

Summary

A seminar (6th of May) on the ethics of sport was organized by Helsingfors Gymnastikklubb, the oldest gymnastics club in Finland. The speakers invited included the Academician Erik Allardt, a sociologist, John Vikström, archbishop emeritus, and Professor Arne Ljungqvist from Sweden.

Allardt emphasized the importance of sports as a builder of local and national identity. He finished by defending the thesis that the shrivelling up of local and national loyalties is a greater problem today than the use of sports for the benefit of narrow chauvinistic aims.

Archbishop Vikström characterized two symbolic objects worth of respect in sports, the referee's whistle and the club's flag. These bring out the central tenets of the ethics of sports. The referee blows his whistle when the rules agreed on have been broken. The Club's flag, for its part, crystallizes the values the sportsmen have undertaken to obey when competing in the name of the club.

Professor Ljungqvist participated in the Helsinki Olympic Games in 1952 as an active sportsman. At the time next to nothing was known about the ethical problem of the utmost current interest, doping. In his paper, he cast a historic view over the development of the doping problem, illuminating also the conflicting points of view. The use of the Alpine cabins, for instance, has been a controversial topic. It is not realistic to ban their use, since it is not possible to check that the rules are obeyed. At the same time, however, competitive sport is creating a distance between itself and the actual circumstances of the average citizen. The competitors must live in artificially conditioned rooms in order to be competitive. In this situation lies a danger whereby competitive sports loses touch with the ordinary people.

In his commentary on the previous statements, Mikael Lindfelt, a theologian, treated two mottoes related to sports, "Citius, altius, fortius" and "Mens sana in corpore sano" in the light of his historical data. They should complement each other, but the professionalization of top-level sports has led to the situation where the motto "More quickly, higher, more powerfully" has overcome the idea of a healthy mind in a healthy body. Doping is a good example of this. To be true, more and more powerful countermeasures have been taken in the form of developments in the doping rules. This process, however, is loaded with a moral trap, in which responsibility is transferred from the sportsman in question to the supervising agents – the judges and officials. This results in a situation in which everything not expressly forbidden is allowed. The rules thus encourage the breaking of the rules. One example of this is the debate on Alpine cabins. It is not realistic to ban their use, since it is not possible to supervise their use. On the other hand, competitive sports is distancing itself from the normal conditions of human life to the extent that competitors must live in artificial rooms in order to maintain their competitive abilities. This implies a danger for sports, in that it risks losing contact with the ordinary human life.

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Mikael Finell

IOC-member number 53: R. F. von Willebrand

During the Olympics in London in 1908 baron Reinhold von Willebrand was elected to the International Olympic Committee (IOC) as the first Finn ever. The Swede Viktor Balck, who belonged to the inner circle of the IOC, played a key role when von Willebrand got his membership in the IOC. Balck played generally a central role in recruiting of Nordic IOC members, obviously because Stockholm needed support for its candidature for the Olympic Games in 1912.

R. F. von Willebrand, a former member of the Finnish Parliament, saw the Olympic Movement as a perfect forum for his political ambitions. He made several decisions on his own responsibility about how Finland should act in relation to Russia in Olympic issues. However, von Willebrand played a minor role

in the IOC. He retired from the IOC in 1920, officially on account of high age (at the age of 61) and weak health. In reality the reason was based on his disapproval of how the IOC treated the losers of the World War I.

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Antti O. Arponen

The Olympic Gold Medalist Jonni Myyrä

The only Finnish double gold medalist in javelin is Jonni Myyrä, who took gold in Antwerpen in 1920 and in Paris in 1924. At the age of 32 he moved to the United States and lived the rest of his life there. In addition to two Olympic wins he threw several times a new world record. The IAAF noted only the result of 66,10 meters which he achieved in 1919 in Stockholm. Myyrä was at the top of the world list 8 times, in 1914–15, 1917–1921 and 1925. In Stockholm Olympics he was eighth. It is likely that Myyrä would have won in 1916 if the Olympics had been held. Myyrä was one of the world's best in discus, too. In an exhibition held in the United States in spring 1925 he threw javelin 68,55 meters, over the world record, and next summer discus 48,80 meters also with world record result. From the Paris Olympics he flew to Japan and continued over to the States. He died in San Francisco on the 22nd of January, 1955. He had been born in Savitaipale in Karelia 13th of July, 1892.

Myyrä stayed in the United States because he had failed as a businessman and a politician in Finland. In 1917, at the of age 25 he had been elected a municipal manager of Savitaipale and a local bank director. In 1920 he became an owner to a saw-mill and a factory which produced javelins. In the summer of 1929 he was arrested because it was found out that he had peculated a large amount of municipal funds. Myyrä had used the money to cover his own debts. Myyrä took a loan from the bank and paid the sum back. Next year he moved to Lahti to flee from his creditors. He went bankrupt in spring 1924 in restaurant business. Myyrä owed more than one million Fm in summer 1924 when left for the Paris Olympics. From there he slipped to the United States and never came back.

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Petri Poikus**Body of an athlete, soul of a class-fighter?**

Finnish-American socialists found the first sports union for the members of the Finnish working-class. The Eastern Sports Union (ESU) was found in Massachusetts in 1908, more than 10 years before the Workers Sport Federation was found in Finland. The road of the Finnish-American socialist sportsmen in United States was quite bumpy. The biggest problem for working-class sports movement in the USA was work. Finnish-American immigrants had to work late, they had hard jobs and their life was generally unstable. Factories, mines and other employers could fire people very easily, and then workers had to move elsewhere. This could destroy the whole cultural activity of the immigrant society. Because sport associations often depended on a few enthusiastic leaders, they were especially vulnerable. Surprisingly the socialist Eastern Sports Union was not very much interested in socialist ideology. There was always a possibility for an ESU member to participate also in bourgeois sports activities as an individual person. This was approved by the Finnish Socialist Federation (FSF) and even the Finnish Civil War had very little impact on this. The reason for this lack of ideology was that the FSF did not see sports as a very important part of political agenda. The ESU's reason to allow participation in bourgeois sports had its origin in Finnish working-class sports movement, which was more interested in competitive sports than the principles of working-class sports. On the other hand, ESU was such a small union, that it had to leave its doors quite open, or the best sportsmen would have joined other sports associations.

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Hannu Itkonen**"What is the goal of the TUL?" – programmes and documents led the way**

The programmes of social movements are social interpretations of the period in question. In working out of programmes the

organization locates itself in the social reality. This article deals with how Finnish working class sports – represented by the TUL – has always emphasized its status as a sports organization for the working class.

First programmes were documents which were originally produced by the international sporting organizations, with which the TUL sided by its decisions. The documents until 1960s tell about separate working class organizational culture. In the programmes dating from the 1970-80s political demands of physical culture became prominent; the onus of responsibility of the physical culture of citizens and of the arenas of physical exercise was lifted on to the shoulders of municipalities and state. The programme of the 1990s is characterized by differentiation of the physical culture.

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Pauli Heikkilä

Alvar Aaltos's Monument of Independence – A Stadium of the "Tähtitornin mäki"

The organization called *Itsenäisyyden Liitto* (The Society for Independence) was founded in order to heal the wounds of the Finnish Civil War of the year 1918. The means was to create a Finnish-national system of symbols; flag-raising day, days for commemoration and a memorial. The two former were quite clear issues, it was the form, location and purpose of the latter that aroused wide debate.

The quarrel raged between the modern and traditional views of art. Also Alvar Aalto, the raising talent in architecture took part in it. He presented the standpoint of the architects which had it that a suitable memorial would be a stadium to be build on a hill in central Helsinki (Tähtitorninmäki). It was also the candidate of the *Itsenäisyyden Liitto*. The rules of the competition were later changed; either the building would be located in a site freely chosen or there would be a statue on the Tähtitorninmäki (later the restrictions on location were dropped, too). Aalto stuck to his original idea and did not succeed.

Itsenäisyyden Liitto was not satisfied with any of the other

proposals either and the memorial was never erected. The society gave up the idea of a stadium of its own and started silently to support the foundation which promoted the building at the Helsinki stadium. At the same time it resumed the plan for a new memorial. Sports or modernism did not mean anything to the ideological message of the *Itsenäisyyden Liitto*. It is rewarding to compare the plan of the *Itsenäisyyden Liitto* drawn by Aalto with the one which was realized as the Olympic stadium; they differed in basic concept and, of course, in success.

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Erkki Vettemiemi

Start Throwing Cobbles instead of Javelin! – Quel Corps? and the possibility of radical criticism of sports

Criticism of sports as an institution of the bourgeois society was slow in coming in the aftermath of the year 1968. By the mid-1970s, however, a number of militant marxists had rallied around the French journal *Quel Corps?*, Jean-Marie Brohm being the most prominent of them. According to *Quel Corps?*, sports is, and has always been, a microcosm of the society at large.

Modern sports is thus a reflection of the repressive dispensation known as capitalism. Alienated athletes and workers alike are subjected to the principle of survival of the fittest, with savage competition, obsession about winning and faith in ever-lasting progress as salient features of the inhumane system. Turning to the spectators, sports represents an opiate to them, and the same applies to sports in the socialist countries, castigated by *Quel Corps?* as "Stalinist bureaucracies".

While dissecting the olympic ideology, the French critics lean on the 1936 Berlin Games as a case in point. In their view the Nazis merely highlighted the hidden agenda of olympism, namely the one that consists of racism, elitism and chauvinism. From commercialism and politicization to violence and doping the scourges of sport are traced back to the core of modern sports as it emerged one hundred years ago.

Quel Corps? dissolved itself in the 1990s. Many paths cleared by the journal have been trodden by less radical scholars,

though what the French themselves meant by criticism was to trash the bourgeois order once and for all. But it is one thing that they overestimated their strength and quite another that their contribution to sports studies is discernible in one form or another.

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Martti Silvennoinen and Tommi Niku

Daredevils from Telemark

The article tells us something of the history of modern skiing which is deeply rooted in the County of Telemark in Norway. Through the text we may follow how a rustic and provincial skiing style shapes its later transformations for the modern competitive sports, especially, in slalom-skiing, in the come-back of telemark-style and, of course, in a very important instant moment of the ski jumping – at the descent.

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Jaana Kari

Summersaults of Womanhood – Tales of a "Skiing-Mum"

This article throws light on a marginal phenomenon in sports history, namely women's sports. Siiri Rantanen, the "Skiing-mum", one of the well-known Finnish female skiers, tells her story what it was like to be a woman in masculine sports arenas of the 1950s. Her story reveals what made her a skier, how she broke the limits of the role of a traditional woman, how she expanded her sphere of life outside home, how she experienced the status of a woman in sports, and finally, what made her give up her career as a top-class sportswoman.

In memorizing her career Siiri Rantanen tells about how the competitions and training were organized, and about general circumstances and camps. At times the subjugated status of women come fore which was highlighted in the way her career came to an end. She was placed under a ban on grounds of "obstinacy" when she, still recovering from an illness, refused to compete for her relay team.