processes of the athlete's eligibility code by the IOC and the continuing lack of an explicit commitment to professional sport.

Therefore there was no systematic pursuit of a system to cope with the athletes' pressured situation. Instead a highly complex cooperation network was established that athletes could hardly grasp and that only went so far in assisting them.. Even today the situation requires many athletes to break with common structural patterns and find individual solutions. For many reasons they must accept high performance sport as an individual/personal project and find strategies that help minimise social, psychological and physical stress. It may seem paradoxical: The fact that the governing bodies clung to the concept of amateurism for so long has in turn forced athletes into the arms of commercialisation.

ARTICLE 26

An amateur is one who participates and always has participated in sport as an avocation without material gain of any kind. One does not qualify:

- a. If he has not a basic occupation designed to insure his present and future livelihood;
- b. If he receives or has received remuneration for participation in sport;
- c. If he does not comply with the Rules of the International Federation concerned, and the official interpretations of this Rule number 26.

OFFICIAL INTERPRETATIONS

The official interpretations referred to in Rule 26 follow. It is the intention that additional interpretation will be issued from time to time as required. Violations of the regulations will be referred to a special committee appointed by the Executive Board of the International Olympic Committee for investigations and report with a view to action.

AMONG OTHER THE FOLLOWING ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR OLYMPIC COMPETITIONS

Those who have participated for money or who have converted prizes into money or, without permission of the National Federation within the rules of the International Federation concerned, have received prizes presents which can be converted into money or other material advantages.

Those who have capitalized in any way on their athletic fame or success, profited

commercially there from or have accepted special inducements of any kind to participate, or those who have secured employment or promotion by reason of their sports performances rather than their ability, whether in the commercial or industrial enterprises, the Services or any branch of the Press, Theatre, Television, Cinema, Radio or any other paid activity.

Any employment must be bonafide and not cover for excessive opportunities for training and competition in sport

If any athlete is paid for the use of his name or picture or for a radio or television appearance, it is capitalization of athletic fame as described above.

*

An athlete who becomes a professional in any sport or who indicates his intention of becoming a professional or who plays in a professional team with a view to become a professional.

*

Those who are paid for teaching or coaching other for competition in sport.

*

Anyone awarded a scholarship mainly for his athletic ability.

*

An athlete who demands payment or expense money for a manager, coach, relative, or friend.

*

Those who have received payment of expenses in excess actual outlay.

*

Those whose occupation (studies or employment) has been interrupted for special training in a camp for over three weeks.

CONTRIBUTION BECAUSE OF SALARY LOSS

The International Olympic Committee in principle is opposed to payments for broken-time which it considers an infraction of Olympic amateurism.

However, when a competitor can prove that his dependants are suffering hardship because of his (or her) loss of salary or wages while attending the Olympic Games, his National Olympic Committee may take a contribution to his dependents, but under no circumstances may it exceed the sum which he (or she) would have earned during his (or her) actual period of absence, which in turn must not exceed 30 days.

PSEUDO AMATEUR

Individuals subsidized by governments, educational institutions, or business concerns because of their athletic ability are not amateurs. Business and industrial concerns sometimes employ athletes for their advertising value. The athletes are given paid employment with little work to do and are free to practise and compete at all times. For national aggrandizement, governments occasionally adopt the same methods and give athletes positions in the army and police force or in a government office. They also operate training camps for extended periods. Some colleges and universities offer outstanding athletic scholarship and inducements of various kinds. Recipients of these special favors which are granted only because of athletic ability are not amateurs.

Notes

- 1 See: CONZELMANN, A./GABLER, H./NAGEL, S., *Hochleistungssport - persönlicher Gewinn oder Verlust? - Lebensläufe von Olympioniken* (Tübinger Schriften zur Sportwissenschaft; vol. 1), Tübingen 2001.
- 2 Cf. ALFERMANN/STOLL, O., *Sportpsychologie*, Aachen 2005.
- 3 BUSSMANN, G., *Dropout-Problematik in der Frauenleichtathletik - Eine Ursachenanalyse bei C-Kader-Athletinnen*, Cologne 1995.
- 4 ALFERMANN, D./SICHART, R./DLABAL, M., "Was folgt nach dem Rücktritt vom Hochleistungssport?", in: *Leistungssport*, 23(1993)6
- 5 Cf. STEINBICHLER, K., *Die Wahl der Qual*, in: *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (28 August 2004), p. 2.
- 6 Cf. DIGEL, H., "Lebensperspektiven nach dem Spitzensport oder: Bedarf der Spitzensport einer sozialen Absicherung?", in: SEILER, R./ANDRES, G./IRLINGER, P., *Das Leben nach dem Spitzensport (La vie après le sport de haut niveau)* (Schriftenreihe des BASPO NR. 77), Paris 1998, p. 12
- 7 In his circular from January of 1894 de COUBERTIN expressed his views on amateurism as follows: "Above all stands the question of conserving for athletics the noble and chivalric character it had in the past, so that it may hereafter play efficiently the same role in the education of modern peoples which Greek leaders assigned to it. Human imperfection steadily

tends to transform the Olympic athlete into the gladiator of the circus. [...] The subjects prepared for the congress relate to the compromises and contradictions of existing amateur regulations" (COUBERTIN, P. de, *Une Campagne de Vinght-et-un- ans (1887-1908)*, Paris 1908 as quoted by John A. Lucas, *Baron Pierre de Coubertin and the Formative Years of the Modern International Olympic Movement 1883-1896*, unpublished D. Ed. dissertation, University of Maryland, 1962. The integration of the amateur paragraph can be seen as a measure of sport policy as COUBERTIN presented his Olympic idea at an international congress/conference of the association of French sport federations (1892/1894) that was aimed at standardising the amateur rules (cf. Müller 1981). Amateurism also ideally suited COUBERTIN'S concept of physical education (cf. Wassong 1995). At the athletic congress on June 22, 1894, the following quotations passed: "1. Any infraction of the rules of amateurism disqualifies as an amateur. A disqualified amateur may be reinstated on proof of ignorance of law, or good faith. 2. The value of objects of art given as prizes need not be limited. Whosoever obtains money by means of the prizes he has won loses his qualification as an amateur. 3. Gate money may be divided between societies, but never between competitors. Teams may have their traveling expenses paid by the societies to which they belong. [...] 6. The committee considers that the tendency of all sports should be toward pure amateurism, and that there is no permanent ground in any sport to legitimize money prizes.

- [...] ("The International Athletic Congress", in: *The Times* (London, June 23, 1894), p. 9 as quoted by A. Glader, "Amateurism and Athletics", pp. 131f.). The fact that even the first version of the amateur paragraph already included an exception is an interesting side comment. Except for fencing only amateurs were admitted (further original exceptions sailing, horse racing and shooting) and further special exceptions were granted to sport federations permitting contests between amateurs and professional athletes (cf. Müller 1981).
- 9 cf. Glader 1978
 - 10 Müller 1981
 - 11 Article 26 as printed below was determined at the IOC meeting in Moscow in June 1962 as well as in the Bulletin, Comité International Olympique in November 1962:
 - 12 According to Glader (1978) the only change of any significance was the extension of the time allowed for special training.
 - 13 Glader 1978, p. 158.
 - 14 Cf. STRENK, A., "Amateurism: The Myth and the Reality", in: SEGRAVE, J.D./CHU D.(eds.), *The Olympic Games in Transition*, Champaign (Illinois) 1988, p. 308.
 - 15 Cf. ALLISON, L., *Amateurism in Sport*, Bodmin (Cornwall) 2001.
 - 16 STRENK, "Amateurism", p. 308.
 - 17 STRENK, "Amateurism".
 - 18 STRENK, "Amateurism".
 - 19 In this time an athlete quoted: "World class athletes would not be world class athletes without taking money. They would never be able to the proper training and diet" (STRENK, "Amateurism", p. 315).
 - 20 Cf. Mader 1976
 - 21 Cf. BRUNDAGE, A., in: *International Olympic Committee Newsletter* (July 1969)22, quoted after Glader 1978:158.
 - 22 Cf. KLUGE, V., *Olympische Sommerspiele. Die Chronik IV. Seoul 1988-Atlanta 1996*, Berlin 2001.
 - 23 Cf. STRENK, "Amateurism", p. 303.
 - 24 Cf. Glader 1978, p. 160.
 - 25 The Code said: "To be eligible for participation in the Olympic Games, a competitor must: A. Observe and abide by the Rules and Regulations of the IOC and in addition the Rules and Regulations of his or her International Federation, as approved by the IOC, even if the federation rules are more strict than those of the IOC."
 - 26 GLADER, 1978, p. 161f.
 - 27 Cf. MÜLLER, N., *Von Paris bis Baden-Baden - Die Olympischen Kongresse 1894-1981*, Mainz 1983.
 - 28 The then-athlete and later IOC member Thomas BACH demanded "sufficient social security for world class athletes [...] as they were forced to sacrifice years of their life for sport" (MÜLLER, *Kongresse*, p. 61).
 - 29 The restatement of the amateur paragraph only contained slight amendments. The original version of the modification was: "To be replaced by the following text: a) Each International Federation is responsible for the wording of the eligibility code relating to its sport, which must be approved by the Executive Board in the name of the IOC; b) The observation of Rule 26 and of the eligibility codes of IFs are under the responsibility of IFs and NOCs involved. The Eligibility Commission of the IOC will ensure the application of these provisions" (INTERNATIONALES OLYMPISCHES KOMITEE (ed.), *Der Kongreß - Berichte und Dokumente zum 11. Olympischen Kongreß Baden-Baden 1981*, p. 247).
 - 30 See: INTERNATIONALES OLYMPISCHES KOMITEE, *Kongreß*, p. 225.
 - 31 INTERNATIONALES OLYMPISCHES KOMITEE, *Kongreß*, p. 220.
 - 32 Cf. KREBS, H.-D., "Die Zeit der Boykottbewegungen (1976-1988)", in: LÄMMER, M. (red.), *Deutschland in der Olympischen Bewegung - Eine Zwischenbilanz*. Frankfurt/Main 1999, pp. 307-315; KREBS, H.-D.: "Baden-Baden 1981 - Startschuß zur Radikalreform", in: LÄMMER, *Deutschland*, pp. 317-320.
 - 33 KLUGE, *Sommerspiele*, p. 31.
 - 34 KLUGE, *Sommerspiele*.
 - 35 Cf. KREBS, "Baden-Baden", pp. 317-320
 - 36 The fundamental difference between professionals and amateurs noted Peter GENT, a former American Football Player: "Professional athletes are first and foremost show business, dealing with illusion and entertainment. The first responsibility of the player is the audience, not themselves. By committing himself to amateur ideals, the athlete develops socially desirable skills and attitudes. Audience satisfaction is not supposed to be a factor in amateur athletics" (GENT, 1978, p. 7).
 - 37 How strongly developed these thoughts were on a moral level was shown at an NOC meeting in Mainz last year. On this occasion the matter of Olympic education was discussed pointing out that commercialism is something alien for the Olympic idea whereas the amateur idea is beneficial.
 - 38 As the complete paper refers to the sport system in the Federal Republic of Germany any further use of the term "German" always refers to the FRG.
 - 39 BETTE/NEIDHARDT 1985:97
 - 40 Cf. RITTNER 1988
 - 41 Cf. EISENBERG 1999
 - 42 Cf. SCHIMANK 1988
 - 43 Cf. RITTNER/BREUER 2004
 - 44 EMERICH/FRÖHLICH/PIETER/PIETSCH 2005:4
 - 45 CONZELMANN/GABLER/NAGEL 2001
 - 46 cf. CONZELMANN/GABLER/NAGEL 2001
 - 47 cf. BETTE, K.-H./F. NEIDHARDT: *Förderungseinrichtungen im Hochleistungssport* (Schriftenreihe des Bundesinstituts für Sportwissenschaften; vol. 57), Schorndorf 1985, p. 23
 - 48 A statement concerning the situation of high class athletes shows how severe Schwank considers the problems in high performance sport to be: "Considering the increasing professionalisation we have to check which sports still allow a dual career [job training (education)/job and sport]. [...] Only a negligible part of athletes participating in Olympic Games can permanently support themselves financially through sport alone." (Cf. Interview in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (29.11.2006))