Ideology, Elitism, Gender and the Evolution of Sports Management in Colonial Kenya, 1923 – 1963

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Abstract

Marginalization of women in sports management in Kenya has a long history. However, the existing literature on the subject overlooks the interplay of ideology and elitism in gendering inequality in sports management in colonial Kenya. This article delves into the evolution of sports during the colonial period to understand the impact of the interplay between ideology and elitism on gendering sports management. It examines data preserved in official records, newspapers/magazines and views and recollections of knowledgeable informants. The article established that ideology and elitism combined with evolving social and political meaning of sports to advantage the colonial political class in top decision-making levels of sports management. At independence the white political class in sports management was replaced by an African one, community development officers and, sportspersons transitioning to sports administration. These developments gave Kenyan men long head-starts in the management of sports as the country transitioned to independence.

Keywords: Elitism, Ideology and Gender

INTRODUCTION

Women are marginalized at the top decision-making levels of sports management in Kenya. Although the existing body of knowledge traces the roots of the marginalization to the colonial period, it overlooks ideology and elitism in structuring gender inequality in sports management. The ideologies of amateurism and Olympism informed sports management in the period between the formation of the first organization to manage sports among Africans and Arabs, the Arab and African Athletics Association (AAAA) in 1923 and Kenya's attainment of full independence in 1964. As an ideology, amateurism propagated a philosophy of sports that rejected payment, espoused fair play, and developed values such as courage, strong will, and respect for authority (Collins, 2013). Olympism, on the other hand, combines qualities of the body, will, and mind by blending sport with culture and education (International Olympic Committee, 2020). The colonial period witnessed the propagation of ideals that cemented elitism in sports management. This elitism was anchored on the two ideologies, race, class and gender. The interplay of elitism with political and social meanings of sports resulted in the formation of male-dominated sports organizations. This article examines how elitism was established and intertwined with the meanings of sports to privilege males in sports management. It also examines how ambivalence in the elitism of sports created room for other social groups such as Africans and women.

There is limited historiography of women and sports in Kenya for the period under study. The limitation extends to the contemporary times during which "the percentage of coverage of women in histories and contemporary analysis of sport in Africa is less than it was before the World Cup [2010] circus [sic] arrived." (Nauright, 2014). A few

sports histories do, however, generally locate the beginning of marginalization of women in sports in the colonial period. In an analysis of the meeting of African cultures with those of the West and the Muslim worlds, Ali Mazrui argued that the combination of militarised African movement cultures and the Victorian ideas of gender and sports complicated women's involvement (Mazrui, 1986).

Writing on women and sports in Africa, John Nauright (2014, 567) noted that there are very few academic historians of sport and quality papers published on African women in sports. He attributed this to hierarchies of significance among historical topics promoted by leading historians in the continent. On women's participation, Nauright argued that the boundary of who plays what game rests on relations of power. Using the case of colonial South Africa, the author asserted that the colour bar was as important in women's sports as it was in men's. He cited a host of reasons that limited black South African women participation: discrimination based on race and sex; colonial migrant labour system in which more men than women moved to urban centers while domestic roles for women were increased; and, the fact that the majority of South Africa's population after independence live in rural areas where traditional laws and customs form the foundation of day-to-day life (Nauright, 2014).

In the only book detailing the historical development of athletics in Kenya, John Bale and Joe Sang missed the opportunity to investigate the relationship between gender and sports management during the colonial period. Although the authors dwelt on the management of athletics in colonial times, they failed to include accounts of female athletes or engage with wider issues of gender and sports management beyond the superficial conclusion that women were not significantly engaged in sports (Bale & Sang, 2013). And in a study on methodological opportunities in the writing of Kenyan sports history, Michele Sikes concluded that economic and cultural factors and institutional barriers abroad disadvantaged female career progression in sports. Sikes argued that the privileging of males in athletics scholarship in American universities from the 1970s had a major impact on the gendered professionalization of athletics in Kenya (Sikes, 2016).

In a nutshell, the existing scholarly works recognize the cultural construction of sport as a male domain in the colonial period. But they do not investigate how the coming together of ideology, political and social uses of sports resulted in privileging of white-male political elites in management. They also do not investigate how ambivalence in the construction processes and the political, social, and economic realities of the time made African agency integral to sports development at the grassroots. This article seeks to fill these gaps. Most importantly, the article seeks to understand how the interplay of amateurism and Olympism with political and social meanings of sports alienated women from the management of sports and participation and how this alienation was contested. The article focuses on the Inter-war and Post-World-War II periods.

Management of Sports Before 1923

In this period, Mission schools provided the institutional framework for the Africans to learn and compete in European forms of sports, particularly athletics and football. Numerous missionary groups were inspired by the prolific writings of pioneers like David Livingstone, the easing of transportation following the completion of the Uganda Railway, and advances in medical science which facilitated the mitigation of tropical diseases (Adu Boahen, 1985). By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, numerous mission societies had operational stations across Kenya. Offering Western education to Africans was a key goal of the missionary societies in colonial

Kenya. While as early as 1906 the colonial government pondered over the provision of education to European children, it left the education of Africans almost entirely in the hands of the missionaries (Anon, 1906).

Although missionary societies acted independently of each other, there were efforts to create alliances as far as interventions on African customs were concerned. Numerous conferences organized in the first three decades of the twentieth century grouped African traditions and customs into three categories: those that needed to be deprecated, those that needed improvement and the harmless ones (Mungean, 1978). After the creation of a Department of Education in the early 1920s, the authorities tapped into the network among the missionaries to emphasize on the centrality of sports in disciplining Africans. The Director of Education warned of the dangers posed to the Empire by offering an entirely literary education to the Africans. The director urged missionary groups investing in educating Africans to adopt a system of education that integrated games, sports, and daily drills that insisted on general smartness and immediate obedience to instructions (Mungean, 1978).

By encouraging a school disciplinary regime based on sports and physical training, the Director invoked the tenets of muscular Christianity. Muscular Christianity was an ideology that encouraged sports programs for schoolboys. It was first employed in England before spreading to the rest of Britain and the Western world. The ideology grew as a reaction against the perceived feminization of the church. Its proponents blamed the "feminization" for inhibiting the church's capacity to respond to the needs of the State, especially during times of war. The sports and physical programs prescribed for the schoolboys were meant to cultivate manly values in preparation for public service later in life (Watson, Weir & Friend, 2005). Consequently, school sports programs became the microcosm for male dominance in sports in the British Empire. As part of the Empire, Kenya was not left out. Sports became a crucial part of the schoolboys' routine. The popularity of sports and physical training in the 1920s was such that schools like Maseno in Nyanza Province provided three football fields-which fields to meet the demand. The boys were also reported to have loved drills to the extent that many rose to the levels of sergeants of the Boys Brigade in no time (Britton, 1923).

Formation of the Arab and African Athletics Association (AAAA)

Before the 1920s, participation in athletics and football by Africans largely took place within the mission circles. However, during World War I, football matches involving British regiments deployed to fight the Germans in East Africa stimulated interest in football among African adults living in Nairobi and Mombasa. The uptake of football was also buoyed by teams visiting from other colonies such as the old boys of King's College Budo, Uganda. The uptake precipitated the formation of the first sports organization to manage sports among Africans and Arabs, the Arab and African AAAA in 1923. The need to officiate and enforce the rules of the game was integral to this initial coordination of sports development in colonial Kenya (Kindy, 1972).

Football matches among Africans particularly in Nairobi attracted spectatorship from the senior colonial officials. One such official, A. E Imbert, the Chief Registrar of the Native Affairs Department, took the initiative in 1922 to establish a control body to organize football among the Africans and Arabs. Imbert shared his thoughts with the African leaders in Nairobi and a few like-minded Europeans. In a matter of weeks, Imbert succeeded to have most African teams in Nairobi, Mombasa, Nakuru, and Kisumu affiliate to the nascent organization, the Arab and African Football Association

(AAFA). With his small team of Europeans, Imbert then set out to secure trophies for different levels of competition (Anon, 1906).

From the football organization, grew an athletics wing that organized the annual track and field competitions in Nairobi. This completed the formation of the AAAA in 1923. The objects of the AAAA were set as: to foster, encourage and control all Arab and African sports organizations and athletic meetings and to arrange competitions between colonies, territories or other countries. In this, F. G. Hamilton became the chairman, with Dr John Arthur of the Church of Scotland Mission (CSM), Canon Burns of the Church Mission Society (CMS), and others serving as committee members (KNA/CE1/30/1).

After establishing the national organ, the association focused on encouraging the growth of provincial associations. The AAAA provincial branches were structured like the national organ. In the inter-war period, the model of sports management in the colony was based on administrative units: districts affiliating to provincial associations and provinces to the AAAA (Kindy, 1972). All officers administering provinces, by the virtue of their office, became ex-officio members and chairmen of the provincial committees. And to ease management of the two sports, the AAAA formed football and athletic councils, each with executive powers. The two councils were organized competitions between districts, provinces, and between Kenya and other countries (AASA Secretariat, 1936).

With the colony-wide administrative structures in place, the AAAA embarked on campaigns to popularise the football and athletics (track and field) events in the colony. Achieving this goal called for regular competitions. Track and field competitions – then referred to as Olympic sports or simply sports to mark them out from football – began with competitions between locations, divisions, and districts. The competitions culminated in inter-provincial competitions. There were numerous football awards, the most outstanding ones being the Remington Cup, an inter-district knockout, and the Gossage Cup, an inter-territorial competition initially played between Kenya and Uganda. Tanganyika joined after Britain took over its administration after World War I. Other competitions included Dr Arthur Cup, Maxwell Cup and Watkinson Cup.

The popularisation project was marked by ambivalence in efforts to cultivate amateurism. European sports as introduced to Kenya were imbued with moral values. The entwined ideologies of Muscular Christianity and amateurism provided the foundation for thinking about athletics and football at the time. The two ideologies were held together by a strong moral conviction as summed up in the following excerpt:

> *As an ideology, amateurism sought to provide a complete philosophy of sport. Alongside a rejection of payments and an espousal of fair play, it also offered a definition of maleness that was squarely based on Muscular Christian ideals. A gentleman amateur … was physically courageous, strong-willed, prepared to give and take orders, and, above all, not feminine. True sport could only be a masculine kingdom (Collins, 2013).*

African players were expected to consume the tenets of these ideologies with little reflection. But, was this the case?

Throughout the colonial period, football players questioned two tenets of amateurism: non-remuneration and the presumed infallibility of those in authority. By the 1930s, football competitions, unlike athletics, drew significant gate collections and sponsorship. Perhaps, this in part informed players' demand for allowance during

training and competitions. North Kavirondo, the most dominant district in football in the inter-war period, rejected the meager allowance offered while training for the provincial competitions. Correspondence between DCs in Nyanza Province demonstrates growing advocacy against non-remuneration among footballers in the province. In the 1933/34 season, for instance, the players pushed the authorities to increase their allowance four-folds. They boycotted the competitions when the increase was reversed in the 1934/35 season. Registering his inability to control the competitors, the DC North Kavirondo wrote:

> *I am sorry to say that apart from one or two isolated entries from the Government African School, North Kavirondo will be unrepresented in these sports. The selected competitors have demanded Shs. 2 posho [sic] night whilst training in Kakamega and I refuse to follow last year's example of giving away to them (DC North Kavirondo to DC Central Kavirondo, 1936).*

African footballers also took issue with the insistence on the unquestionability of referees' decisions as the mark of a true amateur. Footballers and spectators were known to challenge, sometimes violently, referees' decisions. In 1936, with the increasing prevalence of the cases, the Association decided to arrange refereeing courses. The AAAA officials blamed the quality of refereeing, especially by Africans, for the growing cases of protest (Native Association, 1937). When read in the colonial context, the footballers' walkouts and rebellions give clues of sports as grounds for challenging racially defined power relations. It seems football allowed the stifling of power relations between players and decision-makers in sports.

Elitism in AAAA Patronage and Membership

The AAAA constitution established a hierarchy of leadership positions and their eligibility. At the top was the General Council comprising of: the President; Vice President; the Honourable General Secretary; all Provincial Commissioners; and one nominee from each province. The 'provinces' were: Nairobi Municipal Council, Education Department, King's African Rifles, Kenya and Uganda Railway and Harbours, Church of Scotland Mission, Church Mission Society, Roman Catholic, Kenya Police, Nairobi Chamber of Commerce, Nairobi District Council, and The Salvation Army. In the Association's constitution, provinces denoted the administrative subdivision of the colony. The term "provinces" denoted entities such as government departments, missionary societies, and professional bodies, that were affiliated to the Association and were operating autonomously from the control of provincial bodies (Arab and African Athletic Association, 1936).

The General Council had the powers to invite a person, preferably the colony Governor, to patronise the Association. By the virtue of office, the Chief Native Commissioner became the President and was assisted by an elected Vice President. Below the patronage, presidency, and the executive, the constitution established four categories of membership. First, there was the Full Membership that comprised of persons elected by the General Council. Such persons were entitled to vote during meetings and were eligible for election as members of the football and athletic councils, committees, and sub-committees. In turn, such members paid an annual subscription of ten shillings. Second, there was the Corporate Membership for professional bodies, government departments, security organs and corporate firms. Such institutions were expected to make a minimum of ten shillings annual subscriptions. Corporate members were entitled to whole season access to competitions organized by the Association during the financial year. Thirdly, there was the Ground Membership for persons who bought seasonal tickets. The cost of the ticket depended

on one's race: ten shillings for Europeans, five shillings for Indians, and two shillings and fifty cents for Africans and Arabs. The Council reserved powers to deny Ground Membership to any person without explanation (Kindy, 1972).

Lastly, was the Life Membership for persons who donated a sum of sixty-three shillings or more to the Association every year. Such persons were entitled to vote during general meetings and were eligible for election to council, committee, or sub-committee (Arab and African Athletic Association, 1936). Precisely because life members had the right of the vote, controversy surrounded the admission of Africans who could afford the subscription. Even after the 1936 constitution review which renamed the AAAA to the Arab and African Sports Association (AASA), Africans continued to be systemically sidelined. During the 1936 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Athletic Council, for instance, a question arose on whether members of Local Native Councils (LNCs), one of the biggest benefactors of athletics in the Colony, could be granted membership badges. The AASA Secretary reported:

> *The question of Ground Members' Badge was discussed and it was suggested that the existing badges should be utilised for native Life Members and members of LNCs … This subject was referred to the General Council but, as no Native Life Membership is provided for in the Constitution, I have held the matter up for discussion in the next AGM (Native Association, 1936).*

Ambivalence on the Role of AAAA

Controversy emerged surrounding the creation of the position of African stewardship in football management in the early 1930s. The conflict illustrates the ambivalence on the role of Africans in sports management in the inter-war period. The stewardship was established to link the AASA policymaking with the Africans in Nairobi. As such, African stewards were to be allowed to attend Football Council meetings, give an opinion, and disseminate the proceedings of the meetings to other Africans. However, Europeans grew uneasy with the stewards' presence and decided to discontinue their attendance. A veteran journalist summed the silencing of Africans in different aspects of sports as follows:

> *Africans were to be seen and not heard. They were to be told what to do and carry out what they were told without question. The people in the field were the European referees. It took decades and agitation before the colonizers put it in their minds that one could carry an African identity in sports (Informant 1).*

In 1936 a decision was made to "abolish the necessity for the stewards to attend Council meetings as it was doubtful to what extent the proceedings were understood or broadcast by them." (Native Association; 1936). In place of the practice, the Municipal Native Affairs Officer was task with holding monthly meetings with teams' representatives during which he would explain the minutes and obtain their views. While it is doubtful that African stewards impacted decision-making during meetings when racism is considered, it is hard to envision how team representatives impacted decisions *post factum*. Ironically, the stewards were reported to have applauded the decision (Kindy, 1972). But was the uncertainty surrounding the perceived stewards' inability to follow proceedings the only probable explanation for the decision to discontinue their attendance?

European executive members found the presence of Africans in the meetings unsettling. Post-structuralism teaches us that power does not settle comfortably in the hands of the dominant. It argues that there are moments of inversion of power akin to how the host who, "while at the same time being in a position of power … is also in a position of subjection [by the visitor's] inspection." (Sayegh & Altice, 2014). This

article contends that the inversion of power might have precipitated the decision to abolish African stewardship more than the perceived inability to follow and broadcast. It further argues that abolishing the African stewardship was the Europeans' way of resolving the tension between their sense of entitlement and the stewards' inspection of decision-making processes.

Even the advent of Olympism did not shake the elitist hold of sports management in Kenya. As the Olympic movement began to make ingress in Kenya, sports were lauded globally for their role in breaking down racial prejudice. They were believed to "give recognition to the qualities of the man himself irrespective of his color or creed." (Editor East African Standard, 1928). But this value of sports ran countersense to racial relations in colonial Kenya. The fact that sports have the capacity "to elevate participants to heroic status" (Informant 2) meant that African agency in sports was a threat to the notion of European supremacy. Consequently, Europeans policed the place of the Africans in different aspects of sports.

Although elitism and patronage in AASA alienated Africans from top decision-making levels, they were the drivers of athletics and football development at the grassroots. Their innovations and initiative shaped the development of the two sports at the locational level. In 1936, for instance, the Luo Union organized the first major play-off between senior and junior teams in the colony. Up to the time, the AASA had overlooked the junior competitions in its plans. And instead of supporting the Luo Union's initiative by way of material and human resources, it issued a caveat on any eventuality. Undeterred, the Union went on to organize successful competitions then and in subsequent years (Native Association, 1936). This article suggests that the establishment of junior competitions laid the pipeline for athletic and footballing talent that Kenya boasts of today. There is a consensus among Kenyan coaches that achieving a higher training age (number of years one has trained a particular sport) at an early biological age largely accounts for individual differences in performance *(*Informant 3). Regions and communities that reached the training age critical threshold earlier and maintained the advantage over years continue to have a higher output of top performers in the respective sports.

The LNCs were other major drivers of sports development at the grassroots. They funded sports at the locational level. The councils were initiated in 1924 following the enactment of the Native Authority Ordinance. The councils were based on the ideas of the local government system. In such systems, the state allows the establishment of units with powers and authority to make decisions on matters that affect local communities and to mobilize local resources for the implementation of decisions made. LNCs' mandate included tax collection and the provision of services such as water, markets, and education (Mboga, 2009). The local government units were expected to be crucial in financing the development of athletics and football in colonial Kenya.

Colonial chiefs, by the virtue of heading the LNCs also became important drivers of sports at the locational level. The chiefs' character and passion for sports became defining factors. From the prominent Chief Kinyanjui, whom CSM missionaries praised for gracing competitions at the missions in the first and second decades of the twentieth century, to Chief Ongwae, who popularised athletics among the Abagusii in the 1930s, African chiefs were a major catalyst in the uptake of athletics and football in their jurisdictions, so much so that a retired Public Relations Officer of Athletics Kenya (AK) observed a drop in performance and interest whenever less enthusiastic chiefs took office.

Internationalisation of Sports and Formation of the Olympic Association

The entry of Kenya into the international sporting scene added layers of meaning that impacted on the gendering of sports management. Although making its debut in Olympic Games in 1956 was a major watershed towards the internationalization journey, precursors dated to the inter-war period. The precursors included hosting visiting teams such as the King's College, Budo football team from Uganda in the early 1920s; the Gossage Cup in which the three colonies of East Africa competed as early as the 1920s; and matches between combined teams of the British Army, Navy and Air force against the Italian prisoners of war and combined Army during the World war II. Kenya also took part in international competitions such as the Indian Ocean Competitions held in Madagascar in 1952 and the British Commonwealth and Empire Games in 1954 (Arab and African Athletic Association: Arab and African Sports Association Constitution", 1951).

The Kenya Olympic Association was inaugurated on February 14, 1956 under the Presidency of the then Governor, Sir Evelyn Baring and Alderman R. S. Alexander as the Chairman. The incipient Association was modeled on the British Olympic Association whose constitution it adopted with minor changes.[1] The Association's objectives were outlined as: encouraging the development of the Olympic spirit among the youth of the Colony; promoting a programme of education on the philosophy of amateurism; to not just concentrate on performance but to also develop the social, educational, ethical and spiritual values of amateur sports; to encourage all, irrespective of race, creed or status to forge a genuine fellowship and understanding through the medium of sport. Upon formation, major sports associations in Kenya affiliated with the Association (Kenya Olympic Association, 1956). The internalisation of sports, cultivation of the Olympic spirit, and formation of the Olympic Association caused a paradigm shift in the rationale of sports as well as power relations in sports management. Perhaps due to the status associated with the Olympic Movement in the Post-war period, senior administrators, including the Governor, shifted their patronage from AASA to the Olympic Association.

As Kenyan sports joined the international stage, it became incumbent to put mechanisms in place to guide the pursuit of excellence. The Colony Sports Office was established in 1953 with the chief mandate of imparting requisite skills in competition and management to competitors, instructors, Community Development Assistants, referees, prison warders among others. The Sports Office trained Africans on aspects of sports management such as running clubs, record keeping, financial management, organizing competitions, competition judging among others. The office was attached to the Department of Community Development which was meant to uplift the social and economic standards of Africans through informal training.

Most of the training courses were held at the Jeanes School at Kabete, which also served as the headquarters of Colony Sports. The school was established in the mid-1920s after recommendations of the 1924 Phelps Stoke Commission on African education. The school's chief goal was to build on African civilization and culture rather than to impose Western civilization on Africans. Soon after its establishment, the school embarked on training Africans for the role of visiting teachers in village schools to align education to local needs (Editor, 1927). The Sports Office adopted the same system. It used the Jeanes School to train Africans as coaches, physical trainers, and sports administrators. The trainees were expected to contribute to fostering and

encouraging athletics and football in their districts. But there is no evidence, as far as the researchers could establish, of efforts to use African sporting ideals as the foundation of a superstructure of sports in the colony. Instead, there seems to have been a consensus among European stakeholders in sports that success in the adoption of athletics and football was depended on the effacement of African forms of sports and recreation.

Olympism and the Paradigm Shift in Management

It was incumbent that the Olympic Association and its affiliates put in place mechanisms to propagate Olympic ideals in Kenya. Stupendous energy was expended on cultivating Olympic ideals in Kenya during the 1950s and 1960s. However, the Association had to first overcome what seemed insurmountable challenges. The Chef De Mission to the 1960 Olympic team summed up the challenges: "The Association had to labor under difficulties presented by inadequate finance to spread further afield the interests in healthy activities in the stadia and on the village greens (Kindy, 1972)." One strategy was the establishment of *Olympic Review*, a monthly magazine which expounded on the aims and objectives of the Olympic Movement in Kenya. The Association also organized competitions at the districts to popularise the Movement. Its leaders used the competitions to address players and spectators on the ideals. The integration of provincial sports associations was also a strategy to keep the Olympic ideals alive (Kenya Olympic Association, 1960).

Globally, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) invoked *Ekecheria*, a call to peace that was proclaimed during the Olympic Games in ancient Greece. It tasked the National Olympic Committees (NOCs) with cultivating the ideal in their respective countries. The 1952 IOC Congress affirmed that "the promotion of this ideal is still one of our objectives and the IOC … wishes to draw world attention to this fact, and also friendly atmosphere of goodwill which prevails among athletes, officials and spectators from more than three score different nations who observe the amateur sport rules of fair play" (Kenya Olympic Association, 1957). Olympic Games were meant to promote world peace by providing opportunities for nations to demonstrate their strength and aggression in the field of play rather than war. Kenya was no exception. According to Patrick Renison, the Governor of Kenya 1959–1962, the goal of the Olympic Movement in Kenya was to provide "the opportunity of meeting and competing in friendly rivalry with competitors from different countries" (Renison, 1959).

Meanwhile, the Kenya Olympic Association quickly evolved to become an elitist organization. The association's management model privileged prominent persons – even those with little interest in sports – to spearhead its development agenda. The IOC set the pace in privileging the elites in the administration of Olympic affairs. As a self-elected body, the IOC chose persons to represent it in several countries. The selection exercise for a representative in colonial Kenya exposed IOC's deep-seated preference for the elites. After Kenya's impressive performance in the 1956 Olympic Games, the IOC decided to appoint a representative in the Colony. Confidential correspondence between IOC Vice President and Kenya's Governor in 1959 exemplifies IOC's preference for elites. The Vice President wrote:

> *The IOC is a self-elected body and chooses its members to represent it in a number of countries. Among others considered, the case of Kenya has come up and one of our members has written suggesting Mr R. S. Alexander who is the president of the Kenya Olympic Association. What we are after for this committee is not just a sports administrator … but someone who is really a leading figure in the country and generally interested in sport (Kenya Olympic Association, 1959).*

On 6 May 1959, the Governor responded:

> *Mr R. S. Alexander ... has been particularly good in maintaining friendly relations between Europeans, Africans, and Asians. He was ... conceited and brash member of the Nairobi City Council. He was a member of our Legislative Council here and is improving every day…. He is undoubtedly a leading figure in Kenya and will probably become of still greater importance in the future (Kenya Olympic Association, 1959).*

This correspondence reveals IOC's privileging of political prominence over understanding and interest in sports. Given this privileging and the colonial context in Kenya, the odds favored wealthy and politically connected Europeans. By this definition, African and Asian men and women of all races were excluded from the Kenya Olympic association's top leadership. Prominent male leaders such as Governors, members of the Legislative Council, and the Mayors of the Colony's Capital, occupied the Association's apex.

Elitism trickled from management levels to the selection of the Olympics competitors. The fact that competitors representing administrative units like districts in "Olympic games" were not paid enhanced the elitism of the Olympic movement in Kenya. And as was the case in other parts of the world, elitism "prevented potential Olympic athletes who did not have funding and support from competing." (Keller-Smith & Affrunti, 1996). Kenya's case was complicated by oppressive economic policies that subjected millions of Africans to a hand-to-mouth existence. Thus, by insisting on non-remuneration during weeks of training and participation, potential qualifiers who were either unemployed or working outside security organs easily lost out. According to a retired Public Relations Officer of AK, only the security agencies had appreciated the practice of representing institutions in competitions as "work in its own right". Such athletes enhanced the image of disciplined forces by displaying strength and readiness to serve the nation. Even renowned Olympians like Kipchoge Keino acknowledge the opportunity afforded by service in the police in the fifties and sixties in shaping their careers as athletes and sports managers (Orangi, 2002).

With an increasing interest in the Olympic movement by the political elites, space opened for Africans to take part in the decision-making processes of other organizations, particularly AASA. The review of the AASA constitution in 1951, for instance, provided opportunities for bringing Africans and Arabs onboard by altering the composition of both athletics and football councils. The constitution read: "[t]he Sports Councils, one for each sport fostered by the Association, consisting of the Officers of the Association and two, at least one of whom shall be an Arab or African, nominees from each province." (AASA Annual Report, 1951).

After years of silencing African competitors and those in management, it seems the racial foundations began to weaken. Official records reviewed in the course of the study revealed a slow decline in the silencing of Africans in sports. Africans were applauded for their role as competitors and sports administrators. The Kenya Amateur Athletic Association (KAAA) President, for instance, would submit to the Governor brief notes on the contribution of Africans such as David Onjiri, the Physical Training Instructor at the Jeanes School, and William Yeda, Assistant Secretary AASA. Others like Arere Anentia were praised for captaining teams made up of different ethnicities and races; for being a first-class disciplinarian and inspired leader; his grand idea of sportsmanship and cooperation; and for being a gentleman and a fine ambassador for his country. While this article does not repudiate the role of individuals in raising Kenya's athletics and footballing standards, it attempts to place their impact in the

social context. Their achievement required support by other stakeholders including the African communities.

Another paradigm shift included the move towards the formation of multi-racial organizations and the composition of multi-racial teams to represent Kenya in international competitions. By 1959 curtains were fast closing for the AASA which had hitherto managed athletics and football among Africans and Arabs. The Athletic Council was the first to be dismantled and replaced by KAAA. However, the formation of the Football Association (FA) was a conundrum. At inception, the FA constitution allowed direct affiliation by individual leagues. It also gave them the right to representation and a vote in the Executive. The provinces could therefore be outvoted by various leagues and interests in Nairobi. For a while, therefore, football had to be managed by two organizations: the Football Council of the AASA and the FA. And to allow all races to participate in AASA's well-established colony and inter-territorial competitions, the AASA was renamed Sports Association of Kenya in1959.

Another significant shift involved the acquisition of ambassadorial status by Olympians. This new role subordinated sporting prowess to social and political functions during international competitions. Authorities in Kenya were desperate to create the image of a racially tolerant administration especially after mishandling Africans' push for self-determination (Elkins, 2005). Qualification was henceforth premised more on deportment than performance. During the selection exercise for the 1956 Olympics, R. S. Alexander, the Chairman Kenya Olympic Association, drew the attention of those in charge of the exercise to the selection policy, "we are looking to behavior off the field with more stress than behavior in the field.… The eyes of the world will be on Kenya in Melbourne, and so anybody with fancy ideas or peculiarities has no place in the Kenya side." (Kenya Olympic Association, 1956). At the ceremony to present Olympic Colours to the team that was to represent Kenya in the 1960 Olympics in Rome, Governor Renison asserted:

> *I would like to take this opportunity of emphasising … the responsibility that you carry with you when you go to Rome… It will be a vast international concourse at which you will be judged not only on your individual prowess at the Games but, infinitely more important, on your sportsmanship, your bearing, and your conduct. It is not so much you who will be judged, but Kenya which will be judged through you (Kenya Olympic Association, 1960).*

This conceptualization of sports added to the other mechanisms of exclusion. Despite incorporating the goal of forging unity regardless of race, creed, status, and other social dynamics, those who "failed" the deportment test were systematically excluded.

Additionally, Kenya appointed attachés to the Olympic teams from European residents of the countries hosting the respective games. The attachés' reports, like those of local officials of the Olympic Association, elevated the athlete's "diplomatic role" over the actual competition. Furthermore, the credentials qualifying the attaché's appointment had little to do with either their knowledge or interest in sports. Recommending Peter Howson's appointment as attaché to the 1956 Olympic Games, Harold Holt, an officer at Australia's Immigration Ministry, outlined his suitability to include: service as a Lieutenant of the British Naval Force, the fellowship of the Australian Institute of Management, delegate of the Church of England Synod, and chairman of committees of the Prahran Boy Scout's Association. Interestingly, Holt admitted to knowing very little of Howson's sporting background and interest (Holt, 1955).

Gender Nexus to Evolution of Sports Management in Colonial Kenya

The Inter-war Period

As management of sports seeped from the confines of Mission Societies to the AASA and its affiliates in the 1920s, so did the values of Muscular Christianity. This took the form of missionaries like John Arthur of the CSM and Canon Burns of the CMS who became key players in AAAA decision-making processes. The Association allowed some missionary societies to carve out their "spheres of influence" as far as sports administration was concerned. The CSM, for instance, "carved out" the entire Dagoretti-Kabete area from Central Province (Native Association, 1937). The carved-out areas were recognized as "provinces" by the AAAA. Therefore, the missionary spheres could operate with limited surveillance by provincial administrators managing sports from the divisional to the provincial levels. The gender implications, this study suggests, were that missionaries continued to impart muscular Christianity values on school sports.

Even after the establishment of secular schools, mission societies remained important pillars of education and infusion of athletics and football among Africans. So central were the mission schools that a contemporary described the so-called secular schools as 'mission schools in a new form … I can answer from Maseno experience that not a particle of difference has been made.' (Britton, 1923). In a direct reference to mission schools and sports development, a sports commentator wrote in 1927:

> *Until very recent times the only medium for educating the native has been the mission school which today still serves as the main road along which raw native travels to something approaching civilisation … whatever the African has learnt in emerging from savagery, he owes to the missions*.

Missionary societies such as the CSM anticipated the coming of secular education. To secure their decades of investment in education among Africans, the missionaries strategically expanded the training of African teachers and the village schools on which they expected to convince the government to build on. The strategy was premised on the fact that since there were no government teacher training institutions and schools, the logical move for the government was to build an education superstructure on the existing missionary foundation. Furthermore, mission-educated Quality Assurance Officers continued to police sports in schools. Thus, for the better part of the colonial period, children in government schools were socialized in ways that reinforced athletics and football as male sports. Schoolgirls were left out in the two sports even after the education system formed the pillar of the IOC program of education on Olympism. Although the IOC promoted Olympism as a means of breaking barriers to inclusion in sports and other aspects of life, gender was not central to its definition of equality and inclusion (Kenya Olympic Association, 1959).

It is noteworthy that elitism at the AAAA apex and African agency at the locational level converged to marginalize women in sports management. The British exported the Victorian public/private nexus to Kenya. And because political office and prominence defined role designation in sports management, women of all races were sidelined. The creation of the position of African chiefs and LNCs in the British system of administration provided another avenue of gender exclusion in the management of athletics and football. Because women were not appointed as chiefs and played a limited role in LNCs, their opportunities to impact sports management were greatly diminished.

Post-World War II

The evolution of sports in post-war Kenya provided fertile grounds for continuities of male dominance in management and participation. But the period also saw the

beginning of the conversation on the place of women in sports. There was incipient advocacy on the girls' rights to sports. The decision to organize track and field competitions for girls, in part, resulted from advocacy by female teachers keen on sports. In 1950, the teachers convinced the DO Nandi Location, for instance, to rally his peers in including female events in school competitions at the district level. In the DO's words:

> *It may not be too early to suggest that some attention be given to encouraging athletics among girls in the more progressive schools in the District. What leads me to suggest this is the obvious share which the girls have already acquired in the school-life of one or two schools notably Kosiria and Kebulonit together with the fact that at the former, the woman teacher on whose competence I remarked in my last Safari Report, specifically enquired about this possibility. Again, it is suggested that the sociological values might be far wider than mere events themselves, even if the ones decided upon were of a less severely athletic nature than the present programmes that male events comprise (Nandi Locational Sports, 1950).*

But the beginning of the competitions for girls favored what were considered progressive schools. Girls in village schools and those who missed the opportunity to go to school had to wait longer.

The formative years of women's participation in sports were characterized by a sense of obligation by the male sports managers to protect the presumed fragile female body from the physicality of sports. However, the keenness with which girls took to track and field challenged the notion of physically weaker sex. In the coastal region, where adult male and female enthusiasm in track and field events was notably low, the most notable aspect during competitions was the girls' enthusiasm. In 1960, W. H. Mitchel, the Honourable Secretary Coast Province Sports Association wrote:

> *Here, frankly, I must confess I do not know what to do… At best we only seem to get five or six schoolgirls at meetings who enter five or six races plus all the jumps and while we should not discourage keenness, it is obvious that with competing in so many events the standards of performance must necessarily be lowered.*

In the meantime, as Kenya edged close to independence, it was no secret that European patrons preferred to entrust the future of sports management to male Africans. Women were openly discouraged from seeking positions and, in some cases opportunities to train in sports management. In 1960, stakeholders in the Kenya Olympic movement decided to deny women the opportunity to attend an Olympic Course in Germany. This was not a rare exception but a symptom of male entitlement in Olympic matters. The selected candidate was to be sponsored by commercial firms including the East African Standard, East African Airways, and British European Airways. These firms decided to sideline women with the approval of the Kenya Olympic Association. An advertisement for the opportunity read:

> *[T]he type of young man – women will not be considered – the sponsors wish to attract is someone interested … in sport or physical education, both from the organising and philosophical points of view – a young Kenyan who will derive benefit from the course and who will be in a position in the years ahead to pass on the experience and knowledge acquired for good amateur sport and physical education in Kenya, thereby furthering the Olympic ideals of improving sport and human relationships.*

This advertisement illustrates the limited role women were expected to play as custodians of amateurism and the Olympic ideals in Kenya. However, it does not indicate a lack of interest on the part of the women. On the contrary, this article

suggests, the fact that the sponsors saw it necessary to bar women from applying indicates an existing interest. It also indicates the reactions such interest elicited from the stakeholders accustomed to associating Olympism with manliness. Perhaps, they could not foresee a future in which women would become integral in the cultivation and protection of the Olympic ideals. In any case, the barring of women exemplifies the structural and ideological difficulties that women faced as they attempted to cross into the male-defined realm.

The training programs conducted by the Colony Sports Office also allow insights into the place of gender in sport in colonial Kenya. The training programs were designed to achieve attributes generally associated with the males. For instance, as Kenya prepared for its debut British Empire and Commonwealth Games in 1954 the Colony Sports Officer called for professional training of athletes. The officer observed: 'Something much more will be required … to build up strength, speed, endurance, flexibility and technique needed to make the international champion today.' (Archie,1954). Women were not believed to have the capacity for such attributes, neither were the attributes desired of them.

The ideological foundation of sports – amateurism and Olympism – meant that for the better part of the colonial period, women in Kenya were not singled out for training as competitors or roles in sports management. Although this masculine thinking was advanced by local sports officials, it was also reinforced from the outside. One external vessel for the infusion was the invitation of international athletes to give lectures to players and trainees in management. One such athlete was an African-American, Mal Whitfield, then the record holder of the half-mile race and the winner of the 800 meters race in the 1948 and 1952 Olympics. In his column appearing in the *Pittsburg Courier* in 1955, Whitfield reported: "In Africa, I saw fine specimens of physical manhood. These men ran as much as twenty-five miles daily … in remarkably good time." Whitfield's report is indicative of an obsession with physical manhood that characterized global sports management in the post-war period. It is little wonder then that all sports scholarships in universities in America and Europe for Kenyan athletes and managers between the 1950s and 1970s went to men.

Judging from the developments discussed herein, it is a truism that training for competitions and sports management in Kenya was done by men for men up to the eve of independence. It took up to 1959 for the Colony Sports Office to organize the first Women Championship and the first course in sports management for women. As Kenya emerged from colonialism, males had decades of head-start in participation. The head start was also in the form of training in different aspects of sports management as well as the requisite experience in management. The products of the Colony Sports Office training courses since its establishment in 1954 were ready to take charge of sports in the emerging nation. In addition, some among the early generations of athletes and footballers were already absorbed in management in different capacities by the eve of independence. Thus women missed out on the rapid Africanisation of sports management in the wake of independence.

Conclusion

Elitism in sports management in colonial Kenya went through two major faces: the inter-war and the post-war period. In the two periods, dynamics of race, class, and gender combined to privilege white politically connected men to act as the vanguards of British sporting ideals. The political class dominated patronage and other decision-making positions from the divisional level to the apex of organizations such as AASA and the Kenya Olympic Association. However, the ideological (amateurism and

Olympism), social and political meanings of sports were in flux. The state of flux was influenced by developments like the internalization of sports which brought in deportment (as opposed to prowess) and prominence as the key qualifications in participation (especially for the Africans and Asians) and management respectively. Other important developments included the use of sports to promote the friendly rivalry between administrative units in the colony.

The 1950s also witnessed the loosening of the grip of politically connected white males in AASA while simultaneously solidifying their hold on the Kenya Olympic Association. This paradigm shift allowed African elites, especially former sportsmen most of whom served in the disciplined forces, to begin to take charge of AASA. This paradigm shift coincided with the beginnings of women's competitions and the first training opportunities in sports management for women. Although the image of women in sports began to take shape as Kenya edged close to independence, it has a long history. It resulted from earlier advocacy by women, teachers, advances made in girls' education, and the enthusiasm with which young girls entered into competitive sports. The girls' enthusiasm nullified the idea of women as the physically weaker sex. But because African men had long head-starts in participation, training, and management, women missed out in the Africanisation of sports management from the eve of independence. Policy intervention gender inequality sports management must therefore pay attention to the evolution of sports management during the colonial period if they are to address the root of the inequality.

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