

# One Solution to the Urban Crisis: Manly Sports and Winnipeggers, 1900-1914

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Article abstract

In the first decade and a half of the twentieth century, a large number of Winnipeggers became concerned about urban problems in their city. In the opinion of many respected citizens, greater participation in "manly" sports was one method of neutralizing the detrimental physical and moral effects of living in a congested urban environment. The work of these citizens created an explosion of sporting activity in Manitoba's capital during these years. This explosion had a permanent effect on Winnipeg's sporting culture. It bequeathed a legacy of innovative promotion and wide community participation, and a sense that sports played by young people should be organized "properly."

# One Solution to the Urban Crisis: Manly Sports and Winnipeggers, 1900-1914\*

Morris Mott

*Résumé/Abstract*

*Durant les quinze premières années du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle, un grand nombre d'habitants de Winnipeg se mirent à s'inquiéter de l'ampleur des problèmes urbains que connaissait leur ville. De nombreux citoyens respectés estimaient qu'en promouvant la pratique des sports "virils," on contribuerait à supprimer les effets néfastes d'ordre physique et moral que présentait la vie dans une grande ville telle que le devenait Winnipeg. L'encouragement prodigué par ces citoyens fut une des principales causes du débordement d'activité sportive que connut la capitale du Manitoba au cours de cette période. Cette explosion, qui a eu des répercussions durables sur la vie sportive de Winnipeg, fut marquée par de nouveaux moyens de promouvoir et de faciliter l'accès aux sports, par des structures de participation élargies et par un effort pour faire en sorte que l'activité sportive soit "convenablement" organisée et structurée, surtout dans le cas des sports pratiqués par les jeunes hommes.*

*In the first decade and a half of the twentieth century, a large number of Winnipeggers became concerned about urban problems in their city. In the opinion of many respected citizens, greater participation in "manly" sports was one method of neutralizing the detrimental physical and moral effects of living in a congested urban environment. The work of these citizens created an explosion of sporting activity in Manitoba's capital during these years. This explosion had a permanent effect on Winnipeg's sporting culture. It bequeathed a legacy of innovative promotion and wide community participation, and a sense that sports played by young people should be organized "properly."*

In the first fifteen years of the twentieth century the people of Winnipeg began to realize that their city possessed urban problems that were not unlike those faced by residents of many large centres. They responded by advocating and initiating reforms similar to those introduced in several Canadian cities in the years 1880-1920. Urban and social historians have written extensively about both the widespread consciousness of urban difficulties and the reform movement that grew out of it in the late nineteenth and (especially in the case of Winnipeg and other western Canadian cities) the early twentieth centuries. However, unless what occurred in Manitoba's capital was unusual, they have neglected to reveal the way in which the growing awareness of urban troubles, on the part of both "reformers" and others, resulted in the energetic promotion of organized "manly" sports.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, although several Canadian sports historians have shown that the era of widespread urban reform featured a remarkable growth of athletic activity, they have failed to provide information that adequately links the growth of sport to developments in society as a whole.

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Furthermore, if what took place in Winnipeg between the turn of the century and the beginning of World War I was typical of relatively large Canadian centres, sports historians have not pointed to the ways in which the zealous encouragement of sport, especially by those who had become conscious of urban problems, helped bring about seemingly permanent changes in both the means of facilitating games and the kinds of people who participated in them.<sup>2</sup>

## I

Students of Western Canadian history are familiar with the process by which a large number of British Protestant immigrants, primarily from Ontario, moved into Winnipeg and Manitoba in the last three decades of the nineteenth century and, acting upon the assumption that they were bringing "progress" to a semi-wilderness, they quickly began to establish their institutions, values and ways of life in the community.<sup>3</sup> Less well known are the facts that these people were remarkably fond of a vast number of games and that, in their new province and city, they were only slightly less anxious to reproduce their best sporting practices than they were to reinstitute their best political, economic, legal, educational and religious ones.<sup>4</sup> They particularly wanted to ensure that they reestablished the games they referred to as "manly."

"Manly" games were those that seemed to test, and therefore dramatize and inculcate, that quality of character that late nineteenth century British Protestants, in the Canadian West and all over the English-speaking world,

called "manliness." "Manliness" was the ultimate masculine quality, *the* attribute of the ideal male. Major components were not only physical vitality and courage, but also decisiveness, clear-headedness, loyalty, determination, discipline, a sense of charity, and especially the moral strength that ensured that courage would be used in the service of God and of Right.<sup>5</sup> The several manly sports, like the various integrants of manliness, were never written down, but if Manitobans and Winnipeggers did not designate explicitly the competitions they considered manly they did so implicitly. Although an extended list of them cannot be offered here, it is possible to indicate which games qualified and which did not.

Ruled out of the manly category were the sedentary games of chance or strategy, including all the card and board games, and sports, such as horse racing, where the competition was essentially between animals. Sometimes referred to as manly, especially when played by those who were past their physical prime, were tennis, bowling, golf and other competitive activities in which physical attributes were tested, but wherein the hardiness that was often associated with manliness was not usually required. Two groups of sports were almost invariably called manly. The first, exemplified by snowshoeing and the various track and field events, were the relatively straightforward, strenuous trials of speed, strength or other physical qualities. The second, generally more highly regarded than the first because they seemed to test a greater variety of the manly attributes, were games that were more complex than the straightforward sports but which, like them, required a good deal of vigour. The most important of those were the team ball games, especially cricket, baseball, lacrosse, football (in both the "rugby" and "soccer" forms), curling and hockey.<sup>6</sup>

Because they appeared to inculcate manliness, because they symbolically revealed that genuine success came only to those who possessed it, and because they seemed peculiarly "British" and therefore necessary in a truly British and Canadian part of the world,<sup>7</sup> manly sports had been well established in Winnipeg and the prairie West by the end of the nineteenth century. Then, especially in Winnipeg, in the years between the turn of the century and the outbreak of World War I, the degree of participation in manly sports simply exploded.

## II

In the Manitoba capital in the early twentieth century, a significant number of individuals began to take part in a few sports that were new to the city. Among those sports were field hockey, skiing, squash, volleyball, badminton, indoor baseball and basketball. Basketball played regularly by several hundred people by 1914, was the most popular of the "new" sports.<sup>8</sup> The overall increase in activity, however, was not attributable so much to the rise in the popularity of unfa-

miliar games, as it was to the increased popularity of sports that had been present for several years before 1900.

Canoeing was one of these sports. Although competitive canoeing was introduced in the 1880s it was a minor sport until 1910, when the Winnipeg Canoe Club, founded in 1893, moved its headquarters from the foot of the Norwood Bridge, up the Red River to the big bend opposite Elm Park. When in 1913, the Club moved again about one-half mile further upstream, its present location, membership increased substantially.<sup>9</sup> Snowshoeing, a sport that had been popular in the 1870s and early 1880s, had a revival during the decade before the Great War.<sup>10</sup> The enhanced attractiveness of other well-established sports is obvious when the number of clubs in the city at the turn of the century is compared to the number ten to fifteen years later. There was one swimming club in the city in 1900, and five by 1913. During the intervening years swimming and water polo became two of the most popular sports at the Winnipeg Y.M.C.A.<sup>11</sup> Four lawn-bowling clubs were present in 1910, while there had been only one in 1900.<sup>12</sup> Three or four "Canadian" rugby clubs existed at the turn of the century, but by 1912 there were a dozen; in addition, in the years after 1908, anywhere from three to five teams played a series of games in what was advertised as Canada's largest "English Code" rugby league.<sup>13</sup> In 1914 there were at least twenty-six cricket clubs in Winnipeg; fifteen years earlier there had been about five.<sup>14</sup> The Winnipeg Golf Club, formed in 1894, was the only one in the city until 1905 when the exclusive St. Charles Country Club was formed. By 1914 there were five clubs, all of which joined the Manitoba Golf Association, an association formed in the same year.<sup>15</sup>

Probably the most sizeable gains in popularity occurred in tennis, curling and pin bowling. The number of new tennis clubs and new tennis players was a constant source of amazement to observers of the Winnipeg sports scene after the turn of the century. Whereas before 1900 there had never been more than two private clubs, and in most years only one, by 1914 there were five or six, and individuals who did not want or could not afford to join one of these could play in church leagues or on the many public courts built in schoolyards or parks.<sup>16</sup> In 1900 there were three curling clubs in Winnipeg with 218 members, but by 1914 there were ten clubs in the city proper and one in St. Vital, with a total membership of 1,230. In addition, during these years the city clubs began to rent their ice to hundreds of non-members who curled periodically in small leagues or bonspiels.<sup>17</sup> Pin bowling was evidently played by a few devotees from as far back as the early 1870s; in the decade before the War the sport's popularity increased so rapidly that there may have been close to a thousand regular Winnipeg bowlers by 1914.<sup>18</sup>

Generally all the sports mentioned so far were either introduced to Winnipeg in the early twentieth century or enjoyed a noteworthy increase in appeal. A host of others

were consistently popular.<sup>19</sup> Included among these were rowing, rifling, trapshooting, boxing, wrestling, polo, handball, competitive skating, track and field and lacrosse. Included as well were the three games that had been the most popular for a decade — hockey, baseball and soccer. In 1914 it was estimated that there were 4,500 soccer players in Winnipeg.<sup>20</sup> The number of participants in baseball and hockey must have been comparable because the organizational structure for the three sports was very similar.<sup>21</sup> For each sport there was a huge entity, such as the Winnipeg Amateur Hockey League, the Winnipeg and District Football League or the Winnipeg Amateur Baseball Association, that arranged games for players of “senior,” “intermediate,” “junior” and even “juvenile” age or caliber. Those same players, and thousands of other less serious ones, might join dozens of teams in a host of leagues: intercollegiate leagues (except in baseball); church and Sunday School leagues; lodge leagues; “occupational” leagues such as bankers’, mercantiles’, wholesalers’, printers’ or building tradesmen’s leagues; and the remarkably active “company” leagues, such as the 1908 soccer league for Eaton’s employees that had no fewer than sixteen teams.<sup>22</sup>

### III

There were several reasons for the increase in sports participation in the early twentieth century. A major one was certainly population growth; between 1900 and 1914 Winnipeg’s population jumped from about 40,000 to probably more than 150,000.<sup>23</sup> However, the figures previously cited on the number of clubs and athletes indicate that the growth in participation was much greater than the increased population alone can explain. A decrease in the number of hours per week that many men were required to work was an additional reason in the sports explosion, although it cannot be advanced as the major one, as people could have spent their increased leisure time in any number of ways.<sup>24</sup> Two other reasons were much more important. The first — one that will be discussed only briefly here — was that games were “fun” to play, perhaps more so than they had been before. The second was that people were rewarded by others for playing and promoting them.

In attempting to explain why people participate or have participated in games, one can never overlook the facts that games are structured activities, and that one thing they are designed to do, and normally succeed in doing, is to produce a state of being in which “awareness merges with action,” a feeling that we refer to when we say we are “having fun” or “playing.”<sup>25</sup> What actually brings about “play” experiences is uncertain. Among the physiological processes that have been advanced as explanations for their occurrence are the following: a release of surplus energy; a restoration of energy previously drained during “work” activities; a satisfying of an instinct or drive to recapitulate behaviour that has been characteristic of the species at various stages in its evolution; a realization of a desire to achieve emotional equanimity

following unpleasant or tension-producing thoughts or experiences; an attainment of an optimal level of arousal and stimulation; and a consummation of a need to control or affect the environment. All of these explanations, as well as other less popular ones, are ultimately unsatisfactory.<sup>26</sup> We do not really know the internal motivations for playing, and cannot until we gain complete knowledge of what takes place in every cell of the body when the feeling of “joy” or “fun” comes over us.

The precise reason why early twentieth century Winnipeggers had fun resists explanation, then, but what can be said with certainty is that the pleasure of participating in games, enhanced by the pleasure of interacting with others who were also participating in them, was something that many Winnipeggers experienced in the early twentieth century, and that they were therefore motivated to take part in these activities again and again.<sup>27</sup> What can be suggested, furthermore, is that although manly games had provided enjoyment for the people of Winnipeg since the city’s earliest days, after the turn of the century they offered more fun for more individuals than ever before, in large part because of the greater availability of recently developed standardized, improved, moderately priced sports equipment that could produce more kinesthetic and competitive pleasure than the equipment available in previous years.<sup>28</sup> And what seems beyond doubt is that the growing enjoyment of manly games complemented the second important reason for the explosion of sporting activity after 1900, which was that those who participated in and promoted these activities were rewarded for doing so.

For a few highly proficient sportsmen, the reward was money or a “soft” job. For many more individuals the reward was a trophy, a medal or a locket. And for everyone who took part in sport the reward was incessant, repeated praise<sup>29</sup> especially from leading or very respectable members of the city’s British Protestant charter group, particularly clergymen, educators, businessmen and journalists. These people believed, as they had for decades, that manly games tested, inculcated, and brought into focus the many qualities of character that, taken together, constituted manliness. They felt that now, more than ever before, those qualities needed to be developed and highlighted. The reason for the new emphasis on both manliness and the games that tested this quality was that now the charter group, and especially the most articulate members of it, was conscious of what could be called the “problem of progress” or the “problem of modern civilization.” Of course members of the group were still proud of being part of the “British” or “Anglo-Saxon” race, proud that their ancestors had built what they regarded as the greatest, most progressive civilization in the history of man. Nevertheless, like many others in the English-speaking world, they were now more aware of the detrimental effects of progress, and especially of those things that most symbolized “British” or “Anglo-Saxon” paramountcy — wealth, technological expertise, and large urban centres.<sup>30</sup>

The major modern problem seemed to be declining "health." The age of "super-civilization," as the *Winnipeg Saturday Post* called the contemporary period, was characterized by excessive, leisure-creating wealth for a few and, in the cities overcrowded living conditions and sedentary, technologically sophisticated occupations for many. All of this was contributing to a degeneration of physical well-being, and since it was assumed that body and soul were indissolubly connected, the physical decline was necessarily contributing to a moral one. In fact, some people argued that the signs of physical deterioration *revealed* moral decay that had already reached an advanced state.<sup>31</sup> Winnipeggers were especially conscious of and bothered by these problems. Over the years they had expressed confidence that their city would be the metropolis of a region occupied by healthy individuals whose physical and moral strength would provide the backbone for Canada and the British Empire. Now there was growing evidence that residents of the city, especially the young, had physical problems similar to those affecting people who had grown up in large British or Eastern North American centres.<sup>32</sup> Even more disconcerting were the seemingly widespread moral problems. Juvenile delinquency, prostitution and violent behaviour all seemed to be increasingly prevalent and, in the age of the "great barbecue," it appeared that Winnipeggers and Western Canadians had forgotten that men could not be measured solely by their ability to make money. Therefore, the attributes that had made Canada, the Empire and the Anglo-Saxon race so powerful and influential — the manly qualities of self-discipline, will-power, devotion to fair play and equality, and above all that sense of loyalty and duty to a side that was the essence of patriotism — had to be re-emphasized.<sup>33</sup>

Modern inadequacies might be remedied, it seemed, if among other things people participated more extensively in manly games. Therefore, in addition to recommending such things as restructured city government, public ownership of utilities and environmental planning, and with more unanimity among themselves and more support from the general public than they received when advocating these and other reforms, Winnipeggers who were conscious of urban problems made greater efforts to encourage sport. Those greater efforts were marked by new means of promoting games, by an especially aggressive endeavour to make sure that young men played *organized* sport forms, and by the encouragement of wider participation patterns than previously had been in evidence.

#### IV

Since at least the 1880s, almost all sporting activity in Winnipeg had consisted of forms of "pick-up" contests or games arranged through sports clubs, and the facilities used had been either vacant lots or fields and structures provided by clubs or joint-stock companies. After the turn of the century, however, many Winnipeggers began to believe that

"pick-up" games and clubs either did not supply enough sport or did not supply it in the right atmosphere. They also began to recognize that, because of the rapidly expanding population and the escalating value of real estate, vacant lots were becoming very scarce, and clubs and joint-stock companies could not furnish accommodations that most people could afford to use.<sup>34</sup> A large number of citizens chose to seek out new means of accommodating games after considering the detrimental consequences that seemed likely to result from relying on traditional means of instigating and accommodating games.

Probably the most striking new departure was the use of public money to provide facilities. In the nineteenth century fields, rinks, gymnasiums, stadia, clubhouses and other facilities could have been built or maintained only indirectly at public expense.<sup>35</sup> In 1902, however, the City made its first move to directly finance athletic facilities when it began to provide dressing rooms and attendants for a few outdoor skating rinks,<sup>36</sup> and over the next dozen years a host of new sports grounds and buildings were built and maintained through taxpayers' money. By 1913, for example, a Playgrounds Association had been in existence for four years, and it was equipping and providing supervisory personnel for seven winter outdoor skating rinks and at least sixteen summer playgrounds where games such as soccer and baseball were encouraged.<sup>37</sup> Meanwhile, one indoor swimming pool had been built, a second was under construction, and the practice of playing supervised floating swimming "tanks" in the rivers in summer had become commonplace.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, the role and budget of the City of Winnipeg Public Parks Board had been expanded to enable it to provide several major sport facilities. The board had been established in 1893, and until the first decade of the twentieth century, its energy and money had been devoted primarily toward the construction and upkeep of "relaxation" parks characterized by an abundance of gardens, flowers, shrubs and trees. In 1907 the board began, wherever feasible, to set up tennis courts in its parks, and by 1915 it had not only taken the initial steps that would result in the opening in 1921 of Winnipeg's first public golf course, but had constructed or taken over four huge sports-oriented parks that helped to reduce the "overloading" of facilities. As it happens, they are still in use in the 1980s: the Old Exhibition Grounds, off McPhillips Avenue in the north end, responsibility for which was assumed by the Parks Board in 1908 and which soon became an important site for baseball, football and tennis; and Assiniboine, Sargent and Kildonan Parks, built by the City and opened in 1909, 1913 and 1915 respectively, all of which contained tennis courts, huge fields for the summer team games, and sometimes skating rinks and lawn bowling greens.<sup>39</sup>

A less dramatic departure than the use of public money for facilities, but still a very important new means of providing sport, was the use of institutions that previously had not been utilized. One of these was the business firm. In the

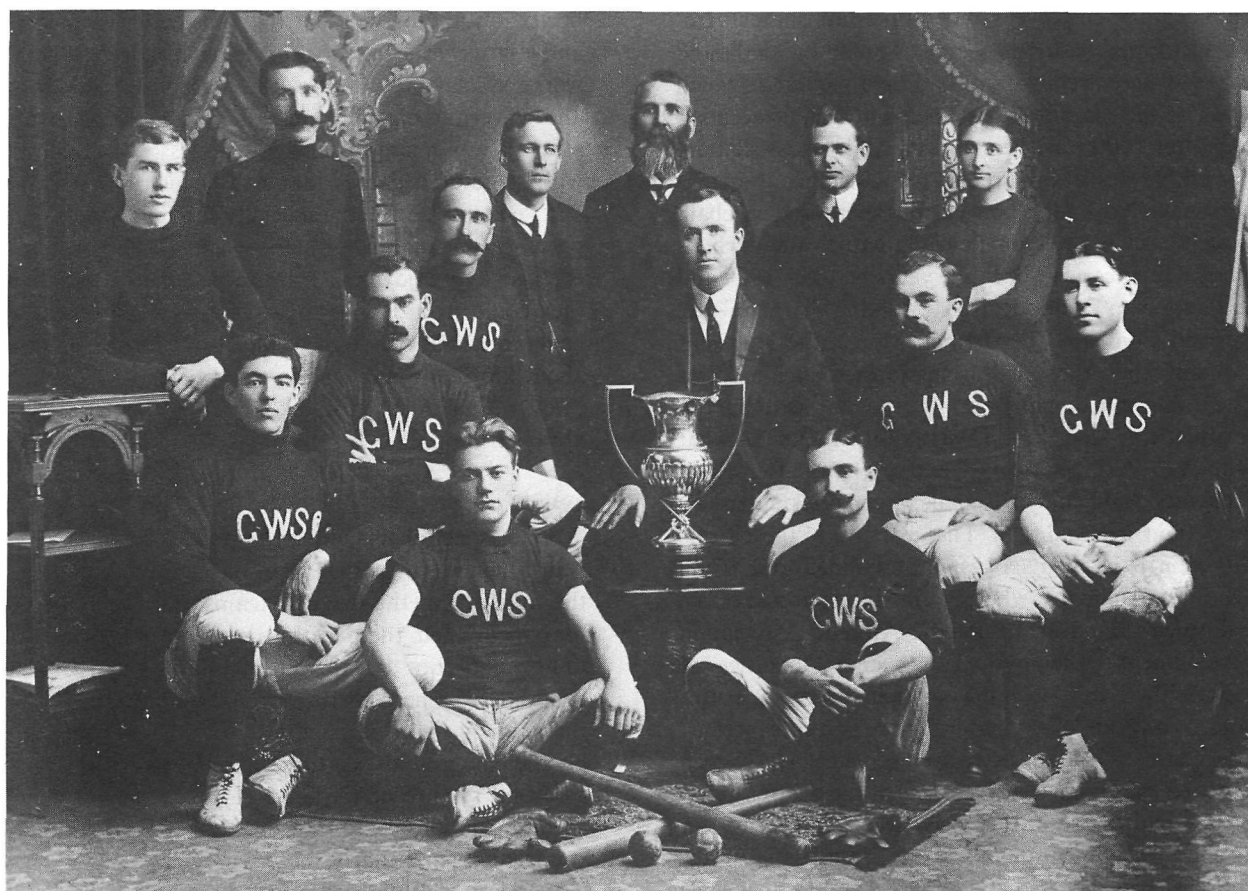
nineteenth century, employees of certain establishments frequently had formed teams, especially to play baseball, and occasionally different companies had held picnics at which employees and their families participated in athletic events.<sup>40</sup> Emerging after 1900 was the company athletic association, set up for employees by or through the assistance of managerial personnel. Normally these entities sponsored baseball, soccer and hockey teams, some curling games and perhaps other sports activities as well. In the years between 1900 and 1915, the Canadian Pacific Railway, Ashdown's Hardware, Robinson and Company (department store), the Hudson's Bay Company and other institutions formed such associations. The T. Eaton Company even went as far as to build a ten acre athletic ground, Eaton Park, situated close to what is now the Polo Park Shopping Centre, where, after 1910, their employees could enjoy baseball, soccer, cricket, basketball, tennis and track and field. The objective of these firms was outlined in 1913 by a spokesman for the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company, who described the purpose of the recently-formed Grand Trunk Pacific Athletic Association as the development of the physical and mental "faculties" of employees, with a view to allowing them to enjoy better health and, as a result, give "better service and satisfaction" to both the company and those whom it served.<sup>41</sup> The church was the second institution that members of the charter group really only began to use in the early twentieth century for fostering sport. Prominent members and clergymen of Protestant churches had endorsed and abetted manly games since the city's earliest days, but in the nineteenth century it had really only been through the annual picnic that they had used the churches, as institutions, to promote them. However, between the 1890s and the beginning of the Great War, more and more of Winnipeg's religious leaders, like those in other cities throughout the English-speaking world, became convinced that the churches should directly sponsor sport. Their feeling was that this would not only draw to the church people that might not otherwise be interested, but would also contribute to a more "wholesome," less commercial and vulgar sporting atmosphere.<sup>42</sup> Acting on these assumptions, by the turn of the century the leaders of many Winnipeg Protestant churches were arranging recreational cycling for members of their congregations, and by 1914 they were facilitating dozens of teams, clubs and events in tennis, basketball, baseball, soccer, hockey, track and field, and other sports.<sup>43</sup>

## V

These new methods of promoting and facilitating sport emerged, in large part, because of the prevailing early twentieth century assumption that adolescent and pre-adolescent boys did not weigh up to the physical and moral standards of previous generations, and they represented part of a diligent attempt to promote *organized* forms of the manly games among male youths. Of course, a good deal of the game-playing of boys between the ages of about nine and seventeen remained unsupervised and impulsive, as it always had

been,<sup>44</sup> but there is not denying that there was an intensified and relatively successful effort to have church leaders, social workers, school teachers or other responsible adults arrange and govern their play activities. Wherever possible the attempt was made to replace "aimless," unorganized play with structured games that had "constructive tendencies" and "educative value," especially the manly ones. The supposition was that youngsters would receive just as much exercise and enjoyment from these supervised activities as they could from less organized forms of play and, without being conscious of it, they would also absorb valuable lessons about life that manly sports could teach — especially that rules must be obeyed and that "right," not might, should always triumph.<sup>45</sup>

One aspect of this effort to provide organized games for young men was arranging sport through Protestant churches; the majority of the leagues, teams and events that, as we have mentioned, these institutions sponsored, were designed to help churches "regain and maintain" their hold on teen-aged boys.<sup>46</sup> The construction and maintenance of most of the publicly financed facilities previously referred to, notably the playgrounds, skating rinks and swimming pools, was a second feature of the effort to reach young men; these accommodations were expected to be used primarily by youngsters, particularly those who, because they had careless or less well-to-do parents, learned about life "on the street" instead of in respectable homes, churches or schools, and who would quite likely become juvenile delinquents and adult criminals if they were not exposed to "uplifting" influences such as properly supervised manly sports.<sup>47</sup> There were several other indications of the new commitment to organized sport for male youths. One of them was the intensified promotion of games by the Winnipeg Branch of the Young Men's Christian Association. Like other early branches of the Y.M.C.A. around the world, the first Winnipeg chapters had attempted to develop morally upright young men through programmes of prayers, Bible study, recitations, readings and singing, but from the mid-1880s "Y" leaders, in Winnipeg as elsewhere, had begun to concentrate on developing the "whole" man, and in order to do so the local branch had fostered a number of summer sports.<sup>48</sup> In the early twentieth century the emphasis on sport at the "Y" was amplified, especially once the branch moved into new headquarters that enabled it to accommodate such winter activities as basketball, volleyball, swimming, amateur boxing and wrestling.<sup>49</sup> Still another development that signified the enhanced appreciation of organized sport for young males was the formation of several youth organizations that consciously used games to inculcate proper values and attitudes. One such institution was the Winnipeg Boys' Club, founded in 1904 and financed by contributions from businessmen and the City; it sponsored annual field days and a host of teams in several ball games in an effort to make sure that "working" boys, especially newsboys, became "strong, healthy, upright" young Canadians.<sup>50</sup> Finally, the new emphasis on



**FIGURE 1.** Great-West Saddlery Company Baseball Club, 1904.

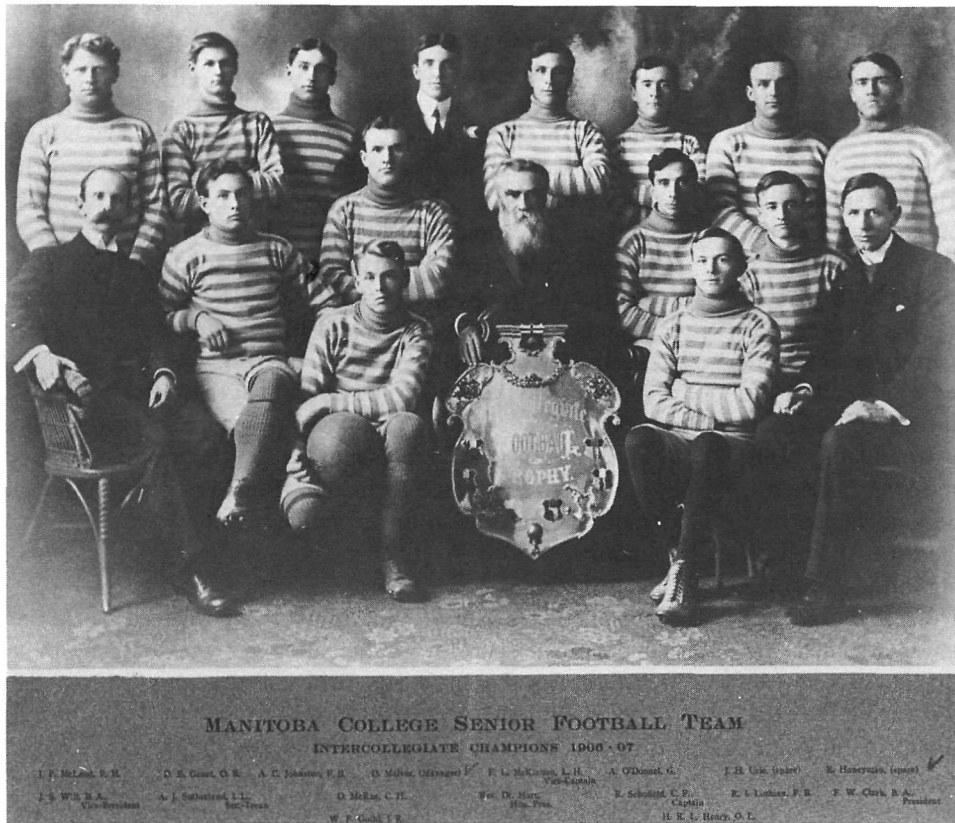
SOURCE: Courtesy Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

organized sport for young men was revealed by what took place in the city's schools.

In the latter decades of the nineteenth century educators in Winnipeg, like educators throughout most of the English-speaking world, had become "athleticists" and had encouraged male students to participate in manly games. In the twentieth century they emphasized sport even more than they had in the nineteenth. At Winnipeg's three Protestant denominational colleges, for example, the authorities seemed to feel guilty that they had hitherto turned out too many effeminate individuals who were, as one writer put it, "sentimental, scholarly, speculative . . . and soon winded on the race-track of practical life."<sup>51</sup> In order to enhance the ratio of virile graduates, the colleges built new or improved rinks, gymnasias, and other facilities.<sup>52</sup> They also accelerated their athletic programmes. For example, they maintained the existing intercollegiate football and hockey leagues and organized a new intercollegiate basketball league.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, with a new enthusiasm, they fostered intercollegiate field days and matches in those sports, such as baseball and cricket, for which no associations existed.<sup>54</sup>

Above all, they created or gave new life to intramural sports organizations that provided tennis, rugby, curling, soccer, hockey and basketball for hundreds of students who, for the most part, were not good enough to play on teams representing their institution. In 1910, one hundred and fifty young men took part in such an intramural rugby league at St. John's College School.<sup>55</sup>

In the public school system, as well, there was a new emphasis on sport. After about 1905 the province's educational authorities, and the public in general, began to regret that they had not been sufficiently conscious of students' physical development and sense of discipline. Suddenly, new importance was attached to nutrition, hygiene and especially physical exercise.<sup>56</sup> One consequence, all across the province but especially in Winnipeg, was that supervised periods of military drill became common; this was true especially after 1911 when provincial authorities negotiated an acceptable arrangement with the trustees of the Strathcona Trust, through which the Department of Education received a share of money that had been set aside by Donald A. Smith, now Lord Strathcona, to supply schools with exercise equip-



**FIGURE 2.** Manitoba College Senior Football (Soccer) Team, 1906-07.

SOURCE: Courtesy Western Canada Pictorial Index, University of Winnipeg.

ment and to train teachers in “physical education.”<sup>57</sup> But because the prevalent assumption was that organized manly games could inculcate health and discipline in young people just as well as, if not better than, formal drill, more emphasis was placed on them as well.<sup>58</sup> As a result, many schools inaugurated inter-class leagues in some of the team ball games, and the Schools Football League and Schools Lacrosse League, established in 1900 and 1901 respectively, grew year-by-year until, by 1914, each entity provided competition for well over five hundred boys of twelve to sixteen years of age.<sup>59</sup>

## VI

The explosion of sports activity in the early twentieth century not only featured, and in part resulted from, the new means of arranging sport and the heightened emphasis on providing organized games for young males. It was also marked, and in part caused, by greater participation than in the nineteenth century on the part of certain recognizable groups that were responding positively to the encouragement they received from leading and respected Winnipeggers. In a way that was not as paradoxical as it might seem. Women were also urged to become more active

in many sports. Members of non-British Protestant minority cultures also became more involved, partly because they were praised for doing so by members of the charter group. Finally, people of the lower or working “classes” participated in a greater variety of sports and were, in general, much more active than in earlier years.

Just as British Protestant Winnipeggers and Manitobans had recognized, since the pioneer years, a quality they called “manliness,” so they had recognized, as they still did, the quality of “womanliness.” As one might expect, womanliness was the consummate feminine attribute. Like manliness, it was an all-embracing, ideal characteristic that was never precisely defined, and different people would have emphasized certain components of it at the expense of others. Nevertheless, one can safely say that womanliness encompassed grace, graciousness, the kind of good looks that stopped short of being ravishing, beauty, vulnerability, daintiness but not flimsiness, and quiet, unaggressive moral strength. Compared to the male, the female was assumed to be by nature, and was thus expected to be, less competitive, more benevolent, more charitable and more sensitive. Above all, she was and should be an encouraging, sustaining and supportive person, especially in her relationship with her man.



Since God had created Eve as a “help meet” for Adam, it was believed, the proper role of woman, had been to “guide and uplift her more worldly . . . mate”; that was her proper role still.<sup>60</sup>

This image of women and of their rightful sphere dictated their place in the sporting culture of the city. From the 1870s to World War I and beyond, women’s most important function was to attend sporting events as spectators. Great pains were taken to make sure that they did so. At regattas sponsored by the Winnipeg Rowing Club arrangements were sometimes made to serve tea to the ladies who watched the races from the riverbanks; rinks were built with the convenience of female spectators in mind; and when ladies were nearby males were expected, and sometimes even instructed, to refrain from smoking and using profane language.<sup>61</sup> Women were welcomed and catered to because, their presence could be expected to have a refining influence on the players and ensure that their competitive zeal did not get out of hand. At the same time, since it was assumed that females admired spiritedness and valor, if they were in the stands it seemed likely that competitors would find the extra reserves of energy and courage needed to play manly games properly. Whether these impressions were based on truths or not is less important than that they were present.<sup>62</sup> Sporting occasions were ceremonies in which couples could work together as they should in all their endeavours: the female watched and offered encouragement while the male strove for honourable success in a manly pursuit.

In the early twentieth century, as in the nineteenth, Winnipeg women were encouraged primarily to watch manly games, but after 1900 they were more often praised, by articulate males, for participating. Along with the realization that Winnipeg was beset with many modern urban problems, came an appreciation of the facts that only healthy mothers could bear healthy children, and that there would be more such mothers if more women played invigorating sports. This was especially obvious and important to the many people who believed that the British “race” had a mission to civilize the world and that, if something were not done soon to curb the detrimental effects of modern living, they might not have the strength to carry it out. When W.J. Sisler, the famous Winnipeg educator, went to London in 1910 he was appalled, as were other Canadians who visited the heart of the Empire in this era, by the living conditions of England’s poor, and especially by the number of drunken, devitalized women. He did not have very much confidence in the “kind of race” that would emerge from these conditions.<sup>63</sup> Winnipeggers should remember, said a writer in the Wesley College student newspaper *Vox Wesleyana*, something that the ancient Greeks had known but which had evidently been forgotten over the centuries, namely that “healthful recreation for women” was “essential” to the “physical perfection of the race.”<sup>64</sup>

Partly as a result of the prodding they received from males, after the turn of the century Winnipeg women played more manly sports more often than ever before. They could now be seen, regularly engaging in rather strenuous sports such as hockey, baseball, curling, competitive snowshoeing and basketball. They also became much more active than they had been in other, more familiar sports such as tennis, golf and track and field.<sup>65</sup> There is no denying that much of the increased female participation in sport resulted from greater desire on the part of many of the gentler sex to become involved; not only did they find the games kinesiologically satisfying, but by playing them they could announce to themselves and others that they were “modern” women, not “swooning” females whose type was out of fashion.<sup>66</sup> But the encouragement they received from influential males also stimulated them, and their response contributed more than a little to the explosion of activity in the manly sports.

Another group of Winnipeggers who helped cause the increase in sport by participating more extensively than before was the city’s non British Protestants.<sup>67</sup> From the 1870s until the late 1890s British Protestants had formed the vast majority of the population, and they had been much more involved in sport than members of other culture groups. Icelanders, English-speaking Roman Catholics, and Franco-Manitobans from across the Red River in St. Boniface had not been completely inactive of course, but they had taken part in manly games to a considerably less extent than had members of the charter group. In the 1890s, however, Icelanders, Anglo and Irish Catholics and Franco-Manitobans began to become more prominent. They especially exhibited greater participation in team ball games such as baseball and hockey, which previously had been played essentially by British Protestants, while at the same time they kept their interest in certain individual sports, such as foot-racing and wrestling, that are and have been played nearly universally and which had been handed down to them, in some form, by their own ancestors.<sup>68</sup> In the early twentieth century, the number and frequency of games played by these people expanded still further,<sup>69</sup> and joining in now, though not to the same degree, were members of the Central and Eastern European culture groups who entered Winnipeg in such huge numbers in the decade and a half preceding the Great War. Most of these Germans, Russians, Ukrainians, Poles, Jews and other immigrants came from peasant backgrounds, and sport seems to have been only a minor aspect of their traditional cultures.<sup>70</sup> Nevertheless, by the years just before the War, a significant number of most of the minorities had become very attached to the manly games that were historically so much more a part of the majority group’s culture than of their own.

One reason why members of the minorities became more involved in games was that, just like British Protestants, they often discovered that, especially when good friends were fellow-participants, these activities provided pleasurable



**FIGURE 3.** Lady curlers at the Winnipeg Board of Trade Building, c. 1906.

SOURCE: Courtesy Foote Collection, Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

experiences that were almost irresistibly attractive.<sup>71</sup> A second reason was that a few leaders of many of the ethnic groups themselves began to foster sport, in the hopes that adult members of a minority would thereby be able to maintain contact with and influence over younger members and even, in some cases, develop in them the strength and discipline that might be used in future to “free” a homeland.<sup>72</sup> But certainly an important cause of the augmented participation by non British Protestants was the encouragement it received from members of the charter group.

Since the pioneer years British Protestants, in Winnipeg and throughout the prairie West, had assumed that their part of the world was and should be a “British and Canadian” one, and that minorities should accommodate themselves to and adopt British-Canadian institutions, values and customs.<sup>73</sup> Because of the physical, mental and moral training and benefits that manly games provided, and especially because these activities seemed capable of bestowing upon others the celebrated British sense of “fair play,” in the nineteenth century participation in sports had often been recommended by members of the majority to non British Protestants, especially to native peoples.<sup>74</sup> In the early twentieth century there was a greater awareness of the role that games could play in inculcating proper values to members

of minority groups. The reason, of course, was that “foreign” Europeans were moving into the city and the region by the thousands, and especially in the city their presence was associated with the apparently increasing incidents of drunkenness, disease, crime, prostitution and violence, as well as with the perceived erosion of commitment to traditional British Protestant customs and values.<sup>75</sup>

Although some people believed that foreigners should be excluded from the country, most Winnipeggers were “assimilationists” — that is, they believed that through constant effort and, especially, through concentration on the “Canadianization” of the younger generation, “foreigners” could be taught to behave and even to think like the majority.<sup>76</sup> One important instrument of assimilation was manly games. “The play world leads to the heart of the foreign child as readily [as of that of] the British born,” was the way one writer put it.<sup>77</sup> Through participation in sport, non British people would not only develop healthy bodies, but unconsciously become familiar with such things as the acceptable “Canadian” ways of reacting to victory or defeat, and the appropriate attitudes toward rules and the individuals empowered to enforce them.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, the people in charge of Winnipeg’s public playgrounds made a special effort to reach “foreign” children through sport, and the immigrant

youngsters who attended institutions such as W.J. Sisler's Strathcona School found that they were virtually forced to play "Canadian" games such as soccer.<sup>79</sup> And until just before the War, when economic depression and unemployment caused greater charter group bitterness toward and suspicion of "foreigners" than before, there seemed to be a general impression that younger members of minorities were gradually becoming "Canadians" and that manly sports deserved a lot of the credit for the progress that had been made. Certainly no finer compliment could have been given to any assimilating agency than that paid to games by a citizen who, in 1909, having observed young people of many backgrounds playing them together, said that it was "difficult" to "pick out" the "foreigners."<sup>80</sup>

Finally, the sports explosion was characterized by, and in large part attributable to, certain games becoming less exclusive, in terms of their "class" appeal, than before.<sup>81</sup> Ever since several manly sports had been established in the city some of them had been primarily played by and associated with particular "classes" of people. In the early twentieth century a number of games that had been previously the preserve of the "upper" or the "solid and respectable middle" classes were becoming popular among the "working" class. Coupled with the phenomenal rise of unexclusive new or formerly unpopular sports such as indoor baseball, basketball and pin bowling,<sup>82</sup> this brought about a significant "democratization" of the manly sports as a whole in the first decade and a half of the twentieth century.

One game that became popular among a much wider class of people was lawn tennis. In the 1880s and 1890s, this sport seems to have been played on courts owned by either prosperous individuals or fairly exclusive clubs, and only by the well-to-do or relatively sophisticated groups that resided in Point Douglas, in Armstrong's Point, or in the area south of St. Mary's Avenue on the old Hudson's Bay Company Reserve. Between 1900 and 1914 several less exclusive clubs were formed, and when dozens of courts on church grounds, in parks or in schoolyards were established the game was made available to anyone who really cared to play it.<sup>83</sup> A second game that was "democratized" was curling. Among the members of curling clubs in the 1880s and 1890s there was the odd tradesman or labourer, but the majority of players were professional men and businessmen. In the early twentieth century the officers of clubs usually remained, as they always had been, men of prestigious occupations, but there was an increased number of carpenters, stone masons, railway conductors and even call boys among general members.<sup>84</sup> In addition, between the turn of the century and the beginning of World War I hundreds of "working" class men began curling intermittently in "occupational" leagues or bonspiels such as those sponsored in 1913-14 by the CPR, the Stovel (printing) Company, and several lumber companies.<sup>85</sup> Still another game that became less exclusive in the twentieth century was cricket. It remained a sport that appealed particularly to men born in England but, com-

pared to the 1880s and 1890s, a lower ratio of those men were lawyers, doctors and prominent businessmen, and a higher ratio were carpenters, reporters, railway car repairmen and individuals with similar, less venerated vocations.<sup>86</sup>

This does not negate the fact that, in the early twentieth century, some sports remained "upper" class recreations; polo and golf, for example, were still played, as they always had been, almost exclusively by the rich, and the type of individuals who, in 1912, could afford the St. Charles Country Club's initial membership fee of \$750.00 or the Winnipeg Golf Club's \$400.00.<sup>87</sup> It was also true that, although "upper" class or "very respectable" people applauded the involvement of their socio-economic "inferiors" in sports such as tennis, curling and cricket, they evidently preferred to see these people, who of course were often "foreign" as well as "working" class, use public facilities or form their own clubs rather than try to become members of such distinguished entities as the Winnipeg Lawn Tennis Club, the Winnipeg Cricket Club or the Assiniboine Curling Club.<sup>88</sup> In 1914 "working" class people still could not afford to play all games, and they were evidently not encouraged to play others in the particular surroundings associated with "better" people, but they were much more involved in the manly sports than they had been in 1900.

No doubt an important reason for this process was that "working" class people *wanted* to play new games. They now enjoyed tennis, curling and cricket, just as men of their station in Winnipeg had for many years been fond of, and still enjoyed, such sports as hockey, baseball, soccer, lacrosse, boxing and track and field.<sup>89</sup> They were also attracted to the prospect of fraternizing with the kind of individuals they could expect to be around when participating in these games.<sup>90</sup> But certainly a further reason was the encouragement of wider participation patterns by the solidly established "middle" and "upper" class members of the charter group. These people knew that it was members of the "working" or "lower" class who usually lived in crowded, unsanitary conditions, and who were therefore particularly in need of the physical exercise that manly games provided. "Middle" and "upper" class people also knew that "working" or "lower" class individuals, because they often lived in unattractive surroundings, were apt to ignore, or even to challenge, some facts of life that games could teach or reconfirm. Among those facts, the most important were that "success" went to those who "earned" it through determination and disciplined skill, and that "failure" could ultimately lead to "success," especially if, rather than prompting angry or violent outbursts, it resulted in a calm resolve to improve upon the weaknesses that had just been revealed.<sup>91</sup> It was in large part because respectable Winnipeggers assumed that participation in sport would be very beneficial, both physically and morally, for the less well-to-do, that they provided public facilities, arranged "business" or "church" leagues and events, and used their control of the newspapers, the pulpit and the school system to publicize the value of games. The

positive response of the “working” class contributed immensely to the early twentieth century explosion of activity.

## VIII

In the years between the turn of the century and the beginning of the Great War, then, organized sport was very popular among and important to Winnipeggers, especially those who realized that their city was beset with urban problems. The new departures they used in this era, to help encourage greater involvement in sport by more people, evidently had a permanent impact on the city’s sporting culture. Although no extensive research on the post-1914 period has yet been carried out, it would seem that over the post-World War I decades, as they’ve reacted to depressions, boom-times and important technological and demographic changes, and as they’ve adjusted many of the manly games and the contexts in which they have played them, the people of Winnipeg have continued to arrange matches and events through businesses and churches, and they have continued to build and maintain facilities at public expense. These things have consistently been done, moreover, in the hope and anticipation that a large number of women, children and individuals from ethnic minorities and the “working” class would take advantage of the resulting opportunity to participate in the sports that offered physical and moral benefits to city dwellers.<sup>92</sup> In sport, as in other matters, many institutions and practices, that Winnipeggers now take for granted, emerged in the early twentieth century.

If one task of historians is to intelligibly reconstruct the circumstances and ideas of people living at a certain time and in a certain place, then what happened in Winnipeg indicates that historians of Canada’s period of urban reform, like historians of so many other eras, should become more aware of how important and highly valued sport has been to the citizens of this country. If a second task of historians is to help explain the present by noting ways in which it has evolved out of the past, then the Winnipeg experience suggests that they might look to the early twentieth century as the seminal period in the development of current Canadian sports attitudes and practices.

## NOTES

1. The way in which sport was promoted in the urban reform period has been suggested, but never discussed at length. See Paul Rutherford, “Introduction,” in *Saving the Canadian City: The First Phase, 1880-1902*, ed. Rutherford (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), xx; Alan F.J. Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1975), 193.
2. See, for example, Allan E. Cox, “A History of Sports in Canada, 1868-1900” (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Alberta, 1969); Kevin G. Jones, “Sports in Canada, 1900 to 1920,” (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Alberta, 1970); Nancy Howell and Maxwell L. Howell, *Sports and Games in Canadian Life, 1700 to the*

*Present* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada Ltd., 1969), especially part 3.

3. W.L. Morton, *Manitoba, A History*, second edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), chapters 8-10, especially 187-190, 223-233, 241-250; J.E. Rea, “The Roots of Prairie Society,” in *Prairie Perspectives*, ed. David P. Gagan (Montreal and Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada Ltd., 1970), especially 46-50; Doug Owsram, *Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West 1856-1900*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), especially chapter 6; Alan F.J. Artibise, “Patterns of Population Growth and Ethnic Relationships in Winnipeg, 1874-1974,” *Histoire sociale/Social History*, 9 (1976): 298-308.
4. On this, see Morris K. Mott, “Manly Sports and Manitobans, Settlement Days to World War One” (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Queen’s University, 1980), chapters 2-3.
5. David Newsome, *Godliness and Good Learning, Four Studies on a Victorian Ideal* (London: John Murray, 1961), 207-211; Norman Vance, “The Ideal of Manliness,” in *The Victorian Public School, Studies in the Development of an Educational Institution*, ed. Brian Simon and Ian Bradley, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd., 1975), 115-117.
6. The reader will surely agree that curling and hockey are ball games, with the ball having been structured to facilitate playing on ice.
7. Late nineteenth century British Protestant Manitobans were all but oblivious to the fact that, by their time, forms of the manly games had been played and played well in many parts of the globe, including the new Canadian West, for hundreds and in some cases thousands of years. Their awareness that peculiar ways of playing certain games had evolved among the British peoples led them to the general assumptions, based on partial truths at best, that members of the “British” race loved manly games more and played them with greater skill than others did or ever had, and that it was in large part through games that Britons had gained the physical, mental and moral strength to acquire and govern their vast Empire.
8. The first indication of field hockey, or “ground” hockey as it was called, being played in Winnipeg, comes in 1904 with the formation of the Pioneer Ground Hockey Club. See *Manitoba Free Press*, hereafter referred to as *MFP*, 8 September, 1904, 5.  
The first skiing in Winnipeg was evidently done in the late 1890s by a few people who went for recreational walks on “Norwegian snowshoes” along the Assiniboine River. Competitive skiing seems to have been inaugurated by the city’s first skiing clubs. The first of these was formed in 1904 by Scandinavians; it was followed by two clubs that catered primarily to British people, the Point Douglas Club established in 1904 and the Winnipeg Ski Club, founded in 1911 and still in existence. See *MFP*: 12 March, 1897, 5; 9 February, 1907, 7; 17 November, 1911, 7; *Canada, the Swedish Weekly*, 20 January, 1904, 6.  
The first squash club was the Winnipeg Squash Club formed in 1908. I suspect that a squash-type game had been played periodically in gymnasiums for several years before the club was instituted. See *MFP*, 25 March, 1909, 6; *Winnipeg Saturday Post*, hereafter referred to as *Sat. Post*, 3 June, 1914, 10.  
Volleyball and badminton became very popular among members of Winnipeg’s Y.M.C.A. and military organizations in the years just prior to the War. I do not know when these games were first played in the city. See *MFP*: 14 February, 1914, 4 of Y.M.C.A. section; 4 April, 1914, 6.  
“Indoor baseball” was what we might call eight-man or five-man “softball,” played usually in gymnasias or hockey arenas. On its introduction to and popularity in Winnipeg, see Jones, “Sport in Canada, 1900 to 1920,” 59-60; *MFP*: 26 February, 1903, 5; 14 October, 1913, 7.  
Basketball was first played in Winnipeg in the fall of 1899 by members of the 90th Regiment in their drill hall. The game really “took off” when the Y.M.C.A. moved into its new headquarters at the corner of Portage and Smith in early 1901. The “Y” had one league with fourteen teams in 1901-02; by 1913-14 the same organization,

- having moved its headquarters again to its present location on Vaughan Street, arranged games for probably close to a hundred teams. In the meantime dozens of teams had been formed for high school or college students, and for church members. See *MFP*: 15 March, 1900, 5; 10 October, 1902, 5; 11 March, 1910, 6; 4 February, 1911, 35; 12 November, 1913, 6; Jones, "Sport in Canada, 1900 to 1920," 216, 221, 223.
9. *MFP*: 14 May, 1910, 5 of sports section; 22 August, 1910, 14; 23 March, 1911, 6; *Sat. Post*: 14 September, 1912, 4; 8 March, 1913, 5; 21 March, 1914, 5.
  10. *MFP*: 9 February, 1895, 5; 10 November, 1905, 5; 18 February, 1911, 33; 21 November, 1911, 6.
  11. *Ibid*: 12 June, 1909, 1 of sports section; 11 October, 1913, 22; 14 February, 1914, 1 of Y.M.C.A. section.
  12. *Ibid*: 11 July, 1908, 1 of sports section; 21 July, 1910, 7.
  13. *Ibid*: 24 October, 1908, 2 of sports section; 10 May, 1910, 6; 10 September, 1913, 7; *Sat. Post*, 3 January, 1914, 5.
  14. *MFP*: 5 June, 1900, 5; 16 May, 1914, 19; 19 May, 1914, 6; 21 May, 1914, 6.
  15. *Ibid*: 5 September, 1908, 1, 3 of sports section; *Sat. Post*, 11 April, 1914, 5.
  16. *Western Sportsman*, July 1906, 201; *Sat. Post*, 3 July, 1909, 11; *MFP*: 24 April, 1909, 6; 18 July, 1914, 6.
  17. See "List of Clubs," *Annual, Manitoba Branch, Royal Caledonian Curling Club*, 12 (1900-01): 65-118; "List of Clubs," *Annual, Manitoba Curling Association*, 26 (1914-15): 106-161; *MFP*: 6 January, 1914, 6; 27 January, 1914, 6; 17 March, 1914, 6.
  18. *MFP*: 26 September, 1908, 1 of sports section; 24 December, 1910, 34; *Sat. Post*, 3 January, 1914, 5.
  19. Probably only one sport was less popular in 1914 than it had been in 1900. This was cycling, which in Winnipeg, as in other cities of North America and Europe, was something of a "fad" of the decade from about 1892-1902.
  20. *MFP*, 25 April, 1914, 20.
  21. The one significant difference in the organizational patterns for soccer, on the one hand, and for baseball and hockey, on the other, was that there were no professional teams or leagues in the former sport, but there were in the latter ones.
  22. On the Eaton's league, see *Sat. Post*, 15 August, 1908, 10. It would be pointless to document the formation of the hundreds of hockey, baseball and soccer teams and leagues; suffice it to say that, for hockey, they were usually organized in October, November or early December, and for baseball and soccer, in March, April or May. It seems likely that, overall, there were more matches played in soccer than in the other two sports. The main reason was that soccer could be played for seven or eight months of the year, but baseball and hockey for only about four months.
  23. Artibise, *Winnipeg*, 130-131.
  24. The decrease in hours of labour in this period is documented in "Wages and Hours of Labour in Canada, 1901-1920," Supplement, *Labour Gazette*, March 1921, 447-480.
  25. I am drawing here on the following: Bernard Suits, *The Grasshopper: Games, Life and Utopia* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 34; Marshall McLuhan, "Games: The Extensions of Man," in *Understanding Media*, ed. McLuhan (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), especially 215; Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Stith Bennett, "An Exploratory Model of Play," *American Anthropologist*, vol. 73 (1971): especially 46; Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, "Play and Intrinsic Rewards," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, vol. 15 (1975): especially 55-60.
  26. These theories of play are outlined and criticized in M.J. Ellis, *Why People Play* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1973), chapters 3-5. See also R.B. Alderman, *Psychological Behavior in Sport* (Toronto: W.B. Saunders Co., 1974), chapter 2.
  27. See Conrad S. Riley, *Rowing Memories* (Winnipeg: Conrad S. Riley, 1934), 110; James H. Gray, *The Boy from Winnipeg* (Toronto: Macmillan Company Ltd., 1970), 16, 45-50, 55, 182; *Annual, Manitoba Curling Association*, 22 (1910-11): 111-119.
  28. On the improvements in sporting equipment in the later decades of the nineteenth century, see Ian F. Jobling, "Sport in Nineteenth Century Canada: The Effects of Technological Change on its Development," (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Alberta, 1970), chapter 4. An impression of the improvements in equipment made in the early twentieth century can be gained by glancing through the pre-World War I catalogues of the T. Eaton Company.
  29. Most Winnipeggers, of course, did not leave a written record of how they felt about games. However, I have not been able to find any negative statements about sports *per se*, only about professional or over-competitive manifestations of it.
  30. On others in the English speaking world that possessed similar anxieties, see Bernard Semmel, *Imperialism and Social Reform: English Social-Imperial Thought, 1895-1914* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1960), chapters 2 and 9; Geoffrey Harpham, "Time Running Out: The Edwardian Sense of Cultural Degeneration," *Clio*, vol. 5 (1976): 283-301; Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power, Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), chapter 7; Ramsay Cook, "Stephen Leacock and the Age of Plutocracy, 1903-1921," in *Character and Circumstance: Essays in Honour of Donald Grant Creighton*, ed. John S. Moir, (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada Ltd., 1970), 163-181.
  31. *Sat. Post*, 6 July, 1912, 7; A.E. Garland, M.D., "Why the City Man Needs Gymnasium Exercise," *Western Sportsman*, (Dec. 1906): 318; *MFP*: 7 April, 1908, 7; 7 November, 1908, 1 of sports section.
  32. See *Winnipeg Tribune*, 15 February, 1895, 1.
  33. *MFP*, 7 November, 1908, 1 of sports section; *Western School Journal*, June 1909, 209-210.
  34. *MFP*: 19 November, 1903, 5; 24 August, 1905, 6; 24 March, 1906, 29; 28 November, 1908, 1 of sports section; 2 April, 1910, 19; *Sat. Post*, 19 November, 1910, 11; *Western Sportsman*, August, 1906, 224.
  35. "Indirectly" through property tax exemptions or deductions that were occasionally granted to sports organizations, or through the taxes that financed school sporting facilities.
  36. City of Winnipeg, *Minutes of City Council*, 1902, 262; *MFP*: 18 November, 1902, 6; 19 December, 1902, 5.
  37. *Sat. Post*, 7 December, 1912, 3; *MFP*, 30 December, 1913, 6. The establishment of public playgrounds had been suggested to Winnipeggers by the example of "advanced" American cities. See *Sat. Post*, 15 August, 1908, 10; *Western Sportsman*: August 1906, 224; March 1907, 34; *Western School Journal*, September 1910, 226-229.
  38. *MFP*, 18 May, 1912, 19; City of Winnipeg Archives, Library and Public Baths Committee Communications, file # 565, 588, 809.
  39. J. Norman Wiebe, "The Historical Development of the Winnipeg Parks System 1892-1945, and a brief description of the major parks of the period," (unpublished paper in possession of J.E. Rea, University of Manitoba, n.d.), 7-9, 25, 45; City of Winnipeg, *By-Laws of the City of Winnipeg*, 1908, By-law #5490; City of Winnipeg, *Annual Reports of the Public Parks Board: 1907 5-6, 14; 1910, 5; 1913, 5, 7, 19; 1914, 19-32; Sat. Post*, 9 May, 1914, 5.
  40. *MFP*: 19 July, 1897, 5; 18 August, 1897, 3.
  41. *Sat. Post*: 18 July, 1914, 5; 4 June, 1910, 19; 24 August, 1912, 4; *MFP*: 23 March, 1908, 6; 28 November, 1908, 1 of sports section. One could view all of this cynically, of course, and say that businessmen were *only* concerned about their own welfare and not with that of their employees. My feeling is, however, that the businessmen of Winnipeg were much less selfish than is generally assumed and that Dr. Alan Artibise, for one, makes them out to be. Although he is not writing only about Winnipeg businessmen in his *A Living Profit, Studies in the Social History of Canadian Business, 1883-1911* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1974), Michael Bliss seems to me to portray their mentality more accurately than Artibise does. It can be noted here that, in promoting sport for employees, Winnipeg businessmen were acting in a manner consistent with the behaviour of businessmen in many other cities, especially in the United States. See John Rickards Betts, *America's Sporting Heritage: 1850-1950* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1974),

- 181-182; John R. Schleppe, "It Pays," John H. Patterson and Industrial Recreation at the National Cash Register Company," *Journal of Sport History*, vol. 6 (1979): 20-37.
42. *MFP*: 31 May, 1902, 20; 4 November, 1908, 6; D.C. Coleman, "The Church and Wild Olive", *Western Sportsman*, September 1906, 246-247.
  43. *MFP*, 25 April, 1914, 19-20. In vigorously promoting sport, Winnipeg's Protestant churches were adopting a practice that had already been instituted, for similar reasons, in other large cities in the English-speaking world. See H.E. Meller, *Leisure and the Changing City, 1870-1914* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1976), 146, 158; Stephen Yeo, *Religion and Voluntary Organizations in Crisis* (London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1976), 60; Alan Metcalf, "The Evolution of Organized Physical Recreation in Montreal, 1840-1895," *Histoire sociale/Social History*, 11 (1978): 154.
  44. See Gray, *The Boy from Winnipeg*, 50, 55.
  45. *MFP*: 20 October, 1903, 5; 21 November, 1908, 1 of sports section; *Sat. Post*, 14 June, 1913, 5; *Western School Journal*: December 1906, 19-20; June 1909, 201-203; September 1910, 226-229; April 1913, 135-138; *Western Sportsman*, February 1907, 16. This represented part of the growing effort, made by Protestants around the English-speaking world since at least the mid-nineteenth century, to control the activities of young people. See Joseph F. Kett, *Rites of Passage: Adolescence in America 1790 to the Present* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1977), parts 2 and 3, passim; Neil Sutherland, *Children in English Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth Century Consensus* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), especially 18-19; Alison Prentice, *The School Promoters: Education and Social Class in Mid-Nineteenth Century Upper Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1978), especially 33-35; and especially Dominick Cavallo, *Muscles and Morals: Organized Playgrounds and Urban Reform, 1880-1920* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981).
  46. Coleman, "The Church and Wild Olive," 247; *MFP*, 25 April, 1914, 19-20.
  47. *MFP*: 21 November, 1908, 1 of sports section; 28 November, 1908, 1 of sports section; 22 May, 1909, 3 of sports section; *Western School Journal*, September 1910, 228-229.
  48. Murray G. Ross, *The Y.M.C.A. in Canada, The Chronicle of a Century* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1951), 22-28, 89-90, 169, 177, 189-192; Meller, *Leisure and the Changing City*, 145-146; *Young Men's Christian Association of Metropolitan Winnipeg, Layman's Handbook, 1975* (Winnipeg: Y.M.C.A., 1975), 10; *MFP*: 10 November, 1874, 3; 7 December, 1874, 3; 12 May, 1888, 4; 13 April, 1895, 5.
  49. *MFP*: 18 January, 1901, 6-7; 8 April, 1902, 5; 12 June, 1909, 1-2 of sports section; 14 February, 1914, 1-4 of Y.M.C.A. section.
  50. Public Archives of Manitoba, Winnipeg Boys' Club File, "Fifth Annual Report of Winnipeg Boys Club," 1909, especially 7-10; *MFP*: 4 January, 1908, 6; 18 January, 1908, 6; 27 September, 1909, 6; 13 February, 1914, 7; 17 April, 1914, 7.
  51. Rev. T.E. Holling, "The Gymnasium of Christ," *Vox Wesleyana*, June 1910, 49. See also *St. John's College Magazine*, June 1914, 232.
  52. *Manitoba College Journal*, January 1912, 17; *St. John's College Magazine*: Easter 1911, 71; November 1912, 1-2, 26, 47; *Vox Wesleyana*, December 1903, 69.
  53. *Manitoba College Journal*, April 1907, 21-22.
  54. *St. John's College Magazine*, April 1910, 44-45; *Vox Wesleyana*, June 1910, 55.
  55. *MFP*, 15 November, 1910, 6.
  56. See *Western School Journal*: February 1907, 38; April 1907, 114-117. Here again, developments in Winnipeg and Manitoba were similar to those in the rest of English-speaking Canada and the English-speaking world. See Sutherland, *Children in English-Canadian Society*, 191-193; Kett, *Rites of Passage*, especially 163.
  57. *MFP*, 24 June, 1905, 7; *Western School Journal*, November 1906, 7-9, 11-12; David A. Downie, "Physical Education in the Public Schools of Manitoba," (unpublished M. Ed. thesis, University of Manitoba, 1961), 66-68, 95; L.C. Green, "The History of School Cadets in the City of Winnipeg," (unpublished M.Ed. thesis, University of Manitoba, 1950), especially chapter 3.
  58. See the remarks of H.R. Haddock of the Winnipeg Y.M.C.A. in *Western School Journal*, April 1907, 117.
  59. *MFP*: 20 September, 1900, 5; 13 April, 1901, 5; 16 April, 1901, 5; 3 October, 1911, 7; 10 October, 1913, 7; 11 July, 1908, 3 of sports section; 6 March, 1914, 6; 4 April, 1914, 8; *Sat. Post*, 1 April, 1911, 8.
  60. On the image of women, see Walter E. Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind 1830-1870* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1957), 348-353; Ramsay Cook and Wendy Mitchinson (eds.), *The Proper Sphere, Woman's Place in Canadian Society* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976), sec. 1, especially the selection from Bliss Carman; M. Johnston, "The Girl of the Period," *Manitoba College Journal*, November 1893, 42-44.
  61. *MFP*: 10 July, 1882, 8; 8 November, 1882, 5; 15 April, 1889, 4; 28 May, 1900, 5; *Manitoba College Journal*: December 1907, 33; November 1912, 29.
  62. H.J. Woodside, "Hockey in the Canadian North-West," *Canadian Magazine*, 6 (1896): 242-244; R. Tait McKenzie, "Rugby Football in Canada," *Dominion Illustrated Monthly*, 1 (1892): 19; *MFP*: 12 September, 1892, 3; 11 April, 1904, 6; *Manitoba College Journal*, April 1897, 157.
  63. Public Archives of Manitoba, W.J. Sisler Papers, "Diary of a Trip to Europe, July and August 1910," entry for July 31. See also Berger, *The Sense of Power*, 181-182.
  64. *Vox Wesleyana*, March 1908, 107. On the concern with healthy mothers around the English-speaking world in these years, see Stephanie Lee Twin, "Jock and Jill: Aspects of Women's Sports History in America, 1870-1940" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Rutgers University, 1978), 115-127; Anna Davin, "Imperialism and Motherhood," *History Workshop*, issue 5 (1978): 10-56.
  65. This is an impression gained from reading most issues of the *MFP* between 1872 and 1914. For specific references to women engaging in rather vigorous sports, see *MFP*: 3 March, 1906, 6; 4 January, 1912, 6; 9 February, 1914, 7.
  66. *Vox Wesleyana*, July 1902, 153.
  67. Much of the information in the next few paragraphs comes from non-English sources that I either could not read or clearly comprehend. For assistance with these sources, I wish to thank Misses Lynn Champagne, Esther Epp and Stella Hryniuk, and Mr. Jonas Thor.
  68. *Northwest Review*: 17 October, 1885, 4; 22 June, 1892, 4; *MFP*: 27 May, 1884, 4; 28 May, 1884, 4; 5 November, 1886, 4; 13 June, 1894, 5; 20 November, 1901, 5; *Le Manitoba*: 24 May, 1888, 3; 20 May, 1891, 3; 7 December, 1898, 3; W. Kristjanson, *The Icelandic People in Manitoba, A Manitoba Saga* (Winnipeg: Wallingford Press, 1965), 259-263, 286, 455, 461.
  69. See *MFP*, 3 April, 1914, 6; *Le Manitoba*: 10 June, 1908, 3; 11 October, 1911, 4; 8 November, 1911, 4; *La Liberté*, 30 May, 1913, 8; Fred Thordanson, "The Romance of the Falcons" (unpublished article in Icelandic Collection, Elizabeth Dafoe Library, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg), no pagination.
  70. See Victor Turek, *Poles in Manitoba* (Toronto: Canadian Polish Congress, 1967), 2; Arthur Grenke, "The Formation and Early Development of an Urban Ethnic Community: A Case Study of the Germans in Winnipeg, 1892-1919" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Manitoba, 1975), 81, 95; Arthur A. Chiel, *The Jews in Manitoba: A Social History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1961), 109; Paul Yuzyk, *The Ukrainians in Manitoba, A Social History*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1953), 160-163; Helen Potrebenco, *No Streets of Gold, A Social History of Ukrainians in Alberta* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1977), 88; Leible Hershfield, *The Jewish Athlete: A Nostalgic View* (Winnipeg: Leible Hershfield, 1980), 20.
  71. Chiel, *Jews in Manitoba*, 109-110; *Le Manitoba*, 27 June, 1889, 3; Peter Humeniuk, *Hardships and Progress of Ukrainian Pioneers, Memoirs from Stuartburn Colony and Other Parts* (Steinbach, Man.:

- Derksen Printers Ltd., 1977), 87; W.J. Sisler, *Peaceful Invasion* (Winnipeg: W.J. Sisler, 1944), 35-40.
72. See Chiel, *Jews in Manitoba*, 155; Turek, *Poles in Manitoba*, 191, 206-208, 234; Grenke, "Germans in Winnipeg," 233-235; *Der Nord-westen*, 8 June, 1910, 5.
  73. Rea, "The Roots of Prairie Society," 46-50; Cornelius J. Jaenen, "Ruthenian Schools in Western Canada, 1897-1919," *Paedagogica Historica*, vol. 10 (1970): 540-541.
  74. *MFP*: 16 July, 1883, 8; 12 February, 1895, 5; 23 February, 1895, 5.
  75. Alan F.J. Artibise, "Divided City: The Immigrant in Winnipeg Society, 1874-1921," in *The Canadian City, Essays in Urban History*, ed. Gilbert A. Stelter and Artibise, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1977), 312-314; G.F. Chipman, "Winnipeg: The Melting Pot," *Canadian Magazine*, 33 (1909), 413-416; J.S. Woodsworth, *Strangers Within Our Gates or Coming Canadians* (Toronto: The Missionary Society of the Methodist Church of Canada, 1909), 125, 134-137, 139-141; *Vox Wesleyana*, November 1907, 63-66.
  76. Artibise, "Divided City", 314; Woodsworth, *Strangers Within Our Gates*, chapters 9-12, *passim*; G.F. Chipman, "The Refining Process," *Canadian Magazine*, 33 (1909): 548-554.
  77. *Western School Journal*, April 1913, 137.
  78. *MFP*: 22 May, 1909, 3 of sports section; 31 August, 1909, 7.
  79. *Ibid.*, 22 May, 1909, 3 of sports section; Sisler, *Peaceful Invasion*, 35, 40.
  80. *MFP*: 31 August, 1909, 7.
  81. In what follows, I have determined peoples' "class" by using what Leo A. Johnson would call a non-Marxian, "subjective rank recognition" approach. In other words, I have placed individuals in "classes" according to my perceptions of the status associated with certain jobs and places of residence in early twentieth century Winnipeg. Johnson outlines, and briefly criticizes, both the "subjective" and "Marxian" approaches to class in Michiel Horn and Ronald Sabourin, eds., *Studies in Canadian Social History* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1974), 213-216.
  82. The fact that these games were popular among all "classes" of people is supported by the names of teams given in *MFP*: 14 October, 1913, 7; 20 February, 1912, 7; 20 November, 1913, 6; 6 November, 1913, 6; 3 January, 1914, 6; 6 January, 1914, 6, as well as by an analysis of occupations of individual participants given in the same references.
  83. This statement is a conclusion drawn from *MFP*: 9 July, 1890, 4; 30 April, 1895, 4; 27 June, 1888, 1; 24 April, 1909, 6; 18 July, 1914, 6.
  84. This is supported by an occupational analysis of members of Winnipeg's curling clubs given in the *Annuals of the Manitoba Branch of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club*, 1 (1889-90), 6 (1894-95), 26 (1914-15). The Manitoba Branch became the Manitoba Curling Association in 1908.
  85. *MFP*: 27 January, 1914, 6; 17 March, 1914, 6.
  86. This is shown by an occupational analysis of cricketers mentioned in *MFP*: 7 July, 1888, 4; 14 July 1888, 4; 23 July, 1888, 3; 1 July, 1895, 5; 2 July, 1895, 5; 8 July, 1895, 5; 15 July, 1895, 5; 29 July, 1895, 5; 5 August, 1895, 5; 23 June, 1913, 7; 7 July, 1913, 12; 2 June, 1913, 7; 16 June, 1913, 7.
  87. See *MFP*, 6 June, 1903, 17; *Sat. Post*, 28 December, 1912, 6. An occupational analysis has been made of polo players and golfers mentioned in *MFP*: 6 June, 1903, 17, 23; 9 September, 1913, 6.
  88. These clubs were the most exclusive in their respective sports.
  89. This statement is supported by an occupational analysis of about 400-500 participants in these sports mentioned in about two dozen different newspaper reports.
  90. It seems to me that the main reason why "working" class people did not take up sports such as rugby, rowing, canoeing, and snowshoeing in this era was, not because they were "excluded" from these sports by the "well-to-do" or "very respectable" classes, but because the "working" class had no great desire either to play these games or to be around others who played them.
  91. See *MFP*: 15 February, 1894, 2 of special bonspiel edition; 14 February, 1896, 1; 21 January, 1909, 6; *Sat. Post*, 30 May, 1908, 10. Note especially Prof. R.O. Joliffe, "On Sport," *Vox Wesleyana*, December 1908, 25-26.
  92. For indications of the persistence of pre-World War One ideas and practices, see City of Winnipeg: *Annual Report of the Public Parks Board*, 1930, especially 14; *Annual Report of the Recreation Division, Board of Parks and Recreation* (1953), especially 41.