

# Preface

After authoring a few books and several articles on professional team sports, and teaching the concepts, principles, and strategies of international business and economics to graduate students, I was surprised and wondered why there were hardly any publications in the academic and popular literature that discussed the origin, development and popularity, and the growth and prosperity of various team sports among groups of nations in the world. This curiosity, in part, motivated me to consider and evaluate these topics and as a result, to then organize and write *Global Sports*. Since it is a recent contribution to the literature, this book's audience includes sports fans, officials, and researchers. Also, the book appeals to the needs of professors and their students who are currently enrolled in sports administration, economics, history, and/or international relations courses at American and foreign-based colleges and universities.

To successfully complete the manuscript of *Global Sports*, I was fortunate to receive different types of assistance to identify, locate, and obtain the appropriate and necessary readings and other materials about foreign countries and their national team sports. Furthermore, I greatly benefited from the cooperation, encouragement, and support that were provided to me by individuals, groups, and organizations. Indeed it was Frank Chance, who is Pfeiffer University's Head Librarian for the Charlotte Campus and Distance Education, and his evening librarians — Elaine Wood and Kara Grimes — who spent time and resources to significantly help me in several ways.

For example, they researched a number of databases and periodicals for readings on specific sports within nations. Furthermore, they discovered a number of web sites that contained useful data, information, and statistics, and requested interlibrary loans of sports books, directories, and other kinds of literature. Consequently, I am especially grateful to Frank, Elaine, and Kara, and to Pfeiffer University at Misenheimer librarians Jonathan Hutchinson and Lara Little for their abilities and efforts to meet and satisfy my frequent and often immediate demands with respect to acquiring different types of sports-related documents.

Besides Pfeiffer's librarians, there were other people who assisted me in my commitment and journey to investigate and author another title on team sports. In no specific order, inputs of information were provided by the following individuals. These included Ed Kobak, who is the President of Global Sports Productions, Ltd. — which is a sports marketing and publishing firm that specializes in producing sports reference volumes from around the world. Ed replied in an e-mail to me about the probable existence of a Japanese professional baseball fan book, and the publication of directories for ice hockey in Finland and the Bundesliga in Germany. Being an athlete, author and columnist, and also very experienced and knowledgeable about global sports, Ed's interest in my research is appreciated. An aside, Ed publishes *The Sports Address Bible & Almanac*.

Anna Kubista is an administrator in the editor's office of a media marketing business in Prague that is named Advertures. In response to my request, she forwarded me a few web sites that discussed the history and development of amateur, semiprofessional, and professional ice hockey in the Czech Republic. For providing information about this special sport in that country, I thank Anna for her input.

Hannu Tolonen, who is a senior advisor in the sports division of Finland's ministry of education, mailed me a list of milestones (1899–2006) in Finnish ice hockey and an overview of the Finnish National Hockey League. Moreover, he provided me with the name of an official and web site for the Finnish Sport Museum. I am grateful for Hannu's reply.

Furthermore, two individuals mailed me some interesting information about the history and development of baseball in Venezuela. First, the cultural attaché at the Embassy of the Bolivian Republic of Venezuela in Washington, DC, Patricia Abdelnour, supplied the name of the Embassy's chief of staff and officer who controls sports projects. Then second, Luis A. Magdaleno — a communication technology employee at the Embassy — forwarded a page of information that discussed why the Caracas Lions have

been so successful as a baseball team; who the greatest Venezuelan baseball players of all-time are; and how the Venezuelan Summer League became so competitive, historic, and popular in that nation. In fact, Luis' remarks were very factual, interesting and specific. As such, I wish to thank Patricia and Luis for their contributions to my research.

Some organizations and a number of web sites contained the total or partial results of nations' sports teams after they had performed in various domestic and international games, matches, tournaments, and other events. Indeed much of these data appear in tables within the chapters and also in Appendices A and B of *Global Sports*. To identify a few of them, these organizations included the International Basketball Association, International Federation of Association Football and Union of European Football Associations, and the International Ice Hockey Federation and International Cricket Council. Likewise, some valuable online sources for statistics in baseball were 19cbaseball.com, niseibaseball.com, and cubanball.com; in basketball were athleticscholarships.com, fibaeurope.com, and usabasketball.com; in football-soccer were all-soccer-info.com, expertfootball.com and uefa.org; in ice hockey were czech.cz, sportsbusinessnews.com, and whoockey.com; and in cricket were cricinfo.com, mapsofworld.com, and uk.encarta.msn.com. In short, I frequently used the information from these and other sources in contents and tables throughout the book.

While preparing the manuscript for this book, my computer failed to operate. As a result, I returned it to Pfeiffer University and purchased an HP Pavilion at Office Depot. Michael Utsman, who is the Administrative Director of Pfeiffer's School of Graduate Studies in Charlotte, North Carolina, visited me on a weekend and spent a number of hours to ensure that the programs in my new computer were appropriately installed and updated. Also, since the mid-to-late-1990s Michael has helped me with any software and/or technical issues that I had encountered while developing various articles and other manuscripts before they were submitted to publishers. For being generous, kind, and willing to assist me on several of my previous projects, I consider Michael a professional administrator and thus appreciate his expertise, knowledge, and skill, and congratulate him for what he has accomplished for Pfeiffer's faculty, staff, and students.

For years, I have shared a home with Maureen Fogle and our sweet but shy and spoiled basset/beagle mix, Lucy. Despite Maureen's busy schedule as a nursing director at a hospital in Charlotte, she has tolerated my relatively dull lifestyle and also accepted my goals to perform research and author sports books. We, therefore, have canceled or postponed a majority of our

trips, vacations, and social functions. Consequently, I realize that Maureen has been very considerate of my interests and thus let my projects interfere with other household activities. So because of her patience, tolerance, and understanding, we have each been able to successfully accomplish some personal and work-related objectives while maintaining our relationship. In part, it is Maureen and not me who deserves credit for any achievement and success. I am also happy with Lucy being a part of our family. To be sure, she is a wonderful pet and companion who thoroughly enjoys playing with her toys, sniffing the ground while walking around the neighborhood, hastily chewing bones, sleeping in her bed, and joining Maureen and I to watch dog shows and other programs on television's Animal Planet.

Most importantly, *Global Sports* is dedicated to my sister Nancy Altuve. Besides being an extremely compassionate and loving wife, parent, and grandmother, during more than 10 years Nancy spent numerous hours each day, week, and month as the primary caregiver for a few of our relatives who were ill and needed medical assistance and other support in the final years of their lives. For that to occur, she conscientiously, meticulously, and promptly handled their affairs with respect to shopping for food and ordering prescription drugs, and with regard to the preparation and submission of paperwork for Medicare benefits, making appointments for them to meet with physicians, specialists, and administrators at local hospitals, cooking special meals, and arranging for any other needs while they stayed at home or at assisted living facilities or nursing homes.

Undoubtedly, these relatives benefited from improvements in their health and therefore lived much longer and happier because of Nancy's selflessness and commitment of her time to their care and well-being. Finally, I admire my brother-in-law Don Altuve for his work ethic and technical skills and also respect him for being a devoted husband, father, and grandfather.

Frank P. Jozsa, Jr.