

CONTEXTING AN AD HOC ATHLETICS UNITY IN NATAL, 1945-48

Francois J. CLEOPHAS

Department of Sport Science, Stellenbosch University, Stellenbosch, Republic of South Africa

ABSTRACT

*This article examines the history of track and field athletics in Natal, South Africa, during the period 1945-1948, placing organised Black sport at the core of the narrative. The official (White) version of this athletics history is ignorant of the complexities of Black sport. This complexity includes a broad range of issues that link athletics to local and international politics, education, community, inadequate facilities, marathon running sponsorship and women. The study covers a historical time period when domestic and world events, in particular India's looming independence, influenced South African Indian leaders to be politically assertive, as their economic and residential liberties were threatened by a racist regime. This political assertiveness coincided with the Durban Indian Athletic and Cycling Union (DIACU), agitating for a national controlling body, the South African Amateur Athletic and Cycling Board of Control (SAAA&CBOC) that paralleled other sport, such as cricket and soccer. Relying largely on the newspaper, *The Leader*, the result is a fascinating account of how Indian political activity in Natal influenced athletics and the formation of the SAAA&CBOC.*

Key words: Athletics; Black unity; Natal; Politics.

INTRODUCTION

No scholarly attention has been directed towards the South African Amateur Athletic and Cycling Board of Control (SAAA&CBOC) that was established in 1946, about the same time as the Passive Resistance Campaign (PRC) of the Natal Indian Congress (NIC). The SAAA&CBOC was born at a time when White leaders were not scared to voice racist remarks. In 1947, J.G. Strydom, leader of the Transvaal Herenigde Nationalist Party (HNP) and later South African Prime Minister, threatened to expatriate Indians from South Africa to India and Kenya when they (HNP) came to power. Another prominent HNP figure, Ben Schoeman, urged party members to boycott Indian shopkeepers while the Party congress adopted a resolution that year to curtail Indian trading licenses (*Leader*, 1947p:9). These developments impacted on sport unity amongst Black federations.

The quest for non-racial athletics in Natal has not been so intensely analysed as cricket and soccer (Desai *et al.*, 2002; Alegi, 2004). Further, athletics is neglected when the sport history of the Indians in Natal is presented (Pahad, 1972:243-244; Bhana, 1997:139). As was the case in cricket, two themes dominated the story of Black athletics after the Second World War, namely growing pressure to achieve non-racialism and the yearning for international competition (Desai *et al.*, 2002). An attempt is made in this research to analyse athletics in Natal, based on these themes.

The political landscape in Natal, immediately prior to and shortly after World War Two, revealed that Durban's town planners squeezed African and Indian people to the outskirts of the city, leaving the best residential spots for Whites (Desai & Vahed, 2010). Naturally, well-educated and prosperous Indians started 'penetrating'⁽¹⁾ White residential areas (Maharaj, 1994:4,25). The two prominent political organisations in the Natal Indian community until 1943, were the Natal Indian Association (NIA) and NIC⁽²⁾. Each stated that there had been little penetration or none at all (Union of South Africa, 1942). A situation arose where White response vacillated between a fraternising paternalistic 'sympathy' and outright official racism. Professor Mabel Palmer of the Natal University, who supported the PRC, represented the former and stated:

"Europeans were refusing to know anything of the Indians who live amongst them and are cutting themselves off from many interesting and worthwhile experiences. The number of dignified and distinguished looking elderly Indian men is noticeable. The young girls are often lovely and admirably graceful in the brightly coloured saris. Many of the young men are educated and intelligent" (Palmer, 1957:186).

The official response to 'Indian penetration' of White residential areas was a series of commissions and legislation. In February 1940, the government appointed the Lawrence Committee that included Indians, to talk prospective Indian buyers out of purchasing property in White areas (Desai & Vahed, 2010). Many Whites felt that the Lawrence Committee did not go far enough and the Broome Commission was appointed⁽³⁾ to look into this matter. The commission concluded that many Whites, claiming penetration, were unable to prove it and "there is no desire on the part of Indians to live among Europeans" (Union of South Africa, 1942:75,76). After the Second World War, the state began implementing the Trading and Occupation of Land Restriction Act of April 1943, which banned White-Indian property transactions in Durban for three years. It was called the "Pegging Act" because the intention was to "peg" Indian land ownership and occupations at 22 March 1943 until further measures were introduced (Desai & Vahed, 2010:125).

Prime Minister, General Jan Smuts, announced the Asiatic Land Tenure Bill and Indian Representation Bill (commonly referred to as the 'Ghetto Act' by Black opposition forces), in the House of Assembly on 21 January 1946. What the Land Tenure Bill sought to do was to restrict Indians from purchasing property in certain areas of Natal and Transvaal (Union of South Africa, 1946:2). Indian response to this Bill was not a politically united one. The NIC that was established by Mohandas Gandhi in 1894 actively opposed this legislation while the Natal Indian Organisation (NIO), a breakaway body, was accused of "suspect dealings with the authorities" (*Leader*, 1947u:1; Goonam, 1991:102; Giliomee & Mbenga, 2007:193). The NIO pursued a liberal response to the Ghetto Act, and one of its spokesmen, M.D. Naidoo, claimed that it was experienced as "a weapon of oppression... but that there were many things outside the pale of politics and political rights which could be achieved by co-operation (with government)" (*Leader*, 1947t:5-7). Amidst this division, different political groupings in the Natal Indian community sought alliances to strengthen its existing structures. Individuals and their ideas within these groupings were visible (and absent) in the athletic fraternity.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study places Black South African athletics at the epicentre of research. A suitable research method for such a process is context theory. Proponents of this theory reject the need for comparison and claim “well-constructed contexts are successful because they show a coherent and internally consistent set of relationships between all the parts in a cultural or social system; in contradistinction, many historical comparisons are insignificant, muddled and pretentious” (Booth, 2005:180). During the period under review (1945-1948), track and field events, throughout South Africa were organised jointly with cycling under the same provincial controlling body. This article emphasises track and field events. Racial epithets (Bantu, Coloured, Indian) were used and accepted by Black sport bodies. These terms became offensive for the South African non-racial sport movement during the Apartheid era. Usage of these terms in this text does not imply condoning them; rather it reflects their historical location. The article uses the term, Black, oppressed or marginalised when referring to all non-white groupings. Because the history of South African Black athletics is in the outside lane, this study highlights details of names, places and events that may appear obscure. This is necessary if there is to be recognition of an obscured and marginalised history.

INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL POLITICAL LANDSCAPE AFFECTING SPORT IN NATAL DURING 1946-1947

International sport

When Smuts announced the ‘Ghetto Act’, it resulted in all property transactions of Asiatic and other races being frozen, except in certain demarcated areas (*Leader*, 1946d:1). In the wake of India’s coming independence and cultural ties with South African Indians, this Bill drew international attention and was raised and criticised at the newly established United Nations Organisation (UNO) (*Leader*, 1946e:1). The *Leader* (1946n:4) alerted its readers that there was a minor but growing intolerance towards racism in international sport. It reported on the New Zealand Rugby Union who intended selecting players strictly on merit and not colour for their South African tour in 1948. Previously, the New Zealand authorities acquiesced to South African racist policies.

Many Natal Indians remained conscious of ‘Motherland India’ and observed India’s Olympic progress. India announced its participation in the 1948 Olympic Games as an independent country and athletics was one of her codes (*Leader*, 1947j:10). The *Leader* also boasted India’s Olympic achievements. One such article broadcasted India’s ‘Olympic consciousness’ and the soon-to-be-completed Olympic size sport stadium in New Delhi. The All India Olympic Association came into being in 1923 with Sir Dorab Jamsett Tata, as the first president. Tata represented India on the international Olympic Committee from 1919 to 1931. India entered the Olympic Games in Antwerp in 1920 and the Empire Games in 1934 achieving great success in hockey. Natal Indians also looked to India for assistance in non-Olympic sports.

In 1946 the Durban and District Football Association (Indian) invited the Indian Football Association for representative matches (*Leader*, 1946i:4,6). The Indian government responded positively to this invitation and the words of the Prime Minister of the United

Province of India, Pandit Govind Pant, reflect this: “India as a free country hopes to succeed where as a subject country she was powerless. On this occasion India is reminded of the difficulties under which Indians suffer in foreign lands” (*Leader*, 1947n:1). India also expressed sympathy for the plight of South African Indian people when she recalled her High Commissioner in 1946, in protest against the Indian Representation Bill (Matthew *et al.*, 1998:201). In return Natal Indians used athletics as a means to show support for India’s independence struggle. The Dannhauser Indian School, for example, organised their inter-house athletics by naming the houses: Bose, Azad, Nehru and Gandhi (*Leader*, 1947u:10). These were the political leaders Subhas Chandra Bose, Azad Hind Sena, Jawaharlal Nehru and Mohandas Karamchand Ghandi.

Natal Indians seeking international recognition

The newly established UNO (24 October 1945) increasingly directed attention to the plight of South African Indians. This resulted in sport organisations growing in confidence and starting to seek international competition. In March 1946, Somasundrum Singaram, a Johannesburg teacher and president of the Transvaal Indian Lawn Tennis Association, was delegated to negotiate with the All-India Lawn Tennis Association to send a representative team to South Africa (*Leader*, 1946g:6). Similarly, an early SAAA&CBOC objective was to provide participation in international track meetings with a promise in January 1947 of the first president, J.B. Eksteen, “to do my very best to send a team overseas” (*Leader*, 1947a:6). Three months later Eksteen stated that the SAAA&CBOC will seek affiliation to the IOC “with the hope to compete in the 1952 Olympic Games” (*Leader*, 1947c:6). On 16 January 1947, the South African Olympic and British Empire Games Association (SAOBEGA), the official gatekeeper for South African representation at the Olympic Games, turned down an affiliation request by the Milo Academy of Health and Strength.

This ‘Academy’ was a body-building club, probably affiliated to the International Health and Strength League, started by Milo Pillay, a Coloured weight lifter and physical culturist. The Academy stated its intention to take non-Europeans to the 1948 Olympic Games and therefore sought affiliation with the SAOBEGA. Ira Emery, the SAOBEGA secretary, replied “although the SAOBEGA has no jurisdiction over non-European sport, it has the final jurisdiction as to who will represent South Africa at the British or Olympic Games” (SAOBEGA, 1947:2). Emery implied that the SAOBEGA would not allow South African non-whites entry into the Olympic Games. Eksteen must have been aware of the futility of seeking entry to the Olympic Games while the SAOBEGA remained the official South African affiliate to the IOC. He then stated that the SAAA&CBOC wanted to invite a team from India because “that country is the only one who will compete with non-Europeans from South Africa” (*Leader*, 1947c:6).

The Black athletic fraternity, however, kept agitating for international recognition. In July 1947, S.L. Singh, in his capacity as a SAAA&CBOC official, said in the presence of the White councillor, P. Osborne from Durban that if South African European sport organisations were not prepared to recognise non-European sportsmen when it came to choosing athletes for the Olympic Games, then they would be forced to take the extreme step and apply for separate recognition and affiliation to the Olympic Games (*Leader*, 1947k:11). Singh and other SAAA&CBOC officials were, however, over ambitious in their claims that “there were

a number of non-European athletes who could hold their own against leading European athletes" (*Leader*, 1947k:11).

In search of Black political unity

During 1930, some sport administrators were also actively involved in political organisations. These organisations can roughly be divided into two camps: The Old Guard or Elite who represented the interests of the merchant class and the New Elite, who was composed of radical students, young lawyers, doctors and trade unionists. The Old Guard's main concern was to protect their commercial interests and protect their privileges within the segregatory framework (Goonam, 1991). A case in point is the previously mentioned S.L. Singh who was engaged in a range of community activities. These included, being secretary of the Colonial Born and Indian Settlers Association (CBISA) (established in 1933), by colonial born Indians in opposition to the merchant dominated NIC. He was also part of a South African Indian Cricket Union (SAICU) committee in 1945 that was mandated to explore the possibility of creating a national cricket body for Blacks. In 1947 this led to the formation of the South African Cricket Board of Control (SACBOC), which still maintained 'race' boundaries in cricket (Bhana & Mesthrie, 1984:127; Bhana, 1997:38; Desai *et al.*, 2002:111,214).

During the same period, Indian intelligentsia were grouping together, largely under the leadership of Yusuf Dadoo, Kesaveloo Gonarathnam Goonam and Monty Naicker, discussing progressive ideas about the best way forward (Goonam, 1991:99). The most influential of these groups were the Left Book Club and the Liberal Study Group (LSG), founded in late 1937, where a forum was created for laying the foundation for the political beliefs and actions of many members (Goonam, 1991:59; Desai & Vahad, 2010:94-95,97). Some of these members were drawn to left-wing politics in Johannesburg and joined with White communists to form the Federation of Progressive Students (FOPS) in September 1943. The FOPS in turn faced opposition from a Trotskyist inspired organisation, the Progressive Forum (PF), as well as the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL), which had been launched at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1944. The ANCYL, FOPS and the PF members engaged in heated discussions on campus, as well as at the homes of students (Desai & Vahad, 2010:112-113).

The anti-Coloured Affairs Department (CAD) movement in Cape Town dispelled the notion of ad-hoc political unity (based on specific issues at particular times), and planned a 'Call to Unity' conference in Cape Town on 16 December 1943. The anti-CAD movement was assisted by the Worker's Party of South Africa (WPSA), Fourth International of South Africa (FIOSA), New Era Fellowship (NEF) and a resurgent All-Africa Convention (AAC). The conference resolved to advance what it termed, *Principled Unity* under a federal structure, the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) (Hendricks, 2010:36). This meant a unity that was based on the striving after principles, such as total equality, merit selection, democracy and accountability, as opposed to the SAIC and ANC's focus on day-to-day issues (Van der Ross, 1986:210; Hendricks, 2010:90). The justification for the NEUM's approach of abstaining from day-to-day issues, found good reason in the fact that the *Asiatic Land and Tenure and Indian Representation Bill* was merely a tightening of previous discriminatory bills. A principled unity entailed pursuing a non-collaboration policy with the state and was defined

as “a complete break with the heritage of friendly collaboration with the ruling class” (*Torch*, 1947:4).

This united front was the basis of a national movement that dispensed with racially exclusive and sectionalist organisations. Initially the South African Indian Congress (SAIC), much the same as the African National Congress (ANC), was set to join the NEUM but withdrew in the face of developments around the Land Tenure Bill with which they reached a compromise with government. Even though the NEUM saw the ‘Ghetto Act’ as a “blow directed against the entire non-European population”, the SAIC balked at the non-collaborationist strategy of the NEUM (Bagwandeem, 1991:174). An Anti-Segregation Council (ASC) was formed on 28 April 1944, under the presidency of Monty Naicker and initially joined the NEUM in January 1945 but returned to the NIC (Bagwandeem, 1983:211; Bagwandeem, 1991:114; Kayser, 2002:53; Desai & Vahed, 2010:127; Hendricks, 2010:36). The formation of the ASC was the first definite fermentation of radical attitudes towards moderate leadership in South African Indian politics (Bagwandeem, 1983). Sport organisations did not openly support the ASC. The only body to do so was the Natal Indian Physical Culture and Weight-Lifting Association (Pahad, 1972:190; Bagwandeem, 1983:355). The ASC remained within the NIC and two sides on the opposite ends of the Indian political spectrum emerged, namely the ASC (mass based) and the A.I. Kajee and P.R. Pather group (accommodationist and wealthy merchant class) (Pahad, 1972:195; Bagwandeem, 1983:250).

The two opposing ideas behind South African Black unity, from 1943 onwards, were *Principled Unity* (NEUM) and *Unity In Action* or *Ad-Hoc Unity* (ANC). Unity in action, or revitalised ANC nationalism, was fore grounded in the post-war world. It was a creed of African nationalism as a basis for national liberation (Hunter, 1993:79). The sociologist and personal friend of Nelson Mandela, Fatima Meer, writes in Mandela’s biography, ‘the front rank ANCYL (Bopape, Mandela, Njongwe, Mda, Sisulu, Tambo) was embarrassed by the NEUM’s non-collaboration with government and the NIC’s PR campaign while the ANC continued to support the Native Representative Councils (NRC)’ (Meer, 1988:37). The moderate middle class Indian leadership, who eschewed an alliance with Africans, promoted ad-hoc unity (Desai & Vahed, 2010). According to Mandela, the PRC (ad-hoc unity) became a model for the type of protest the ANCYL were calling for (Meer, 1988; Mandela, 1994).

The ASC rejected the political principles of the NEUM, when its members ceased control of the NIC on 21 October 1945 under the presidency of Naicker and chairmanship of George Singh, who sought alliances with the ANC’s multi-nationalism⁽⁴⁾ (Bagwandeem, 1983:256; Kayser, 2002:53). A new Indian elite replaced the old elite and formed a ‘Doctors Unity Pact’ between Yusuf Mohammed Dadoo (NIC), Gagathura (Monty) Mohambry Naicker (NIC) and Alfred Bitini Xuma (ANC) on 9 March 1947. The ‘pact’ grew out of the anti-pass campaign of the ANC and the PRC campaign of the NIC, but was presented as a “declaration of co-operation between the national organisations of the Non-European peoples” (Limb, 2012:325). The NEUM, on the other hand, believed in the concept of unity of all the Black sections and viewed the PRC as a “return of the reactionary NIC days of seeking concessions from the government” (Van der Ross, 1986:205; Kayser, 2002:53). Furthermore, the political activist, Neville Alexander, writing under the pseudonym No Sizwe⁽⁵⁾, asserts that the “ideological lag had to be bridged by means of a genuine national unity movement ... that disregard the question of race as a defining characteristic” (Sizwe, 1979:57,59).

From 1945 onwards, Black sport federations sought co-operation using the Ad-Hoc approach. On 25 January 1945, at a council meeting of the South African Indian Cricket Union (SAICU) in Durban, a committee comprising M.S. Badat, M. John and E.I. Haffejee mandated S.L. Singh to explore the possibility of creating a national cricket board to cater for all Black federations (Desai *et al.*, 2002:206). On 30 September 1951, the South African Soccer Federation (SASF) was established in Durban “bringing together 46 000 members of the African, Coloured and Indian national associations under one umbrella body” (Alegi, 2004:107). These were federal sport structures using ‘race’ as a criterion for participation.

Black ‘unity’ in athletics

In January 1946, the president of the Western Province Amateur Athletic and Cycling Association (Coloured) (WPAACA), J.B. Eksteen and the Reverend Bernard L.E. Sigamoney of Transvaal, met officials of the Durban Indian Athletic and Cycling Union (DIACU) (from Natal), with a view to form a national body (*Leader*, 1946b:8). Sigamoney also spearheaded Black unity in cricket and soccer and was a PRC leader (Odendaal, 2003:107,109; Desai & Vahed, 2010:123). This national athletic body was intended to allow Africans, Coloureds and Indians to participate in a South African athletic championship at various centres from time to time (*Leader*, 1946b). In May, the DIACU president, C.C. Pillay, planned a visit to the Transvaal and also the WPAACA championship in Kimberley on 24 May with the “view of negotiating with various non-European athletic and cycling bodies to hold a South African Non-European Athletic championship in Durban that year” (*Leader* 1946j:7).

The Natal Indian sport fraternity imitated what politicians were embarking on at the time. Cissy Gool, the fiery Cape Town based activist, supported the PRC in Natal and was arrested during protests. Dr Xuma called for unity amongst African, Coloureds and Indians and at the same time condemned the Ghetto Act. During the PRC, Durban based Africans launched the anti-pass campaign (*Leader*, 1946m:5). Z.A.H. Kumalo, the secretary of the Zulu Society in Natal, stated: “... if the African is to achieve success in his freedom struggle, he must link with the PRC” (*Leader*, 1946t:5). In turn, the secretary of the NIC, M.D. Naidoo stated “The salvation of the Indian people in this country lay in a united front of non-Europeans” (*Leader*, 1946x:5). Unity for most Black organisations meant inter-racial harmony rather than a non-racial and classless society (Van der Ross, 1986).

The ‘Old elite’ who associated themselves with ruling class symbols, social status and official pomp and ceremony drove this racial unity. The radical ‘New elite’, who presented themselves as more politically daring, maintained much of ‘Old elite’ values. Kesaveloo Goonam relates how she was “bowled over by the very sophisticated western atmosphere in the Cricket Club of India” (Goonam, 1991:87,88). When the Western Province athletic team visited Natal in July 1947, the Natal hosts arranged, amongst others, a mayoral reception, a sight-seeing tour of the Natal Estate sugar mills, a reception at the Durban International Club, a boat cruise around Durban Bay and entertainment by various Natal sport organisations (*Leader*, 1947j:11).

Black sport bodies accepted their racial tags and conducted their struggles through the official White structures. Eksteen stated, shortly after the establishment of the SAAA&CBOC, “If all (geographic) centres irrespective of race or creed affiliated to the Board then we could easily

break the Colour Bar clause and gain admission [to the SAOBEGA]. We would lay the foundation of an inter-racial Board of Control” (*Leader*, 1947c:6). The SAAA&CBOC directed attention to the development of Black athletics along the lines of ‘race’ and Eksteen said: “In the Cape, athletics is definitely on the up-grade, while it is at low ebb in the Transvaal. There was much latent talent at Fort Hare, Lovedale and neighbouring schools and Natal would do better if they considered athletics seriously among the schools” (*Leader*, 1947c:6). Fort Hare University College and the Lovedale Institution were Higher Education Centres in the Eastern Cape, set aside but not exclusively, for African people. Shortly afterwards, Rajcoomar Bijou, chairman of the DIACU, said: “Athletics among the Indian people had come to stay, the Bantu was taking an interest and he hoped the Coloured people would soon follow suit” (*Leader*, 1947k:11).

Bijou was also president of the Natal Indian Cricket Union (NICU) in 1951 when Black cricket was organised along inter-racial lines at national and provincial level (Desai *et al.*, 2002:118,207). Local Natal clubs were also pursuing the ideal of *Ad Hoc Unity* and in August 1947, the Maritzburg County Indian Sports Club declared their Annual Monster Sports Meeting “open to Indians, Africans and Coloureds” (*Leader*, 1947n:2). On 4 October an advert, placed by H. Harrypersadh, the chairman of a sport body, announced an athletics meeting on Monday 6 October at Curries Fountain “open to Indians, Coloureds and Africans” (*Leader*, 1947r:10). It is not clear if all athletic unification proceeded along *ad hoc* or *principled* unity. This uncertainty surfaced in a report in the *Leader* that claimed to be the first contact between Indian and African schools in athletics in Westville that were planned by the Westville Social Club for 30 November at the Armstrong Road Sports Ground. The programme also included open items for boys and girls not attending the participating schools and items for adults. The participating institutions were: Rooikopjes Bantu, Westville Indian, Candella Boys, Roosfontein Indian, Hindu Sangatan Indian Girls and Hill View Indian Schools (*Leader*, 1947y:10). There were a few Whites willing to assist Black athletes, such as Mrs Tempest, who offered her services for training the boys and girls for the Ladysmith Indian Secondary School Sports Day (*Leader*, 1947q:11).

Calls for Black unity (*Ad Hoc* and *Principled*) did not exclude Whites from participating in their school sport programmes. This is indirectly implied in A.I. Meer’s (a NIC official) appeal to Smuts and cabinet minister, Jan Hofmeyer, to open schools to all races (*Leader*, 1947l:10). Although Indians remained the chief organisers of Black athletics in Natal, competitions were open to all ‘races’ and there was a growing desire to take this idea nationally. An athletic and cycling meeting was organised by an Indian body in January 1946 where nine Africans participated and one of them, Abel Enoch from the Springbok Club, won three cycling events (*Leader*, 1946c:6). Indian and Coloured athletes participated in the 1947 Natal championship (*Leader*, 1947h). The previous year the *Leader*, indicating a ‘race’ consciousness, stated that the Natal athletic officials:

“... can learn from the work of soccer people⁽⁶⁾ and make their aim a non-European athletic meeting once a year and get the cream of South Africa’s non-White athletes together. This must be to show the rest of the country, which even in sports believes there is only one class of person here – a White one – that non-Europeans too can hold their own with the best” (*Leader*, 1946q:6).

Speeches made at the conclusion of the first post-War athletic and cycling meeting under the auspices of the DIACU centred on Black unity. Y.R. Chetty, the Union patron, stated that the meeting was open to all non-Europeans without any prejudice (*Leader*, 1946c:6-7). The SAAA&CBOC still sought White support even if it sometimes came from quarters that behaved ambivalently to the plight of Indians. This is as a result of the ‘unity in action’ method where “the office of a patron, even though hostile to your cause is desired” (Kuper, 1960:92). Therefore, the first SAACBOC patron was Abe Bloomberg, Cape Town’s mayor (*Leader*, 1946b:6). Also, the Durban mayor, Rupert Ellis Brown took the salute at the march past at the SAAA&CBOC junior inter-provincial meeting in Durban, 1947 (*Leader*, 1947k:11).

In 1941 Brown approved the Durban City Council’s plans for expropriating Indian land for allocation to Whites and condemned all forms of opposition to it (Bagwandeen, 1991:67). In October 1946 the (White) mayor, A.E. Slattery “after being thanked for his and the European visitors presence, eulogised the work of the Dannhauser Indian School principal, Rungaswami Loganathan and the sports master, D.S. Maharaj” (*Leader*, 1946u:6). When the Martizburg County Indian Sports Club revived athletics in Pentrich in Natal after 17 years of dormancy, support was given by Messrs W. Jowett, du Bois and Sirakis of the (White) Midlands District Athletic and Cycling Association (*Leader*, 1946u:6). These Whites were largely ignorant of the impact of political realities on sport in Black communities. Jowett, for example, stated that he predicted a great future for Indian athletics at a time when people were facing forced removals under the Ghetto Act (*Leader*, 1946u:6).

ATHLETICS IN NATAL IMMEDIATELY PRIOR AND AFTER THE FIRST SAAA&CBOC INTER-PROVINCIAL ATHLETIC MEETING (1946-1947)

Due to the World War, athletic activity was dormant in Natal from 1942 till 1945. Early in January 1946, on a Sunday morning, the Natal based, DIACU organised an athletic meeting at the Curries Fountain Sports Complex. It was common practice to organise athletic and cycling meetings on a Sunday due to the dominant Hindu and Islam presence in Natal, unlike the Western Cape with its large Christian representation. The participating clubs were Alpine, Avondale, Baumanville, Rosebank, Rovers and Springbok (*Leader*, 1946c:6,7). Besides these clubs, there were also Hillview and Kismet Athletic and Cycling Clubs, the Plessialaer Youth Club, Prospect, Clairwood Youth Sporting League and Puntan’s Hill Club that offered participation opportunities (*Leader*, 1947a:6; 1947b:6; 1947e:11; 1947h:11; 1947i:11).

In addition there was the Pinetown and Suburban Indian School’s Sports Association (established 1937) (*Leader*, 1947d:6). This body had nine affiliated schools, namely Alencon, Chatsworth, Fannin, Malvern, Pinetown, Roosfontein, Shallcross, Welbedacht and Westville (*Leader*, 1947o:11). Organised school athletics was, however, in a bad state and the *Leader* (1947h:11) reported that “as usual there was a poor response from schools (for the Natal Championships in 1947)”. School athletic meetings were characterised by spectacular displays of glamour rather than quality participation. When the Ladysmith Indian Secondary School held its first athletic meeting on 13 September 1947, the *Leader* (1947q:11) reported on “the flags which fluttered lustily with the cooling breeze creating a feeling of joyousness ... the presence of so many women in their brightly coloured saris and the brisk business at the stalls”.

An athletic meeting, under the auspices of the DIACU, was held in Durban in April 1946. This was a prelude to an inter-provincial meeting between an 11 member representative Western Province (Coloured) and Natal (Indian) athletic side on 31 May (Union Day) in Durban (*Leader*, 1946h:6). By September, the *Leader* (1946p:6) stated: "Athletics was shedding its reputation as the Cinderella of sports among the Indians". However, the organisation of Natal athletics was a far way off from Olympic standard. That month a club meeting was held in Durban where there was a "fairly long delay in starting and the programme included a motor-cycle race" (*Leader*, 1946p:6). In Pentrich an athletic meeting was held where the "Magnus Leagues Physical Culture Club provided a physical culture and boxing display while a donkey derby provided lighter entertainment" (*Leader*, 1946u:6). The Dannhauser Indian School's annual athletic day was not unusual either seeing that soccer and basketball was played alongside the 26 track and field events (*Leader*, 1947u:10). Also, the chairman of the Maritzburg Indian Sports Club, P.T. Govender, contradicted a previous statement in the *Leader* (1947r:4) and stated in October 1947 that "athletics is the Cinderella of sports in Maritzburg". Nevertheless, the DIACU accepted an invitation from the WPAA & CA (Coloured) to participate in the inter-provincial athletic meeting in Cape Town on 1 January 1947. The Griqualand West Athletic and Cycling Union (Coloured) also confirmed their participation (*Leader*, 1946p:6).

Events leading up to the first SAACBOC championship (1948)

The SAACBOC was established in December 1946 with Natal and Western Province as a founder member and the headquarters in Cape Town. It was agreed that the headquarters would rotate to whatever province hosted the national championship (*Leader*, 1947a:6). The first elected officials were: S.L. Singh⁽⁷⁾ and C.C. Pillay (Natal); Councillors J. Frank and Ahmed Ismail; J.B. Eksteen (president); Dr J.M. Joshua (secretary); W.J. Fisher (treasurer); J.C. Wrangmore (record clerk) and E.H. Fisher (auditor) (*Leader*, 1947a:6). To date not much biographical information is available to historians about these individuals other than Joshua who was politically neutral while Ismail was a strong anti-Coloured Affairs Department (CAD) voice (Van der Ross, 1986:205; Kies, 2007).

In October 1946 the *Leader* announced a decision of a DIACU sub-committee meeting that Natal would be represented by 16 athletes at the 1 January 1947 inter-provincial athletic and cycling meeting in Cape Town. The team selection would be determined at the Natal Open championship on 17 November 1946 (*Leader*, 1946s:6). Rajcoomer Bijou was appointed team manager, while M.K. Tommy performed duties as trainer and masseur (*Leader*, 1946w:6). The inter-provincial meeting of 1 January 1947 was held at the Paarl Sports Ground and Western Province gained a decisive win with 95 points against Natal's 30 points. Raleigh Pillay was the only Natalian with prominence who tied second place with John Grimwood (Western Province) in the 100-yards; finished third in the 220-yards and won the 440-yards (*Leader*, 1947a:6).

Education, community, sponsorship, women, juniors, marathon running and facilities

Education

Most schools for Indian children were established by missionaries and had ramshackle and unsanitary facilities with underpaid teachers (Palmer, 1957). Shortly after World War Two,

many qualified Indian teachers resigned the profession because of niggardly salaries resulting in a shortage of skilled educators (*Leader*, 1946g; 1946h). This shortage affected physical education teaching, which was already in a nebulous state. A *Leader* columnist, 'Faqr', commented on the lack of 'physical culture' amongst 'non-Europeans' and lamented on his primary school days when "physical jerks were for a few moments only and that depended on the headmaster, who usually did not worry much about it anyway" (*Leader*, 1946c:7).

Access to formal education is generally considered to be a stepping-stone towards an international athletic career. Black opinion dispensers in Natal, therefore, demanded decent Physical Education in their schools. When the Dundee Indian Secondary School held its first athletic meeting at the Dundee Sports Ground in 1947, the principal (K. Thumbadoo) stressed the importance of Physical Education in schools. However, Black school children in Natal learnt athletic skills from passionate but scientific lacking sport masters, such as C. Rughubar at the Dundee School (*Leader*, 1947r:5).

The Indian elite saw education as a necessity if it was to overcome increasing racist attacks. In submitting his report to the 7th annual meeting of the Maritzburg Indian Technical Students Society, L. Singarum Moodley emphasised that education was vital to the Indian community who had to fight for its existence and overcome a series of diabolic legislation (*Leader*, 1946h:3). Moodley and others propagated Indian progress through education and, therefore, took pride in the available higher education facilities and its activities.

The Sastri College was the centre of Indian cultural life in Durban and turned out large numbers of male matriculants and its teacher-training department raised the standard of teaching in Indian schools (Palmer, 1957:108). Young Indian men, unable to gain entry into the Sastri College, could gain access to the ML Sultan College, a technical institution. The Sastri College athletic inter-house competition was usually held at the Curries Fountain Sports Complex and the houses were named after personal names associated with 'Indian or Asian progress': "Sastri, Tagore, Hussein and Reddi" (*Leader*, 1946k:6; 1947g:11). There were exceptions and the Kearsney Government School had inter-house names associated with Asian tea products: Pekoe, Orange and Souchong (*Leader*, 1946l:6).

In some cases school athletic meetings were opportunities for cultural and political affirmation and displaying signs of upward social mobility. On 17 December 1945, the Naidoo Memorial Government School in Umkomaas held its ninth annual school sports day. Besides one of the houses being named after the political activist and later Indian prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, the prizes were awarded by Dr Goonam whose speech was translated from English into Tamil by Mrs Amiya Rani Pillay, songs were sung by the children of the Hindi Patshala and the day was ended with the singing of the Hindu prayer song, the Arathi (*Leader*, 1946a:6). Goonam, a medical doctor, was the founder of the Indian Women's League (1938) and Women's Liberal Study Group (1942). Goonam stood apart from the traditional South African Indian woman and she was present at the formation of the ASC and belonged to the left-wing Non-European Unity Front (NEUF) (Bagwandeem, 1991:135; Bhana, 1997:63; Desai & Vahed, 2010:114,118).

Community

Athletics was part of the Natal community life, in particular the religious sacred Azalea Week Carnival of which S.V. Pillay was the secretary in 1947. The Maritzburg Indian Sports Club, under the chairmanship of P.T. Govender, took charge of organising an athletics competition at the Royal Agricultural Showground in September. The competition had standard track and field events alongside ‘football kick’, ‘basket and potatoes’, ‘running women with dresses’, ‘throwing the cricket ball’, etc. (*Leader*, 1947r:4). The following month, Deputy Mayor, Councillor R.M. Thomas opened a sports meeting for adults at the army magazine barracks. Events included nail driving, golf driving and putting. The highlights of the day were the 7- and 15-mile distance foot races where Uday Singh “ran splendidly in the 15-miles but collapsed with about 400 yards to go” (*Leader*, 1947s:10). These were amateur events that were sometimes organised with minor sponsorships.

Sponsorship

Athletic sponsorship usually took the form of trophies that were donated by prominent families that sometimes did this for familial interests. These sponsorships were usually limited to owners of small to medium business enterprises. In November 1946, V. Rajoo Chetty, owner of the Springbok Service station and patron of the DIACU, donated a floating trophy valued between £25 and £35 for a marathon road race from Inchanga to Durban. Chetty also promised trophies for all competitors who completed the course. Another patron of the DIACU, Norotham Maharaj, donated trophies for school athletic events (*Leader*, 1946u:6). The following month Chetty distributed prizes to athletes at the Greenwood Park Indian School Sports Day. Three new floating trophies were donated to the school, bringing the total amount to five. They came from Mrs K.S. Pillay (girls 100-yards); Ram Elliah (boys 100-yards) and T.V. Thathiah (girls 440-yards) (*Leader*, 1946y:6). The Pinetown and Suburban Indian Schools Sport Association offered the Kamlam Nairs Victor Ludorum and Middleton trophies at its annual competitions (*Leader*, 1947p:11).

At the ninth annual school sports day of the Naidoo Memorial Government School in Umkomaas, the Amiya Rani’s Athletic Cup, donated by Mrs Amiya Rani Pillay, was awarded to the winning house (*Leader*, 1946a:6). Jimmy Maistry donated floating trophies for the 1947 Natal Championship meeting and was presented to the athletes by his wife (*Leader*, 1947h:11). That same year, Harold Sulim, president of the DIACU, presented a trophy for the Natal athlete with the best performance at the inaugural inter-provincial junior championship (*Leader*, 1947i:10). This trophy was awarded to S. Kirsten for winning the 100- and 220-yards (*Leader*, 1947k:11). Once the ideal of *Ad Hoc* Black unity had taken root, individuals and business people, sponsored athletic meetings across the Colour Bar (*Leader*, 1947n:2). Occasionally Whites sponsored trophies as in the case of “a European who promised a trophy for the best performance at the Ladysmith Indian School Sports Day” (*Leader*, 1947q:11). Sometimes, sponsorship reflected familial interest in athletics and Dannhauser Indian School athletic meeting in October 1947 was characterised by the surname, Maharaj, featuring prominently. Here the mayor, A.E. Slatter, presented the Bhawani Memorial and Maharaj trophies to Quarchand Maharaj, the Azad House captain while the sport master was D.S. Maharaj (*Leader*, 1947u:10). The Bhawani Memorial trophy was presented to the same school as a floating trophy by the widow and sons of the late Mr Bhawani (*Leader*, 1947w:11). School boys competed for the B. Maheer Cup while girls vied

for the A. Horne trophy in the first inter-racial athletic meeting in Westville on 30 November 1947 (*Leader*, 1947y:10).

Women

Prior to 1946, there was a strong gender consciousness⁽⁸⁾ towards female participation in NIC politics (Goonam, 1991:101). This was mirrored in athletic participation and there were no women competitors at the January 1946 track and field meeting organised by the DIACU (*Leader*, 1946c:6). Women were consigned to spectatorship and the *Leader* (1946u:6) reported that “a pleasing feature (of the athletics meeting) was the large number of Indian women spectators”. This non-participation may be explained by Palmer’s claim that “Indian parents upheld a tradition that girls should be kept at home under the control of their parents and especially the grandmothers” (Palmer, 1957:108). Because the Smuts regime limited formal education opportunities for Indian girls in Natal, there were few avenues for athletic participation. The Dartnell Crescent Girl’s High School was one of these (Palmer, 1957:108). At one time, there were only six pupils at the Indian Girl’s High (possibly Dartnell Girl’s High) (Goonam, 1991:93).

Further, sport participation amongst South African Indian women was largely limited to the wealthier classes and the ‘soft sports’ such as tennis. One example is a report in the *Leader* on the Indian Women’s Club who held its seventh annual meeting at the Goodwill Club in September 1946 where “tennis was one of the chief attractions” (*Leader*, 1946r:8). However, some post-World War Two Indian women were moving away from being mere passive subjects in the broader society and the *Leader* noted that “more and more women are going to jail for defying the Ghetto Act” (*Leader*, 1946r:7). In 1947 women were highlighted, with photographs on the front page of the *Leader* for their part in the PRC (*Leader*, 1947v:1). At the same time, photographs of women cyclists appeared in the paper (*Leader*, 1947m:3). In India sport leaders were directing attention to women. In July 1947, the president of the Cricket Board of Control in India, A.S. de Mello, advocated a Physical Education programme for women that were to be part of a state controlled education system (*Leader*, 1947k:10).

The Natal Indian Athletic and Cycling Union (probably DIACU), introduced events for women in the Natal Club Championship meeting on 1 June 1947 (*Leader*, 1947f:10; 1947h:11). Sparkle Bunsee won the 100-yards track and 440- and 880-yards cycling events (*Leader*, 1947h:11). Women entries were allowed in the first junior inter-provincial meeting between Western Province and Natal. However, women were still not presented in the media as provincial representatives. The *Leader* (1947k:11) reported that “there was keen competition between the Indian Women’s Friendly Circle (Natal) and the Spartan Club (Western Province)”. From 1947 onwards, women athletes became more visible in the media and the *Leader* reported that Madrajh Naidoo won the 100-yards in the DIACU meeting at Curries Fountain on 6 October (*Leader*, 1947s:9). However, women athletes were always presented as supplementary to males and the *Leader* (1947y:10) reported on a “special item for ladies” at the first inter-racial athletic meeting in Westville on 30 November.

Juniors

In May 1947, Bijou announced, on behalf of the Natal Indian Athletic and Cycling Union, that a non-European junior (19 years or younger) inter-provincial triangular athletic meeting

under the auspices of the SAAA&CBOC was planned for 13 July at Currie's Fountain. The Griqualand-West, Natal and Western Province units were invited. The administration was simple: a 5-3-1 point system was to be used for first, second and third placing; the winning team would win the trophy outright and the entry limitations were 15 competitors per team with a maximum of three entrants for each event. The team was to be selected at the Natal Club championship meeting on 1 June (*Leader*, 1947f:10; 1947i:11). However, there was not a wide reservoir of junior athletes in Natal and the preparation for the July inter-provincial took the form of senior vs. junior competition (*Leader*, 1947i:11). At this championship, some juniors set better standards than the seniors, where only a few entries were received for the running events.

D.V. Naidoo of Sastri College was awarded the best junior athlete of the day, winning the 100- and 440-yards, long jump and high jump events. The young College walker, V. Mareemuthu, won the junior half-mile event and then beat A.N. Archary of Avondale on the finish line in the senior two mile event (*Leader*, 1947h:11). The Natal team consisted of: D.V. Naidoo (captain), S. Kirsten, M.A. Hansa, W. Stevens, R.R. Somers, J. Vinden, V. Mariemuthoo (Sastri College); R. Bennie, Dannie Naidoo, S. Nariansamy, Bobby Naidoo, B.S. Harripersadh (Rosebank); R. Peter (Alpine); M. Rajah, R. Jairam (Springbok); G. de Lange, M. Albert, C.P. Pillay (Pentrich); C. Kuniappen, James Buthelzi (Avondale); J. Singh, R. Bhimsin (Prospect); K. Mudhoo; with C.C. Pillay (manager) and J.S. Naidoo (trainer) (*Leader*, 1947i:11). This team defeated Western Province 58-55 in front of an estimated crowd of 4 000 (*Leader*, 1947k:11).

Road running

Road running was more popular in Natal than other units of the SAAA&CBOC, probably due to the presence of the Comrades Marathon for Whites. Until 1943 a road race between Maritzburg and Durban was organised by Natal Indians who competed for the Sunclash Shield. The race was suspended due to the Second World War and the last winner was G. Murgasen from Durban. It was resumed again in 1947 (*Leader*, 1947f:10). In similar vein the Comrades Marathon was suspended from 1941 till 1945 (Alexander & Alexander, 1966:80). The 'Indian road race', according to the *Leader*, therefore, continued two years after the suspension of the Comrades Marathon in 1941.

The Natal Open Championship on 17 November 1946 included a road race with 31 competitors running from Inchanga (Botha's Hill) to Durban (Currie's Fountain)⁽⁹⁾, as well as motor-cycle events (*Leader*, 1946s:6; 1947w:11). This was approximately half the distance of the famous Comrades Marathon and the competitors competed for the Springbok floating trophy. L. Moonsamy of the Avondale Club was the 1946 winner in 3 hours and 10 minutes in a field of 31 competitors (*Leader*, 1947w:11). Elsewhere in Natal, road running was also popular and 44 runners participated in the Maritzburg County Indian Sports Club meeting in November 1946 (*Leader*, 1946u:6).

By 1947, road running was entrenched in Natal athletics and on 1 March the *Leader* (1947b:6) reported that Ramdass Seebran won the 20-mile marathon from Cato Ridge to Pentrich that was organised by the Kismet Athletic Club. The following month M.S. Naicker won the 30-miles junior road race, organised by the Clairwood Youth Sporting League, in a

time of 3 hours and 45 minutes (*Leader*, 1947e:11). In September the Maritzburg County Club organised a 26-mile marathon, starting from the Pentrich Recreation Ground where Africans and Indians participated. M.V. Naidoo was the winner in 2 hours 52 minutes and 23 seconds (*Leader*, 1947o:11). The following month, P.T. Govender, chairman of the Maritzburg Indian Sports Club (probably the Maritzburg County Club), urged athletes at the Azalea Festival to “begin training for the road marathon over the world distance (i.e. Comrades Road Marathon) from Durban to Maritzburg, to be organized next May” (*Leader*, 1947r:4). In November a 5-mile ‘marathon’ was planned for adults at the first inter-racial school athletics meeting in Westville (*Leader*, 1947y:10). This part of Natal history, for the period 1945-1948, is ignored in the official version of the Comrades Marathon (Alexander & Alexander, 1966:84-89).

Facilities

The major athletic facility in Natal was Curries Fountain in Durban while the Kismet Athletic and Cycling club held their competitions at the Pentrich Recreation Grounds (*Leader*, 1947a:6). At least one school, Welbedacht Indian School, had sufficient facilities to host the annual Pinetown and Suburban Indian School Sports Association competition (*Leader*, 1947p:11) However, Black communities in Natal had inadequate sport facilities and worsened by disinterested municipalities and councillors. Occasionally a mayor, such as Councillor Rupert Ellis Brown, supported the extension of sport facilities. In October 1946 he was the guest speaker at the opening of the new tennis courts of the County Indian Tennis Club and admitted that it took seven years to convince local government to support this venture (*Leader*, 1946r:10). A major obstacle in developing sport facilities was the false promises made by White councillors. In July 1947 Councillor Osborne stated he was keenly interested in sport for the Indian and Coloured people of Durban and that the City Council had a big programme in hand for eradicating the shortage of sport facilities (*Leader*, 1947k:11). However, sport facility provision is a matter of political expediency and governments will only move on this issue if they are forced to. Nothing came of Osborne’s statement and the nonchalant attitude of government officials continued to limit facility provision.

When officials of the NIO showed General Smuts the facilities at the outdated Curries Fountain Sports Complex, spectators voiced dissatisfaction at their presence, stating they regarded the Prime Minister’s presence ‘an intrusion’. The *Leader* reported that Smuts was told that the Durban City Council was adopting delaying tactics in developing a new Argyle Road Complex to replace the Curries Fountain. The NIO trusted Smuts words of support and one official stated “I think matters will move faster now” (*Leader*, 1947k:5). Nothing came of Smuts’ support: he was removed from office the following year and an even more racist Re-united National Party did not show any interest in spectators who voiced their dissatisfaction at a White Prime Minister.

Preparations for the 1948 championship

The elements (education, community, sponsorship, women, juniors, road running and facilities) presented thus far were evident in the preparations for the first SAAA&CBOC championship meeting in 1948. At a SAAA&CBOC meeting held in Cape Town, in November 1947, it was decided to stage the first championship meeting since the

inauguration in December 1946 at the Paarl track outside Cape Town on 1 and 2 January 1948. The known delegates at this gathering were L.J.A. Alexander, K.S. Henry and C.H. Maggot (Natal); Norman Stoffberg⁽¹⁰⁾ and J.B. Eksteen (Western Province and chairman) (*Leader*, 1947w:11). Griqualand-West, Natal and Western Province were invited and after much discussion, it was agreed that the same 28 events for women and men would be provided. Bijou stated in the *Leader* (1947w:11) that it was uncertain whether women would be included in the Natal team. The Natal body decided not to send women to the championship because “they only took to athletics recently”. However, C.C. Pillay, president of the DIACU, was mandated to negotiate with Griqualand-West about the possibility of including women in an inter-provincial meeting in April in Kimberly (*Leader*, 1947x:5).

Each province was allowed 28 members with four named competitors of each team allowed participation in an event. Alexander proposed that the venue for the next championship meeting (1949) be in Natal but it was resolved to place the issue on the agenda for the next Annual General Meeting on 30 December. The Natal team was to be selected at the provincial championships on 30 November 1947, under the auspices of the DIACU, from amongst Indians, ‘Africans’ and ‘Coloureds’. The *Leader* (1947w:11; 1947y:11) announced the championships would provide a ‘full programme’ for junior and senior men and women. However, the only items on the programme for women were the 100- and 220-yards junior and senior ladies events (SAAA&CBOC, 1948). Pillay and J.S. Naidoo were appointed manager and trainer of the Natal team respectively while the selectors were Bijou, C.C. Pillay and S.L. Singh (*Leader*, 1947x:5; 1947y:11).

In the excitement of the upcoming 1948 championships, a record number of entries entered for the road race in 1947, “a distance of approximately 26 miles, 385 yards” was an indication of an emphasis on complying to international standards (*Leader*, 1947y:11). Despite the *Leader* (1947y:11; 1947z:11) reporting that nine provincial records were broken at the Natal championships, the performance standard was not high and most of the winning times were below the SAAA&CBOC championship qualifying times. The prominent athletes were B. Ngozi (Alpine) who broke the Natal 440-yards record for men with a time of 54.2 seconds, won the 220-yards and finished second in the 100-yards; S. Lookun was the only competitor in the high jump and cleared 5 feet and 5 inches, won the long jump with a leap of 18 feet and 11 inches and the 100-yards in 10.5 seconds (*Leader*, 1947z:11). This ‘poor performance’ played out in a similar situation in India at the time. The *Leader* (1947za:11) reported on India’s athletic chances at the 1948 Olympic Games in London and the national secretary, N. Ahmed, stated that he was not very confident at success but participation was paramount.

CONCLUSIONS

All the developments presented thus far culminated in the first SAAA&CBOC championship meeting in 1948 outside Cape Town. The SAAA&CBOC manifested an inter-racial drive without giving serious consideration towards a non-racial society within which sport participation takes place without racial considerations. This inter-racial drive took place during the years immediately after the Second World War where two political movements operated in the midst of the peripheral mass of Indians, the ‘old elite’ and the ‘new elite’. The ‘Old elite’ safeguarded their own interests by means of polite constitutional protest. They sought political solutions through ‘round table’ discussions. Therefore, when a writer in the

Cape Indian (1924:9) accused the Western Province Amateur Athletic Association (Coloured) of “nurturing athletics only in a certain section of the public”, a suggested solution was “a round table chat”. The ‘new elite’ was the colonial offspring of indentured and ex-indentured labourers made up of professionals. They were essentially white-collar persons who became successful in their respective fields through western education (Bhana & Mestrie, 1984). The ‘new elite’ framed a ‘racial unity’ based on co-operation between the different ‘races’. When the ‘new elite’ (led by A.I. Kajee) was replaced by a more radical group, the ASC, the former was still held in high esteem by the latter (Bagwadeen, 1983:256).

Organised sport in the Indian community was, therefore, largely left in the hands of Kajee, a cricket administrator who also donated a sponsorship trophy to Black inter-race soccer (Desai *et al.*, 2002:50; Alegi, 2004:108). A contemporary of Kajee, Bernard Sigamoney, president of the South African Indian Cricket Union in 1942, was in the forefront of the Black ‘unity’ drive in athletics and also sponsored cricket in the same manner (Desai *et al.*, 2002:61; Odendaal, 2003:97). The political language of sport administrators and that of the Joint Passive Resistance Council⁽¹¹⁾ (JPRC) corresponded. Whereas the JPRC made a plea for “... the individual’s right to equality before the law, justice and fair play”, Sigamoney spoke of the life lessons he learnt in England: “love one another, respect for one another and above all, discipline” (Bagwadeen, 1983:309; Desai *et al.*, 2002:60).

The ‘new elite’ was not prepared to go beyond local politics and remained loyal to the English empire. When the Natal team visited the Western Cape in 1947 under the management of Bijou, they concluded their visit by singing the British national anthem (*Cape Standard*, 1947:8). Odendaal (2003:108) is to the point: “Inter-racial co-operation in sport in the 1950’s was a reflection of broader co-operation occurring in the (African National) Congress alliance in politics”. The athletic ‘unity’ that was framed by the formation of the SAAA&CBOC was an *Ad Hoc* one and further research should indicate whether this action was sustainable.

Notes

- (1) Officially, ‘penetration’ meant “the commencement of occupation or acquisition for trading or for residential purposes of sites in predominantly European areas by Indians since 1 January 1927 (Union of South Africa, 1942:1,3).
- (2) The two organisations merged on 29 August 1943 (Desai & Vahed, 2010:125).
- (3) Another Broome Commission was appointed in 1943 that concentrated on the ‘penetration’ of Indians into the Durban municipality of Natal. It was a rushed affair that took place over a few days and the NIA withdrew from the Enquiry (Union of South Africa, 1942:1,5).
- (4) Singh was an executive member of the South African Soccer Federation (SASF) in 1958 that operated as a multi-racial rather than non-racial structure until 1959 (Alegi, 2004:116-117).
- (5) Neville Alexander was under house arrest in 1979 and was not allowed to publish.
- (6) Black South African soccer was still organised on a ‘race’ basis at the time.
- (7) He was part of a South African Indian Cricket Union (SAICU) committee in 1945 that was mandated to explore the possibility of creating a national cricket body for Blacks. This led to the formation of the South African Board of Control (SACBOC) in 1947 that still maintained ‘race’ boundaries in cricket with a few (Desai *et al.*, 2002:214).

- ⁽⁸⁾ For examples see Goonam (1991:26).
- ⁽⁹⁾ There were only 22 competitors at the starting line of the Comrades Marathon on Empire Day, 24 May 1946 where eight finished (Alexander & Alexander, 1966:80; Cottrel *et al.*, 2000:39; Cameron-Dow, 2011:81).
- ⁽¹⁰⁾ Stoffberg was regarded as an outcast by the NEUM because of its involvement in the Klaasjagerberg sport camp. This was a camp organized by the CAD and elicited protest action from the NEUM (Cleophas, 2009:151-156).
- ⁽¹¹⁾ This refers to the coordinated work of Passive Resistance Councils in the Cape Province, Natal and Transvaal (Bagwandeem, 1983:294).

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Dr Francois J. CLEOPHAS: Stellenbosch University, Department of Sport Science, Private Bag X1, Matieland 7602, Republic of South Africa. Tel.: +27 (0)21 808 4724, Fax.: +27 (0)21 808 4817, E-mail: fcleophas@sun.ac.za

(Subject Editor: Prof Ashwin Desai)