

## **Sport and Social Regulation in the City: The Cases of Grenoble and Sheffield**

### **Le sport et la régulation sociale en ville : le cas de Grenoble et de Sheffield**

### **El deporte y la regulación social en la ciudad : el caso de las ciudades de Grenoble y de Sheffield**

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#### Article abstract

This article seeks to redress the dearth of comparative urban sports policy literature, undertaking an historical analysis of the development of sports policy in a French and a British city (Grenoble and Sheffield) from the late 1960s to the end of the century. Both of the cities, though very different in political, cultural and economic terms, have given considerable prominence to, and have significantly changed the nature of, local sports policy. The article employing an approach drawn from regulation theory identifies and explains similar trends evident in both cities. There is in both cases a “structured coherence” between the hardware (spectacular sporting facilities / events / sporting spectacle), organisational forms (commercialised, de-bureaucratised operations) and the dominant sets of social relations (increasingly market relations) which characterise their emergent sports policy systems and which systematically privilege market over social interests, reflecting post-Fordist policy goals despite very different political, institutional and structural contexts.

# SPORT AND SOCIAL REGULATION IN THE CITY: THE CASES OF GRENOBLE AND SHEFFIELD

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## Introduction

With claims about the declining significance in policy terms of the nation-state (Morris, 1997; van Deth, 1995), the role of cities in the development of both social and economic policy has grown, and thus the role of sports policy and associated urban sports politics has also become increasingly significant (Cochrane, Peck, and Tickell, 1996; Henry, 1997). Nevertheless, the politics of urban sport has to date been a largely neglected phenomenon, with comparative urban sports politics in particular being virtually absent from the literature (Arnaud, 1999; Bramham, Henry, Mommaas, and van der Poel, 1993; Gratton and Henry, 2001). This article seeks to redress the dearth of comparative urban sports policy literature, undertaking an historical analysis of the development of sports policy in a French and a British city (Grenoble and Sheffield) from the late 1960s to the end of the century. Both of the cities, though very different had given considerable prominence to sport as a policy area, and in both cases the nature of sports policy has undergone radical change across the period in question.

The issue of whether local politics matter has been a question of significance to political analysts for some considerable time (John and Cole, 2000). The changing significance of the nation-state and the city (and of transnational

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government) in a variety of policy domains is of course bound up with the phenomenon of globalisation. Indeed, social analysis has been preoccupied with attempts to conceptualise the relationship between local and global forces and actions (Keil, 1998; Negus, 1993; Robertson, 1992). The rapidly increasing scope (Giddens, 1990) and pace (Harvey, 1989) of economic, social, and political change mean that policy actors find themselves enmeshed in a globally changing policy context. In order to explain local policy outcomes one must make reference to global context, but the global is both context and outcome of local actions. Thus, most commentaries in characterising the local policy context seek to avoid the excesses of, on the one hand, crude determinism, where local actors are powerless to effect change when faced with global forces, and on the other hand, naïve voluntarism, with explanations of policy options adopted at local level being based on the unconstrained choices of local actors (Harding and Le Galès, 1997). In the analysis presented in this paper we have sought to articulate within the context of regulation theory the enabling and constraining factors which have impacted upon the urban sports policy context in these two contrasting cities which have become identified with distinctive approaches to sports policy.

### **The Theoretical Context: Local Government, Sports Policy and Regulation Theory**

In developing an analysis of urban policy change in sport, this article seeks to consider the extent to which such change can be said to reflect changing forms of social regulation. The regulation approach, derived initially from studies of the labour process in capital accumulation (Aglietta, 1979; Boyer, 1986), argues that particular modes of capital accumulation are accompanied by complementary regimes of social regulation if they are to be sustained. This is not to suggest that specific forms of capital accumulation *require* specific forms of social regulation in a functionalist sense. Such forms will vary from one context to the next, but social regulation will invariably be, in some measure, compatible with economic processes (Mayer, 1994).

In the developed economies of the capitalist system of the west, three periods of capital accumulation are generally acknowledged: competitive regulation (from the mid-nineteenth century until the 1920s); Fordist regulation (1920s until early 1970s); and the transition from Fordism (sometimes referred to as post-Fordism or neo-Fordism – from the early 1970s until the present day). Our focus in the present article is on the latter two periods. In practical terms the welfare state is said to reflect a set of social arrangements which was complementary to the conditions that held, particularly under post-Second World War Fordism, of relatively full employment and continued economic growth. Welfare provision was seen as an element of the social wage which, together with rising incomes, secured worker commitment to production in a Fordist society dominated by mass

production (with work forms characterised by worker alienation). Welfare rights implied access to health, housing, education and other basic forms of social provision as well as ultimately the more luxury services of sport, culture and leisure. As production changed in western economies to a post-Fordist or neo-Fordist scenario (Allen, 1992) in which full employment for mass production was to be replaced by automated production processes and high skill niche production, requiring lower levels of employment, so the social arrangements which accompanied this changed set of circumstances were themselves to change. Welfare provision for all was to be replaced by the development of a two tier policy to reflect the needs of two tier society. One tier (those in employment and benefiting from economic growth) require consumer rights, freedom to buy on the open market, while the second tier (those unemployed or underemployed) was likely to be provided with lower level welfare rights (to reduce national taxation levels and ensure the global competitiveness of industry) which, together with increased policing and security investment would serve to guard against social instability (Christopherson, 1994). Sport for all in such a scenario is thus replaced by “sport for some”, residual welfare policies targeted at disadvantaged groups. The other shift implied in post-Fordist sports policy is the use of sport for city marketing. As traditional industry is replaced by service sector provision, the use of cultural provision (including sport) to capture global publicity and to attract service sector professionals is evident, as cities become more entrepreneurial in selling themselves on the global market (Harvey, 1989).

There has been a range of work which has sought to address the question of whether local government in general terms has reflected a shift in the nature of social regulation (Goodwin, Duncan, and Halford, 1993a; Jones, 1998; Mayer, 1994; Peck and Tickell, 1992; Stoker, 1990; Tickell and Peck, 1995) but with few exceptions little attempt has been made to address the issue of whether sports or leisure policy might form an element in a new set of approaches to local social regulation (Henry, 1993; Ravenscroft, 1993). Thus this study sets out to evaluate whether the developments in sports policy in these two contrasting cities can be accommodated within the context of a regulation theory-based account of change in the city.

### **Grenoble and Sheffield – Leading Lights in the French and British Local Government Context**

The two cities presented in this account have contrasting political, economic, and cultural histories. The very particular political culture of the city of Sheffield is rooted in the nature of the local economy and social structure. The city was, until recently, renowned for its steel industry and the concentration of employment in steel-related activity meant that the major decline in the demand for steel in the 1970s hit the local economy particularly hard (Benington, 1987). From the

beginning of the 1980s the decline accelerated with local unemployment exceeding the national average from 1981, and unemployment growing threefold from 5.1% in January 1980 to 15.5% in September 1984. In 1971 almost half of the work force was engaged in manufacturing industry, but this had fallen to 24% by 1984, with job loss in the metal-based manufacturing sector between 1981-4 being double the rate for the UK generally (Sheffield City Council, 1993).

The decline of steel-related industry was compounded by the relatively poorly developed service sector, with growth in the business, financial and high technology sectors being well below the national average (Strange, 1995). The growth in service jobs of 25,000 between 1971 and 1984 in the city failed to compensate for the loss of jobs from the shrinkage in manufacturing employment.

The political control of the city had since the war rested almost entirely with the Labour Party. The nature of Labour politics at the local level has nevertheless been subject to local variations as well as to change over time (Gyford, 1985), and after an extended period of resisting central government's attempts to reduced the size and significance of local government service provision, Sheffield adopted a series of partnership projects with local capital from the late 1980s. One such partnership project was the bid to stage the World Student Games of 1991, which was to have a profound effect, not only on local sports policy, but also on urban policy more generally for the city (Lawless, 1990; Seyd, 1993; Strange, 1993).

While Sheffield had been predominantly associated with a single traditional industry, with deindustrialisation and a relatively drab urban environment, Grenoble enjoyed a reputation for research-led economic development with, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, high technology companies such as Hewlett Packard (computers), Péchiny (electro-chemical research), Becton Dickinson (paramedical development) establishing production, research and administrative headquarters in the city. With a population of 400,000 (including the suburbs) in 1975, Grenoble was seen as a good centre for attracting high level international staff, in part because of its strong educational base, but also because of quality of the local environment, in particular the physical proximity of the city to winter sports opportunities. Unlike Sheffield, Grenoble had had a relatively indistinct political history at municipal level. As Ardagh (1990, p. 181) points out: "Through the boom years of 1950-65 the *mairie* had remained in the hands of the old guard Grenoble-born *notables*, in turn Socialist or Gaullist by label, conservative by temperament." With the arrival of the Dubedout administration in the city in 1965, however, the city gained a high profile socialist mayor (though he had initially been elected as an independent) with an innovative set of policy approaches.

If the nature and reputation of the cities were very different, they also existed within very different contexts in terms of their relationship with the state in the period under review. In the French case, the state was seen to give way to growing pressures for decentralisation, with de facto powers being to some extent assumed

by leading cities such as Grenoble prior to legislation, and subsequently the legal basis of decentralisation being established in the early 1980s (Schmidt, 1990). This contrasts with the UK case in which, during the 1980s, increasingly centralised power was imposed by a Conservative central government on local government in Britain, in order to curb local government expenditure (Farnham and Horton, 1993; Goodwin *et al.*, 1993a; Leach, Stewart, and Walsh, 1994). While Grenoble was to the fore in developing local autonomy for French cities, Sheffield was equally prominent in its (ultimately unsuccessful) attempts to oppose the dilution of local government powers by Margaret Thatcher's governments in England (Seyd, 1993).

### Methodology

In order to undertake an analysis of sports policy change across the period, key stages of generic policy significance were identified in the political development of the two cities. Subsequently, following an approach derived from strategic analysis (Bernoux, 1985; Friedberg, 1993), policy and change were evaluated across four dimensions: ideologies or rationales for policy; objectives; strategies employed; and policy outcomes (see table 1 below).

**TABLE 1**  
**Indicators Employed in the Analysis of the Politics of Sport**  
**in Grenoble and Sheffield**

| <b>Actors</b>     |  |
|-------------------|--|
| <b>Dimensions</b> | <b>The Politicians Responsible for Sports Policy</b>   |
| <i>Ideology</i>   | Distinguishing political tendencies (e.g. decentralisation / participation / community development; neo-liberal individualism / centralised control / market development)  |
| <i>Objectives</i> | Dimensions of sports policy<br>– Élite / mass participation<br>– Image promotion / needs<br>– Prioritising groups in need / undifferentiated provision for all   |
| <i>Strategies</i> | Decisions voted upon<br>Origins of proposals (who initiates the decision; what process is adopted in the progressing of particular proposals)<br>Nature of the proposal – what types of intervention are proposed (e.g. provision of facilities, staff, subsidies, etc). |
| <i>Outcomes</i>   | The implementation of decisions<br>How are resources spent across the sectors of facility provision, staffing and subsidy of sporting associations.  |

In the case of Grenoble identifying the stages of significant political development in the city, and their dates is fairly straightforward. The period divides neatly into two covering the political control of the city by two charismatic mayors, Henri Dubedout (1965-1983) and Alain Carignon (1983-1995). Dubedout came to power and inherited a city which had successfully captured the Winter Olympic Games for 1968, but which had had little in the way of strategic policy goals in respect of social or physical planning. Dubedout, in addition to changes in the physical infrastructure of the city, successfully developed policies to enhance community development such that the city became known as a “social laboratory” for urban policy, and he successfully forged a stronger role for Grenoble *vis-à-vis* the central state in the French urban policy system (Bruneteau, 1998; Frappat, 1979). When Alain Carignon came to power, though initially maintaining some of the Dubedout approach in respect of social development, he subsequently promoted a business agenda for the city which favoured economic development over social goals (Avrillier and Descamps, 1995).

The periodisation of Sheffield’s political development is slightly more complex. Comparison with Grenoble is complicated by the different history of institutional structures and periods of political control. Local government was reorganised in England in 1974, and prior to this political constituency boundaries were rather different. In addition Labour had held power in the city for all but two years from 1926 to 1999. Finally, in the absence of directly elected mayors, the key political figures in the city have been leaders of the Labour Group who have been leaders of the Council (mayors being symbolic heads of municipal government in the English context). Notwithstanding these qualifications, three phases of political development in the period 1974-1999 can be identified. In the first period 1974-1980, the city Council was dominated by Labour members from traditional backgrounds (trades unions, local working class communities, etc.; Seyd, 1993), with traditional goals of maintaining levels of public expenditure, service provision, public sector employment, and support for local industry. Such a strategy brought the city into direct conflict with central government, particularly after 1979 when Margaret Thatcher’s administration took power.

A second and transitional period, 1980-1987 was one in which this stance was increasingly recognised as futile. A new group of young left wing politicians, led by David Blunkett, gained control of the City Labour Party in 1980. Similar groups emerged in a number of British cities, and were termed the New Urban Left by political commentators – new because they represented a break from traditional Labour, with many members being from the new service sector, and urban because this new group first began to appear in city, rather than national, politics (Gyford, 1985). The New Urban Left group acknowledged that since economic restructuring was inevitable, a strategy of “shaping”, or influencing for the better, rather than resisting that restructuring was necessary. Unequivocal protection of existing local services was also called into question since it was

recognised that some public sector services were not effective in serving the needs of the most disadvantaged in the city. However, the local Labour Party did remain committed to opposing central government cuts to local budgets, and in 1985 the Labour Group teetered on the brink of failing to set a legal (non-deficit) budget, which would have left individual councillors personally financially liable for the financial shortfall, and would thus have rendered them bankrupt. At the eleventh hour, sufficient numbers of Labour councillors drew back from the risk of bankruptcy, Sheffield set a legal budget and effective resistance to central government was over. Sheffield, which had been characterised in the press as the “capital of the Socialist Republic of South Yorkshire”, fell into line with other Labour local authorities which had accepted the futility of struggling against a Conservative central government that had the legislative means to ensure compliance (Stoker, 1991).

In the later 1980s it became apparent that the New Urban Left’s policy initiatives were having only marginal effects in urban contexts, and in Sheffield, with the election of Blunkett to Parliament in 1987 and his resignation from the City Council (cumulative mandates are very rare in Britain), a new group of Labour Modernisers took control of the Council with Clive Betts as leader. This group sought direct involvement and partnership with business as a central plank to their policy programme. Thus, in the Sheffield context there are three distinct stages which are evident in the political developments affecting the city – control by Traditional Labour, by the New Urban Left, and by the Labour Modernisers, – the first two of which reflect a relative antipathy to working through local business interests, while the last reflects a new approach by Labour, fostering partnership with capital.

As indicated earlier, for each of the stages of development of the two local political systems, analysis was undertaken along four dimensions. Three types of source were employed to evaluate these dimensions,

- written documents (minutes of the meetings of the *conseil municipal* and the City Council, books relating to local political and sporting history, articles in the local press, information materials and official reports from the local authorities);
- semi-structured interviews conducted in Grenoble with the politicians who fulfilled the role of *adjoint au sport* across the period (unfortunately it was not possible to interview the mayors for the period, Dubedout having died in a climbing accident in 1986, and Carignon having been imprisoned for corruption in 1995). In Sheffield, interviews were conducted with local politicians of all three major local parties, local government officers, and other stakeholders in the sports policy community locally.<sup>1</sup> Interviews took place in Grenoble over the period 1991-1994, and in Sheffield over the period 1995-1999;

- official studies of local expenditure (*comptes administratifs communaux*, and CIPFA, 1976; CIPFA, 1982; CIPFA, 1984; CIPFA, 1988; CIPFA, 1990; CIPFA, 1992; CIPFA, 1993; CIPFA, 1994; CIPFA, 1995; CIPFA, 1996; CIPFA, 1997; CIPFA, 1999) and “factual” items reported by the local press (e.g. opening, closure of facilities, changes in management arrangements, etc.) were employed particularly to document policy outcomes.

### **Sports Policy in Grenoble – the City as a “Social Laboratory” 1965-1983**

#### **(a) *The Ideologies and Objectives of Sports Policy under the Socialist Administration of Dubedout***

Between 1965 and 1983 a group of socialist politicians led by Hubert Dubedout (an engineer at the Centre of Nuclear Studies in Grenoble) controlled the local authority. Successful in three successive local elections, Dubedout was also elected to the *Assemblée nationale*, and the *Conseil régional*.

The ideas and practical orientation of the Socialists were directed towards the development of social (public) housing, and of cultural facilities, as part of a wider project of reorganising urban space. The local authority proposed in its programme prevention of uncontrolled urban development and countering of the domination of urban development by private interests. In doing so it opposed autocratic and unplanned urban management which had left some neighbourhoods under-provided and lacking facilities, while leaving others well provided for, but too expensive for many local inhabitants. This policy approach also emphasised the importance of giving a voice in politics to local citizens and thus also gave prominence to various local organisations (Joly, 1985). As a consequence these local organisations were recognised by the municipality as privileged partners, and they thus became closely involved in the management of sociocultural facilities. Indeed Grenoble gained a reputation for the strength of its local voluntary sector.

It has to be remembered that one is more likely to live in a community on the banks of the Isère, than elsewhere: it is a real indication, in effect that nearly 6 out of 10 *Grenoblois* were members of some sort of association in 1975, while only 3 out of 10 French people were in the same situation .... At the beginning of the 1960s, neighbourhood associations, organisations which already had some history, gained a new importance in the town, until in 1965 they were able to participate in municipal decision-making. (Parent, 1982, p. 96; authors' translation.)

Certain of the community organisations served more particularly to support the implementation of this political experiment in sociocultural development. Some examples include the *Maison du Cinéma et de l'Audiovisuel* in relation to the exhibiting and documenting of film, and *l'Association Grenoble Animation Information* in relation to written material, which managed the development and publicising of information about the town.

Thus the affirmation of the strength of local power *vis-à-vis* the central state was the dominant policy theme in the post-1965 period. The concern of the city to assume a powerful role appeared to be a novelty in the mid-1960s when cities were dominated by the state, negotiations concerning the built environment were directed towards the private sector, and small concessions in decentralisation were directed towards the regions rather than to *communes*. Grenoble was thus one of the first examples of a city emerging out of the shadow of the power of the central state (Bonzy, Durbet, and Podico, 1988). It is in this sense that Grenoble can be described as a test-bed for local democracy which was to be given formal expression in the decentralisation legislation of the early 1980s in France.

As far as sports policy was concerned, the priority until the end of the 1960s was with the staging of the Olympic Games programme inherited from the previous municipal administration. The Games were held in 1968, three years after Dubedout came to power, and most of the construction plan was thus committed prior to his election. It was necessary to wait for the beginning of the 1970s, that is to say after Dubedout had been reelected for a second term as mayor (1971-1977), to see the emergence of more specific political objectives in the field of sports policy. Policy goals in the sports domain related to provision for the greatest number of local inhabitants, an objective which was evident in speeches and statements by the mayor reflecting a “Sport for All” approach: “Sport is for everyone, and as such it should not lead to decisions which reinforce divisions” (Dubedout, 1971) and in the proposals of the *adjoint au sport*: “The activities of the masses are not incompatible with the practice of high level competition. The diverse nature of the former is not in opposition to the specialised nature of the latter. Both are implicated in the larger plan for sport.” (Espagnac, 1971). One of the priorities was not to discriminate between clubs, in particular ensuring equity in subsidies, as M. Espagnac argued in an interview published in the *Dauphiné Libéré* (Ribeaud, 1973). This political discourse was expressed in the refusal to engage in a bidding process relating to the funding of high level sport which would have been to the detriment of the policy of sport for all.

The policy of funding the development of champions which we are rejecting, by which I mean the entering into the scandalous game of bidding to pay to retain stars paying more and more, which renders it impossible for the municipality to promote and fund other sports .... An élite takes on the role of the rich and the town promotes its image through the players it has bought and which only represent it artificially. For ten years our objective has been to provide adequate sporting facilities for the town, with the goal of providing for our children the opportunity to obtain a satisfactory training in sport, for our clubs to have access to the appropriate facilities, and finally for all inhabitants of Grenoble to participate in the sport of their choice. (Dubedout, 1975a)

The ideas which we have about sport corresponded well with socialist ideas about the sports movement. For many towns sport is reduced to élite teams, but we, for example have transformed gymnastics in schools into a policy of sports animation, because [for young people] to move into the sports clubs,

it is necessary to go beyond the formal school context. And “sport for all” it was necessary to strive to do that, and even at times it was necessary to intervene at the level of the élite clubs in the town. (Espagnac, interview with C. Dulac, 5 January 1995.)

This political discourse was expressed in the refusal to engage in a bidding process relating to the funding of high-level sport which would have been to the detriment of the policy of sport for all.

**(b) *The Strategies and Outcomes of Sports Policy under the Socialist Administration of Dubedout***

One element of the strategy of the politicians is manifest in the development of facilities. The Socialist administration was not simply satisfied with existing provision, and in particular with the infrastructure linked to the Olympic Games and financed in 1966 and 1967. A new programme of provision was developed at the end of the 1960s, with construction oriented towards community recreation facilities in neighbourhoods. This policy orientation is one illustration of how Grenoble earned the title of “social laboratory”. The policy of developing this type of facility, for which the town was a “trail blazer”, was effectively followed by central government in developing its programmes *Mille Piscines*, *Mille Tennis* and similar schemes for the whole of France. The growth of facilities in the Dubedout period had financial implications, because the capital costs were much more significant in comparison with revenue costs in the budget for sports facilities in the periods 1968-1970 and 1972-1974. The growth in capital costs was more significant during the second period: 11.4% (1972-1974) as compared with 2.35% (1968-1970).

In 1975 the orientation of the local authority was to open its facilities to the greatest number of people possible: “We should be aware of the need to provide financial aid to allow large numbers of young people who do not even have sufficient resources to pay the symbolic amounts necessary to gain entry to swimming pools or sports halls.” (*Nouvelle Revue d'Information et de Documentation*, March 1971, p. 9).

In terms of facilities the municipality had a two pronged strategy: to create neighbourhood facilities in Grenoble, and to manage the large-scale sports provision in the city. This was in order to provide a diverse range of participants with access to the large-scale facilities, while giving sports participants free use of neighbourhood provision (Dubedout, 1971). This strategy implied full usage of existing facilities, including those inherited from the period of Olympic investment (*Délibération du Conseil municipal*, 5 December 1968). Thus “indoor swimming pools, sports halls, indoor tennis courts, floodlit sports facilities, all were implicated in the strategy of full usage” (*Nouvelle Revue d'Information et de Documentation*, March 1971, p. 8). As press statements indicated, this strategy

incorporated school sport as well as provision through sports associations: “It is absolutely essential that the sporting and cultural provision constructed for schools should be integrated into the life of the town, that is to say that it is useful not only for pupils but also for local people.” (*Dauphiné libéré*, 22 September 1968, p. 8). As far as the distribution of subsidies was concerned socialist policy was evident in the priority accorded to non-élite sport. In effect, during the period 1965-1982 the share of subsidies provided for non-élite sport represented 50.15% of the total sum allocated, while in comparison high level sport and the *Office municipal des sports*<sup>2</sup> obtained 39.42% and 10.43% respectively.

This orientation of the socialist policy in favour of mass sport rested on a particular strategic axis which consisted of controlling the financial management of high level sports clubs, and in particular that of the city’s professional football team which played in the Second Division. This particular club had in effect adopted an unsustainable financial policy having over-stretched itself, after twice gaining promotion to the national division 1 (in 1960 and 1962), and subsequently recruiting the former coach of the French national team and of Stade de Reims, Albert Batteux in 1963. As a consequence of this the *Adjoint au sport* was charged with overseeing the use of subsidies given to the club, in order to ensure that the club did not commit the same mistakes (*Délibération du Conseil municipal*, 7 July 1969). As a result of this intervention there was a reduction in the amount of subsidy granted to high level sport in the city during the period 1968-1975, from 46% of total subsidies for sports associations to 21%. From 1976 onwards, the proportion of subsidy provided to high level sport grew again until the end of the period of socialist control, standing at 44% in 1982. In effect when the municipality wished to pursue a policy of sport for all, it had to take account of the élite sports clubs, but sought to do so without detriment of the other sports clubs.

We are not going to get involved in bidding [by élite sports clubs for subsidy increases], but we will allow clubs which are doing very well [in national leagues] to be able to defend their interests, giving them a hand when necessary without burdening the municipal budget. (Dubedout, 1975b)

This explains why the growth of the subsidies provided to high-level sport was always below that accorded to mass sport.

The second strategic approach used by the municipality was to encourage each of the élite sports clubs to take responsibility for their own affairs. The *adjoint au sport* suggested that they should find alternatives to municipal subsidy: “The clubs must not rely solely on municipal aid to resolve their problems, it will be necessary to look for support elsewhere and to rely on spectator income.” (Bergeaud, 1980, p. 22) He alluded to the paying public as a revenue source to be explored, but also indirectly to appeals for sponsorship. The Mayor also noted that certain sectors of sport with a high spectator appeal managed without assistance from the local authority: “the refusal to engage in an auction does not mean a rejection of high level competitive sport and its value as an example or inspiration.

The large crowds at the *Palais des sports* during the “*Six jours*” [indoor cycling competition] or international events are a good example of this.” (Dubedout, 1975b, p. 16).

Thus in the Dubedout period, widening access to facilities, involving local associations in decision-making in sports policy, maximising use of facilities, and weaning local elite sports clubs off high levels of municipal subsidy characterised sports policy in Grenoble.

### **Grenoble under New Managerialism 1983-1995**

In 1983 the socialist group led by Dubedout lost the municipal elections to a coalition of the right led by Alain Carignon. The new mayor sought to appropriate the benefits and publicity from projects developed by the preceding administration, while constructing his politics around a new neo-liberal programme: “fewer taxes, less government intervention”, “a leaner municipality”, and “less involvement of the central state” at the local level (Avrillier and Descamps, 1995, p. 48-9). Thus the new municipal administration of the right looked to promote a politics based on a liberal ideology, which manifested itself principally in the media projection of the city (Dulac, 1998).

#### **(a) *The Ideologies and Objectives of Sports Policy under the Neo-liberal Administration of Alain Carignon***

Between 1983 and 1995 Alain Carignon won two successive elections. In addition he became a member of the *Conseil général*, of the *Département*, of the *Assemblée nationale*, and of the European Parliament, and he was a minister in the “*cohabitation*” governments of Jacques Chirac (Environment 1986-8) and Edouard Balladur (Communication, 1993-4).

During his first period in office the mayor developed his policy programme around the central theme of city promotion and marketing. The 1980s saw the emergence of “the entrepreneur” as an emblematic figure, with personalities emerging such as Messrs. Bouygues, Lagardère, and Tapie. In this context Carignon declared directly to the local press that he wanted “to manage the town like a business enterprise” (*Le Dauphiné Libéré*, 10 May 1984). He developed this policy approach drawing on direct and privileged links with the business world, having himself come from a background within the local Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Avrillier and Descamps, 1995, p. 56).

In terms of sports policy, the Carignon administration inherited a considerable investment in sports infrastructure, which is why it retained in part the dual orientation of its predecessor, of using the Olympic facilities and constructing neighbourhood facilities. As the 1980s progressed the priority of the administration

in sports policy became more clearly oriented towards high-publicity sporting spectacle with media impact (rather than towards the promotion of high-level performance per se, or of community recreation). This search for civic prestige was directly reflected in Carignon's local election manifesto in 1986. Of the 89 proposals contained within the manifesto, 5 were dedicated to sports policy and the majority of these were concerned with elite sport. Propositions 47 to 49, for example, advocated the promotion of the city through a major sports team, the development of a major sports complex, and a system for developing elite young local sporting talent. Once elected the Carignon administration confirmed the adoption of this approach in a press communiqué on 18 May 1983, concerned specifically with high-level sport and high-profile sporting events.

**(b) *The Strategies and Outcomes of Sports Policy  
under the Neo-liberal Administration of Carignon***

The dominant strategy of the Carignon team was to exploit the media potential represented in sport, emphasising the high-profile events (such as *Six jours cycliste*, and the *Masters Pole Vault* event) and also high-profile sports teams in the city. The Masters Pole Vault competition in particular was the subject of a contract with Canal+ until 1989, when it was taken up by France 3 from 1990. By this time the budget for this event had reached 1.6 MF, with the level of subsidy on the part of the town of Grenoble standing at approximately 20% of the total budget for the event. The other competitive events on the evening of the Masters competition were simply included to legitimate the event as a general athletics competition recognised by the national governing body so that any records established would attract official recognition.

A second theme in the policy strategy related to support for high-prestige sporting teams. From 1983 the municipality allocated more than half of the total sum provided for sports club subsidy (excluding school sport) to the five major high profile sports teams. These teams were competing at the highest level regionally or nationally in the sports of football, rugby, ice hockey, basketball and volleyball. The proportion of subsidies dedicated to this elite group oscillated between 60 and 65% of the total sum allocated between 1983 and 1988, illustrating the precedence given to high-level sport over sport for all. The remainder of the monies had to be shared among 60 or so clubs.

When the Carignon team won its second term at the municipal elections of 1989, this signified a shift in the orientation of sports policy. In effect the municipality decided to put a brake on the promotion of high-profile sport, because of a legal case in September 1989 against the *Football-Club Grenoble Dauphiné* (for a debt of 2.24 MF and a budgetary deficit of 8 MF at 30 June 1989: *France Football*, 13 February 1990). However, the sporting and financial difficulties of the football

club were not the only such difficulties the administration had to face. Table 2 illustrates the implication of the Commune and the Département in the financing of the five major sporting clubs in the town at the end of the 1980s.

**TABLE 2**  
**Financial Relationships between the Elite Sport Clubs,**  
**the City of Grenoble and the Département in 1989**

| Clubs           | Budgets                          | Subsidy<br>by the city | Subsidy<br>by the<br>Département* | Loans guaranteed<br>by the city |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ASG-Volley      | 1 800 000                        | 935 000                | —                                 | No                              |
| FCGI (football) | Under judicial<br>administration | 2 250 000              | 364 080                           | Yes                             |
| FCG-Rugby       | 3 465 000                        | 1 275 000              | 240 000                           | Yes                             |
| GBI (basket)    | 1 600 000                        | 825 000                | 60 000                            | Yes                             |
| CSGH (hockey)   | 4 800 000                        | 875 000                | 200 000                           | Yes                             |

\* Alain Carignon presided over the *Conseil général* (i.e. Council of the Département/County Council) from 1985 to 1994.

Source: *Grenoble Mensuel*, no. 3, 4-12 December 1990, p. 8-9

Thus the investment of the municipality in high-profile sport was not only in terms of subsidies, but also the provision of access for the clubs to municipal facilities (for which the running costs could, in any given year, exceed the total subsidy to the club: for example the renovation of the municipal stadium cost 2.85 MF in 1985, while the subsidy to the football club which used it was 1.91 MF). Furthermore the town provided financial guarantees for the clubs. As table 2 indicates, four of the five clubs were in this situation. These guarantees were to be renewed during the period of office of the Carignon administration, as was the case for example for the football club (*Délibération du Conseil Municipal*, 13 December 1985) or for the basketball club (*Délibération du Conseil Municipal*, 2 July 1990). In May 1988 the town of Grenoble and the Département guaranteed a loan of 12 MF for the football club.

The brake placed by the municipality on this policy of favouring the high profile clubs was evident in a number of policy initiatives taken in 1989. The first of these concerned two prestigious facilities in Grenoble: the *Palais des sports* and the “Speed Rink”. After a period under municipal management the *Palais des sports* was handed over to a commercial company Alpexpo which also managed the city’s exhibition centre and the “Summum” (a location for major events). The Speed Rink originally constructed for speed skating in the Olympic Games of 1968, was managed initially by central government, the municipality and the French Ice Sport Federation, then subsequently managed solely by the municipality. After twenty years of use the facility had to have its refrigeration system renewed, and

this renewal was beyond the budget of the municipality since it would cost 15.8 MF, on top of its operating costs, estimated at 1.6 MF for 1988/9. After an appeal to the Minister for Youth and Sport for financial aid had been turned down, this facility was abandoned, and used only for informal activity and as a roller skating rink (Caubet, 1993).

The second initiative concerned the organisation of the new *Conseil municipal* elected in March 1989, in which the mayor wished to provide a specific role for well-known local sports persons (e.g. J. Longo, an international cycling champion, and J. Liénard, coach of the Grenoble rugby club). This policy was seen as part of an opening up of policy machinery to the influence of civil society, but also as a reflection of the fact that by the 1980s sport was seen as a point of “social reference” to excellence (Ehrenberg, 1991, p. 266) and therefore valuable as an element of political identity.

During this second term of office Y. Machefaux, *adjoint au sport* shared his responsibilities with local elite sports personalities, J. Longo (who was given the brief of sports promotion and liaison with high-level sport), and J. Liénard (who was given responsibility for team sports). This strategy reflects the political will to control better high-profile sport through a partitioning of tasks and responsibilities, while conserving a dynamic image for the town.

The third strategy was reflected in the creation of a commission to control high-level sport, in which a specified individual was to be responsible for the financial control of any given club. This initiative was the result of the catastrophic situation in which some clubs had found themselves, but the anticipated results were not forthcoming. Thus the Administrative Tribunal announced in quick succession the liquidation of the ice hockey club in 1991, and the football club on two occasions (1989 and 1993). As a consequence the town took on responsibility for the debts of these two clubs (*Délibération du Conseil Municipal*, 9 December 1991, and 4 May 1992).

These various initiatives of the local authority resulted in the necessity of modifying its financial policy of support for high-profile sport. At the same time the municipality had to take account of sport for all, and in particular sport targeted at combating social exclusion for young people in local neighbourhoods (Arnaud, 1999), while effectively dealing with reduced resources in real terms for such social aspects of policy (Dulac, 1999).

### **Sheffield – the City of Steel: from Traditional Labour to the New Urban Left**

The development of Labour politics in the city is closely tied up with the fortunes of the steel industry. The traditional strength of the Labour Party in the city, up until the beginning of the 1980s, had lain with the strength of the working-class

workforce in the metal-related industries, and the Trades Union movement, from which many of its members and political representatives were drawn. The decline of the steel industry locally coincided with the decline of traditional Labour in Britain's cities generally, and Sheffield was no exception. Just as Dubedout's arrival in Grenoble signalled the electoral power of a new service class, the new figures in Labour politics in Sheffield in the 1980s were drawn from professional, often public service, backgrounds (Darke, 1992). The New Urban Left, as they came to be referred to in collective terms (Gyford, 1985) emerged in a number of British cities and sought a departure from traditional Labour politics. In Sheffield the New Urban Left promoted a change in generic policy terms, and in cultural policy more specifically, though in terms of sports policy per se there were few radical departures. (For this reason, and for pragmatic grounds of space, the two periods are considered together in the commentary below.) Radical departure in sports policy terms was however to follow in the period of the Labour Modernisers, from 1987 onwards.

**(a) *The Ideologies and Objectives of Sports Policy under the Control of Traditional Labour (1974-80), and the New Urban Left (1980-1987)***

The reorganisation of local government in England in 1974 heralded a rapid expansion of public sector investment in sport. The first local government funded sports centre in England had opened in Harlow in 1964 but by the end of the 1980s there were well over 1000 such facilities. The traditionalist Labour group which controlled the local authority in Sheffield however chose not to expand its stock of sports facilities, many of which, particularly the swimming pools were dated. As one of the local authority leisure services officers expressed it:

While many local authorities were investing in new or improved sports facilities, Sheffield's priorities lay elsewhere and as a consequence it retained a number of outdated facilities, particularly swimming pools which were in need of upgrading or replacement. (Taylor, 1990)

The generic concerns of the local authority were with maintaining social service provision, sustaining low charges for municipal services, including public transport, and protecting public service employment, in the face of attacks from central government on local government spending levels. In addition the mode of delivery of those services was through local government departmental bureaucracies with little wider involvement of voluntary organisations in the city. This was a common feature of service provision not simply in Sheffield but in most of the large-scale local government units established in the 1974 reorganisation of local government (Hambleton, 1988). The end result of this approach to service provision was seen as inefficiency (because of bureaucratic waste) and ineffectiveness (the most disadvantaged groups in society were not well targeted by such provision). This was as true in sports provision as it was in other service areas (Audit Commission,

1989). This promoted policy moves nationally in relation to the delivery of local government services: from the political left, the push was for decentralisation of services to be closer to communities; and from the right, the push was for greater commercialisation of such services (Hambleton, Hoggett, and Tolan, 1989; Henry and Bramham, 1986).

Traditional Labour had opposed central government's attempts to squeeze local government expenditure, and the Sheffield Labour Group in the early 1980s pursued this policy aggressively. As central government introduced more and more legislation to curb local government spending, Sheffield City Council sought ways to circumvent this legislation and to continue to resource local services and public sector employment. This eventually brought the City Council into direct confrontation with central government as it refused to set a budget in line with the legal limits introduced by the Conservative Government. Faced with the threat of personal bankruptcy for local councillors, the Council eventually backed down in 1986, and resistance to central government's reduction of local government financial resources and policy powers was effectively ended in Sheffield (Stoker, 1991).

The New Urban Left Group subsequently began to drive policy in a different direction. Instead of opposing economic restructuring in the city, the local authority sought to maximise the opportunities for disadvantaged groups within the restructuring process. The city established an Economic Development Unit which looked at ways of promoting new investment and new jobs within the city to compensate for the loss of steel industry related employment (Benington, 1987; Sheffield City Council, 1983). However, though cultural provision received a boost through new initiatives described below, sports provision remained relatively low in terms of priorities.

**(b) *The Strategies and Outcomes of Sports Policy under the Control of Traditional Labour (1974-80), and the New Urban Left (1980-1987)***

Thus, in general, the strategies and outcomes of this period were negative in relation to investment in sport. In the period of control by Traditional Labour, provision was very much "community oriented", with facilities concentrated in many traditional working-class housing areas, but heavily reliant on an ageing stock of sports facilities (Sheffield City Council Recreation Department, 1984). The implicit strategy was avoidance of the opportunity costs of investing in sporting or other infrastructure, focusing instead on investment in core social services. In 1976, the first years for which comparative data are available for the reorganised local government system, Sheffield, with 14 swimming pools and three sports halls spent a total of £1.85 per head of population on indoor sport and recreation, ranking 27th out of 36 metropolitan districts in England (CIPFA, 1976). By contrast, in the same year, it spent £1.61 per capita on cultural services, ranking second equal. This level

of cultural expenditure reflects the city's traditional commitment to improving civic intellectual capital, which had left it with a heritage of traditional museums, theatres and art galleries, many of which also dated from the previous century. As the figures for 1980/1 provided in table 3 indicate, the situation had changed little by the end of the period of Traditional Labour control.

**TABLE 3**  
**Comparison of Sheffield Expenditure on Sport and Culture**  
**with All Metropolitan Districts for Selected Years 1980/1 – 1991/2**

|                    | Net expenditure<br>on indoor pools |                          | Net expenditure<br>on Indoor Sports Halls/<br>Leisure Centres<br>with & without Pools |                          |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
|                    | <i>Sheffield</i>                   | <i>All Met Districts</i> | <i>Sheffield</i>  | <i>All Met Districts</i> |
| <b>1980/1</b>      |                                    |                          |   |                          |
| Total expend.      | 1046                               | 24895                    | 562   | 14418                    |
| per capita expend. | 1.92                               | 2.14                     | 1.03  | 1.24                     |
| <b>1982/3</b>      |                                    |                          |   |                          |
| Total expend.      | 1246                               | 29709                    | 665   | 22251                    |
| per capita expend. | 2.29                               | 2.55                     | 1.23  | 1.91                     |
| <b>1987/8</b>      |                                    |                          |   |                          |
| Total expend.      | 1740                               | 37899                    | 1851  | 50720                    |
| per capita expend. | 3.2                                | 3.25                     | 3.41  | 4.36                     |
| <b>1991/2</b>      |                                    |                          |   |                          |
| Total expend.      | 1267                               | 38779                    | 6695  | 104497                   |
| per capita expend. | 2.33                               | 3.33                     | 12.32   | 8.11                     |
|                    | Outdoor Sports Facilities          |                          | Cultural Facilities<br>(e.g. theatres, museums)                                       |                          |
|                    | <i>Sheffield</i>                   | <i>All Met Districts</i> | <i>Sheffield</i>  | <i>All Met Districts</i> |
| <b>1980/1</b>      |                                    |                          |   |                          |
| Total expend.      | 29                                 | 3187                     | 1242  | 11380                    |
| per capita expend. | 0.05                               | 0.27                     | 2.29  | 0.8                      |
| <b>1982/3</b>      |                                    |                          |   |                          |
| Total expend.      | 38                                 | 3123                     | 1706  | 16310                    |
| per capita expend. | 0.07                               | 0.27                     | 3.14  | 1.4                      |
| <b>1987/8</b>      |                                    |                          |   |                          |
| Total expend.      | 380                                | 6947                     | 2579  | 29298                    |
| per capita expend. | 0.7                                | 0.6                      | 4.75  | 2.51                     |
| <b>1991/2</b>      |                                    |                          |   |                          |
| Total expend.      | 1318                               | 11501                    | 3034  | 50047                    |
| per capita expend. | 2.43                               | 0.99                     | 5.58  | 4.30                     |

With the arrival of the New Urban Left on the local political scene from the early 1980s, the Traditional Labour focus on core social services, the protection of public sector employment, and support for traditional industries, was to be called

into question (Sheffield City Council, 1983). The New Urban Left group sought new ways of promoting the interests of the local community. If economic restructuring could not be effectively resisted by governments, local or national, then how could that restructuring process be used positively to promote the needs of local people? The answer to this question favoured by the New Urban Left had few implications for sport but did signal important developments in respect of culture, when the Council, following the lead of the Greater London Council (Garnham, 1983; Greater London Enterprise Board, n.d.), developed a cultural industries strategy, involving in particular the development of an Audio-visual Enterprise Centre incorporating a municipal recording studio and video and film production capacity (Betterton and Blanchard, 1992).

The Council promoted cultural production within the local community with three principal rationales. First, the value thus implicitly placed on local culture (the culture of local communities and of disadvantaged groups) was intended as a boost to the morale of those groups, particularly those hard hit by the impact of the decline of the steel industry. Second, the cultural industries were part of the new service sector in which jobs were seen to be growing, and thus was a potential source of employment. And finally, by improving the cultural infrastructure of the city, it was intended that it should become more attractive to inward investors. Thus within the leisure sphere, investment in the city continued with an emphasis on culture rather than sport. As table 3 indicates, sports expenditure remained stubbornly low and little policy change was evident (Taylor, 1990).

### **New Realism in Sheffield Labour Politics: Labour Modernisers and Partnership with Business**

After the debacle of the Council's climb down in its confrontation with central government, and with a deepening of the crisis of the steel industry, and the continuing squeeze on local government finance, Sheffield's Labour politicians acknowledged that finance and other resources had to come from sources other than local taxation (which had been effectively capped by central government legislation) or financial transfers from central government. Partnership with local capital provided one of the few ways forward. As the Labour Chair of the Finance Committee expressed it, most were initially reluctant to cooperate with business. There had been:

a continuing and underlying suspicion within Labour Group against developing too close a relationship with the private sector .... For many, if not all, Labour councillors, partnership was a marriage of convenience, even a shotgun bond, rather than the union of natural soul mates. (Darke, 1992)

The partnership process was facilitated by a change in leadership within the Sheffield Labour Group. David Blunkett had departed to the national political scene, and leadership of the Council was taken up by Clive Betts, who was associated with a much more pragmatic and less ideological approach to politics.

Formalisation of partnership arrangements came in December 1986 with the establishment of the Sheffield Economic Regeneration Committee in the City Council's Department of Employment and Economic Development (Seyd, 1990; Strange, 1993). This committee brought together representatives of the City Council, the business community, trades unions, higher-education institutions, central government agencies and local organisations. The aim of the group, as stated in the principal planning document it produced, *Sheffield 2000* (Sheffield Economic Regeneration Committee, n.d.), was to develop a long-term economic regeneration strategy for the city, with a particular focus on the Lower Don Valley in which most of the old steel plants had existed and which was now largely derelict.

As part of the regeneration process and following the recommendation of commercial consultants that a flagship project was required to spearhead the drive for regeneration, the city developed a successful bid over the period 1986-8 to stage the 1991 World Student Games. This project, as described below, stemmed from the partnership process (business and civic leaders together put forward the bid to the governing body of the World Student Games), and both further contributed to partnership activity. However, the Games were also the source of divisions which began to appear in the partnerships established as the Games approached.

**(a) *The Ideologies and Objectives of Sports Policy under the "New Realism" of the Labour Modernisers in Sheffield (1987-99)***

If partnerships were to be the way forward and one of the new vehicles for partnership was to be the city's bid for the World Student Games to be held in 1991, how was sports policy affected in this context? The staging of the Games had several objectives. First, it was intended to reorient the image of Sheffield from "City of Steel" to "City of Sport". Second, the bid was to promote tourism in the city. Third, the use of partnership with business was thought likely to erode central government antagonism to the city and thus to improve the city's financial standing with central government. Fourth the Games were intended to generate a range of new and exciting facilities for local people to use after the Games, and which would allow in the post-Games era, the staging of international sporting events. Fifth, the building of new facilities in the Don Valley would enhance the environment, given that the Valley had been decimated by the closure of steel related plants and factories, and was an eyesore, a large swathe of highly visible derelict land.

**(b) *The Strategies and Outcomes of Sports Policy under the Control of the New Realism of the Labour Group (1987-99)***

The final period of new realism introduced by the Labour Modernisers under Clive Betts had a profound effect on sports policy in a number of ways. It determined the strategy to be adopted which was in effect an event-led planning approach,

focused on the requirements for staging the World Student Games (Foley, 1991; Roche, 1992), rather than one which began with an analysis of local needs. In tandem with this was a strategy in terms of management of sports facilities which involved the “debureaucratisation” of sports services, with the formation of private companies and trusts to operate some of the facilities opened for the World Student Games in particular. The medium for achieving this strategy was partnership. The outcomes can be summarised under four main headings: financial; sports development; environmental; and political.

In financial terms, there were significant hidden costs in running the Games. In November 1986, the City Council had approved a bid, believing that the cost of running the Games would be met by generated income, and the capital costs of the facilities would be met by government grants, charities and private sources (Foley, 1991; Roche, 1992). However, by 1988, new Central Government legislation constrained the City Council’s capital borrowing and spending. The city faced a critical dilemma and at the time estimated that at least £110 million was needed to develop the facilities for the World Student Games. A private trust was created to run the facilities and to access private funding. This private trust, the Sheffield Leisure and Recreation Trust (SLRT) was established in March 1988 to provide the facilities and manage their future use. The capital was raised through foreign bank loans with a twenty-year repayment period (Seyd, 1993).

Subsequently, two subsidiaries of SLRT were established with different roles: firstly, Universiade (GB) Ltd, to administer and raise finance for the Games and secondly, a joint public-private board, Sheffield for Health Ltd, to manage the World Student Games and three of the major facilities (Ponds Forge Swimming Pool and Sports Centre; the Don Valley Athletics Stadium, and Hillsborough Sports Centre); the fourth major new facility, the Sheffield Arena, was put in the hands of an American company, SMGI subcontracted to Sheffield for Health.

The World Student Games involved the largest sports facilities construction programme then seen in Britain with a total cost of the Games estimated at around £180 million. Construction of the new facilities accounted for nearly £150 million, with £27 million required for the running of the event itself (Middleton, 1991; Seyd, 1993). Except for the Arena which attracted some private funding, the rest of the construction was underwritten by the Council. By mid-1990 only £500,000 had been raised and the company Universiade (GB) Ltd. was forced to cease trading and wind up with debts of nearly £3 million. Thus, in June 1990, the city was compelled to take direct responsibility for the running of the Games.

As a result, the city’s commitment to the World Student Games was criticised as a high-risk strategy, being financially questionable (Roche, 1992). It was also criticised as being the product of a lack of consideration of alternatives (Cricher, 1991). Due to the escalation of the facilities costs from £110 million in 1988 to £147 million, the payment of debt charges commenced in 1992 and was

rescheduled to end in 2013, with every adult paying an additional £25 annually in local tax (Seyd, 1993). Table 3 shows that Sheffield's expenditure on sport had moved by the end of the 1980s to significantly above the national average, having trailed for most of the rest of the period. Although table 4 suggests that Sheffield's expenditure reverted in the 1990s to below that of the national average, this is misleading in that the rescheduling of Sheffield's debt repayments and the ongoing revenue costs of running the new facilities are not taken into account in this budget heading because of the establishment of an independent trust to run the new facilities.

**TABLE 4**  
**Expenditure on Sport and Recreation and on the Arts**  
**Excluding Debt Charges for Sheffield**  
**and for All Metropolitan Districts**

|                   | Indoor Sport<br>& Recreation | Outdoor Sport<br>and Recreation | Arts |
|-------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|------|
| <b>1994/5</b>     |                              |                                 |      |
| Sheffield         | 8.12                         | 9.96                            | 4.76 |
| All Met Districts | 10.09                        | 11.42                           | 4.08 |
| <b>1998/9</b>     |                              |                                 |      |
| Sheffield         | 5.36                         | 6.83                            | 2.82 |
| All Met Districts | 8.32                         | 14.16                           | 4.14 |

In political terms, the strategy also appears to have been problematic. Labour's vote locally diminished significantly against the national trend and though it may be difficult to attribute this wholly to the Games issue, this was certainly a salient and hotly debated issue. A group calling itself the "Stuff the Games Group" campaigned heavily locally against the subsidy during the staging of the Games and had political support within the Labour Party as well as from other local community and political groups.

While the Games were financially a disaster for the city, and politically a problem for the Labour Group controlling the city, they did leave a legacy of facilities which have allowed the attraction of a programme of events of international sporting significance (Gratton, 1998; Kronos, 1997). In addition, they had a positive effect on the environment, the sporting facilities in effect creating a sport and leisure "corridor" through the Don Valley, the area of the city most affected by de-industrialisation. However, in terms of meeting the social needs of the local population, the Games legacy has been problematic. The management of the new facilities was placed by the local authority in the hands of a division of a City Trust established for the purpose, namely Sheffield International Venues Limited. This Trust is however contracted by the local authority to meet certain

standards of financial performance, but has no significant social goals specified by contract. As a result of this social goals have been de-prioritised and contractual standards of financial performance given prominence. The policy of centralising swimming provision in a large city centre facility of international competition standard has also radically affected those neighbourhoods which lost their swimming pool to permit this centralisation. As Taylor (1998) has shown, participation in swimming in the city has actually declined since the introduction of the new facility, against the national trend.

The overall outcome in terms of sport policy might be characterised therefore as a two tier policy, with an increase in consumer rights for those who can afford to pay private sector or near private sector rates, with some lower level welfare rights (subsidised sports development) for others who do not have the financial resources to benefit from consumer choice.

## Conclusion

Grenoble and Sheffield are cities with very different political, cultural and economic histories. Notwithstanding these differences, there are key and perhaps obvious similarities in the nature and direction of sports policy change, which can be characterised along four dimensions. In both cases, sports policy exhibits a shift

- from a concern with social and community development through sport (among other policy areas) to one of economic development and urban entrepreneurialism (Harvey, 1987);
- from a concern with participatory approaches to planning, to one of decision-making by political and business elites;
- from decentralised policy-making within the local authority to centralised decision-making;
- and from an emphasis on sport for all to one on professional and elite sport.

The direction of policy change described here is consistent with features of a shift away from traditional, Fordist modes of social regulation. The provision of sport for all as part of the social wage delivered to the working population within the context of a welfare state has clearly been eroded, and replaced by a concern to target the needs of the service class and of their employers, and / or to generate revenue through sporting provision. However, if charges of reductionism are to be countered, changes in respect of local policy cannot simply be “read off” from changes in the wider political economy, and variation in policy between cities does exist (Goodwin *et al.*, 1993a; Goodwin and Painter, 1996). Indeed we can assert that though similar tendencies may be observed elsewhere, Sheffield and Grenoble stand out as having been to the fore in promoting this type of sports policy change and cannot therefore be regarded as typical.

How then in Sheffield and Grenoble did the “localised conditions of production and consumption, and local constellations of social forces and cultural practices” (Goodwin, Duncan, and Halford, 1993b, p. 69) which are said to produce policy change, result in post-Fordist approaches to sports policy being fostered? In order to explain this, we would argue that account has to be taken of three sets of factors: the local political context; the institutional context ; and the structural context, as well as the activities of the significant policy actors in both cities. It is not necessary to explain similar policy outcomes as resulting from similar local contextual factors since the same outcome may be explained by different sets of contexts, but it is important to tease out the relationship between context, action and policy outcomes if one is to explain the emergence of a particular pattern of policy at any given point of time.

#### **(a) *Local Political context***

There are clearly distinctive political histories in the two cities in the period under consideration. Grenoble was subject to the rule of two charismatic figures in the form of Dubedout and Carignon, of different party affiliations and ideological leanings. The shift from the “socialist” approach of Dubedout’s administration to the “neo-liberal” approach of Carignon is marked and represents a clear break, and is in part a reflection of what is seen as the growing failure of socialist political ideas to deal with the local consequences of the global recessions of the late 1970s and early 1980s. (Although the *Parti socialiste* had swept to power in 1981 in national elections, the failure of the Socialist government’s attempts to employ Keynesian economics to “spend its way out of recession” had damaged its credibility, thus Dubedout’s task in the local elections was made all the more difficult.)

In contrast, Sheffield was continuously under the control of the Labour Party in the period concerned. Sheffield did experience the charismatic leadership of a national figure in the form of David Blunkett in the early 1980s but leadership in the adoption of policies related to urban entrepreneurialism and the use of sport as tool of city marketing was a product of the period of control under the less well-known Clive Betts. Thus, while the electoral failure of the local socialist leadership of Dubedout in 1983, together with the business orientation and the powerful personality of Carignon, explains much of the shift in sports policy in Grenoble, one has to look beyond the local political context to explain policy change in Sheffield.

#### **(b) *Institutional Context***

In relation to the institutional context of French local government, decentralisation introduced in 1982 was crucial in strengthening the role of local government in mediating and / or determining policy change. Indeed, even before 1982, Dubedout’s forcefulness in developing local initiatives had allowed Grenoble in many ways

to act as a forerunner to the approach promoted in the legislative changes, and decentralisation legislation further strengthened the hand of strong local leadership.

Ironically in the British , the autonomy of local government was being curtailed across the 1980s. Sheffield was prominent in its opposition to Central Government in this respect. Ironically, it is this very opposition and Central Government's subsequent refusal to provide financial support for Sheffield after it had committed to invest in the World Student Games, which left the city leadership with relatively few options other than to commercialise existing provision to reduce costs and promote income.

### (c) *The Structural Context*

In terms of the structural location of the two cities within the national and global economies, again there are major contrasts. Grenoble had emerged in the 1960s as a *technopole*, host to a growing number of technologically sophisticated industries, while Sheffield was very much a traditional industrial city which was to deindustrialise rapidly in the 1980s. Both cities sought to position themselves as service centres with Sheffield in particular seeking to use sport to combat a negative industrial image. Grenoble in effect employed sport to complement its already strong association with an alpine sports environment. Thus both cities approached the development of sports policy in the post-Fordist mode from very different perspectives, Grenoble because this was perceived as an appropriate fit with its existing image and location in the national and global economic structure, and Sheffield because its city politicians recognised the need to change dramatically its image if it was to change its structural location in economic terms.

Thus, although there are strong parallels in the development of sports policy in the two cities, their political culture and history, their institutional and structural settings are very different. Grenoble's adoption of a post-Fordist related set of sports policies may be regarded as the product of the political espousal of a neo-liberal policy approach, within a newly defined, decentralised set of local political institutions designed to foster local autonomy, and within a structural context in which the city was seeking to reinforce its image as an exciting place to live and work for the new service class. In essence, as a city with a post-industrial profile, Grenoble was a natural candidate for post-Fordist urban sports policy orientation. By contrast, Sheffield's political and institutional context was much less evidently one which promised such an outcome. Indeed while in Grenoble, increased local political autonomy through decentralisation legislation fostered the new approach to sports policy via a neo-liberal mayor, the reduction of local political autonomy in Britain under Margaret Thatcher's governments (and in particular the curbing of local taxation powers which such legislation introduced), together with negative structural location of Sheffield in the national and global economic contexts left the city's Labour leadership with the notion that it had few options but to enter

into the policy “game” of seeking to attract inward investment through sport while reducing the local bill for such services by commercialising the operation of such services. The outcome of these very different sets of circumstances is one of equifinality. There is in both cases a “structured coherence” (Goodwin *et al.*, 1993a; Harvey, 1995) between the hardware (spectacular sporting facilities / events / sporting spectacle), organisational forms (commercialised, de-bureaucratised operations) and the dominant sets of social relations (increasingly market relations dominated) which characterise their sports policy systems and which systematically privilege market over social interests.

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## NOTES

1. The Sheffield analysis draws on material collected for two other studies by one of the authors in conjunction with J. Paramio-Salcines (Henry and Paramio Salcines, 1999), and with David Denyer (unpublished study of *The Development of Potential Partnerships in Sport*, commissioned by Sport and Recreation Department, Sheffield 1999). Acknowledgement of the contribution of these two colleagues in conducting interviews and discussion of analysis is gratefully recorded.
2. L'*Office municipal des sports* is an association as formally constituted by the law of 1901, which is an umbrella organisation with representatives of clubs affiliated to competitive sports federations.

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Christine DULAC et Ian HENRY

*Le sport et la régulation sociale en ville : le cas de Grenoble et de Sheffield*

## RÉSUMÉ

Afin de combler le manque d'études comparatives sur les politiques sportives en milieu urbain, le présent article analyse, d'un point de vue historique, l'évolution des politiques sur le sport à Sheffield (Angleterre) et à Grenoble (France) de la fin des années 1960 à la fin de la dernière décennie. Bien qu'elles soient très différentes aux points de vue politique, culturel et économique, ces deux villes ont accordé une place très importante aux politiques locales sur le sport et, par le fait même, ont modifié la nature de ces politiques. Au moyen d'une approche inspirée de la théorie de la régulation, les auteurs cernent et expliquent certaines tendances observables dans les deux villes. Par exemple, il existe au sein des deux communautés une *cohérence structurée* entre le matériel (installations, événements et spectacles sportifs de grande envergure), les formes d'organisation (opérations commercialisées et débureaucratisées) et les relations sociales (relations de plus en plus axées sur le marché) qui caractérisent leurs nouveaux systèmes de politiques sportives et qui privilégient systématiquement les intérêts du marché aux intérêts sociaux. Malgré des contextes politique, institutionnel et structurel très différents dans les deux villes, des objectifs politiques propres à l'après-fordisme apparaissent à travers cette tendance.

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Christine DULAC and Ian HENRY

*Sport and Social Regulation in the City: The Cases of Grenoble and Sheffield*

## ABSTRACT

This article seeks to redress the dearth of comparative urban sports policy literature, undertaking an historical analysis of the development of sports policy in a French and a British city (Grenoble and Sheffield) from the late 1960s to the end of the century. Both of the cities, though very different in political, cultural and economic terms, have given considerable prominence to, and have significantly changed the nature of, local sports policy. The article employing an approach drawn from regulation theory identifies and explains similar trends evident in both cities. There is in both cases a "structured coherence" between the hardware (spectacular sporting facilities / events / sporting spectacle), organisational forms (commercialised, de-bureaucratized operations) and the dominant sets of social relations (increasingly market relations) which characterise their emergent sports

policy systems and which systematically privilege market over social interests, reflecting post-Fordist policy goals despite very different political, institutional and structural contexts.

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Christine DULAC y Ian HENRY

*El deporte y la regulación social en la ciudad :*

*el caso de las ciudades de Grenoble y de Sheffield*

## RESUMEN

Con el fin de llenar la falta de estudios comparativos con respecto a las políticas deportivas en medio urbano, el presente artículo analiza, de un punto de vista histórico, la evolución de las políticas sobre el deporte en la ciudad de Sheffield (Inglaterra) y en la ciudad de Grenoble (Francia) desde finales de los años 60 hasta el final del decenio de los 90. Aunque estas ciudades son muy diferentes entre ellas desde el punto de vista político, cultural y económico, las dos han concedido un lugar muy importante a las políticas locales hacia el deporte, y por el mismo hecho, han modificado la naturaleza de estas políticas. Por medio de un enfoque inspirado en la teoría de la regulación, los autores delimitan y explican ciertas tendencias que se observan en las dos ciudades. Por ejemplo, existe en el seno de las dos comunidades una *coherencia estructurada* entre el material (instalaciones, acontecimientos y espectáculos deportivos de gran envergadura), las formas de organización (operaciones comercializadas y desburocratizadas) y las relaciones sociales (relaciones cada vez más centradas sobre el mercado) que caracterizan sus nuevos sistemas de políticas deportivas y que privilegian sistemáticamente los intereses de mercado más que los intereses sociales. A pesar de los contextos político, institucional y estructural muy diferentes en las dos ciudades, los objetivos políticos propios del postfordismo aparecen a través de esta tendencia.

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