



Sport and Ireland: A History

Paul Rouse

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This is the first history of sport in Ireland, locating the history of sport within Irish political, social, and cultural history, and within the global history of sport. Sport and Ireland demonstrates that there are aspects of Ireland's sporting history that are uniquely Irish and are defined by the peculiarities of life on a small island on the edge of Europe. What is equally apparent, though, is that the Irish sporting world is unique only in part; much of the history of Irish sport is a shared history with that of other societies.

Drawing on an unparalleled range of sources - government archives, sporting institutions, private collections, and more than sixty local, national, and international newspapers - this volume offers a unique insight into the history of the British Empire in Ireland and examines the impact that political partition has had on the organization of sport there. Paul Rouse assesses the relationship between sport and national identity, how sport influences policy-making in modern states, and the ways in which sport has been colonized by the media and has colonized it in turn.

Each chapter of Sport and Ireland contains new research on the place of sport in Irish life: the playing of hurling matches in London in the eighteenth century, the growth of cricket to become the most important sport in early Victorian Ireland, and the enlistment of thousands of members of the Gaelic Athletic Association as soldiers in the British Army during the Great War. Rouse draws out the significance of animals to the Irish sporting tradition, from the role of horse and dogs in racing and hunting, to the cocks, bulls, and bears that were involved in fighting and baiting.

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