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### Staudohar, Paul D., *Playing for Dollars: Labor Relations and the Sports Business* (3rd ed.)

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particulier pour nous en assurer. Ensuite, cette histoire oubliée des grands pans des diverses périodes étudiées, sinon qu'en se contentant de fournir quelques anecdotes plus que générales. L'auteur exige donc du lecteur plusieurs actes de foi pour le suivre dans ses analyses et ses conclusions.

En somme, ce livre est intéressant pour l'observateur de la scène des rela-

tions industrielles dans l'industrie de la construction. Il faut cependant se demander sérieusement s'il s'agit bien d'une histoire selon les canons méthodologiques appropriés ou d'une apologie.

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***Playing for Dollars: Labor Relations and the Sports Business (Third Edition)***

by Paul D. STAUDOHAR, Ithaca, N.Y., ILR Press, 1996, xii + 216 p., ISBN 0-8014-8342-5.

In 1986 Paul Staudohar published a work entitled *The Sports Industry and Collective Bargaining*. A second edition, with the only changes being updated information, under the same title, was published in 1989. In 1996, under the title *Playing for Dollars: Labor Relations and the Sports Business*, he published a third edition, with the only changes again being updated information. In all three editions Staudohar has utilized precisely the same formula in terms of planning, presentation, paragraphs and prose. Despite the accumulation of additional data, and twists and turns associated with various issues, he offers precisely the same insights in each of the three editions. New data has not compelled him to revise any of his original ideas.

In the preface to *Playing for Dollars* Staudohar says he has written the book for the sports fan who wants to learn about industrial relations in the four major North American professional (team) sports — baseball, football, basketball and hockey (p. ix). His preface also states that "little has been written on the topic in the literature" (p. x). This statement is somewhat surprising. It is well known, for example, that baseball is America's national pastime which has spawned diverse and high quality writing. Moreover, there has been an increasing academic literature on various business, economic, legal and industrial relations issues associated with professional sport.

Staudohar's sources compare unfavourably, for example, with the thirteen page bibliography of Andrew Zimbalist's *Baseball and Billions: A Probing Look Inside the Big Business of Our National Pastime* (New York, Basic Books, 1992). Staying with baseball Staudohar makes no mention/use of former Major league Baseball Players Association director Marvin Miller's *A Whole Different Ball Game: The Sports Business of Baseball* (New York, Birch Lane Press, 1991), nor John Helyar's brilliant *Lords of the Realm: The Real History of Baseball* (New York, Ballantine Books, 1995).

*Playing for Dollars* is organized into six chapters. Chapter one introduces readers to general issues associated with sport, industrial relations models as applied to sport, the legal overlay in terms of the *National Labor Relations Act* and the structure and (thematic) contents of collective bargaining. Staudohar adopts Dunlop's three actors' systems model. Unfortunately, he incorrectly describes Dunlop's third actor as "government" rather than "governmental agencies". It is conceivable that Dunlop should have (or someone else could) define the third actor as "governments"; the fact is that Dunlop didn't. More generally, Staudohar confuses courts and governmental agencies with government. A more generic term such as the "state" could have been employed, of which government (presumably federal) is one part. Given the

importance of anti-trust issues to the subsequent narrative Staudohar may have been well advised to have broadly outlined these issues, and their connection with collective bargaining and the "labour exemption" in the introductory chapter. He may have also given consideration to providing details of the peculiar labour market rules which operate in team sports.

The next four chapters are concerned with examining industrial relations in each of the respective sports. They are generally organized with a presentation of material concerning the economic context, the importance of television revenues, the structure of employment, various actors involved, accounts of various disputes and collective bargaining rounds, and information concerning violence, gambling and drug abuse. The presentation, at times, jumps between product and labour market issues and has trouble separating themes and chronology. The last chapter brings together major issues and offers insights concerning the future direction of industrial relations in sports.

The major strength of the book is its compilation of material concerning developments within the four respective sports. Those without a background in anti-trust and collective bargaining may find parts of the presentation heavy-going. While *Playing for Dollars* may be written for fans, it is for fans who are well informed.

In the concluding chapter (of each of the three editions) Staudohar says that he would like to see a more cooperative relationship develop between the respective groups of parties to enhance the long term survival and maintenance of fan interest in sports. In espousing such a view he places the major onus for coop-

eration onto the respective player associations. On pages 175 and 176 he says "It would be too much to expect that the unions would put aside their weapons and embrace management in widespread accommodation." In adopting such a stance he does not appear to be aware that cooperation is a two-way street. Most, if not all, of the major struggles and confrontations in professional sports — court battles and strikes/lock-outs — have been due as much (if not more — see Helyar's *Lords of the Realm*) to the intransigence of the league and owners as to the desire of player associations to defend and improve the lot of members. A further example of Staudohar's owner bias is his description of franchises, which in 1993 dollars were valued as being worth between US\$60 million and US\$190 million, and generated annual incomes in the range of US\$32 million to US\$107 million (p. 181–182) as "Mum-and-Pop businesses" (p. 169).

Finally, it is not clear that a lack of labour-management cooperation per se, has adversely harmed the respective sports. While each sport at different times and in different ways has found itself embroiled in conflict, the evidence assembled by Staudohar in *Playing for Dollars*, and his previous two editions, demonstrate their continuing growth and economic success. All of the leagues have expanded, the value of franchises have risen, revenues have grown and player income has continuously increased. The only really surprising thing to report is the inability of Staudohar to revise his conclusions in light of continuing and overwhelming evidence to the contrary.

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