

# *The Evolution of Organized Physical Recreation in Montreal, 1840-1895\**

by Alan METCALFE\*\*

Any cursory examination of today's newspapers, T.V. coverage, patterns of consumer spending, and salaries of professional athletic entertainers indicates that sport and physical recreation play an important role in the lives of large numbers of Canadians, yet little analysis of their growth, development, and role in life has been undertaken by Canadian historians.<sup>1</sup> The basic ideology, patterns of behaviour and sports which formed the foundations of urban recreation emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century when Canada first felt the impact of urbanization and industrialization. These changes occurred in the 1870s and 1880s, the formative era in the evolution of organized physical recreation.

The choice of Montreal, 1840-1895, was not fortuitous; it presents an ideal case study of Canadian sport and society. In the first place, Montreal was the first city in Canada to feel the brunt of industrialization. Secondly, the growth of organized sport in Canada was closely associated with the city of Montreal.<sup>2</sup> Finally, the period 1840-1895 was chosen because it encompasses the change from pre-industrial forms of recreation to the beginnings of the era of mass sport.

## 1840-1870

Before 1840 organized physical recreation was the exclusive preserve of a small, select segment of Montreal society. The first organized club, the Montreal Curling Club (1807), was formed by a group of Scot-

\* A criticism that could be levelled at this paper is that the material is for the most part taken from English newspapers and thus ignores the majority of the population of Montreal. In terms of organized sporting clubs, there is no evidence of significant French participation. A survey of *La Minerve* in 1865, 1875, 1885 and 1895 indicates that sport reporting was nearly non-existent. In 1865 and 1875, the few references to sport were never more than one line. By 1885, the reporting was limited to an occasional two or three line statement. The references throughout were similar to those found in the *Star* and *Gazette*. Throughout the four years, horse racing was most important. There were occasional references to billiards and fishing. The only references to sport clubs were to those French clubs that are identified in the main body of the essay — snowshoeing in the 1870s and 1880s with the advent of Le Canadien and Le Trappeur Snowshoe Clubs; swimming in the 1880s with the success of the bilingual Montreal Swimming Club. The first reference to lacrosse was in 1895 with the inauguration of Le National Lacrosse Club.

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<sup>1</sup> In fact, there have been no serious studies of sport and physical recreation by Canadian historians. The only substantial work is the book written for popular consumption by S. WISE and D. FISHER, *Canada's Sporting Heroes* (Toronto, 1975).

<sup>2</sup> WISE, *op. cit.*, p. 13-26.

tish merchants while the Hunt (1829), Cricket (1829), Tandem (c.1837), and Racquet Clubs (c.1839) owed their existence, in part, to the officers of the Montreal Garrison and the social elite of Montreal society.<sup>3</sup> In each instance great emphasis was placed upon the social significance of the activities; dances, social gatherings and the demonstration of desirable social behavior were as important as the playing of the game.

During the winter of 1840, a group of Montrealers gathered on a regular basis for the purpose of tramping on snowshoes around the environs of Montreal. These informal gatherings led to the formation of the prestigious Montreal Snow Shoe Club in 1843. At the same time, the Olympic Athletic Club (1842) was formed, which, for a brief period during the 1840s, sponsored intra and inter city cricket, track and field, rowing, and the 1844 Montreal Olympic Games. The membership of these early clubs was drawn from the highest strata of Montreal society; crossing ethnic lines, it included future judges, Members of Parliament, lawyers, doctors, government officials, businessmen and garrison officers.<sup>4</sup> The infrequent gatherings were social occasions attracting the cream of Montreal society. These sporting activities along with the Hunt and Tandem Clubs were part of a social milieu which to a degree mirrored the life of the English aristocracy. The activities themselves reflected their origin in the traditional sports of Scotland and England.

This flurry of athletic activity in the early 1840s produced the first evidence of public concern over the availability of recreational facilities. On 20 August 1844 the editor of the *Montreal Transcript* wrote:

There ought to be a piece of ground set apart in the neighbourhood of every city for the practice of manly sports — for cricket, and all other kinds of sports. Montreal, unfortunately, possesses no such place, nor is there a single public walk or garden in which those who compose the humbler classes can go either for exercise or recreation.<sup>5</sup>

Apart from the Racquet Club, the Garrison Cricket Grounds on Sherbrooke Street and the river for curling in winter, there were no public or private facilities for sporting recreational activities. This pattern of private facilities for the wealthy and a dearth of grounds for the public was to remain throughout the nineteenth century.

It would be erroneous to suggest that there were any regular patterns of recreation. For the most part regattas, track and field, hunting, and tandem rides were infrequent occurrences. Only three activities; curling, snowshoeing and cricket, could lay any claim to regularity. Cricket was played every summer by the officers of the garrison. Throughout the winters, six to ten members of the Snow Shoe Club tram-

<sup>3</sup> P. LINDSAY, "The Impact of the Military Garrisons on Sport," *Canadian Journal of History of Sport and Physical Education*, Vol. I, No. 1, May 1970, p. 33-44.

<sup>4</sup> A. METCALFE, "Organized Sport and Social Stratification in Montreal, 1840-1901," in R. GRUNEAU and J. ALBINSON, *Canadian Sport Sociological Perspectives* (Toronto, 1976), p. 77-101.

<sup>5</sup> *Montreal Transcript*, 20 August, 1844.

ped across the Mountain on Tuesday evenings and the countryside on Saturday afternoons, in each instance ending up at Dolly's Chop House for a "convivial" evening. Weekly curling matches on the river rinks frequently concluded with the two rinks adjourning to a local hostelry where the losers paid for the dinner. It was in curling that the basic patterns of organized sport first developed. The Montreal Club was joined by the Thistle Club (1842) and Caledonian Club (1850) which resulted in regular inter-club competition. Their matches were played on the river rinks until 1848 when the Montreal Club moved into indoor sheds and the first relatively permanent sporting club facilities were opened. The increased interest in recreation that the curling clubs reflected was also illustrated in the first provision of commercial sporting facilities; a floating bath (60' × 25' with a saloon and 60 dressing rooms) opened in June 1849 opposite Bonsecours Market.<sup>6</sup> Later in the same year, a fencing school was opened for the officers of the garrison and the gentlemen of Montreal. These clubs and commercial ventures reflected a growing interest of Montrealers in recreation.

The year 1856 witnessed the formation of the Montreal Lacrosse Club and an increased interest in sport. Within four years, the city boasted ten snowshoe, six cricket and nine lacrosse clubs.<sup>7</sup> The proliferation of clubs was accompanied by the growth of specialized athletic facilities; the Montreal Cricket Grounds, McGill College Grounds, Montreal Lacrosse Grounds, and the opening of a new commercial venture — the Victoria Skating Rink (1862). These developments were neither general nor widespread — *all* the clubs, private grounds and commercial facilities were located in the predominantly English speaking St. Antoinnes Ward; a pattern that remained constant until the early 1890s.

The early 1860s also witnessed an increase in the number of inter-club competitions in cricket, lacrosse and snowshoeing. However the competitions were still held infrequently and no pattern of regular competition could be observed. There was an observable difference between the socially oriented sporting clubs and those whose focus was turning towards competition. The Montreal Tandem and Hunt Clubs, the exclusive preserve of the social elite; tended to be lifetime sports in which age and physical prowess were not as important as social status. The youth-oriented active sports clubs attracted their membership from a wider, but still limited segment of society. The young Molsons and Allans were on the playing fields, joined by bank clerks, engineers and university students. Organized physical recreation was in an embryonic state and limited to a select segment of Montreal society.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 June 1849.

<sup>7</sup> These figures were taken from a Scrapbook of the M.A.A.A. Obviously they are speculative in nature, but can be taken to represent a significant increase in the number of clubs.

Fig. 1. Density of Buildings in the wards of Montreal, 1861-1891

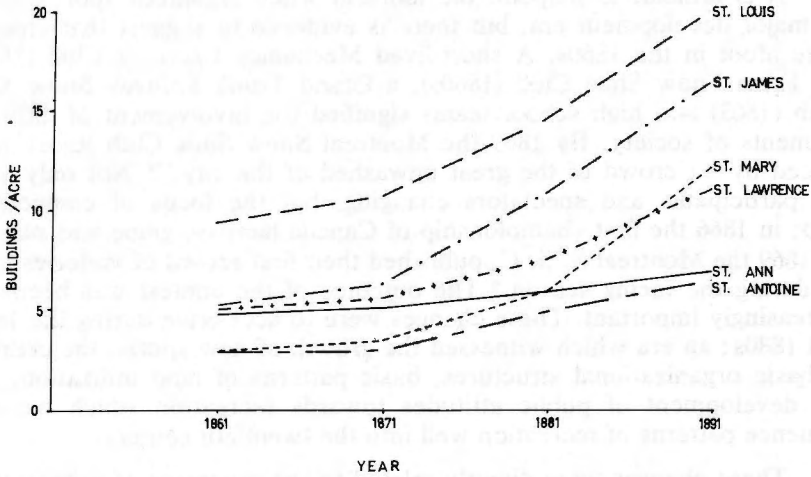
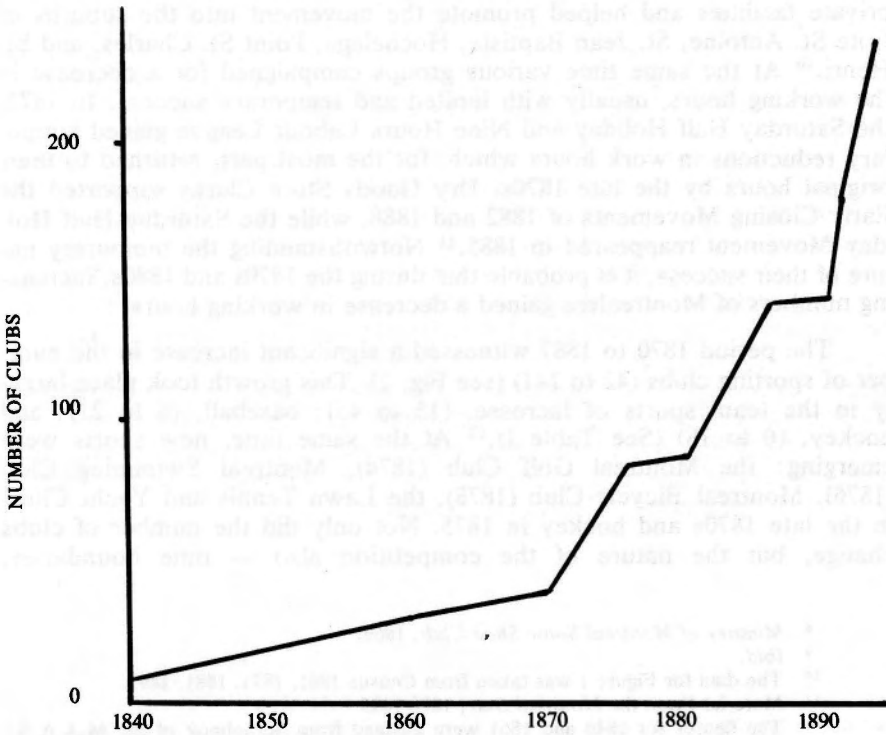


Fig. 2 Number of Sporting Clubs in Montreal, 1840-1894.



## 1870-1890

It is difficult to pinpoint the moment when organized sport entered its major development era, but there is evidence to suggest that changes were afoot in the 1860s. A short-lived Mechanics Lacrosse Club (1861), the Erina Snow Shoe Club (1860s), a Grand Trunk Railway Snow Shoe Club (1863) and high school teams signified the involvement of different segments of society. By 1869 the Montreal Snow Shoe Club Races were graced by "a crowd of the great unwashed of the city."<sup>8</sup> Not only were the participants and spectators changing, but the focus of competition also; in 1866 the first championship of Canada lacrosse game was played; by 1869 the Montreal S. S. C. published their first record of victories gained during the racing season.<sup>9</sup> The outcome of the contest was becoming increasingly important. These changes were to accelerate during the 1870s and 1880s; an era which witnessed the growth of new sports, the creation of basic organizational structures, basic patterns of land utilization, and the development of public attitudes towards recreation which were to influence patterns of recreation well into the twentieth century.

These changes were directly related to the processes of urbanization and industrialization which, by the 1870s, were beginning to have a marked effect upon all aspects of life and living. Increased density of population and housing (see Fig. 1) especially in the predominantly French wards to the east of St. Lawrence Main created pressure on public and private facilities and helped promote the movement into the suburbs of Cote St. Antoine, St. Jean Baptiste, Hochelaga, Point St. Charles, and St. Henri.<sup>10</sup> At the same time various groups campaigned for a decrease in the working hours, usually with limited and temporary success. In 1872, the Saturday Half Holiday and Nine Hours Labour League gained temporary reductions in work hours which, for the most part, returned to their original hours by the late 1870s. Dry Goods Store Clerks supported the Early Closing Movements of 1882 and 1888, while the Saturday Half Holiday Movement reappeared in 1885.<sup>11</sup> Notwithstanding the temporary nature of their success, it is probable that during the 1870s and 1880s, increasing numbers of Montrealers gained a decrease in working hours.

The period 1870 to 1887 witnessed a significant increase in the number of sporting clubs (42 to 141) (see Fig. 2). This growth took place largely in the team sports of lacrosse, (15 to 45); baseball, (6 to 21); and hockey, (0 to 18) (See Table I).<sup>12</sup> At the same time, new sports were emerging: the Montreal Golf Club (1874), Montreal Swimming Club (1876), Montreal Bicycle Club (1878), the Lawn Tennis and Yacht Clubs in the late 1870s and hockey in 1875. Not only did the number of clubs change, but the nature of the competition also — time boundaries,

<sup>8</sup> *Minutes of Montreal Snow Shoe Club, 1869.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> The data for Figure 1 was taken from Census 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891.

<sup>11</sup> Material From the *Montreal Star, 1870-1895.*

<sup>12</sup> The figures for 1840 and 1861 were gleaned from Scrapbook of the M.A.A.A.; for 1870-1895, the *Montreal Star.*

officials, and championship competition all appeared. The history of lacrosse illustrates clearly the changes taking place. In the early 1870's, games were played spasmodically throughout the summer; by the late 1870's, this pattern had given way to regular exhibition and infrequent championship games. In 1885 the five major lacrosse teams, including two from Montreal, established a series system of play for the championship. This was actually a league with a schedule of games throughout the summer — sport had become a regularized pattern of behaviour. At the same time, there was increasing pressure to change the method of determining a winner from the best three games out of five to a defined time period. Finally, this proliferation of sporting clubs in Montreal and Canada led to the formation of local, provincial and national organizations to codify rules, control behavior, and integrate competition.

Table 1: NUMBER OF SPORT CLUBS IN MONTREAL, 1840-1894

CLUB	1840	1861	1871	1877	1881	1887	1891	1892	1893	1894
Curling	1	3	3	3	4	3	5	5	5	5
Hunt	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
Snowshoe	1	10	7	15	20	16	17	17	16	22
Cricket	1	6	6	6	3	8	13	14	16	21
Lacrosse	—	9	15	31	25	45	36	53	56	49
Skating	—	1	1	1	—	1	2	2	—	1
Football	—	—	1	9	8	5	12	16	15	15
Baseball	—	—	6	14	14	21	11	14	19	10
Rowing	—	—	1	—	4	7	1	8	11	7
Hockey	—	—	—	4	2	18	23	19	28	46
Bicycle	—	—	—	—	1	1	2	2	4	4
Lawn Tennis	—	—	—	—	1	—	3	6	3	5
Quoits	—	—	—	—	1	3	3	3	5	7
Soccer	—	—	—	—	—	4	9	19	30	29
Others	3	2	1	1	4	8	7	10	12	23
No. of Sports	7	8	10	10	16	17	19	21	21	23
Total Clubs	7	32	42	85	88	142	145	189	222	245

Among the active participants there was a clear differentiation between social and competitive sports although the boundaries were sometimes blurred. The yacht, racquet and golf clubs joined the hunt and tandem clubs as elite life time sports where youth was more often a hindrance than a help. These social sports focused as much on the private club house as on the competition itself. The same was true to some extent for the snowshoe and curling clubs although their base of support was somewhat wider. It was these exclusive sporting clubs that were central to the social life of the upper segments of Montreal society.

If there was any democratization in sport during this era, it was in the competitive sport clubs. However, even in this instance, there were inter-sport differences. Certain sports witnessed no significant growth during the period 1870-1887; football (1 to 5), cricket (6 to 8), and bicycling (0 to 1) were played nearly exclusively by the anglophones of St. Antoine's Ward, drawing heavily from High School students, bank employees, University students and graduates, and the younger Molsons,

Redpaths, and Allans. They were of course exclusive English-speaking clubs.

Lacrosse (15 to 45), baseball (6 to 21), and hockey (0 to 18) witnessed significant growth during the 1870s and 1880s. Hockey rightfully belongs with the first group as no evidence can be found of any teams existing outside of St. Antoine Ward. Lacrosse and baseball were played throughout a far wider area of the city (see Table 2). Although they were still located in the predominantly anglo wards of St. Antoine, St. Lawrence, St. Anne and Point St. Charles, clubs were beginning to emerge in the east end of the city.<sup>13</sup> The most important change was the emergence of clubs in the working class areas of St. Anne, St. Henri and Point St. Charles. In fact, it is likely that baseball appealed to a different section of the population (see Table 2).

Table 2: LOCATIONS OF LACROSSE AND BASEBALL GAMES  
PLAYED IN MONTREAL, 1878-1887

	St. Antoine Ward	St. Lawrence Ward	Pt. St. Charles Cote St. Henri St. Anne Ward	St. James St. Louis St. Mary
Lacrosse	189 (82%)	25 (11%)	13 ( 6%)	4 ( 1%)
Baseball	4 (13%)	2 ( 6%)	22 (71%)	3 (10%)
Total	193 (73%)	27 (10%)	35 (13%)	7 ( 4%)

The number of clubs masks a factor critical to the growth of recreation in Montreal — the permanency of the clubs. Table 3 illustrates that few clubs outside the predominantly social clubs could be considered to have any degree of permanency.<sup>14</sup> However, it was those permanent clubs that significantly influenced the long-term development of sport. The casual teams, on the other hand, reflected a growing interest in organized recreation on the part of an increasing number of Montrealers.

Table 3: PERMANENCE OF LACROSSE AND BASEBALL CLUBS  
IN MONTREAL, 1870-1889

Total	Over whole period	Over five years	2-4 years	1 year
Lacrosse 120	5 (4%)	12 (10%)	12 (10%)	91 (76%)
Baseball 63	1 (2%)	6 ( 9%)	9 (14%)	47 (75%)
	6 (3%)	18 (10%)	21 (12%)	138 (75%)

<sup>13</sup> These figures were obtained from the *Montreal Daily Star*, 1878-1887. They represent all lacrosse and baseball games for which locations were given.

<sup>14</sup> The existence of the lacrosse and baseball teams was determined from the *Montreal Daily Star*, 1870-1889. The clubs that existed for over ten years number 17; 2 lacrosse, 4 snow shoe, 1 cricket, 3 football, 3 curling, 3 hockey and 1 baseball. See: A. METCALFE, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

All the permanent clubs exhibited similar characteristics; a private club house, grounds, non-playing members, and a strong social component. For the most part, they were located in St. Antoine's Ward, drawing their membership from the English-speaking business and financial community. There is evidence of new groups becoming involved in the formation of permanent clubs which reflected a widening base of participants. Perhaps the most interesting of these was the Shamrock Lacrosse Club which, on the playing field, was working class. The Shamrocks provide an interesting case study of the way in which working men gained entrance to the exclusive amateur sport fields. Formed in 1868 by a group of Irish Roman Catholics, the Shamrocks became the most successful lacrosse team in Canada between 1868-1886. The working class origins of this team are unquestionable.<sup>15</sup> However, the working class nature of the Shamrocks can be overstated. From the outset, they depended upon the active support of prominent Irish Canadians; James McShane, Mayor of Montreal, C. J. Doherty, Q.C., and many other leading Irish Montrealers.<sup>16</sup> Financial support and administrative expertise was given to the club by the upper segments of society. All the administrative posts were held by businessmen and clerks; only at the committee level were any mechanics included in the administrative structure. Although the evidence is scanty, the majority of active players appeared to be mechanics and clerks; there is no evidence of labourers, bricklayers, carpenters, or any of the traditional trades. The men involved in the new industrial establishments were the players. The Shamrock Lacrosse Club was, therefore, working class only on the playing field — the leadership and organizational expertise was provided by the middle class and those workers with clerical training.

The second group of relatively permanent clubs whose players were drawn from a different segment of society were those that bore the name of the Grand Trunk Railway (G.T.R.). As early as 1863, there was a Grand Trunk Snow Shoe Club but this ceased to exist in the mid-60's. In fact, only one club could claim a continuous existence, the G.T. Boating Club (1876). Predating this club by two years was the Cricket Club which existed spasmodically into the twentieth century. A football club was started in 1875 but died soon afterward and was resurrected in 1885 as the G.T.R.F.C. Although having a degree of continuity, the G.T.R. clubs exerted no influence on Provincial and National organizations but were most important in the growth of sport in Montreal and specifically in working class Point St. Charles. These clubs all exhibited the same basic growth patterns: initiated by the clerical staff in the various offices and played by the clerks. The mechanics, machinists, and shop workers were conspicuous by their absence except for periodic challenge matches. The type of person involved was classically illustrated in 1892 when the war

<sup>15</sup> Evidence of the working class nature of the team can be found in *Montreal Star*, 9 October 1874; H. W. BECKET, *Scrapbook of the M.A.A.A.*, 1877-1880, p. 315-324.

<sup>16</sup> This was clearly demonstrated when the Shamrocks raised \$12,000 for their new ground, the subscription list read like a "Who's Who" of Irish Montrealers.



canoe, Minne-Wa-Wa, capsized drowning six members of the G.T.B.C.<sup>17</sup> Five of the six were clerks and one a machinist; all were Sunday School teachers, and three were active in the Y.M.C.A. They epitomized the upward mobile working class who accepted the basic Victorian ethic — true “muscular Christians”.

The 1870s also witnessed the first evidence of French Canadian participation in organized sport. However the only clubs with any degree of permanency were *Le Canadien* (1878) and *Le Trappeur* (1884) snowshoe clubs.<sup>18</sup> These were essentially social clubs whose membership was drawn from the professional segment of the French community.

By far the greatest number of clubs existed for one season and then disappeared (see Table 3). Groups of young men banded together to challenge each other in lacrosse, baseball, and cricket, and to form snow shoe clubs. During the 1870s these were drawn from banks, retail and wholesale dry goods stores, telegraph offices, and the various offices of the G.T.R. There is also evidence of French Canadian baseball and lacrosse teams. Finally, mechanics in the G. T. R. works and other factories formed teams to play infrequent lacrosse and baseball games. The existence of these “fly-by-night” clubs reflected the increasing importance of recreational activities to a widening but still limited segment of Montreal society. Recreation had not yet become a regularized pattern of behavior nor had it spread much beyond the white collar anglophone workers. However, it was beginning to permeate down into the working class via the factory workers.

Although an increase in participation is an accurate indication of the growing importance of organized recreation; the nature of its growth, the codification of rules, the development of attitudes towards recreation and the behaviour associated with it, lay in the hands of a small group of organizers and administrators. All of this group, whether associated with permanent or temporary clubs, were drawn from white collar workers. Within this select group, the most powerful were the Montreal Amateur Athletic Association (M.A.A.A.) formed in 1881 by the amalgamation of the Montreal Lacrosse, Snowshoe and Bicycle Clubs.<sup>19</sup> It was the leaders of these clubs and particularly the M.A.A.A. who were instrumental in creating local, national and provincial organizations, codified the rules, established codes of behavior, and generally organized amateur sport. Montrealers were instrumental in the formation of the National Lacrosse Association (1867), the Canadian Football Association (1873), Canadian Wheelmans Association (1883), Canadian Amateur Athletic Association (1884) and the Canadian Amateur Skating Association (1888). More im-

<sup>17</sup> *Montreal Star*, 4 July 1892.

<sup>18</sup> There was a French Canadian baseball club in 1872 but there was no evidence of it existing for more than a few months.

<sup>19</sup> The Montreal Amateur Athletic Association (M.A.A.A.) was central to the growth of organized sport in Montreal and Canada. For a fuller discussion of their role, see METCALFE, *op. cit.*

portant still was the underlying value system which has been the foundation stone of the rationalization of organized sport in modern Canadian life. This value system drawn, for the most part, from English ideas, was institutionalized in the ideal of athleticism and permeated amateur sport.<sup>20</sup> Simply stated, sport must be a means to an end and not an end in itself. The playing field was to be a place for the demonstration of desirable social attributes and the development of character. Therefore, it was the way the game was played rather than the outcome that was important. This ideal was nurtured in the High School and University and transmitted to many of the white collar workers. Therefore, from the outset these recreational activities were perceived to be a valuable instrument for the demonstration of desirable social attributes. The approach to recreation is illustrated most clearly in a speech given by Lord Lansdowne at the Montreal Winter Carnival in 1884.

But gentlemen, it seems to me that we may be quite mistaken if we regard these national sports and amusements which you have promoted with so much success as destined to provide amusement and attract visitors, and nothing more. They have their serious place in our national as in our individual life. Neither the individual nor the nation can exist without recreation. Amid the strain and pressure of life, whether our habitual vocation calls us to the field or to the city, to the desk or to the bar, to the legislature or to the study, the recreation which shall give strength to the intellectual fibre, which vary the monotony of our daily existence, which shall give refreshment to the jaded body and overwrought mind, which shall render our youth manly and active and our maturity vigorous and robust is as necessary to us as the air we breathe.<sup>21</sup>

The importance of this set of ideas and the need to justify recreation is illustrated in the increasingly important role of various social institutions in meeting the needs of people in a developing urban industrial society. Institutions such as the Church and School underwent a reappraisal of their fundamental assumptions and slowly redefined their objectives to meet new social needs. Among the means used to attain the new objectives were a variety of organized sporting activities. However, the promotion of these activities was not indiscriminate; in all instances they were means to an end and never ends in themselves. Sport was used to inculcate desirable social qualities such as teamwork, perseverance, honesty and discipline — true “muscular Christianity”.

Perhaps the most important institution was the Church. Various denominations were concerned with the provision of recreational activities from early in the 1870s. St. Anne's Roman Catholic Church located in the heart of Griffintown was the site of many meetings of the Shamrock Lacrosse Club from 1870 on. In fact, this church was central to the whole life of this district. The Protestant Churches did not supply facilities for this type of social activity until a much later date, although indications of a change in attitude towards the provision of recreational opportunities

<sup>20</sup> The amateur ideal has affected organized sport throughout the twentieth century and is central to an understanding of sport in modern society.

<sup>21</sup> *Montreal Star*, 5 February 1884.

was evident as early as 1872. At the laying of the cornerstone of the new Y.M.C.A. building, the Rev. Dr. Burns of the Canada Presbyterian Church stated:

Much less was their association a mere literary club, although it served for literary purposes. He had respect for the whole man — like the churches, which ruled that the body as well as the spirit should be cared for. To look after the body was proper, and if baths, gymnasiums, and places of innocent recreation could not be provided elsewhere than by Christian Associations, these ought to look after them.<sup>22</sup>

This was a revolutionary statement at that time yet there is no evidence that this advice was heeded until much later in the century. During the 1870s there were spasmodic efforts to provide sporting activities, most likely for middle class youth. In September, 1872, the St. James South West Methodist Sunday School held a picnic with athletic sports at Beloeil.<sup>23</sup> Mr. Osborne's Bible Class organized an "Olympic Athletic Club" in 1876.<sup>24</sup> However, it was not until the mid 1880s that churches began to sponsor relatively permanent sporting clubs. Between 1884 and 1890 at least eight churches, all west of St. Lawrence Main, initiated lacrosse, snowshoe, soccer, baseball, cricket or athletic associations. Perhaps more significant is the fact that three of the churches were located in St. Anne's Ward and Point St. Charles; in the areas with the highest density of blue collar workers.<sup>25</sup> By the end of the 1880s, it appears that some churches were beginning to provide physical recreational opportunities for certain segments of the workers.

Both the Y.M.C.A. and high schools included physical recreation in their programs during the late 1870s. Early in the 1880s the Y.M.C.A. provided classes for businessmen and others and sponsored snowshoe, football, lacrosse and aquatic polo clubs. It was not until 1891 that the first Physical Director was appointed. High school sport was extracurricular and was in evidence from the mid 1870s. However, both these institutions were middle class both in membership and ideology and therefore their impact was limited to a small segment of Montreal society.

Fragmentary though this evidence is, certain tentative conclusions can be drawn as to the role of these institutions in the provision of recreational activities. By 1895, they were just beginning to overcome the inertia of conservative leaders who found it difficult to accept physical recreation as part of the work of the church, youth associations or schools. When it was offered, it was to the middle class and those workers who accepted their value system. The sport that was played fell very clearly within the boundaries of the amateur code and the values associated with it. It was not until the era of mass sport that these institutions would play an important role in the provision of recreational activities.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 September 1872.

<sup>23</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 7 September 1872.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 April 1876.

<sup>25</sup> Grace Church, Corner of Wellington St. and Fortune; Point St. Charles Methodist, Wellington and Charron; St. Stephens, College and Inspector.

## FACILITIES

Physical recreation is predicated upon the existence of facilities. As the century progressed and Montreal's population and physical size expanded, land value increased while availability of vacant land within the city decreased. This decreased availability of land was paralleled by an increased demand for facilities. Therefore, the availability and provision of facilities became one of the most important factors determining the nature and extent of the development of organized physical recreation. The 1870s witnessed increased pressure on private facilities and vacant land, and an expression of public concern over the provision of "breathing spaces," parks, baths, and athletic grounds. Since permanent private, and public facilities were the sole location for organized sport, the individuals who controlled their development assumed an importance out of all proportion to their numbers.<sup>26</sup> These were drawn exclusively from the business, commercial, and professional segments of the community; a small elite. This same group controlled the Town Council and thus determined the acquisition and use of public land, the establishment of priorities, and the creation of laws to control life in the urban environment. This powerful group believed in the innate goodness of free enterprise and resisted public intervention in private affairs. Their attitudes to the question of public recreational facilities can easily be imagined and are clearly revealed in the growth of public parks and swimming baths.

There was little public concern over parks until the 1870s. Before this time, parts of Mount Royal (Fletcher's Field), Logan's Farm and St. Helen's Island were used by the public for picnics and athletic sports. These areas were all acquired by the city as public parks during the 1870s. Their acquisition gives a clear picture of the attitudes of the Town Council. St. Helen's Island (1873) and Logan's Farm (c. 1875) were acquired by the city as gifts from the Federal government at no cost to the city of Montreal. On 24 May 1876, Mount Royal Park was officially opened to the public after fourteen years of council indecision, public apathy, and private greed had skyrocketed the cost from \$350,000 to over \$1 million.<sup>27</sup> In fact, Mount Royal was public in name only, as a working man, whose predictions proved correct, wrote to the *Star* on 25 July 1871: "It would only be for the rich who could reach it in their carriages."<sup>28</sup> The acquisition of Mount Royal was the sum of Council efforts to provide public parks. On occasion in 1870, 1871, 1873, 1879, and 1890, individuals raised the question of public parks in the poor districts of the east and west, but all to no avail.<sup>29</sup> More urgent questions of sanitation, transpor-

<sup>26</sup> Their influence can be seen in the punitive Municipal Laws enacted by the Town Council that effectively prevented use of roads and public highways for other than transportation.

<sup>27</sup> Council reversed their position on several occasions. Public meetings to discuss the Park were greeted by public apathy. The appropriation costs doubled when several rich Montrealers successfully doubled their prices for some marginal scrub land.

<sup>28</sup> *Montreal Star*, 25 July 1871.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 9 December 1879; 20 December 1870; 11 May 1871; 25 June 1873; 25 August 1887; 14 March 1890.

tation and education served to ensure that public parks occupied a low position on the agenda of the Council.

The Council evinced little interest in the provision of athletic facilities, parks were regarded as ornamental gardens for evening strolls or breathing spaces for the growing city. However, the organized athletic clubs, finding it increasingly difficult to afford facilities of their own, petitioned the council for grounds in the parks. In 1876 the Cricket Club requested a ground in Mountain Park, which was followed by a joint petition from the Lacrosse and Football Clubs for the same.<sup>30</sup> This resulted in grounds for "cricket, lacrosse and other athletic games" being laid aside for that year. Further petitions in 1877 and 1878 by various groups indicated that the success of 1876 was short lived.<sup>31</sup> Throughout the ensuing 16 years, periodic petitions for parks, recreation grounds, children's playground and athletic grounds were greeted with luke warm enthusiasm. The temporary nature of any success is clearly illustrated in 1894 in Ald. Stevenson's reiteration of a motion first introduced in 1877 "that Fletcher's Field be laid out for cricket, lacrosse, baseball".<sup>32</sup> The only relatively permanent success was the award to the socially prestigious Montreal Golf Club of an eight year lease to a portion of Mount Royal.<sup>33</sup> However, Fletcher's Field, Logan's Farm and St. Helen's continued to be used for athletic sports but at no cost to the Council.

Athletic facilities and public parks catered to a small segment of the population; public baths, on the other hand were created for the masses. The history of the free public baths reveals clearly the public apathy towards recreation (or health) facilities for the masses, and the popularity of physical recreation among a segment of Montreal society who were strangers to the fields of amateur sport. As early as 1862, John G. Dinning submitted a prospectus to City Council for the construction of a public swimming bath. This plea was rejected as were others in 1870, 1871, 1879, 1881, and 1882. In each instance, the question focused on the need of a swimming bath in the densely populated St. Anne's Ward; on each occasion, the Council referred the matter to a Committee, after which no action was taken. The Council, in 1877, attempted to get permission from Ottawa to open public baths on the river but were refused. However, in 1883 Council gave permission for the construction of a public bath at a cost of \$1,000 in the waste weir of the Lachine Canal between Wellington Street and Grand Trunk bridges. On 18 June 1883, the (26' x 160') bath was opened to men and boys, from 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., six days a week, and was inundated with customers; no less than 3,296 in the first four days! It proved to be so popular that rules had to be drawn up restricting the bathing time to twenty minutes. The different value system of the clientele was graphically illustrated at the end of the first week when the Council felt it necessary to pass a resolution requiring "frequenters of

<sup>30</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 10 May 1876.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 April 1877, 25 April 1877; *Montreal Star*, 8 June, 1878.

<sup>32</sup> *Montreal Star*, May 1894.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

public baths to wear bath trunks."<sup>34</sup> Even though the swimming bath used water from the Canal which was contaminated by sewage, it retained its initial popularity throughout the period. In 1884, a new public bath was opened on St. Helen's Island but its distance from working class areas detracted from its popularity. On August 1, 1890, the first public bath built specifically as a bath was opened at Desery St., Hochelaga.<sup>35</sup> The inhabitants of the east end greeted it with the same enthusiasm as did their brethren in the west. Once again it was restricted to men and boys. The success of the public ventures indicates very clearly the interest of the working man in some form of physical recreation. It also illustrates their dependence on middle class sponsorship and support in terms of the creation of recreational facilities. They were to a large extent victims of the conditions in which they lived and over which they had little control.

The paucity of public facilities placed increased pressure upon private and commercial grounds and vacant lots. As a result of increased population within the city, vacant land disappeared and land values increased to such a degree that it became impractical for clubs to retain their athletic grounds. The nature of this problem was demonstrated in 1876 by the increased taxes on the Montreal Lacrosse Grounds, \$2,500 a year.<sup>36</sup> This was the first evidence that clubs were finding it difficult to find the financial resources to support their operations. However, the response of clubs was immediate-movement to the suburbs where land was cheaper. In 1878 the Shamrock Lacrosse Club, beset by rising costs, moved to a portion of the old Priests' Farm just outside the western city limits on St. Catherine Street. By 1891 the club was forced to move again to new grounds in north east Montreal. St. George Cricket Club disbanded in 1880 due to the loss of grounds through road construction. By 1886 the Montreal Lacrosse Grounds and the Montreal Cricket Grounds, the centre of sporting activities in Montreal, were under pressure from real estate demands. In July, "The Phillips estate management had ordered their property (Montreal Lacrosse Grounds) on Sherbrooke and St. Catherine Street surveyed into building lots."<sup>37</sup> Within a year both the lacrosse and cricket grounds had been lost to real estate developers and in 1889 the M.A.A.A. (lacrosse) opened their new grounds in the western suburb of Cote St. Antoine.

Movement to the suburbs was one response to the financial problems that beset clubs, another was amalgamation into Amateur Athletic Associations (A.A.A.). In 1877 the Montreal Lacrosse and Snow Shoe Clubs amalgamated to rent club rooms in the Montreal Gymnasium.<sup>38</sup> This informal amalgamation was legalized in 1881 with the formation of the M.A.A.A. with its own grounds and a gymnasium. Even this powerful

<sup>34</sup> The material on the opening of the public bath was taken from the *Montreal Star*, June 16-23, 1883.

<sup>35</sup> *Montreal Star*, 1 & 2 August 1890.

<sup>36</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 14 February 1876.

<sup>37</sup> *Montreal Star*, 28 July 1886.

<sup>38</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 27 March 1877.

group found it difficult to resist the demands for land and were forced to move to Cote St. Antoine in 1889. Other groups attempted to amalgamate with varying degrees of success. In the east side on grounds at the corner of St. Catherine and Delorimer the St. Lawrence A.A.A. (1887) was followed by the Crescent A.A.A. (1892) and the Gordon A.A.A. (1893); the first two succumbing to financial disaster. Cote St. Antoine A.A.A. was formed in 1890 and the Shamrock A.A.A., an amalgamation of three lacrosse teams held their inaugural meeting on their new grounds in 1892. It would appear that movement to the outskirts and amalgamation were the only answers to the increase in land values.

These grounds were not the only facilities available for recreation. The 1870s and 1880s witnessed the emergence of a number of clubs catering to the wealthy, in every case elaborate club houses and facilities were created at considerable expense to the members. The Handball Club (1880) was the first to renovate old facilities. A new club house was built for the Montreal Golf Club in 1881.<sup>39</sup> Also in 1881, the Pointe Claire Boat Club opened a new club house.<sup>40</sup> The West End Lawn Tennis Club opened in 1881 and the Montreal Yacht Club extended its premises to include a tennis court and a new club house in 1886. The 120 members of the new Racquet Club (1889) spent \$12,000 to build their courts while the Cote St. Antoine Tennis Club boasted four courts and a club house in 1891.<sup>41</sup> The early 1890s witnessed the Park Toboggan Club, St. Lawrence Curling Club, Grand Trunk Boating Club, and St. Lawrence Yacht Club adding to their facilities. Organized physical recreation had arrived for a select segment of Montreal society. Without exception they followed the example of the older Hunt and Curling Clubs in emphasizing the social aspects of club life.

There was a further group of facilities that were created for the use of a select social group; these took the form of semi-commercial Joint Stock Companies whose investors, for the most part, were members of the clubs. The first of these was the Victoria Skating Club (1862). Various gymnasiums were opened in the 60's and 70's; Montreal (1867), Union (1870), and Barnjums (1876). Kilgallan's Floating Bath graced the waterfront from 1870 until it burned to the waterline in 1885.<sup>42</sup> Perhaps the most interesting of all was the Athletic Club House (1885) on Cote Des Neiges Road. A joint stock company formed by snowshoers for the use of snowshoers, it lived a precarious existence throughout the early 90's and was the focal point of the snowshoe tramps of the various clubs.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>39</sup> *Montreal Star*, 6 October 1881.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 June 1881.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 December 1891.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 21 September 1885.

<sup>43</sup> The Athletic Club House was created by snowshoers to be used as the rendezvous for over the mountain tramps. The accounts of the indoor football and men waltzing together, dispel some of the more puritan views of these Montrealers. Many of these young men rose to the most responsible positions in the commercial, financial and educational world of Montreal.

All the previously mentioned facilities were fostered by the participants themselves. There were, however, two further facilities that were sponsored by entrepreneurs for financial gain. The first group were ostensibly built as race courses but became multi-purpose locations for amateur and professional athletic activities. The first was Fashion Race Course (Blue Bonnets) in the west end (1870). Within two years Decker Park (1872) had opened at Mile End and Lepine Park (1872) in Hochelaga. The last was a joint stock company which built the Montreal Driving Park (1883) in Point St. Charles. In each instance, the courses were located on the periphery of the city.

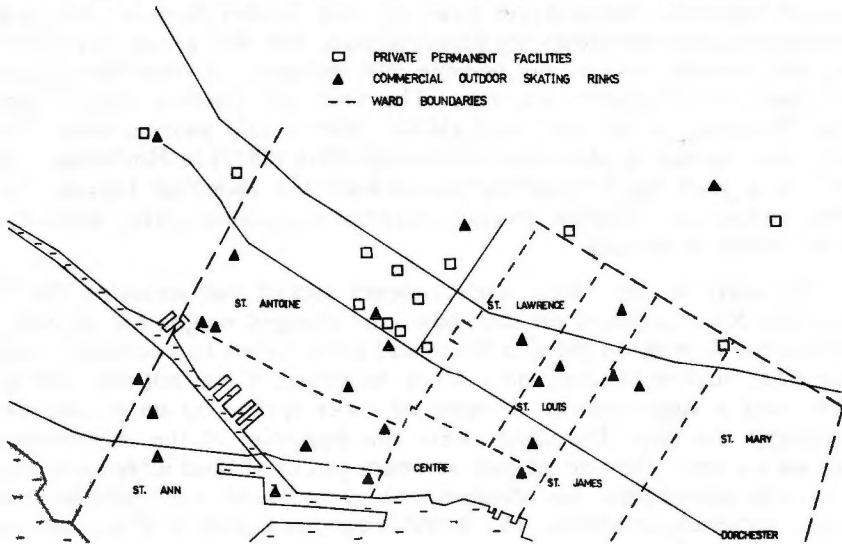
As early as the 1850s entrepreneurs staked out areas on the St. Lawrence River, cleared off the snow, and charged people for the use of the area for skating. In the late fifties and early sixties two covered indoor rinks were built in St. Antoine's Ward; however, it was not until the late 1870's that a large number of open air rinks sprang up on vacant sites throughout the city. The 1880s were the highpoint of the impermanent open air ice rink; they developed on spare pieces of land within the areas of densest population, and disappeared as the land was used to build houses, factories, or offices. The distribution (see Figure 3) of ice rinks reveals their availability to all segments of the community, the majority being located in the areas of mixed blue and white collar workers.<sup>44</sup> What these rinks do indicate is an increased base of participants interested in recreational activities. It is impossible to determine who used these rinks, but since an entrance fee was charged, it is logical to assume that for the workers living on a marginal subsistence level, even these ice rinks lay beyond their reach on a regular basis. Therefore, it was probably the more solid and affluent segments of the working community who were the mainstay of these rinks.

There is little doubt that even though increased land prices caused many clubs to lose their grounds there was a significant increase in the number of facilities during the period after 1870. By the late 1880s at least 36 permanent athletic facilities existed in Montreal. Their location illustrates some basic characteristics about organized physical recreation. Nearly without exception the grounds, private clubs, and semi-commercial facilities were located in the predominantly English-speaking wards. In fact, there was a heavy concentration in the select St. Antoine Ward and the English suburb of Cote St. Antoine. The only exception to this rule was the shift towards the North East in the 1890s, Logan's Farm and St. Helen's Island — public parks, and the more commercially oriented race tracks which served all parts of Montreal. It would, therefore, be difficult to avoid the conclusion that organized physical recreation to 1890 was created by the English, for the English and played by the English Canadians.

<sup>44</sup> The material was gained from the M.A.A.A. files in the National Archives and the Montreal Star. The majority of the open air ice rinks were identified to exist between 1875-1884.



Fig. 3: Private and Commercial Athletic Facilities Montreal, 1860-1895



### THE 1890s

The consolidation of the anglophone, white collar power in determining the form, organizational structure and ideology of sport continued in the 1890s, but, in fact, sport was entering a new era; the era of mass sports. An examination of Figure 1 indicates a phenomenal growth in the number of clubs in the three year period 1891-1894; over 100 clubs. Although there was some increase in the select sports of lawn tennis and yachting; the greatest increase was in team sports; lacrosse (36 to 49), hockey (23 to 46), cricket (13 to 21), the emerging sport of soccer (9 to 29), and the newly invented sport of basketball (1891) (0 to 11). Even more important was the establishment of regular schedules which signaled the arrival of sport as an integral part of the recreational activities of Montrealers. As has been mentioned the first league was formed in lacrosse in 1885. However, it was not until the 1890s that leagues became the basic structure for sporting competition. By 1894 there were 24 leagues operating in Montreal in seven sports. This proliferation of teams and leagues was due to the widening base of participants. Juveniles (under 15) were organized into leagues in soccer and lacrosse. More indicative of the incipient democratization of sport was the spread of clubs throughout the whole city and away from the dominant St. Antoine's Ward. A comparison between Tables 2 and 4<sup>45</sup> indicates clearly that in the case of lacrosse there had been a significant shift from St. Antoine's Ward (82% to 30%) to the rest of Montreal, particularly to the working class area of St. Anne's and St. Gabriel's and to the area east of St. Lawrence Main. For the most part, the new groups entering organized

<sup>45</sup> Lacrosse and soccer locations were gleaned from the *Montreal Star*, 1891-94.

physical recreation were drawn from the English speaking community, only in lacrosse and snow-shoeing could any evidence of significant French Canadian involvement be found. Clearly organized sport was no longer the exclusive preserve of a social elite.

Table 4: LOCATION OF LACROSSE AND SOCCER CLUBS IN MONTREAL, 1891-94

	St. Antoine	St. Lawrence	St. Cunegonde St. Anne St. Gabriel	St. Louis St. James St. Mary	Others
Lacrosse	23 (30)	13 (17)	18 (24)	18 (24)	4 (5)
Soccer	4 (15)	4 (15)	9 (35)	7 (27)	2 (8)
Total	27 (26)	17 (17)	27 (26)	25 (25)	6 (6)

#### COMMERCIAL RECREATION

In an emerging industrial society the provision of entertainment for the masses takes a low priority. By definition, pleasure and present-oriented activities catered to a different segment of society from those who adhered to the gospel of work, dedication and self denial. However, it would be erroneous to place a class connotation on this group; individuals from all walks of life espoused this present-oriented philosophy with its rejection of work as the only meaning of life. Entrepreneurial commercial sporting spectacles epitomized these values, sponsored for material gain, providing a vehicle for gambling — they were popular throughout the period 1870-1895 and there is little doubt that the so-called working class provided a significant segment of the audience who watched, drank and gambled at these events.

The gradual increase in the number of spectator-oriented promotions during the period after 1870 is concrete evidence of the interest of segments of the population in recreational activities. Some, such as horse racing, boxing exhibitions, and wrestling, while frowned upon by the churches and upholders of public morals, were never declared illegal. Other activities such as Sunday entertainments faced persistent harassment and some sports, prize fighting and cockfighting, were actually illegal. What is indisputable is that there was commercial entertainment involving physical activities which appealed to a group different from those who played amateur sport.

Perhaps the most popular of all spectator sports was horse racing which had been practised in Quebec for many years. Frequent references to challenge matches, spring and summer flat races, trotting during the summer and winter, and annual steeplechases attest to the variety of races and their widespread support. Prior to 1870, the only regularly scheduled races were the annual Montreal Hunt Club Steeplechases. These traditionally English pastimes were exclusive in every sense, the participants being members of the club, the location a farm belonging to a member, and the spectators drawn from the social elite of Montreal. In 1870,

two steps were taken that influenced horse racing. First, some leading Montreal citizens formed Turf and Trotting Clubs to regulate summer and winter racing.<sup>46</sup> From that time on regular spring, summer, fall and winter meets were run under the auspices of these groups. In 1881 they expanded their influence with the establishment of the Province of Quebec Turf Club. Thus the organization and control of horse racing was in the hands of the social elite and only incidentally provided spectacles for a different segment of society.

Far more important to the growth of horse racing as a spectacle was the establishment of three relatively permanent race tracks. Fashion Race Course on the west side, Decker Park at Mile End, and Lepine Park in the east end were opened in 1870 and 1871 by three tavern owners, Joe Emonde, Mr. Decker of the Albion Hotel and Mr. Lepine. It was at these locations that the prestigious Hunt, Trotting and Turf Clubs held their annual meets. However, more important to the mass of racing enthusiasts were the numerous challenge matches — flat races, ten mile buggy races, twenty mile races, trotting matches, handicap events, four days of races and a variety of others, which proliferated through the period 1870 to 1895. Gentlemen, councillors, butchers, farmers and others raced their horses against time and each other. References to the composition of the crowd indicated that the horse racing fraternity crossed class boundaries embracing all segments of the community.

Illustrative of man's preoccupation with the unusual was the popularity of sporting "fads" which spread across North America, achieved instant popularity, and then died. These fads attracted as many as 5,000 spectators at one location for a number of weeks or months and then disappeared as quickly as they had come. Between 1869 and 1871 velocipede racing and velocipede rinks attracted large crowds to Guilbault Gardens and other locations throughout the city. Newspapers and ministers railed against the drinking, gambling and immorality associated with these dens of vice. After the death of velocipede racing in 1871 there were no popular fads until 1879 with the emergence of the professional walking matches in Perry's Hall and Gilmore Gardens. Pedestrians who walked for purses of up to \$10,000 had all but disappeared by 1880 and were not replaced until 1888 with the professional and amateur six day races at the Victoria Rink. What all these "fads" had in common was mass appeal and an association with gambling.

Other commercial sporting ventures included "Sparring exhibitions," world championship wrestling bouts, and various strength demonstrations which attracted spectators at infrequent intervals throughout the second half of the nineteenth century; these contests attracted a clientele different than that attending the amateur sporting competitions. Perhaps even more important is the fact that commercial athletic entertainments became more popular as the century progressed providing entertainment for increasing numbers of the working class.

<sup>46</sup> *Montreal Star*, 10 December 1870.

A six day work week effectively excluded large numbers of people from attending the weekday and Saturday entertainment. This left Sunday as the one day generally available for rest and recreation. Despite persistent complaints about "Sabbath desecration", Sunday was *the* day of recreation for many Montrealers.<sup>47</sup> Although the spectators were drawn from all segments of society, the events were located, without exception, in the predominantly working class areas of the city and thus the majority of the supporters were drawn from this class. At the same time, they crossed ethnic boundaries and provide one of the few instances in which French and English speaking Canadians attended the same events.

These sporting entertainments were the antithesis of the amateur sports popular amongst the middle class of St. Antoine's Ward. Often violent, involving bloodletting and pain, these "games" were practised for financial gain and immediate pleasure and not for the demonstration of desirable social qualities. Invariably involving gambling and drinking, "debauched spectacles" focused on the working class areas of St. Cunegonde, St. Jean Baptiste and St. Mary's Ward or just outside the city boundaries, which placed them beyond the jurisdiction of the Montreal City Council and in the purview of apparently more amenable councils. The periodic railings against "Sabbath desecration" provide a fascinating insight into the nature of this Sunday sub-culture and the popularity of these entertainments. The summer of 1870 was the highpoint of the velocipeding craze which aroused the ire of the editor of the *Montreal Star* who expressed frustration at being unable to control the Sunday activities taking place at Mile End, just beyond the city limits.<sup>48</sup> On Sunday, May 22, 1870, nearly five thousand spectators gathered to watch the velocipede champions Pacquette and Alard. Swearing, drinking and betting accompanied this three heat race.<sup>49</sup> During the same year, crowds of up to 4,000 attended velocipede races, acrobats, prize fights, cockfighting and clog dancing in St. Henri, St. Jean Baptiste and in Guilbault's Gardens within the city boundaries. The problem became so acute that the City Council held a special meeting to consider steps to be taken to prevent desecration of the Sabbath and the excessive drinking associated with it. No action was taken!<sup>50</sup> In the ensuing twenty years the Sabbath question was raised on several occasions. In 1871 over prize fighting and velocipede racing in St. Henri and Rond St. Jacques, and Sunday entertainments in Viger Garden.<sup>51</sup> The City Council, in November, 1873, passed a motion "That power should be obtained to pass by-laws for the better observance of the Sabbath."<sup>52</sup> By 1878 complaints were being made about the "unruly mobs congregating on Sunday in the Villages of St. Henri and St. Jean Baptiste in connection with sports openly carried out in both vil-

<sup>47</sup> "Sabbath desecration" was the subject of editorial comment in the *Star* on 35 occasions between 1870 and 1894.

<sup>48</sup> *Montreal Star*, 15 August 1869.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 May 1870.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 October 1870.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 March 1871; 10 April 1871; 19 June 1871.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 18 November 1875.

lages."<sup>53</sup> Crowds of over 3,000 attended these regular Sunday afternoon athletic sports. Large crowds also watched the Sunday horse races on the Lachine Canal in Cote St. Paul in 1880.<sup>54</sup> In 1884 saloons, billiard rooms and skating rinks were doing a thriving business and in the early 1890s, attention turned to the skating rinks and the increasingly popular game of hockey.<sup>55</sup> All these examples illustrate the existence of a thriving Sunday entertainment industry which catered, to a large extent, to the working class. Significant segments of this group were not overcome by their hours of work and living and working conditions but rather with their one free day a week found momentary pleasure and an escape from reality in these spectator events where they could swear, gamble, drink and enjoy the companionship of other like-minded individuals. Surely a vivid and telling rejection of the value system of the work oriented middle class!

One further activity which represents values antithetical to those espoused by the middle class amateur athletes was the illegal sport of cockfighting. Throughout the second half of the century, cockfighting faced an active campaign by the R.S.P.C.A. to suppress it — yet it continued to exist. It is through the prosecutions initiated by the R.S.P.C.A. that we are able to gain a glimpse of this sub-culture. The twenty-two fights prosecuted between 1860 and 1895, were located without exception in working class areas: near the Lachine Canal in Point St. Charles, by the tanneries in St. Henri, and on the border of St. James and St. Mary's Ward.<sup>56</sup> Twenty-nine of the forty-three participants prosecuted were blue collar workers. Although the majority of fights were organized by particular ethnic groups, there was some interaction between the French and the English, certainly more than in middle class amateur sport.

Whereas organized sport was restricted to those groups that adhered to the amateur ideal, commercial and Sunday sport drew its support from all segments of the community. Contrary to gloomy verdicts on urban life, the evidence of a widespread net of Sunday entertainment suggests that the submerged mass of the population did not accept the puritanical influence of the church and the work ethic, but actively sought pleasure and enjoyment. The provision of commercial spectator sport throughout the working class areas is concrete evidence of the existence of a present and pleasure-oriented philosophy among significant segments of Montreal society.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The years 1840 to 1895 witnessed a change in organized physical recreation from infrequent socially-oriented activities for a select social group to the spectator-oriented mass sports. However, it was not until 1870-1890 that urbanization and industrialization began to make a significant impact on the patterns of physical recreation. This era witnessed

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 May 1878.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 January 1880.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 March 1891; 17 March 1892.

<sup>56</sup> Material from the *Montreal Gazette* and *Montreal Star*.

a major increase in the number of clubs, the introduction of new sports, the development of organizational structures, the introduction of public parks and swimming baths, and the building of private and commercial facilities. All of these events established patterns of urban physical recreation that have remained little changed to the modern day. Within this era of change, certain factors emerged that were central to the growth of recreation; the dominance of the English-speaking white collar segment of St. Antoine's Ward, the incipient democratization in certain team sports, the growth of commercial recreation based on a different value system than that which dominated amateur sport, and finally the establishment of patterns of urban land utilization upon which modern systems are predicated.

Perhaps the dominant factor was the centrality of the anglophones of St. Antoine's Ward. Organized physical recreation was conceived and nurtured by this group who maintained their exclusiveness throughout by creating a number of select social sporting clubs, with private facilities and club houses, and by liberal use of the black ball to keep out unwanted intruders. As club sport developed, they placed upon it their own imprint in the guise of the amateur code. This code which gave meaning to sport beyond mere victory and enjoyment, permeated all organized club sport throughout the nineteenth century. Their imprint was made even stronger by their control of the administrative structure of amateur sport and through the dominant role in the promotion of sport of the University, High School, Y.M.C.A., and churches.

If there was any real democratization in amateur sport, it was in the team sports of lacrosse, baseball and soccer. Even in these instances, the sports permeated down from the elite clubs to the white collar workers in various retail and wholesale establishments and then to the offices of the G.T.R. The first workers to become involved were the mechanics in the newly created factories in the English-speaking St. Anne's Ward and Point St. Charles. This movement was facilitated by the increasing involvement of churches located in working class areas in promoting sport in the late 1880s. Therefore, the segment of the working class who first became involved in sport was that group that was most akin to the middle-class values of work and thrift.

Whereas amateur sport was organized and played by a small segment of Montreal society, commercial entertainment catered to all segments of the population. The evidence suggests that there was growing commercial involvement in the provision of sport both for participants and spectators. The existence of a widespread network of Sunday entertainment is suggestive of the involvement of segments of the population different from the group participating in organized amateur sport.

Perhaps the most important single factor was the emergence of distinct patterns of land utilization which were to influence urban recreation patterns well into the twentieth century. Central to these patterns was the dominant role played by the middle classes whose values determined the patterns of land utilization and attitudes to recreation. Unfettered indivi-

dualism and a belief in restricted public interference in public or private affairs led to a limited involvement in the creation of public parks. The availability of Mount Royal, Logan's Farm, and St. Helen's Island, in fact, ensured that there would be no city recreational policy and thus few sporting facilities created by the city. Sport, a frivolous activity to these Victorians, was a private concern, therefore, the creation of facilities was left in private hands. Thus, the people who had access to sporting facilities were those who could afford it — the wealthy. Even in these instances, the value of land in an expanding city was such that athletic clubs were forced into the suburbs in the search for grounds at a reasonable price. In the absence of public involvement in the construction and maintenance of facilities this meant a decreasing availability of facilities in areas of densest population. The only evidence that facilities and opportunities were being provided for the masses is seen in the development of commercial recreation and in the increasing involvement of social institutions such as the church and Y.M.C.A. in the provision of recreation.

In conclusion, it would appear that although for people in power recreation was, for the most part, a frivolous diversion from the real meaning of life — work; recreation did, in fact, become increasingly important as the century progressed. Despite public apathy it is evident that for many people recreation was an important element of life in the emerging industrial society. The patterns created during the 1870s and 1880s formed the foundation stone upon which the growth of mass recreation in the 1890s and twentieth century was based and thus assume an importance out of all proportion to their contemporary significance.