

THE PROVISION OF SPORTS FACILITIES AND THE MANAGEMENT OF SPORTS PARTICIPATION IN MANGAUNG, 1945-1990

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1. INTRODUCTION

The backlog in the provision of sport facilities for Mangaung dated back to as early as 1890 when the City Council of Bloemfontein first revealed its unsympathetic and unhelpful attitude towards requests by the residents for sports facilities. The residents soon realized, in the absence of any official policy declarations or legislation, that they were solely responsible for the financing of their sports facilities and the management thereof - a situation that only eased somewhat after the promulgation of the Natives (Urban Areas) Legislation of 1923 and 1945, compelling local authorities to meet their sport obligations towards the black residents under their control.

The recreational activities of the urban blacks in South Africa received little attention from academics after the Second World War (1939-1945) until 1990 when President FW de Klerk announced a new political dispensation for South Africa. Only a few scientists, mainly anthropologists, geographers and some historians paid attention to the recreational life of the urban black. Some of the authors who wrote remarkable books on this theme are CM de Villiers, JS Rademeyer and Tim Couzens (historians) and Peter Becker (anthropologist). The absence of extensive literature on the history of the recreational life of the black people generally, draws attention to the almost total lack of knowledge on this theme and accentuates the obvious lack of knowledge of specifically the sport life of urban blacks.²

Seeing that recreational activities cover such an extensive field, it is the aim of this article to concentrate on the provision of sport facilities and the management of sport participation in Mangaung, the black township at Bloemfontein. Mangaung

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² JS Rademeyer, *Die rol van sportisolasië as faktor in die daarstelling van 'n nuwe politieke bedeling in Suid-Afrika, 1980-1992* (D Phil, UV, Bloemfontein, 2002); JEH Grobler, *Die rol en betekenis van ontspanning in swart gemeenskappe: 'n historiese perspektief* (UP, Pretoria, 1987).

consists of various suburbs like Batho, Kagisanong, Phahameng, Botshabelo and Rocklands. As the numbers of their residents increased, the need for sports facilities in each of these suburbs also increased. The question is to what extent did the City Council of Bloemfontein succeed to provide sport facilities and the management of sport in Mangaung. This question also counts for the successors of the City Council for black local government, namely the Administration Board of the Southern Orange Free State (SOFS) since 1973 and the Development Council that assisted the new Town Council of Mangaung (established in 1982) to manage its sport affairs since 1984.

The scope of the article covers the period from 1945 until 1990. The year 1945 marks the end of the Second World War with its preceding phenomenal industrialization process, causing the City Council of Bloemfontein, like most other local authorities large and small, to struggle with an almost overwhelming influx of blacks and whites from the rural districts for employment purposes. These urbanization tendencies involved various socio-economic complications like insufficient housing, sport and recreation facilities, intensified by low wage incomes for blacks, rising crime and poverty figures. The notorious Natives (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act, No. 25 was also introduced in the year 1945. This many-faceted act served as a framework for local authorities to govern their black townships, including the provision of sport facilities.³

The year 1990 is a watershed in the history of South Africa. In his well-known speech on 2 February 1990, President FW de Klerk, true to his mandate for political and socio-economic reform, recalled the ban on the African National Congress (ANC) and other formerly banned political parties, thus introducing a new era for South African sport. A new local government structure was also under way in 1990, involving changes to the Black Local Authorities Act, No. 102 of 1982, including the management and financing of sport.⁴

Sport was non-existent in the founding years of Mangaung, dating back to 1865. The sole reason for the presence of the black residents was to be of service to their white employers. It was not until 1890, when Mangaung was a settled community, consisting among others of masons, brickmakers, shoemakers, smiths and joiners, that voices went up for sport and recreation facilities. However, requests for land for a soccer field and tennis court were, without reasons given, refused by the City

³ TRH Davenport, **South Africa, a modern history** (MacMillan, London, 1991), pp. 235-6; JF Holleman, "The tightrope dancers", **The South African Municipal Magazine**, February 1959, 41 (498), pp. 17-9.

⁴ Annual Report of the council for the co-ordination of local government affairs, Department of Planning, Provincial Affairs and National Housing, 1990, RP 98, 1991, pp. 5-6; Rademeyer, p. 299.

Council of Bloemfontein. Despite the unhelpful attitude of the City Council, the serious socio-economic obstacles like low wages, a grossly over-populated township and rising crime figures during the years leading to the Second World War, the residents continued their rich social life, which, in the case of sport, found expression in an increasing interest in types of sport like soccer, cricket, tennis, cycling and golf.⁵

Throughout those earlier years Bloemfontein was predominantly English, having an English-speaking City Council. However, in 1946 the Afrikaans-speaking section of the white community, instigated by a feeling of upsurging Afrikaner nationalism and the ideal of republicanism, achieved the majority vote in the municipal election of that year, to be followed by the National Party victory at national level in 1948. At that time the white residents of Bloemfontein totalled about 31 000, the residents of Mangaung surpassing them by about 7 000. The succeeding race-related legislation and the political policy of racial separation (apartheid) of the National Party government, boded ill for sport in Mangaung (and generally speaking for sport in South Africa). These measures actually encouraged the Afrikaner orientated City Council of Bloemfontein to continue the unsympathetic attitude of its English-speaking predecessors.⁶

Racial discriminatory practices are not endemic to South Africa. Similar practices are present in the United States of America (USA) and Britain. Indeed, it is the experience in the USA that racial discrimination within the larger society inevitably spills over into sport because sport co-exists with its society. Changes in the political and socio-economic structures of a society, as in South Africa after 1948, influence the local and central authorities who have to make decisions about the opportunities and constraints facing sport. For this reason sport is seen as the reflection of a particular society.⁷

Central to the writing of a critical history of sport, whether on a local or a national level, are public examples of the provision of sport amenities by local authorities, intervention by government, the funding of sport projects and political influences. The reason for closer government involvement in sport is an important question because it highlights the way in which sport is played and administered. The British author, J Hargreaves, distinguishes three modes of government intervention: repression of sport, such as legal controls; political ritual in sport, and in the last

⁵ K Schoeman, **Bloemfontein, die ontstaan van 'n stad, 1846-1946** (Human en Rousseau, Kaapstad, 1980), pp. 84-8, 131, 218-23, 286, 297-8.

⁶ **Ibid.**, pp. 298-302.

⁷ M Polley, **Moving the goalposts, a history of sport and society since 1945** (Routledge, London, 1999), pp. 1-11 and chapter 6; EE Snyder and EA Spreitzer, **Social aspects of sport** (Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 1983), p. 174.

instance the programmed provision of sport facilities by local and central government or private institutions. Government involvement relates to the British social-democratic model in sport, typifying government as the provider and facilitator rather than the controller of sport.⁸

Based on the above-mentioned insights, this article also looks at methods of communication by government, involving a centralised ministry of sport, local and central departments for black affairs and decentralised local councils. The post-war history of British sport, based on its political welfare ideology, shows that as a result of the growing interest by local and central government, many types of sport were on a firmer financial and organized position in the 1990s than they had been shortly after the Second World War. More people have access to sport facilities and sport has a permanent structure in government for support and co-ordination.⁹

With the acceleration of urbanization all over the world after the Second World War, sport and recreation increasingly gained in sociological significance, accentuating the important part played by sport in the quality of life of a community. JF Butler-Adams and AF Franke even went so far as to link the neglect of sport (and recreation) to frustration and ultimately conflict and riot conditions. Sport brings about a release of tension, bringing "recreation" in the literal sense of the word as it restores lost energy. This was an important consideration for the local authorities in the case of Mangaung with its escalating crime and juvenile delinquent figures after the war.¹⁰

2. THE POLICY OF SPORT IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1945-1990

Sport and the government policy of racial separation and development had a direct bearing on the course of sport generally. Racial separation in sport, without an official sport policy or prescribing legislation, was part and parcel of the traditional inheritance of sport in South Africa. At its best racial legislation imposed some restrictions on black sport. Restrictions on the socio-economic life of the blacks, including their sport life, were imposed by the Group Areas Act, No. 41 of 1950 (as amended by Act No. 36 of 1966), which gave birth to the policy of apartheid of the National Party government in order to develop its homelands, also establishing separate townships for whites, blacks, Coloureds and Asiatics. The Separate Amenities Act, No. 49 of 1953, provided for separate localities for the different

⁸ Polley, pp. 14-20.

⁹ **Ibid.**, pp. 20, 34.

¹⁰ JF Butler-Adams and AF Franke, "Recreation and social need: principles and an illustration - the case of people's parks", **South African Journal for Research in Sport, Physical Education and Recreation**, 1986, 9(1), pp. 71-81, 533. Compare **Volkshlad**, 9 November 2004 for causes of township riots in the Eastern Free State.

race groups where each could participate in their respective sport facilities. The act actually inhibited the establishment of recreational infrastructure, adequate and accessible to everybody, a tendency which was carried further by the apartheid ideology of the National Party, imposing racial discrimination in sport, crippling the development of sport at all levels.¹¹

The autonomous character of sport administration at local level caused administrators and participants to be solely responsible for the handling of race relations and the financing of their sport ventures. It was only since 1956 that sport relations countrywide were mainly regulated by policy statements made by National Party leaders TE Dönges, HF Verwoerd (1961) and BJ Vorster (1967). They denounced multiracial sport. Their silence on sport administration and its financial obligations indicated the ongoing responsibility of local government and sport organizations in this respect. Their argument for denouncing multiracial sport was separate development in the homelands to avoid ethnic conflict.¹²

Due to international pressure the beginning of the 1970s heralded a new era for South African sport, characterised by a positive development towards "open" sport, the government associating itself with the autonomy of sport and the depoliticization of sport relations. In 1971 the concept of multiracial sport was announced by Prime Minister BJ Vorster, bringing sport at club level within municipal boundaries closer to multiracial sport. The Department of Sport and Recreation rendered its services available, such as the organization of national tournaments and sport leadership courses, also affirming the concept of multiracial sport in 1976, namely that the respective sport bodies for blacks, whites, Coloureds and Asiatics were free to compete in sport at all levels by way of collective managing bodies for the several types of sport. This meant that black sportsmen and women from clubs in townships like Mangaung were free to be incorporated into the national teams of South Africa. The Department of Bantu Administration and Development followed by establishing itself as the overseer of black sport in the country, aiming to promote co-operation and interaction between all the racial groups. The period 1971 to 1976 can thus be regarded as the time when multinational sport was clinched in South Africa. For the first time the four race groups were able to compete on the sports field - a thought which did not go down well with some hardline members of the ruling National Party.¹³

¹¹ Grobler, pp. 5-9; GDH Wilson, "Recreation within the black townships of the PWV region: The challenge in perspective", **Development Society of Southern Africa, Development: The human challenge** (Kloofsig, 1989), p. 534.

¹² HSRC Sports Investigation, **Sport in the RSA**, No. 1 (HSRC, Pretoria, 1982), p. 36.

¹³ **Ibid.**

However, despite these efforts to depoliticize sport relations, South African sportsmen and women were still expelled from 25 international sport associations after the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (SANROC) and the South African Council of Sport (SACOS) put pressure on governments world-wide to refuse South African sportsmen and women to compete in their countries. It was the aim of these two organizations to use South African sport as a pretext to force the South African government to suspend its national policy of racial separation (apartheid) for a policy of non-racial democracy.¹⁴

How successful the international sport isolation of South Africa was, became evident in 1986 when only 31 of the 108 sport control bodies remained members of their respective international control bodies. The sport fraternity in South Africa became highly frustrated with their isolated situation. The situation at local level only served to aggravate their frustrations. Some city councils ruled by the National Party or right wing parties, discriminated against requests of blacks for proper sport facilities equal to those of whites, causing race related incidents at sport clubs in Bloemfontein, Durban, Cape Town and Pretoria.¹⁵

The founding of the National Sport Congress (NSC) by sport administrators and members of the sport fraternity in 1989 introduced the first step to curb social separation in sport. The NSC aimed to promote the founding of non-racial control bodies for all types of sport in the country to gain some ground internationally. It soon surpassed SACOS in popularity, due to its increasing popularity with black sportsmen and women and support from prominent black leaders returning from exile abroad. The final event changing the whole political scene for South Africa was of course the famous speech of President FW de Klerk on 2 February 1990, stating his mandate to reform and renew the political and socio-economic scene in the country, thus also introducing a new era for South African sport.¹⁶

3. SPORT IN MANGAUNG, 1945-1971

Subject to the approval of the Minister of the Department of Native Affairs any local authority could, in terms of sections 1 and 2 of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act, No. 21 of 1923 and sections 2 and 3 of its consolidating successor, Act No. 25 of 1945, lay out land for housing, including recreation facilities, which were referred to as "other reasonable requirements of natives", having to be "adequate and suitable". The quoted words clearly obliged the local authority to look diligently after the recreational needs of its black residents. The section in the Bloemfontein

¹⁴ Rademeyer, pp. 124, 266-70, 284.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 289.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 299.

municipal Department of Native Administration, dealing with sport in Mangaung, formed part of the main office of revenue and accounts, registration, influx control and housing until 1946. The multiple duties of the main office overshadowed the sport section. The increasing influx of blacks into the township (counting 26 000 in 1946) for employment purposes, necessitated the reorganization of the functions of the department to allow more prominence to the sport section. To this end the section was eventually incorporated into the office of social welfare as both fulfilled a complementary role.¹⁷

The aim of the office of social welfare was the promotion and management of social welfare work, including outdoor sport and indoor recreation activities like film shows and dances. The Mayor of Bloemfontein, CE Kidger, created the impression in his annual report of 1942 that the "sporting instincts" of the residents of Mangaung were well provided for, referring to the facilities for, among others, soccer, cricket, croquet, basketball, tennis and golf - sporting activities which were patronized by large crowds of spectators. The keenness of the residents to indulge in outdoor recreation was met by the setting aside of numerous areas of municipal land spread throughout Mangaung. The Mayor even went so far as to say that these facilities provided an effective antidote to crime and juvenile delinquency. It is indeed true that sport and other recreational activities combat crime. However, administrative delays and the dire shortage of money for urgent improvements to the sports grounds and amenities like dressing-rooms, kitchens, shelters, and ticket offices, and the accompanying escalating crime and juvenile delinquent figures for Mangaung, contradicted the positive picture sketched by Mayor Kidger.¹⁸

The City Council of Bloemfontein obviously failed to provide adequately for the sports needs of its black residents, despite the undertaking by the National Advisory Council for Physical Education to render financial assistance for the erection of sport facilities for blacks country-wide. Indeed, the Committee on Adult Education, appointed by the Minister of Education, found that an urgent need for sport facilities for blacks existed especially in the larger urban centres like Mangaung and the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging (PWV) region in 1945. For the smaller centres like Ladybrand and Trompsburg facilities were almost non-existent, whereas facilities for whites were inadequate.¹⁹

¹⁷ Free State Archives, Bloemfontein (FAB), MBL 1/2/4/1/43, Minutes Native Affairs Committee, 14 March 1947, pp. 18-9.

¹⁸ FAB, MBL 3/1/33, Mayor's Minute, 31 March 1942, p. 20; FAB, MBL 1/2/4/1/39, Minutes Native Advisory Board, 8 June 1945, p. 6.

¹⁹ Verslag oor die opvoeding van volwassenes in Suid-Afrika deur 'n komitee van ondersoek, Departement van Onderwys, UG 35, 1945, pp.75, 78; G Graser, **Die oorsake van die hoë misdaadsyfer in Suid-Afrika** (NIMRO, W.O. 313, s.a.), pp. 7-8.

The delays in the provision of sports facilities frustrated the members of the Native Advisory Board who represented the interests of the residents of Mangaung, albeit only on an advisory basis. Nonetheless, in terms of Section 21 of the Natives (Urban Areas) Act of 1945, no regulation could be made or withdrawn by the local authority without consultation with its Board. At the root of their frustration was the low wage structure of the township's residents which incapacitated the Native Revenue Account to meet the costs of sport projects, causing their postponement indefinitely. At least 80% of the residents lived below the breadline, rendering them unable to pay the continuously rising taxes to fill the Native Revenue Account. The situation somewhat eased in 1973 when the Wage Board of the Department of Labour recommended higher wages for the industrial sector with the City Council following suit.²⁰

The lack of qualified social workers who could manage the sports section contributed to the frustration of the Manager of the municipal Department of Native Administration, the able GJ Viljoen, and his Native Advisory Board in the 1940s. Those who were appointed resigned after some months due to the low salary paid and the enormous extent of the work, involving also night-time work. It was only in November 1948, with the appointment of SCT Ramabodu, that the management of sport and social work improved. Viljoen described Ramabodu as "trustworthy and diligent in his work", despite the fact that he was like his predecessors single-handed and not professionally qualified for his extensive job description, involving the following: the organizing of all sport activities except school sport, involving the founding of sport clubs, interviews with sportsmen and women, organizing matches and arrangements with the Department of the City Engineer to prepare sports fields and acting as sports promotor by conducting interviews with various sports organizations like the African Football Association and the Bantu Social Institute to popularize sport among the juveniles and residents of Mangaung.²¹

The early 1950s brought some relief to the work-load of Ramabodu when the residential figure of Mangaung passed the 30 000 mark. Two qualified social workers, J Magooa and L Nkabinde, male and female respectively, were appointed, but after a few years dismissed when both were found guilty of indecent behaviour. Viljoen again realized how difficult it was to find suitable candidates for an exacting post like that of sports organizer and social worker combined, especially after Ramabodu reminded him that a full-time sports organizer should be appointed due to the increasing numbers of blacks joining the sports clubs, necessitating sports

²⁰ FAB, MBL 1/2/4/1/39, Minutes Native Advisory Board, 8 June 1945, p. 2 and 10 August 1945, pp. 5-6; **The Friend**, 24 May 1973, "Get cracking" (Leader).

²¹ FAB, MBL 1/2/4/1/42, Minutes Native Affairs Committee, 8 November 1946, p. 15; FAB, MBL 3/1/42, Mayor's Minute, 31 March 1950, p. 40; FAB, MBL 1/2/4/1/44, Minutes Native Affairs Committee, 8 March 1949 and Report Manager, Department Native Administration, 1949, p. 1.

management on a much larger scale. To release him in the meantime of the female sports activities like netball and tennis, the City Council appointed a female assistant, Martha K Mosina, in 1957.²²

Important sports developments in the course of the 1950s reiterated the need for a sports organizer. A new arena, known as the Bantu Sport Arena, was erected with money of the National Memorial Health Foundation in 1955 to supplement the facilities for soccer, boxing, tennis, cycling, basketball and athletics at the two existing sports grounds. Regulations for the hiring out of the new arena was drawn up by Ramabudo, after having been appointed by Manager Viljoen as a member of the board of management of the arena, including D Msikinya, a member of the Native Advisory Board. Again Ramabodu pointed out that sport could only progress if exercised within an enclosed area under the proper supervision of a sports organizer. The City Council nonetheless appreciated the sports initiative of the Foundation, because the Native Revenue Account had been depleted by the layout costs of the new suburb of Rocklands, whereas the money in the General Revenue Account of the white electorate was on political and ideological grounds not available for recreational improvements in Mangaung.²³

Some other important arguments for a sports organizer were put forward by the Native Advisory Board and the Joint Council of Europeans and Non-Europeans (a conciliatory movement for closer co-operation between black and white) in 1961, indicating that not only the adult black sport fraternity of Mangaung would benefit, but also the juvenile delinquents and so-called "tsotsis", who could be roped by the more effective management of sports activities towards practising a better lifestyle. The press was indeed warning the local authorities in Bloemfontein that the crime situation in Mangaung was getting out of hand. However, a prerequisite for suitable appointments in the sport and social welfare section was proper salaries, a grievance generally experienced in the municipal Department of Native Administration. The excuse of the government Department of Bantu Administration and Development that delays in this respect were due to the country-wide salary survey was met with scepticism and growing dissatisfaction.²⁴

An improved salary scale for social workers was at long last introduced by the City Council four years later, in October 1964, enabling Manager Viljoen to appoint

²² FAB, MBL 1/2/4/1/55, Minutes Native Affairs Committee, 14 April 1955, p. 7; FAB, MBL 1/2/4/1/57, Minutes Native Affairs Committee, 10 September 1956, p. 10; FAB, MBL 1/2/4/1/58, Report non-European social welfare worker, March 1957, p. 28.

²³ FAB, MBL 1/2/4/1/63, Minutes Native Affairs Committee, 2 November 1959, pp. 4-5; FAB, MBL 3/1/45, Mayor's Minute, 31 March 1953, pp. 28-9.

²⁴ *Ibid.*; FAB, MBL 1/2/4/1/63, Minutes Native Affairs Committee, 2 November 1959, pp. 4-5; FAB, MBL 1/2/4/1/56, Minutes Native Affairs Committee, 7 October 1955, p. 14; FAB, MBL 1/2/4/1/68, Minutes Native Affairs Committee, 8 January 1962, p. 26.

three assistants for Ramabodu. The basic problem was however not yet addressed, namely to appoint suitably qualified social workers who could also perform sports duties, or at least one qualified sports organizer. Fortunately the work-load of Ramabodu was to some extent softened by the co-operative assistance rendered by Viljoen, who used his influence with the Native Affairs Committee to exert pressure on the City Council for sports improvements, such as to allow the building of the Bantu Sport Arena by a private source.²⁵

The critical lack of sports facilities in the late 1960s when the residential figure of Mangaung totalled 75 000 was, as usual, accentuated by Ramabodu. How acute the situation was, was voiced by the Native Affairs Committee and the English press criticizing the lack of proper, accommodating pavilions, floodlights, swimming baths and tennis courts at the sports grounds in Mangaung. The pavilion of the Bantu Sports Ground for example catered for only 3 000 people whereas 10 000 and more spectators attended popular sports matches like soccer, cricket and boxing tournaments. The sports fields were only suitable for tribal dances and choir competitions, grossly neglecting the needs of the other types of sport mentioned before.²⁶

The urgency to provide more speedily in the sports needs of the urban blacks country-wide was stressed by the sports commentator, Ali Gu Twale, and the researcher, CM de Villiers. They warned that the attendance of sports occasions in urban areas steadily increased in popularity, so much so that three out of four black men and two out of four black women regularly attended such occasions in 1970. Furthermore 20% of all black urban men and almost 50% of men 16 to 25 years of age in the PWV area were active sportsmen in 1970.²⁷

It was only after pressure from Viljoen, the press and members of the City Council (and despite a depleted Native Revenue Account) that the City Council resolved to request the government's Department of Bantu Administration and Development for money to provide two fenced-in sports grounds for soccer, cricket and athletics in 1968. The swimming-bath, for which requests dated from 1950, was eventually built in 1971. The sports grounds were fitted with floodlights but the pavilions

²⁵ **Ibid.**; FAB, MBL 1/2/4/1/68, Minutes Native Affairs Committee, 7 March 1962, pp. 16-7; FAB, MBL 1/2/4/1/77, Minutes Native Affairs Committee, 3 May 1966, pp. 12, 69; FAB, MBL 1/2/4/1/67, Minutes Native Affairs Committee, 7 August 1961, pp. 2, 26 and 7 September 1961, p. 22.

²⁶ FAB, MBL 1/2/4/1/46, Minutes Native Affairs Committee, 3 March 1950, p. 16; FAB, MBL 3/1/61, Mayor's Minute, 31 March 1969, pp. 1-2; **The Friend**, 26 September 1969, "That swimming pool" (Leader).

²⁷ P Becker, **Tribe to township** (Panther, Suffolk, 1974), p. 227; CM de Villiers, **Die Vryetydsbesteding van volwasse manlike Bantoe in die gebied Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging** (D Phil, UP, Pretoria, 1972), pp. 142-6, 31.

sadly fell short of accommodating the growing numbers of spectators or to serve as central venues for the approximately 60 active soccer clubs and their combined membership of several thousands. The result was that matches and exercises were still conducted at more than 12 soccer fields and about 40 unscrapped fields. These grounds and fields, costing about R12 000 annually to keep in order, were spread over the township - indicating the need for larger sports stadiums with proper amenities to cater for large numbers of participants and spectators.²⁸

The press severely criticized the City Council for proclaiming to improve sports facilities for blacks but only after it had been long overdue and even then such facilities were not of the same standard as those of its white voters, referring to the attractive recreation centre at Loch Logan in Bloemfontein, built in 1969, boasting a swimming-bath according to Olympic standards and a tennis stadium to stage tennis tournaments of international standard, complete with ample pavilions and floodlights. The cost of the swimming-bath, a second, for the approximately 64 000 white residents, was R275 000 compared to the mere R12 000 for the swimming-bath in Mangaung with its 78 000 residents, exceeding the figure for white Bloemfontein by 14 000. The money for the facilities at the Loch Logan recreation centre derived from the well-funded General Revenue Account financed by the white tax payers, while the swimming-bath for Mangaung was unjustifiably financed from the Bantu Revenue Account which depended on what the black residents were able to pay in stand and rental taxes, after receiving wages comparing most unfavourably with the cost of living. Evidently the City Council, including the Department of Bantu Administration and Development, was under pressure of their majority white National Party electorate to prioritize sport facilities for whites.²⁹

4. SPORT IN MANGAUNG, 1971-1990

A new dispensation for sport at local level in South Africa was introduced by the Act on the Administration of Bantu Affairs, No. 45 of 1971. In terms of the act the Minister of the Department of Bantu Affairs proclaimed 22 Bantu Affairs Administration Regions in the country and appointed administration boards to manage all black affairs in these areas. Such a board was also proclaimed for the Southern Orange Free State Region (SOFS), which included Mangaung and the smaller townships in 1973. The board consisted of three directorates (departments) to

²⁸ FAB, MBL 1/2/4/1/61, Mayor's Minute, 31 March 1969, pp. 1-2.

²⁹ **Ibid.**; FAB, MBL 3/1/64, Mayor's Minute, 31 March 1972, p. 49; **The Friend**, 9 January 1968, "Give them a swimming pool" (Leader); FAB, MBL 3/1/60, Mayor's Minute, 31 March 1968, p. 9; C le Roux, "The performance of tsotsi gangs and the causes leading to their formation in Mangaung, Bloemfontein, 1945-1976", **Journal for Contemporary History**, September 2004, 29(2), p. 53.

manage the black municipal affairs of the townships in the region. The Section Sport and Recreation was separated from the Section Social Welfare Services, though both continued to resort under the Director of Labour and Housing. Control of the blacks in the townships of the region, including the staff and assets and liabilities of the revenue accounts of the respective townships (their Departments of Native Administration thus), was taken over by the Administration Board of the region.³⁰

The aim of the new arrangement was to create a more uniform administration in the proclaimed areas in order to promote a more effective service in the black townships. To this end the government Department of Co-operation and Development (successor to the Department of Bantu Affairs) created a sports development fund for each region and appointed a regional sport organizer in the person of M du Toit in 1975. He was assisted by the administrative officials of the Section Sport and Recreation to provide and sustain sports facilities and co-ordinate sports activities in the region.³¹

The Administration Board of the SOFS obviously made a good start by erecting two sports stadiums in Mangaung in 1973 and 1979 respectively. These were the Kagisanong Sports Stadium in the suburb of Kagisanong and the Masenkeng Sports Stadium in the suburb of Batho. The latter boasted two soccer fields, though without floodlights preventing play in the evenings, unfenced - making it possible for spectators to storm on the field to disrupt play - and a sewerage system in bad state. Its pavilion was upgraded to accommodate 10 000 people in 1979. The Bantu Sports Stadium remained neglected, unfenced, lacking floodlights, a concrete wall and parking space. In an effort to upgrade deficiencies like these the Administration Board at long last appointed Mangaung's first sport organizers, namely DK Makgadi, EM Morgan and D Nkuna. SCT Ramabodu retained his position as social worker on account of his more than 20 years experience, but also carried on as a key-figure for sport promotion in the township. He was indeed re-elected as President of the South African Amature Boxing Union in 1975.³²

The need for sports facilities in the townships of the SOFS region increased to such an extent in 1979, due to urbanization for employment purposes and increasing population figures, that the Administration Board was obliged to request its

³⁰ FAB, MBL 3/1/65, Mayor's Minute, 31 March 1973, pp. 49-51; FAB, BOD 35, Meeting Southern OFS Administration Board, 28 June 1974, pp. 2-3.

³¹ FAB, BOD 43, Minutes Executive Committee, OFS Administration Board, 28 August 1975, p. 128; For a discussion on the composition of the Administration Boards consult pages 128-41.

³² FAB, BOD 40, Minutes Executive Committee Administration Board, Southern OFS, 10 December 1973, p. 109; FAB, BOD 86, Minutes Native Advisory Board, 16 October 1974, p. 104; FAB, BOD 37, Minutes Administration Board, Southern OFS, 29 August 1979, p. 212.

Director of Housing and Labour to report on the matter. The report revealed that sport facilities in the smaller towns were at a very low level - in many towns non-existent. In Mangaung, the largest black township in the region, followed by the Goldfield towns of Welkom, Virginia and Odendaalsrus, sports facilities needed to be drastically improved. Such improvements, however, were not possible in Mangaung due to expenditures of more than one million rand on housing and infrastructure and the depleted Native Revenue Account. The Sports Development Fund of the government Department of Co-operation and Development was only able to meet 50% of the claims for more facilities due to limited funds. The neglect of the members of the Native Advisory Board and the officials of the Section Sport and Recreation to draw up a list of preferential facilities, contributed towards the ineffective spending of money and the consequent lack of such facilities.³³

Government endeavoured to counter the blow of limited funds for sports facilities by some legislative and institutional arrangements. The first was the passing of the Law on Community Councils Act, No. 125 of 1977 to place the administration of sport and recreation facilities in the hands of black Community Councils, replacing the Native Advisory Boards. In terms of section 5 of the act members of the latter were still eligible to serve on the new councils, continuing their advisory powers. The Administration Board would develop on request of Mangaung's Community Council the sports facilities on sites agreed upon, whereafter the Community Council would allocate such facilities to the local sports clubs to determine charges for using the facilities in consultation with the Administration Board. The latter thus remained responsible for all sports matters at local/club level, concentrating on presenting to the mass of people tournaments and training courses, so as to involve them in sport in an organized way.³⁴

To address sport matters like the critical question of sports facilities on a monthly basis, the Administration Boards established control boards for those types of sport in a township having more than one club. In the case of Mangaung the following nine types disposed of control boards: soccer, boxing, tennis, karate, golf, body-building, netball, softball and athletics. Cycling, disposing of only one club, liaised directly with the sport advisory liaison committee of Mangaung. Recommendations were then made to the Community Council of the township who made further recommendations to the Administration Board. In this way community involvement was promoted as the sport and community leaders became co-responsible for sport

³³ FAB, BOD 42, Minutes Executive Committee Administration Board, Southern OFS, 27 June 1974, p. 2; FAB, BOD 36, Minutes Executive Committee Administration Board, Southern OFS, 30 May 1979, pp. 4,11; FAB, BOD 52, Minutes Executive Committee Administration Board, Southern OFS, 7 January 1977, p. 108.

³⁴ FAB, BOD 36, Minutes Executive Committee Administration Board, Southern OFS, 30 May 1979, pp. 38-40.

promotion. Co-operation at local level between the control boards of the clubs, the Community Councils and the Administration Boards, facilitated the progress of local sport and its participants towards sports participation at provincial level, from where the government's Department of Sport and Recreation took a hand in co-operation with national sports associations to promote sport at national and international level.³⁵

It is clear that the Administration Boards played a leading role in the provision and management of sport in their regions. The Board of the SOFS region was strong under the impression of the extent of its duties, covering 42 townships including Mangaung in 1980. The Section Sport and Recreation of the Administration Board, formerly housed by the Department of Labour, was for functional reasons transferred to the new Department of Community Development (the former Department of Housing) in 1980. From then on sport and recreation linked up with the whole concept of community development and the administration of the township, because sport and recreation could not be severed from social welfare and community development.³⁶

To give effect to the goal of community development including sport, two important legislative steps were taken by government. The first was the Black Local Authorities Act, No. 102 of 1982, providing for black town councils looking after their own affairs. It was to this end that the newly established Town Council of Mangaung resolved to contract the Administration Board to develop its sport facilities, more in particular the sport stadiums, to meet the increasing demand for sport exercise. The second step was the Law on the Development of Black Communities Act, No. 4 of 1984. This law transformed the Administrative Boards into Development Boards, redefining the functions of the Administrative Boards to accentuate the functions for development rather than administrative functions. Section 16 clearly aimed to promote the abilities of individuals and their communities so that they would eventually control their own institutions, such as sport, recreation and social welfare. To achieve this goal the Development Board strived to develop black local authorities and their community services like sport. To further the goal of sport the Town Council of Mangaung appointed a sport committee of seven members to assist the regional sport planner and the three sport organizers of Mangaung in 1984. The members were town councillors, officials of

³⁵ FAB, BOD 37, Minutes Administration Board, Southern OFS, 29 August 1979, pp. 121-2; FAB, BOD 378, File 19/8/B, Volume 1, Annexure A, Circular Department Sport and Recreation, 25 February 1980, pp. 4-7.

³⁶ FAB, BOD 59, Minutes Administration Board, Southern OFS, 12 December 1980, pp. 72, 85-6.

the Development Board and the sport organizer of Mangaung, NS Mathobisa, acting as chairman.³⁷

However, it soon became evident that the new legislative measures for community development and the sport committee of Mangaung failed to put sport matters in the township on a new track. The survey on sports facilities, carried out by the Town Clerk of Mangaung in 1986, revealed that none of the seven sport stadiums in the township, nor the Bantu Social Institute, being a sports centre for indoor sport (built in 1926 and recommended for replacement by the Community Council), lived up to the expectations of the sportsmen and women and the spectators. For interest sake these stadiums are those mentioned earlier, namely the Masenkeng Stadium, the Johnson Bendile Stadium and the Kagisanong Stadium. The other four remaining stadiums built in the 1970s and early 1980s are the South African Transport Services Stadium (a private stadium), the SCT Ramabodu Stadium, the Rocklands Stadium and the Mangaung Stadium.³⁸

Not one of these sports stadiums, a relatively impressive number, qualified for multipurpose sport presentations. The 1986 survey of the Town Clerk of Mangaung calculated that Mangaung with its approximately 86 000 residents required a multipurpose sports stadium, and a pavilion with seats for at least 40 000 spectators. The stadiums endeavoured to cater mostly for soccer, boasting 81 clubs and 3 564 members in 1990. The remaining nine types of sport also practised on a fairly large scale in Mangaung in the 1980s were athletics, tennis, boxing, softball, volley-ball, golf, karate, swimming and netball, all in all involving 27 clubs and about 600 members. The SCT Ramabodu Stadium was favoured by the Bloemfontein Celtic soccer team, but has seats for only 15 000 spectators (the largest pavilion in Mangaung). The Johnson Bendile Stadium was the only one to display some multipurpose functions, offering facilities however only for soccer, cricket, netball and rugby. The stadiums generally lacked proper amenities like dressing-rooms, public conveniences, safety fencing and gates to prevent spectators disrupting play, parking area for buses and vehicles, ticket offices and most important, floodlights for evening play and to draw more spectators.³⁹

³⁷ Report Department Co-operation and Development, 1 April 1982 – 31 March 1983, RP 12, 1984, p. 21; FAB, BOD 97, Annexure Development Board, 30 January 1985, pp. 9, 11.

³⁸ Mangaung Town Council Archives, 19/8/2/1/1, Letter JD Marx to Town Clerk, Bloemfontein, 9 October 1986, pp. 10-1, 20-1.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Town Clerk, Mangaung, Report to Bloemfontein Town Council, 4 July 1986, pp. 4-5; Mangaung Town Council Archives, 6/7/1/3/1, Letter Acting Town Clerk to Town Treasurer, 26 June 1990; FAB, BOD 378, File 19/8/B, Volume 1, Letter Chief Director Development Board to Town Clerk, Mangaung, 27 May 1986, and Chief Director Development Board to Regional Representative, OFS Department Development and Planning, Bloemfontein, 26 March 1986.

Generally speaking sports facilities in Mangaung were in dire need of repair and upgrading in the 1980s. The fact that the sport fraternity and residents of the township were quite aware of the concept and positive impact of sport practice on the lives of humans, placed a moral obligation on the relevant local authorities for the upgrading of sports facilities. Such awareness were proved by the growing numbers of club members and spectators of all the types of sport, and the research conducted by the Department of Human Science Movement of the University of the Free State in the 1990s. Indeed, 90% of the households and 95% of the community leaders questioned in Mangaung indicated the inferior quality of their sports facilities compared to the much more superior quality of facilities for white Bloemfontein (which was also true for townships in the PWV region). This lack of proper sports facilities was the main barrier to sport participation (and to alleviate the still critical crime situation in the township). Other important barriers were the still low annual financial income of black families impeding sports participation, the limited time available for sport due to long working hours and sports organizers neglecting to acquaint residents with the different types of sport through sport promotion courses.⁴⁰

5. CONSIDERATIONS INHIBITING THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF SPORT FACILITIES

The underlying cause for the degraded condition of the sports facilities in Mangaung (and at other townships in the country) dated to before 1978 when blacks were still regarded by local and central government as temporary sojourners in the urban centres and the planning and provision of facilities were consequently conducted on a temporary basis. It was only after the de facto permanence of urban blacks was recognized in terms of the Black (Townships) Amendment Act, No. 97 of 1978, that government endeavoured to amend the situation, but would then be handicapped by considerations such as money constraints, the lack of proper project planning and the impact of racial politics.⁴¹

The Chief Director of the Development Board of the SOFS region expressed his concern about the lack of money to upgrade the sports stadiums and amenities to cater properly for all the types of sport offered in Mangaung. The lack of funds for sports facilities was actually the dominant problem facing all the local authorities in the country. Considerations which constrained the availability of money for sports facilities were firstly the State Treasury, exercising financial control over the total expenditure of local authorities on account of escalating inflationary figures instiga-

⁴⁰ HJ Bloemhoff, **The influence of recreation activities on social indicators of Batho (Mangaung)**, (University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, 2000), pp. 13-24.

⁴¹ Wilson, p. 540.

ted by rising oil prices and the isolationist policy internationally against South Africa's policy of racial separation. Added to these impediments were the high costs of sports development and the low level of private sector involvement, being more inclined to sponsor coaching, training and leadership courses than high expenditures on sports facilities. Lucrative sponsors like large trading organizations almost exclusively sponsored white sport for economic and political reasons, ignoring the struggling efforts of the black urban sport fraternity.⁴²

The community councils in the townships had to rely largely on the limited grants of their local authorities, central government and regional development boards. Most discouraging for black and interracial sport was the finding by the Institute for Leisure Studies of the University of Potchefstroom (North West University) that white city councils generally only spent R0,82 per capita on black sport but R5,42 per capita on white, Coloured and Asiatic sport. The figure for black sport was totally inadequate. Black local authorities, including Mangaung, were consequently obliged to rely, almost exclusively, on the Sport and Recreation Fund of the Department of Co-operation and Development, drawing its finances from the one cent levy on every litre sorghum beer sold by each municipality. When the sorghum beer industry was privatized in 1986, this levy was abolished, whereafter money was allocated from the budget of the Department of Education and Training according to the list of preferential sports facilities submitted by the Administration Board. As almost 50% of expenditures went for salaries, expenditures on the individual sport needs and on items like the maintenance of facilities, transport, training courses and merit awards were relegated to minimal amounts.⁴³

The Administration Board of the SOFS region ascribed the delay in carrying out sports projects in Mangaung and other black urban centres in the region to the absence of the proper planning of preferential projects by the Town Councils and their Community Councils (known as Native Advisory Boards before 1978). The negligence to complete the questionnaires for the sports needs of their communities such as the number of township residents, levels of education of prospective sportsmen and women and the incomes of households, left the Administration Board and the Department of Co-operation and Development (the Department of Education and Training after 1986) in the dark about the nature of the sports facilities and the extent of the financial support desired. When budgeting for projects the Community Council did not take into account the limited funds of the Board and that tenders had to be called for recommended projects which was a time-consuming process

⁴² **Ibid.**, pp. 540-2; FAB, BOD 72, Volume 23, Minutes Extraordinary Meeting Administration Board, Southern OFS, 1 April 1982, pp. 4-5; FAB, BOD 80, Minutes Extraordinary Meeting Administration Board, Southern OFS, 2 May 1985, p. 35.

⁴³ Verslag IVS 2, Instituut vir Vrytydstudies, Sportfinansiering deur plaaslike owerhede van die RSA, 1980/81 (PU vir CHO, Potchefstroom, 1984), pp. 11, 13, 21, 76, 81.

involving rising inflation and inflated prices for materials. Eventually expenditures reflected the arbitrary allocation of money due to the lack of scientific guidelines on the amount of money to spend per capita.⁴⁴

It is clear that the procurement of money for the provision and upgrading of sports facilities was a primary constraint for sports development in Mangaung (including the smaller black urban centres in the region) at least until 1990. To complicate matters, sports legislation remained a contentious issue. Although many restrictions were lifted by 1990, there was still much confusion about the opening up of sports facilities in white and black municipal areas. This confusion was aggravated by the Republic of South Africa Constitution Act, No. 110 of 1983, classifying sport and recreation as so-called own affairs. Different regulations were consequently in force in the urban centres, handicapping interracial sport participation.⁴⁵

Mangaung and the chairman of its sports committee, NS Mathobisa, were drawn into this political and interracial sports debate in 1986 when anti-apartheid activists and the ANC targeted the Town Council and its sports officials when protesting against the interracial sport policy of the government. Mathobisa was a local sport organizer and generally a prominent promotor of sport in the black community, being a manager of the Free State cross-country race team and chairman of the Mangaung Athletics Club. Pressure exercised on Mathobisa and other Mangaung sports officials to withdraw from local sports management, extended to other Free State towns like Ficksburg. The debate culminated in the serious anti-cricket tour demonstrations in January 1990, a few days before President De Klerk introduced his new political dispensation for South Africa.⁴⁶

6. CONCLUSION

The inability of the City Council of Bloemfontein and the succeeding local authorities - the Town Council of Mangaung, the Administration Board and the Development Board of the SOFS region - to provide and manage sport effectively, were indicated by the government Committee on Adult Education in 1945, at various occasions by the able social worker and sport organizer, SCT Ramabodu since 1948 and in at least three sport surveys by the Administration Board (in 1974 and in 1986) and by the Town Clerk of Mangaung (1986). Though Mangaung eventually disposed of at least seven sports stadiums in 1990, facilities at these stadiums remained inadequate and not of the standard to cater properly for the

⁴⁴ **Ibid.**, pp. 24, 58, 69; FAB, BOD 91, Minutes Native Advisory Board, 19 April 1978, p. 37; RGN Sportondersoek, Finansiering van sport, Nr. 9 (RGN, Pretoria, 1982), pp. 78, 108-9.

⁴⁵ Wilson, p. 541.

⁴⁶ **Die Volksblad**, 20 November 1986, p. 2; **The Star**, 31 January 1990, p. 2.

various types of sport practised in the township, unlike the facilities of international standards provided to the white residents of Bloemfontein.

Racial separation in sport was part and parcel of the traditional inheritance of sport in South Africa and had a direct bearing on the course of sport generally. At its best racial legislation like the Group Areas Act and the Separate Amenities Act of 1950 and 1953 respectively, in conjunction with the apartheid ideology of the National Party government, imposed restrictions on black sport, crippling its development at all levels. Despite administrative developments at local level such as the establishment of a Town Council for Mangaung, assisted by a Regional Administration Board, later succeeded by a Development Board, sports matters remained defective for various reasons.

The underlying cause for the defective sports situation was the viewpoint of local and central government that the blacks were only temporary sojourners in the urban centres - a viewpoint which changed after the Black (Township) Amendment Act of 1978, recognising their de facto permanence. Other crippling factors were mainly money constraints inhibiting the upgrading of existing sport facilities, not to speak of the procurement of sufficient and proper sports facilities including the employment of duly qualified sports organizers. The financial contributions by central and local government and the private sector proved to be approximately 50% too few for sport requisites. The lack of proper project planning by the Mangaung Town Council and its Native Advisory Board/Community Council, prevented the Administration Board from budgeting effectively for preferential sports facilities like soccer and services like coaching and transport.

The impact of racial politics and the low income structures of families, preventing people to participate more readily in sport, had a disrupting effect on sports management and facilities in Mangaung (as elsewhere in the country). Racial politics as it found expression in the activities of political activists targeting the official multiracial sport policy for the sake of democracy, complicated local sports management. The situation was further intensified by legislation classifying sport as a so-called own affair in 1983, leaving the door open for white right wing political parties in city councils to discriminate against sports facilities for blacks until the commencement of the new political dispensation in 1990. A complex set of considerations, ranging from financial, administrative and organizational constraints to racial politics, were thus responsible for the failure of local authorities in Bloemfontein to provide sports facilities and manage sports participation effectively in Mangaung.