

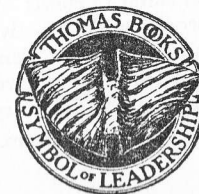
# THE PHILOSOPHY OF SPORT

( A Collection of  
Original Essays )

*Edited by*

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To my wife, Kerry,  
and children: Kris, Nicole, and Kirk

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**PREFACE**

**E**VEN THOUGH SPORT (broadly and variously conceived here to either exclude, include, or serve as the basis for distinguishing, what are commonly regarded as other major forms of human movement phenomena; such as, dance, exercise, game, physical education, play, and recreation) has become an enormously influential force in distinguishing the texture of contemporary culture, surprisingly little of a genuine and systematic philosophic character has been written of it. During the third, fourth, and fifth decades of the twentieth century philosophic reflections concerning sport were conducted principally by a small number of physical educationists and sport theoreticians with only a limited knowledge of, or appreciation for, the rigors of philosophy proper. That is, insufficient attention to the form and content of the purely philosophic endeavor was clearly in evidence during these embryonic periods in the development of the philosophy of sport. The result was a mosaic of largely dogmatic accounts of the most general nature of sport, and espousals as to its most significant use. Since that time, however, a greater number of genuinely philosophic treatments have been forthcoming; such that, at present we already have before us several very sophisticated works, and the prospect of many more. In recent years, then, the volume of literature concerning the philosophy of sport has steadily increased, and the quality of that literature improved commensurately. This phenomenon is in large measure attributable to the increasing accommodation of scholarly examinations of sport to the demands of true philosophy.

This more abiding consultation with the philosophic discipline itself has served to overcome the *truth by fiat* doctrines characteristic of an earlier era, and has, resultantly, allowed us a more informed, comprehensive, and systematic insight into the most general nature and significance of sport; as well as encouraged us to fashion a greater sensitivity for its true ideals. This process has been, and yet remains, essential to the construction of an identifiably coherent body of knowledge concerning the philosophy of sport. And this body of

knowledge in turn must be employed so as to suggest a rationally defensible and appealing course of action, practice, and conduct with respect to man's involvement in sport. Indeed, if sport is to be preserved, even regarded as worthy of preservation in its present state of crisis, the light of philosophic reflection must be brought to bear upon it. For only by the intervention of this influence may we plausibly expect sport to be sufficiently well understood and thereby properly treated, engaged, and nourished.

The appearance of the present volume is largely attributable to the informed conviction that a more authentically philosophic treatment of sport than it has generally received is necessary to a fully satisfactory understanding and practice of it. In accord with the best expectations of philosophic inquiry, then, the twenty-two essays presented here attempt a reflective apprehension of the nature and significance of sport in its most general, accessible constitution. More specifically, these essays divide themselves into three major categories (from most to least synoptic): the ontology of sport, the ethics of sport, and the aesthetics of sport. And though the essays in some manner or measure similar to one another have been juxtaposed, they are otherwise presented in no particular order. The order of generality sought in each case exceeds that of the biological, psychological, sociological, and historical perspectives and thereby aspires to a different sort of understanding, albeit one taking account of these others and drawing them into a higher unity. In effect, the present tract is to be regarded as a collection of original, previously unpublished, essays concerning the philosophy of sport. And insofar as the editor has been able to determine, these essays now represent the major unpublished, non-dissertation contributions to the literature concerning the philosophy of sport. Their scope, scholarly merit, and tenacious commitment to the rigors of both philosophy and sport qualify them uniquely well for inclusion.

Though several of the works were privately solicited (designated *a* in the *Contents*), the great majority have been first presented as symposium papers; either at the Symposium on the Philosophy of Sport (designated *b* in the *Contents*), State University College at Brockport, New York, February 10-12, 1972 (the first professional conference devoted exclusively to the philosophy of sport); at the First

Canadian Symposium on the Philosophy of Sport and Physical Activity (designated *c* in the *Contents*), University of Windsor, Ontario, Canada, May 3-4, 1972; or at the Symposium on Sport and Ethics (designated *d* in the *Contents*), State University College at Brockport, New York, October 26-28, 1972. Both Brockport symposia were conducted under the visionary guidance of Professor Warren P. Fraleigh, Dean of the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, State University College at Brockport, together with the astute assistance of his February Organizing Committee composed of Brockport Professors Joseph Gilbert of the Faculty of Philosophy, and Francis W. Keenan, Scott Kretchmar, Robert G. Osterhoudt, Ginny Studer, and Carol Susswein all of the Faculty of Physical Education; and his October Organizing Committee chaired by Professors Francis W. Keenan and Scott Kretchmar. Both symposia were also partially supported by the Center for Philosophic Exchange, State University College at Brockport, Professor Howard E. Kiefer, Center Director and Dean of the Faculty of the Humanities. The Windsor symposium owed its great success to its director, Professor P. J. Galasso, Dean of the Faculty of Physical and Health Education, University of Windsor, and to his outstanding faculty colleagues. My indebtedness extends equally to each of these persons and to the seventeen contributors, for the present volume is no more than a collection of their creative efforts. It is also appropriate at this time to acknowledge with gratitude the efficiency and kindness of the secretarial personnel who assisted so ably in the preparation of the manuscript: Mrs. Barbara Duffy of the State University College at Brockport and Mrs. Helen Schatzlein of the University of Minnesota.

Robert G. Osterhoudt

Minneapolis, Minnesota

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