**British Society of Sports History**

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**BSSH Conference 2011: Call for Papers**

London Metropolitan Business School is pleased to invite members of the BSSH and all other interested persons to the 29th Annual Conference of the British Society of Sports History, 2–3 September 2011.

The conference will take place at the Holloway Road campus of London Metropolitan University, situated in North London (next to Emirates Stadium).

The conference will be open-themed. Papers should be a maximum of 20 minutes in length, with ten minutes for questions and discussion. Abstracts (no longer than 200 words) and suggestions for panel sessions should be and should be sent to the Conference Committee (email bssh2011@gmail.com) by Friday 6th May 2011. Please also address any questions to this email address. Cost and other relevant details will be published in the next few days.

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Speed: towards a collective biography of Brooklands’ female motor racing drivers

Jean Williams: ICHSC, de Montfort University

‘A favourite remark many people make to women drivers, which seems to them to explain why a few of the weaker sex enjoy handling cars, is ‘But you must be a born driver and love speed.’ Perhaps it does apply to some of them, but during my six years of racing all the women who achieved success in cars did so only after hard work and long practice. Many of them undoubtedly had a flair for driving, but I was not so gifted. In fact I was anything but a born driver. My earliest driving in Canada was punctuated with frequent visits to a garage boasting a sign that said, ‘Fenders straightened while you wait.’ The family saloon and I spent many hours on their premises.’

Introduction
As Roger Munting pointed out in the last BSSH Bulletin, academic historians have written very little on motor racing. In referencing Adrian Smith’s paper ‘Sport, speed and the technological imperative’ Munting located the inter-war period as of special importance for the wider contemporary context and it is a comment that this paper is intended to support. I could not call myself a motor racing enthusiast, even though perplexed that academic sports history has largely overlooked the range of activities that this implies, along with a vast literature, fashion, art and collectibles market. However, it should also be more widely acknowledged that women were part of the turn-of-the-century story. Most people, for example, will be aware of Bertha Benz and the tale of her lone 180 kilometre drive from Mannheim to Pforzheim in August 1888. Mercedes was also famously the name of the daughter of Emil Jellinek, the commercial partner of Karl Benz and Gottlieb Daimler. However, fewer people have discussed the role of Anne de Mortemart, Duchess d’Uzès, famous for her hunting skills, who has been credited as being the first European woman to pass a driving test on 23 April 1898. Less than a month later she was also the first to be caught speeding in her 2-cylinder Delahaye at over 12 km per hour on 9 June, in the Bois de Bologne. The many and varied fashion statements of Camille du Gast, combining fur, bloomers, sometimes full dress uniform and an admiral’s hat, perhaps deserve a paper in their own right. She was however, famous as a pioneering racing driver, the ‘Amazon with green eyes’, who finished 33rd out of 122 participants in the 1901 Paris-Berlin race. After a ban on women, particularly ‘the Valkyrie of the motor car’ in the 1904 Berlin to Paris Gordon Bennett Cup, du Gast then piloted a Darracq motorboat (wearing violet and a captain’s hat) in an open-sea race from Angiers to Toulon. Rescued by the destroyer Kléber, she was declared the winner two months later. Jeanne Hervaux was another very successful hill-climber and reportedly performed an exhibition ‘loop-the-loop’ at the Crystal Palace in a car but became better known as a pilot in a Blériot from 1910. There are clearly narrative histories here, not to be improved upon by fiction, as I have not included the assassination attempts by du Gast’s daughter, her work with animal charities or her Moroccan adventures on horseback. So much for the mythologising of these early women pioneers then: a range of material for

2 Roger Munting, ‘Dick Seaman - was he a hero or villain’, Bulletin of the British Society of Sports History, December 2010 pp. 11-23.
3 Adrian Smith, ‘Sport, speed and the technological imperative: dealing with the declinists’, Historians on Sport, De Montfort University, Leicester October 2007.
5 Barbara Burman, ‘Racing bodies: dress and pioneer women aviators and racing drivers’, Women’s History Review Vol. 9 No. 2 2000, pp. 299-326 - does not reference Du Gast but gives a well-illustrated argument of the move between 1900 and 1939 towards dress and image as part of celebrity status.
academic historians to analyse. 7 In the first decades of the twentieth century motor sport articulated a decidedly nationalistic jealousy, comprising international rivalry first in machine development and then in circuit-building, in Europe, across the Atlantic and into the Southern Hemisphere. It seemed to express a national virility by being synonymous with modernity, as well as personal pioneering spirit. The British for example, sought to colonise land, sea and air in measured spans and endless broken records of their own devising at the same time as the Empire began to slip from their grasp. The isolationism of the United States can be read in its embrace of Indy Car, particularly racing at Indianapolis, as an indigenous motor sport, quite different from the European emphasis on Grand Prix. 8 The significance of Italian, French and German marques and events tells us about the dissemination of sport in the twentieth century that is more nuanced than the often-told narrative of British diffusion and European internationalisation. Speedway, as has been said, was in part a process of antipodean contemporary popularisation in sporting spectacle. 9

This project began, when I was asked to look at the lives of women drivers by Peter Bartrip, who is series adviser to a collection of motorists for the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (DNB) in 2013. Having initially been given half a dozen names and asked to see if there was enough

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7 See for example Miranda Seymour The Bugatti Queen: In Search of a motor racing legend (London: Simon and Schuster, 2004) p. xvii who defends her ‘creative reconstruction’ of some events of Hellé Nice’s biography due to lack of sources and concerning a subject ‘who continued to reinvent herself throughout her fascinating life’.

8 Floyd Clymer Indianapolis 500 mile Race History (Los Angeles: Floyd Clymer Publishing, 1946); Jean Williams ‘Making the Pilgrimage to the Yard of Brick: The Indianapolis 500’ in Jeffrey Hill, Kevin Moore and Jason Wood (eds) Sport, History and Heritage: An Investigation into the Public Representation of Sport (Boydell and Brewer, 2012) pagination to be confirmed.


material to warrant individual DNB entries, I overlooked the gender politics behind the request in favour of some happy afternoons at the British Racing Drivers’ Club (BRDC) Silverstone and two days at Brooklands in Surrey. The voluntary association of like-minded women racers at Brooklands seemed to lend itself to a collective biography but there is only space here to talk about two key figures, Kay Petre and The Hon. Mrs Victor Bruce. Their very different careers fit a pattern of leisure participation, an involvement with the media and a wider influence on British culture.

Both Kay Petre and the Honourable Mrs Victor Bruce had wider cultural influence than has been so far acknowledged. However, my first theme in this work is leisure, as both fell into racing by chance. I have suggested in a recent article in Sport in History that male historians have largely overlooked upper middle class women in their analyses of class. 10 However, in the attempt to explore social backgrounds at Brooklands, it has become clear that there were many more women drivers and of a more diverse range of circumstances than had first appeared. The multiple forms of motor racing in the inter war years on land, sea and in the sky, as Roger Munting has pointed out, has been much-neglected in the recent analyses of the period. 11 Even where there has been coverage of speedway for example, the class analysis of the consumer has predominated over the lives of the riders and promoters. Fay Taylor’s biographer claims that she was ‘the first, and at the time the only British dirt-track rider to take on the Australians at their own game, in their own land’ when she left London on 14 November 1928. 12 Of an Anglo-Irish family

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11 Mike Huggins and Jack Williams Sport and the English, 1918-1939 Between the Wars (Oxon: Routledge, 2006) p. 63-4, has one paragraph on car racing and aviation, referencing Lady Bailey and seeing the phenomenon as primarily expressing ‘the machine as progress’.

and born either in 1904 or 1908, Taylour was to have a successful speedway racing career before a ban in 1930 cut short her opportunities (plus those of Eva Asquith and other women) and she turned to cars.\(^{13}\) Spending three years in Holloway Prison as the mistress of Oswald Mosley from June 1940 Taylour retired in old age to Dorset and lived to the age of eighty. She never did renounce the Mosley affa, though whether for personal or political motives is unclear.\(^{14}\) Of course, social class can also change over a lifespan. Both Petre and Bruce made particular contributions to the media industry; one mainly as a professional driver and writer, the other principally as a sponsored record-breaker and newspaper distributor. This paper then is part of a larger attempt to use prosopography in grouping together women who raced at Brooklands and is a provisional attempt to chart similarity and difference in the lives of two of the leading personalities.

**Brooklands: ‘The Right Crowd and No Overcrowding’**

Motor racing was already part of trans-national fashionable ‘cosmopolitanism’ by the time Hugh and Ethel Locke-King began work on Brooklands in Surrey in 1906.\(^{15}\) Having watched races on the continent, they wanted for the British motor industry what the French and Italian roads provided in terms of proving grounds for reliability and speed. Dorothy Levitt, for example, had already been a well-known British motorist from 1903, probably inspired by France’s Camille Du Gast.\(^{16}\) However, women racing cars was to be a contested process. The Automobile Club was founded in 1897 by Frederick Richard Simms and in 1907, King Edward VII awarded the Club the ‘Royal’ title. It was to be very much a gentleman’s club. Brooklands was different. The Locke-Kings had a large Itala car, which Ethel often drove; Hugh being less intrepid, saying ‘You can’t have very big accident in very small car.’ The family owned the land around Brooklands, which was run as a farm. They spent an estimated £80-£100,000 of their own money on the track, which was the world’s first purpose-built motoring circuit.

In many ways then, Brooklands is a monument to nationalism expressed in the motor and air industries, of which racing was as much a consequence as a purpose. 2,000 men, largely of Irish descent, were involved in its construction. It was 3½ miles long, of which 2 miles were level and it was 100ft wide. The Byfleet bank was 21ft 10” high. Members’ bank was 28ft 8” high. There was seating for 5,000 and space for a total of 30,000 spectators. By December 1906 Hugh had a nervous breakdown and was close to bankruptcy after having inherited a fortune worth several million pounds today. Ethel leant on her family for more cash. The Brooklands Automobile Racing Club (BARC) was formed in December 1906 and Ethel inaugurated the circuit at a lunch on June 17, driving the Itala with Hugh as passenger. The procession was nevertheless provoked by having a woman driver at the front and turned into an impromptu race,\(^{17}\) which was followed by an air race and six car events.

Brooklands was notionally open to all but racing

\(^{13}\) Jack Williams ‘A Wild Orgy of Speed’ p. 10.

\(^{14}\) Brian Belton Fay Taylour p. 5; Jean-François Bouzanquet Fast Ladies p. 79 for a photograph of Fay entering Holloway Prison looking for all the world as if she is stepping into the hairdressers.


was to be administered by the BARC, which initially had its HQ at Carlton House, Regent Street SW1 and its committee was comprised mainly of Lords, Dukes and the odd Prince. The circuit was only 20 miles from the Royal Automobile Club in Piccadilly and had close links with it. The Club motto was ‘The Right Crowd and No Overcrowding’ so, although based on horse racing’s society connections, it was not meant, at any stage to be a mass spectator event. At the inaugural race meeting drivers were to wear coloured smocks ‘numbering of the cars not being tolerated’ and the Jockey Club starter was used to begin competition. In return for entry fees ranging from 15 to 50 sovereigns, prize money in the first six races ranged between 250-1,400 sovereigns, plus a cup race valued at 200 sovereigns. Women were not allowed to race in 1907 because there were no women jockeys. It was very much more about the enjoyment of the participants than providing a spectacle for crowds but it was nevertheless a part of the season, increasingly becoming known as a ‘Motoring Ascot’ in the inter-war years, though its popularity declined from the 1930s until the circuit was sold and fell into dis-repair during World War Two.

However, in 1908 the ruling banning women was relaxed and a Ladies’ Bracelet Handicap was inaugurated. Muriel Thompson’s Austin won ahead of Ethel Locke-King and her Itala. By 1920 women were racing in both female and mixed races, provided they could persuade someone to lend them a car. They still had to have a male mechanic at Brooklands. However from 1927 Ethel took over the BARC after the death of Hugh and more women could race in more events; some mixed. So it is the inter-war period that is especially important for women’s participation. It is also perhaps significant that the British Racing Drivers’ Club was not formed until 1928 and its control of Brooklands was not total, as the first British Grand Prix had already been held there in 1926. The BRDC was chauvinist however on a number of levels - ‘foreigners’ and women could only have associate status - a situation as far as women are concerned (though not foreign nationals) that still pertains today. Who were the Brooklands’ women and what impact did they make?

HRH The Prince of Wales became the Club’s Patron in 1930 and safety also became more of an issue. There were also some concessions to spectators: cheap combined rail and admission tickets were arranged with Southern Railway, the GPO provided new and more telephones for the public and Press facilities were improved.\(^{18}\) Refreshment prices were reduced and new Phillips loudspeakers combined with Synchroelectric clocks, plus a Leroy Electric chronograph for more accurate timing was purchased, complete with light-beam contacts. In February a dinner-dance was held at the Savoy with ladies being permitted at BARC gatherings for the first time and dances were arranged at the new Paddock buildings. Whit Monday 1933, in particular marked a red letter day for women drivers. The R.A.C. gave blanket permission for women to drive in Open meetings at Brooklands, on equal terms with men. At this time Kay Petre became perhaps the most famous of all the Brooklands’ women.

Kay Petre: The Darling of the Brooklands Crowds

Born in Toronto as Kay Defires on 10 May 1903, her father was a well-known barrister and the family travelled extensively as the firm had clients in England and Ireland.\(^{19}\) She attended a High Church of England school until aged 10, then a boarding school in Nova Scotia, then to Eastbourne England. On holiday, aged 16, back in Toronto, Kay was taught to drive by a naval cadet. Then she moved with her mother to a flat on the Left Bank, Paris where she attended art classes at the Academie de la Grande Chaumiere, off Boulevard Montparnasse. She met her husband ice-skating and they married in 1928. Henry Petre was a confirmed bachelor nicknamed ‘Peter the Monk’ and a Brooklands pilot (who flew amongst other things a Deperdussin monoplane (one of the more sporting aircraft of the day) and it caused some surprise that he married so quickly.\(^{20}\)

\(^{18}\) Brooklands Automobile Racing Club (BARC) Minutes May 1930 Brooklands Museum, Weybridge Surrey

\(^{19}\) Key Petre ‘My Motor Racing’ p. 140.

Henry Petre bought Kay a racing Wolseley Hornet for her birthday (supposedly to save the gear box in his Invicta which she began racing in 1931). She wore tailored pale blue silk overalls and was the most photogenic of the women racers: not least because of the contrast between her 5ft tall, 8 stone frame and the large Bugattis and ERAs that she sometimes drove. By 1934 she had become one of Brooklands 120 mph badge-holders driving a borrowed 10½ litre Delage in a friendly rivalry against Elsie ‘Bill’ Wisdom. In 1935 Gwenda Stewart challenged her to the Brooklands women’s record.\(^2\) Though these were timed laps as a race was thought to be too dangerous, Stewart eventually beat Petre at over 135mph and they were awarded honorary membership to the BRDC in 1931 and 1934 respectively. Kay and Gwenda became two of only 17 people to do 130 mph at the circuit and Kay then became a professional driver in a mixed Austin team in 1937 with Bert Hadley and Charles Goodacre.\(^2\)

Reg Parnell’s MG accident put her in hospital for four months in 1937 and effectively ended her racing career.\(^3\) It seemed she would not survive and she lay in Weybridge hospital gravely ill. According to Alfred Neubauer (racing manager of Mercedes Benz) the German racing team went to see her there.\(^4\) The friendship is meant to have developed when Petre drove her Riley in the 1937 South African Grand Prix, finished in 11th place and became friendly with Elly Beinhorn, a German aviator who married Bernd Rosemeyer. The British Grand Prix on October 2nd at Donnington was won by Rosemeyer in an Auto Union. He reportedly visited Petre’s bedside after the race leaving her the victor’s laurel wreath and the flowers he had won, though she was unconscious.\(^5\) Rosemeyer was killed less than six months later in an Auto Union record attempt on 28th January 1938 in Frankfurt when a gust of wind deflected the car into a bridge at 270 mph. Kay Petre had a slow recovery including plastic surgery and overcame partial paralysis but never raced seriously again.

As someone quite short she jokingly said she’d invented a special seat to raised her in the car, ‘the Petre Patent Pew.’ However design was to become part of her professional life as she became colour and style consultant from 1950 to the British Motor Corporation at Longbridge. In this capacity she appeared in Austin advertisements for four years as an expert in pattern and fabrication. One of her projects was the interior and colour range of the original Mini. She was already an established motoring journalist for the Daily Graphic, acting also as food correspondent during and immediately after the War. A notable scoop was the prediction of Stirling Moss as a future star in 1948 when he was only 17. However, she resigned in 1965 when failing memory and widowhood (in 1962) led to retirement and she spent her final years in a London nursing home where she was a bridge enthusiast. She died aged 91.\(^6\) The article now uses the same three themes of leisure, media and culture to look at the very different career of self-styled The Hon. Mrs Victor Bruce.

The Hon. Mrs Victor Bruce
Born Mildred Mary Petre (no relation) in Chelmsford, Essex in 1895, Mildred (more usually Mary) was the daughter of Lawrence Petre of Copfold Hall and an American Shakespearean actress mother. The marriage of her parents, she reported in her autobiography, was an unhappy one with an anxious, dramatic mother and a lugubrious father.\(^7\) Little wonder then perhaps that she

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\(^2\) Elsie Wisdom ‘Tete a Tete: What do women motorists think of the 1934 models’, The Autocar 6th October 1933 Silverstone Collection. See also ‘Like mother Like Daughter’ in Motor 30 June 1936 p.26 as Elsie was the mother of Ann ‘Wiz’ Wisdom who, after obtaining her driving licence in 1956, partnered Pat Moss to success in the 1960 Liège-Rome-Liège rally in an Austin Healey 3000.


\(^4\) Alfred Neubauer Speed was my Life (London: Barrie and Rockcliff, 1958) p. 62.


\(^6\) ‘Kay Petre Obituary’ The Times 22nd August 1994, she died 11 August.

\(^7\) The Hon. Mrs Victor Bruce Nine Lives Plus:
showed an early fascination for getting out of the house, often involving speed and danger, beginning her road racing career on her brother’s motorbike at age 15%; travelling along the country lanes with her collie dog, Laddie, in the sidecar. Laddies’ thoughts on his jaunty red bow, to match those of Mildred’s plaits, have not been recorded for posterity. Mildred however, claimed to be the first woman ever arrested for speeding in a motorbike at between 55 and 60 mph in 1911 and the first to crash.

She soon graduated to automobiles, after marrying the Hon. Victor Austin Bruce in 1926. He was a member of the AC works team and had become the first Englishman to win the Monte Carlo Rally in 1926. They were divorced in 1941 but she retained her title, becoming known in motoring circles thereafter as ‘The First’ Hon. Mrs Victor Bruce and devoting herself to her son, Tony. In 1927 however, Victor and Mildred had set off with Bobby Beare, motoring editor of the Daily Sketch and an engineer, with Mildred driving the 1,700 miles from John O’Groats to Monte Carlo to win the Coupe des Dames. It had taken 70 hours and 20 minutes non stop to finish at the Monte Carlo Casino. Under the sponsorship of Selwyn Edge and the AC factory, they continued a further 8,000 miles on a distance trial for the RAC from Monte Carlo to Tunis and on to Tangier and returned to England through Spain. The 8,000 miles distance trial to Italy and Morocco, after also pulling in a 1,000 miles time-trial at Monthéry near Paris, made the couple ‘motoring celebrities.’ Selwyn Edge gave Mildred the car.

She was not therefore a racing driver in the same way as Kay Petre, though she drove at Brooklands, particularly in 1928, and was certainly part of its social and cultural milieu.28 This of course is my point. Each woman combined ‘specialisms’ such as hill climbs at Shelsley Walsh; racing and time-trials at Monthéry; motorbike, cycle car, motorboat and/or aviation interests in a varied pattern of participation.29 Mildred Bruce became a writer and media personality simultaneously with driving feats and breaking records, publishing several books to mark her many exploits. The first of these was, Nine Thousand Miles in Eight Weeks - Being an Account of an Epic Journey by Motor-Car through Eleven Countries and Two Continents.30 Much given to self-promotion, she was thankfully to become increasingly keen on more succinct titles.31 The next venture was to leave the Hotel Cecil 9 July 1927 for the Arctic, again sponsored by the AC factory, to take a car as far north as had been driven through Finnish Lapland and Greenland. A Union Jack was planted about 250 miles north of the Arctic Circle, about 40 miles from the Arctic Ocean. It was claimed in Nine Lives that this was the nearest a car had been to the North Pole.32 The next record was determinedly nationalistic in seeking to outdo the American Chrysler team who had averaged 10,000 miles at 60mph. At the Monthéry track outside Paris, driving fin six-hour shifts, Victor and Mildred between them broke 17 world records, including 15,000 miles at an average of 68mph. After racing at Brooklands in 1928, there was then a 24 hours solo run of 2,164 miles at Monthéry in a 4½ litre Bentley, at an average of nearly 90mph on 7 June 1929.


28 S. C. H. Davis Atalanta: Women as Racing Drivers has a single, almost footnote reference on to her career, p.171.
The diversity of her activities can be assessed by the double journey across the Channel and back in 1 hour 47 minutes in a motorboat. Named Mosquito. Then she ‘Beat the Berengaria’s’ distance record over 24 hours by driving 694 nautical miles solo in October 1929. Following another Monte Carlo rally in 1930, boredom set in. After buying an aeroplane from a shop in Burlington Gardens, London and flying it - ‘Bluebird: Honeymoon model, ready to go anywhere’ - around the world solo, Mildred became something of an international figure. This included meeting Miss Bouko, one of Japan’s pioneer aviators, on the way, via the United States and home to a reception led by Amy Johnson and Winifred Spooner in 1931. Air to air re-fuelling in an endurance flight attempt using Marconi mobile radio technology was to follow, as was joining a flying Circus called the British Hospital Air Pageants, forming ‘Air Dispatch’ or the Dawn Express at Croydon to carry newspapers across to Paris by breakfast, coming second to Colonel Llewellyn at her first Royal International Horse Show at Olympia and winning the 1939 Open Jumping class at the Royal Horse Show at Windsor.

Mildred also fulfilled her childhood ambition of becoming a sterling millionaire with aeronautical contracts during the war and property development thereafter. It seems an incredible range of activities but there is more here than a well-to-do woman indulging her interests. Pauline Gower and Dorothy Spicer were among her flying circus colleagues. Each charged 15 shillings for a five-minute flight. What did people make of these early passenger flights? Did they pre-date longer trips for most of their participants? Similarly, when Mildred inaugurated a ‘tube of the air’, linking Heston, Hanworth and Gatwick airports to others, with passengers buying their tickets from the pilot, it was an important form of short-haul flight on a route similar to the current M25. She also claimed to have employed the first female air steward, ‘a very attractive blonde’ by the name of Daphne Vickers. Whatever the accuracy of some of these claims, the extent of her entrepreneurial activities is evident.

**Conclusion**

So, what is the more general significance of the Brooklands’ women for sport history? First off, the project on motorists in the Oxford DNB shows a growing awareness of how overlooked the multiple forms of motor sport have been in academic sports history. This is all the more surprising given the extent of the literature of enthusiasts, which is of such high quality that specialist publishers, such as Fouls and Veloce, exist. In terms of photographic, visual and cultural artefacts, this is an oversight that deserves a specialist conference sometime soon in Britain. Writing on inter-war topics has largely overlooked the importance of Brooklands in particular. We are overlooking whole areas of transport and communication history as they have impacted on sport unless we bring motorised competition in its varied form into our mainstream journals. For this reason, and because I have had to visit more than my fair share of museums dedicated to motor bikes, trains, planes and automobiles, I am not convinced by comments about the lack of technological innovation or a primary role in British motor sport. Cannibalisation of machinery is after all one of the reasons why the provenance of certain motorcars and bikes is such a big issue in their valuation: how original is an original, as it were. Small and light British car manufacturers, including the Austin and George England Motor Bodies are examples. The 1926 Cup Model built by George England Ltd at the Palace of Industries, Wembley stadium to commemorate the FA Cup, put a lighter body on an Austin Seven specifically for racing and for public sale. The hands-on developments of mechanics and groups of individuals looking to break records perhaps suggests that we need to read about British manufacturers apparent lack of support with a ‘top-down’ as well as a ‘bottom-up’ perspective.

The second example shows how academic sport history is still largely being informed by the assumptions implicit in Richard Holt’s comment that: “The history of modern sport is Britain is a history of men. Social divisions, and to a lesser extent age differences, crop up continually but women figure only fleetingly…because sport has been so thoroughly identified with men”. Well-

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35 Richard Holt, Sport and the British: a modern
researched evidence suggests differently whether you are an empiricist or a post-modernist. Motor racing, like some equestrian disciplines and ‘lifestyle’ sports, were and are very modern in their approach. Can we understand modernity if we choose to overlook women’s place in it? Women racing drivers, both as individuals and as a group, may perhaps have been more important in the inter-war years than they were before or have been since, but until we do the work we simply will not know. In any event, the role of men facilitating, encouraging and financing women’s sport is an area in need of much further work, as are the entrepreneurial activities of female sporting figures. Space here precludes discussion about ethical and methodological concerns in using biography but in the final analysis, having found 30 plus women who raced at Brooklands regularly, there may be a concentration of writing, let alone the innovation of fashion, style and image that would warrant much greater interest. Women’s fascination with speed and record-breaking also requires more attention.

Thirdly, I have played with mythology and with autobiographies as well as minute-books and other sources here to argue a need to use contemporary material more thoroughly in our work and resist ‘the exclusion of women from the media’ narrative that has somehow become an orthodoxy. Regardless of whether some of the stories about some of the women are ‘true’, meanings have been invested in the lives of individuals and unpicking the ‘whys’ and ‘hows’ of this would be instructive. The following is an example of the complexities of that situation:

The energetic romantic novelist Barbara Cartland was another unlikely pioneer. At the request of the nightclub queen Kate Meyrick’s son-in-law Lord Clifford, she had organised a bevvy of former debutantes to drive super-charged MGs around the Brooklands track. ‘The race was ostensibly to show the public that women could drive as well as men [as the ‘Speed Queen’, Kay Petre, frequently showed] - actually to publicise the cars’. Cartland, who personally disliked driving, completed three laps with Lord Clifford as passenger, and the leather-helmeted, goggle-wearing women she had managed to collect - ‘quite a difficult feat in 1931 as few young society beauties drove well enough’ - were endlessly photographed and filmed and their exploits shown on newsreels to cinema audiences.36

This event is one of several highlighted in this paper as having been mis-read because we have not sufficiently debated what Brooklands meant, and continues to mean, in our sporting, social and cultural history. We should not exaggerate Cartland’s place in sports history since the so-called ‘race’, stage-managed by all the women wearing white coats in the approach to their vehicles, was filmed for British Movietone news cameras and the ending was re-run at least half a dozen times to make it more exciting for viewers. Discussed variously as ‘A Brooklands Race that Wasn’t’ and a hoax, it had been pre-arranged that Princess Imertinsky would win because she held the most senior title.37 Joan Chetwynd, the only real racing driver present called it a ‘farce’ and ‘shattering’.38 If the incident informs us more about the social set at Brooklands than its contribution to motor sport and women’s part in it, there are, in Sammy Davis’ words ‘many others’ who could tell us more.39

38 Joan Chetwynd Correspondence The Motor 3 December 1931 p. 888 Brooklands collection.
Cambridge Companion to Cricket Seminar & Book Launch
Thursday 12 May 2011 at 11am
The International Centre for Sports History and Culture (ICSHC), De Montfort University, is delighted to announce a special seminar to celebrate the publication of the prestigious Cambridge Companion to Cricket (Cambridge University Press 2011). The book is edited by Professor Emeritus Jeff Hill and Honorary Visiting Research Fellow Dr Tony Bateman who are both based at the ICSHC.

The publication includes contributions from David Frith (Wisden), Mihir Bose (Former BBC Editor of Sport), Dr Boria Majumdar (Rhodes Scholar) and Prof. Andre Odendaal (Chairperson of the Transformation Committee of the United Cricket Board of South Africa).

Co-editor Prof. Jeff Hill said, “We would like the seminar and book launch to be an informal gathering of sports scholars – an opportunity to reflect on some of the current and past issues in cricket raised by the book – prompted by short talks from Prof. Tony Collins, Prof. Richard Holt, Dr Prashant Kidambi, Rob Steen and Karen McWhirter of Cambridge University Press.”

The seminar will be followed by a small buffet lunch and drinks. To register and for further information please contact: James Panter at: JPanter@dmu.ac.uk

Sport and the Military
The British Armed Forces 1880-1960
Tony Mason and Eliza Riedi

This book has been a long time in the writing and has been the subject of painstaking research and meticulous revision. It addresses a sporting sub-culture that has not been served well in terms of serious work and for that reason alone will attract much attention. The influence of military sport is not often lauded and sometimes derided but it is without doubt a subject worthy of serious academic study.

The book is published by Cambridge University Press and is available in both paperback (£19.99) and hardback (£55.00) versions.

“When 400 soldiers were asked in Burma in 1946 what they liked about the Army, 108 put sport in first place - well ahead of comradeship and leave” (C.U.P. website)
Major Accessions to Repositories in 2009 Relating to Sport

Courtesy of Richard Cox

Local

Berkshire Record Office
9 Coley Avenue
Reading
Berkshire RG1 6AF
Reading Athletic Club: records 19th-20th cent (D/EX 2117)
Reading Bowling Club: records incl. minutes, accounts, membership records, visitors’ book 1874-1989 (D/EX 2084)

Bolton Archive and Local Studies Service
Civic Centre
Le Mans Crescent
Bolton BL1 1SE
Bolton and District Referee Society: photographs, membership cards, newspaper cuttings 1900 - 2000 (FZ)

Bristol Record Office
'B' Bond Warehouse
Smeaton Road
Bristol BS1 6XN
Knowle Lawn Tennis Club: minutes, accounts, photographs and papers 1926-2005 (44299)

Coventry History Centre
Herbert Art Gallery and Museum
Jordan Well
Coventry CV1 5QP
Coventry and District Football League: additional material incl. minutes, accounts and handbooks 20th cent (PA2766)

Cumbria Record Office, Kendal
County Offices
Kendal
Cumbria LA9 4RQ
Burneside Cricket Club: records (WDSO 330)

Denbighshire Record Office
Ruthin Gaol
46 Clwyd Street
Ruthin
Denbighshire LL15 1HP
Denbighshire County Cricket Club: minutes, ledgers and score books 1940-2003 (DD/DM/1700)

Derbyshire Record Office
New Street
Matlock
Derbyshire DE4 3AG
Belper Ladies Hockey Club: minutes 1998-2006 (D7094)
Derby Ladies Hockey Club: minutes 1911-1934 (D7092)
Derbyshire County Offices Staff Football Club: minutes 1955-1964 (D7055)
Rowlesley Boys Football Club: minutes 1949-1952 (D7056)
Springfield Tennis Club: accounts, minutes and roll of members 1924-1961 (D7148)

Devon Record Office
Great Moor House
Bittern Road, Sowton
Exeter
Devon EX2 7NL
John Couch, soldier: diaries and papers rel to First World War service and later involvement with the Devon and Exeter Football League 1914-1987 (7659)
Clyst Hydon Bowling Club: minutes 1990-2009 (7646)

Dorset History Centre
Bridport Road
Dorchester DT1 1RP

Durham County Record Office
County Hall
Durham DH1 5UL
Hutton Magna Billiards Club: minute book 1911-1927 (Acc no 07398)
Ealing Local History Centre
Central Library
103 Ealing Broadway Centre
London W5 5JY
Ealing Ladies Hockey Club: minutes, corresp
and records 1929-1989 (394)

East Riding of Yorkshire Archives and Local
Studies Service
The Treasure House
Champney Road
Beverley HU17 9BA
Royal Yorkshire Yacht Club: records 1925-2005
(DDX1451)
South Cave Parish Council: fair and sports
committee minutes 1903-1931 (DDX1528/2)

East Sussex Record Office
The Matlings, Castle Precincts
Lewes
East Sussex BN7 1YT
SS Brighton, ice rink: photographs, programmes
and corresp with performers, incl. material rel to
Brighton Tigers ice hockey team c1920-90
(10439)
Buxted Park Cricket Club: records 1957-2009
(10330)
Lewes Druids Club: papers 1920–79 (10298)
Maresfield Lawn Tennis Club: committee
minutes 1948-68 (10331)
South Downs Society: Brighton and Hove Albion
football stadium enquiry papers 2001-07
(10283)

Flintshire Record Office
The Old Rectory
Rectory Lane
Hawarden
Flintshire CH5 3NR
Dyserth Field Club: minutes and other papers
1917-2007 (AN 4258)
Hawarden Park Cricket Club: minute book and
score books 2002-2008 (AN 4219)

Glamorgan Archives (formerly Glamorgan
Record Office)
Clos Parc Morgannwg, Leckwith
Cardiff
Glamorgan CF11 8AW
Barry Yacht Club: records incl corresp, minutes,
financial papers and membership applications
1930-2002 (DBYC)

Glasgow City Archives
The Mitchell Library
201 North Street
Glasgow G3 7DN
Glasgow Junior Angling Club: minutes 1881-
1888 (TD1754)
Scottish Bowling Association: minute books 20th
cent (TD1777)

Gwynedd Archives, Caernarfon Record
Office
Victoria Dock
Caernarfon
Gwynedd LL55 1SH
British Sub Aqua Club, Gwynedd Branch:
records 1965-2008 (XD 145)

Hampshire Archives and Local Studies
Hampshire Record Office
Sussex Street
Winchester SO23 8TH
Aldershot Cricket Club: scoring book 1888-91
(189A09)

Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies
CHR002
County Hall
Pegs Lane
Hertford SG13 8EJ
Sawbridgeworth Sports Association: minutes
and misc. papers 1921-1968 (Acc 4839)

Highland Council Archives
Highland Archive and Registration Centre
Buigh Road
Inverness
Inverness-shire IV3 5SS
Boat of Garten Curling Club: records incl.
minutes c1924-1990 (D1172)
Hillingdon Local Studies, Archives and Museums Service, Central Library
14-15 High Street, Uxbridge
Middlesex UB8 1HD
Hillingdon Cricket Club: minutes and papers 1895-1978 (ADB/09/13)

Lancashire Record Office
Bow Lane
Preston
Lancashire PR1 2RE
Ramblers Association, Lancashire Footpath Council: minutes and corresp with papers rel to diversion of a footpath in Gisburn Forest 1984-99 (DDX 2756)

Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, Record Office, Long Street
Wigston Magna
Leicester LE18 2AH
Leicester Colleges of Art and Technology Athletics Club: minutes, accounts and misc. records 1939-1991 (DE7747)

Lewisham Local History and Archives Centre
Lewisham Library
199-201 Lewisham High Street
London SE13 6LG
St Barnabas Football Club, Lewisham: records 1930-1991 (A/09/51)
Sydenham Wesleyan Church cycling club: minute book 1898-1899 (A/09/2)

Liverpool Record Office: City Libraries
William Brown Street
Liverpool L3 8EW
Everton Football Club: additional records incl. contracts, memorabilia and photographs 1900-2002 (6288, 6348 and 6349)

Norfolk Record Office
The Archive Centre
Martineau Lane
Norwich NR1 2DQ
Cyclists Touring Club, Norfolk District Association: records of the Norfolk District Association and Norfolk Road Club 1930-2004 (SO 274)
East Anglian Women’s Hockey Association: additional records 1925-1999 (ACC 2009/83)

North Yorkshire County Record Office
Malpas Road, Northallerton
North Yorkshire DL7 8TB
Yorkshire Ramblers Club: records incl. minutes, accounts and reports 1891-1994 (ZMY)

Northumberland Collections Service
Woodhorn
Queen Elizabeth II Country Park
Ashington
Northumberland NE63 9YF
Blyth Cricket Club: records 1950-1955 (NRO 08294)

Nottinghamshire Archives
County House
Castle Meadow Road
Nottingham NG2 1AG
Woodthorpe Tennis Club: minutes and cash book 1909-2003 (7593)

Oldham Local Studies & Archives
84 Union Street
Oldham OL1 1DN
Crompton Cycling Club: minutes 1909-1919 (2009/23)

Perth and Kinross Council Archive
AK Bell Library
2-8 York Place
Perth
Perthshire PH2 8EP
Perth & Kinross Recreational Facilities Ltd: corresp files, agendas and reports 1985-2003 (ACC09/10)

Scottish Borders Archive and Local History Centre
Heritage Hub, Kirkstle
Hawick
Roxburghshire TD9 0AE
Hawick Rugby Football Club: minutes, papers, photographs and programmes 20th cent
St Mary’s Angling Club, Selkirk: minutes and papers 1934-1980
Sheffield Archives
52 Shoreham Street
Sheffield S1 4SP
Sheffield City Council: Hillsborough inquiry files
1989-1999 (X258)
West Midlands Police Authority: reports and
papers relating to the Hillsborough disaster
1989-1990 (WMP)

Somerset Record Office/Heritage Office
Brunel Way, Langford Mead
Norton Fitzwarren
Taunton
Somerset TA2 6SF
Somerset Golf Union: records 1907-2007
(A/DCE)
Somerset County Hockey Association: minutes,
accounts and corresp 1900-2006 (AIDAR)

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Archive
Service: Stoke-on-Trent City Archives
Hanley Library, Bethesda Street
Hanley
Stoke-on-Trent ST1 3RS
North Staffordshire Referees Club: minute
books 1913-2005 (SD 1466)

Stirling Council Archive Service
5 Borrowmeadow Road
Springkerse Industrial Estate
Stirling FK7 7UW
Strathblane Bowling Club: minutes and
photographs 1905-1925

Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich Branch
Gatacre Road
Ipswich
Suffolk IP1 2LQ
Kesgrave Community and Sports Centre:
minutes, financial records, corresp and other
records c1948-2008 (GB458)
Suffolk Women's Hockey Association: records
1961-2002 (GC699)

Surrey History Centre
130 Goldsworth Road
Woking
Surrey GU21 6ND
Guildford Teachers' Cricket Club: score books
1943-46 (8568)
Ramblers Association, Guildford Group: files incl
material rel to rights of way 1932-94 (8577)
Woking and District Darts League: minutes and
accounts 1948-88 (8578)

Trafford Local Studies
Waterside
Sale M33 7ZF
Bowdon Bowling and Lawn Tennis Club:
minutes, lists of shareholders, financial records,
corresp 1887-1987 (TRA921)

Walsall Local History Centre
Essex Street
Walsall
Staffordshire WS2 7AS
Walsall Corporation Tramways Social and
Athletic Club: minute, accounts and summary
books 1947-1964 (1453)

West Glamorgan Archive Service
Civic Centre
Oystermouth Road
Swansea SA1 3SN
Skewen Rugby Football Club: papers (D/D Z
779)

West Sussex Record Office
Sherburne House
3 Orchard Street
Chichester
West Sussex PO19 1RN
Lower Beeding Stoolball Club: accounts 1935-
40 (AM230)

West Yorkshire Archive Service, Calderdale
Central Library, Northgate House,
Northgate
Halifax HX1 1UN
Halifax Cricket League: challenge cup records
incl. accounts 1891-1900 (WYC:1345 (addnl.)
Halifax Cricket League: minutes 1913-1959
(WYC:1344 (addnl.)
Warley Cricket Club: ladies committee minutes
and accounts 1960-2006 (WYC:1314)
West Yorkshire Archive Service, Kirklees Central Library
Princess Alexandra Walk
Huddersfield HD1 2SU
Cyclists Touring Club, West Yorkshire District: records incl. minutes and financial records 1935-2006 (KC876)
Holmfirth Harriers Athletic Club: records incl. minutes, corresp. & members’ lists 1978 - 2008 (WYK1523)
Honley Cricket Club: records incl. minutes 1879-1963 (WYK1268)
Huddersfield and District Cricket League: records incl. minutes 2005-2008 (WYK1369)
North of England Keeshond Club: records incl. minutes, corresp., judging books and financial records 1953-2009 (WYK1542)
Skelmanthorpe Methodist Church Tennis Club: records incl. minutes and accounts 1914-1980 (WYK879)

West Yorkshire Archive Service, Leeds 2 Chapeltown Road
Sheepscar
Leeds LS7 3AP
Yorkshire County Cricket Club: records incl. minutes, accounts and corresp 1960-2001 (WYL2053)

Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre
Cocklebury Road
Chippenham
Wiltshire SN15 3QN
Friends of Melksham Blue Pool: minutes, accounts, corresp and papers 1981-1997 (3794)
Holt Bowls Club: minute books 1924-1999 (3776)
Kivel Football Club: copy papers and photographs 1969-1981 (3781)

Worcestershire Record Office, County Hall Branch
County Hall
Spetchley Road
Worcester WR5 2NP
Kidderminster Field Club: papers incl. minute books and photographs 1928-2009 (BA14897)

National
Island Archives, Guernsey
St. Barnabas
Carnet Street
St Peter Port
Guernsey GY1 1LF
West United Rugby Club, Guernsey: notebook of rules and accounts 1922-1927 (AQ 1082/08)

Jersey Archive
Jersey Heritage Trust
Clarence Road
St Helier
Jersey JE2 4JY
St. Brelade’s Miniature Rifle Club: minutes 1930-1959 (JA/1604)

National Library of Scotland, Manuscript Collections
George IV Bridge
Edinburgh
Midlothian EH1 1EW
Hamish Macmillan Brown, mountaineer and author: further papers 1961-2008 (Acc.13060)
Frederick Guthrie Tait, golfer: golf match books and diaries 1886-1900 (Acc.13048)
Thomas Weir, mountaineer, author and broadcaster: papers c1932-2000 (Acc.13059)

Public Record Office of Northern Ireland
66 Balmoral Avenue
Belfast BT9 6NY
Belfast Amateur Swimming Club: minutes and members register 1902-1982 (D4461)
Irish Football Association: committee and council minutes 1880-1980 (D4196)
Ulster Ski Club: records incl. minutes 1963-2007 (D4462)

Special
Bishopsgate Institute
230 Bishopsgate
London EC2M 4OH
Brookfield Manor Girls Club: records incl. minutes, oral histories and photographs 1945-2009 (BM)
Mountain Heritage Trust
Station House, Ullswater Road
Penrith
Cumbria CA11 7JQ
Giles Barker, climber and instructor: audio
interviews with climbers active in the Peak
District, associated papers and files 1959-1988
(BAR)
Sir Christian John Storey Bonnington,
mountaineer, writer and photographer: corresp,
files rel to expeditions, draft mss of book,
articles and news cuttings 1951-1998 (CBO)

University
Aberdeen University, Special Libraries and
Archives: Library and Historic Collections
King's College
University of Aberdeen
Aberdeen AB24 3SW
University of Aberdeen Sports Union: additional
records c1960-2009 (Acc 346)

Dundee University Archive, Records
Management and Museum Services
Tower Building
Dundee
Angus DD1 4HN
Dundee University Rucksack Club: further
Grampian Club, Dundee: further minute books,
attendance register, journals, photographs,
'bothy books', etc 1927-2007 (2009/333 and
346)

Exeter University Library (Special
Collections) Old Library
University of Exeter
Prince of Wales Road
Exeter EX4 4SB
Martin Lee, sports psychologist: professional
papers 1960-1999 (MS 369)

University of Westminster Archives
Archive Services ISLS,
4-12 Little Titchfield Street
London W1W 7UW
Polytechnic Cycling Club, Westminster:
additional papers incl photographs 1891-2009
(UWA PCC)

The International Centre for Sports
History and Culture (ICSHC),

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International Centre for Sports History and
Culture
Clephan Building
De Montfort University
Leicester, LE1 9BH

Sport & Gender
Conference

On Friday, 10 June, the Sport and
Leisure History Seminar Group will
be holding a special one-day
conference on Sport and Gender at
the University of Central Lancashire
in Preston.

We still have three slots available
for speakers at this event. If you
would be interested in presenting
your work at the conference, please
send me an abstract (c. 300 words)
and a brief biography by Sunday, 3
April.

For the sake of a balanced
programme, we are particularly keen
to receive proposals for papers on
sport and masculinity, although all
abstracts will be considered.
Speakers who have not presented a
paper at the Sport and Leisure
History Seminar either last year or
this year, and who are not
scheduled to do so this year or next
year, will also be preferred.

Dion Georgiou, Seminar Convenor
sportshistory@hotmail.co.uk
The Search for Female Footballers... in Australia

Rob Hess: University of Victoria

The earliest known photographs of female Australian Rules football teams date from Perth During the Great War, when employees of the Foy and Gibson department store pioneered the code for women. It was something of a shock therefore to receive a call from the Victorian Women’s Football League (V.W.F.L.) letting me know that West Footscray resident and octogenarian Ron Neilsen claimed to have a photograph of a women’s team from an earlier period. The national history of women’s football prior to the formation of the V.W.F.L. in 1981 can be characterised as discontinuous and fragmented, so the opportunity to investigate another potentially important piece of the heritage jigsaw was too good to refuse.

A rare find: Ron Neilsen holding a postcard depicting a women’s football team. It is the earliest known photograph of women dressed as footballers in Australia. COURTESY: ROB HESS

The photograph actually constituted one side of a postcard, with, ‘The Allan Studio, 318 Smith Street, Collingwood’ and blank space for a message, on the reverse.

The image was taken at Allan Studios in Smith Street, Collingwood. Identified are younger sister Maggie Lennox (centre – back row) and sister, Grace (seated 2nd from left). The postcard is undated but the later wedding portrait of Maggie (next page) suggests the above image must have been taken prior to WW1. COURTESY: RON NEILSEN


Ron discovered the postcard amongst some family papers, and was only able to identify his mother (Maggie Lennox) and her younger sister (Grace Lennox) from the group of women in the photograph. The postcard was undated but Maggie clearly appeared younger in her football gear than
she did in a later portrait, taken on 21 April 1915 when she married Albert Ernest Neilson. This means that the image of the football team possibly dates from the middle years of the first decade of the 20th Century, when Maggie would have been around nineteen years of age.

Ron has no recollection that his mother (or aunt) ever played football or supported a football team, but there was a suggestion that she was involved with Collingwood Harriers. This association is somewhat speculative given that women's athletics was not a high profile activity for females at that time, although Maggie did spend much of her early life in nearby Fitzroy, and it is possible that that the group of women in the photograph had some connection to a sporting team.

Given the context, and also given that only eleven women are pictured, (including two females dressed as trainers and one as an umpire), it seems unlikely that the image in question depicts an actual women's football team. Rather, Maggie and her sister, along with some friends, who were probably associated with some community group, or were part of a social outing, entered the Allian Studio and decided to ‘dress up’ as footballers in Collingwood colours for a staged photograph, that was later to be distributed as a postcard. Or perhaps it was an initiative of the photographer to gather together some passers-by for a topical image, the male Collingwood team having played in every finals series of the Victorian Football League between 1901 and 1911. Whatever the case might be, the image is intriguing, as it represents the first photographic evidence of a ‘team’ of women in Australia dressed in football uniforms (including masculine shorts, in contrast to the dresses worn by female football teams in Perth during World War 1).

Research indicates that games of ‘fancy dress’ football, often played by members of theatrical troupes for charity purposes, took place in Melbourne as early as 1881, and throughout the 1890s and early years of the new century there are several examples of individual men and entire teams dressing up as females in order to participate in novelty, carnival or burlesque matches of Australian Rules football. ²

However, the research surrounding all the above matches is nascent at best, and it would be helpful if anyone with further information about female footballers, or men dressing up as women to play football, or the teams they were involved in, could contact me. Ron and I would also be very grateful to anyone who can shed light on the postcard featuring Maggie and Grace Lennox. [N.B. This piece was prepared with a purely Australian readership in mind. Ed.]

Rob Hess is the Executive Editor of the Bulletin of Sport and Culture, from which Journal, and with whose kind permission, this piece has been reproduced. He can be contacted at:
Robert.Hess@vu.edu.au.

² In one example from rural Victoria, it was reported that all male members of a local band and the swimming club were dressed as females when competing in a football match against each other for fund-raising purposes. It was noted of the participants that: ‘their make-up, if not picturesque, was at least humorous, while their general deportment and eccentricities were consistently maintained. Ballarat Courier, 12 September 1908, p.10.
Call for Papers:
The Sport and Leisure History Seminar Summer Conference:
'Sport and Leisure in Suburbs and New Towns: Communities, Identities and Interactions'
21\textsuperscript{st}-22\textsuperscript{nd} July, 2011
Hosted by the Institute of Historical Research, London

Global society is becoming increasingly dominated by suburban growth, yet our understandings of suburban social life are still lamentably under-informed or prejudiced by elitist anti-suburbanism. Some historians, cultural commentators and social scientists have explored the social significance of sport and leisure in new communities but much more work needs to be done to provide a fuller picture of the social life of suburbs and new towns in the modern and post-modern eras.

Our conference is looking for academics who are working on sport and leisure in suburbs and new towns. All sports and leisure activities are to be included. Approaches that include a focus upon community and association, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, age and class are encouraged. An emphasis upon suburban identities and social formation in new communities is particularly welcome. Conformity and subversion are key themes that should also be addressed.

There is also a tendency – even in academic work – to treat 'suburban' as a byword for lower middle class. We are therefore particularly keen to receive papers that demonstrate the social heterogeneity of suburbs and new towns. Contributors should also consider the geographic, as well as the social and cultural, dimensions of sport and leisure in suburbs and new towns: what are the influences, for example, of their spatial dimensions; of their infrastructure; of their distance or disconnection from existing urban centres; of migration to and from them?

Our scope is global: we hope to get proposals for papers not only from Britain and Europe, but also the Americas, Africa and Asia. We are particularly interested in work being undertaken in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and in the first decade of the current century. We therefore hope to attract academics from a range of disciplines, including history, sociology, geography, cultural studies, and architecture and the built environment, to name a few.

Please send abstracts (c. 300 words in length) and a brief biography to leisureinsuburbia@gmail.com by Friday, 15\textsuperscript{th} April.

Conference organisers: Dr Mark Clapson, Dion Georgiou and Dr John Law.
DR. DARTS’ COLLABORATES WITH THE ‘KING OF BLING’

Following the publication of the book based on his PhD Darts in England 1900-1939: A social history by Manchester University Press in June 2009 and his tuition book The Official Bar Guide to Darts (New York: Puzzlemight Press) published the same year, BSSH member Dr. Patrick Chaplin began to work on his next darts-related project.

Patrick, a Research Fellow in History at Anglia Ruskin University, said, “I’m not one for gate-keeping my research. That’s why in the past I have involved myself in a number of book projects that bring my subject to a wider readership.” So far this has worked well with his other publications including two collaborations with three-time World Darts Champion John Lowe (John’s autobiography Old Stoneface (2005 and 2009) and The Art of Darts 2009) and ghost-writing Golden Girl (2008) for nine times Women’s World Darts Champion Trina Gulliver. Patrick’s latest project involves collaboration with another top English professional darts player, Bobby George, popularly known as ‘The King of Bling’ or ‘Bobby Dazzler’; this time the subject being the language of darts.

Patrick recalled, “When I started my darts research back in the 1980s I also began collecting examples of the special language used by darts players. Over the years I accumulated hundreds of words and phrases, some used countrywide and others only in specific locations.” Many years before Patrick’s research began, author John Moore in his novel Brensham Village (1946) (part of The Brensham Trilogy) had recognised that

‘…darts has its own esoteric terminology, some of which is common to the whole country and some of which is probably local. It is a language of association, with a bit of rhyming slang mixed up in it.’

Over four decades later Richard Holt, in his groundbreaking book Sport and the British – A Modern History (Oxford University Press, 1989) acknowledged this, referring to darts as being ‘a good example of the power of popular culture to create private languages for players’. Patrick believes that was the first time the language of darts (or anything to do with darts at all) had been mentioned in a major academic publication.

As the list of words and phrases grew Patrick prepared a short book with the working title Hooked! Ochel Ockyl – A Guide to the Language of Darts but he failed to secure a publisher. Patrick said, “It was simply a darts dictionary. I had no name in the sport at that time and when the fifteenth publisher had turned it down I filed the manuscript away.”

Years later, during the broadcasting of the 2008 Lakeside World Professional Darts Championship on
BBC TV, Patrick watched a humorous sketch where front man Ray Stubbs interacted with top darts player and TV pundit Bobby George; Bobby saying something in ‘darts lingo’ followed immediately by Ray giving the viewers the translation. Patrick said, “I sat up and said ‘That’s it!’ I had known Bobby for some time so had no hesitation in contacting him to ask if he fancied working with me on a book about the language of the sport. Coincidentally he had thought of the same idea after working with Ray on that sketch so we shook hands and work commenced straightaway on a brand new book.” (Ray would later agree to write a Foreword for the book.)

The book _Scoring for Show, Doubles for Dough_ is not simply a darts dictionary with the sources of all words and phrases revealed; many for the first time. It also features memories of Bobby’s 30+ years ‘on the road’ as a professional and exhibition darts player. Five times World Professional Darts Champion Eric Bristow MBE has already endorsed the book by commenting, “Bobby’s language has always been colourful. This book proves it.”

Patrick said, “Although _Scoring for Show, Doubles for Dough_ is a humorous work, written to appeal to the millions of darts and sports fans across Britain, indeed worldwide, I am hoping that it will also appeal to those non-academic and academic researchers who are interested in the development of the ‘private languages’ that Richard Holt referred to back in 1989.” He added, “Although the book is very much ‘tongue-in-cheek’ my research into the derivation of numerous words and phrases has been a difficult, frustrating but ultimately satisfying task. I never thought this aspect of my work would ever see the light of day but now it will.”

The book is also about an academic letting his hair down in the company of the most entertaining darts player in Britain.

_Scoring for Show, Doubles for Dough_ – Bobby George’s Darts Lingo will be published by Apex Publishing in June (ISBN 978-1-907792-98-4) priced £12.99 (Hardback) and will be available from all good bookshops and via Amazon.co.uk.

For further information visit [www.apexpublishing.co.uk](http://www.apexpublishing.co.uk).

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_image by Wendy Balic © 2011 Bobby George and Patrick Chaplin_

In late 2009 a publisher was secured and the book, book cover, blurb and cartoons were all submitted by the deadline date. Then the bad news…

Patrick recalled, “In the early summer of 2010 the publisher went into administration. It was not until November 2010 (when the new owners considered their list of unpublished titles) that Bobby and I were eventually freed from our contract.” Patrick added, “It was not because they didn’t want to publish our work. No. The new owners already had a darts-related title in their forthcoming schedule of publications and wanted to see how that sold before committing themselves to another work of the same genre.” Fortunately it took Patrick less than a week to find another publisher (Apex Publishing) and the book is now not only back on track but also will be published this coming June.

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**Football Collectors’ Fair:**

Sunday 27th March: 10.30am–1.30pm. Swallow Hotel, Samlesbury, Preston. On A59 close by Junction 31 on M6

If you/your institution is staging an event – academic or otherwise – do let us know and we’ll circulate the details for you.