

**Book presents Marxist view**

# Has sports become the opiate of the masses?

By LYNN SLOTKIN

In his book, *Rip-Off The Big Game*, Paul Hoch shows sports to be elitist, sexist, militaristic, racist and poisonously nationalistic.

Hoch says his book is "neither an attack on sports nor on America. It is a defense of both, against their perversion by forces less interested in sport than in their own continued wealth and power." One must conclude, however, upon reading all of Hoch's data, that his book is an attack on sports and America for allowing those forces to "take over."

In 1968 when Ohio State defeated Michigan in a football match, there was a good natured riot, complete with overturning cars and breaking windows all in celebration of Ohio's win. The police looked on. The same thing happened in Pittsburgh following the Pirates' victory in the 1971 World Series.

According to Hoch, there is an elitism in the sports world. The males who participate are referred to as "clean cut", "manly," or a "credit to the country," while those who don't participate, or the ones with long hair, are "sissies," and that all "boys" should take part in sports to acquire "a well-rounded education."

And what of this well rounded education? Hoch says the participants are taught in a militaristic vein to "kill, smash, throttle, trounce" the enemy. In a sexist vein they are taught that sports are a man's domain with almost no room for women. If by chance women participate they don't deserve equal pay because the men support families and women do not.

Hoch implies that the blacks on various teams are token blacks, and asks, "how many black referees, umpires, judges and linesmen are there in professional sports?"

But the frightening aspect of the book is Hoch's discussion of the opiate aspect of sports. He writes, "What else can you call it when hundreds of thousands of Americans

protest the war by picketing the White House, only to find that millions — including their president — are off watching football games?"

Indeed it happened just recently in Canada. The rising cost of living, the high unemployment and the political situation didn't get as much attention as one Canada-Russia hockey game, when the whole country was figuratively breathing

on the same beats.

Hoch admits that his idea of sports is Marxist. He submits an argument that is solidly backed up by data both historic and contemporary which is hard to refute. What he fails to do is offer any solutions to the problems, he raises.

**Rip-Off The Big Game, Paul Hoch, Doubleday, pp. 212; \$2.15.**

## Eleven summer seminars planned

By LIONEL LLEWELLYN

Have you ever wondered what occurs at the familiar buildings on the York university campus during the summer?

If you didn't know before, York, like so many other institutions, is becoming a full-time education center. One hive of bustling activity is the modern, efficient and nearby Tait McKenzie gymnasium.

Approximately 2,000 athletes and coaches from Canada, and the rest of the world will attend one or more of the 11 summer York university seminars. The purpose of these seminars, as described in the 1972

annual report of York university seminars states: "To provide those who participate the opportunity of acquiring a body of knowledge in an activity of their choice."

From its inception in 1967, the summer seminar program has grown from five to 11 programs, each program lasting five days. The Ontario Gymnastic Association conducted the first successful seminar at York then, and the York physical education department decided as "policy that it would work willingly with any amateur sport group for the betterment of the sport as long as this was compatible

with the educational philosophy of the university."

The only key requirement stipulated that a faculty member from York must maintain a leadership role in the organization and administration of the seminar. This provides a permanency of operation and allows the university to handle many administrative details as there is a large executive turnover in amateur organizations.

And so, summer teaching and recreation in the forms of Canadian gymnastics, modern gymnastics, field hockey, volleyball and dance arrived at York in that inaugural

year. This summer six additional programs join the original five: rigger, basketball, badminton, table tennis, synchronized swimming and athletic injuries.

The seminars aim at several objectives. They provide the opportunity to obtain specific knowledge: in the theory and practice of a particular activity; in fitness and conditioning methods; in developing skills and techniques; and in effective care and prevention of injuries.

World class coaches and assistants are hired by these self-supporting seminars (fees paid by seminar participants cover costs of coaching, salaries, printed material, and room and board) for five days. This time period has been ideal for both the coaches, who interrupt their vacations, and the participants, who range in age from elementary and high school to the college level.

While some coaches have yet to confirm their appearance, York is recognized as a major seminar school by those coaches who will appear this year. Miroslav Cerar, a 16-time national gymnastic champion of Yugoslavia and 1970 World Champion on the pommel horse will head the coaching staff of the Canadian gymnastic seminar. Maurice Robinson, the English national coach, is one of four participants in the badminton program. And Elizabeth Hunter, a Scottish national team member, will provide instruction during the field hockey seminar.

These seminars have produced important outgrowths. In particular, a book entitled *Olympic Gymnastics for Men and Women* was printed by Prentice-Hall in 1972. It was co-authored by Dr. Bryce Taylor and Tom Zivic of the York Physical Education staff and by Boris Bajin, a gymnastic coach who spent a year at York financed by the seminar.

Many coaches at these seminars continue on into executive positions in sport groups, or into international and national judging of competitions, or into coaching of other national squads in countries outside their own. Several students who attended the seminars have become competent coaches for different organizations as well.

Beginning June 14 with volleyball and concluding August 31 with seminars in Canadian gymnastics, field hockey and athletic injuries, the seminar committee is hoping for a repeat of 1969 when every province was represented at the summer seminars. Last year 751 athletes and coaches attended the five programs, 693 from Ontario. But participants hailed from Newfoundland to British Columbia, and from Manitoba to Pennsylvania.

For further information concerning the seminars, the cost, the respective coaches, etc., contact Dave Smith in the Physical Education offices. And if you are not doing anything this summer, why not visit the gymnasium — you may see dance instructor Jenny Budrow helping with synchronized swimmers, or Dr. Taylor performing an old North American Indian rain dance. It's interesting, it's educational and it's enjoyable.



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