

# RAISING THE CROSSBAR: POWER POLITICS AND THE ROLE OF VALUES AND SELF-INTEREST IN SPORT

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## *Abstract*

*Within the broader ambit of sport the organisation and administration of athletics have been underpinned or driven by strong opposing undercurrents such as self-interests and basic values such as fairness and equality. In the South African context power politics and the interference of central government in sport followed a strong self-interest in sport, which translated into regulatory policies which resulted in the isolation of most sports codes from international participation. In the article the path of athletics in South Africa is recounted as an example of a sports code that has been dictated and dominated by the two approaches to sport – the emphasis on how the self-interest displayed by the South African National Party led government translated into the isolation of South Africa in the sport of athletics on the world stage. However, during democratic normalisation in the country a strong value driven approach was adopted which paved the way for South Africa back into the fold of international sport. Unfortunately, at the same time, in a climate of commercialisation and self-interest, sports administrators of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAAF) delayed the re-entry of South Africa into international sport for more than a year.*

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**Keywords:** Power politics; values; self-interest; athletics; Olympic Games; International Olympic Committee.

**Slutelwoorde:** Magspolitiek; waardes; selfbelang; atletiek; Olimpiese Spele; Internasionale Olimpiese Komitee.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

South African athletics (1894-1992)<sup>2</sup> has, since its formation as a sports code, displayed internal dynamics that could be strongly aligned with the fundamental dynamics of the sociology of power politics in sport. The status of athletics in the country was strongly dictated by the historical and political context which left a vivid imprint on its development, history and characteristics. The strong, centralised political policies in South Africa during the apartheid era, with its intrinsic regulatory dynamics to control society, therefore, translated into a protracted period

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2 The time span 1894-1992 was selected because it spanned the period from the official organisation of athletics in South Africa until its readmission into the international fold just in time for the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games.

during which a high self-interest driven approach to sport in general and athletics in particular was adopted.

The South African state's historically strong regulatory role in society enforced a specific political agenda onto sport (athletics) which was to the detriment of values such as fairness and equality. The sociology of power politics during the era 1889-1992 resulted in a sports administration that was driven by self-interest and not values. The underlying dynamic of (political) self-interest, demonstrated by a heavily centralised government, dictated the administration of athletics, the subsequent acceptance of policies that regulated the sport and, ultimately, the membership of its international governing bodies. The end result of this regulatory racial approach was the progressive and highly successful isolation of athletics until it was banned from all international competition in 1976.

The international isolation of athletics ended at the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona, Spain, when the South African athletic team stepped onto the maroon Mondo athletic track. This symbolic step, indicating the re-admission of South Africa in 1992 into the international fold, had additional significance – it pre-empted South Africa's political unification, state building and democratisation by almost two years.<sup>3</sup>

The South African athletic team's re-admission back into the fold of the Olympic movement (IOC) was a direct consequence of democratic changes politically, but also the adoption of a value-driven approach to politics and sport. The democratisation of the country and the normalisation of society paved the way for a new era. However, what was obscured during the normalisation process was that, beneath the surface, self-interest was again evident within the dynamics of power politics in sport, played a part in the (unnecessary) manipulation and caused a delay in the timing of the re-admission process for more than a year. Self-interests *again* dictated the South African team's re-entry into international sport in 1992 and not the values of fairness and equality which underpinned the process of democratic transformation in the country.

As will be explained in the article, the newly formed Athletics South Africa (ASA) was in fact eligible to participate at the 1991 World Championships in Tokyo a year earlier. The re-entry of the South African athletics team into the international fold was delayed for more than 12 months as a direct result of the presence of strong self-interest at the highest level in sport. The South African athletics team was again the victim of internal politics and was trapped because of a power struggle and the sociology of power in sport. The dynamics that were responsible for the expulsion of South African athletics from international sport in 1974 were again responsible for the delay in the team's acceptance back into international

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3 When the South African Athletics Union was formed it actually also pre-empted the formation of a South African political system (Union of South Africa) in 1910 (Le Roux 1994:115).

sport. Athletics had once again become the victim of the (personal) self-interests of politicians and international sports administrators. The reason underpinning the delay was because values in sport was forced to play a subservient role within the hierarchy of national and international sport and the official's and politicians own preoccupation with personal prestige.

## 2. PURPOSE OF THE ARTICLE

On a global scale organised sport has always been associated and influenced by the interference of politicians, governments and sports administrators within the ambit of power politics. The impact of politicians and sports administrators and their policies and decisions on societies to small groups is far reaching. Coakley (2007:448) defines the politics in this context as “the processes and procedures of making decisions that affect collections of people, from small groups to societies ...that are unified for specific purposes (such as sport)”.

The focus of the article is to follow the political and historical contours of athletics in South Africa and the impact and interaction of athletics with power politics. The investigation into athletics will be done with reference to its inception as a sports code in South Africa; it's expulsion from international sport in 1974<sup>4</sup>; and, eventually, its 1992 re-admission to global mega-sports events, such as the Olympic Games and the Athletics World Championship. The revolving door of expulsion and re-admission took place as a result of the dynamics of the power struggle in sport which were, in turn, driven either by self-interest or by strong values such as equality and fairness. The power struggle between the various role-players, each with their own agenda, deeply affected a group of people (athletics in South Africa) who were unified for a specific purpose (to partake in international sport).

The purpose of the article, therefore, is to:

- (i) give an outline of the theoretical aspects of the sociology of political power in sport;
- (ii) illustrate how power politics, within this sociological context, involve processes that are either regulatory (self-interest) or value driven;
- (iii) show how powerful international role-players – politicians and officials of the International Amateur Olympic Committee (IOC) and the

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4 South African Athletics (as part of the Olympic family of sport) was expelled from the IOC in 1974 and from the International Amateur Athletics Federation in 1976. The International Olympic Committee withdrew its invitation to South Africa to compete at the 1964 Olympic Games which meant that the South African Olympic teams made their last appearance at an international level at the Rome Olympics in 1960.

International Athletics Federation (IAAF) – have manipulated sport in the period 1991-1992 as a commodity to enhance their own positions of power. This manipulation has, as a result, had an impact on South African athletics' re-entry into sport.

In order to achieve the set objective the article will be divided in various interrelated sections. In the first section the theoretical aspects of politics, political power and the sociology of sport will be outlined to provide a theoretical framework for the article. In this section the difference between the regulatory (self-interest) and value-driven approach to sport will be outlined and explained to emphasise how the difference in approach impacted on South Africa and led to the isolation of its athletes from international competition and then inhibited the country's re-admission into the international fold.

In the second section two important sports organisations, the International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAAF) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) will be introduced with specific reference to the interrelationship between the two mega-sports organisations. The purpose is to outline the dynamics of the interrelationship or the power struggle for control and prestige between the role-players of the two major sports organisations. It will be pointed out that the result of this power struggle had a direct bearing on the South Africa's athletic team's re-entry into a major mega-sports event. The theoretical framework used to describe the interrelationship between the newly formed Athletics South Africa (ASA) in 1991, on the one hand, and the IOC and IAAF, on the other, will again be dictated by the dynamics of self-interest (regulatory) and value-driven approaches in sports sociology.

### **3. THE ROLE OF VALUES IN SPORT**

#### **3.1 South African athletics relationship with the IAAF and the IOC**

The historical interrelationship between South Africa athletics and the athletic organisation's membership to international sports organisations, such as the IAAF and the IOC, was predominately underpinned and driven by contrasting policies and approaches, because of the role and status of different normative values in the formulated policies of the respective organisations.

The history of the South African Amateur Athletics Union (SAAAU) and as a member country of both international governing bodies, the IAAF (1905) and the IOC (1908), is long and protracted. The relationship between the SAAAU and the international governing bodies followed a path of full membership and active participation of both organisations, followed by gradual alienation and increased international hostility because of South Africa's internal politics. The uneasy, rocky

relationship and different perception of the role of values and self-interest in sport resulted in the SAAAU's suspension from the IAAF (1976) and the withdrawal of South Africa's invitation to the 1964 Olympic Games and, in 1970, the expulsion of South Africa from the IOC.

### **3.2 Levelling the playing field, the SAAAU, IOC and IAAF**

The historical and dynamic relationship between the SAAAU and the two sports organisations, the IAAF and IOC, provided a fertile ground to demonstrate, comparatively, the differences between self-interest/regulatory and value-driven approaches to sport. The comparison will enable a categorisation, understanding and explanation of the different approaches of the SAAAU, IOC and IAAF toward sport, and the role that values and self-interest played in their own disposition and interrelationship. The comparison will also be enhanced by an application of the exposition of the German sociologist, Max Weber, to elucidate the different actors' social actions in sport. Weber's theoretical exposition provides a valuable framework to understand and make a methodological analysis of South Africa's approach to sport. This will also provide insight into why South Africa's policies complicated its membership of both the IAAF and IOC. However, before outlining the developments that impacted on the relationship between South Africa and these organisations, it is important to understand the sociological theoretical perspectives that underpin the relationship.

Sociology, as a social science discipline, entails *inter alia* the ability to explain and predict social events and patterns. One of the subfields of Sociology, the Sociology of Sport, aims to construct theories to analyse, explain and predict sports-related behaviour, processes and structures (Cantelon & Ingham 2002:67).

As a result of the dynamic aspect of sports sociology a number of theories have developed which are very useful in explaining the nature of sport and could contribute to an analysis of relationships in sport between different countries. Weber's influence and impact on sports sociology, in this regard, was without a doubt substantial and his approach was, therefore, chosen to methodologically underpin this investigation. His insight with regard to human action in sport is very useful, especially regarding the framework of human action which provides a valuable methodological means of ordering, outlining and explaining specific sports actions and relationships.

Weber's exposition was, therefore, the preferred choice to structure an investigation into the relations between politicians, South African athletics, the IAAF and the IOC and how it affected the country's continued membership to these international organisations. The application of his broad methodology will enhance the understanding of the interrelationship and shed light on the specific choices that were made and the outcomes that were achieved during this period.

#### 4. WEBER ON THE SOCIOLOGY OF SPORT

According to Hargreaves (1986:3), power is a core concept in the social sciences. In the social sciences family, (political) sociology focuses *inter alia* on sport because it is naturally and intrinsically part of this hegemony. Hargreaves (1986:3) explains that when the term “power” is used, it actually refers to a relationship between classes and different agents. The outcome of this relationship is determined by the agents’ access to relevant resources and the use of appropriate strategies in specific conditions when in competition with other agents. Sport is one cultural form in which these agency/power dynamics can be studied because, as Sugden and Tomlinson (2002:9) explain, power relationships are inherently social relationships.

Weber reiterates that to fully understand human action (in sport) an “ideal” type methodology should be developed to investigate the different approaches to sport. Weber’s own basic outline is strongly based on the rationalisation theory and he maintained that the process of rationalisation has a profound impact on life and on the way social action (such as sport) could be characterised (Cantelon & Ingham 2002:67).

Weber classifies social action into four ideal types, namely, instrumentally rational, value-rational, traditional and emotional. For the purposes of this article only the first two of the expositions will be outlined, because they are directly applicable to this specific investigation.

##### 4.1 Instrumental rational action

Instrumentally rational action involves regulatory action (policy) towards the attainment of a goal (or policy) that is deliberately selected by the actor from several available goals. This decision involves the rational consideration of alternative means to reach the end goal, after weighing up the advantages and disadvantages of each goal. One of the alternatives is then selected and deliberately pursued (Cantelon & Ingham 2002:67; Weber 1947:117). If this decision (or choice) is made on a central governmental level, to accumulate political advantages, the result is that this instrumental rational approach (as a sports policy) intrudes more and more into the private (non-governmental) space of citizens. Therefore, if a government follows the instrumentally rational approach to sport the objective is not primarily to gain advantages for the participants, but also to benefit those on the periphery of the action such as the politicians. The agenda of the central government is to accumulate the “spinoff advantages”, such as accumulated international prestige or the reinforcement of a specific political agenda such as apartheid. In the process the athletes are being partially alienated, because of the marked regulation and intrusion that takes place at a central level. (In the article this approach will be referred to as self-interest or regulatory driven approach.)

## 4.2 Value-rational action

In contrast, value action or value-rational idealism refers to action undertaken by decision-makers (either government or sports federations) with a strong regard for formulated, ultimate or absolute values such as fairness in sport and equality in the sense of access to sources and facilities. As Cantelon and Ingham (2002:68) explain, value-rationality can be seen in anyone who acts according to his or her convictions. Weber (1947:25) uses the expression “I did what I did because of my beliefs, it was my duty and my honour” to epitomise this approach.

The difference between instrumentally rational (self-interest/regulatory approach) and value action is clearly located in the role that values play in the two approaches. Values play a more subservient role in instrumentally rational action, whereas values fulfil a more dominant role in value-rationalism idealism. These two actions, the instrumental rational and the value-rational, will be utilised as an approach to analyse the underlying policies of the various role players in determining the relationship between the South African government, SAAAU, IAAF and IOC. In varying forms and different degrees these contrasting actions (as a result of the perspective on values) framed the formulation of their governments’ and federations’ respective sports policies. This, in turn, impacted on the manner in which the SAAAU was first expelled from the IAAF and IOC and then allowed back into the international fold.

It is the power-political relationship that structures, confines and demarcates the social action which flows deductively from the broader political context of the South African and the international community, and within the IAAF and IOC. It is, therefore, understandable that the application of power relationships from a central level downwards to their sports policies would differ, because of the development from different contrasting historical and political vantage points and the different appreciation of basic values.

To keep politics from creeping into sport is an insurmountable task. Power politics regularly camouflages itself under the innocent cloak of sports policies and seeps into the regulatory network of sport. This phenomenon is encapsulated in Weber’s instrumental rational approach to sport, where specific political goals are selected and pursued, while values (in sport) are greatly underplayed in the process.

Furthermore, in relation to the Gramscian notion of hegemony, the ideological and cultural domination of one class over the other, this political domination is specifically achieved by engineering consensus by controlling the cultural forms and pastimes of society, for example sport (Jarvie 2006:29). In this manner the former South African apartheid regime had a very strong regulatory self-interest driven control over all cultural forms by developing a strong regulatory and instrumental approach to sport, in general, and athletics, in particular. In the process basic human values of the broader society was grossly neglected, which led to a

predictable reaction from the disposed society and the internal sports community. This event eventually, but not unexpectedly, led to the expulsion of South African athletics from both the IAAF and IOC.

## **5. OUT OF THE STARTING BLOCKS: SOUTH AFRICA'S REGULATORIAL (INTEREST DRIVEN) APPROACH TO SPORT**

South African athletics has a very long history and a colourful tradition which originates in the era before the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902). The South African Amateur Athletics Association (SAAAA) was formed in 1894 as a result of a collaboration between the two colonies (Cape and Natal) and the two Boer Republics (Transvaal and the Free State) and the next year four athletes were sent to compete in the English championships (Le Roux 1994:10).<sup>5</sup>

Even during the years even before the institution of the system of apartheid South Africa already followed a strong regulatory (self-interest) approach (instrument rational) to sport (athletics) that would eventually initiate and fuel its isolation and lead to its expulsion from international bodies. The institutionalised segregation in the political, economic and social domains, from the outset, was directly reflected in sport, where strict separation was enforced between racial groups, with very little regard for basic human rights and values.

South Africa's discriminatory regulations and racial discrimination in sport displayed strong political self-interests, with little regard for basic values. This disposition in sport eventually led to the SAAAUs expulsion from almost all sports codes in the 1960s, most noteworthy in 1976 from the IAAF at its congress in Montreal (Le Roux 1984:39) and the IOC in 1970. The last Olympic Games that South Africa was allowed to participate in, was the 1960 Rome Olympic Games (Wallechinsky 1984:xix).

The reaction or opposition towards South Africa from the other member countries and international sports bodies was predominantly steeped in a strong value-rational approach, that is, that there should not be any discrimination in sport. The values of equality and fairness in sport were paramount and this uncompromising view led to a revolving door of entry, expulsion and re-entry for South Africa. This was directly as a result of the clash between South Africa's instrumental rational approach and the value-rational idealism of international sports bodies.

However, South Africa's regulatory approach to the administration of athletics with little or no adherence to (human) values in sport initially had an informal

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5 This is an amazing development because the athletes represent an entity which was not a state as such, but consisted of two British colonies and two Boer Republics. The Union of South Africa was formed 16 years later.

façade. The division between racial groups in sport occurred indirectly as a result or spin-off of the broader political and socio-economic regulation of the South African society. The regulatory (instrumental rational) approach became only more visual and direct after the Second World War when specific sports policies were adopted as a result of strong opposition.

When the National Party (with its vision of apartheid policies) won the 1948 general election, the government (and sports bodies) adopted an even stronger regulatory approach to sport, which accelerated and institutionalised the segregation process in South Africa. The new regime enacted various segregationist laws and bylaws to ensure that sport in the country mirrored the national policy of “apartheid”. In 1964 Jan de Klerk, the Minister of the Interior, confirmed South Africa’s strong regulatory sports policy, which reinforced the prevailing position of separateness and inequality between the various races in the country (Allison 1986:115), with the result that sport became highly centralised and strongly regulated and the broader values imbedded in sport played a minor role. As Keech, in Sugden and Tomlinson (2002:167), explains, the (white) predominately Afrikaner authorities progressively used sport on the domestic level as a tool to maintain their political ascendancy over the English community and the non-white population.

Sport was in the hands of Afrikaner nationalists, who as part of a policy of self-interest strengthened apartheid policies and fragmented society into separate racial entities. Sport was used as an instrument, not to unite and to build a nation, but a regulatory tool to divide and to establish a divided country. In reaction the non-racial sports movements, in South Africa and externally, rallied around a value-rational principle to establish unity and equity through sport (Keech in Sugden and Tomlinson 2002:285).

The South African team that was sent to the 1960 Rome Olympic Games was exclusively white and reflected the manipulated (regulatory/self-interest approach) political demographic situation of the country. This blatant discrimination against non-whites in the country on the basis of colour and disregard of values escaped nobody’s notice. This renewed the efforts of the opposition which emphasised a value driven approach to sport which translated into policies to counter South Africa’s exclusive regulatory policies towards sport.

In 1961, when South Africa was forced to leave the British Commonwealth, the country was slowly moving towards international isolation and their continued membership of international organisations was put under more pressure (Killanan & Rhoda 1979:32). The whole matter of South Africa’s continued manipulation and regulation of sport was soon heading for a direct confrontation. During an IOC session in 1963 in Baden-Baden, the IOC member of the USSR, Constantin Andrianov, led the strong upswell against South Africa and quoted (the values) from the Olympic charter that states: “No discrimination is allowed against any

country or person on grounds of race, religion and politics” (Killanan & Rhoda 1979:32).

The IOC then called on the South African Olympic Committee (SANOC) to oppose publicly all racial discrimination in sport and competition. In effect this request was for South Africa to move away from a rational self-regulatory approach in sport and to adopt a value-driven approach to sport in accordance with the values of Olympic charter. However, in January 1964, at Innsbruck, the IOC noted that SANOC has not complied with the request and subsequently withdrew its invitation to South Africa to compete at the 1964 Olympic Games. The withdrawal of the invitation was the start of a slide down a slippery slope for SANOC membership of the IOC and its eventual expulsion from the movement. The stressful situation came to a head in 1970 in Amsterdam when the SANOC’s representatives, in what many IOC members regarded as an abusive speech, talked about the IOC’s unwanted interference in the internal politics of South Africa. The country was subsequently expelled from the IOC movement with a narrow majority (Killanan & Rhoda 1979:32).

South Africa’s regulatory instrumental self-interest driven approach to sport, therefore, led to its isolation and eventually the complete expulsion from the IAAF. South Africa’s sports policy was very difficult to comprehend and the lack of values very difficult to defend against the international condemnation. Humphrey Khosi, a mild-mannered black South African athlete, broke the 880 yards national African record in 1964, but was not allowed to compete for his country.

South Africa and, specifically the SAAAU, attempted, after their expulsion, to salvage the situation to ensure their re-admission in the international sports bodies. The irony was that the efforts were still underpinned by a regulatory approach to sport driven by self-interest and not values. Invariably it was too little, too late.

The first effort to rectify the situation was the ill-fated multi-racial athletic events that were staged in the early 1970s. The first of these meetings was held in 1971 at Greenpoint Stadium in Cape Town, but different racial groups were forced to display their ethnic grouping as Zulus, Tswanas and Sothos on their sporting gear. Johannes Metsing, who was involved in an epic battle with Andries Krogmann in the 10 000 metre event, was “forced” to take part in a singlet that displayed his racial group: Tswana. Although the IAAF acknowledged the positive step towards multi-racial sport, the racial manipulation and regulatory approach to sport was still a far cry from the demands that were made by the international world (South African Athletics Annual, Le Roux 1972) and South African athletics received no credit from the international sports community. The tide had changed to such extent that the IAAF congress in Montreal in 1976 took the decision to expel South Africa from the organisation. This meant that South African athletes

were not allowed to take part as individuals at international meetings<sup>6</sup> (*Rand Daily Mail*, 23 July 1976).

South Africa's expulsion from the IAAF resulted in drastic changes at home to rectify the situation. In June 1977 the SAAAU adopted a revised constitution and scrapped the provision of different organisational bodies for the different racial groups. The new constitution made provision for one governing body with one national championship and full autonomy for all provinces and clubs. This was a strong move away from racial discrimination and represented a strongly value-driven approach to sport. This bold move by the SAAAU was, in fact, more liberal than government policies made allowance for at that stage (Le Roux 1994:91). However, this bold step by the SAAAU was again too little too late, because world opinion against South Africa's apartheid policies had already changed irrevocably. The horse has already bolted. The SAAAU invitation to the IAAF in 1978 to send a fact-finding committee to South Africa went unanswered. South Africa's instrumental rational (self-interest) approach to sport has ultimately led to its total isolation in world sport and its athletes were forced into isolation and not permitted to compete internationally until 1992.

## **6. BACK FROM THE COLD AND THE LONG ROAD BACK TO THE INTERNATIONAL FOLD**

South Africa's instrumental rational approach to sport, which was self-interest and not value driven, was responsible for almost twenty years of sports isolation. More than one generation of excellent sportsmen and women were restricted to domestic competition and denied the opportunity to test themselves against the world's best. However, political normalisation and the road to a full democracy, build on the principles of values such as fairness and equality, and aligning sport according to the broader principles of a value rational approach, soon opened the international doors to South African sport.

When President FW de Klerk made the bold move to announce in 1992 that banned political parties will be unbanned and that talks to negotiate a new democratic dispensation will commence, it reflected a value-driven approach to society which paved the way for the re-admission of athletics back into the international fold (Johnson 2000:11). All international sports organisations, however, insisted that the new sports bodies should be fully integrated and that opposing sports bodies in South Africa should be formed under one umbrella.

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6 South Africa was prohibited earlier in 1974 from taking part in international competitions, but was still able to compete as individuals in Europe and elsewhere. The expulsion in 1976 from the IAAF meant that South Africa was isolated from all forms of competition.

The long absence of South Africans on the international sport stage made them a sought after commodity and they suddenly gained in value and status. The country's re-admission on the sports world stage thus ignited a battle between powerful sports administrators from the major governing sports bodies to have the prestige to be the first to host South Africa at their meeting.

This situation pitched two of the most powerful sports administrators at the time, from the IOC and IAAF, up against each other. Both administrators were driven by self-interest, with little or no regard for the values of sport, which were held in such high regard for many decades. In the one corner was Juan Antonio Samaranch, the President of the powerful IOC organisation, the umbrella organisation that stages the Olympic Games every four years. In the opposing corner was Primo Nebiolo, the President of the equally powerful IAAF, which is the largest sports organisation on the globe. As Simson and Jennings (1992:346) observed: "What a coup it would have been for either promoters to be first to present the South Africans at the next Olympics (1992) or the World Championships (1991)."

Nebiolo had the inside track, because the next World Championships meeting was to take place in Tokyo, a year earlier (1991) than the Olympic Games (1992) in Barcelona. However, Samaranch moved faster and in July 1991 the newly formed South African National Olympic Committee was given provisional recognition (Simson & Jennings 1992:347). Nebiolo, not to be outdone, invited a South African multi-racial athletics delegation to his home town, Rome, to expedite the amalgamation of the various (opposing) athletic organisations in South Africa (Le Roux 2012).<sup>7</sup> Unfortunately the multiple federations could not agree on their structure in time and role-players such as the politician/sports administrator, Jannie Momberg,<sup>8</sup> and the late Minister of Sport, Steve Tshwete, were instrumental in delaying the re-entry (Momberg 2011:23) and, subsequently, their participation in the 1991 Tokyo World Athletic Championships.

Nebiolo, in a countermove, declared that the IAAF would not recognise the South African National Olympic Committee and that recognition could only be given by the IAAF biennial congress, which came after the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games. This (self-interest driven) move meant that South African athletes would not be eligible to compete at the Barcelona Olympic Games. In an amazing manoeuvre Samaranch then "convinced" the IOC members to allow him to appoint two additional members, of his choice, to the executive committee which provided him leeway to approach Nebiolo to change his views.

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7 Telephonic interview with Mr Gert le Roux, former Director of the South African Athletic Union.

8 Jannie Momberg was a former Vice-president of the SAAAU, who joined the ANC and was very influential in dictating events and South Africa's re-entry back into international sport. An interview was conducted with him shortly before his death in 2011.

Nebiolo, who strived for many years to serve on the IOC executive committee, suddenly announced that he intended to go to Africa to grant provisional membership to ASA, which opened the way for participation at the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games. Samaranch subsequently announced in a meeting that the IAAF President, Nebiolo, would join the exclusive club of the IOC executive committee (Simson & Jennings 1992:348-9).

During an unrelated visit to South Africa four years later Nebiolo mentioned in a speech his earlier wish to allow South Africa to participate in the 1991 World Championships. He then turned to Momberg, slapped him on the back and said: “You stopped it” (Momberg 2011:24). It is evident from the outline that South Africa’s athletes were manipulated between the self-regulatory ambitions and the self-interest of Nebiolo (IAAF) and Samaranch (IOC), each wanting the honour of allowing South Africa back into world sport.

The intrinsic sadness is that, when South African politicians and sports administrators eventually wilted under all the pressure and adopted a value-driven approach to politics and to sport, there was a general degeneration of world sport, as influential organisations had substituted their value-driven position to sport with a stronger financial driven approach. The IAAF and the IOC corporatist, commercialised approach to world sport, as a tool to generate money and personal prestige, is a great concern for many. Again sport has been manipulated by self-interest and is structured, not on the basis of values, but rather to benefit the commercial interests of high ranking officials. This was illustrated by Samaranch’s utterance in the aftermath of the 1992 Olympic Games, with reference to the sport of yachting: “Any sport that does not get TV interest has no future” (Simson & Jennings 1992:347).

## **7. CONCLUSION**

As Weber has explained, an approach to the administration of sport can either be self-interest driven or value-driven. It is apparent, from the developments in athletics during the apartheid era, that South Africa’s regulatory self-driven approach to sport was responsible for the sports code’s international isolation. During the period after the Second World War a strongly value-driven approach was prevalent in the world and was followed by major international sports bodies, which underpinned their decision to isolate and boycott South Africa.

However, a few decades later, after the first commercially successful Olympic Games in 1984 in Los Angeles, the playing field had changed and both the IOC and the IAAF adopted a less value-driven approach to sport. Fuelled by commercialism and a self-interests approach, values have, progressively, been relegated into a secondary position. This affected South Africa at a time when its value-

driven approach to politics and, specifically, to sport made the country eligible to be allowed back into the international fold. The world had, by then, changed irrevocably and sport had a strong self-interest driven, commercialised opponent in the opposing corner. The sad aspect is that sport has lost its moral compass and, in the process, its innocence.

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