CHAPTER THREE

Products, Training, and Technology

DAVE DAY

The period from 1650 to 1800 witnessed important transformations in political structures, ideological systems, popular culture, and ordinary life in Britain, primarily as the result of the economic and demographic outcomes of increasing industrialization, which resulted in the development of factories and the expansion of urban conurbations. Although agricultural products continued to be the chief source of income, commercial interests grew in importance as masters in the craft guilds became capitalist employers and the gentry, a concept representing a lower level of the governing class of gentlemen, became more influential. As societal relationships changed, there were concomitant changes in the organization and meanings of games and recreational activities.

For Bourg and Gouguet (2005: 4) and Cronin (2014: 30), modern sport emerged in Britain because of an industrial revolution that began in the early eighteenth century and accelerated significantly after the 1760s. However, sports did not develop spontaneously and processes such as emergent capitalism, boundary-making, standardization, codification, and specialization had long been evident (Struna 2000). McClelland (2007) and Kruger (2008) have argued that athletic activities were displaying characteristics of modern sport by the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, while Behringer (2009) conceptualized this period as a distinct epoch in sports history, due to the high levels of institutionalization and standardization of sport in many western European countries. Tomlinson and Young (2011: 10) suggest that modern sports forms existed well before the eighteenth century and argued that from 1450 sport became increasingly institutionalized by the creation and codification of rules, the building of dedicated sport spaces, the existence of a European-wide trade in sports equipment, and the emergence of a professional class of athletes, coaches, and officials. Further contradicting the notion that modern sport evolved following industrialization, Guttmann ([1978] 2004: 85) viewed modern sport as a by-product of the scientific revolution of the European enlightenment, and Szymanski (2008) saw this a critical starting point rooted in new forms of associativity. However, Vamplew (2016: 343) has argued convincingly that, while some of its precursors might have originated before widespread industrialization, the institutionalization of sports required further stimuli. As the spatial and temporal parameters of leisure changed for much of the British population and were influenced by the evolution of a triadic model of class, changes in work patterns and religious beliefs, greater urbanization, and increasing societal control, sports became more regulated. Alongside rule development and the growth of sports architecture, there was an increase in the production of sporting goods and equipment, the numbers of specialized teachers, trainers, coaches, and sporting entrepreneurs, and the growth of sports reporting and advertisement (Huggins 2017: 119–20). Allied to this was a change in the perception of the sporting body and an application of industrial discipline to its preparation and presentation. All these factors are considered in this chapter, which reflects Vamplew's view that the term sports product incorporates the player product, that is, games and their associated rules, equipment and costume, instruction and assistance, facilities, and clubs; the spectator product, supplied by those facilitating the viewing of sports through the provision of grandstands for example; and the associated product, initiatives such as catering or sports newspapers that were attributable to sports expansion but not directly related (Vamplew 2018). The focus here is on the ways in which these factors emerged in Great Britain, widely regarded as the nation that provided the prototype for subsequent global developments, during the Industrial Revolution. This was a critical period in the commercialization and rationalization of existing sports and the emergence of new sports forms.

INDUSTRIALIZATION AND COMMODIFICATION

In the mid-eighteenth century, the English economy began an accelerated structural transformation in which industry became more prominent. Industrialization affected popular sport because factory work required regular, long hours and necessitated new work patterns (Perkin 1981: 9). The requirements of the capitalist economy for a large, locally available, and disciplined workforce meant that many traditional rural sports and sporting occasions were either impossible in the urban context or were incompatible with the industrial economy. What workers did in their free time was important to employers concerned about productivity (Vamplew 1998: 25) and sports without time constraints, such as baiting and cockfighting, were anachronisms in an industrial society dependent upon punctuality (Krzemienski 2004: 171–3). Recreational opportunities in the early industrial cities and towns were few and open space was at a premium, while time free from work was virtually non-existent. In urban areas, leisure activities increasingly had to be paid for, and early industrial workers barely received a subsistence income.

Conversely, urbanization and industrialization also stimulated sporting participation and widened access to commercial leisure pursuits, since cities held the populations, the communication and transportation networks, the discretionary incomes, and the clearer segments of time that promoters needed. Cities were also the focus of concerns about health, morality, and community, which continually served as rationales for new and reformed sports products (Hardy 1997).

Although industrialization contributed to the commercialization of sports, many aspects of sports were already commercialized, emphasizing that it was a recognizable industry, overseen by the involvement of promoters as employers of labor (Vamplew 2016: 344). For Vamplew (2018) these sports entrepreneurs were change agents who attempted to increase the output of the sports industry, improve the consumer experience, or raise interest in sports products by developing new markets and creating new products, be they physical or less tangible, such as the formation of clubs and associations. This process occurred as soon as sports had been recognized for their profit potential and a growing demand for purpose-built sporting facilities had given rise to commercialized tennis courts, bowling alleys, and greens for gentlemen in London at the beginning of the sixteenth century. These facilities were embedded in a wider network of similar semi-public facilities such as alehouses, taverns, and inns, many of them having adjacent spaces where it was possible to play games for which the proprietors provided equipment such as balls, bowls, and cudgels (Schattner 2014: 198, 204). Sports such as bowling, riding, and billiards were considered health-enhancing and curative by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century physicians, and sports facilities provided places where men could meet. In this respect, bowling greens, tennis courts, and dancing-rooms fulfilled much the same function as coffee houses, assembly rooms, or the baths (Schattner 2014: 208). From the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the nobility retreated to spa towns for the summer, and sixteen spas were founded during this period, developments that were closely connected to sports provisions since exercise was considered an essential component of hydrotherapy. Along with tennis and bowling, patrons enjoyed ball games like wind ball and yarn ball, hawking and shooting, horse racing, cudgeling and wrestling matches, and foot races (Schattner 2014: 207; Sul 1999: 151–3).

These athletic contests, often associated with festivals or fairs and as additional attractions at race meetings or cricket matches, gradually became

FIGURE 3.1: Early eighteenth-century lawn bowls. Courtesy of Getty Images.

more frequent. Foot racing, or pedestrianism, required no equipment or outlay, and personal diaries suggest that it was popular during the seventeenth century. Pepys watched a foot race in Hyde Park in 1660 and recorded how all of London was talking of another in July 1663, "run this day on Banstead Downes between Lee, the Duke of Richmond's footman, and a tyler, a famous runner. And Lee hath beat him; though the King and Duke of York and all men almost did bet three or four to one upon the tyler's head" (Griffith 1997: 237). Eighteenth-century foot races for both men and women, smock races, such as the one in Thomas Marchant's fields at Hurstpierpoint in June 1721, were the sites of innumerable wagers in towns, as well as featuring in the Cotswold Games. Sometimes races were highly organized, like the two-mile events held during Marlborough Races in 1739, for which men paid an entrance fee of half a crown, women one shilling. By this time, some London tracks were already charging for admission and team races were not unknown, with a Sandwich team easily defeating a Canterbury team in 1769 (Underdown 2000: 27). Running contests became widely publicized events, often attracting crowds of many thousands among whom heavy betting was commonplace, and pedestrianism was a recognized working profession. Most seventeenth- and eighteenth-century pedestrians were servants, tradesmen, or farmers, and the best runners were often retained by aristocratic patrons, such as the Duke of

Queensberry who reputedly "kept running footmen . . . he was in the habit, before engaging them, of trying their paces . . . up and down Piccadilly . . . watching and timing them from his balcony" (Thoms 1856: 9). He subsequently put them under the guidance of a professional trainer to prepare them for competition, treating them as "he would a running horse, under like discipline" (Sinclair 1806: 10).

By the eighteenth century, provision for sport appeared in the form of swimming baths, riding schools, fencing academies, lessons in the pugilistic art, and boats for hire. London promoters saw profitable opportunities in real tennis, and a new court in Great Windmill Street in 1743 charged patrons up to two shillings a set, with the use of a billiard table while they were waiting. Thomas Higginson offered both tennis and fives at his court in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where he gave lessons and sold balls and rackets (Underdown 2000: 53). Ancient martial traditions were allied to modern commercial practices with wrestling becoming both sport and spectacle, as carnival wrestling existed parallel to wrestling as an athletic contest (Lindaman 2000). Fencing was increasingly promoted as a skill that contributed to the development of a polite gentleman, and Domenico Angelo, whose fencing school was established at Carlisle House in 1763, emphasized its civilizing benefits for persons of rank in "giving them additional strength of body, proper confidence, grace, activity, and address; enabling them, likewise, to pursue other exercises with greater facility" (Shoemaker 2002: 528–30).

PATRONAGE, PRIVATE AND PUBLIC PROVISION

Inevitably, social class played a major role in the emergence and development of organized sports. Although urbanization provided sports entrepreneurs with concentrated markets, income levels, even in the eighteenth century, were such that popular sports remained dependent upon patronage. After property, this was the most important factor in determining status, and the number of "friends" he could "oblige" reflected a man's position in society (Perkin 1981: 23, 45). Sports were both highly political and highly politicized for the English elite. Culturally and politically, sports had many uses and meanings and, if used carefully, could connect a gentleman to the seat of power. Socially, sports were valuable as a method of establishing and consolidating social networks so, while they were expensive in time, effort, and money, sports were important markers for the contemporary gentleman (Williams 2008: 389). Over time, gentlemanly sports became central to the notion of British high culture, and upper-class sports were associated with traditional rural values, patriotism, and national strength by the 1780s. Sporting spirit was supposedly synonymous with national spirit, helping to foster the moral, economic, and physical strength of the landed classes, and the involvement of the social elite gave organized sports a high profile (Huggins 2008: 364). Since sporting rituals were an occasion for the improvement of morality and order, the social elite could utilize these to demonstrate their influence. Sharing pastimes with the commoners did not impair their dignity since they could reinforce the hierarchy through a variety of devices, such as physical segregation, with the fashionable sitting in privileged positions close to the action (Sul 2000: 173, 176), in ringside positions at boxing, or paying to sit in the grandstands at racecourses (Vamplew 2018).

Upper-class "contentments" demanded large spaces and placed heavy demands on the environment. Horses, hunting, hawking, fowling, fishing, and cockfighting, as well as archery, bowls, and tennis had a substantial impact on the rural landscape, as well as on country-house architecture (Huggins 2008: 364). Great mansions were surrounded by extensive landed estates, which were exploited for field sports, and the stable blocks and kennels attached to many great houses reflected hunting hobbies as well as transport needs. Sometimes private trainers trained horses on the estates and sometimes land was utilized for a stud farm. From the eighteenth century onwards, hunting, shooting, or fishing lodges, with up to twenty beds and stables for fifteen to twenty horses, were built on estates, and billiard rooms began to appear in country houses. Access to such spaces marked out and maintained the hierarchy, sustaining social and gender order (Huggins 2008: 372–5; 2017: 120–2), although there are hints that aristocratic women could take up falconry and play tennis as well as enjoying coursing, deer hunting, angling, and archery. Queen Elizabeth I was a keen sportswoman, a capable and enthusiastic rider who regularly hunted and shot into old age. Queen Anne kenneled the Royal Buckhounds in Windsor Forest and hunted herself, while the royal court, including women, hunted deer in Richmond New Park in October 1734 (*The London Journal*, October 19, 1734). However, while the succession of these two queens had an impact both on the structure of the court and the delivery of royal sports, it is questionable that this had any significant impact upon the participation of elite women in sports. While there does not seem to have been any rigidly prescriptive code limiting women's participation, although they were expected to ride side-saddle, women do appear to have occupied a marginal position on the hunting field, and during the eighteenth century, when the new sport of foxhunting emerged, there was some opposition to their presence. Although horse racing always attracted upper-class women spectators to the more exclusive grandstands, their open active participation as jockeys or trainers was unacceptable (Huggins 2008: 381–2).

Clubs and Associations

Szymanski (2008) locates the origin of English sports within eighteenth-century associativity rather than in nineteenth-century industrialization and, from the late seventeenth century onward, the voluntary associations and clubs formed by the elite and upper middling groups facilitated the construction of a sporting culture. Whether they were dedicated to debating, the delights of passing wind, or to sporting activities, voluntary associations generated spaces which helped to construct relationships of rivalry and bonding between males. Coursing clubs emerged toward the end of the eighteenth century with Swaffham Coursing Club in Norfolk being formed by George Walpole, the third Earl of Orford, in 1776, Ashdown Park Club was founded by Lord Craven in 1780, and Yorkshire's Malton Club in 1781. A skating club was established in Edinburgh in 1742, and the first handbook on figure skating was published in London thirty years later. In curling, one of the earliest recorded clubs was Muthill, of Perth, founded in 1739, while England's first yacht club, the Cumberland Fleet, later The Royal Thames Yacht Club, came into being in 1775. Falconry was revitalized when Walpole and Colonel Thornton founded the Falconers Club in 1771. The Honorable Company of Edinburgh Golfers was established in 1744 and golf clubs such as the Knuckle Club, which became Blackheath Golf Club in 1822, were formed in England. Archery societies were created in Darlington in 1758, in Richmond, Yorkshire in 1755, and in Wharfedale in 1737, and Sir Ashton Lever subsequently formed the Toxophilite Society in 1781. By 1791, the now Royal Toxophilites had a membership of 168 and a small cottage industry had developed manufacturing bows, arrows, and other equipment (Johnes 2004: 195–6).

The driving force behind the establishment of rules, clubs, competitions, specialized venues, and professional performers was a passion for gambling. Aristocrats and gentry set out to win and the prospect of winning a bet could add to the excitement of watching the contest, but only if the initial odds of winning were evenly balanced. This required a high organizational level so the first codifications of sporting rules—Broughton's rules for boxing in 1743, the Cricket Club's laws of 1744, and the Jockey Club's rules of 1752—were by eighteenth-century clubmen for games that involved serious betting. Horse racing began to be controlled by the Jockey Club, formed about 1750, by owners and breeders meeting at the Star and Garter coffeehouse in Pall Mall, after which racing became more regulated, and the St. Leger (1778), the Oaks (1779), and the Derby (1780) had been established by the end of the century. In 1766, Richard Tattersall opened premises to auction horses at Hyde Park Corner, London, then purchased the adjacent Turf Inn and rebuilt it to include a "subscription room" in which clients could place and settle bets. The English Racing Calendar was established in 1773 and the Stud Book was first published by Messrs Weatherby in 1791. Cricket had been played under unwritten rules before they were written down in the articles of agreement for a match in 1727, which specified time, place, stakes, numbers on each side, and how to settle disputes. The White Conduit, an offshoot of an aristocratic club that also met at the Star and Garter in Pall Mall, issued both the 1744 Laws of Cricket, which proscribed features such as the length of the pitch, size of the wickets, and forms of dismissal, as well as the 1774 revisions, while their ground at White Conduit House in Islington became the venue for big matches in London (Underwood 2000: 158–9). The club eventually became the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), which, like the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews (R and A), was not set up initially to govern the sport, but, because of the prestige of their members, they invariably settled disputes, drew up agreements on rules or etiquette, and gradually assumed control.

Commercial Provision

During the eighteenth century, British elite patronage of popular recreation declined, partly because of enclosure and other changes in the agricultural economy that weakened gentry-tenant bonds (Holt 1989 [1992]). The middle and professional classes in cricket and the commercial entertainers in prizefighting took over as promoters, making both players and paying spectators more important. Cricket, pedestrianism, prizefighting, rowing, and horse racing had "a long history of mass spectating, profit-seeking promoters, paid performers, stake-money contests and gambling" (Tranter 1998: 14–15) and they could draw five-figure crowds by the 1760s, although crowds at these pre-railway events were large partly because they were rare occurrences and partly because they were held on unenclosed land, where attendance was free (Huggins and Tolson 2001). However, specialist facilities which required payment were already in existence in and around major cities. There were indoor riding arenas, bear and bullbaiting arenas, cockpits, bowling greens, inns, and taverns, and sports buildings erected specifically for ball games (Huggins 2017: 120–2), while marathon pedestrian events gradually moved away from point-to-point challenges, with their varying terrains, gradients, and surfaces, to the use of measured courses and specialized running areas (Brailsford 1999: 204).

The recreations of working-class males had traditionally been restricted to the pleasures of the tavern. Urban inns and alehouses were often specialized in terms of their clientele, not merely stratified in serving different ranks of society but specifically catering for occupations and trades, and they were places where men were paid as well as where they spent some of their wages. Eighteenth-century landlords were significant leisure entrepreneurs, motivated by the profits from the sales of food and drink that accompanied sporting activities, and they catered for a repertoire of amusements, including cockfighting, bullbaiting, horse racing, dancing contests, and games of skill and strength. Ten prison-bars enjoyed popularity in London in the 1740s, and contestants took the game seriously. When two Cheshire champions played ten of the rest of England in 1744, the Cheshire men walked off and would only agree to a rematch if their opponents promised to accept the umpires' decisions

(Underdown 2000: 81–2). Aficionados of the turf or prizefighting found pubs which were centers for these activities, and increasing numbers of boxing and wrestling contests were promoted and advertised (Golby and Purdue 1999: 40), while alternative pedestrian facilities were frequently provided by innkeepers as the countryside was industrially developed (Lile 2000). Sunday was the busiest day of the week for the inns and alehouses on the outskirts of London, many of which provided sports such as duck hunting, dogfighting, and badger baiting (Brailsford 1984b).

Continuity and change were closely intertwined in martial practices, which were susceptible to variations in the social climate and context, as well as technological developments. The decline of archery as an essential skill, for example, was the result of a reduction in the bow's usefulness as a weapon of war, although public swordplay performances remained visible at fairs and in many provincial towns after the Restoration. Prizefights for money attracted large crowds as professional swordsmen developed traveling companies, holding contests in inn-yards and on the stage. Bands of "gladiators" paraded the streets, preceded by a drummer, and fought shows with blunted, flat swords and bucklers (Misson [1697] 1719: 307). Though governed by strict rules, the contests were often bloody affairs. Pepys describes seeing one man so cut about the head and legs in 1663 that "he was all over blood" while another match in 1667 resulted in a brawl between rival supporters (Griffith 1997: 218, 534). In 1705, Thomas Brown graphically described an exhibition at the bear-garden when two men "cut large Collops out of one another to divert the Mob, and make Work for the Suregeons [sic]" (Guttman 1985: 114).

Sporting Animals

Given the levels of violence tolerated between sporting humans, it is little surprise that animals were treated as objects for sport and entertainment. Hunting wild animals as a pastime had evolved into sharply divided class-conscious sports, and hunting knowledge had become a signifier of gentility. The Duke of Norfolk had drawn up rules for coursing with greyhounds during Elizabeth's reign, and coursing matches, properly judged by the "Laws of the Leash," were frequent, while angling was increasingly supported by informed and technical literature. Sports facilities needed specialized staff and animal sports were labor-intensive, with hunting requiring kennel staff and huntsmen, along with park-keepers to maintain the hunting grounds. In addition, a wide range of specialist sporting equipment was essential, and supplying the needs of the sporting elite became big business. Falconry was notable for its international trade in hawks, and there was a market in providing the tools associated with the sport (Williams 2008: 398). Hawking vied with hunting as a noble sport, and falconry retained its high status for some time, aided by a printing press that produced treatises on manning, feeding, hooding, and training, but the

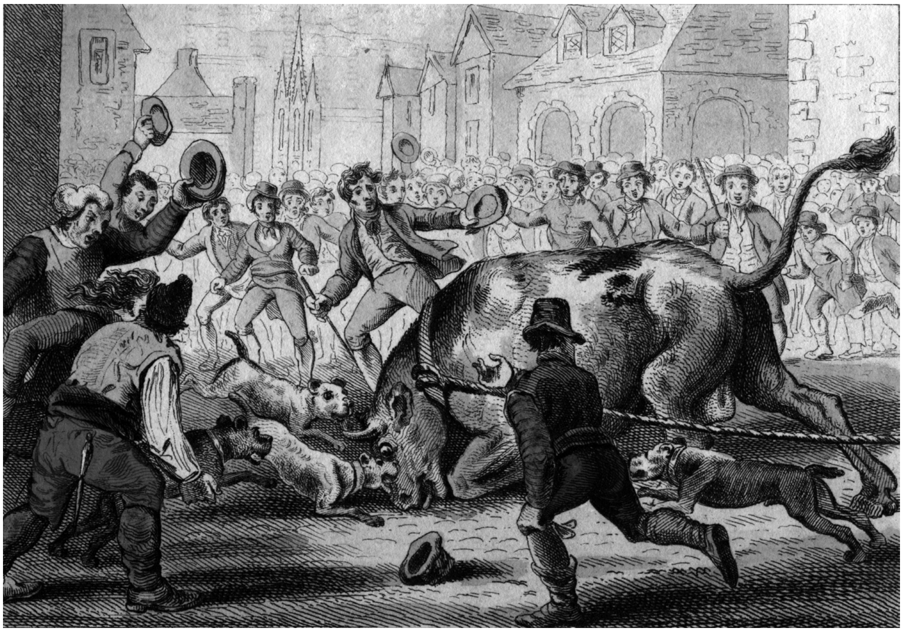

FIGURE 3.2: London, bullbaiting, print, 1816. Photograph by Universal History Archive, courtesy of Getty Images.

sport had declined by the end of the seventeenth century when estate workers were diverted towards gamekeeping and servicing guns and dogs as gentlemen began to compete as marksmen (Grassby 1997).

The training of animals for baiting by dogs was undertaken by "jugglers," professional entertainers, and several places in London were specifically set aside for baiting, with the Paris Garden in Southwark containing two bear gardens. Although curbs were introduced during the Commonwealth, bearbaiting, bullbaiting, and dogfighting were all revived as popular pastimes after the Restoration (Taylor 2004: 45). Considerable care was devoted to the breeding and training of dogs for ratting contests and dogfights, which might last up to six hours. Bulldogs were crossed with terriers to obtain the best strain and dogs were trained so finely that it was necessary to blanket and muzzle them during their exercise (Wymer 1949: 211). Houghton (1694) noted that large wagers attended bullbaiting contests and that members of the aristocracy, as well as the general populace, traveled great distances to spectate. Cockfighting also attracted aristocratic as well as plebeian spectators. It was a highly organized sport, with regular matches fought on a county basis, and one which offered little opportunity for cheating. While each fight was termed a battle, several battles, taken collectively, constituted a main. Before the first battle, owners provided the referee with lists showing the names and weights of their contestants, and he would match them to prepare his "match-bill" (Wymer 1949: 84–92, 210–11).

In horse racing, the first professional trainer, Tregonwell Frampton, appeared at Newmarket in the time of Charles II and he dominated the Newmarket scene for almost fifty years, receiving an annual stipend of £1,000 to look after the royal horses from 1700. Equestrian training was not limited to patrons of the turf. Philip Astley capitalized on his army training by working as a riding instructor and by performing as a trick-rider. By 1768, his company had established a new genre of entertainment comprising feats of physical skill based in an equestrian circle, the fifth display of trick-riding to be set up around London since Thomas Johnston had exhibited feats of agility on horseback ten years earlier. Circus equestrians advertised riding lessons at a price affordable to many and published popular riding and horse-breaking manuals. Their skills were widely appreciated, and they derived honorary status from being experts and tutors in a prime accomplishment of gentlemen. They also reinforced notions of effective progress through rational training techniques and a more enlightened understanding of animals than their predecessors (Kwint 2002: 75, 77, 84, 89).

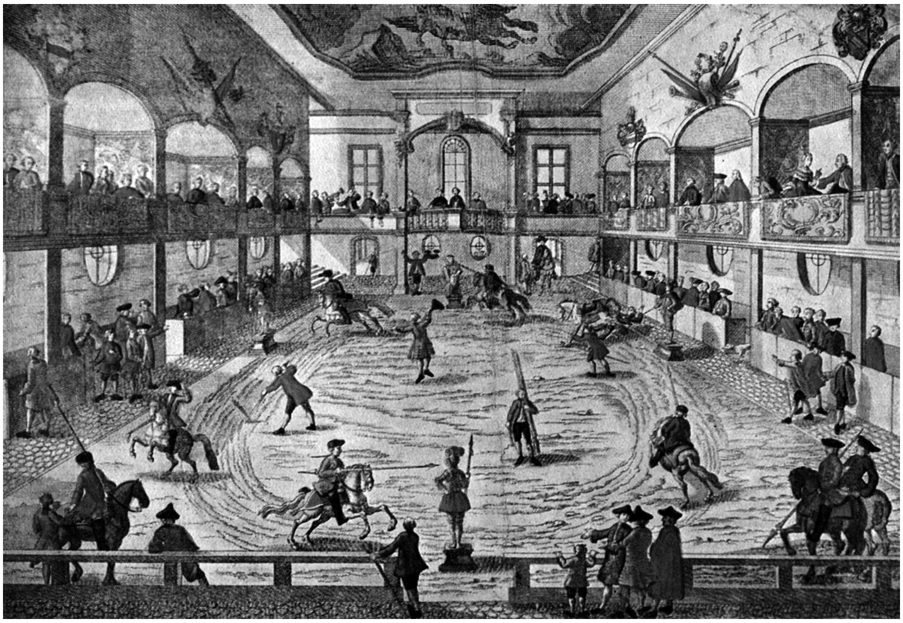

FIGURE 3.3: An eighteenth-century horse riding school. Photograph by Lebrecht Authors, courtesy of Alamy.

PROFESSIONAL SPORTSMEN AND ENTREPRENEURS

While equestrian events continued to be supported by all levels of society, animal blood sports ran counter to the bourgeois work ethic by encouraging drunkenness, gambling, and absenteeism. By 1800, the cockpit at St. James was being used for state meetings, the two bullrings in Nottingham had gone out of use, and butchers were no longer providing bulls for baiting. As blood sports came under pressure from changing sensibilities, the human performer moved to center stage. Making a living as an athlete often became a feature of most sports as soon as they achieved some form of organization. Real tennis professionals were working in France by the late sixteenth century, and the existence of seventeenth-century professionals in billiards and tennis suggests that these activities could be profitable. Bowls was a game where skilled players and matchmakers made a living from its regulation in the Stuart period (Henricks 1991: 114–15), while eighteenth-century fives player John Cavanagh made money by playing matches at Copenhagen house for wagers and dinners (Watson 1903: 419–21). Other exponents included Powell, who filled his gallery in the court in St. Martin's Street at half-a-crown a head, and John Davies, the racket, tennis, and fives player (Egan 1823: 42–7). Sports were a way of augmenting incomes for gentlemen of limited means, such as Richard Bouchier, who "if he could have lived upon two or three hundred a year the tennis courts might have maintained him" and who won considerable sums not so much by his skill, but by "his dexterity in hiding it" (Birley 1996: 16).

By the eighteenth century, the practice of making money from sport as a promoter or a performer was commonplace. The growing importance of gate money led naturally to greater numbers of professional performers, and the best players were in increasing demand so that, by the end of the century, the freelance professional sportsman was as common as the hired man. The aristocracy had no problem with the fact that lower-class men could earn a living by their sporting prowess, since this was merely a natural extension of a social order full of inequalities, and so professional sport was neither morally nor socially suspect. Rowing races began with professional watermen competing against each other for wagers and, as their skill developed, watermen began to challenge one another to matches of £200 or more a side. They also instituted regattas, with the annual Doggett's Coat and Badge Race, rowed first in 1717, becoming notable for its fine livery prize. In June 1775, several watermen held an open regatta before Ranelagh Gardens, and formal elite regattas, frequently using watermen to steer, became popular on the Thames in the late eighteenth century (Wymer 1949: 173; Underdown 2000: 82). Golf, horse racing, cricket, pedestrianism, and pugilism all had paid performers by the mid-eighteenth century, controlled by an aristocracy who often made money from sport but who could also afford to lose it.

Boxing

As a sport, prizefighting was further advanced than pedestrianism, because it had nationally recognized written rules and a championship, and pugilism gained a strong hold upon men of all classes in eighteenth-century Britain at a time when "manly males" were supposedly under threat from the dissipating effects of luxury and its effeminizing consequences. During the century, a strong link developed between boxing and national identity, as England, especially London, became a cosmopolitan capital of the boxing world. Through their powerful physiques and calm attitudes, fighters represented an ideal of English manhood that for some commentators highlighted sturdiness, courage, and manliness (Krzemienski 2004: 166–7, 170). Ruti Ungar argues that boxing played a role in constructing and contesting class hierarchies at a time of heightened social tensions and that it inculcated supposedly English manly characteristics of humanity, fairness, and magnanimity towards a fallen enemy (2011: 368, 375–6).

Boxing was viewed as an antidote to the effeminizing influences of corruption and money on the nation, and as an important means to national military strength. It became a fashion perhaps experienced as keenly by contemporary men of all classes as the "culture of sensibility" that describes this period of increasing politeness in society. Paradoxically, although gentlemen would not

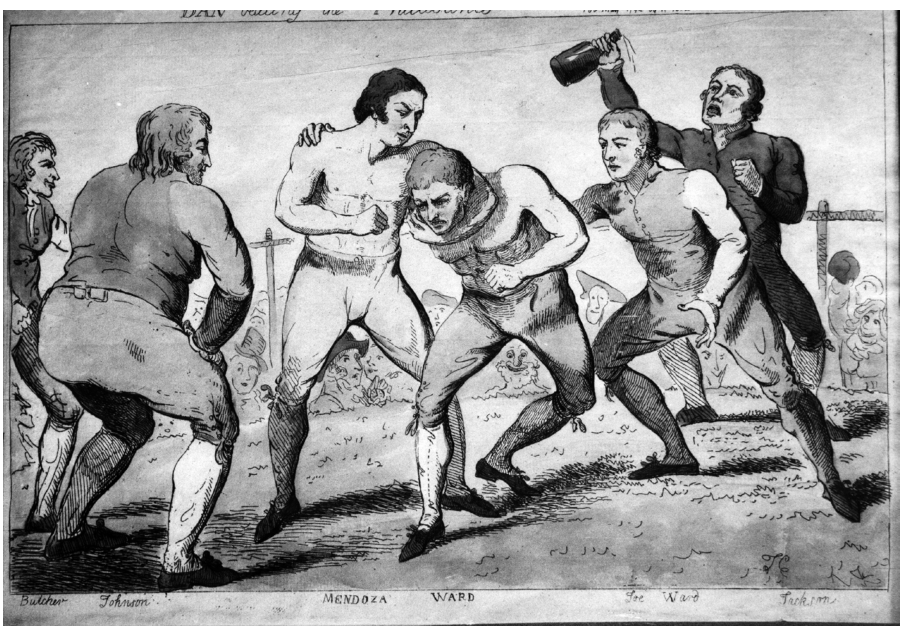

FIGURE 3.4: Daniel Mendoza (1764–1836). Photography by *Jewish Chronicle*, courtesy of Getty Images.

countenance prizefighting, knowledge of how to fight was an essential skill for those who wanted to be considered part of the fashionable world and to demonstrate their masculinity (Radford 2001: 61–2). Downing (2010: 328–9) has argued that men across the social spectrum found in the "gentleman boxer" a resolution to the dichotomy between politeness and manliness and that boxing provided an arena in which men debated the very nature of masculinity, leading to a change in attitudes towards violence. Shoemaker (2002: 525–35) found that new rules and conventions and the changing role of seconds led to fewer injuries and fatalities in duels, and boxing practices underwent similar changes. Elias and Dunning (1986: 150–1) call this process of civilizing pastimes "sportization," a concept that encapsulates an increasing emphasis on fairness, rules, orderliness, and self-discipline. For Elias and Dunning, the introduction of sports demonstrates a clear civilizing process in the modern era because sports, through their codes of conduct and ordered structures, tend to transform violent and barbaric nature into a more civilized manner.

Cricket

In the eighteenth century, the substantial financial support given by aristocrats and gentry to cricket was central to its acceptance as a sport. The key period was from the early 1740s, when Charles Lennox, the second Duke of Richmond, sponsored the village team of Slindon, Sussex, and used cricket to court

FIGURE 3.5: The Royal Academy Club playing cricket in Marylebone Fields, engraving after Francis Hayman (1708–76). Photograph by Universal History Archive, courtesy of Getty Images.

popularity with county voters. Noble involvement transformed cricket from an informal, rural pastime into an organized, professional sport. The Marylebone Cricket Club, with aristocratic and gentry members, was founded in 1788 (Huggins 2008: 369), by which time cricket was professional, popular, and commercial. Hambledon Cricket Club in Hampshire regularly played for stake money of £500 to 1,000 guineas and they drew crowds of up to 20,000. Comparable crowds could be seen at the Artillery Ground in Finsbury Square, while similar stakes were played for at Goodwood, Guildford, Chertsey, Moulsey Hurst, Sevenoaks, and London (Radford 2001: 56). Generally, though, cricket clubs were formed for the benefit of members who paid annual subscriptions to maintain them. Clubs might play competitive matches or there might only be weekly games in which members played against each other, sometimes incorporating professionals to improve the standard of play. At Coxheath, near Maidstone, members decided how professionals should be paid and made other regulations about the weekly sessions. The club paid 5s to each professional on the winning side, 2s.6d. to the losers; they would also get their expenses for horse hire, plus 1s.6d. for food and drink. In 1787, Thomas Lord laid out a ground near Dorset Square, the first of three locations for Lord's Ground, moving in 1814 to the present site off St. John's Wood Road. Like George Smith at the Artillery Ground, Lord did well out of selling refreshments at the tavern adjacent to the cricket field and the cricketing contacts he made helped promote his subsequent wine business (Underdown 2000: 126–9, 160).

Noblemen strengthened their own cricket teams by employing individuals because of their cricketing ability, and these players were among the earliest full-time professionals. Thomas Waymark, a groom who was paid 7s a week plus board, played for the Duke of Richmond as early as 1727 and at Christmas 1729, he was given 10s.6d. "to buy shoes and stockings" (Underdown 2000: 69). The Duke of Dorset engaged cricketers Brown and Miller as gamekeepers, Minshul as a gardener, and William Pattenden, who was paid £9 a year, as a shepherd, while the Earl of Tankerville employed William Yalden, a wicketkeeper for Surrey and England, "Lumpy" Stevens as a gardener, and William Bedster as a butler (Sandiford 1998: 101).

There were also independent players, and as spectatorship numbers rose the cost of hiring professionals and paying bonuses increased. William Beldham received five guineas for a win and three for a defeat in the 1780s; twenty years later, this had increased to six guineas for a win and four for a defeat. Five guineas for three days' work in the 1780s was five times what a London artisan and more than twenty times what an agricultural laborer would have earned in the same time. This was enough to take some cricketers out of menial occupations, although many professionals ensured they first mastered another craft or trade. By the 1790s, Beldham considered that serious cricket was nearly completely professional and that even some of the gentry had made it their profession by betting on their own or others' performances. Lord Frederick Beauclerk, the best amateur batsman of the day, said that he made roughly 600 guineas a year out of the game (Underdown 2000: 69–70, 119–20, 149, 160, 163).

PEDAGOGY, TRAINING, AND INSTRUCTION

One innovative feature of the Hambledon Cricket Club was the attention given to improving performance, through carefully organized practices and coaching from gingerbread baker Harry Hall. As the amount of competition increased, the numbers of professional sportsmen grew and the need to prepare properly under a coach or trainer became more important, both in terms of skill development and in respect of physical and psychological training. Instruction and assistance came as goods, in the form of manuals, rule books, and performance enabling substances, and as services, such as coaching, teaching, and scientific advice.

Manuals and Newspapers

The aspirations of the middling and "better" sorts of eighteenth-century provincial society brought together notions of gentility and "politeness," a contested concept with fluid meanings that changed over time, but which remained a model of behavior that distinguished and justified the position of a gentlemanly elite. Courtesy writers suggested that gentlemen should maintain their rank through manners, highlighting dignity, easy assurance, repression of emotional display, and distinguished speech, while gentlewomen should have "dignified ease and graceful control," good table manners, and diverting conversation (Vickery 1998: 202). Even with a readership limited to a literate noble and bourgeois clientele, McClelland (2015: 26–7) has already traced at least 400 instruction manuals available in Europe between 1400 and 1650 and treatises on recreation continued to multiply with books on falconry, chess, poetry writing, and meat carving that taught gentlemen how to do some of the things a gentleman ought to know (Marfany 1997). The importance of knowing "how do the right thing" was reflected in later manuals on dueling etiquette, which taught people how to "kill one another politely" (Marshall 1993: 279). The existence of a substantial literature in many sports suggests that those involved, including trainers, were literate. Even in the later seventeenth century about 60 percent of the emerging middle classes were literate, and about 15–20 percent of Englishmen from the lower classes could sign their names, while many more could read than could write (Cressy 1977). Huggins (2018: 254–66) notes that some horse trainers were highly literate and numerate, and that these specialized, professional individuals were often able to generate sufficient wealth through a variety of business strategies to become landowners and join the lower gentry.

The expansion of the printing presses helped disseminate sporting knowledge, not least through the medium of newspapers, which first appeared in mainland Europe and then in Britain, where there were twelve London newspapers and twenty-four provincial papers by the 1720s (Huggins 2017). Stobart (2008) drew on a survey of newspaper advertisements and trade card articles to examine the ways in which eighteenth-century advertisements helped to spread notions of politeness. While advertisements for books and patent medicines formed the largest proportion, Ferdinand suggested that they declined in relative numbers through the middle decades of the century, while notices placed by local tradesmen and professionals offering goods, services, or leisure activities grew from 17 percent to 28 percent (Ferdinand 1993: 398). Newspaper advertisements for public houses to let in London show that bowling and other games such as skittles, shuffleboard, and billiards remained an important feature of the eighteenth-century service trade. The proprietor of the Peerless Pool, William Kemp, kept a pleasure bath, where swimming instructors taught the customers, in addition to a bowling green, while Thomas Higginson placed enough newspaper advertisements for tennis and fives in London between 1742 and 1760 to suggest he was a successful leisure entrepreneur (Schattner 2014: 203–6). Specialized sporting magazines also emerged in Britain from the late eighteenth century, although they were expensive, catered for a select market, and were London-based (Vamplew 2016: 346).

Coaching and Teaching

In the early part of this period, it was the courtly arts that benefitted from specialist instruction. The royal families of Europe recruited Italians as masters of ceremony, fencing masters, and riding instructors, and at the French court before the Revolution, dancing masters taught young gentlemen how to control their movements and to perform gestures elegantly and gracefully (Perkin 1981: 24). Fencing became a difficult, exclusive, and highly cultivated sport as the course of a fencing match was analyzed and broken down into individual and combined movements. The rules were precise, and emphasis was laid on elegance and graceful harmony of movement. In riding schools and academies, private riding masters taught new fashions to aristocrats. To achieve elegant horsemanship the horse was expected to perform precisely measured steps as though dancing. This required riders to undertake special exercises, *voltige*, training for which focused on skill and agility using various types of equipment, including a wooden horse that eventually evolved into a gymnastic “horse” with two handles (Charles 1981: 45).

Notions of achievement, discipline, and measurement are all discernible in the approaches taken to prepare the sporting body, a process of instrumental rationalization of the human body and movement linked partly to the industrialization of the workplace, that had been stimulated by Descartes’ *A*

Treatise on Man (posthumous 1662/1664). Within the animal sports, trainers focused on a disciplinary process that involved balancing humors by removing wastes and establishing an appropriate diet. Humoral theory held that bodies were comprised of the four humors of earth, fire, water, and air, each having its associated characteristic of melancholy, choler, phlegm, or blood. The work of the trainer was to identify humoral imbalances and redress them through a program of diet, exercise, and medication. In more advanced cases, humors were removed rapidly through bloodletting or purging to facilitate solid elimination. Writing at the end of the seventeenth century, Gervase Markham suggested that it would take between one and two months to get an overweight horse into racing condition, and six-week preparatory periods, divided into two-week phases, were often used to get a horse ready for hunting or racing. Over the course of the next century, horse training developed established discourses about horse care and preparation, articulated in several texts that were available to owners, farriers, grooms, and trainers (Curth 2013).

Horses were regularly "purged" to clear the inner gut, done mildly after a gallop or more intensively to get rid of infections and reduce weight. Andrew Cockinne was "physicking" horses at Newmarket in 1675, and training reports show that trainers would administer doses of physic and use liniment and medicines (Huggins 2018). Exercise and diet were important since diets were designed to minimize the build-up of gross humors while exercise allowed the processes of nutrition to work properly and for humors to be eliminated naturally. The systematic use of sweats, either through exercise or artificial

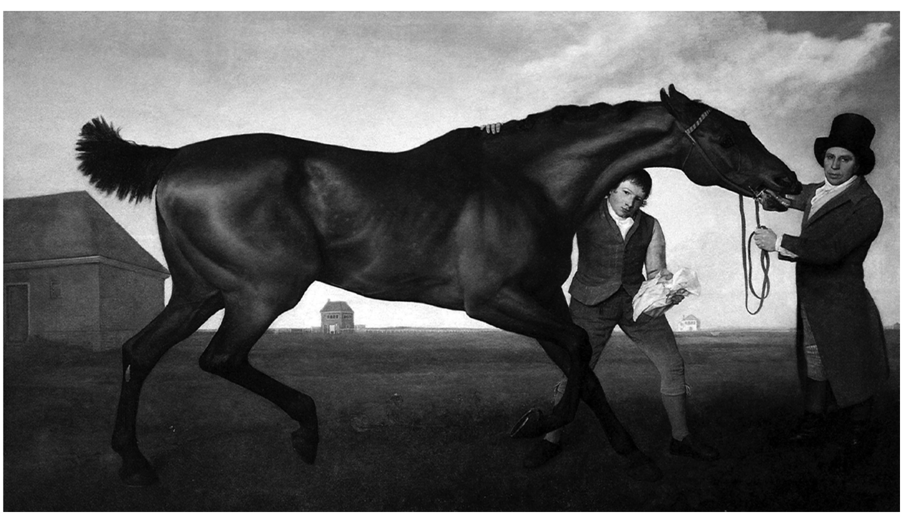

FIGURE 3.6: *Hambletonian* by George Stubbs, *c.* 1800. Photograph by Picturenow, courtesy of Getty Images.

heating, was also critical. Three- or four-mile sweating gallops at about half pace under heavy blankets reduced fat and cleansed the pores of dirt. Afterwards the sweat was scraped off with "sweat slippers" at a stable or rubbing house. The more that the horse was exercised within its capabilities, the better that wastes were flushed out, thus restoring humoral balance, maintaining good health, developing wind, and improving racing performance.

Gamecocks were also rigorously trained, and when only a few months old they would be sent out to "walks," or training-farms, before starting a fighting career in their third year. One method of sparring was to cover the heels with "hots," rolls of leather, and set them on a straw bed to fight just long enough to be sure of heating their bodies and breaking down surplus fat. This would be followed by a course of "sweating," when they were fed with a mixture of sugar-candy, chopped rosemary, and butter, before being shut in a deep basket of straw until early evening, when the "feeder" would lick the eyes and head of each before placing them in their pens. Finally, the feeder would fill the troughs with square-cut manchet and "piss therein and let them feed whilst the urine is hot; for this will cause their scouring to work, and will wonderfully cleanse both head and body" (Wymer 1949: 91). For thirty to fifty days before a main fight, the bird was specially conditioned. To toughen its body, it was given daily baths and massaged with a mixture of alcohol and ammonia; to increase stamina and aggressiveness, it was fed a special, often secret, diet, while in competition, cocks had silver spurs and their beaks and claws were sharpened (Brasch 1986: 78).

As a more competitive sports body culture developed, traditional training practices were replicated by many trainers of pugilists and pedestrians. Professional fighters were the focus of fierce regional loyalties and a champion could make a good living, not simply from purses and the rewards of his backers, but by setting up a gymnasium and instructing the wealthy in the science of self-defense or by retiring as the owner of a public house frequented by supporters of "the fancy" (Golby and Purdue 1999: 74). Popular portraits of boxers displayed both male poise and power, and boxers marketed their diet and training regimes to elite men as a means of producing a muscular but elegant physique (Begiato 2016: 140–1). James Figg, who kept the "Adam and Eve" inn in what is now Tottenham Court Road, taught "Ye Noble Science of Defence," a realistic form of fighting with cudgel and fist. His business card, engraved by William Hogarth, advertised that he taught small-sword, backsword, and quarterstaff, and he exhibited "Foil, Back-sword, Cudgel, and Fist" at the amphitheater he opened in 1719, as well as at Southwark Fair, to audiences that often included British and continental aristocrats (Guttmann 1985: 115). One of his pupils, John Broughton, a waterman and the 1730 winner of Doggett's Coat and Badge, subsequently formed his own amphitheater near Tottenham Court Road, offering fencing matches and cudgel-play, "to divert the men till the house fills" (Underdown 2000: 79). Prizefighting also took place at the tennis court in St. James's Street. When Broughton fought Jem Slack in 1750, 200 reserved tickets at £1.10s.6d. each had been sold and £130 taken at the door, all won by Slack, plus another £100 from a wager (Underdown 2000: 79). Another entrepreneur, George Taylor, second only to Broughton as the best boxer of the age, became proprietor of "The Great Booth at Tottenham-Court" but relinquished it following the success of Broughton's establishment (Gee 1998: 19). All these men made money from teaching boxing skills and conducting training regimes (see Day 2011, 2012, 2016).

The seriousness of pedestrian competition at the end of the eighteenth century meant that there was an increasing demand for the services of ex-athletes such as Jacky Smith, who lived in the North Riding as a tenant farmer where his father had bred racehorses in the 1750s. Smith made a good living in and around sport for well over thirty years. He had won cups at the Artillery Ground in the 1760s and then gained a considerable reputation as a coach, having acquired a reputation as an expert on training, and he expected his athletes to work hard. After a gentleman "well known amongst the young men of fashion" (*Sporting Magazine* 1798/9: 165) wagered 500 guineas to walk fifty miles in ten hours over Malton racecourse on January 1, 1798, he underwent a course of training with Smith, who was optimistic of success despite the high odds against him. His principal food was raw meat and eggs, with a pint of Slape ale, and a glass of white Lisbon every morning and evening; he was only allowed to sleep five hours every night, and that with at least half a dozen blankets over him; the remainder of the night he was obliged to spend in a hammock by way of exercise. Commentators wished him success but reminded him that more than one gentleman had "lost their lives by breaking a blood vessel, from too great an exertion" (*Sporting Magazine* 1798/9: 166).

CONCLUSION

During this period, there were elements of both change and continuity in the playing and organization of sports in Great Britain. The process of industrialization clearly stimulated sporting products in all the categories proposed by Vamplew (2018) and involved a shift in the balance of power between classes, but the manly mores underpinning popular recreations continued to find expression and, while new sports and sporting organizations developed, other older, less industrialized forms of sporting activity persisted (Maguire 1986: 266–8). Given the limited range of sources available at the present time, especially with respect to the skilled and unskilled working classes, it is little surprise that many of their histories remain hidden from view. That may continue to be so for the foreseeable future and represents a gap in the historiography that colors the ways in which historians write about sports and leisure in this period. This affects not just the understanding of how leisure

FIGURE 3.7: *A Party Angling*, 1789, after George Morland (1763–1804). Photograph by The Print Collector, courtesy of Getty Images.

activities were fitted around working lives but also clouds the narrative surrounding regional and national differences, leading authors to resort to generalized statements that communicate a standardized, and often quite parochial, view of continuity and change. The Anglocentric perspective often proffered for Britain as the originator of organized sports is an example of this approach, as is the widespread assumption that women lacked leisure or sporting opportunities.

Gender roles were clearly defined by society at large and, in many cases, this applied to sports (Williams 2008: 406–7), but it is evident that women's sporting participation in this period has yet to be fully understood. Bath corporation built the Queen's Bath in the late sixteenth century strictly for the use of women (Sul 1999: 155) and it seems that seventeenth-century licenses for bowling alleys and tennis courts, issued initially to upper-middle-class couples, could be retained by widows to allow them to run the premises on their own, making them very early examples of female sporting entrepreneurs (Schattner 2014: 202–3). At the other end of the social scale, festivals, carnivals, and commercial sports sometimes offered opportunities for plebeian women, and there were individuals such as pugilist Elizabeth Stokes who established a professional reputation at the end of the eighteenth century. As the extensive research already conducted into nineteenth-century sports is gradually extended back into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and as more relevant resources are exposed some of these questions over women's involvement, the trajectories of global sports processes, and the sporting lives of all those who lived through the period, will hopefully be resolved. An expanding evidence base will also help to inform the debates surrounding the impact of industrialization on the formation of modern sport.