<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Sports information and the Olympic movement in Singapore and Malaysia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>N. G. Aplin and Selina Khoo Phaik Lin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>11th World Congress of the International Association for Sports Information (IASI) on “Sports Information in the Third Millennium”, Lausanne, Switzerland, 25 – 27 April 2001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Sports Information and the Olympic Movement in Singapore And Malaysia

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The inexorable move towards rationalisation and professionalisation reaches all corners of modern society including bodies involved with sport. However, not all elements of the process of being up-to-date receive the same attention. It is common for developing nations to employ groups of people to the task of enhancing athletic performance or increasing mass-participation rates. These are the obvious priorities because they focus on the immediate needs of the state and the population. Somewhat less obvious is the perceived need to accumulate and safely store information pertaining to the earlier development of sport. It is a task that is assigned to a small number of individuals. Hand in hand with this – an often-overlooked objective – is the revelatory yet frustrating task of re-discovering and re-creating information about past events, experiences and interactions. The stories, the experiences, and the passions that crystallise sport into a mutually recognisable institution tend to reside as personal memories that either gradually lose touch with the reality of events or they gather dust and are even lost through lack of storage. That aspect of sport that is a vessel for information, moves forward inexorably, but most eyes on board are usually watching from the bow to observe measurable gains in performance, improvements in the provision of facilities and manpower, or in fluctuating participation rates. Alternatively, the eyes are on the horizon and the new shores to reach, as targets for the future. However, at the stern, as soon as the thrust is generated and direction has been set, the outward manifestation of power becomes little more than turbulence and immediately starts to subside, dissipate, and recede from view. The stories of pioneers, problems, passion, and perseverance become lost.

With a clear and unapologetic bias towards sports information of a historical nature, this paper explores the idea that factors operating in some newly developing nations tend to mediate against the optimal creation of an accessible culture – that the ‘passengers’, so to speak, have not devoted sufficient time to appreciating the view from the aft rail and to recognising the importance of alternative perspectives that present themselves on their journey. More encouragement is called for in seeing a vibrant sports culture as one that is interesting and informative in its own right, one that, furthermore, provides a value setting and therefore direction for new development. It is argued here that a backdrop woven by the exploits of heroes and heroines and the values that emerge simultaneously within the athlete and the society are significant in providing the more utilitarian aspects of sports development with some steadying ballast.

The combination of ‘no information’, ‘missing information’ and ‘misleading information’ represents the core problem that confronts those who are interested in re-creating and/or
consolidating the cultural fabric of sport. Not knowing where one has come from – or at least not being able to refer to records of the past – creates two types of dangers. First, the danger of losing a history of challenges, sacrifices, effort, joy, emotion, motivation, and success is a danger of losing a defining element of the human spirit. Second, the danger of losing written records and reports of the past is the danger of repeating the mistakes of the past. Not a new problem, nor one that is unique to sport.

Singapore and Malaysia

Singapore and Malaysia have shared many experiences on their respective roads to national independence. In the field of sport and in particular the development of that part known as the Olympic Movement there are indeed close ties. The Straits Settlements, including Singapore, and the various Malay States, were at one time known collectively as British Malaya. Competition and rivalry, in sport as in trading and commerce, began with the British. Inter-port and inter-State sporting contests represented the pinnacle of competition for colonialists and settlers before affiliation to the International Olympic Council (IOC). Singapore apparently took the lead in formalising the process of affiliation, amid unsuccessful attempts to create a pan-Malayan body to organise amateur sport. As a Crown Colony, Singapore was inducted in time for the 1948 Games in London. The Federation of Malaya, the predecessor of independent Malaysia, first took part in the Olympic Games in Melbourne in 1956, three years after the Malaya Olympic Council was formed in 1953.

Malaysia with a present-day population close to 23 million comprises four main population groups with Malays (58%), and Chinese (25%) being the two most significant groups. It has chosen to pursue the goals of sports excellence more vigorously than Singapore in the years since its independence in 1957. Its most recent policy statement emphasises the achievement of sports excellence and concurrently the enhancement of national pride. Mass sport or sport for all does play an important part, where sports and activities are defined as spontaneous or organised aimed at encouraging greater participation.

Singapore now with a resident population of 3.3 million inhabitants has a different demographic profile, with Chinese accounting for over 76.8% of the population, Malays 13.9%, and Indians 7.9%. Singapore adopted a deliberate Sports For All philosophy in 1973, eight years after achieving independence in 1965. The main goals behind the promotion of sport concerned the practicalities of enhancing and sustaining the health and welfare of citizens, so as to ensure the economic prosperity, security and harmony of the nation. Even though local stars were acknowledged, any undue emphasis on the individual pursuit of sporting glory was played down.

The successes that have been achieved in sports excellence and sports for all have been notable in view of limited resources and an increasing challenge from other developing nations. However, the development of a recognisable culture of sport appears to have been constrained in both countries by a lack of extensive and detailed written information relating to the social nature of events associated with Olympism, sports personalities, performance, and participation in the two countries. During the colonial period little was written about indigenous sport or the activities of groups other than the Europeans and a few Asians who had access to sport. Since self-government and independence, that part of the sporting past where lines of distinction between Malaysia and Singapore became blurred, the tendency was to leave well alone and start a not so much a ‘fresh page’, but more a new book. Thus the shared past may have helped to develop a friendly rivalry, but it may also have acted as an impediment to defining a separate identity that was accessible to each nation.
Sports Information and the Problem of Identity

There is still some confusion concerning the allegiance of the first representatives of Singapore or Malaysia to participate at the Olympic Games. Before the Second World War, neither state – Malaysia was then Malaya – had formal representation within the Olympic Movement. Individual migrants and settlers, who owed allegiance to their respective motherlands, did compete on the world stage however. Khoo indicates that two Chinese athletes competed in the Berlin Games of 1936. Chua Boon Lay, from Singapore, represented China in soccer and Poh Kim Seng, from Kuala Lumpur in Malaya, competed in the sprints, also for China. After the Second World War, Singapore established its own Olympic Sports Council (SOSC) and became affiliated to the IOC in 1947. However, top hurdler Ng Liang Chiang did not don the colours of Singapore – his home – as is seemingly claimed by Khoo later in his paper, rather he represented China in the hurdles in 1948. Chu Chee Seng and Chia Boon Leong, two soccer players from Singapore and Yeap Cheng Eng from Malaya also played for China in London. Malaya did not create its own Olympic Council until 1953, so it was understandable that Yeap would play for China. The official accolade for the first Olympic representative of either Singapore or Malaya belongs to Lloyd Valberg, a Eurasian high jumper, as the sole athlete in the first Singaporean team, which was sent to London in 1948. The story of misleading information does not end here however. Having established the identity of the first Olympian, it would be only proper to record the performance of Valberg in his event. This has been problematic in itself. The first president of the SOSC, Scotsman Andrew Gilmour, undoubtedly proud of the efforts of his first nominee, reported that Valberg had been placed 8th in the final. The Official Report, however, places him equal 14th recording a height of 1.80m.

In 1956, two women represented Singapore in the Melbourne Olympic Games. Mary Klass and Janet Jesudason were the only two women in an official squad of 45 participants. They were sprinters who appeared at the Melbourne Cricket Ground with modest aspirations. Janet was outclassed finishing fifth in the heat in which Rao the Indian runner collapsed shortly after the start. Mary fought a sterner fight and was narrowly beaten by more seasoned competitors. She was credited by the Singapore press with a personal best time, a new national record, and victory over an undisclosed number of rivals. In anyone’s terms a great individual triumph on the world’s greatest stage. For more than forty years a misrepresentation was then perpetuated. Whether deliberately or by accident, officials representing Singapore did not record and report the correct times of these two athletes. As late as the year 2000 Janet Jesudason was still unaware of the time she had recorded – being under the impression that no time had in fact been taken. The knowledge of her actual time did nothing to dampen the memory of well-earned Olympian status, rather it brought a sense of closure to a lifetime’s experience. For Mary there were similar emotions, for even though her official time was at least 0.4 second slower than she had assumed, the indelible memory was one of a good race – hard-fought.

This problem of misleading and sometimes missing information highlights some interesting issues when viewing the development of the culture of sport in Singapore and Malaysia – particularly as it might pertain to the general development of newly independent multiracial nations. Sports cultures do not materialise over-night and for countries like Singapore and Malaysia, the issue of establishing an identity in sport – one that accommodates each of the ethnic groups and comes to terms with a colonial past – remains an important one. Information is the lifeblood of identity, and a steady stream of information has been required in Singapore and Malaysia to elevate the status of sport.
The colonial legacy has been problematic for two main reasons. First, the available records of the past have tended to focus on the activities of Europeans, less so on the people who ultimately claimed independence. The majority of leading ‘amateur’ athletes and players in Malaysia and Singapore before self-government were the privileged administrators, businessmen, members of the garrison, many of whom were on relatively short tours of duty from Britain. The exceptionally talented local athletes like Wong Peng Soon who was the unofficial world champion in badminton in the late 1940s and early 1950s were few and far between. A sporting legacy for the Malayan Peninsula therefore has been lacking in information on home-grown talent. Second, there is a natural tendency for a new nation to distance itself from aspects of past colonial influence. To start afresh means to identify new faces for the new nations. In this way the local population that was active before independence and therefore associated with the colonial rivals tend to be overlooked or disregarded unless they achieved high levels of performance at an international level. Lloyd Valberg, Janet Jesudason, and to a lesser degree Mary Klass fall into this category. The passage of time has erased many of the memories of the sporting culture and also many of the records.

The shared colonial history of Singapore and Malaya was marked, in particular, by the migration of thousands of settlers from China, who at one time owed allegiance only to China. Even though Chua Boon Lay and Ng Liang Chiang both lived in Singapore, the laissez-faire approach of the British did not insist on sports representation reflecting colonial position under British sovereignty. The country was therefore denied the use of sporting experiences that might have helped to build and later reinforce the identity of other inhabitants of this small tropical island. Missed opportunities to record and applaud home-grown successes, small in their own way, might have created a sense of indifference amongst other settlers at the time. Years later the lack of heroes and heroines from the immediate past presents the newly evolving culture with some gaps to fill. Singaporeans are presented with images of athletes, but the images are ephemeral, the faces easily forgotten. Countries need sporting icons and reliable information is required to paint the picture for its people.

A joint venture, published in Petaling Jaya, Malaysia in 1975 was the Who’s Who in Sports in Malaysia and Singapore. Edited by TRP Dawson, it represents one of the few anthologies to be produced that has been attempted to provide information for lovers of sport and adherents. It was hoped that the volume would become a standard reference book or encyclopaedia for sports organisations, institutions, and libraries in the two countries, but there is no evidence that new joint-editions were published. The aim was to produce a record of sports activities and achievements. The recent effort by Malaysian Government Services Welfare and Recreation Council to document past and present sports heroes in the public service did result in a similar publication that was restricted to Malaysians personalities however.

The Olympic Movement in Singapore and Malaysia

Singapore instituted its Olympic and Sports Council (SOSC) in 1947, when still under British rule. The linking of two concepts within one name was indicative of a conceptual distinction between ‘Olympic’ and ‘Sports’. Subsequently the respective objectives of Olympic representation and the promotion of amateur sports were to be assigned to two different bodies. Representation at the London Games was achieved in the form of the solitary Valberg jumper and a team manager. In 1970, five years after independence was achieved, the SOSC was re-named the Singapore National Olympic Council (SNOC), and athletes have been present at every Games with the exception of the 22nd Olympiad in Moscow. These straightforward facts can be verified. Naturally they fail to paint a full picture of events, furthermore they also add nothing to picture of the context within which the initiatives were
taken, nor some of the earlier experiences, events, and motivations that ultimately led to the affiliation of these bodies with the IOC.

For a period of 47 years the Olympic Movement in Singapore was largely synonymous with participation in the Olympic games themselves. In 1994, both Malaysia – with the aim of training sports officials - and Singapore – with the aim of promoting Olympic Education in schools - instituted their own National Olympic Academies. The National Olympic Academy of Malaysia has been conducting annual NOA sessions since 1998, inviting participants from the surrounding Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) region. Thus a broader acquaintance with Olympism was created.

Sports Information in Singapore and Malaysia
Notwithstanding the cursory attention that was paid to recording sport in colonial times amongst the different ethnic groups, it would be inaccurate to say that no attempts have been made to retrieve and restore a significant sporting legacy in more recent years. The next section of this paper focuses on the importance of sports information for Singapore and Malaysia, both as an ongoing process in the medium of information that quantifies, evaluates and records engagement in sport and performances of athletes, and but also as important elements that define the developing culture of sport itself within the context of the Olympic Movement. What emerges from the two different perspectives is that limited resources have been assigned to the tasks associated with sports information and although the people who are involved have made considerable strides bearing in mind the constraints imposed on them, there remain new paths to consider for the future.

The focus of the section on Singapore is less concerned with information in the form of results and names, although this is a fundamental requirement, but more with information creation, gathering and presentation as an essential part of sport, which is to deliberately create a recognisable culture. A particular emphasis is placed on information as a reflection of the value systems that have prevailed in the past and currently prevail within the sport culture. The focus of the section on Malaysia is to describe some of the concrete attempts made to make sports information more accessible to Malaysians in the current context of national development.

Many external problems have existed in both countries in the past that have prevented or constrained the accumulation of information. But equally there have been limitations imposed by society and the state. Physical problems, which relate to the actual preservation of printed documents, include the degrading effects of high levels of humidity, the presence of veracious ants, fungus and other biological agents. In the past there was little that could easily done to prevent deterioration and decay. Human problems included, most significantly, the ravages of Japanese occupation between 1942 and 1945, when many records were lost. Accidental loss by fire, such as happened at the building dedicated to the main offices of the National Sports Associations in 1984 in Singapore – and in 1986 in Malaysia – are devastating and depressing. For the professional or even amateur historian the situation has always been alternately frustrating and exhilarating. 9

The Scene in Singapore
In a rapidly industrialising nation where priorities have been set in the three main areas of economic progress, national security, and educational advancement, sport has been assigned a supporting role. The collection of sports information by state bodies tends to be directed
towards the accumulation of facts and data that facilitate state initiatives. Information of this sort is designed to provide a platform for improving the status of sport.

State bodies have been assigned the main task of gathering sports information. The process of information accumulation, information processing, and information dissemination was initially the function of the Information and Research Division at the Library of the Singapore Sports Council (SSC), which was formally established in 1974. More recently, changes in organisational structure have passed that responsibility to Management Services of the SSC. During the past twenty-five years the scale of resources available has grown considerably, largely as a result of the valiant efforts of a handful of individuals. Excellent though the numerical progress has been, there remain concern that little has been created or written specifically by Singaporeans about Singaporeans.

In 1975, the Sports Library contained 1645 books, by 1984 the number had grown to 9230, and as of today the shelves contain in excess of 18000 volumes. The library is a member of IASI, and since its inception in 1974, the centre has become one of the foremost repositories for material on the South East Asia Games, a regional variant of the Olympic Games. There is a problem of language in that Singapore is the only country in the region that has adopted English as its language of administration. Although Malaysia, as the closest neighbour, does generate some material in English there is apparently little contact between the respective library facilities.

There are two main categories of sports information collection in Singapore. First, those that relate to the organisation and management of sport, e.g. participation figures, budget projections, accountability, targets, goal setting, rationalisation, quantitative figures, technical aids to professionalisation, scientific research on performance. The SSC operates its own web-site in order to disseminate important information to the public (http://www.ssc.gov.sg/)

Singapore is different from Malaysia in that the enduring philosophy has been one of Sports For All. There has also been less high-level political involvement in the earlier years of independence than across the causeway that connects the two countries. Hosting the South East Asia Peninsula Games in 1973 was the earliest landmark of regional sport that touched the lives of the population. At a national level, initiatives in health and fitness have always been the key concerns, although Sports Excellence is experiencing a revival as the nation moves into the 21st century. In 1975, the Sports Medicine and Research Centre run by the Singapore Sports Council looked into ways and means of raising the level of physical fitness and improving the physical capacity off the population.

Today’s focus remains on the present issues of participation. In 1999 the Research Department included three main surveys and three smaller studies in their programme:

- a) A census of sports facilities, the sixth in a series, to establish the number and type of facilities available.
- b) A review of the sports excellence programme
- c) A company wellness survey
- d) A survey on the demand for riding facilities
- e) Feedback on school sports
- f) Information on customer satisfaction

For the researcher access to sports information is found in a number of key locations. The Singapore Sports Council Library, previously mentioned, acts as a resource centre for the
receipt and dissemination of information. It attempts to establish links with other libraries, and institutions nationally and internationally. A sports magazine – founded in 1973 under the National Sports Promotion Board, which was the precursor of the SSC – represents the most significant monthly journal to be published. 11

The Singapore Sports Council Museum opened in 1983 with a hall of fame. It is a member of the Museum Round Table in Singapore with links to the National Heritage Board, it is also affiliated to the International Association of Sports Museums and Halls of Fame. One part-time executive and one full time clerical officer run the facility, which is not easily accessible, nor prominent as a sporting landmark. In view of the constraints, it is remarkable that much is achieved to promote existing resources. The problem for the museum is that it is severely limited in the amount of research that its employees can carry out. One solution that is emerging is that the work is commissioned out to academics and historians both amateur and professional. Other sources of sports information include The National Archives, which acts as a heritage centre for some useful general resources including maps, documents, oral histories, and photographs, and the publications of the SSC and other institutions. 12

Newspaper archives run by Singapore Press Holdings represent the only continuous records of events relating to sport.

The Scene in Malaysia
Malaysia has developed a name for hosting significant world events such as the World Heavyweight Boxing match between Joe Bugner and Mohammed Ali in 1975, the Formula One Grand Prix races in 1999 and 2000, and the Commonwealth Games in 1998. The first motto, which was Sports for the Nation, struck a strident note. Sport was among the foundations of solidarity and unity. The first Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman, who was known as the Sporting Prince, played a major role is establishing sport in the minds of the people. In 1975 Tun Haji Abdul Razak was President of the Olympic Council of Malaysia, since when Malay leadership has often been associated with sport. For example, two of the more popular sports in the country, football and hockey, are headed by members of the Malay royal family. The president of the Football Association of Malaysia is the Sultan of Pahang, Sultan Ahmad Shah, while the president of the Malaysian Hockey Federation is the Sultan of Perak, Sultan Azlan Shah.

The National Sports Council of Malaysia was established in 1972 to achieve excellence in competitive sports. The National Sports Council library, set up in 1984, has a comprehensive collection that includes journals, magazines, periodicals and videotapes. Documentation on the SEA Games, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games and the Olympic Games can also be found here. In addition the library also stores photographs, trophies and medals. The National Sports Council library is located at the National Sports Council and next to the Institute of Sports. It has a comprehensive collection that includes journals, magazines, periodicals and videotapes. The National Sports Institute, which comes under the NSC, was set up in 1992. One of its objectives is to conduct research into sports. Unfortunately no major research has been carried out by the institute.

The Olympic Council of Malaysia (then Olympic Council of the Federation of Malaya) was registered in 1953. The library at the Olympic Council of Malaysia officially started in 1991. It mainly stores materials related to the Olympic movement. In addition to that it also has information on the SEA Games, the Commonwealth Games, the Asian Games and of course the Olympic Games. This includes reports, participation figures and medal tallies of the
Some of the information can also be found on the official Olympic Council of Malaysia web-site: www.olympic.org.my.

The Ministry of Youth and Sports also has its own library, which has been in existence since the forming of the Ministry in 1964 (then Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports). It mainly stores government documents and reports. In addition to that, proceedings from sports conferences and seminars organised by the ministry can also be found there. Whenever ministry officials attend seminars abroad, they present a copy of the seminar papers to the library. Unfortunately documentation was lost in a fire at the ministry in 1986. There have been other efforts at sports documentation.

Although all three libraries are open to the public, they mainly cater to the needs of the organisation. The libraries act more as a reference centre where members of the public can look up information and make the necessary photocopies. However the staff at the respective organisations are allowed to borrow the materials.

At present the libraries are underused. The ones who frequent the libraries are mainly undergraduates and postgraduates who conduct research on sports. In actual fact, in the area of sports, information clients or consumers are many and varied — athletes, coaches, sports journalists, sports scientists, researchers, sports physicians as well as sports enthusiasts. It is essential to provide clients with information they require as well as anticipate their information needs. Different clients require different information. Athletes and coaches may want to know about the techniques or about competitors, sports journalists might like to find out the past games records, sports physicians might want to know the latest research findings while sports enthusiasts might be interested in sporting personalities. Greater attempts could be made to attract more people to use the library facilities. Many people want information, but they do not always know the best sources. Looking for related and relevant material is usually a time consuming and stressful process if one does not know where to go. It could be like getting lost in a maze. Or even like looking for a needle in a haystack. Many give up in the quest. This is an area where sports information specialists can improve.

At the moment, Malaysia does not have a sports hall of fame, but this is a project for the future. It could highlight Malaysia’s success in sports like badminton, ten-pin bowling and squash as well as heroes including Wong Peng Soon and Eddy Choong (who dominated the All England championships in the 1950s), M. Rajamani (the first woman to win a gold medal at the Asian Games), and the 1975 national men’s hockey team (placed 4th in the World Cup). Other achievements to include are the hosting of the 1998 Commonwealth Games, le Tour de Langkawi (the biggest cycling event in Asia) and the Malaysia Formula One Grand Prix.

Sports information has not been a priority, but that is changing as people realise its importance. Information is important in all fields of study and sport is no exception. This is especially true in the age of Information Technology. With the Malaysian Government’s plan for the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC), it is important to be able to find one’s way in cyberspace. One does not want to be left behind when everyone else has stepped onto the Information Superhighway.

In the beginning, materials were collected more on an ad-hoc basis, and mainly by interested individuals. The collection of information has since become more systematic and professionals were put in charge of the task. Currently, the Olympic Council of Malaysia,
National Sports Council and Ministry of Youth and Sports have full time staff to manage the libraries. The staff is responsible for collecting, cataloguing and storing all materials.

There are also local magazines that add to the pool of knowledge. One in particular, All Sports, produces special issues in conjunction with events like the Formula One championship in Malaysia, Euro 2000 and the Sydney Olympics. Some national sports associations produce their own magazine. An example is the Football Association of Malaysia. The Olympic Council of Malaysia and the National Sports Council publish annual reports. The Ministry of Youth and Sports annual report has been available for the last two years. Sports information in Malaysia is in its infancy. Although efforts are being made to document sports on a wider scale, more can be done. It would be ideal if there were a link between the different sports resource centres in the country. This would enable the different organisations to share resources and avoid duplication.

Conclusions
Nation building very often avoids the backward glance. The need to forge a brighter future necessitates that the national focus is directed towards the immediate demands of the present and in turn to planning for the future. Both countries have acknowledged the need for sporting role models to encourage young participants, but rarely is the initiative embraced by more than a few individuals or groups. The process of nation building has been of utmost importance to both nations and clearly the role of sport in creating a sense of identity has not been overlooked. With this in mind, certain types of questions are raised when considering the role of information:

a.) To what degree is sports information seen as important within the countries as a means of establishing a culture of sport?

b.) Do people, who are interested in sport, have easy access to types of information they require?

c.) Is sports information that concerns pre-independence involvement in sport relevant to attempts to create a new legacy of sport?

d.) As new nations, what priority is given to re-creating sports information from the past?

e.) What counts as important or significant information?

f.) Does the collection of information play a part in the general aim of nation building?

g.) To what degree does sports information contribute to the general development of sport?

In comparison to the former colonial power, Singapore and Malaysia do not appear to have taken a major interest in preserving, and, if necessary, compiling records of performance for posterity. They have not transformed that part of their sporting heritage into forms that are equally acceptable and approachable as both academic and popular reading. As yet there has been little interest in expanding available knowledge of the local scene.

The co-authors have focused on some of the perceived limitations in their respective working environments. In Singapore the need is apparently for more historical documentation that integrates the fragmentary pieces of information that exist. In Malaysia, where the larger population creates more people with an interest in sport, there is a particular need for greater communication and a broadening of the scale of operations. The paper now concludes with the call for academic institutions and independent individuals to take a greater responsibility for documenting important events, policies, and the changes that are occurring in sport.
In Singapore efforts are being made at a modest level, they include the development of the new Singapore Olympic Academy which is housed at the Physical Education and Sports Science block at the Nanyang Technological University. A research project entitled The Olympic Movement in Singapore, has been funded by the SNOC and Olympic Solidarity. The origins of the SOSC in Singapore and the attempts to create a pan-Malayan body represent a current line of investigation. Furthermore there are plans to create a database of readings for students and other interested parties involved in sports studies. As technological expectations increase there will be a call to make such resources available electronically. There is a greater emphasis in these types of projects on the value of keeping records for the development of the culture of sport; the role of information relating to performance as well as participation, and biographical information.

Notes

1 The idea of cultural ballast is not new to Singapore. In the past it has been suggested that certain positive cultural values act as a necessary deterrent to excessive external influences.
2 Department of Statistics, Malaysia, 1999
3 Singapore Department of Statistics, 2000
7 Straits Times, 21 May, 1947. The first resolution was to form a Singapore Olympic Council, however, Mr. P.F. de Souza, representing one of the private clubs, pointed out that “wording of that name would imply that the Council would solely concern itself with the project of competing in the forthcoming Olympics, and not the general development of amateur sport in Singapore.”
8 Chua Chong Jin, Swifter, Higher, Stronger: 50 Years of the Singapore National Olympic Council, Singapore: Times Editions Pte. Ltd., 1998, p.39. The author describes the interrelationship between the SNOC, the Singapore Sports Council (SSC), and the National Sports Associations (NSAs). “They are often uttered in the same breath because their work and activities are closely related. Strictly speaking, these groups have well-defined duties. Among other things, the SNOC, which has a small but autonomous set-up, promotes general interest in amateur sports in Singapore; plans, selects and administers any Singapore team that participates in an IOC-sanctioned event; and monitors teams that receive aid from the SSC.”
9 Ilsa Sharp, author of The Singapore Cricket Club: Established 1852, personal communication. “In the earlier days of research in Singapore, 1970s-early ’80s, most historical research facilities were less well organised and it was indeed tough to dig stuff out – on the other hand, it was more exciting, because one kept coming across long-hidden gems if one persevered enough! The system was also less bureaucratic and, perhaps scandalously, one was able actually to touch original old books and newspapers which in fact needed better protection!”
10 Singapore Sports Council. The First Ten Years (1983). “The topics for surveys have been mainly directed towards the theme of sports participation among Singaporeans” (SSC, 1983: 71)
11 A Chinese language version was published briefly between 1977 and 1980.
12 Available resources written in English include: Annual Reports of the SSC (1973-2000); Commercial magazines; Commemorative books, e.g. Singapore Cricket Club, by freelance author Ilsa Sharp, Chinese Swimming Club, Singapore swimming Club; School books and annual reports, e.g. Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus, Singapore Chinese Girls School, Nanyang High Girls School; Club and Sports Association programmes; Malaya – a journal of the British Association of Malaya, which started in 1926. The main newspaper resources are the Straits Times, the Free Press, the Straits Budget; two doctoral dissertations examining the history of sport in Singapore have been completed since (Desmond Oon – ‘Government Involvement in Sport’ in 1982, and Nick Aplin – ‘Values and the Pursuit of Excellence: The Case of Singapore’ in 1999.