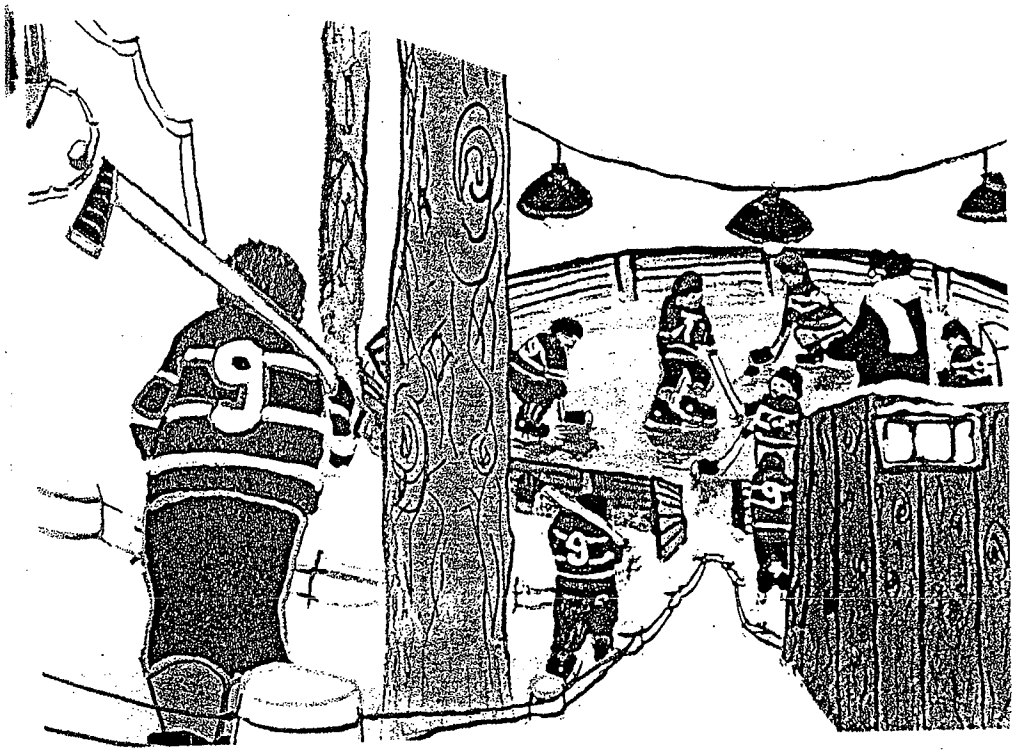
The Sport Literature Association

19th Annual Conference

June 20-23, 2002



The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario

The Sport Literature Association

President, 2001-2002
Dick Stull
Humboldt University

Program Chair, 2002 Conference
Judy Hakola, University of Maine

Local Arrangements, 2002 Conference
Don Morrow, University of Western Ontario

Our thanks to the many people at the University of Western Ontario who contributed to the success of this conference, especially

- **Dean's Office, Faculty of Health Sciences, for sponsoring the banquet guest speaker**
- **Director's Office, School of Kinesiology**
- **Dr Kevin Wamsley, Director, Center for Olympic Studies**
- **University of Western Ontario Conference Services**

THURSDAY, JUNE 20

Ivey School of Business, room 2R21 (morning sessions only)

9:00 Welcome: Dick Stull, SLA President

9:15-10:15 SESSION 1: Baseball Literature
Chair: Dick Stull, Humboldt University

Eric Solomon, San Francisco State University: Sport and School: A. T. Dudley's *At the Home Plate*

Kevin Wamsley, University of Western Ontario: Original Fiction

10:15-10:45 Refreshment Break

10:45-12:00 SESSION 2: What Is Sport?
Chair: Don Johnson, East Tennessee State University

Mark Noe, Pennsylvania College of Technology: Reflections on 'Sport': Words, Actions, and James Salter

Open Discussion: What is sport?
See *Time* article on chess as a wannabe sport on the back pages of this program.

Essex Residence Hall
12:00-1:30 LUNCH

THURSDAY, JUNE 20

Somerville House, room 3345 (both afternoon sessions)

2:00-3:30 SESSION 3: Poetry Readings
Chair: David McGimpsey, Concordia University

Dale Ritterbusch, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

Grace Butcher, Kent State University, Geauga Campus, emerita

John B. Lee, Brantford, Ontario

Neil Nakadate, Iowa State University

Dick Stull, Humboldt University

3:30-4:00 Refreshment Break

4:00-5:15 SESSION 4: Sport and Popular Culture
Chair: Tim Morris, University of Texas at Arlington

Michele Schiavone, Marshall University: Let's Play Too: Race in African-Americans' Baseball Hall of Fame Induction Speeches

Dennis Gildea, Springfield College: W. O. McGeehan's Les Slacker Stories and the American Buildup to World War I

Stephen Mosher, Ithaca College: "God Bless America" and Other Popular Patriotic Songs in Post 9-11 Sport Settings

Essex Residence Patio
6:00 Conference Banquet
Speaker: Marty Gervais, Editor, *Windsor Review*:
"In the Batter's Box"

FRIDAY, JUNE 21

Somerville House, room 3345 (both Friday sessions)

9:00-10:15 SESSION 5: Sport and Poetry
Chair: Dale Ritterbusch, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

Don Johnson, East Tennessee State University: The Fat Man and Other Spectators: Poems on Fans

David Vanderwerken, Texas Christian University: David McGimpsey's Sporting Blues

David McGimpsey, Concordia University: Response

10:15-10:45 Refreshment Break

10:45-12:00 SESSION 6: A Celebration of Canadian Writers
Chair: Don Morrow, University of Western Ontario

Lesley Krueger, Ryerson University: from "The Hockey Stalker"

Jerry Amernic, Toronto, Ontario: from *The Gift of the Bambino*

Marisa de Franceschi, Windsor, Ontario: "The Race"

Friday lunch, afternoon and evening: on your own

SATURDAY, JUNE 22

Somerville House, room 3345 (sessions 7, 8, and 9)

9:00-10:15 SESSION 7: Sports and American Life
Chair: Ed Sims, Springfield College, emeritus

Christopher York, Michigan State University, "Part Way There": The Mexican League and American Conflict in *The Veracruz Blues*

G. Sami Gorgan Roodi, University of Sussex, England: "Price Fighting": Boxing and the Myth of Success in Clifford Odets' *Golden Boy*

Eric Gadzinski, Lake Superior State University: "the hardest game we've ever played": Baseball as Metaphor in Four Viet Nam War Poems by Dale Ritterbusch

10:15-10:45 Refreshment Break

10:45-11:30 SESSION 8: "Consumers" of Sport Literature and Film
Chair: Joyce Duncan, East Tennessee State University

Tim Morris, University of Texas-Arlington: Seabiscuit? Come on....

Judy Hakola, University of Maine: Women in a Man's World: Changing Representations of Women in Popular Sports Films

11:30-12:15 SLA BUSINESS MEETING
Dick Stull, President

SATURDAY, JUNE 22

Somerville House, room 3345

2:00-3:15 SESSION 9: Sports on Film
Chair: Mark Noe, Pennsylvania College of Technology

James Leonard, University of Maine: (student paper read by Judy Hakola): *Hoosiers* and*Hoop Dreams*: The Best and Worst That Basketball Has to Offer

Don Morrow, University of Western Ontario: Bagger and Will: Mysticism in *The Legend of Bagger Vance*

Kegan Doyle, University of British Columbia: "Since We Were Kings": *When We Were Kings* and *Ali*

At Glynn Leyshon's cottage (transportation provided; shuttling will begin soon after Session 9 ends)

SESSION 10: Fiction Readings
Chair, John B. Lee

Duncan Jamieson, Ashland University

John Morefield, East Tennessee State University

Glynn Leyshon, University of Western Ontario, emeritus

Dick Stull, Humboldt University

Craig Riordan, Humboldt University

SUNDAY, JUNE 23

Somerville House, room 3345

9:30-11:00 SESSION 11: Sunday buffet—a little of this, a little of that....

Chair, Judy Hakola, University of Maine

Ron Hyatt, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill: Thomas Wolfe Revisited: A Concordance

Glynn Leyshon, University of Western Ontario, retired: Decoyed into Art

Conference adjourned. We look forward to seeing you at Springfield College in 2003.

The illustration on the front cover of the program is by Sheldon Cohen. It is from the Livres Toundra edition of Roch Carrier's classic short story, "Le Chandail de Hockey" ("The Hockey Sweater").

Time: Monday, Mar. 25, 2002

Quick, name this sport: rival world champions, a shady multimillionaire commissioner, drug testing, boycotts and shapely young women parading around in skimpy costumes.

If you said professional wrestling, you get partial credit. The correct answer, of course, is chess. The governing body of world chess, led by its eccentric president, Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, has launched an all-out campaign to remake this most elevated of intellectual exercises into a fast-paced, high-stakes spectacle suitable for prime-time television. In the process, Ilyumzhinov is either rescuing chess or dragging it down to the level of Tonya Harding vs. Paula Jones, depending on your point of view. In the highly political, deeply petty world of top-rung chess, nothing is black and white.

The story of Ilyumzhinov's rise to power reads like a James Bond movie scripted by Vladimir Nabokov. Like many other chess players, Ilyumzhinov was a prodigy. At 9 he was the chess champion of his native Kalmykia, a tiny, impoverished Russian republic populated by the descendants of Genghis Khan. But his talents went beyond pushing pawns. In his 20s he made millions running a string of banks in the early wildcat years of post-Soviet Russian capitalism. At the tender age of 31 the dapper Ilyumzhinov (he has a fondness for white capes and vintage Rolls-Royces) was elected President of Kalmykia. His regime has been dogged by allegations ranging from electoral irregularities and embezzlement of federal funds (an investigation has been launched but no charges filed) to the 1998 murder of the crusading editor of an opposition newspaper (one of his former aides was convicted of the crime).

In 1995 Ilyumzhinov took over the presidency of the venerable Federation Internationale des Echecs, FIDE for short, which curates the rules of chess and tabulates the world rankings. He immediately set out to reshape the sport in his own image. In an attempt to make chess more sponsor-friendly, he compressed the traditional two-year championship schedule into a more dramatic three-week tournament. He sweetened the pot with liberal infusions of cash from his deep pockets and sped up the game clock, discarding the time-honored classical chess format, in which players spend hours elaborating intricate moves, in favor of rapid chess, an adrenalized variant in which each game lasts just 50 minutes. "Chess had to be commercialized. Investment had to be brought in," Ilyumzhinov insists. That must be what he had in mind when he staged the 1999 world championships at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas.

Ilyumzhinov also launched a campaign to make chess an Olympic sport, a process that will involve, as per International Olympic Committee regulations, mandatory drug testing. In Kalmykia's capital city of Elista, he erected a $30

million chess coliseum called Chess City, a bizarre extravagance in a place where hot water is still a luxury. Last spring he staged a fashion show featuring flirty chess uniforms modeled by Alexandra Kosteniuk, a curvaceous grandmaster who may be the chess world's answer to Anna Kournikova. Kosteniuk then proceeded to play eight simultaneous matches. On Rollerblades.

"Apparently, in order to save chess, it must be destroyed," American grandmaster Yasser Seirawan observes wryly. Ilyumzhinov, naturally, takes a different view. "All is quiet in the chess kingdom," he says. "Everything is clearly structured. Everything is predictable and runs smoothly."

But every sports commissioner needs his Michael Jordan, and the game's only superstar isn't playing along. Garry Kasparov, ranked No. 1 in the world for the past 17 years, has called Ilyumzhinov's version of the game "the end of chess as we know it" and urged his fellow grandmasters to boycott FIDE events. "If the leading players do not organize themselves soon," Kasparov told TIME, "classical chess will all but disappear." (Ilyumzhinov, for his part, has called Kasparov "unbalanced.")

Matters came to a head in Moscow last December, when FIDE and Kasparov staged simultaneous rival tournaments in the same city. Without either Kasparov or No. 2-ranked Vladimir Kramnik in attendance, FIDE ended up crowning an 18-year-old Ukrainian named Ruslan Ponomariov. Last week Kasparov gave the whiz kid the grandmaster of all spankings at a tournament in Spain.

So who's the real world champion? No one knows. Few think Ponomariov has what it takes. But Kasparov doesn't have FIDE's stamp of approval, and, besides, he lost to Kramnik in a non-FIDE championship match two years ago (since then Kramnik has managed to avoid a title rematch). "There's this terrible rift in chess," says Seirawan, who is also boycotting FIDE events. "The world chess championship is a disputed title."