

Centers and Peripheries in Sport

April 8–12, 2010, at Malmö University, Malmö, Sweden

The Department of Sport Sciences at Malmö University, in partnership with the World Village of Women Sport, is organizing two separate, and yet partly coinciding conferences. Both conferences are focusing on inequalities in the development of sport. The first conference, commencing on the 8th of April, acknowledges the inconsistencies in association football between centers and peripheries in the European context. On Saturday the 10th a particular focus on women's football will mark the end of the first conference and the opening of the second conference, which concentrates on the development of women's sports, with an emphasis on equality and differences.

The Development of Football: Commercialization, Culture and Identity

April 8–10, 2010

Ever since the revolutionary breakthrough of television and, a decade or so later, the infamous Bosman ruling, the world of association football has been divided into strong centers, less powerful semi-peripheries, and more or less marginalized fringes. Some national leagues have, in sporting and economic terms, left the others behind far behind. The same pattern is apparent in women's football. In the 1980's, a Swedish club could still win the UEFA Cup, a feat that's nigh on impossible today. What's more, there's a clear division within the national leagues as well, with the same handful of rich and famous clubs claiming top positions in the league tables. There are manifest social networks, through which players are recruited in peripheral football areas, like Africa, to play in semi-peripheral leagues, for instance in Scandinavia, from where the most successful players can be bought and brought the major European clubs. Is this the football of the future? Is the division into centers and peripheries beneficial for football? These are some of the themes and question that will be penetrated at Malmö University's important international football conference.

The Development of Women's Sports: Separate but not Equal

April 10–12, 2010

Gender differences and similarities, and whether differences and similarities should be reflected in the organization of sports, is a hotly contended issue in media, in sports, and between scholars. There is consensus about the basic inequalities within sports, but how can that be corrected? Who will spearhead the campaign for gender equality in sports, and in what way should it be run? In various ways, feminists have tried to steer society towards gender equality; but how did the association sports respond? These and many more questions concerning men, women and sports will be subject to thorough exploration at this unique conference. Why is it called football, and women's football? Are women that play football – or volleyball or golf, or doing long or high jump – any different from men doing the same things? If men and women are different, should sport be organized and arranged on the basis of the biological sex? Must there be special women's football clubs? Is separate equal in sports? Or is it perhaps the other way around, that gender apartheid in the organization of sports leads to a devaluation and trivialization of women's sports?