Introduction: establishing the field of play

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As an enduring and ubiquitous part of modern life, sport has a powerful capacity to touch individuals and societies around the world in ways that traditional forms of diplomacy and those traditionally thought of as diplomats rarely can. As writer and former England cricketer Ed Smith sagely notes, in the twenty-first century 'sport is bigger, grander and more diverse than ever'. However, the role that sport plays in global affairs as a whole – and in diplomacy specifically – is poorly understood and often ignored. Indeed, a commonly held view is that sport and anything in the political domain are wholly distinct, but, as Lincoln Allison posited, this 'myth of autonomy' does not stand up to scrutiny. Sport, therefore, demands understanding in the realm of diplomacy.

Nowhere has the diffusion and redistribution of political and economic power in our globalising world had more visibility than in international sport and its coverage by globalised media. Put simply, sport today is a multi-billion dollar global business. New media companies encompassing television networks, and their radio predecessors, have paid immense sums of money to broadcast major sporting events from the Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) estimated its revenue for the Olympiad – the four-year cycle encompassing the Summer Olympic Games in its first year, culminating with the Rio de Janeiro Games - would exceed \$4 billion, comprising nearly three-quarters of its entire revenue.3 The Olympics are able to generate such vast monies because they have a global audience; their only competitor for attracting as many viewers - and thus potential consumers – is the FIFA Football World Cup.⁴ It is precisely the global reach of mega sports events (MSE), such as the Olympic Games and World Cup, that attracts a range of actors to seek to utilise them to achieve their diplomatic goals. A raft of literature exists on sporting 'mega-events' to which this volume contributes directly in the shape of Suzanne Dowse's analysis of the South African FIFA World Cup; and indirectly as it embraces the transactions of the quadrennial diplomatic game.⁵

The most recognisable member in the cast of actors found at MSE is national governments, not least because they share in large part the visual imagery of the competitors at these events. States can reach millions if not billions of people across

the world as audiences through these MSE. Given their transnational character they allow for the dissemination of 'public diplomacy' - to win the 'hearts and minds' in the lexicon of conflict resolution - on a grand scale and in more pervasive means than individually or nationally focused programmes. As a prime recent example: the German tourism industry published a colourful and positive factsheet extolling the many benefits that the country received from organising the 2006 FIFA World Cup, noting that 'Germany rolled out the red carpet for its guests' and that the country's image abroad had improved, at least in part due to a more positive self-image that Germany was able to portray.⁶ Academic research supports the enhanced perception of Germany's increased image abroad, which helps reinforce to potential host cities or countries the potential benefits of organising a mega-event.⁷ (Debates over whether the financial costs outweigh the potential benefits of hosting MSE are a challenge to address. They are addressed where relevant in this volume but are not central to its analysis.8) R. S. Zaharna notes that public diplomacy and tourism are two key components of 'nation-branding', and hosting sporting events allows the two elements to help national governments and other diplomatic players achieve their political goals. Not every state hosts MSE; indeed, in the twenty-first century very few states have the infrastructure and/or finances to do so. From a high point in the early 2000s of up to ten cities vying for the right to stage the Olympic Games, the IOC faces a challenge in the second decade of the century to find enough cities to bid meaningfully for the games. 10 Other sporting federations face a more acute and more immediate predicament, with sport reflecting global societies facing financial challenges.

Even without the focus of hosting major international sporting events, countries, organisations and individuals can and do use sport to achieve diplomatic ends. Sport provides a lens upon the international system that gives insight into the underpinning facets of diplomacy as means of communication, representation and negotiation. The 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro highlighted many dimensions to diplomacy. For example, for the first time the Olympics welcomed a Refugee Olympic team, highlighting the plight of millions of refugees (although the celebration of the Refugee Olympic team stands in stark contrast to the political response to the issue of refugees globally). Yulia Efimova, the Russian swimmer who had previously served a doping suspension and almost did not compete in the Olympics because of a second positive doping test, touted the line presented in the Russian media that the West is returning to a state of Cold War anti-Russian sentiment, reflecting the heightened tensions between Russia and the rest of the world.¹¹ The Lebanese team refused to travel on a bus with the Israeli team; a Saudi Arabian judoka withdrew from her match citing injury, which the Israeli press claimed was to avoid a potential second-round match against an Israeli athlete; and an Egyptian judoka was sent home from the Games after refusing to shake hands after losing to his Israeli competitor.¹² These episodes can also be considered 'diplomatic incidents' of the type that diplomats regularly address and as such are routine.

Equally, because of the popularity of sport, individuals have also chosen to use sporting events as a place to stage a protest or worse. When traditional diplomacy (be it international or domestic) does not appear to provide an avenue for change, athletes

and others have used the tremendous audiences at sporting events as a platform for their message. Political protests have included John Carlos and Tommie Smith's actions on the podium in 1968 at Mexico City supporting the American civil rights movement; teams from the National Basketball Association and Women's National Basketball Association supporting Black Lives Matter and protesting the killings of unarmed African American citizens by law enforcement agenciesin recent years; and the 2016 Olympic silver medallist Feyisa Lilesa making an X with his arms above his head as he crossed the marathon finish line to show his solidarity with his persecuted Oromo people in Ethiopia. The en masse African boycott of the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal contributed to the Gleneagles Agreement which ensured the sporting exclusion of apartheid states in Africa – and also that African states would participate in and not boycott the 1978 Commonwealth Games in Edmonton, Canada. 13 The Black September group used the 1972 Olympic Games at Munich to raise awareness of the Palestinean cause, their terrorist actions causing the death of eleven Israeli athletes and coaches and one German policeman. More recently, in November 2015 the Paris terrorist attacks organised by the so-called Islamic State included the friendly football match between France and Germany at the Stade de France as one of the sites of their coordinated bombings. Sport has therefore not surprisingly been used by a variety of actors as a vehicle to achieve specific political goals. This in turn reinforces the diplomatic qualities of sport as a medium for communication, representation and negotiation, but also the necessity of a nuanced understanding of how such incidents - and those away from the headlines - shape the sport and diplomacy nexus.

At another point of the spectrum of the relationship between sport and diplomacy there is the use of athletes to promote a particular, often national, image abroad. As athletes engaging in elite competition have a profile that makes them marketable commodities and potentially hugely wealthy, endemic to this quality is their ability to communicate and represent. Whether they are articulate orators or not, they can communicate through their sporting prowess; and whether they are playing an individual sport, in a team in a national league, or in international competition alongside multiple sponsors, they are representing a series of identities. The United States Olympic Committee (USOC) has its Team USA Ambassador Program for Olympians, Paralympians and hopeful athletes to prepare them for 'the expectations, roles and representing the United States', including extensive education on 'being ambassadors for their sport and country'. 14 The USOC, along with the national governing bodies and professional leagues, also works with the State Department for the Sport Envoy programme which sends athletes and coaches abroad to work with community and youth programmes organised by the US embassies and consulates. 15 The United States is not alone in this. Indeed, the visibility of athletes is why many of them, along with musicians and actors, have served as 'Goodwill Ambassadors' for the UN agency UNICEF in order to help improve the lives of children across the world. 16 'Goodwill Ambassadors' as a title, used both officially and unofficially, is a reflection of the appropriation of diplomatic language to other realms of global society: including sport.

The guiding theme throughout this book is the practice of diplomacy in relation to

sport. It focuses upon the concept of soft power in its many forms and its relation to public diplomacy and nation branding; terms that have received considerable scholarly discussion, but rarely combined with the world of sport. The Harvard scholar Joseph S. Nye Jr has argued that '[T]he soft power of a country rests heavily on three basic resources; its culture (in places where it is attractive to others), its political values (when it lives up to them at home and abroad), and its foreign policies (when others see them as legitimate and having moral authority).'17 Governments and other actors across the globe have utilised sport to attempt to achieve their aims, particularly as they can easily promote the three aspects Nye emphasises as being central to soft power. In many cases governments directly and indirectly use sport, such as programmes for development and peace or by hosting MSE. Sport exchanges at the most basic level - organised by individuals or governments - have contributed to the 'winning of hearts and minds', to quote Nye again. 18 On the other hand, withholding the opportunity to compete in sport - the oft used and misused term 'boycott' - or even just the threat of such action has been utilised by a variety of actors in their efforts to achieve a desired political outcome.

Not all examples of sport as a form of soft power are directed by states. People-topeople exchanges, frequently organised by private individuals or organisations and often characterised as track-two diplomacy, can also contribute to the changing of perceptions. Exchange programmes perform one aspect of this regardless of whether the programme is supported by a government – such as the State Department funding of the Fulbright Program or the British Council's Premier Skills campaign - or organised by a private individual such as Martin Feinberg, who wanted to show his French basketball club his home country. Previous work has addressed agents of cultural diplomacy and what they are attempting to achieve via these programmes, and the variety of actors utilising sport within diplomacy is just as important. 19 As Giles Scott-Smith has noted, 'the informal networks established from these relations themselves have major political import'. 20 Perhaps one of the strongest pieces of evidence of the value of these exchanges is the impact of the Erasmus Programme, an educational exchange programme for students within European Union (EU) countries, begun in 1987 and enhanced in 2014 with Erasmus +, which brought together all the EU's education, training, sport and youth programmes. In the UK referendum on its EU membership (23 June 2016), the preference to remain as part of the EU was overwhelmingly supported by younger voters.²¹ Time spent abroad, living in and learning about a country, can have long-lasting impacts on both populations; sporting tours have provided a ready medium for exchanges since at least the end of the Second World War.

After many years of relative neglect by their separate disciplines, the realm of sport and diplomacy together is attracting renewed scholarly attention across a range of academic fields. This book is deliberately aimed at broadening and deepening the debate about sport and diplomacy, and expanding this specific but nascent field. Scholars began to critically examine sport and international politics in the late twentieth century, but only more recently has sport and diplomacy become a site of greater interest.²² The few books on sport and diplomacy literature tend to focus solely on the

Olympic movement²³ or remain more narrowly focused on specific periodisations of time, such as the interwar decades or the Cold War.²⁴ When a chapter on sport is included in a more substantial book on diplomacy, it is often relegated towards the end or mentioned within a chapter on international organisations.²⁵ Special issues of a variety of academic journals are increasingly addressing this intersection of sport and diplomacy,²⁶ and the editors of this volume look forward to the publication of more full-length monographs addressing these topics.²⁷

The volume here is not restricted to MSE or the Cold War, although both of these elements appear on the following pages. Furthermore, sport, development and peace (SPD) literature has largely remained a separate, isolated component of broader sport studies literature, frequently addressed by sport sociologists and not often by those who engage with diplomacy.²⁸ The contributions contained herein bring that subfield into larger conversations around diplomacy with those who consider global affairs. Indeed, the inclusion of Cárdenas and Lang's chapter on the practice of SPD within this volume on sport and diplomacy helps move this field past the narrow confines of the Cold War and into the twenty-first century. With a combination of theoretical chapters grounded in historical examples and chapters which address particular episodes, the book will help guide future research on sport and diplomacy by illustrating the value of studying the two together. This has the added benefit of showing that scholars of sport and diplomacy do not view themselves as distinct but instead come together to continue to expand the nascent field while making valuable contributions to each subfield.

To address the themes of soft power and public diplomacy, and the narratives that flow from them, the book is divided into three parts followed by a separate concluding chapter. The first section brings together various conceptual dimensions of sport and diplomacy and begins by tackling issues familiar to students of diplomacy: namely peace and conflict. Laurence Cooley's chapter on the 'deeply divided' societies of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus and Northern Ireland illustrates the competing jurisdictions of different actors such as a troika of UEFA, FIFA and the IOC demanding time-sensitive reforms to Bosnia's post-Yugoslav football architecture. These pragmatic concerns are also evident in Alexander Cárdenas and Sibylle Lang's practitioner account of the use of sport in Colombia and the Philippines in programmes for development and peace. The authors' field work, vested in diplomacy at the grassroots, is integral to their thinking on the positive and progressive opportunities that sport provides. Alan Tomlinson draws on his expertise in the study of FIFA to ask questions of the sport and diplomacy relationship in three realms: the individual, the institutional and the ideological. Suzanne Dowse implicitly takes up these themes in the example of the 2010 South Africa FIFA World Cup to illustrate how a state can utilise a global mega sports event as a political tool to influence domestic and international audiences, and reveals the disjuncture between expectations and realities that cut across elites and publics. Addressing these spaces between expectations and reality is something the study of sport and diplomacy can facilitate.

The second section looks at ways governments and individuals have sought to use international sport competitions as a form of public diplomacy to achieve specific

aims. Maximilian Drephal shows two dimensions of public diplomacy in Afghan-British relations: first, how a newly independent Afghanistan used sport to display its burgeoning nationhood, and secondly, how British diplomats used sporting contests, both with and as events for the local population, to continue a colonial legacy in a post-independent Afghanistan. While 'ping-pong diplomacy' famously describes the opening of US-Chinese relations in the 1970s, Amanda Shuman demonstrates how China used this sport in its relations with newly decolonised states a decade earlier in its efforts to position itself as the stronger communist state in the deepening Sino-Soviet split. Shuman's account reveals the importance of representation of the state in people-to-people diplomacy. Lindsay Sarah Krasnoff's chapter looks at informal people-to-people diplomacy. The two tours to the United States by French basketball team PUC in the 1950s and early 1960s brought enduring positive legacies for both the sport and the individuals involved against a backdrop of indifference in Franco-US relations. David Rowe's contribution is to question the position of Australia in relation to an Asian context and the role the region's leading sport – football – had to play in Australia hosting the 2015 Asian Confederations tournament.

The final section addresses the withholding of sport competitions, including the threat of boycott, as a diplomatic tool. Carole Gomez takes a broader and more theoretical approach to boycotts in the realm of sport and diplomacy; and grapples with the difficulties of pinning this concept down. Rachel Vaughan's chapter is about the melding of sport with issues of recognition and the implications of recognition in one realm upon another as she explores American diplomacy towards 'two Chinas' surrounding the 1960 Winter Olympics in Squaw Valley, California. Joe Eaton tackles perhaps the most famous sport boycott - the 1980 Moscow Olympics - by investigating Asian and African responses to American diplomatic efforts on this issue. His account starkly reveals the need for nuance and appreciation of diversity within the diplomatic sphere in considering the 1980 boycott. Umberto Tulli's contribution is to return to the debate on public diplomacy, and particularly propaganda, as he sheds light on the extensive but arm's length role the Reagan White House played in the organisation of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics in the midst of the 'new' Cold War. The concluding chapter, by Aaron Beacom and J. Simon Rofe, provides an overview of the developing field of sport and diplomacy, picking up the issues outlined while contextualising the arguments put forward in the volume by looking to the implications for further research.

Taken together, these chapters increase our understanding of the field of sport and diplomacy. They do so by reflecting a diversity of approach and method from a range of scholars from previously distinct academic fields brought together by a desire to enhance the overall appreciation of the duality of sport and diplomacy. In discussing cultural diplomacy, Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht and Mark C. Donfried state that 'between 1945 and 1989–91, cultural productions became the most powerful tools for the promotion of ideological goals and strategies'.²⁹ Our hope with this volume is to demonstrate the primacy of sport with diplomatic endeavours, transcending the Cold War, both geographically and temporally. Much public diplomacy literature, along with broader sport and diplomacy scholarship, has focused on these ideas being

part of the American diplomatic toolbox. While this idea is addressed in some of the chapters contained herein, many of the contributions in this volume expand public diplomacy discourse beyond the scope of the United States, and indeed beyond the nation state. States and organisations across the globe will continue to utilise sport within their soft power efforts. Whether those endeavours involve mega-events such as the Olympic Games or FIFA World Cup, or more localised programmes which involve either elite athletes or average citizens, sport uses diplomacy in many different ways to achieve political goals. The Cold War was a driving factor for many of the actions taken on either side of the ideological divide, as well as within the Sino-Soviet communist split, but the Cold War marked neither the introduction nor the end of the use of sport within soft power. Sport has been and remains an integral part of diplomacy. The multi-billion dollar business of sport, the drama of competition and the narratives it produces bring the world's population together like no other facet of modern society. This volume provides an enhanced critical analysis of the past as well as contributing to the debates across academic and sporting fields.

Notes

- 1 Ed Smith, 'Has sport ever had it so good?', 29 December 2015, espncricinfo.com, available at www.espncricinfo.com/magazine/content/story/956239.html (accessed 2 March 2016).
- 2 Lincoln Allison, *The Politics of Sport* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986), 17–21.
- 3 IOC, 'IOC marketing: media guide Olympic Games Rio 2016', available at https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document Library/OlympicOrg/Games/Summer-Games/Games-Rio-2016-Olympic-Games/Media-Guide-for-Rio-2016/IOC-Marketing-Media-Guide-Rio-2016.pdf (accessed 8 August 2016).
- 4 FIFA runs a number of global championships for various age groups, with two World Cups run on a quadrennial cycle the most prominent; a tournament for senior men's teams begun in 1930 and a tournament for senior women's teams begun (as the Women's World Championships) in 1991. The differentiation born out of gender is testament to the increased focus upon sport as a reflection of global society and further justifies the attention this volume provides.
- 5 Two examples include Stephen Frawley (ed.), *Managing Sporting Mega-Events* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016); and 'Going global: the promises and pitfalls of hosting global games', *Third World Quarterly*, 25:7 (2004).
- 6 Germany National Tourist Board, "A time to make friendsTM": the 2006 FIFA World CupTM and its effect on the image and economy of Germany', available at www. germany.travel/media/en/pdf/dzt_marktforschung/Fazit_der_FIFA_WM_2006_PDF. pdf (accessed 9 August 2016).
- 7 Magdalena Florek, Tim Breitbarth and Francisco Conejo, 'Mega event = mega impact? Travelling fans' experience and perceptions of the 2006 FIFA World Cup host nation', *Journal of Sport and Tourism*, 13:3 (2008).
- 8 Bent Flyvbjerg and Allison Stewart, 'Olympic proportions: cost and cost overrun at the Olympics 1960–1972', *Saïd Business School Working Papers* 2002, available at

- http://eureka.sbs.ox.ac.uk/4943/1/SSRN-id2382612_%282%29.pdf (accessed 5 March 2016); Martin Müller, 'After Sochi 2014: costs and impacts of Russia's Olympic Games', *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, 55:6 (2014); Tracey J. Dickson, Angela M. Benson and Deborah A. Blackman, 'Developing a framework for evaluating Olympic and Paralympic legacies', *Journal of Sport and Tourism*, 16:4 (2011); Jo Jakobsen, Harry Arne Solberg, Thomas Halvorsen and Tor Georg Jakobsen, 'Fool's gold: major sport events and foreign direct investment', *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 5:3 (2013).
- 9 R. S. Zaharna, 'Mapping out a spectrum of public diplomacy initiatives: information and relational communication frameworks', in Nancy Snow and Philip M. Taylor (eds), *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 90.
- 10 The withdrawal by the Italian Olympic Committee of Rome as a host city for the 2024 Games in September 2016 left only three cities vying for the right: Los Angeles, Paris and Budapest, after Boston and Hamburg also withdraw due to concerns over staging the event. At the same stage in the preparations for the 2012 Olympic Games there were nine cities still in contention, with five being shortlisted for the final competition. London was selected to host the 2012 Summer Olympic Games on 6 July 2005.
- 11 Shaun Walker, 'Yulia Efimova hits back at critics: "I thought cold war was long in the past", The Guardian, 9 August 2016, available at www.theguardian.com/sport/2016/aug/09/yuilia-efimova-olympics-critics-cold-war-swimming-lilly-king-rio (accessed 9 August 2016).
- 12 'Saudi judoka forfeits Rio match, apparently to avoid Israeli', *Times of Israel*, 7 August 2016, available at www.timesofisrael.com/saudi-judoka-forfeits-rio-match-apparently-to-avoid-israeli/ (accessed 9 August 2016); Karolos Grohmann, 'Egyptian judoka sent home over handshake refusal with Israeli', Reuters, available at www. reuters.com/article/us-olympics-rio-judo-egypt-israel-idUSKCN10Q1WC (accessed 22 August 2016).
- 13 Aviston D. Downes, 'Forging Africa-Caribbean solidarity within the Commonwealth? Sport and diplomacy during the anti-apartheid campaign', in Heather L. Dichter and Andrew Johns (eds), *Diplomatic Games: Sport, Statecraft and International Relations since 1945* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2014), 117–49.
- 14 'Team USA Ambassador Program', TeamUSA.org, available at www.teamusa.org/ About-the-USOC/In-the-Community/US-Olympic-Academy/team-usa-ambassador-program (accessed 22 August 2016).
- 15 'Sports envoys and sports visitors', Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, available at https://eca.state.gov/programs-initiatives/sports-diplomacy/sports-envoys-and-sports-visitors (accessed 22 August 2016).
- 16 'Goodwill ambassadors & advocates', UNICEF, available at www.unicef.org/people/people_ambassadors.html (accessed 22 August 2016).
- 17 Joseph S. Nye, Jr, 'Hard, soft, and smart power', in Andrew F. Cooper, Jorge Heine and Ramesh Thakur (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 566.
- 18 Joseph S. Nye, Jr, 'Public diplomacy and soft power', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 'Public Diplomacy in a Changing World', 616:94 (2008), 108.
- 19 Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, 'What are we searching for? Culture, diplomacy, agents

- and the state', in Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht and Mark C. Donfried (eds), *Searching for a Cultural Diplomacy* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 4.
- 20 Giles Scott-Smith, 'Exchange programs and public diplomacy', in Nancy Snow and Philip M. Taylor (eds), *Routledge Handbook of Public Diplomacy* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 51.
- 21 Jessica Elgot, 'Young remain voters came out in force, but were outgunned', *The Guardian*, 24 June 2016, available at www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/24/ young-remain-voters-came-out-in-force-but-were-outgunned (accessed 9 August 2016).
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- 25 David Black and Byron Peacock, 'Sport and diplomacy', in Andrew F. Cooper, Jorge Heine and Ramesh Thakur (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 708–14; Jeremi Suri, 'Non-governmental organizations and non-state actors', in *Palgrave Advances in International History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 223–46.
- 26 The special issues include: 'Sport and foreign policy in a globalizing world' in Sport in Society, 11:4 (2008); 'Sport and diplomacy' in Sport in Society, 17:9 (2014); 'Sports diplomacy' in The Hague Journal of Diplomacy, 8:3–4 (2013); 'Sports diplomacy, politics, and peace-building' in International Area Studies Review, 16:3 (2013); 'Diplomacy and sport' in Diplomacy and Statecraft, 27:2 (2016); 'Sport diplomacy forum' in Diplomatic History, 450:5 (2016).
- 27 Two excellent sport-specific monographs are Beck, *Scoring for Britain*, and Sayuri Guthrie-Shimizu, *Transpacific Field of Dreams: How Baseball Linked the United States and Japan in Peace and War* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).
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- 29 Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht and Mark C. Donfried, 'The model of cultural diplomacy: power, distance, and the promise of civil society', in Gienow-Hecht and Donfried (eds), *Searching for a Cultural Diplomacy*.