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PROFESSIONAL SOCCER IN THE CARIBBEAN

The Case of Trinidad and Tobago, 1969–1983

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Abstract Research for Britain, the United States and Canada has shown that the early development of professionalism in sport was met with strong resistance from the elite adherents of the amateur ethos. For Trinidad and Tobago, however, and in relation to soccer, the conflicts which erupted over several attempts to professionalize the game had nothing to do with any opposition to professionalism on the part of the governing middle class dominated, soccer elite. Rather, the conflicts were fuelled by elite concerns over the protection of their power and authority over the game locally. While noting these comparative differences, a central aim of this article is to explain the nature and outcome of several attempts to professionalize soccer in the former British colony of Trinidad and Tobago between 1969 and 1983, drawing on the work of R. Williams and R. Gruneau.

Key words: • differential access to resources • emergent • professionalization • structural location

Introduction

There has been a renewed discourse within recent times over the oppositional growth and development of amateurism and professionalism in sport in both Europe (namely the UK) and North America (Baker, 1995; Collins, 1995; Lewis, W.R., 1997; Pope, 1996; Sheard, 1997; Terret, 1995; Waser, 1996). The debate however has been largely restricted to particular countries in the above regions. A question one may legitimately pose, however, is: has such a conflict existed in the ex-British colonies of the Anglophone Caribbean, and if so, how did it manifest and play itself out? This article attempts to deal with this question by examining the case of Trinidad and Tobago, a British colony from 1797 to 1962.¹ The article is structured in four parts which include (a) the global context of the professionalism–amateurism debate; (b) the objectives, methodology and theoretical framework of the case study; (c) the history of the development of football in Trinidad and Tobago, and (d) the attempts to professionalize the game from the late 1960s, to the early 1980s and the character and outcome of these efforts.

Professionalism vs Amateurism in International Context

One of the salient features of the early development of competitive sport was the conflict and struggles between professionalism and amateurism, as adherents of the latter sought to construct it as the ideal or 'normative framework' for the conduct of sporting activity (Ingham, 1978; Pope, 1996). Amateurism did not only mean the absence of monetary or pecuniary rewards, but also represented or symbolized a complex of virtues which included such notions as fair play, obedience (e.g. the decision of the referee or umpire is final), discipline and loyalty which were all geared to the creation of 'gentlemen'. Given the intrinsic underpinnings of amateurism, professionalism constituted its antithesis, for in professionalism athletes and officials received monetary rewards for their services. In Britain (Baker, 1995; Hargreaves, 1986), Canada (Gruneau, 1983, 1999) and the USA (Ingham, 1978; Pope, 1996), the middle and upper classes which controlled the organization of sport reacted negatively to professionalism because they saw it as a direct threat to the amateur ethos which they upheld and the class distinctions which underpinned it. And they opposed it notwithstanding the fact that some of them were also involved in various capacities, in pecuniary or professional activities such as horseracing, cockfighting and prizefighting. Members of the 'lower orders' or working class also participated in these activities. However, while elite opposition did serve to constrain its development, professionalism was gradually to supersede amateurism as the dominant feature of organized sport in these countries.² This process was greatly aided by a confluence of related factors which included capitalist industrialization, urbanization, increases in population size, disposable income and technological developments in transport and mass communication. In these processes, the initiative and aggressiveness of the rising class of industrialists played a crucial role (Gruneau, 1983: 100–35; Hargreaves, 1986: 114–38; Ingham, 1978: 187–276). In addition, the need to be competitive by recruiting the best and by engaging in more prolonged training was also a critical factor in eroding the amateur citadel, since it would have required dealing with such issues as 'broken-time' and directing more finance generally to improving athletic performance (Baker, 1995: 118–22).

Objectives and Methodology

The article has several related objectives. It seeks to (1) examine several attempts to professionalize soccer in Trinidad and Tobago in the period 1969–83 and describe the character or form they assumed; (2) account for their outcomes; (3) examine the possible link between the (middle) class background of football officials within the ruling body and (a) the transmission or prevalence of the amateur ethos in Trinidad and Tobago football, (b) their reaction to the attempts at professionalizing football and (c) its failure to develop in a sustained fashion in the period under review. The available literature on the amateur–professional divide in the development of sport as a whole, has shown that the middle classes in Europe and North America were central actors in this process. The aim is to examine whether they were also central actors in this process in the Anglophone

Caribbean context, and particularly in light of the Caribbean experience with British colonialism and the diffusion and internalization of British values in sport, politics and society at large (Beckles, 1998; Braithwaite, 1975; James, 1963; Mangan, 1986; Manley, 1988).

Because of the historical nature of the developments examined, the study relied heavily on documentary sources, namely newspapers and organizational records, and formal interviews with relevant officials and players. In respect of the interviews, the combined effects of migration, death, non-availability and the small size of the population of officials resulted in a purposive approach to sampling. As regards the national soccer officials, 27 were obtained out of a possible total of 63 (42.8 percent). A questionnaire was administered to these officials, one objective of which was to ascertain their class background. Using their own self-definition of class, it was found that 3.7, 70.4, and 25.9 percent of officials were drawn from the upper, middle and working classes respectively. The vast majority of soccer officials therefore were drawn from the middle class.

This self-definition approach to class comes from a broader theoretical perspective which sees human actors or individuals as having the capacity to create their own reality and forms of meaning which shape their (in)actions, independent of wider societal forces and structures, although it recognizes that these external forces can also impact upon them (Giddens, 1979; Gruneau, 1983, 1999; Silverman, 1970, 1985; Yelvington, 1995). However, while this approach facilitates the exercise of human agency, the use of actors' self-definitions generally has several weaknesses or limitations. The chief weaknesses include the fact that (a) certain meanings and categories exist prior to individuals, (b) individuals may not be consciously aware of the ideological underpinnings of certain meanings or social categories which they employ and (c) self-definitions as forms of 'subjective' reality may be at variance with the actual or 'objective' reality of human actors. For example, in the latter respect, and as it relates to the self-definition of class, an individual's conception of their class location, say as middle class, may represent more their mobility aspirations than their actual class position. However, whether valid or invalid, individuals often act on their self-definitions or perceptions of situations which have real consequences for social behaviour.

Theoretical Framework

The examination of the professionalization problematic in Trinidad and Tobago rests primarily on a materialist theoretical framework advanced by Gruneau (1983, 1999) for the study of sport and the work of Williams (1977) in relation to cultural analysis.

In offering a framework for the study of sports, Gruneau (1983, 1999) shows that the meanings (e.g. amateurism and professionalism), pressures, possibilities and choices which human agents encounter in sport are significantly influenced by the differential resources to which they have access as a result of their particular structural and class location. In respect of class, there are two important dimensions to which Gruneau draws attention: the distributional and relational. The distribution dimension pertains to the material and symbolic factors, such as

income, occupation, education, property and family status, which contribute to social ranking and inequality. The relational dimension pertains to the systematic relations between social groups which are differentiated in terms of material and symbolic factors (Gruneau, 1983: 168). It is the 'differential resources' deriving therefrom which can influence further the power of some individuals to structure sport and shape the meanings associated with it. As regards power, the above view suggests a conception that presents power not as an object, or something possessed by an individual or collectivity, but as a relationship which is contoured by the nature of the access which human agents have to particular resources (Hargreaves, 1986: 3–5). However, as Hargreaves also notes, in the power relationship it is not just resource accessibility which is critical, but also the various strategies and tactics employed by agents to realize their particular objectives. In examining resource accessibility in this article, not only is occupational location considered but also organizational location, since this is known to be critical in shaping resource access and the capacity of agents to influence the choices, possibilities and meanings they face in sport (McCree, 1990, 1995; Slack and Kikulis, 1989). As will be shown, for instance, it was mainly the organizational location of the local football officials, as members of the ruling football body, distinct from their self-ascribed class location, which gave them the power and upper hand in resisting attempts to professionalize soccer when these appeared to threaten their authority and control over the game.

In the Caribbean, historically, there have been several competing approaches to explaining inequality, conflict and social relations generally. These have included orthodox Marxian class analysis, with a focus on property relations or ownership of the means of production and class struggle (Beckford and Witter, 1980; Jacobs and Jacobs, 1980), neo-Weberian analyses with their focus on occupation, education, income or 'market situation' and status (Gordon, 1986; Smith, 1970; Stone, 1973) and analyses focusing on race and ethnic cleavages (Despres, 1967; Smith, 1965, 1984, 1991). During the period of the cold war, however, and up to the mid-1980s before the collapse of the left internationally, it was the Marxian approach which was the more dominant and appealing paradigm in certain intellectual, political and trade-union circles, given its focus on political struggle and proletarian revolution.

The Caribbean history of racism, African slavery and Asian indentureship, however, made issues of colour, race and ethnicity critical in explaining the social and political processes at work in Caribbean society, the extent of which varied from country to country within the region. While some Marxist analyses of Caribbean society acknowledged the importance of these variables, they still ended up assigning theoretical primacy and autonomy to class and class struggle, in 'the last instance' (Beckford and Witter, 1980; Hira, 1984; Karch, 1985). As a reaction in part to Marxian class reductionism, the anthropologist M.G. Smith developed the notion of the 'plural society' which assigned theoretical primacy to the variables of race and ethnicity in explaining the workings and trajectory of Caribbean societies, particularly in such societies as Surinam, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago where Asians (i.e. Indians) and Africans form the majority of the population (Smith, 1965, 1984, 1991). Smith's focus, however, was at the expense of class divisions which he saw as subordinate to race and ethnic divi-

sions, stating in this regard that 'these class structures are subsumed within those wider racial and cultural divisions that together constitute the corporate macro-structure of these societies' (1984: 141). Arguably, while Smith's work represented a definite theoretical break with Marxist analysis, like the Marxists he was also guilty of reductionism, in this case the variable was not class but race and ethnicity (Hall, 1977; Lewis, 1997; McCree, 1999; Robotham, 1980).

In the aftermath of these theoretical debates, there is a general sensitivity within contemporary Caribbean sociology to avoiding these forms of reductionism by using more eclectic theories, where necessary, which combine not only class and ethnic divisions but also gender to see how they articulate and disarticulate with each other to shape social relations (Barrow, 1998; Lewis, 1997; McCree, 1999; Yelvington, 1995). Interestingly, the failure to employ more 'inclusive' theories has also characterized the development of sport sociology internationally, although this is slowly changing (Gruneau, 1999: 122–7).

In this article, the neo-Marxian framework adopted to examine attempts to professionalize football in Trinidad and Tobago and the apparent non-exclusion of race as a variable might appear to repeat the same mistakes pointed to above, particularly when the racial composition of the population is taken into consideration.³ However, the irrelevance or omission of race as a variable in the study becomes evident when we consider the racial make up of both the football officials sampled and the individuals who led the efforts to professionalize the game. In respect of the officials for instance, who were sampled, a majority or 59 percent described themselves as black, 33 percent as 'mixed', 3.7 percent as white and 3.7 percent in the category of 'other'. And, of the four attempts to professionalize the game of football between 1969 and 1983, three were led by blacks, and one by an Asian; of these four, only one was female. While the over-representation of certain groups in local soccer and the under-representation of others has to be put in proper historical perspective, it raises a wider question, as to why certain groups are found more in some sports than others, which cannot be dealt with here.

Emergent and Pre-Emergent

In one of his famous texts, *Marxism and Literature*, Raymond Williams (1977) introduced the notions of 'archaic', 'residual' and 'emergent' elements of culture. Both the 'archaic' and the 'residual' refer to elements of a culture derived from the past, but the residual is much more active in the present 'cultural process', although aspects of it may be incorporated into the dominant culture (Williams, 1977: 122). By 'emergent', Williams meant that new meanings and values, new practices, new relationships and kinds of relationships are continually being created (1977: 122–3). While it may represent an alternative, and a source of opposition to the dominant culture, elements of the emergent culture are also vulnerable to incorporation by the bearers of the dominant culture. Much incorporation is often veiled as 'recognition', 'acknowledgement' and a 'form of acceptance'. Where there is incorporation (or even accommodation) of the 'emergent', this places limits and pressures on its very emergence. In addition,

Williams points out that, before the 'emergent' becomes fully manifested, there may be a 'pre-emergent' phase in which the nascent cultural form, while 'active and pressing', is not 'yet fully articulated' (1977: 123–6).

In examining the various professional developments in football, the concepts 'emergent' and 'pre-emergent' will be used to analyse and characterize the particular form(s) which they took. The examination and determination of these forms will be based on several factors. These include the nature of the contracts (e.g. informal vs formal), the method of wage payments (monthly, weekly, per match), the other conditions of service in respect of the provision of insurance and medical coverage, and the level at which these developments expressed themselves organizationally. In this latter respect, it is examined whether the professional developments found expression at a club and/or league level, and either nationally or regionally.

The Historical Background to Professionalism in Trinidad

The game of football was introduced to Trinidad and Tobago by the British in the mid to late 19th century (TTFA, 1988: 15). This was facilitated through the British expatriates who worked in the sugar and nascent oil industries, the military, the civil service, the clergy and in the commercial and financial sectors. Dr Basil Matthews, a former president of the ruling body for the sport, noted that

The recreational life of the Colony was similarly given tone and direction by these self-same interests. It was these people who introduced Association Football to Trinidad. It was these people and their institutions who both sired and nurtured the Football [sic] way of life in Trinidad and Tobago. (Matthews, 1965: 1)

The formalization and bureaucratization of football organization was initiated in 1908 with the formation of the Trinidad Amateur Football Association (TAFA). From its inception, the TAFA was responsible for the organization of football in the north and nationally. Between 1910 and 1961, this formalization of football organization was to continue, with the formation of several other regional leagues and organizations throughout the country. Out of concerns that it was too elite dominated and biased towards the northern region which fell within its authority, the TAFA underwent some organizational change in 1953, when it 'was formed into an island controlling body called the Trinidad Football Association [TFA]' (Matthews, 1965: 5), which was supposed to be more representative and democratic in character. The dissolution of the TAFA led to the formation of the Port of Spain Football League (POSFL), which was to administer the other league in the north, previously the responsibility of the TAFA (*Trinidad Guardian*, 8 November 1953, Sport Section: 1).⁴ As hinted earlier, the TAFA comprised individuals who were drawn primarily from industry, the military, the clergy, the civil service and merchant sector. Members of the clergy and military in particular assumed a prominent leadership role in the organization of both club and college football on the island (and sports generally), for they often held the chief positions on the executive as either president, vice-president or secretary⁵ of the

respective national associations in both pre- and early post-independence (1962) periods. It is important to note the key role played by the military and the clergy especially in the administration of football, for this may help to explain how a meaning system emphasizing the virtues of discipline and obedience consistent with the amateur-gentleman ethos came to shape football activity in the society, since they were agencies which were associated with the espousal of its core values.

The surviving records of the TAFE and TTFA, however, offer a more direct or less intuitive insight into the type of action orientations or meaning systems that have historically characterized the sport of football, in the pre- and post-independence periods. These early organizational records serve to confirm the existence and adherence to an amateur-gentleman ethos in football. For 1935, for instance, one reads of the following match reports from two local club games in which certain players were disciplined for alleged 'ungentlemanly conduct':

Reports were read from Mr. Goveia [sic] referee of the Rovers-Q.R.C. match [sic] against Yates of Rovers F.C. for dangerous play and Moore of the same club for ungentlemanly conduct (impertinence) during the game. (TAFE, 15 July 1935)

A report was read from Mr. Mark against A. Daniel of the Invincible F.C. for dangerous play and ungentlemanly conduct in the match [sic] Prisons versus Invincible [sic] which was played on the 11th September, 1935. (TAFE, 23 September 1935)

In another instance, this time in 1938, G. Harding of Colts FC was accused of 'ungentlemanly conduct' for physically assaulting a player of an opposing team, after a game which Colts had lost (TAFE, 1938). In yet another case, this time some 25 years later in 1964, one reads of the following decision of the TFA Appeals Committee in relation to an incident arising out of a game which involved Malvern and Shamrock:

We are strongly of the opinion, however, that the silence of the Malvern Club, in Word and Deed, exposes then [sic] to the charge of publicly condoning the misconduct of their players on the field of play, particularly as the Captain (Ken Henry) openly declared the ungentlemanly conduct of his players to be entirely justified. In view of this, the Appeals Committee recommends that the Malvern Club be sternly reprov'd and severely denounced for their gross dereliction of duty to the Port of Spain Football League, The Trinidad Football Association and the [sic] Football-loving public of Trinidad and Tobago. (TAFE, 9 October 1964)

In the records and periods examined, I frequently found these charges of 'ungentlemanly conduct' being levelled against players for either infractions against opposing players or against the referees themselves. In respect of the latter, some of the reasons for which players were found guilty included: 'making dirty remarks', 'walking off the field' and issuing direct threats to the referee's person because of dissatisfaction with their decisions. The punishment meted out to players for ungentlemanly acts varied generally, according to the perceived gravity of the offence committed. They could have been suspended for one or two matches, for several months in a season or for an entire season and more.

This amateur-gentleman orientation notwithstanding, the records also suggest the existence of a pecuniary orientation among officials and players. For

instance, in 1937, the TAFE had approached the colonial government of the day seeking permission to introduce sweepstakes in football. The quotation below reveals the response of the colonial government to this request:

REPLY FROM GOVERNMENT RE SWEEPSTAKES

A letter was read from the Honourable, the Colonial Secretary, informing the T.A.F.A. that the Governor regretted not being able to grant the request of the Association to be allowed to run sweepstakes at football matches. (TAFE, 1937)

No reason was given, however, for the Governor's decision not to support the introduction of sweepstakes at football matches. While I am not suggesting any possible relationship between the two decisions, it is interesting to note that the Governor's decision had coincided with a similar decision made by the English FA around the same time. A circular from the English FA,⁶ headed 'the raising of funds by illegal methods', had stated:

Reports having been made to the Council that a practice was growing of clubs and their supporters launching schemes for raising funds by sweepstakes, lotteries, or other means which are not only illegal but are also calculated to bring the game into disrepute, notice is hereby given that clubs must satisfy themselves before adopting any scheme that it is in order, and not calculated to bring the game into disrepute; and that failure to do so will possibly result in the offending club being permanently suspended. (TAFE, 1937)

Clearly, the evidence suggests that the Governor's decision, together with the circular from the English FA, may have combined to thwart what perhaps is the first known case of pecuniary instrumentality in football, in the form of gambling. There were two more similar attempts to establish a 'football pool along English lines' in the early 1950s (Braithwaite, 1975: 66) and in 1975 (TTFA, 1975) by individuals outside of the TTFA but these apparently did not bear any fruit.

In respect of players in this pre-independence period, there is some evidence to suggest that some may have engaged in betting in any case, and may have even betted on games in which they were actually playing. In this regard, an executive member of the TAFE had reported in 1940 that 'on two different occasions he had observed a player taking bets going on to the field of play, and said that it is against the rules of the Football Association for players to bet on football matches' (TAFE, 1940). It may be of interest to note that, while the attempt of the TAFE executive to introduce betting on football matches in the form of sweepstakes, three years earlier, was not against the rules of the Association, the reported action of players was. Nevertheless, what the report does suggest additionally is that spectators were also involved in betting, something formally denied officials and players.

Some two to three decades after these developments, available records reveal that in the 1960s, profit sharing schemes existed in two of the regional football leagues, the POSFL in the north and the Southern Football Association (SFA) in the south. In respect of the POSFL, it is known that the scheme catered for clubs in the First and Second Divisions, and that it operated for the 1967 and 1968 football seasons (*Trinidad Guardian*, 5 June 1968). For the 1968 season, 16 clubs — eight each from the two divisions — were to share TT\$7949.36 (US\$3974.68) in

profits and bonuses. The First Division clubs received TT\$709.76 (US\$354.88), while the Second Division clubs received TT\$283.91 (US\$118.29) (*Trinidad Guardian*, 5 June 1968). It is interesting to note that these sums represented a reduction over the previous 1967 season when First Division clubs were given TT\$944.60 (US\$472.30), and Second Division clubs obtained TT\$400.00 (US\$200) (*Trinidad Guardian*, 5 June 1968). While similar details were not obtained for the league administered by the SFA, the evidence of profit-sharing in this league was contained in the following newspaper report which read:

Despite the grand . . . opening last season and a \$1000 [US\$500] gate which it brought, the SFA dropped \$723.81 [US\$361.90] on their 1967–68 operations. As a result, there will be no profits to be shared among clubs, it was reported at the association's annual general meeting . . . (*Trinidad Guardian*, 28 May 1968)

Interviews with officials confirmed that the recipients of these profit-sharing schemes were the clubs and not the players themselves, which was consistent with the dominant amateur ethos at the time. As one former official noted in interview: 'Profit-sharing went to the clubs. In those days players weren't given any financial [sic] profit went to the clubs.' Although it proved impossible to ascertain when these profit-sharing schemes first started, past officials suggested in interview that the principal cause of the termination of the scheme was the dissolution of the POSFL and the other regional associations/leagues, following the establishment of the National Soccer League in 1974.

The various pecuniary developments in both the pre- and post-independence periods of Trinidad and Tobago football history — that is, the sweepstakes plan, the football pool, player and spectator betting and profit-sharing — all serve to confirm the existence of a pecuniary or a professional tendency among certain segments of the football fraternity, particularly officials and players, the official espousal of amateurism notwithstanding. The early development of football in the country reveals that professionalism and amateurism existed side by side, although it was amateurism which had emerged as the dominant meaning system in the initial formative years. It was both these tendencies which may have 'sired and nurtured the football way of life in Trinidad and Tobago', albeit disproportionately. In addition, these developments can be easily seen as the precursors to more direct and formal efforts to professionalize the game of football in this Caribbean island from the late 1960s, to the early 1980s.

Professionalization in Trinidad, 1969–1983

In the period 1969–1983, there were four major attempts to professionalize football in Trinidad. These included Paramount Internationals in the Eddie Hart Football League (EHFL), the Caribbean Professional Football League (CPFL), the Professional Sports Promotions (PSP) and the Premier Soccer League (PSL). These efforts were led by individuals drawn from quite a diverse and contrasting occupational spectrum, which included a pub owner, the head of a local company involved in handling airline cargo and airline travel, a director of a communica-

tions company based in the USA, who was a former national of Trinidad and Tobago, and a senior female civil servant.⁷

What can be considered the first direct attempt to professionalize the game locally took place in 1969, in the EHFL. The EHFL was a minor football league based in north-eastern Trinidad which was not affiliated to the ruling TTFA. However, this nascent development involved only one team in the league, called Paramount Internationals, which was sponsored by the owner of a local working class recreation club or pub (Jordan, 1978). At least six of the team members were paid, some of whom were already professionals in the now defunct North American Soccer League (NASL). In relation to their conditions of work, former players and a former official revealed that these players were all informally contracted and paid small sums ranging between TT\$25.00 (US\$12.50) and TT\$400.00 (US\$200) per match, but there was no insurance coverage. In addition, while there was the provision of free transport, this was restricted to a few players who resided in a southern community some 95 kilometres away. In view of its largely informal and very restricted character, it is reasonable to classify this professional development as 'pre-emergent' in character.

With respect to the actual competition in the EHFL, matches involving Paramount Internationals and another team called Singing Guns engendered tremendous rivalry and crowd support, for both teams contained the cream of local and professional players from the north and south of the country (Jordan, 1978: 3). The large public interest and support which these teams attracted troubled the ruling football body — so much so that they stated publicly that 'in order to maintain our structure and stability, the practice must stop' (Jordan, 1978: 4). The 'practice' which was alluded to was the participation of the players of these two top teams, who were already registered with teams in leagues affiliated to the TTFA, in the EHFL which was not one of its affiliates. In order therefore to protect their 'structure and stability', the ruling body decided to use its constitutional power and ban the footballers concerned from playing in minor leagues, by invoking Rule 19 of its constitution which prohibited its registered players from playing in non-affiliated leagues. This decision was challenged by the affected players and teams through the staging of a public demonstration (*Trinidad Express*, 18 October 1969). But although this strategy of public protest proved successful by facilitating the continued participation of the players involved, Paramount Internationals folded shortly thereafter, between 1970 and 1974, due to a combination of factors including the migration of some of its key players to the USA to play in the NASL and financial difficulties experienced by its sole sponsor.

Following Paramount Internationals, the CPFL was launched in April 1977. This was a lot more ambitious than the previous effort, for it represented an attempt (a) to establish a professional football league as opposed to just a team and (b) to establish such a league on a Caribbean wide or regional basis. While one individual appeared as the major leading force behind the idea, he appeared to have acted in alliance with two other individuals, with whom he had formed a company called West Indian Communications Limited, based in the USA which was given the franchise for the intended CPFL (*Trinidad Guardian*, 14 August 1977). The teams in the CPFL were to be drawn from the Dutch-, French-,

Spanish- and English-speaking Caribbean (*Trinidad Guardian*, 17 September 1979). Although the initiative was launched in 1977, the CPFL was set to come into operation two years later in 1979 (*Trinidad Guardian* 2 September 1977). In the intervening period, the entrepreneur sought to lay the necessary groundwork for its establishment. This involved contacting other teams, gaining the sanction of the regional football authorities, and marketing the idea. In this latter regard, several matches were staged locally, which involved local, regional and international teams. The plan to form the CPFL received the support of the TTFA, but because of its regional trajectory it also had to receive the sanction of the Caribbean Football Union (CFU), although this body was still in the process of formation (*Trinidad Guardian*, 24 November 1977). However, the CFU demonstrated tremendous vacillation and uncertainty on the matter: in the period 1977–9, it consented to the league on three occasions, and on another three occasions it refused to sanction its formation ‘indefinitely’ (*Trinidad Express*, 21 November 1979; *Trinidad Guardian*, 23 November 1979). Unfortunately, the author was unable to ascertain the reason(s) for the CFU’s indecision. What is known, however, is that this marked the end of the still-born CPFL. The entrepreneur had reportedly invested around TT\$500,000.00 (US\$208,333) in the venture (*Trinidad Guardian*, 23 November 1979; *Trinidad Express*, 25 November 1979), and for one match, the New York Cosmos, containing the likes of Brazilian Pele and the German Beckenbauer, reportedly received TT\$96,000.00 (US\$40,000) (*Trinidad Guardian*, 3 September 1977). Although the CPFL never materialized, it can still be classified as a pre-emergent professional development in view of the organizational effort, promotion and finance that had gone into its planned formation.

Almost simultaneous to the launching of the CPFL in 1977, a professional team named Caribbean Pro Pioneers was formed by a company called Professional Sports Promotions (PSP). The company had two directors, one male and one female, and the latter was the managing director and the main force behind the initiative (*Trinidad Guardian*, 10 August 1977). The team members were all formally contracted for a period of seven months in the first instance, were to be paid on a monthly basis and there were also provisions for transport, insurance against injury, loss of income and death benefits (*Trinidad Guardian*, 20 August 1977). In respect of these provisions the sums involved were not disclosed. In relation to salaries, while the owner of the team was quoted as stating that players were paid \$TT100.00 (US\$42) per month and TT\$50.00 (US\$21) per match, the former coach of the team revealed that players were paid between TT\$800.00 (US\$333) and TT\$1500.00 (US\$625). Notwithstanding this lack of corroboration, what remains significant is that these players were formally contracted and paid on a monthly basis. In the CPP professionalism had emerged because it was formally developed, although still not fully developed or widespread since it involved only one team.

When the CPP was initially launched, it easily gained the approval of the ruling body, but this changed drastically when the PSP declared its intention to form a professional league based in Trinidad. In its original conception, the league was to comprise 10 teams, split across two zones. The five teams in each zone were to compete for TT\$1000.00 (US\$417), and the zonal winners would

have then met to play 'for a TT\$5,000 [US\$2,083] super prize'. In addition, teams would each have received 35 percent of the gate receipts from matches in which they played, and the PSP would have received 25 percent, while the remaining 5 percent was to be shared 'equally' between the TTFA and the Trinidad and Tobago Referees Association (TTRA) (*Trinidad Guardian*, 22 September 1977). This decision to form a professional league was strongly opposed by the ruling TTFA whose then secretary⁸ was reported as stating:

Originally, we thought the Pro-Pioneers were designed to be a club or scratch team with some affiliation to the TTFA. But now we hear that they are planning to organize a professional league in the country along zonal lines, and people are talking about selling franchises for teams. All this is in conflict with the TTFA. It is a whole new ball game. We now have to review the situation because when we granted the Pro-Pioneers permission to play a few matches, we did not know of their long term plans. (*Trinidad Guardian*, 22 September 1977)

In 1993, some 16 years later, the former secretary (now a vice-president of FIFA), revealed the basis of their opposition when he stated in interview that 'T.F.A. again was negative, was lukewarm, because they felt threatened. They felt that, of course, the limited resources would have been dissipated. Generally speaking, they felt this was a rival organization and this was the best thing to do' (i.e. not to approve of it). In spite of the attempt on the part of the PSP's owner to assure the TTFA that the aim was not to 'usurp their authority', the ruling body still used its power and withdrew their initial sanction of the PSP (*Trinidad Guardian*, 23 September 1977). As a consequence, the PSP was officially debarred from playing against local and international teams, in accordance with the rules of the TTFA and the FIFA, as they relate to non-recognized or non-sanctioned football organizations (*Trinidad Guardian*, 22 September 1977). Inevitably, this led to the demise of the PSP, and the CPP much like the CPFL, and which had nothing to do with any anti-professionalism hysteria, as in Europe or North America, but with concerns over the ruling body's possible loss of control over the game.

Following these earlier efforts, the most significant professional development in the history of local football took place in June 1981 with the formation of the Premier Soccer League (PSL) (*Trinidad Guardian*, 5 June 1981). The principal financier of the PSL was an air cargo company called Aviation Services Limited (ASL), whose managing director was also the president of the PSL (*Trinidad Guardian*, 22 April 1981), and who, just prior to the decision to form the PSL, had served as an official on the northern zone of the TTFA (TTFA, 1981-2: 5). The ASL was a locally owned company whose 'authorised share capital' amounted to one million ordinary shares, with a fully paid up issue of TT\$200,000.00 (US\$83,333) (*Trinidad Guardian*, 14 April 1981).

The data suggest that a great measure of dissatisfaction with the ruling TTFA was the principal factor which led to the formation of the PSL. This dissatisfaction stemmed from several sources which included: the perceived low standard of the game nationally, the lack of benefits and incentives for players, the absence of a business-like approach to the game and the lack of participation afforded in the decision-making process of the ruling body. Reacting to this dissatisfaction,

the ASL used their access to significant financial resources to effect a virtual transformation in the way that football was hitherto organized and promoted in Trinidad. For instance, in its inaugural year (1981), the cash prizes offered in the First Division of the league totalled TT\$170,000.00 (US\$70,833) (*Trinidad Guardian*, 14 April 1981). Of this amount, the winning team was to receive TT\$40,000 dollars (US\$16,667), while the other teams received sums ranging from TT\$25,000.00 to TT\$5000.00 (US\$10,417 to US\$2083) depending on their final placing. Besides the normal league competition, there were two knockout tournaments which offered cash prizes amounting to TT\$30,000.00 (US\$12,500). In addition, an extra TT\$10,000.00 (US\$4167) was offered as incentive for the Man of the Match at every game and the Five Players of the Year. By contrast, and for its 1981 season, the total cash prizes offered by the TTFA in its First Division amounted to TT\$10,000.00 (US\$4167), of which TT\$5000.00 (US\$2083) went to the winner (TTFA, 1981–2: 4). The total amount of money offered in the PSL therefore was 17 times that offered in the traditional league of the ruling body. Not surprisingly, this soon led to the defection of six teams from the TTFA organized National Soccer League (NSL) to the PSL (*Trinidad Guardian*, 21 October 1981).

In 1982, the second year of the PSL, cash prizes in the League competition increased by another TT\$25,000.00 (US\$10,417) as four more teams defected from the NSL (*Trinidad Guardian*, 20 October 1981). In addition to the cash prizes and incentives, the PSL also provided insurance, medical and travelling benefits for their players and team officials. In respect of the insurance benefit, players and officials were individually insured for TT\$20,000.00 (US\$8333), which covered ‘accidental death or serious dismemberment’, whether in training or in official league competition. Medical benefits totalled TT\$25,000.00 maximum (US\$10,417) and were spread across three years (*Trinidad Guardian*, 27 April 1981).

In the PSL, however, only three of the teams had a professional character, albeit in varying degrees of emergence. These were Modniks, Motown and the ASL Sports Club. Modniks was sponsored by the same pub owner who had sponsored Paramount Internationals 12 years earlier. Its former manager revealed that only a handful of their players were formally contracted and received salaries ranging from TT\$800.00 to TT\$1500.00 per month (US\$333 to US\$625), but no official was remunerated. The contract also provided for injury benefits, but the details were not given. In addition, the duration of the contract was not revealed. Motown was sponsored by a small entrepreneurial concern which specialized in the retail of electrical and construction goods and equipment. Its manager-trainer revealed that all the players were formally contracted and paid a monthly salary, but refused to disclose the sums involved. There was also an injury benefit provision, but the respondent was unable to provide the details. As regards the duration of the contract, this was strictly a function of the actual performance of the player and as a result was not predetermined. In relation to the ASL Sports Club, whose owners were also the owners of the PSL, its players were all formally contracted for a period ranging from one year to two years (*Trinidad Guardian*, 19 April 1981; ASL, 1981) and were paid monthly salaries which varied from TT\$800.00 to TT\$4000.00 (US\$333 to US\$1667). Team officials

were also remunerated. For instance, the Brazilian coach contracted was paid approximately TT\$6000.00 (US\$2500) per month and his remuneration package also included free accommodation, the use of a private car and free travel to and from Brazil. The other team officials who included the trainer, masseur and the team doctor were also remunerated but the respondent was unable to recall the sums involved. The total wage bill of this team varied between TT\$20,000.00 (US\$8333) and TT\$25,000.00 (US\$10,417) monthly (*Trinidad Guardian*, 22 April 1981). Of the three teams therefore, it was only in the ASL Sports Club that professionalism had fully emerged, while in Modniks and Motown, it had only partially emerged. Furthermore, because it contained only three teams which had a varying professional character, the PSL was not a full-fledged professional league.

The ruling TTFA reacted negatively to the PSL. In order to understand this reaction and the eventual dissolution of the PSL, one must consider several related factors: the PSL's remunerative and benefit structure, the context of its formation, the motives of its key organizers and the monopoly character of control over its operations.

Given the relative enormity and scope of its material rewards and benefits, the PSL was vigorously opposed by the ruling soccer body who saw it as a definite challenge to their control and authority over the game. This was openly revealed by the former secretary when he remarked that: 'Because of the nature of its formation, its background and so on, it obviously was a threat . . . this guy was trying to undermine the TTFA because he has resources and therefore we had to fight it.' In order 'to fight' this 'threat', the officials of the ruling body used their organizational location and knowledge of the rules to full effect as with the PSP before. Similarly, the imposition of negative sanctions on those involved in the PSL was the chief strategy of resistance in the exercise of its power. These sanctions debarred the teams in the league from playing against local and foreign teams and disqualified its players and officials from possible selection to the national team. In this attempt 'to fight' the PSL, the TTFA received the full support of the world governing body for the sport, FIFA (*Trinidad Guardian*, 12 March 1981).

Faced with this national and international opposition, the PSL authorities were pressured into conceding to the TTFA in order to gain official recognition and affiliation. With this affiliation, which was granted in December 1981, the PSL became subject to the rules and regulations of the ruling body (TTFA, 1981: 1). However, and following on Williams (1977), affiliation did not only mean recognition but more importantly it meant the incorporation of an emergent and oppositional development into the traditional football apparatus. As a result, the middle class dominated TTFA was able to protect and reassert its authority over the game which was under visible threat from this aggressive entrepreneur. Although the owners of the ASL Company had access to substantial financial resources to challenge the TTFA by dint of their occupational or economic location, that challenge was undermined because their structural location, at the same time, did not give them the legal authority to do so.

However, what the ASL's owner was unable to do regarding the ruling body, he was able to do regarding the PSL itself. Subsequent to the affiliation in 1981,

the ASL was to effect a merger with the ruling body in November 1982, which led to the automatic dissolution of the PSL and the creation of a new league called the Trinidad and Tobago Football League (TTFL), of which the owner of the ASL was made the president (TTFA, 1982: 1). The merger was effected in order to afford the owners of the ASL the opportunity to play a greater role in the organization of local football, which they had sought to do in rebel fashion with the PSL, unsuccessfully. However, this decision to merge with the ruling body, while having the support of the executive of the ASL company, was supported neither by the general executive of the PSL, nor by its clubs and players. In terms of their interests, the players and officials had seen the merger as going against the very reasons why they had defected from the TTFA in the first place. However, the role of ASL's president as the chief author and, more so, as the sole financier of the PSL gave him the necessary power to resist this opposition, and so realize the merger. Initially, the merger was to last until the 'the end of the 1985 season', but it was short-lived for the ASL officially withdrew from the arrangement in October 1983 (TTFA, 1983). In so doing, however, the company also terminated its substantial and unprecedented investment in local football, a decision which was largely due to the decline that had set in from around 1982 in the local and international economy.

Conclusion

From the examination of several attempts to professionalize football in Trinidad, six major related findings emerge that assume theoretical, empirical and comparative significance. First, drawing on Williams (1977), Paramount Internationals, the CPFL, PSP and PSL soccer initiatives have been variously shown to represent 'pre-emergent' and 'emergent' professional developments in local football which proved oppositional to the ruling body for the sport locally. Second, where professionalism had either technically emerged or pre-emerged, it assumed a temporary character, for it was not self-sustaining owing to a combination of internal and external political, organizational and economic factors. In respect of these variables, and borrowing from Gruneau (1983) and Hargreaves (1986) it has been shown that the outcome of these developments was shaped by the occupational and organizational location of the individuals involved and the access this afforded them to such resources as finance, power and authority. It was this resource access which enabled them to alter, challenge or resist transformations in the way football was hitherto played and organized locally. The challenges to the ruling football body came from a varied occupational grouping (pub owner, civil servant, transport and communication companies or executives, both local and foreign), who also differed in terms of the material resources at their command. In all instances, however, officials of the ruling body, by dint of their organizational location, were able either to resist, frustrate or even incorporate some of these challenges by using their constitutional and legal authority, knowledge of the rules governing the establishment of leagues and clubs, and the weapon of sanctions to full effect. It was their organizational location per se (as the ruling body), which formed the basis of their power and the ability to deploy

it effectively, and not access to financial resources, of which they had very little in any case, as can be evidenced by the value of the cash prizes offered in its National Soccer League. By way of contrast, the power of some of the perceived challengers to the ruling body, and particularly in the case of the Premier Soccer League, was based largely on their access to significant financial resources. But although they had this financial power by dint of their occupational/economic location, they did not have the legal authority within the organization of football to challenge the ruling body successively. The ultimate effect was their capitulation and incorporation into the traditional football apparatus. Third, it was revealed that the conflicts which erupted over these developments, and which shaped the fate of the PSP and PSL in particular, had nothing to do with the middle class dominated ruling body protecting amateurism as a meaning system from a still nascent professionalism, but rather with protecting their power and authority over the game which was threatened. In other words, amateurism played no role in affecting either the outcome of these developments or the constraints which they encountered. On the contrary, the middle class dominated TTFA seemed willing to facilitate the emergence of professionalism, as was evident in their initial sanction of the PSP, the CPFL and the PSL (after its incorporation by the very same TTFA), but once it was not to the detriment of their control over the game. Such willingness, moreover, was consistent with the historical pecuniary tendencies evinced within the elite dominated TTFA itself since the 1930s, and similar ruling bodies in Europe and North America. Fourth, given its fundamental character, this made the conflict that erupted over the professional developments in Trinidad qualitatively different from the British and North American experience since they did not represent or embody a defence or protection of amateurism against an encroaching professionalism. Indeed, while the amateur adherents in the latter regions might have been also concerned with their authority and control over the game and sport in general, it is quite clear that the defence of amateurism and all that they thought it signified sociologically formed a central component of their anti-professional manoeuvrings. Fifth, as in the UK and in North America, historically, both amateur and professional tendencies or meaning systems have always existed side by side in football in Trinidad and Tobago, among both officials and players, although not marked by a similar level of tension and conflict, as their respective adherents fought for ideological ascendancy as the ideal way to play soccer and sport in general. Sixth, given the fact that those who led the professional initiatives were predominantly black males (there was only one Asian male and one female), and that the vast majority of officials of the ruling body were also predominantly black males, neither race, ethnicity nor gender was empirically relevant to examining the professional developments or their outcomes. Moreover, the ruling body had responded in the same basic negative fashion to all, whether working class pub owner or transport executive. In light of this, the analysis cannot be faulted for not considering the race question in the way that postcolonial notions of class and the international development of sport sociology did.

For the historical conjuncture examined, it was the differential access to resources arising out of the different structural location of the actors involved (one occupational, the other organizational), which shaped the dynamic of the

relations of domination and subordination between them, and the eventual outcome of the efforts to professionalize the game of soccer between 1969 and 1983.

The failure of the amateur–professional cleavage to reproduce itself in this former colony, as in others, might be linked to several factors. First, while the amateur ethos was no doubt transferred to the colonies as part of a wider process of cultural diffusion and imperialist hegemony (Mangan, 1986) through their social elites, the class distinctions that it embodied apparently were not. It is plausible to argue that they did not take sufficient hold among the elite classes to become institutionalized in the society. Second, the absence of a group of zealots who saw amateurism as a strategy of class exclusion and formation meant that professional developments or tendencies would not have met with as much elite opposition or denunciation as in Europe and North America, where it assumed cut-throat proportion. In explaining further the failure of amateurism to become a class signifier in the former colony of Trinidad one may have to consider the possible role of such factors as (a) the negative influences of slavery (1783–1834) and indentureship (1845–1917) on the development of sport for much of the 19th and early 20th centuries when the professional–amateur divide was going through its nadir abroad and (b) the fact that professionalism, by the late 1960s and 1970s when it was being attempted, had already assumed much more international legitimization.

Notes

1. Trinidad and Tobago is a twin island state whose population is around 1,274,799 (Central Statistical Office, 1999). Trinidad is the larger of the two islands with a population of 1,223,383 while that of Tobago stands at 51,416. The British seized Trinidad from the Spanish in 1797 and Tobago, which was ceded to Britain some 34 years earlier in 1763, was united with Trinidad in 1889 (Brereton, 1981: 32–51, 153–6). Both islands were under British rule from these periods until 1962 when independence was attained.
2. Teret (1995), writing for the UK and in particular relation to swimming, and Pope (1996), writing for the USA, made two important related points worth noting. First, they noted that professionalism existed before and side by side with amateurism in the 19th century; Thierry also noted additionally, that this was the case as far back as the origins of sport in Greek society. Second, they observed that it was amateurism which first challenged professionalism as social elites sought to construct it (i.e. amateurism) as the ideal/pure way or the normative framework for the conduct of sporting activity consistent with their broader aims of social control.
3. In 1970, the population comprised 42.8% individuals of African descent, 40.1% of Asian descent, 14.2% mixed and 1.2 percent white, while in 1980, it was 40.8, 40.7, 16.3, and 0.9%, respectively (Central Statistical Office, 1996: 6). These years correspond closely to the period of the study (1969–1983).
4. The name of the new national body, the Trinidad Football Association (TFA), was eventually changed to the Trinidad and Tobago Football Association (TTFA) in the mid-1960s and due primarily to the demands of the Tobago Amateur Football League (TFA, 1965: 2–3). More recently, in 1999, the national football association was again changed from the TTFA to the Trinidad and Tobago Football Federation (TTFF).
5. Some of the well known clerics in the pre-independence period include Father John O'Brien, Canon C.S. Doorly, Reverend Fathers Finnigan CSSp., and O'Hanrahan (Matthews, 1965: 7), and in the post-independence period Fathers Gerald Pantin (TFA, 1964: 1–2); Gerald Farfan (TFA, 1965: 4) and Dom Basil Matthews (TFA, 1967: 5). In the pre-independence period, some of the major military officers who served as president included Captain Cutteridge, 1934–41

- (*Trinidad Guardian*, 31 May 1942); Major Courtenay Rooks, 1942–4 (*Trinidad Guardian*, 27 May 1945) and Lieutenant Commander Charles Hayward, 1945–54 (*Trinidad Guardian*, 13 September 1955).
6. This circular was sent through Mr Curtis Norman, a vice-president of the TAFA, who was in England at the time (TAFA, 1937).
 7. Of these four individuals, the pub owner was deceased at the time of the study and the other three had migrated to North America. Consequently, information about them had to be obtained from newspaper reports and interviews already conducted by others.
 8. This secretary is presently one of the vice-presidents of FIFA. He first served as assistant secretary of the TTFA from 1973 to 1974 and then as secretary from 1974 to 1990 during the period of three of the major attempts to professionalize the game locally. He has been the president of the Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Football (CONCACAF) since 1985, and an executive member of FIFA since 1983. In 1997 he was made a vice-president of FIFA (Singh, 1998). Ironically, the former secretary has been the major driving force behind attempts to establish a professional league in the Caribbean and Trinidad and Tobago in the 1990s, and even owns one of the leading teams in the present professional league in Trinidad.

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