

"For ours is a plea to swim, play golf, netball, cricket, soccer, soccer, baseball, basketball, softball, table-tennis, tennis, hockey, rugby with all those who love these games for their own sake - in public parks, on sports fields, in stadia, pools and pitches at all levels. Colour, as the basis for such participation is wholly unacceptable and much too artificial."

- Morgan Naidoo, President, Non-Racial
South African Amateur Swimming Federation

Blacks in South Africa have, for many years, vigorously propounded and practised non-racial sport despite police intimidation and official government policy of forcing the races apart.

Outside South Africa, very little publicity has been given to the extraordinary bravery displayed by the Black sportsmen and sports administrators who constantly defy the official state sports policy in bringing non-racialism to the South African sportsfields.

This paper is intended to give the world a better insight into this aspect of sport in South Africa which has boosted the morale of so many Black sportsmen and women.

Introduction

Sport was first introduced into South Africa by the regiments of the British Army and by the early British settlers.

Extra leisure time at the disposal of the settlers, combined with the excellent climate for outdoor activities, inspired the whites to form clubs and associations in the various sporting codes.

The Afrikaaners soon joined the British settlers.

This was later followed by the formation of sports bodies by the Black groups. As the Black groups were socially and residentially separated and ostracized by the white racists, it became necessary to form separate associations.

White sports bodies, although constitutionally barring Blacks from becoming members, never had any racial labels to the names of clubs or associations: it was always Durban Surf Club, Natal Football Association, Transvaal Cricket Union, etc. On the other hand the Black clubs and associations, although constitutionally never debarring persons of other racial groups from becoming members, had names such as, Durban Indian Surf Club, Transvaal African Football Association, Natal Coloureds Hockey Union, etc. No doubt this was due to the forcible separation of different Black racial groups socially and residentially. However, the establishment of Inter-Race Sports Boards ensured mingling and competition between the various Black groups. The white sports organizations refused to affiliate to these Inter-Race Sports Boards.

Between 1875 and 1910 most of the whites-only organizations, such as the South African Cricket Association, the South African Amateur Athletics Association, the South African Olympic Games Association, etc., were admitted to international and/or Commonwealth Games Associations. This gave them a "passport" to compete with or against national teams of other countries for international honours.

Although the white organizations held National Open Championships (in Golf, Athletics, Swimming, etc.) which were recognized by the international and Commonwealth Games Associations, Blacks were always barred from taking part. Blacks were left out of South Africa's national teams even after they had gone abroad at tremendously great expense and sacrifice and, in many cases, proved their worth.

It must be realized that the present South African Government (elected in 1948) was not yet in power with its policy of apartheid: racial discrimination in sport was only a social practice at the time.

Until relatively recently there were no laws forbidding "mixed" sport within South Africa. Even now legislation affects "mixed" sport only indirectly. In 1960 Sewsunker Papwa Sewgolam, an Indian South African golfer, entered for the white organized Natal Open Golf Championships and in 1963 he entered for the Natal and South African Open Golf Championships.

In 1963, the Lincoln City Football Club (of Pietermaritzburg, Natal) whose team consisted of five Coloureds, four Indians and two Whites played against an Indian team at Curries Fountain, Durban. The Coloured and White members of the team were charged with "illegally occupying" property zoned for Indians. The Natal Supreme Court dismissed the case. The prosecution's appeal was also lost. Prior to this, on several occasions, Black cricketers, footballers and tennis players had played with and against whites.

In 1973 the non-racial Aurora Cricket Club of Natal applied, and was accepted, to play in the all-white Pietermaritzburg and District Cricket Union League. The Security Branch of the South African Police attended nearly all its matches and constantly intimidated the members of the Aurora Club, who, however, persisted in playing in the all-white league. No charges were brought against these players.

Even now the government grants special dispensation to racist associations to organize "multi-national" matches for window-dressing.

Struggle for recognition

By 1945 most of South Africa's all-white sports federations had not only established firm links with national sports organizations of other countries but also managed to get into executive positions of many international federations.

Meanwhile, in South Africa, the white racists continued to refuse Blacks a place in their national teams, irrespective of the ability of Black sportsmen.

The Black sportsmen and sports administrators, completely frustrated by the uncompromizing attitude of the whites, appealed to the international and Commonwealth Games Associations for their help.

They were not very successful in the early years. Many national and international associations were most unsympathetic to their pleas. For instance, Mr. Oscar State, the then Secretary of the British Amateur Weightlifters' Association and still active in international weightlifting, replied to an appeal by Black sportsmen on May 13, 1946:

"Please pardon my delay in replying to your letter but I had to wait until I placed the matter before our Central Council. They considered your request with sympathy but it is with regret that I have to inform you that we cannot bring any pressure on the South African Weightlifting Federation to force them to recognize you. Their rules, as with all national sporting associations in South Africa, will not permit of mixed contests between white and Coloured athletes. This is also a condition of the South African Olympic Council. Therefore, no Coloured man could be chosen to represent South Africa in the international contests. For these reasons we cannot support your claim against the South African Weightlifting Federation."

The only alternative left to Black South Africans to gain international recognition was to go abroad. Because of the prohibitive costs, only a handful left South Africa.

In 1946 several boxers campaigned in Great Britain. Mr. Seaman Chetty, one of the early arrivals, was rated sixth contender for the British Empire Bantamweight Title. Mr. Jake N'Tuli, who sparred regularly with Vic Toweel, the then white South African World Bantamweight Boxing Champion, arrived in England in 1952. N'Tuli, at one sparring session, knocked Toweel out of the ring. In 1953 N'Tuli knocked out Gardiner of England to become the British Empire Flyweight Boxing Champion. At the height of his career he was unanimously hailed by internationally recognized boxing scribes as the best flyweight boxer in the world. Only Pascuel Perez's (of Argentina) delaying tactics in arranging a World Championship fight prevented him from becoming a world champion. The number one contender for the world title was, in the eyes of the white-controlled South African Boxing Board of Control, not good enough to become the South African Champion.

Mr. David Samaai played tennis at Wimbledon, but was not good enough to enter open tournaments in South Africa. In 1968 and 1969 the non-racial Southern African Lawn Tennis Union sent some of its promising players to participate in European tournaments. In 1968, Mr. Jasmat Dhiraj and Mr. Herman Abrahams won the North of England Men's Doubles Championship and in 1969 Mr. Dhiraj won the South of England Singles Championship. Mr. Dhiraj and Ms. Paddy Orchards also won the Mixed Doubles Championship in that year. In 1968 Mr. Dhiraj and Mr. Abrahams qualified for the Wimbledon Tennis Championships.

In 1971 a private match was arranged between Mr. Dhiraj and Mr. Cliff Drysdale, a white South African, who at the time was one of the top seeds in world tennis. Drysdale won the best of three sets match 6 - 4 and 7 - 5. Immediately after the match Drysdale publicly announced that Dhiraj was good enough to take part in the South African Open Tennis Championships. But this was never accepted by the white Union.

Mr. Ron Elland, although by far exceeded the total weight lifted by any white South African weightlifter in his division, was told emphatically that he cannot represent South Africa. So he packed his bags and went to England. He qualified to lift for Great Britain and he was a member of the 1948 British Olympic Team.

For identical reasons Mr. Precious McKenzie left his native South Africa for England in 1964. Since then he has represented Great Britain in three Olympic Games and has won three Commonwealth Gold Medals for England.

Mr. Sewsunker Papwa Sewgolam won the Ducth Open Golf Championship in 1959 and in 1960. In 1963, after extensive world pressure, Mr. Sewgolam was allowed to compete in the South African Open Golf Championships and he finished runner-up, but he was not even considered for South Africa's Canada Cup Team.

Mr. Albert Johannson played football for the famous British Leeds United. He was the first black person to play in an F.A.Cup Final in Britain. He had no chance to represent his motherland.

Mr. Basil D'Oliviera, a Coloured South African, was a regular member of the MCC Cricket Team for several years. In 1962 he was selected to represent the World Cricket Team yet, he was not eligible for any South African representative side.

These are only a few of the Black South Africans who managed to leave South Africa to campaign overseas and win international honours. But what about the thousands who could not afford to do so?

While not condoning their actions, it may be recorded that some South Africans of fairer skin tried to get into representative sides by "playing white".

Mr. Smilee Moosa (alias Williams), a Black South African, managed to get into the all-white Berea Park Football Club as a player. Berea Park played in the all-white National Football League of the white racist Football Association of South Africa. Eventually his identity was exposed and he was immediately expelled from the Club, of which he was a first team player for months.

Until 1970 Mr. Topham, a Coloured South African living in the black township of Johannesburg's Coronationville enrolled with a white judo club. Keeping his identity a top secret he even managed to qualify to represent South Africa by his meritorious display. No one even suspected that he was not white until it came to the presentation of the South African Springbok Colours. He had to produce his identity card and he was exposed. Although he represented South Africa later on several occasions he was never awarded Springbok Colours because he is Black.

South African Sports Association (SASA)

The Black sports organizations, having been organized into federations, were faced, as we have seen, with the problem of being unable to participate in world games, because the white sporting organizations, internationally affiliated, were not prepared to accept Black members. The sporting policy of the country was inextricably bound up with its political and social policy; and as there was little hope that the white sporting organizations would adopt a more liberal outlook towards the Blacks, Black sports organizations took the initiative to campaign for recognition both at home and abroad.

In 1955 the Committee for International Recognition was formed in Durban. Its aim was to get South African non-racial bodies affiliated to international sports federations. In 1956 it succeeded in getting the South African Table Tennis Board of Control affiliated to the International Table Tennis Federation. The white association was expelled because it practised racial discrimination.

The South African Sports Association was formed in 1958 as a counter to the white Olympic and Empire Games Association. Its main objective was to fight for the complete elimination of racial discrimination in sport in South Africa.

SASA, as it was popularly known, sent a memorandum to the International Olympic Committee in Rome in 1959 and stated inter alia:

"It is the contention of non-racial sporting bodies that it is the right of all sportsmen of a country to be considered on merit for selection in teams representing their country, and that the South African national bodies, by excluding the non-whites of the country, have flouted the canons of sportsmanship.

"It must be noted that the non-whites have no desire to see their white compatriots excluded, and that they insist only that merit be the criterion, without consideration of extraneous issues, such as colour, race or creed."

South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (SAN-ROC)

SASA failed in its attempts to win the support of the Olympic Committee. Unable to win recognition and unable to persuade the white sports associations to abandon their "whites only" policy, and after further frustrating attempts by Black sportsmen to become members of the South African Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association, SASA, together with a number of Black sportsmen and sports administrators, formed the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee on January 13, 1963 in Johannesburg. Since then SAN-ROC has campaigned at international sports congresses to air the grievances of South Africa's black sportsmen and to demand recognition of only non-racial representatives from South Africa.

Re-constitution of Black bodies into non-racial organizations

"Our goal is complete non-racial swimming - at every level in the country - administered by a single, truly non-racial swimming organization; not the useless, ineffective and misleading body like the Amateur Aquatics Federation of South Africa."

- South African Amateur Swimming Federation (non-racial)

Until 1962 Black sports organizations were loosely united together by so-called "Inter-Race Sports Boards" which provided inter-racial competitions at regional and national levels.

Of all the inter-race boards, the South African Soccer Federation was by far the strongest and most powerful as regards playing strength and spectator appeal. In 1962, the Federation, realizing that several racial clashes had resulted from such artificial compartmentalization, decided to go completely non-racial at all levels.

Soon, other inter-race boards followed suit, and the full gambit of apartheid legislation became operative. The white sports officials immediately realizing that this move of the Black organizations was a direct threat to racist sports, co-operated fully with the police and government officials to either crush or fragment non-racial sports.

Despite major problems (including police intimidation, closing of sports grounds, etc.) Blacks persevered with the principles of non-racialism. Now, non-racial sport enjoys a fair degree of popularity among the Blacks of South Africa. Although all Blacks support the principle of non-racialism, unfortunately everyone is unable to practise it because of intimidation and duress.

Some non-racial sports organizations

South African Soccer Federation

Football is, by far, the most popular sport among the Black people of South Africa. Although the Black footballers use inferior facilities, several footballers have gained international fame in America, Portugal, Britain and Holland.

The South African Soccer Federation, with a membership of well over 50,000 footballers, organizes a national tournament biennially. Their last tournament was held in Johannesburg in July 1976, when ten regional units competed for the national trophy.

The high standard of play of the Federation clubs has attracted extremely large crowds. At the last Federation Knock-Out Club Final the gates had to be shut half-an-hour before the match commenced because the ground was filled beyond capacity.

In contrast, white racist football attendances are falling. Several clubs are considering disbanding or amalgamating because of the poor attendances.

Some years ago the white officials deliberately arranged attractive white football fixtures whenever a Federation match was scheduled to lure Black spectators. After an initial period of success this plan back-fired on the racists and they now find themselves deprived of a large Black patronage.

South African Cricket Board of Control

There is now great confusion within the ranks of the South African Cricket Board of Control (SACBOC) which controls more than ninety per cent of Black cricket.

In 1976 officials of SACBOC misled the Black cricketers into believing that white cricket administrators were at last genuine and honest in their search for mixed cricket which the white newspapers termed "normal cricket". Some officials of the non-racial and white bodies met and formed a so-called "Motivating Committee" to work out the blueprint for South African cricket. The President of the white South African Cricket Association said that the government had given the go-ahead.

The provincial non-racial unions in the Transvaal, Natal and Griqualand West decided to join the whites in "normal cricket".

No sooner had the "normal" leagues started and publicized internationally when white hypocrisy was immediately exposed. "Nuffield Week For Whites Only", "Jeppe Club's No To Black Players", "Indians Quit Mixed Cricket", "Mixed Clubs Are Out", etc., were the newspaper headlines inside South Africa.

One Natal cricketer, Mr. Jagoo Gavender, mildly put it this way:

"How's this for "normal" cricket? You play the game you love at a certain ground on the Natal North Coast but cannot use the verandah where drinks and food are served!

"Only minutes before our game against Maidstone, to which we really looked forward, we were told that facilities at the clubhouse were for whites only.

"In other words, Maidstone could use the clubhouse and changerooms but Royals couldn't at all because we happened to be Blacks - but playing a normal game.

"And being the hosts we were naturally frustrated and embarrassed to say the least as we could not even use the verandah to entertain our visitors.

"We drove into town to have meals together but found that the 40 minutes allocated for lunch was insufficient so had to borrow another 20 minutes from playing time to make do." (Post, Durban, 26 January 1977)

Black clubs complained bitterly of the discriminatory arrangements and stated that they will only continue if the non-racial SACBOC's constitution is fully adhered to:

- (a) to foster a spirit of goodwill, equality and fraternity among all cricketers in particular and other sportsmen generally, and to oppose and prevent any discrimination among sportsmen on the grounds of race, colour, caste, creed or religion.
- (b) to achieve the selection of representative teams in South Africa on merit alone and to promote, encourage and advance the playing of cricket on a non-racial basis from club level upward and to ensure that all cricketers irrespective of race, colour, caste, creed or religion are provided with equal opportunities, playing and training facilities to exploit their talents to the fullest.

Mr. Hassan Howa, former President of SACBOC, aptly remarked of "normal cricket":

"It was, in fact, turned into a showpiece of propaganda for the outside world - part of the effort to get South Africa back into international cricket."

"Normal cricket" proved to be just an extension of the government's "multi-national" sports policy which was overwhelmingly rejected by the Blacks and the whole world.

However, it was too late. Some non-racial bodies were conned by the whites and their stooges.

Having no access to constitutional recourse, nearly all the Black clubs withdrew from the so-called "normal" league. The matter rests there until September 1977 when the cricket season resumes.

Meanwhile Mr. Rashid Varachia of SACBOC is believed to be presently touring India, Pakistan, West Indies and England to canvass for South Africa's re-admission into international cricket.

South African Amateur Swimming Federation

The South African Amateur Swimming Federation celebrated its tenth year of existence in April 1976. Mr. Archie Hulley, its Vice President, deputizing for the dynamic Mr. Morgan Naidoo, who was banned by the racist government for his outspoken views on apartheid sport, summarized the activities of his Federation in its official brochure, A Decade Of Endeavour:

"Those of us who, by design and intent, are irrevocably committed to the work of the South African Amateur Swimming Federation, regard its principles to be so fundamental that they represent a way of life, a moral calling. True enough that non-racialism in sport does not find particular favour with a large section of white South Africa which has, for over three centuries, enjoyed a privilege from which has flowed a sense of racial arrogance and artificial superiority that are being questioned with increasing frequency. What is important is that our own effort, in the short span of just a decade, as minimal as it may be, represents a significant contribution towards the change in thinking and the metamorphosis that the South African sports scene is undergoing. But it is true also that we do subscribe to and believe implicitly in non-racialism in sport which has not, as yet, by any means, "arrived"!

"Confined in the main to suburban pools with their severe limitations our progress has been truly phenomenal. We have graduated from mediocre items for events of 50 metres and less to the present state when some of our top swimmers are considered to have sufficient mettle, determination and ability as to be able to measure up to standards that are truly worthy in sport. While we certainly do not claim to have swimmers in our ranks who can compare, at the present time, with the performance of the best in open company, we know that their potential cries out to be developed. It is therefore an indictment on the attitude of the privileged that we Blacks continue, wilfully and deliberately, to be relegated in a frightening state of permanency, to second-class citizenship in the land of our birth, in almost every walk of life.

"In the face of such foreboding odds nothing but good has emerged from the challenge that has faced SAASwIF and its affiliates. We know and we believe that if we continue to build on the solid foundation established by our predecessors our swimmers will be recognized and accepted both by FINA and right thinking peoples the world over."

Besides constituting and stabilizing the principles of non-racial swimming from school level upwards, the Federation has vigorously campaigned for acceptance into the International Swimming Federation (FINA). Its affiliation will be discussed at the Bureau Meeting of FINA to be held in West Berlin in July 1978.

The South African Council on Sport (SACCS)

Despondent and impatient at the lack of progress towards non-racial sport in South Africa, representatives of a number of national sports organizations gathered in Durban for a Conference in September 1970.

This Conference resolved to tackle a number of problems confronting sport. Among the main resolutions were:

- i. To strive for a complete, non-racial sports structure;
- ii. To express strong opposition to and expose discrimination in sports sponsorship;
- iii. To seek facilities that are deserving of all sportsmen, irrespective of their colour; and
- iv. To form a national, non-racial sports organization.

A subsequent meeting of this Conference held in 1973 made a detailed study of racialism in sport and the failure of white bodies to show a genuine desire to resolve the situation. At this later Conference was born the South African Council on Sport (SACOS).

SACOS is now a serious threat to the white Olympic Council and it has geared itself to become a real force in South Africa and all indications are that it will soon be. It has already been bestowed the following accolade from the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa:

"With great pleasure and honour, we take this opportunity to congratulate you for the tremendous work you have done in fighting 'njustice of apartheid sports policy in South Africa.

"We are glad to inform you that, during the last session of the Extraordinary Executive Committee meeting with the Presidents of the African Sports Confederations held in Yaounde from January 24 to 26, 1971, your Council was granted observer status.

"As soon as your country is free, you will be accorded the full affiliation to the Council. We would like you to know that all sportsmen of Africa are behind you in this struggle. We assure you our unshaken support in the fight against apartheid."

Problems confronting non-racial sports

Besides constant police intimidation of non-racial sports officials, the banning of Morgan Naidoo and the systematic government policy of refusing travel documents to non-racial sports officials, several other problems confront non-racial sport in South Africa.

Facilities

"A couple of years ago, during an inter-provincial cricket match at Tills Crescent, Durban, a famous white Springbok player remarked: How can you play in such conditions?"

"If he was shocked, one wonders what his reaction would have been had he seen the Queenspark grounds in Vrededorp, Johannesburg.

"The regally-named Queenspark, sandy, dusty and bumpy, with broken glass sprinkled all over the place, is a sportsmen's nightmare.

"Yet across the road stands another ground in striking contrast. A lush carpet of grass which stands almost empty throughout the year. The difference is that that ground is in a white area, and Queenspark in a Black suburb.

"Black sportsmen, for as long as they can remember, have been performing in atrocious conditions and it is amazing that they have continued when it could have been so simple to give up in despair.

"And if the players must be given all the credit for keeping sport alive, the officials must deserve high praise for maintaining the enthusiasm.

"There has been a gradual and stumbling advance for Black sportsmen in recent years. But facilities leave a lot to be desired and when Black officials point out that Black sportsmen cannot hope to reach international standards without equal opportunities, they are accused - you might not believe it - of bringing politics into sport. "

- Mr. Ameer Akalwala in South African Soccer Federation Magazine, 1976.

The South African Amateur Swimming Federation conducted a survey 1973 into the availability of swimming pools in the country for the various population groups. The results, even though not unexpected, have been startling.

Of the 75 towns/cities, for which figures were available, all had, at least, one pool for whites; 64 of these did not have a single pool for Blacks. Again, for only those cities for which population and pool figures were available, a total of 2,084,996 Africans have a mere 16 pools and the 1,757,045 whites have 87 pools.

Pretoria, at the moment, does not have a single pool for any of the Black groups but has 8 for whites - the same city which so proudly showed the world that it could host the so-called "multi-national" South African Games.

Sponsorship

The marked discrimination practised by big white business organizations, including international companies, is a clear example of the manner in which racial sport enjoys all the privileges.

In a survey conducted in 1972, SACOS revealed that whites (4,2 million) benefitted by something like R2,606,750 while Blacks received a mere R102,150.

Some of the companies grossly guilty of partial sponsorship are:

Stellenbosch Farmers Winery
South African Permanent Building Society
Ford Motor Company
Rothmans
Pro-Nutro
Shell South Africa
Coca Cola
Peugeot Motor
Datsun Motor
Gillette

Press and Television

The South African media, in collaboration with the white sports administrators, provide abundant cover for white sports and the so-called "multi-racials". If one picks up a newspaper in South Africa one gets the impression that Blacks do not play sport.

Most of the white-owned daily and week-end newspapers openly discriminate. When it comes to controversial matters, attempts are made to reflect white racial sports organizations in the best possible light.

The government-controlled television will not televise Black sport.

Collaborators

Like all oppressed societies, South Africa is not without its share of collaborators. Black stooges are included in the delegations to all international congresses. Very seldom are they allowed to speak. The South Africans took several Blacks with them to the Montreal Olympic Games in 1976. They were used extensively in front of cameras. The only other purpose they served in Montreal was to distribute South African racist literature to the public.

Appendix

NON-RACIAL SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Membership</u>
S.A.Amateur Athletics Board	5 000
S.A.Badminton Association	3 000
S.A.Amateur Bodybuilding Federation	2 000
S.A.Cycling Association	2 000 (estimated)
S.A.Cricket Board of Control	20 000
S.A.Darts Board of Control	5 000
S.A.Hockey Board	not known
S.A.Rugby Union	10 000
S.A.Soccer Federation	50 000
S.A.Amateur Swimming Federation	8 000
Southern Africa Lawn Tennis Union	15 000
S.A.Table Tennis Board	not known
S.A.Amateur Weightlifting Federation	not known
S.A.Netball Association	not known

These non-racial bodies are affiliated to the South African Council on Sport: President, Mr. Hassan Howa; Patron, Mr. George Singh; Secretary, Mr. M.N. Pather.