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The Perpetuation of Nineteenth Century Amateurism as a British Virtue in Modern Olympic Track & Field

By

Katrina Marie Smith

Presented to the Graduate Faculty of
Claremont Graduate University in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Arts in History.

We certify that we have read this
document and approve it as adequate in
scope and quality for the degree of
Masters of Arts.

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2020

“No man has the right to be an Amateur in the matter of physical training. It is a shame for a man to grow old without seeing the beauty and strength of which his body is capable.”

~Socrates

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Introduction

In 1913, Jim Thorpe suffered the humiliation of being stripped of his gold medals and titles in track and field for violating amateur ideals by accepting monetary compensation in the non-Olympic sport of baseball prior to his participation in the Stockholm Olympic Games of 1912. In 1936, Jesse Owens, who was regarded as the world's fastest man in his era, was stripped of his gold medals in track after he received a pair of running shoes from an up and rising company called Adidas at the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin for violation of amateur ideals. Meanwhile, in 1975, Olympic track and field athlete Steve Prefontaine protested against prohibitive policies concerning amateur athletes' sources of income and threatened to forgo the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal. On behalf of the amateur Athlete, Prefontaine argued that, "to make all the sacrifices necessary [for training, competing, and everyday living], I'll be a poor man. If you're not a millionaire, there's no way [to meet costs]."¹ In 2016, Olympic track and field athlete Nick Symmonds said, "[he] would do everything possible to separate track and field from the Olympic movement. The Olympics are a great entity, but they are so steeped in amateurism that we just can't have a full-fledged Professional sport as long as the Super Bowl for us is the Olympics every four years."² The plight of the athletes mentioned here are but a microcosm in a chronology spanning over 120 years of track and field athletes with careers that were either derailed, devastated, or stagnated by the financial prohibitions of British Victorian virtues of amateurism. The idea of amateurism in track, by design, inhibited the athlete from profiting. For this thesis, I will argue that the history of track and field cannot be understood without an examination of amateurism as a nineteenth century British virtue. In doing so I will

¹ "Prefontaine is Boiling Over Amateur Rules," *New York Times* (New York: New York Times, 1975), 1.

² Adam Elder, "Q&A: Nick Symmonds on the Olympics, Doping and Parties," *Podium Runner* (Pocket Outdoor Media, 2016), https://www.podiumrunner.com/qa-nick-symmonds-on-the-olympics-doping-parties_152296.

examine how the financial impediments experienced by track and field athletes were a byproduct of amateurism and its historical legacy as perpetuated by the Olympic Games via the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and affiliated amateur athletic organizations. The significance of this study is to show that the British origins of amateurism to this day still serves as a significant prohibitive barrier to the financial needs of track and field athletes worldwide, especially in the United States.

Typically, historians who examine the Olympics begin their study of amateurism in track and field in 1860s Britain with the emergence of Victorian amateur athletic clubs and organized track competitions. However, my research examines the period before the 1860s to understand the contributing factors that led to the creation of amateurism and its integration into modern track and field. From this research, I have gathered that the amateur athletic club was originally a type of gentlemen's club specializing in sports like track and field. Subsequently, by examining amateurism within the context of gentlemen's club history, I have identified sub-histories of the genre such as the British wealthy gentleman or noble, British leisure, gaming houses, sports, and the development of masculine homosocial societies in Britain that comprise gentlemen's club culture which have contributed to amateurism's existence. These sub-histories will be defined in greater detail in chapter three. The objective in pursuing these findings was to clarify amateurism's historical purpose and identify amateurism as an invention of the British gentleman for the benefit of the British gentleman. By recognizing Amateurism as a British invention of the British gentleman, the behavior of amateurism as a system of governance to benefit the wealthy in track and field became increasingly pronounced.

However, it would be a Frenchman who would advance amateurism worldwide. In 1896, track and field entered the global spectrum under amateurism when Frenchman Baron Pierre de

Coubertin founded the modern Olympic Games. After studying amateurism and sports in Britain in the 1880s, Coubertin adopted the amateur model and adapted the principles to his vision of reviving the Olympic Games. The historically fundamental and controversial philosophical conundrums Coubertin experienced when he paired British amateurism with Olympism has been underexplored by track and field and Olympic historians. This thesis explores the impact of amateurism in track and field among the international Olympic markets of athletes, spectators, coaches, officials, and affiliates during the era of Coubertin, 1896 to 1916.

To fulfill the objectives of this thesis, I researched in the International Olympic Committee Collections which contain the official Reports of the Summer Olympic Games from 1896 to 1916, the *Annuaire du Comite International Olympique*, IOC Historical Archives since 1894, the Lausanne Archives, the Olympic Review, and the memoirs and writings of Olympic founder Coubertin. Other collections represented in this research were the Records of the Amateur Athletic Association of England, and collections provided by the National Union of Track Statisticians. Additionally, this project included reading a variety of journals and print material including *Sporting Life*, *The Journal of Sports History*, and *The Journal of Olympic Sports* as well as legislation provided by The National Archives of the United Kingdom. Secondary sources were consulted to provide background on gentlemen's clubs, gaming, amateur athletics, and sports as leisure in Britain in order to illustrate the formation of amateurism in Britain and its influence on governance and finance in track and field.

Amateurism in Track and Field: An Overview

By 1916, significantly influential amateur athletic governing bodies of track and field were established worldwide by men of wealth working in tandem with the IOC for the advancement of amateur track and field. These governing bodies were the Amateur Athletic

Association of England (AAA) in 1880, National Olympic Committees (NOC) like the French Olympic Committee (FOC) in 1894 and the British Olympic Committee (BOC) in 1905, the International Amateur Athletic Federation in 1912, and in the United States, the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) in 1888, and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) around 1905. Upon their inception, the governing bodies were founded as not-for-profit organizations operating as amateur organizations for amateur athletes. Universally from 1896 to the 1970s, the responsibility of these organizations was to uphold the principles of amateurism by establishing and enforcing rules regarding eligibility, gentlemanly behavior otherwise known as sportsmanship, and the suppression of profits. Amateur athletes were expected to compete without want for profit or payment, would refrain from specialization, were minimally trained, were of the male persuasion, and were financially and economically suitable to seek sport as leisure.³ By the third Olympiad in 1904, the International Olympic Committee would rise to become the dominant voice on amateurism in track and field for both national and international markets and dictated how track and field operated financially as a sport.

In 1894, in accordance with the principles of amateurism, the Baron Pierre de Coubertin co-founded the IOC as a not-for-profit organization and mandated that any sports organization linked to the IOC be amateur⁴ with a membership base that also refrained from seeking profits in sport. The principles of amateurism will be discussed in chapter two. For track and field, Coubertin's objectives in adopting amateurism was to arrange financing for the IOC to advance the sport and annex existing track and field practices and methodologies of standardization

³ To financial and economically suitable, track and field athletes needed to be strong financially to finance their lifestyle as an athlete because amateur competitions prohibited prize monies and discouraged receipt of monetary gains from sports. The rich and upper-middle classes had the financial means to seek track and field as their sport of leisure. Working class athletes did not have the luxury of focusing their time on sports competitions that did not provide an income. Greater detail will be provided in chapter two.

⁴ A euphemism for not-for-profit.

which included the 400m cinder track, systems for recording, archiving, and tracking performance results, officials, the means for the international use of metric measurements in Athletics, and the rules of eligibility, sportsmanship, and conduct for organized track and field. Though Coubertin founded the IOC as a not-for-profit, the organization would require access to financial resources to finance the Olympic Games and the day-to-day operations of the IOC. As a strategy, Coubertin sought political and affluent connections from the amateur athletic club circuit in Britain, Europe, and other anglophone nations to act as financiers of his Olympic vision based on his research of British amateur athletic clubs and sports management. Coubertin's strategy will be discussed in detail in chapter three.

Coubertin was faced with the challenge of raising capital to finance the building of track and field stadiums in Olympic hosting countries. Unfortunately, Coubertin did not initially factor the historical and inherent exclusivity of amateurism as being financially restrictive to event producers, athletes, and other stakeholders. Coubertin misread what he perceived would be the financial and ideological ambitions of the amateur elite who rested on the board of the IOC. For the Paris 1900 Olympics, Coubertin attempted to market and build spectatorship for track and field and the Games by accessing for-profit companies and aligning with for-profit events such as the World's Fair in 1900 but was met with resistance from members of the IOC and amateur athletic affiliates. In St. Louis 1904 Olympics, the Baron was criticized again for allying with a for-profit exhibition, the World's Fair of 1904. Britain, France, and many elite American universities including Yale, Columbia, and Georgetown boycotted the Olympic Games because of the Fair in response to Coubertin's violation of amateurism.⁵ In 1908, the British

⁵ Charles P. Lucas, *The Olympic Games, 1904* (St. Louis: Charles P. Lucas and E.B. Woodward, 1905), 17.

Olympic Council⁶ struggled to raise funds to host the 1908 London Olympics and support its athletes.⁷ When the BOC solicited taxpayers to finance British athletes for the Stockholm Games of 1912, critics like Frederic Harrison retorted that, “[the BOC’s] appeal for £100,000 ‘stinks of gate-money and Professional pot-hunting.’”⁸ Ultimately, the IOC and national Olympic governing bodies, particularly the BOC, and the American Olympic Committee (AOC) with the AAU under amateurism would struggle to raise funds for the first five Olympiads.

⁶ Now referred to as the British Olympic Committee.

⁷ Theodore Andrea Cook, *The Fourth Olympiad, 1908: Official Report* (London: The British Olympic Association, 1909), 20.

⁸ Matthew Llewellyn, “A Nation Divided: Great Britain and the Pursuit of Olympic Excellence, 1912 – 1914,” *Journal of Sport History*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 82.

Chapter 1: An Overview of the Financial Issues Affecting the Growth of Track and Field During the Coubertin Era

This chapter will identify the financial impediments of Coubertin, the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and the Olympic track and field athlete respective to amateurism. Knowing this information is integral to understanding the historical and financial environment and experiences of Coubertin and track and field athletes as defined by amateurism. Included in this chapter is a literature review of the views of Olympic and sports historians regarding the financial issues of Olympic track and field under amateurism. Following this literature review is a narrative on the financial impediments of Olympic track during the Coubertin era spanning from 1896 to 1916.

1.1 Literature Review

As Joseph Turrini explained in his monograph, *The End of Amateurism in American Track and Field*, historical research on track and field often gets subsumed into histories on the Olympic Games and treated as a microcosm of sports history. As a researcher focused on uncovering how amateurism historically shaped the financial structure of track and field, I found this trend problematic. Typically, historical narratives that discuss the Olympic Games and track and field begin their analysis as far back as 776 BC with the founding of the Ancient Grecian Games. After discussing in one or two chapters four hundred years' worth of the ancient Games, the narrator then jumps to 1894 with the founding of the International Olympic Committee and 1896 for the first Olympiad of the modern era. Track, from the author's view, is simply one of many sports featured in the Olympics. If the author chooses to focus on any historic events related to track it's usually, Jim Thorpe and his debacle with the AAU, Jesse Owens and his triumph against the Nazi's, Tommie Smith and John Carlos and their controversial black power

stance against American racism, the 1972 Munich Games, and the professional era ranging from Florence Griffith-Joyner to Usain Bolt. In other words, the author's choice to survey the history of the Olympic Games from the ancient world to modernity muffles the significance and unique details that define each Olympic sport in the modern era. I wanted to know specifically how amateurism stifled the financial trajectory of track and field in the modern era. To fulfill this objective, I could not turn to Olympic historians like Allen Guttman, David C. Young, Vassil Girginov, Jim Parry, or David Goldblatt for guidance. Though these authors are notable among Olympic historians, their works did not speak specifically to track and field, amateurism, and the period I wished to study. My research required a study on the works of historians focused on analyzing amateurism in track and field. This literature review will therefore analyze Joseph Turrini's *The End of Amateurism in American Track and Field*, Matthew P. Llewelyn and John Gleaves's *The Rise and Fall of Olympic Amateurism*, and Lincoln Allison's *Amateurism in Sport*.

Joseph Turrini's *The End of Amateurism in American Track and Field* spoke specifically to the relationship between amateurism and track and field from the nineteenth century to the present. Though Turrini's primary objective was to understand this relationship within the geographical context of the United States, Turrini devoted his opening chapters to the origins of modern track and field and amateur athletics in mid-nineteenth century Britain and attributed power structure of amateurism to British men of wealth who designed amateurism for their benefit. Chapter one, which was devoted to an exploration of track and field from the 1820s to the 1890s, was especially significant in building my research on amateurism in track and field during the nineteenth century because this section focused on the establishment of track and field governance and the financial objectives of the amateur athlete.

Turrini, a professor of labor, sports, and archival histories at Wayne State University, approached his study of amateurism in track through the lens of labor relations and argued, “how track athletes moved track and field from a formally amateur into an openly professional sport and redefined their relationship with the governing bodies.”⁹ Based on this argument, Turrini outlined the following as issues that negatively impacted the financial trajectory of the Olympic track and field athlete from 1896 to 1993. Turrini stated that, “the athletes had little protection or input in the sport’s governing structures. They lacked processes to dispute the decisions of the governing bodies which functioned as nongovernmental organizations outside the bounds of state control. The athletes struggle to alter the amateur rules related to these larger issues of representation, authority, protection, and control of their athletic careers.”¹⁰ The track athlete’s inability to address these blockades contributed to the perpetuation of amateurism’s financial dominance over their track careers.

Although Matthew Llewellyn and John Gleaves placed track and field within the broad context of the Olympic Games, the authors offered historical depth in their research on the financial plight of track and field relative to Coubertin’s struggle to alleviate the financial restrictions upheld by the IOC as dictated by the amateur ideal. In their book *The Rise and Fall of Olympic Amateurism*, Llewellyn and Gleaves endeavored to examine, “amateurism through the lens of those who controlled it and shaped it, to challenge its cultural naturalness by showing what it is was for those who lived it, how it changed and for what reasons people changed it, and how it continues to shape attitudes about both the Olympic Games and sport today.”¹¹ The

⁹ Joseph M. Turrini, *The End of Amateurism in American Track and Field* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 2.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹¹ Matthew P. Llewellyn and John Gleaves, *The Rise and Fall of Olympic Amateurism* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2016), Introduction, Kindle edition.

authors argued that, “when Coubertin deliberately bound amateurism to the Olympic Movement, the ideology was imbued with a feeling of permanence, a natural fit for the ‘invested traditions’ of his modern Olympic revival.”¹² This observation assisted my research in understanding how track and field as an Olympic sport tailored to the invested traditions of the Olympic Movement, was also bound by amateurism internationally.

Rise and Fall is concrete in its examination of when, where, and how amateurism was cultivated and by whom. Llewellyn and Gleaves first outlined the apparent social, cultural, and financial issues concerning Coubertin, the IOC, and amateurism, the union between amateurism and Olympism, and amateurism and the Olympic athlete. Next, the authors dissected, what they called, the anatomy of amateurism in order to explain what amateurism was to the Olympic Games and the Olympic athlete. Once the anatomy of amateurism was revealed, the authors were able to explain why fundamentally amateurism was incompatible with the values and objectives expressed in Olympism and why amateurism created a “universal dilemma” for Coubertin, the IOC, and track athlete worldwide. Additionally, Llewellyn and Gleaves identified the nineteenth century amateur athlete’s concern with gambling in sport especially among British amateur athletic club members who violated the anti-profiting philosophies of amateurism. The issue of gambling is explored in chapter two of this thesis along with an examination of British clubland culture as examined by sports historians Llewellyn, Gleaves, and Sir Sherman Montagne and clubland historians Amy-Milne Smith and John Timbs for the purpose of understanding why men of wealth created amateurism and the financially restrictive environment experienced by the track athlete.

¹² Ibid.

Historian Lincoln Allison's *Amateurism in Sport* makes clear that amateurism is British. Allison is blunt in his delivery and unwavering in his stance that historians need to consider amateurism's geographical and temporal origins and direct their attention to nineteenth century Britain rather than rely on interpretations of abstract philosophies and social ideologies that inadequately explain the existence of amateurism. According to Allison, "amateurism evolved in specifically English conditions,"¹³ and that these conditions were defined by commercialization. Allison also argued that, "amateurism in one respect was the creation of a sector of society which protected the individual and the group from both the market and the state."¹⁴ *Amateurism in Sport* was greatly influenced by the work Adam Smith and Karl Marx which Lincoln the lens to examine amateurism in terms of commerce. Allison defined commerce in terms of financial exchange and attributed amateurism's financial prohibitions as measures to discourage profit-seekers in sport.¹⁵ The profit-seeker, according to Allison, is a gambler which was significant to my research on why amateurism discourages profiting and how the term profiting broadened to mean deriving an income from sport. By 1896, Coubertin's Olympic revival and the track athlete would be subjected to the broad interpretation of profiting.

1.2 Narrative

Baron Pierre de Coubertin's plans of Olympic revival derived from his desire to improve international relations between people and nations and all the while contributing to the revitalization of the French economy through sport. As noted in his Olympic manifesto, Coubertin believed the British economy and Britain's approach to sport, physical education, and industrialization to be ideal economic models to reference while restoring the French economy to

¹³ Lincoln Allison, *Amateurism in Sport* (London: Routledge, 2001), 10.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 142.

the economic heights France experienced prior to the Napoleonic era.¹⁶ After studying in Britain in the 1880s, Coubertin returned to France and drafted enterprising plans reflecting a modern interpretation of the ancient Olympic Games scaled for a global market. These plans led to the founding of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in 1894 under amateurism and the revitalization of the Olympic Games of Ancient Greece in Athens 1896. As part of Coubertin's marketing efforts, Coubertin reimagined each Olympic sport by mixing modernity with ancient Grecian traits to introduce the Ancient Games to a modern audience. Among the sports reimagined was track and field.

Modern track and field was invented in the 1830s and 1840s in Britain at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, and at the Royal Shrewsbury School in Shropshire in Britain.¹⁷ By the 1860s, British-style track and field, now referred to as organized track and field, followed the principles of Amateurism. These principles will be discussed in detail in chapter two. Organized track, not to be confused with pedestrianism or footraces,¹⁸ was standardized and regulated by a set of rules affecting eligibility,

¹⁶ Baron Pierre de Coubertin, *Le Moniferte Olympique*, edited by François d'Amat, (Lausanne: Les Editions du Grand Pont, 1994), 66-79.

The Napoleonic Era began around November 1799 and ended with Napoleon Bonaparte's abdication on June 22, 1815. Pierre de Coubertin was born on January 1, 1863, during the aftermath of Napoleon's reign.

¹⁷ Peter Matthews, *Historical Dictionary of Track and Field* (Plymouth: Scarecrow Press, 2012), xiv-xx.

Track and field is part of the internationally recognized sport of Athletics. The sport of Athletics is comprised of track, cross country, road running, marathoning, ultra-marathoning, trail running, and racewalking. The Royal Shrewsbury School in Shropshire was responsible for the creation of cross country running as a sport.

¹⁸ Footraces are informal competitions when two or more people regardless of athletic ability randomly compete to see who is the fastest. Footraces can be run on any surface including a parking lot. These races are unregulated, are not standardized, and are not bound to a specific distance like the 100m, 400m, or 1600m. Footraces do not adhere to any formal governance by an established local, regional, national, or international federation or association. No officials are required to be in attendance to legitimize the outcome of the race. Pedestrianism was a popular sport in the nineteenth century that involved racing while walking. Like foot racing, pedestrianism was informal and was often experienced as an impromptu event. Pedestrianism was the precursor to racewalking. Organized track and field involves a stadium designed by an architect and an engineer who are responsible for constructing a regulated track and a field that is form fitted for shotput, discus, javelin, long jump, high jump, triple jump, hammer throw, and pole vault. Track and field is a formal environment where people called athletes compete for time and placement. In an outdoor stadium, the track itself is traditionally 400m with

behavior, and profitability. Organized track was controlled by governing organizations, such as the Amateur Athletic Association, that evolved from the British amateur athletic club system. The Baron studied the structure and modernity of organized track and Hellenized the sport with the addition of the javelin and the marathon. The new look of modern track and field made the sport an iconic attraction of the Olympic Games.

This attraction, however, required considerable funds related to the restoration of a track stadium, as well as architects, engineers, construction, facility maintenance, officials, and other expenses. Unfortunately, Coubertin did not receive the financial support he expected from his IOC which consisted of financiers, many of whom were proclaimed amateurs of sport in Britain, Europe, and the United States. Monetizing track and field and other Olympic sports would prove difficult for the Baron and subsequently track and field athletes due to amateur rules against profiting.¹⁹ Coubertin's financial plight will be further examined in chapter three.

From 1896 to the 1916, the financial restrictions imposed on Olympism by amateurism essentially reserved Olympic sports, like track and field, for wealthy athletes with the

8-lanes, 2-curves, and 2-straight measured to exact specifications. Running events are standardized and include the 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, 1500m (For the Olympics and USA Track and Field), 1600m (For high school), 2000m, 3000m Steeplechase, 3200m, 5000m, 10,000m, 100m Hurdles, 110m High Hurdles, 300m Hurdles, 400m Hurdles, Pentathlon, Heptathlon, and Decathlon, and the Marathon. Because tracks and events are standardized, these events can be run on any regulated track. All running events are officiated by an official who starts each race with a starter pistol. All field events are marked and recorded. Racewalking is its own sport but is often featured as a track and field event. Like the running events, racewalk is timed, recorded, and officiated. Unlike the running events, racewalkers must walk with a specific form. As one foot lifts from the ground, the other foot must remain on the ground. Athletes who lift both feet from the ground at the same time are subject to disqualification. Racewalking and track and field are governed by associations, federations, and organizations responsible for ensuring that all competitors comply with a set of rules and regulations that equal the playing field for all athletes. The official is responsible for policing the athletes and enforce the rules for competition on behalf of the governing bodies.

¹⁹ Coubertin expressed his challenge with monetizing track and field and sports in a special pamphlet issued by the *Revue Olympique* to those participating in the International Architecture Competition, Paris 1910. This pamphlet is featured in Norbert Muller's *Pierre de Coubertin 1896-1937*. Norbert Muller, *Pierre de Coubertin 1896-1937, Olympism: Selected Writings (Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 2000)*, 268.

wherewithal to denounce athletic specialization, training, and profiting. For the wealthy athlete, athletic excellence was dependent on natural ability and talent, not training. Training, specialization, and profiting were viewed, by the wealthy athlete, as work and were considered contrary to the objectives of amateurism. From Coubertin's assessment, however, the desire to achieve excellence in athletics required work, finance, and self-development through training and specialization. Coubertin understood that the revival of the Olympic Games would financially incentivize the need for athletes to train in order to achieve their best and honor their country.²⁰ To achieve their best, many track and field athletes such as 1912 British Olympic gold and silver medalist William Applegarth advocated the need to train, specialize, and profit, the very concepts amateurism fought against. Coubertin recognized the, "obvious [nature] that one cannot hope to be completely successful in any sport without engaging in specialized training,"²¹ and that training necessitated an income or profits for many track and field athletes. Applegarth argued that, "anyone who says that the English athlete of today does not want or need specialised training commits himself to a preposterous absurdity. The young runner or jumper...is mighty glad to get all the skilled advice and Professional care he can."²² Coubertin and many track and field Olympic athletes were puzzled by the expectation that amateur athletes were to, "embrace special sports clothing but reject specialized physical preparation. According to the mandates of amateurism, sport was supposed to be a celebration of natural, unforced qualities of the human body,"²³ even at Olympic levels.

²⁰ Baron Pierre de Coubertin, "L'Education Anglaise" *La Réforme Sociale [Social Reform]*, Vol. 7, Series 2, No. III (Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 1887), 633-648.

²¹ Baron Pierre de Coubertin, "Les Sources et les Limites du Progres Sportif [The Origins and Limits of Athletic Progress]," *Olympische Rundschau (Revue Olympique/Olympic Review)*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 1938), 1-2.

²² Llewellyn and Gleaves, "A Nation Divided," *Journal of Sport History*, 85.

²³ Richard Holt, "The Amateur Body and the Middle-Class Man: Work, Health and Style in Victorian Britain," *Sport in History*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (Milton Park: Taylor and Francis, 2006), 365.

The cost of track and field training and specialization were compounded by the costs of traveling on the high seas or by land to the Olympic Games along with lodging, and any fees associated with athletic participation in the Games including qualifying competitions. In terms of Olympism, “wealth was not a necessary possession in order to take part of the Olympic Games, but it can be easily understood that the heavy expenses entailed by a long corporal training, together with the cost of the journey to Olympia and the sojourn there, added to the banquet which the victor was expected to give his fellow-citizens afterwards, must have rendered a certain degree of affluence imperative.”²⁴ Wealth, on the other hand, was a requisite of amateurism. Since amateurism was embedded into the organizational strategy of Olympism, amateurism prevailed in reserving Olympic sports for individuals with the financial capability to meet the expenses of their sport. Olympic excellence was therefore dependent on the athlete’s financial strength. Why the system of amateurism was designed by the wealthy to devalue, discourage, and impose prohibitions against training and specialization in the face of Olympism was a puzzlement to Coubertin and many Olympic athletes of the era.²⁵

To supplement costs, many athletes relied on financial support from private clubs, wealthy benefactors, or assistance from their government while facing the IOC’s fluctuating definitions on amateurism. The need to address the cost of being an Olympian gave rise to profiting among athletes and their supporting financiers.²⁶ For example, in the Athens Olympics Games of 1896, “Spyros Loues, a local Athenian peasant and winner of the inaugural marathon event, received promises of financial and material reward – including lavish monetary purses,

²⁴ SP. P. Lambros and N. G. Polites, *Die Olympischen Spiele [The Olympic Games]* (London: Grevel and Company, 1896), 18.

²⁵ Allen Guttman, *Sports: The First Five Millennia* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004), 259–262.

²⁶ Brian L. Goff, William F. Shughart II and Robert D. Tollison, “Disqualification by Decree: Amateur Rules as Barriers to Entry,” *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics*, Vol. 144, No. 3 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck Verlag and Co. KG, 1988), 518.

free meals, haircuts, and even offers of marriage.”²⁷ At the Paris Olympics in 1904, “[amateurs] openly violated Olympic antiprofitteering regulations reinforced at the 1897 IOC Congress at Le Havre. In a number of events such as automobile racing, motorboating, and equestrianism, successful amateurs received lucrative prizes such as monetary payments, art objects of various value, goblets, and medallions.”²⁸ After the Stockholm Games, the British Olympic Committee issued a national appeal of £100,000 (\$486,600) to properly prepare the British Olympic team for competition. Germany allocated \$75,000 for its athletes to train and the French National Committee of Sports met its target of \$100,000 by receiving funds from a Greek arms dealer named Basil Zaharoff.²⁹

Due to the absence or underdevelopment of National Olympic Committees (NOC’s) in participating nations, the practice of profiting expanded in track and field among the non-rich. Many nations ignored or did not understand the historical context of amateurism nor its purpose and developed their own standards of eligibility for each sport in order to qualify or disqualify athletes, but not on the basis of their profiting or sources of income. Subsequently, “in its infancy, the IOC lacked the jurisdictional and technical authority, not to mention organizational capability, to verify the amateur statuses of Olympic athletes.”³⁰ Unfortunately, the inability to make such verifications of every athlete led the IOC to implement the random policy and practice of banning athletes from amateur competition due to accusations of profiting, especially by the United States. In the United States, track and field stood firm as an amateur Olympic

²⁷ Llewellyn and Gleaves, *Rise and Fall*, chap. 1, Kindle edition.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Llewellyn, “A Nation Divided,” *Journal of Sport History*, Vol. 35, No. 1, 82.

Unfortunately, despite the efforts of athletes, associations, and nations to raise funds, the Olympic Games of 1916 was postponed due to World War I.

³⁰ Llewellyn and Gleaves, *Rise and Fall*, chap. 1, Kindle edition.

sport under the Amateur Athletic Union governed by James Sullivan and William Mulligan Sloane from 1888 to 1909. Sullivan, who would become founder of the American Olympic Committee (AOC), now called the US Olympic Committee (USOC), was devout in his stance on amateur policies and principles against profiting and ran his organization as such. Track and field historian Joseph Turrini explained that, “the AAU, through its control the AOC, [was responsible for] manag[ing] fundraising, organizing, and transporting the Olympic team.”³¹ Sullivan would fall short of the funding necessary. Fortunately, Colonel Robert Means Thompson, a generous benefactor, salvaged the AAU, AOC, and the American Olympic Association from experiencing financial ruin by contributing large sums and championing fundraising efforts. Thompson, whose Navy League Society network included the Guggenheim Family, J.P. Morgan, Andrew Carnegie, and former presidents William Howard Taft, Theodore Roosevelt, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt to Thompson’s, arranged hundreds of thousands of dollars from 1911 to 1926 for the AOC and AAU on behalf of the athletes.³²

³¹ Joseph M. Turrini, *The End of Amateurism in American Track and Field* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 16.

³² John Lucas, “Setting the Foundation and Governance of the American Olympic Association: The Effects of Robert Means Thompson, 1911-1919 and 1922-1926,” *Journal of Sport History*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 459.

Chapter 2: Unearthing the Hidden History of Amateurism, Amateur Athletic Clubs, and Track and Field's Not-for-Profit Origins

The objective of this chapter is to provide background and context the issues identified in chapter one regarding amateurism. The logic behind this chapter is that the function of amateurism in track and field and the financial issues that exist in track cannot be fully understood without first identifying the purpose of amateurism and the historical factors that contributed to amateurism's existence. In this chapter, I provide an analysis specific to the commercial and legal conditions that influenced men of wealth to create amateurism. Research for this chapter required an examination of British gaming legislation and literature by Amy Milne-Smith, John Timbs, Sir Montagne Sherman, Matthew Llewelyn and John Gleaves on the following fields of study: gentleman clubland culture, gaming laws, gambling, gaming houses, leisure time, and masculine socialization in Britain. Research these fields was integral to understanding the purpose and formation of amateurism by 1860.

Before reading this chapter, it is important to understand that sports before 1845 were heavily associated gambling among British clubland culture. The year 1845 marked a turning point in sports history and clubland culture whereby economically diverse societies of British gamers were subjected to the enforcement of a new law, the Gaming Act of 1845. This chapter provides a narrative discussing the historical environment that prompted the need to enact the Gaming Act of 1845. The reactivity of wealthy British gentlemen to the Act prompted the development of the amateurism in sports and the invention of the amateur athletic club. This narrative concludes with an examination of a specific type of amateur athletic club in the nineteenth century, track clubs. The research provided in this chapter will serve to provide context to chapter three which discusses how Britain's legacy of British clubland culture was

subsumed into the Olympic ideal when the International Olympic Committee became an amateur organization. Consequently, when track and field entered the modern Olympic arena, the sport and its athletes were subjected to the financially restrictive environment that was cultivated by British clubland culture and British law.

2.1 The Challenge of Identifying Amateurism's Origins for Historians

Athletic Amateurism was created in reaction to the enforcement of the Gaming Act of 1845 by Queen Victoria. The Act of 1845 was designed to repeal the Unlawful Games Act of 1541, an act that failed to quell the gaming activities among British men in genres such as sport. In a span of three-hundred and four years, illegal gaming contributed to the popularization of gentlemen clubland culture throughout Britain.³³ The influence of this exhaustive history, however, is not readily apparent when identifying amateurism's origins, function, and purpose in track and field because amateur athletic clubland culture fought to distance themselves from the gaming traditions of British clubland in order to stay compliant with the law. This thesis recognizes that amateurism was cultivated by an expansive history of British clubland culture which included a history of gambling and law, socialization and community, class, masculinity, and leisure.

For historians, the ambiguity of amateurism's origins can be attributed to the inaccessibility of amateur athletic club archives in Britain. Many sports historians begin their research with the earliest mention of amateur athletic clubs in 1860s and evidence detailing the popularity of these organizations among universities.³⁴ Turrini broadened this scope by hinting

³³ England and Wales Sovereign (1509-1547): Henry VIII, "Unlawful Games Act, 1541," *The Effect of Certain Branches of the Statute Made in Anno 33. Henrici VIII, Touching the Maintenance of Artillery, and the Punishment of Such as Use Vnlawfull Games, Very Necessary to be Put in Execution* (England and Wales, 1541).

³⁴ Many of these archives attribute the founding of the Amateur athletic Club (AAC) in 1866 and the Amateur Rowing Association (ARA) in 1882 historically revolutionary, adding to the character of how Amateurism is

that amateurism was linked to the private English clubs favoring high-class masculine societies. For the purpose of my argument, these masculine societies will be referred to as gentlemen's clubs. Clubland culture has a rarified but lengthy history predating 1860 that must be considered when discussing amateur athletic clubs. The absence of clubland culture from amateurism's history has mythologized amateurism as pure and produced misunderstandings of its function and purpose.³⁵ Because amateurism, "materialized not from the mostly working class-participants, organizers, and spectators of the popular running, throwing, and jumping contests of the Professional era [pre-1860s] but rather from wealthier segments of [British male] society,"³⁶ this thesis analyzes the creation of amateurism from the perspective and objectives of the British nobleman. From these histories track and field historians can ascertain that amateurism was created by British clubland culture as a not-for-profit system of managing the organizational, financial, and bureaucratic structure of clubs and their bodies of governance.

The idea that amateurism advocated love, purity, and integrity for sport originated in the 1860s and was largely based in myth propagated by British men of wealth and popularized by men of British middle-class who sought cultural capital by attaining club membership. When the amateur athletic club system opened their doors to the middle class in the 1870s and 1880s, amateurism as myth spread throughout the British Isle, Europe, and the Anglophone world. The strength and historical value of amateurism as myth and reality became valuable strategic tools

recognized today. For instance, among other contributions, the AAC, "the first sport[s] organization to ever use the word 'Amateur' in its name, and the ARA suddenly dispensed with cash prizes in favor of symbolic awards and, more drastically, restricted participation on the basis of social status.

Llewellyn and Gleaves, *The Rise and Fall*, chap. 1, Kindle edition.

³⁵ Amy Milne-Smith explained that, "despite being such a prominent feature of late-Victorian London, men's clubs are surprisingly absent from scholarly research...Historians more generally make note of clubs, but with [little] detail and little documentation."

Amy Milne-Smith, *London Clubland* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), 2.

³⁶ Turrini, *The End of Amateurism*, 13.

for Coubertin in generating financial support for the revival and modernization of the Olympic Games from wealthy and middle-class amateurs. When Coubertin and the International Olympic Committee of 1894 embedded amateurism into the core of Olympism, the IOC became an amateur entity, a not-for-profit organization upholding the values and traditions of the British gentleman and clubland culture regarding sports as communal leisure.³⁷ Under amateurism, Coubertin and all stakeholders, including athletes, were restricted from seeking profits and were assumed to be economically suitable to participate in the amateur only event called the Olympic Games. Additionally, all governing bodies associated with the IOC were required to be amateur along with the clubs, associations, and teams, they served in order to be eligible for participation in the Games. This chapter aims to understand amateurism's historical core as this core by 1896 will interact with Olympism and non-rich markets.

2.2 Pre-1860s: The Formation of Athletic Amateurism as a System of British Club Management

In 1845, Queen Victoria enacted the Gaming Act of 1845 which targeted the gaming activities of gaming houses and appealed the Unlawful act of 1541. Gentlemen clubs, club members, and associates who engaged in the leisurely activity of gambling were legally declared Gaming Houses under the Act and were subjected to the expressed penalties stated in the law. The Act of 1845 empowered, “the Justices of the Peace in every Shire, and Mayors, Sheriffs, Bailiffs, and other head Officers within every City, Town, and Borough, within this Realm...,” with the legal authority to, “...enter any House, Room, or Place where unlawful Games shall be

³⁷ The IOC maintained its Amateur status until the 1970s. Though the IOC now allows Professionals and Amateurs to compete against each other, the IOC still maintains its not-for-profit status.

suspected to beholden.”³⁸ By stigmatizing clubs that engaged in illegal gambling as Gaming Houses, upper-class gentlemen, in particular, were inclined to reconsider the legalities and social legitimacy of club operations. The Act of 1845, therefore, marked a critical turning point in British clubland history, whereby men of wealth were forced to rethink the concept of the gentlemen’s club, club management, masculine communal leisure, and winning in sports.

As Amy Milne-Smith explained, “gambling [in Britain] was an endemic part of eighteenth-[and early nineteenth] century leisure,”³⁹ therefore any effort to reconceptualize club life was contradictory to the customs of the existing sporting culture. For this thesis, the language of the Act of 1541 is highlighted to identify the issues addressed in the Gaming Act of 1845 and the ideologies that would later contribute the creation of athletic amateurism in the nineteenth century. The Unlawful Games Act stipulated that:

That no person by himself, factor, deputy, servant, or other person, shall for his or their gain, lucre, or [issuing] keep, have, hold, occupy, exercise, or maintain, any common house, Alley, or place of Bowling, Coiting, Cloise, Coiles, half bowl, tennis, dicing, table, or carding or any other manner of Game, prohibited by any statue heretofore made or any unlawful new game now invented or made, or hereafter to be invented, found, had, or made, upon pain, to forfeit and pay for every day, keeping, having, maintaining, or suffering any such game to be had, kept, executed, played, or maintained within any such House, Garden, Alley, or other place, contrary to the form and effect of this Statute, and the players so taken, to pay for every time.⁴⁰

According to the Unlawful Games Act, all sports for the lifespan of the law were legally identified as games and were therefore subject to the terms of the law if the game involved a gambling. At the time this Act was written, King Henry VIII viewed gambling in sport as a

³⁸ *Gaming Act, 1845: An Act to Amend the Law Concerning Games and Wages* (Kew, London: The National Archives of the UK, 1845).

³⁹ Milne-Smith, *London Clubland*, 23.

⁴⁰ England and Wales Sovereign (1509-1547): Henry VIII, “Unlawful Games Act, 1541,” *The Effect of Certain Branches of the Statute Made in Anno 33. Henrici VIII, Touching the Maintenance of Artillery, and the Punishment of Such as Use Vnlawfull Games, Very Necessary to be Put in Execution* (England and Wales, 1541).

nuisance and a distraction that negatively affected the training and development of his infantry. The Act targeted the gambling activities of his military men but was written broadly to affect the gaming activities of the Kingdom of Britain and its territories. This law was written to protect the assets of both the laborer and the nobleman from the risk of profiting via wagering in sport, not for the purification of society through morality. To discourage the poor from elevating their financial status by profiting from the rich through gambling, the Act specified that, “no Artificer, or handicrafts man of any occupation, Husbandman, Apprentice, Labourer servant of Husbandry, journey man, or servant or Artificer, Mariner, Fisherman, Waterman, or any Serving man, may use any unlawful Game,”⁴¹ to profit. In other words, a man’s use of physical proficiency or skill as gained by an occupation for profit via wagering or gaming of any kind was considered unlawful. The legal conditions expressed in the Unlawful Act would later contribute to the founding principles of amateurism which established division between the nobleman and the servant man in track and field and other sports and prohibited profiting.

Though the Unlawful Act outlawed gaming in sport, from the mid-1500s through mid-1700s, masculine nascent gaming clubs continued to form and operate privately in public settings, most notably in diverse socioeconomic settings such as taverns, chocolate-houses, and coffee-houses.⁴² This trend developed in response to the lax enforcement of the Unlawful Act by King Henry’s successors. The primary purpose of these masculine nascent clubs was leisure and socialization, themes that would be carried into clubland culture in the nineteenth century. Nascent clubs during this period allowed British noblemen and men of the lower classes to

⁴¹ England and Wales Sovereign (1509-1547): Henry VIII, “Unlawful Games Act, 1541,” *The Effect of Certain Branches of the Statute Made in Anno 33. Henrici VIII, Touching the Maintenance of Artillery, and the Punishment of Such as Use Vnlawfull Games, Very Necessary to be Put in Execution* (England and Wales, 1541).

⁴² Milne-Smith, *London Clubland*, 24.

commune together over gaming. Milne-Smith explained that the public house or pub was, “a nascent public sphere that was open to any man, regardless of rank, who could contribute to the conversation spurred by the press and political gossip. People met at the coffeehouses to drink, to socialize, to gamble, to read the latest periodicals and newspapers, and even to meet prostitutes,”⁴³ past-times encouraging socialization, masculinity, leisure, and profit.

For the purpose of this study, this thesis surveys the type of gentlemen’s clubs that formed in the seventeenth through eight centuries along with the demographics clubland originally attracted to understand the atmosphere of clubland culture and why the Unlawful Act was repealed under the Gaming Act of 1845. This section will also identify the issues targeted by the Gaming Act of 1845 and the practices protected or shunned by amateur athletic clubs and amateurism regarding profiting, professionals, and ungentlemanly behavior. Unlike the air of exclusivity that defined British club culture in the nineteenth century, early modern clubs were predominantly inclusive and indifferent to the socioeconomic inequalities of their social group. Beginning in the 1670s, gambling, drinks, and increasingly subversive conversations circulating among masculine nascent clubs attracted men of wealth and political influence. This history of violence, political unrest, drunkenness, and financial risks associated with high-stakes gambling among the wealthy and the lower-classes would be addressed by the Gaming Act of 1845.

By the mid-eighteenth century, sports betting became a defining feature of gentlemen’s clubs like the Jockey Club. In 1750, gentlemen of wealth and influence established the Jockey Club at the Star and Garter Tavern along Pall Mall in London. The founding club members formalized rules and set a system for horseracing to monitor the wagers of spectators and

⁴³ Ibid., 19.

gamblers.⁴⁴ Georgian and early Victorian nascent clubs emerged over pedestrian contests and other sporting contests that encouraged gambling. Prize money offered a chance for pedestrian racers of all classes to profit. By sponsoring prize monies and wagering assets, the gentleman placed their wealth at risk, potentially jeopardizing their financial well-being or relationship between wealthy families, or financially empowering members of working class. Meanwhile, among card players, “wealthy upper-class patrons, as well as publicans and clergymen, provided the financial sponsorship and moral legitimacy for dockworkers, artisans, bank clerks, factory hands, and grocers to compete openly for monetary purses.”⁴⁵ For men, clubland culture was inviting to men regardless of profession or class to socialize and compete for profit through leisurely activities such as sport.

After 1845, however, the threat of lawsuit, arrest, prosecution, and conviction as stipulated by the Gaming Act of 1845 threatened the existence of British clubland culture. The Gaming Act enforced what the Unlawful Act of 1541 addressed and dis-incentivize participation in games by men who sought only to profit from sport using skill against men who were unskilled. This change meant that British aristocracy could no longer pursue sports, “for the love of a wager.”⁴⁶ Subsequently, by the 1860s, many gaming houses that engaged in sports ceased their gambling activities and converted their societies into not-for-profit entities called amateur athletic clubs.⁴⁷ Under the amateur athletic club system, the law became the basis for principles defining eligibility rules for amateur games and amateurism’s stance against training, specialization, and profiting in track and field and sport in the nineteenth century. Training and

⁴⁴ Spectating in sports, prior to 1845, referred to gambling rather than an audience of observers.

⁴⁵ Llewellyn and Gleaves, *Rise and Fall*, chap 1, Kindle edition.

⁴⁶ Milne-Smith, *London Clubland*, 23.

⁴⁷ *Gaming Act, 1845: An Act to Amend the Law Concerning Games and Wages* (Kew: The National Archives of the UK, 1845).

specialization developed skill and was viewed by early amateur track and field athletes as practices that enhanced athletic performance and gave an unfair competitive advantage against those who were unskilled. The amateur body, “framed a definition of an amateur which excludes [the physique and skill set of] the mechanic, artisan or laborer.”⁴⁸ As an alternative to profiting, symbolic awards such as trophies replaced monetary purses and were given to the top competitors in recognition of their athletic achievements. Finally, the gentlemen’s club as a reformed organization developed an organizational system of management outlined as follows. First, the club had to prohibit profits in order to stay compliant with the Gaming Act of 1845. Second, club membership would be determined by eligibility rules that defined and contributed to the quality of the association. This principle reflected the legal language expressed in both the Unlawful Games Act of 1541 and the Gaming Act of 1845 and became a standard for defining who was regarded as an amateur athletic for track and field organizations and other amateur athletic sports. For example, in 1866 amateur organizations such as the Amateur Rowing Association (ARA), “den[ie]d amateur status to any oarsman ‘who has ever been employed in or about boats or in manual labor for money or wages,’ and ‘who is or has been by trade or employment for wages a mechanic, artisan, or laborer, engaged in any menial duty.’”⁴⁹ In other words, the servant man or working class was not permitted to become an amateur. Amateurism was designed for the benefit of the wealthy. Third, the club required its members to engage in gentlemanly behavior as dictated by the rules of the club. Finally, the club was expected to continue its promotion of leisure time, socialization, and masculinity among the wealthy class.⁵⁰ These basic criteria would serve as a not-for-profit organizational model for club management of

⁴⁸ James Keating, “The Heart of the Problem of Amateur athletics,” *The Journal of General Education*, Vol, 16. No. 4 (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1965), 268.

⁴⁹ Llewellyn and Gleaves, *Rise and Fall*, chap. 1, Kindle edition.

⁵⁰ Milne-Smith, *London Clubland*, 61.

finances, membership, behavior, eligibility, and club activities. By the 1860s, this management system had acquired a name, athletic amateurism.

2.3 Post-1860: Amateurism and the Rise of Amateur Athletic Track and Field Organizations

From the 1860s onward, many gentlemen's clubs followed the trend of expanding special interests such as traveling, science, art, and track and field in the name of amateurism. For the track and field community, the London Athletic Club (LAC) was created in 1863. Founding member John Graham Chambers, a Cambridge graduate and son of wealthy landowner William Chambers, has been credited for forming the first edition of amateur rules for the LAC which were originally based on pedigree.⁵¹ In a nineteenth century publication called *Land and Water* of which he was editor, Chambers revealed that he patterned the infrastructure of the LAC after the Jockey Club while simultaneously integrating nascent principles of amateurism and the Victorian class system.⁵² After founding the LAC, Chambers diverted his attention to establishing amateur regulations for the newly founded Amateur Athletic Club (AAC) in 1866 which specialized in boxing. Track was secondary. This diversion would prove costly to Chambers and revolutionary for amateur athletics. By the 1870s, Chambers's regulations and definition of amateurism began to shift at the hands of LAC Treasurer James Waddell, and Secretary William Waddell from honoring pedigree to permitting athletes without a history of engaging in sport for profit to compete. To the chagrin of Chambers, by broadening the concept

⁵¹ Education and class.

⁵² John Graham Chambers, "Athletic Club," *Land and Water*, February 10, 1866.

of amateurism, the LAC lost much of its exclusivity and became inclusive of an economically diverse demographic including the middle-class, mechanic, artisan, and the laborer.

The LAC market quickly resembled the social structure of its predecessors the AAC, in terms of inclusivity. Though Chambers was strict in his stance that amateurism protected men of wealth, the regulations he crafted for the AAC were “remarkably liberal”⁵³ compared to the LAC’s. The AAC was established as a private gentlemen’s club which originally honored the nascent club tradition of allowing the wealthy and non-wealthy to compete in the same space. However, there were two caveats. One, despite the inclusivity of the non-wealthy at competitions, membership at the AAC would be exclusive to men of wealth including lawyers, high ranking officers of the military, and civil servants. Two, gambling was not permissible. However, the shared space between amateurs and professionals at the AAC and other rising amateur athletic clubs became a controversial topic among proponents of amateurism.⁵⁴ On Saturday, April 24, 1880 at the Randolph Hotel in Oxford, Oxford University athletes Clement Jackson, Bernhard Ringrose, and Sir Montague Shearman founded the Amateur Athletic Association (AAA) as a regulatory body of British track and field. As a benchmark, Chambers patterned the structure of the AAA after the Marylebone Cricket Club to establish the AAA into a national governing body managing amateur club activities and regulating competitive arenas designed exclusively for amateur athletes.⁵⁵

After reviewing competing definitions of amateurism, the AAA resolved that, “when the open races were first thought of, nearly all the competitors were ‘gentlemen amateurs.’ It was

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Wealthy and non-wealthy.

⁵⁵ M.A. Bryant, “Chambers, John Graham,” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 1.

soon found that, hard as it was to define an amateur, it was still harder to define ‘gentleman’ for athletic purposes. The ‘gentleman amateur’ was replaced by the ‘amateur,’ a man who competed for love of the sport, and respected the rules of honour and fair play,”⁵⁶ as influenced by the Gaming Act of 1845. The law became the basis for principles defining eligibility rules for amateur games and amateurism’s stance against training, specialization, and profiting in track and field and sport in the nineteenth century. The law would be used to generate regulation disincentivizing participation in track and field for profit and competitions between wealthy men and men who were, “mechanics, artisans, laborers, or engaged in any menial duty.”⁵⁷

However, the Gaming Act of 1845, this history of gaming among British clubland culture, and its association with amateurism was old news by the 1880s. In his travels to England in the 1880s, Coubertin observed the driving forces that contributed to the popularity of track and field, the amateur athletic club, and the amateur movement in Britain from a contemporary perspective rather than historical.^[58] Among these driving forces were the LAC and AAA’s organizational and financial management of track meets. Accordingly, “‘gate-money’ taken at the meetings [now called track meets] was enough to support a club without paying much attention to subscriptions of members, and when meetings began to spring up throughout the country,”⁵⁹ the amateur track and field organizations and competitions became popular attractions to financiers, spectators, and athletes of varying economic backgrounds. Coubertin reasoned that by studying British athletic club administration, amateurism, the amateur athlete, and the organization, structure, and Britain’s modernization of Hellenistic sports

⁵⁶ Sir Montague Sherman, *Athletics and Football* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1894), chap 8, Kindle edition.

⁵⁷ Llewellyn and Gleaves, *The Rise and Fall*, chap. 1, Kindle edition.

⁵⁸ Access to educational institutions and industrial jobs helped to burgeon the Victorian leisure class. Meanwhile, the creation of the Amateur gave rise to the creation of the professional, a label vilifying the financial deficiencies of the working-class and its need to profit from sports.

⁵⁹ Sherman, *Athletics and Football*, chap. 8, Kindle edition.

such as track and field he could establish a self-sustaining IOC and effectively pursue his vision in reviving the Olympic Games.

Chapter 3: The Financial Imposition of Amateurism for The Olympic Games and the Track and Field Athlete from 1896 to 1916

This chapter explores the introduction of track and field to international markets in 1896 as presented by the Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the IOC, and amateurism. The objective of this chapter is two-fold. First, this chapter discusses how amateurism's British clubland origins factored into Coubertin's plans to revive the Olympic Games. Second, this chapter examines how the revival of the Games catapulted track and field to the international stage and introduced the sport to the world as a not-for-profit sport.

Amateurism was originally invented for the benefit for the Victorian gentleman, not the world. The rules and restrictions amateurism imposed were based on Victorian law applied to Britain and British territories, not the world. Amateurism, as constituted in Britain, did not factor in the culturally, nationally, racially, and economically diverse world Coubertin endeavored to include in his Olympic plan. Nevertheless, in the Athens 1896 Olympic Games, Coubertin attempted to adapt the inherent and historical restrictions of amateurism which proffered that all amateur athletes be gentlemanly, wealthy, and preferably British. As a compromise, Coubertin proposed to simplify and broaden the label of amateur athlete to a context that included all athletes, regardless of wealth, as long as they vowed to uphold a set of rules promoting the ideals of amateurism which included a stance against profiting in sport. Consequently, when the mechanic, artisan, or wage-working laborer stepped onto the track but struggled financially to address the cost of training, competition, and travel, that athlete was viewed by wealthy amateur athletes as unsuitable for amateur competition. The ejection or voluntary withdrawal of the non-wealthy athlete from track and field was viewed by the wealthy amateur athlete as a gain for the amateur world.

Coubertin was baffled as to how to manage the growing diversity of participants in Olympic sports when amateurism was not designed to support diversity. The first Olympiad reportedly, held in Athens, Greece, attracted fourteen nations including the United States, Australia, Austria, Hungary, Sweden, Switzerland, and Britain. By the London Games of 1908, this total nearly doubled with twenty-two nations including Russia, Argentina, and South Africa. However, nine nations sent less than fifty athletes compared to the French team who sent over three hundred. Coubertin grew exceedingly frustrated with the compounded restrictions amateurism imposed on his ability to finance his Olympic vision, attract athletes, and spectators. The Baron conceded that, “there still remains the most important problem – that of amateurism,”⁶⁰ especially when different nations have their own interpretation of the label amateur. To address this problem, Coubertin considered whether if generating a universal definition of amateurism could produce uniformity and remedy the issues negatively affecting the financial requisite of his extravagant vision. On the one hand, “without a uniform standard for all Olympic sports, he believed that amateurism was simply impossible to govern. It was a zero-sum situation.”⁶¹ Coubertin resolved that to generate a universal definition, all sports and sporting markets had to share a commonality undisrupted by their variances. In other words, “either employ an enforceable, universal amateur definition or simply entrust the athletes to regulate themselves.”⁶² However, the IOC president cautioned that, “without a workable definition of amateurism to pair with Olympism, placing the onus on the athlete to rule himself

⁶⁰ Baron Pierre de Coubertin, *The North American Review*, Vol. 170 (Lausanne: International Olympic Committee), 802–811.

⁶¹ Llewellyn and Gleaves, *Rise and Fall*, chap. 2, Kindle edition.

⁶² Ibid.

as an amateur or Professional without the clarity of amateurism would also prove disastrous,”⁶³ to the integrity of the Games and amateur athletics.

The unique needs of soccer and track and field, for example, could not violate the universal definition of amateurism regardless of the high recurring expenses necessitated profits to cover costs, violating amateurism’s anti-profiting philosophy. Compared to other sports, soccer historically had a high concentration of professional athletes who regularly trained and were compensated for their time on the field, naturally violating amateurism’s anti-professionalism philosophy. Meanwhile, the majority of track and field athletes from anglophone nations hailed from private or university amateur athletic clubs and were accustomed to the antiprofitteering paradigm amateurism advocated. The IOC governed the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) and under the USOC Olympic gold medalist and track and field Jim Thorpe publicly experienced the inconsistencies of amateurism which resulted in controversy. A newspaper article publishing Thorpe’s receipt of payment from participation in a semi-professional baseball game in North Carolina, and as a result the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), under James Sullivan, charged Thorpe on grounds of profession. Thorpe was stripped of his amateur status along with his gold medals in the pentathlon and decathlon earned at the Stockholm Olympics in 1912. In the following passage, Llewellyn and Gleaves argued against, what they perceived as an illegal and flagrant misuse of power by Sullivan and the AAU under the guise of amateurism. Llewellyn and Gleaves explained that:

In shooting, yachting, and gymnastics, Thorpe’s financial gain from his sporting exploits would have been tolerated. What is more alarming, the statute of limitations (30 days after the award of his medals) for the claim made against his eligibility had lapsed—the announcement of Thorpe’s professional baseball career occurred in January 1913, almost six months after the conclusion of the Olympic

⁶³ Ibid.

Games. In accordance with General Rule 13, Thorpe's disqualification was completely unwarranted. The IOC, oblivious to its own amateur rules, and indifferent to mounting international public opinion, decided unanimously to revise the results of the pentathlon and decathlon, expunge Thorpe's records, and award the gold medals to Norway's F. R. Bie and Sweden's Hugo Wieslander during its 1913 annual session in Lausanne, Switzerland.⁶⁴

Prior to the Thorpe allegations, debates regarding the legitimacy and inconsistency of amateurism circulated among members of the IOC. In 1910 the IOC held a meeting in Luxembourg whereby British representative Sir Theodore Andrea Cook was present. According to Cook, "a universal definition of all sports is today impossible." He concluded that "at this time it is impossible that all associations agree to a simple formula that would define the status of amateur in a way accepted by all."⁶⁵ As historian James Keating noted, the amateurism question to date remains unsolvable.⁶⁶

3.1 Understanding Olympism for Track and Field

Initially, Coubertin viewed amateurism as, "an important ideological and motivational cog in Coubertin's early Olympic operations. However, Olympism as a renaissance movement for the international sports world and the Olympic Games was not embraced by Coubertin's contemporaries who viewed the Games as, "a ghastly parody of Greek antiquity or trivial and debased festival of athleticism."⁶⁷ In his memoirs, the Baron reflected on his inability to

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Matthew Llewellyn and John Gleaves, "A University Dilemma: The British *Sporting Life* and the Complex, Contested, and Contradictory State of Amateurism," *Journal of Sport History*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2014), 109.

⁶⁶ James Keating highlighted that in the 1950s, IOC President Avery Brundage resolved that, "you can make a rule book ten times as thick as the one we have and not solve the problem." His observation identifies the perpetual state of amateurism in Olympism and the financial impediments amateurism imposed on the Olympic track and field athlete.

James Keating, "The Heart of the Problem of Amateur Athletics," *The Journal of General Education*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1965), 264.

⁶⁷ Llewellyn and Gleaves, *Rise and Fall*, chap. 1, Kindle edition.

persuade the Union of French Athletic Sports Societies (U.F.A.S.A.) to approve his project in 1892. The U.F.A.S.A. was an organization that formed to, “standardize the norms of amateurism in athletic associations in France and abroad, in order to simplify international athletic relations.”⁶⁸ At the time, Coubertin was the General Secretary of the U.F.A.S.A. The Baron recalled that:

Everyone applauded, everyone approved, everyone wished me great success, but no one had really understood. Full of good will—but no understanding—they were unable to comprehend my idea, to interpret this forgotten thing: Olympism, and to separate the soul, the essence, the principle...From the ancient forms that had enveloped it and which, during the last fifteen hundred years, had fallen into oblivion.⁶⁹

Feeling patronized, the Baron reasoned that his contemporaries lacked the imagination to understand why the Olympic Games should be revived and how this revival could reach international audiences. In order to win the favor of his countrymen and affluent proponents of amateurism, Coubertin resolved that he needed to redirect the focus of his presentation from the Olympic Games and onto more pressing matters for the U.F.A.S.A. In 1894, the U.F.A.S.A. led by its president Senator Baron de Courcel, held a meeting at Sorbonne to discuss the possibility of establishing a modern Olympic Games. Coubertin methodically set the meeting agenda to first direct attention to the issue of defining amateur athletics for international markets. This topic was followed by a discussion of eligibility rules, professionalism versus amateurism, symbolic awards and their monetary value, the ramifications of profiting in sport and charging admission, the practicality of establishing a universal definition for all sports and all nations, gambling, and lastly reviving the Olympic Games.^[70] By reserving his discussion of the Olympic Games to the end of his presentation, Coubertin believed he could build his argument in

⁶⁸ Muller, *Pierre de Coubertin 1896-1937*, 38.

⁶⁹ Baron Pierre de Coubertin, *Olympic Memoirs* (Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 1997), 12 – 24.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 12 – 24.

explaining why modern athletics needed to restore the Olympic Games.⁷¹ This strategy allowed Coubertin to outline the concerns of his associates regarding the advancement of sports and form a persuasive argument detailing how the Olympic Games could address these concerns.

In a manuscript written on April 19, 1896, Coubertin expressed that Olympism was not the catalyst that catapulted the Olympic Games as he had hoped, “but it is the logical consequence of the great cosmopolitan tendencies of our times.”⁷² To appeal to his French associates on the U.S.F.S.A., the Baron countered opposition to his argument by emphasizing Britain’s superior innovations to physical education, sport, and exercise in the 1840s onward and ridiculing France’s militaristic inferiority and aversion to modernity through athleticism. Coubertin mocked how the French among other nations believed, “games were supposed to destroy study [or brainwork] ... Regarding the development of the character of the youth, the axiom, that a close connection exists between the force of will and the strength of the body never entered anybody’s mind.”⁷³ The Baron criticized that such beliefs stunted the growth and glory of France after Napoleon and how France and all distressed nations should adopt the mantras of Britain denouncing overwork and advocating that, “the muscles are made to do the work of a moral educationer.”⁷⁴ The need for a revolutionary and reformatory physical education program to revitalize France and other nations became the theme of Coubertin’s pitch to the U.S.F.S.A along with amateurism.

To appeal to the U.S.F.S.A.’s amateur ideals, Coubertin designed his pitch to condemn the so-called evils of profiting in sport. Coubertin explained that, “a mercantile spirit threatened

⁷¹ Ibid., 36.

⁷² SP. P. Lambros and N. G. Polites, “Part II: Letter by Pierre de Coubertin in Athens on April 7/19, 1896,” *Die Olympischen Spiele [The Olympic Games]* (London: H. Grevel and Company, 1896), 1.

⁷³ Ibid., 2.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

to invade sporting circles. Men did not race and fight openly for money...the desire to win was often prompted by one not inspired by mere ambition for honorable distinction. If we did not wish to see athleticism degeneration and die out a second time, it had to be purified and united.”⁷⁵ For the members of the U.F.A.S.A., hearing Coubertin’s lecture about the transformative power of sport in purifying and unifying nations and seeing this power demonstrated in Britain was profound. In his closing argument, Coubertin proposed, “the establishment of a periodical contest, to which all sporting societies of all nationalities would be invited...[for]...hallow of greatness and glory.”⁷⁶ Once his program was approved Coubertin revealed the true intent of his program in a most cunning manner. According to Muller, when the, “final program was drawn up...he disclosed his real goal, by giving an entirely new name to the Congress: ‘International Congress at Paris for the Restoration of the Olympic Games.’”⁷⁷ By the time members learned of Coubertin’s intent, “seventy-eight delegates from thirty-seven athletic unions representing nine countries voted to restore the Olympic Games.”⁷⁸ Once voting was completed, Coubertin co-founded an amateur International Committee for the Olympic Games, better known as the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

Following the establishment of the IOC was Coubertin’s next major challenge, fundraising for the Games. For the IOC, acquiring funding for the quadrennial Olympic Games was analogous to running the 400m hurdles, difficult and inundated with obstacles. When Coubertin formed the IOC, he endeavored to form a committee comprised of affluent and politically influential individuals and amateur athletic organizations capable of arranging

⁷⁵ Ibid., 4.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Muller, *Pierre de Coubertin 1896-1937*, 36.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

financing for the Games. Coubertin allied with Greek businessman and author Demetrius Vikelas and together the duo co-founded the IOC Coubertin and Vikelas recruited Aleksey Boutowski of Russia, Victor Balck of Sweden, Karl August Willibald Gebhardt of Germany, Ferenc Kemény of Hungary, and Jiri Guth Jarkovsky a Czech from the Austrian Empire as their founding committee members.⁷⁹ From Coubertin's perspective, allying with men of wealth and great political influence as well as amateur athletic organizations should have culminated into a successful enterprise. However, Coubertin quickly learned that the virtues of amateurism regarding profiting, affiliating with for-profit enterprises, and soliciting funds would interfere with his ability to finance his efforts to build a track and field stadium and other Olympic facilities, market the Olympic Games, and the fulfill his vision.

When Athens was accepted as an Olympic hosting city in 1894, Greece was on the brink of bankruptcy. The IOC could not rely on Greek taxation since public charity had already been exhausted by the Greek economy.⁸⁰ Borrowing funds from other nations was not an option due to the constraints of amateurism. Greece, Coubertin, and the IOC had to figure out, under the parameters of amateurism, how to raise an estimated 600,000 drachmas to cover expenses. An estimated cost of 200,000drs was devoted to the restoration for the Pan-Athenaic Stadion of the ancient Grecian Olympic Games of 776 B.C for track and field and all its accommodations. The track in the Stadion needed to be form-fitted to honor the dimensions requested by the amateur athletic running communities of Britain, Europe, and the Americas regarding the circumference of each curve to reduce injury and promote speed. Approximately, 400,000drs was projected to rehabilitate and construct facilities for gymnastics, nautical sports, wrestling, fencing, shooting,

⁷⁹ Llewellyn and Gleaves, *The Rise and Fall*, chap. 1, Kindle edition.

⁸⁰ SP. P. Lambros and N. G. Polites, *Die Olympischen Spiele, Second Part [The Olympic Games]* (London: H. Grevel and Company, 1896), 19.

and cycling plus transportation systems, lodging, and hospitality.⁸¹ The Crown Prince of Greece, George, formed a council of twelve that was made up of subcommittees managed by his brothers Nicholas and Constantine. Each subcommittee was responsible for their assigned project – sports, the Stadion, hospitality, facilities, and transportation.⁸²

Though Coubertin acknowledged the hardships of acquiring funds for the Games and slight mismanagement at the gate in his report of the Olympic Games, the Baron expressed admiration for the Greek government and the IOC in putting together the event in under two years. The inaugural event, according to Llewellyn and Gleaves, was a, “small-scale-affair – only 241 athletes from fourteen nations participated in the Greek capital.”⁸³ Bruce L. Mouser explained that the Athens Games, “occurred over a period of nine tightly-packed days...,” and catered to athletes primarily from the United States and Europe, “...with the exception of seventeen athletes from Australia, Chile, [and] Egypt.”⁸⁴ Of the Americans, fourteen were, “either students of Harvard or Princeton or members of Boston’s Athletic Association (BAA).”⁸⁵ Low turnout in athletic participation at the Games can be partially attributed to the amateur athletic associations of Europe and the Americas. Many athletic associations and National Olympic Committees (NOCs) under the philosophies of Amateurism, lacked the, “structural, organizational, and financial capabilities to participate,”⁸⁶ in the Games. In the United States, for example, the American Olympic Committee (AOC) and Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) were the prevailing organizations overseeing US athlete participation in the Olympic Games despite

⁸¹ Ibid., 24.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Llewellyn and Gleaves, *Rise and Fall*, chap. 1, Kindle edition.

⁸⁴ Bruce L. Mouser, *George Coleman Poage – 1880-1962: America’s First African American Olympic Medalist: A Biography* (La Crosse: 2017), Accessed at Harvard’s Hutchins Center, 32.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Llewellyn and Gleaves, *Rise and Fall*, chap. 1, Kindle edition.

having no monetary reserves to subsidize the travels, entry fees, and other expenses for competing U.S. Olympic hopefuls.⁸⁷ Although the United States managed to participate in the Games, the AOC and AAU's fundraising prowess, led by James Sullivan, would remain poor over the next five Olympiads. The U.S. would have to rely on the financial ingenuity of benefactors such as Colonel Robert Means Thompson to salvage the AAU and AOC and support the athletes.⁸⁸ The underperformance and underdevelopment of participating NOC's affected Coubertin's ability to finance and manage the Games according to their original design. Consequently, Coubertin adjusted the structure of the Games by cutting sporting events, days, and several building projects from the program in order to meet costs. To finance the Games and balance the effects of NOC mismanagement, the Baron relied on private investors and grants which accounted for 332,756drs, commemorative stamp sales accrued 400,000drs, and admission approximately 200,000drs.⁸⁹ With great ingenuity by Prince George and Coubertin, the IOC managed to break-even without profiting which fulfilled the principles of amateurism but created a financial disadvantage for the Baron. Coubertin would have to devise new financial strategies and fundraising campaigns to rebuild capital for the IOC and finance upcoming Olympiads from square-one.

The recurring theme of each Olympiad from 1896 to 1916 was lack of financing. The Athens Games were, "stymied by a lack of publicity, haphazard organization, and a low international turnout, [which] illustrated the experimental nature of early Olympics."⁹⁰ Using trial and error, Coubertin and the IOC would use the next four Olympiads to address the

⁸⁷ Lucas, "Setting the Foundation" *Journal of Sport History*, Vol. 29, No. 2, 459.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Lambros and Polites, "Part II: Letter by Pierre de Coubertin," *Die Olympischen Spiele*, 20.

⁹⁰ Llewellyn and Gleaves, *Rise and Fall*, chap. 1, Kindle edition.

financial, marketing, and management issues experienced in the first Olympiad. Amateurism's historical restrictions against profiting and associating with for-profit organizations placed limitations on Olympism and Coubertin's ability to raise funds. The function of amateurism as a not-for-profit model was to break-even, reach a sum of zero on its balance sheet without incurring a profit. Despite these financial parameters, Coubertin attempted to forge a relationship with a for-profit entity, the World's Fair. For the Paris Games of 1900 and St. Louis Games of 1904, Coubertin partnered with the World's Fair to market Olympism and the Olympic Games. The World's Fair was a well-established and world renown event by the Paris Games, attracting vast international audience. Back in 1894, the entrepreneurial-minded Coubertin saw the World's Fair of 1900 as an opportunity to market his Olympic Games, educate audiences on the values of Olympism, and attract athletes and spectators to the Games. However, planning for the second Olympiad in Paris did not begin until 1898. This two-year delay proved costly for Coubertin and the IOC. By 1898, France had already committed funding for the World's Fair of 1900 and struggled to acquire additional funding for the 1900 Olympic Games.

To add to Coubertin's frustration, the addition of a sports attraction featuring amateur and professional athletes at World's Fair set the exhibition in competition with the Olympic Games. To eliminate his competition and gain financing, Coubertin negotiated with the organizers of the World's Fair to convert their sports attraction into a segment called Olympic Competitions. The Olympic Competitions were designed to act as a preview to the Games for potential spectators. As the main attraction, Coubertin chose track and field specifically to represent his concept of Olympism at the World's Fair. According to Muller, "Coubertin and his colleagues on the IOC mounted a publicity campaign to promote participation in these events. He assumed

responsibility for the track and field events.”⁹¹ Coubertin’s decision to ally with a for-profit event like the World’s Fair was heavily criticized by proponents of amateurism in 1900 and again in 1904. In 1905, Charles Lucas reported that, “the attendance, while greater than that at Paris, was far below the daily attendance at Athens, and Baron de Coubertin, has gone on record by saying the games will never again be held in connection with an Exposition.”⁹² Although Coubertin expressed regret for his decision because of low attendance and the backlash he received from proponents of amateurism for allying with the World’s Fair, the Baron recognized commercialism as an otherwise effective financial strategy for funding the Games and as an international conduit for circulating ideas, philosophies, and knowledge packaged as Olympic propaganda to promote Olympism.⁹³

This thesis recognizes that Coubertin was not fully committed to the British virtues of amateurism but held them in order launch sports like track and field on an international scale through his Olympic vision. In his memoirs, Coubertin admitted that amateurism and Olympism was an “unholy union”⁹⁴ that stifled the financial growth of the IOC, Olympism, the track and field athlete, and athletes representing other Olympic sports because of financial prohibitions defined under amateurism. Llewellyn and Gleaves argued that, “for an organization committed to the noncommercial idea of amateurism, the IOC had seemingly sacrificed one of its core principles by forming an ‘unholy union’ (as Coubertin would later describe it) with commerce, trade, and industry – the antithesis of British-style amateurism.”⁹⁵ Fundamentally and ideologically, this historical viewpoint was demonstrated that any engagement with commercial

⁹¹ Muller, *Pierre de Coubertin 1896-1937*, 41.

⁹² Charles J. P Lucas, *The Olympic Games, 1904* (St. Louis: Woodward and Tieran Printing Co., 1905), 17.

⁹³ Baron Pierre de Coubertin, *Une Campagne de Vingt-Et-Un Ans (1887 – 1908)*, (Paris, 1909), 136.145.

⁹⁴ Coubertin, *Olympic Memoirs*, 58-69.

⁹⁵ Llewellyn and Gleaves, *Rise and Fall*, chap. 1, Kindle edition.

enterprises for personal or organizational gain violated the principles of amateurism. The World Games, for example, aspired to showcase professional athletes in addition to Coubertin's Olympic Competitions which greatly opposed amateurism's principles on fraternization with Professionals in sport. Oddly, amateur organizations in, "England, Ireland, and Scotland, the Dansk Idraets Forbund, and the University of Philadelphia,"⁹⁶ supported Coubertin efforts to market the Games using commercial networks. In this moment, "the IOC's high-minded appeals to 'sport for sport's sake suddenly appeared shallow when placed in the backdrop of one of the largest commercial fairs in world history."⁹⁷ The success of this collaborative effort was ignored by many Amateur Athletes and organizers in Britain including, IOC member and vocal Amateur proponent Reverend Robert Stuart de Courcy Laffan [who] insist[ed] that the decision to unite the Olympic Games with a World's Fair 'is not made to enhance the dignity of them.'⁹⁸ Criticism and oppositions within Coubertin's camp regarding promotions, financial support, and the fulfillment of his Olympic vision compelled Coubertin to question the polarity of values juxtaposing Olympism and amateurism. However, for Coubertin and his IOC, the question of amateurism remained unsolvable.

⁹⁶ Baron Pierre de Coubertin, "Le Apprets de la Deuxieme Olympiade," *Une Campagne de Vingt-Et-Un Ans (1887-1908)*, Paris 1909 (Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 1909), 136-145.

⁹⁷ Llewellyn and Gleaves, *Rise and Fall*, chap. 1, Kindle edition.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

Chapter 4: The Effects of Amateurism on the Olympic Track and Field Athlete

For nearly a century, amateurism dominated track and field and deterred athletes from using track as a means to profit or derive an income. This chapter explores the long-term effects of amateurism on the track and field athlete. To Coubertin, the prohibitions against profiting were impractical for working class athletes and complicated the athlete's ability to compete beginning with the Games in 1896. In the United States and Canada, many middle-to-lower-class athletes relied on universities, athletic clubs and organizations to provide funding to compete at the Games. In 1904, the first African American track and field athlete George Coleman Poage was afforded the opportunity to compete at the Games thanks to the Milwaukee Athletic Club rather than his own finances. Poage, a student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, won bronze in the 200m hurdles and 400m hurdles at the 1904 St. Louis Games. African American John Baxter Taylor Jr. was subsidized by the Irish American Athletic Club to compete at the 1908 London Games where he won gold in the medley. Native American Louis Tewanima backed by Coach Glenn Scobey "Pop" Warner at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School won silver in the 10,000m and ninth in the marathon in 1908 before returning home to continue his work in sheep herding. Native American Franklin Pierce Mount Pleasant Jr., also backed by Pop Warner, competed in 1908 finished sixth in the long and tripled jump spent his life coaching and doing odd jobs thereafter. Through the Amateur Athletic Union of Canada, African Canadian athlete John Armstrong Howard competed in 1912 at Stockholm in the 100m, 200, 4x100, and 4x400m. Also competing in the 1912 were Chilean athletes Pablo Eitel in the sprints, Rodolfo Hammersley in the jumps, Federico Mueller and Leopoldo Palma in the 800m, Afonso Sanchez in the 5000m, 10,000m, and marathon, and Rolando Salinas in the 10,000m racewalk. From Asia, Japanese marathoner and world record holder Shizo Kanakuri and 100m,

200m, and 400m athlete Mishima Yahiko were the only athletes Japan could afford to send to the Stockholm Games.

Though Olympic excellence under amateurism necessitated wealth, Olympism from invited the world's top track and field athletes, regardless of their socioeconomic background. Ideally, upper-middle-and-working class athletes would each have the opportunity to compete on an equal playing field in the Olympic Games. As far as Coubertin was concerned, "sport is not a luxury pastime, an activity for the leisured few, nor merely a form of muscular compensation for brainwork."⁹⁹ The Baron envisioned sport to be accessible and pursued by all members of society. Antagonistic to the Baron's utopian vision was amateurism and safeguards men of wealth built into the system of amateurism to reserve sport as leisure. Amateurism required all participants of Olympism, regardless of their economic status, to compete as Amateurs. This impediment generated an unequal playing field and perpetuated the inequalities that existed within each nation represented at the Games. Like the upper-class, Olympic athletes of the working and middle classes were expected to rely on their earnings and capital assets, if any, to address the costs of their sport. Consequently, working-class and many middle-class athletes struggled to meet the financial demands of their sport.

Athletes who suffered financial deficiencies and failed to arrange backing from amateur athletic organizations essentially had two options. Option one, the athlete could attempt to profit in sports to supplement the cost of civilian life and athletics. However, if the athlete was caught profiting from sport, the athlete would be stripped of their amateur status and banned from competing in amateur events for life. For example, Alf Shrubbs, a AAA Champion distance track

⁹⁹ Coubertin, *Olympic Memoirs*, 230 – 236.

and field athlete, was denied his opportunity to represent Britain in 1904 on grounds of Professionalism. In 1904, Shrubbs allegedly accepted payments for running which violated Amateur rules. According to the AAA, based on his personal records (PR), 10 miles in 54:30.4 and 4-miles in 19:56.8, 5000m in 14:51.2, mile in 4:22.0, and 1500m in 4:17.2, Shrubbs would have potentially won seven gold medals for Britain in the 1904, 1908, and 1912 Olympic Games.¹⁰⁰ Decades later, African American Olympian Jesse Owens won four gold for the United States in the 100m, 200m, 4x100m, and Long Jump against Nazi Germany and the world in the 1936 Olympics. Owens accomplished this feat while wearing shoes given to him by a new and rising shoe company, Adidas. After the Games, Owens left Nazi Germany and returned to the Jim Crow south and sought profits from foot races. As a result, the World Record Holder was labeled a Professional and was stripped of his Amateur status by U.S. Olympic officials. In 1972, the International Track Association (ITA) was established to provide Professional arenas for track and field athletes. Athletes who joined the ITA, including 1968 Olympians Lee Evans and Jim Ryun of the U.S., Kip Keino of Kenya. As Professionals, Evans, Ryun, Keino, and other ITA athletes were in violation of Amateur rules and were therefore unable to continue competing as Olympians. Under option two, the non-rich Amateur track athlete could receive under-the-table funds from meet producers. Lastly, the track and field athlete could retire from their sport without fully discovering the breadth of their athletic potential.

¹⁰⁰ Mel Watman, *The Official History of the AAA, 1880 – 2010* (Cheltenham: SportsBooks Limited, 2011), 25.

4.1 The Legacy of Amateurism in Track and Field

As a byproduct of reviving the Olympic Games using Amateurism, Coubertin branded track and field as an emblematic sport of amateurism, subsequently and unintentionally entangling the financial framework of track and field with the ideals of the not-for-profit organizational model amateurism and launching track and field in 1896 on a global scale as a zero-sum sport. In 1913, the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF)¹⁰¹ followed the platform set by the IOC which were founded on Amateur principles regarding profiting. These financial precedents were listed as follows: “competing for money or any other pecuniary [financial] reward in any sport makes the competitor a professional in all sports...[and] in track and field athletic sports one who knowingly competes with, or against, a professional, thereby became a professional...[and] anyone who taught, trained or coached any sport for money was professional.”¹⁰² Despite the demographic shift that occurred during this period, track and field in the United States remained steadfast in its resolve to honor amateurism under the AAU. Turrini explained that, “during the first half of the twentieth century, from the creation of the modern Olympic Games, in 1896 to the 1940s, the AAU sought and maintained near-unilateral and strict control of American track and field and track athletes.”¹⁰³ When the, “IAAF affiliated with the IOC in 1921, [the IAAF became] the most important and powerful [International Federation] within the Olympic movement,”¹⁰⁴ and strengthened the AAU’s stronghold on track and field in the US. Moreover, “the AAU’s IAAF franchise, combined with its dominant position on the American Olympic Committee, provided it with ample international clout to

¹⁰¹ The IAAF is now called the International Association of Athletics Federation or World Athletics.

¹⁰² Eric D. Zemper, “The Evolution of Track and Field Rules During the Last Century,” *USA Track & Field New England*, July 4, 2008, http://usatfne.org/officials/ruleshistory_zemper.pdf.

¹⁰³ Turrini, *The End of Amateurism*, 16.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

increase its control of domestic track that would not have been possible prior to the Olympic movement.”¹⁰⁵ Amateurism, as directed by the AAU under the guise of Olympism, was solidified as an infrastructural base for organized track and field defining athlete eligibility, event structure, the roles of each stakeholder, and most importantly, the financial structure and constraints of the sport. Based on the gentlemanly history of amateurism, track and field in the US had become a rich-man’s sport whereby athletes were historically expected to compete as wealthy mid-nineteenth century British noblemen engaging in the non-productive leisurely activity of Olympic sport. Although a majority of track and field athletes, especially in the United States, did not belong to the wealthy upper-class, Amateurism preserved track and field as non-revenue sport. Track and field was branded as a zero-sum sport.¹⁰⁶

In the 1970s, track and field’s legacy as a zero-sum sport and the monopolistic presence of amateurism among U.S. track and field governance was brought into question by U.S. Congressman and former 1936 Olympian Ralph Metcalfe. Metcalfe’s concerns have been transcribed in a transcript for hearings of the Sports Act of 1978. These hearings were held to address the financial barriers track and field and other Olympic athletes faced under amateurism since 1896 Olympic Games. Metcalfe, who competed on the US Olympic Team with Jesse Owens in Berlin, spoke in defense of the amateur athlete and cited that, “our athletes have been frustrated for decades...frustration as to who he can turn to for financial assistance other than family, close friends, or the occasional benefactor; frustration as to where he might track and receive quality instruction.”¹⁰⁷ With the exception of the short-lived International Track

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 18.

¹⁰⁶ An Amateur sport- a sport that does not seek profits.

¹⁰⁷ House, Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Administrative Law and Governmental Relations, *Amateur Sports Act of 1978: Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Administrative Law and Governmental Relations of the Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, 95th Congress, 1st sess., 1978, 2.* <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/purl.32754075290001>, (accessed May 16, 2019).

Association (ITA) which began in 1972 and ended in 1976, track and field after did not have an organized professional alternative to amateur athletics until after the Amateur Sports Act of 1978.¹⁰⁸ Track and field athletes within the U.S. were subjected to the will of the AAU and USOC from 1896 to 1978. Internationally, track and field organizations are controlled by the IOC and the IAAF and have been since their inception. Though these organizations were uniform in their stance to uphold the values of amateurism, their position on amateurism was varied much like their predecessors the LAC and AAC. Metcalfe characterized the governance of these amateur organizations as fickle, fluctuating, and arbitrary due to their, “lack of definitive policy and direction, a lack of common purpose, and the lack of a strong, central coordinating body sports programs.” In other words, the lack of consistency and uniformity in infrastructure, “prevented our athletes from reaching their utmost potential.”¹⁰⁹ Metcalfe’s observations in the 1930s through 1970s echoed the sentiments of 1912 British track and field Olympian Arnold Strode Jackson who pleaded to the BOC in 1913 the pursuit of the Olympic ideal required athletic excellence and athletic excellence required financing. As Steve Prefontaine expressed in 1972, to be excellent, the athlete must be permitted to engage in free market opportunities to finance training, coaching, and a lifestyle of athleticism. The financial barriers Amateurism placed on the track and field athlete suppressed the athlete’s ability to engage in the free market and sustain their participation in the sport.

The Honorable Robert H. Michel echoed Metcalfe’s sentiments at the Hearings regarding amateurism and training. Michel agreed that amateurism placed financial barriers on Olympic

¹⁰⁸ Turrini, *The End of Amateurism*, 166.

¹⁰⁹ House Committee, *Amateur Sports Act of 1978*.

athletes that affected their ability to train, develop, specialize, travel, and compete. Michel explained that:

Our speed skaters who did so well at the 1976 Olympic Games in Innsbruck had to each pay \$2,000 of their own money in order to go to Europe to train...Emerging gymnasts who have the potential to become elite must pay \$5-\$6,000 of their own money (or their parents must pay it) in order to obtain the proper coaching, competition, and development. It cost a world-class figure skater like Dorothy Hamil up to \$19,000 per year to prepare for her Innsbruck performance. Post collegiate athletes like 1976 Olympic long jump champion Arnie Robinson could not train unless his wife supported him. Some world-class athletes have even been on food stamps because they could not hold down a job and train...How many potential athletes are turned away from competition due to financial barriers?"¹¹⁰

When the AAU, IOC, USOC, IAAF, and NOCs adopted Amateurism, these organizations assumed the history and legacy of amateurism. The financial barriers experienced by track and field amateur athletes in the twentieth century like Arnie Robinson reflect the types of barriers and paradigms developed in the nineteenth century regarding profiting in sport among British gentlemen. The financial prohibitions developed within gentlemen amateur athletic clubs were designed to protect the wealth of British noblemen, ensure their compliance with the Gaming Act of 1845, and cease fraternization with the mechanic, artisan, and other laborers who relied on sports for profit. In 1896, these amateur principles were challenged but most of the 241 athletes who competed in the Games came from wealth. By the twentieth Olympiad 7,134 athletes, fifteen percent of which were female, competed representing 121 nations of varying economic levels. In the sport of Athletics, 1,324 athletes competed from 104 nations. Majority of the athletes competing at the 1972 Munich Games did not come from wealth and represented the middle-and-working classes.¹¹¹ As Michel aptly stated, the financial barriers amateurism

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 6.

¹¹¹ International Olympic Committee, *Die Spiele: The Official Report of the Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXth Olympiad Munich 1972* (Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 1972).

imposed on the track and field athlete required reassessment in the inclusive world of the Olympic Games.

In response to the presence of amateurism's financial prohibitions, many athletes violated amateur rules by receiving under-the-table funds from meet producers as unaccounted income. Others joined the newly formed ITA in 1972, the first professional international governing body in track and field. The ITA unfortunately, could not compete with the strength of the AAU, IOC, and IAAF, and disbanded in 1976. All athletes who competed for the ITA were labeled as professionals and lost their amateur status. Athletes who wished to continue competing were forced to appeal to the AAU for reinstatement.¹¹²

The enactment of the Amateur Sports Act of 1978, challenged and relinquished the AAU's control of track and field in the U.S., and affected change on the international track and field landscape. From this Act, The Athletic Congress (TAC) was created to provide track and field athletes an alternative to amateur track whereby the athlete could profit. However, TAC, being a derivative of the AAU, would continue much of the culture, philosophies, and precedents of Amateur athletics regarding profiting. Amateurism's and its longstanding history would serve as the benchmark for structuring a track and field governing body, managing the sport, and addressing profiting in the professional era. Consequently, TAC continued the amateur tradition of creating financial barriers for track and field athletes using the TAC Trust System.¹¹³ The TAC Trust System was a trust fund empowering TAC to set the terms and conditions on how track and field athletes would be paid. Prize monies, sponsorships, and other earnings were held and allocated through the TAC Trust. In 1992, TAC became USA Track and Field (USATF).

¹¹² Turrini, *The End of Amateurism*, 94.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 166.

Through USATF, the amateur paradigm still prevails limiting the athlete's ability to profit under Rule 40, a condition which placed limitations on sponsorship.¹¹⁴

4.2 Coubertin's Thoughts on Amateurism

The Baron's regard and use of Amateurism in Olympism has confounded historians who consequently regard Coubertin as being, "a man of paradoxical extremes."¹¹⁵ On the one hand, Coubertin expressed that amateurism was, "noble and chivalrous...[and]...warned against the 'spirit of gain and professionalism that threatened its existence."¹¹⁶ Alternatively, Coubertin expressed grave distaste for amateurism citing that the system was, "an admirable mummy that could be presented at the museum of Boulaq as a specimen of the modern art of embalming!"¹¹⁷ These statements lose their paradoxical nature, however, when juxtaposed with the Baron's endeavor to revive the Olympic Games and popularize sports like track and field. In his memoirs, the Baron wrote with transparency that, "today I can admit it; the [amateur] question never really bothered me. It had served as a screen to convene the Congress designed to revive the Olympic Games. Realizing the importance attached to it in sporting circles, I always showed the necessary enthusiasm, but it was enthusiasm without real conviction."¹¹⁸ From Coubertin's view, his characterization of amateurism as "noble and chivalrous" was propagandic and heightened the marketability of Olympism in track and field circles that advocated their love for

¹¹⁴ Rule 40: "Except as permitted by the IOC Executive Board, no competitor, team official or other team personnel who participates in the Olympic Games may allow his person, name, picture or sports performances to be used for advertising purposes during the Olympic Games."

International Olympic Committee, *Olympic Charter, 2015* (Lausanne: International Olympic Committee, 2015).

¹¹⁵ Llewellyn and Gleaves, *Rise and Fall*, chap. 1, Kindle edition.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Coubertin, *Olympic Memoirs*, 12 – 24.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 114 – 121.

amateurism. Coubertin's objective to advocate and integrate Amateurism into Olympism can then be classified as Machiavellian in nature as, "amateurism functioned as an important ideological and motivational cog in Coubertin's early Olympic operations. It inspired the revival of the games, [and most importantly] consolidated the movement's influential support base and lured high-ranking dignitaries and officials to serve on the IOC."¹¹⁹ Coubertin's Machiavellian approach to amateurism essentially reduced amateurism to a tool, an infrastructural model used to propel Olympism and govern sport. However, blinded by the novelty of amateurism, Coubertin focused on the benefits of synergizing the system with his Olympic vision without equal consideration for the historical risks associated with amateurism regarding financial gain, fraternization with professional markets,¹²⁰ specialization, and work as experienced by clubland culture. Subsequently, amateurism's historical paradigm and structure continues to dictate the financial viability of track and field today.

¹¹⁹ Llewellyn and Gleaves, *Rise and Fall*, chap. 1, Kindle edition.

¹²⁰ Artisans, mechanics, laborers, and wageworkers.

Conclusion

“The tendency of sport historians to subsume track and field history with Olympic history conceals part of the story,”¹²¹ as does the historian’s tendency to exclude the amateurism athletic club from gentlemen’s club history. As a result, the effects of amateurism on track and field to this day is not fully understood. Athletic amateurism was originally created in the 1860s by the British gentleman for the benefit of the British gentleman who endeavored to enjoy sports like track and field without violating the British Gaming Act of 1845. This basic premise was what the British gentleman referred to as purity of sport. In 1894, the Frenchman the Baron Pierre de Coubertin and the IOC attempted to modify and broaden the concept of amateurism to serve the bureaucratic and financial needs of Olympism and track and field, but the historical integrity of amateurism which defined the inherent function, purpose, and who benefited remained unadulterated. Subsequently, in 1896 Coubertin’s amateur Olympic Games were called into question by Olympic Committees and track and field athletes worldwide regarding amateurism compatibility with athletes of varying economic levels. As evidenced by British clubland history, athletic amateurism was not originally designed for the benefit of all competitors, just the wealthy. Athletic amateurism specifically protected the assets and financial well-being of the wealthy competitor by setting parameters restricting behavior and profiting. Using prohibitive financial barriers and rules of eligibility, amateurism sought to distinguish the gentleman from the artisan, the rich from the poor. If the track and field athlete was financially unfit to compete, the amateur world determined him unsuitable for amateur competition. The amateur paradigm permeated the track and field world as all major track and field governing bodies including the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the International Amateur Athletic

¹²¹ Turrini, *The End of Amateurism*, 3.

Federation (IAAF), Amateur Athletic Association (AAA), American Olympic Committee (AOC), and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).

Since 1896, Olympism has sounded the clarion for nations to present their best track and field athletes regardless of their financial status, but amateurism limited those who might have answers. Coubertin understood that, “unless the young [track and field] athlete is independently wealthy, he will come to see that if he is going to dedicate himself fully to a given activity, then it will be necessary for him to earn his living in the process.”¹²² In 1913, Coubertin advocated against the IOC on behalf of non-rich athletes like Thorpe to fulfill Olympism. Fundamentally and philosophically, Olympism and amateurism stood as two opposing forces playing a socioeconomic game of tug-of-war over the track and field athlete’s eligibility and financial suitability for competitions. Nations like the United States disregarded the socioeconomic condition of their track and field athletes and responded to Olympism by presenting their most athletic rather than their wealthiest to the world’s stage but prohibited the athlete from, “compet[ing] in any sport for money, coached for money, or attempted to use his reputation as an athlete to benefit monetarily, like writing articles about his sporting exploits or allowing his image to be used in advertisements, [otherwise] the AAU banned him for life from all [amateur sanctioned] competitions.”¹²³ Thorpe responded to Olympism by competing at Stockholm and winning gold in the pentathlon and decathlon. However, by violating the rules of amateurism regarding profiting, Thorpe was banned from Olympic competition. Because amateurism prevailed in all major national and international track and field competition, Thorpe’s ban

¹²² Keating, “The Heart of the Problem,” *The Journal of General Education*, Vol, 16. No. 4, 267.

¹²³ Turrini, *The End of Amateurism*, 15.

extended to all amateur sanctioned competitions including those produced by amateur organizations the IAAF, AAU, NCAA, and NOC's.¹²⁴

In 1992, five-time Olympic track and field athlete Carl Lewis voiced, "amateurism is the strongest form of discrimination in [track and field]. Because it discriminates against the underprivileged, it discriminates against the poor. If we want sports to go back to the wealthy, let's make it amateur again."¹²⁵ On October 29th, 2019, the NCAA announced that starting in 2023, NCAA athletes would be permitted to profit on the condition that the NCAA's current revenue streams remain unaffected. The NCAA's assertion of establishing financial barriers to protect their own financial assets demonstrates the historical stronghold amateurism has on the financial stature of sports like track and field.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 15.

¹²⁵ Trip Gabriel, "The Runner Stumbles," *New York Times*, July 19, 1992.

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FINAL THOUGHTS BY COUBERTIN

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"Measure yourself against your own performance, trying to gain an inch or a second more every day. Make progress step by step. Pay attention to the recommendations of science and forget 'what your neighbor is up to.' This is excellent advice, but I do not think that it can be applied over long periods of time except by professionals, given the degree of daily resolve and tenacity that it requires. For non-professionals, 'what the neighbors are up to' is, in fact, a powerful stimulus. I cannot see how amateurs could do without it. However, one should be familiar with those eloquent achievements, the 'world records' held by great champions. But I would also like to see what I would call average records, results that a man of average strength and training can achieve, printed in a small paperback format right next to the statistics records of the great champions."