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The linkage of sport with secondary public education was an important development. This linkage developed at the turn of the twentieth century and was aided by two major factors: First, popular collegiate sports were diffused to high schools, first in metropolitan areas then in rural ones. Second, the population shift from rural to urban areas accelerated during the 1900s, causing disruptions and crisis in rural communities. Local high school sports programs became a source of community identity and cohesion during this period. School sport in rural communities promoted parental, alumni, and community support for the school.

Since the 1970s, high schools have faced numerous issues involving gender equity in boys’ and girls’ sports programs, pay equity between men and women coaches, and increasing costs of equipment and travel. The organization of high schools within each state also has been an issue as smaller rural schools were pitted against larger, urban schools in state tournaments. Most states resolved this equity issue by instituting a classification system based on school size. As late as 1996, however, Indiana high school basketball still operated under a single class system.

Little League baseball was established in 1939, with roots in rural America. Carl Stolz of Williamsport, Pennsylvania, organized the league with initial support from Floyd A. Mutchler of Lycoming Dairy Farms. Little League grew from its humble beginnings to sponsor a national tournament in 1948 (Lock Haven, Pennsylvania, defeated St. Petersburg, Florida). Stolz received corporate support for the tournament from the United States Rubber Company, which made a long-term commitment to support the organization after receiving positive publicity. Today, Little League Baseball, Inc. has more than $11 million total assets and consists of more than 7,000 leagues and more than 48,000 teams. Most rural communities have a Little League team. Further, more than 8,000 international leagues in more than 40 countries are affiliated with Little League Baseball, Inc.

Currently, corporate sport dominates athletics. However, informal sport can be found throughout the nation. Rural areas continue to produce athletes who gain national recognition and superstar status. Although sport will most likely continue to be dominated by urban-based corporate sport organizations, rural sport will continue to be an important component of rural communities. From high school sports to Little League, community-based softball leagues, Pop Warner League football, tennis, swimming, and other athletic activities, sport will continue to provide recreation opportunities in rural areas and serve as a source of rural community identity and pride.

—Duane A. Gill

Stock Car Racing

A form of automobile racing using modified standard American cars on oval, usually paved, tracks. Beginning as speed competitions among moonshine runners, stock car racing developed into a nationally recognized American sport in the middle of the twentieth century. Bill France spearheaded the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) in 1948, organizing and legitimizing the races. Professional drivers today make it a family affair, involving several generations. The mostly southern sport courted corporate sponsorship from the beginning, and it attracts fans from throughout the country.

From Moonshine Runs to Racetracks

On the back roads of the Deep South and mountain roads of Appalachia, young men delivered moonshine liquor to the Piedmont and Tidewater Flatlands during the 1930s. The hardscrabble existence in the mountain regions afforded the residents few opportunities. The soil supported few cash crops besides corn and grain. Converting them into moonshine liquor made these crops easier to haul to market than the bulky harvest. Despite the federal
government's insistence on controlling liquor production through taxation, the local independent-minded moonshiners continued to produce their wares with a free-enterprise mentality; they believed it their right to make a living as they had been doing for years. To outrun and outmaneuver local sheriffs and the federal revenue agents determined to stop the flow of untaxed alcohol, the drivers modified and improved their cars' performance. Junior Johnson and Curtis Turner became legends for their skill in implementing a "bootleg turn"—rapidly reversing the direction of their speeding cars. Johnson once commented, "I always think someday I'm gonna look in my mirror on the race track and see a flashing blue light. I got caught at the still [in 1955]. I never got caught on the road. They never outrun me" (Wilkinson 1983, 12; Bledsoe 1975, 43). The competitive daredevil drivers, proud of their driving ability and cars, inevitably began to race each other to prove who had the fastest car.

From one-on-one speed contests on back roads and in cow pastures and clearings, the participants moved to old fairgrounds horse racetracks. Using only American-made standard or stock cars modified for racing, the blue-collar, predominantly southern drivers proved which car was fastest on dirt and paved racetracks. Corporate sponsors watched the cars circle the track as rolling advertising billboards for their products. Throughout the 1930s and early 1940s, racing remained a local event, often disorganized and run by shady promot-

ers who sometimes absconded with the gate receipts before the race ended. The racing boom exploded with returning World War II veterans. The red clay in the foothills of the Appalachian and Blue Ridge Mountains offered an excellent natural racing surface. Farmers easily cut out a quarter- or half-mile oval, hammered together wooden grandstand seating, and created a racetrack. Stock car racing became the fastest-growing spectator sport, eventually attracting drivers and fans from other regions and economic classes.

Bill France Creates NASCAR
The home of land-speed racing, Daytona Beach, Florida, became the site of the first organized and sanctioned stock car race in March 1936, when the American Automobile Association, the owner of the timing equipment, sponsored a race of a specified length and purse. Sig Haughdahl, a motorcycle and car racer, cut two passes through the sand dunes to form an oval beach road course for the race. Although it failed because of the deep sand and infighting among the local politicians, one of the drivers, Bill France, Sr., saw the potential; within two years he promoted races over the beach course. Drivers from as far away as the red clay ovals of Atlanta, Georgia, traveled to Daytona Beach to race, often generating more excitement along the way than when they arrived. France continued to hold weekend races. In the 1940s, along with several other racers and promoters, he created NASCAR to bring the sport respectability and profit.

In December 1947, Bill France, Sr. and Bill Tuthill, a promoter of midget car and motorcycle races called a meeting with other promoters in the lounge of the Streamline Hotel in Daytona Beach, Florida, to discuss organizing stock car racing. Within two months, France and Tuthill drafted the plan for NASCAR, a name suggested at the December meeting by Red Vogt, an exly builder of some of the fastest Atlanta stock cars. France brought in one of his service station's customers, attorney Louis Ossinsky, to handle legal issues and problems. They incorporated NASCAR on February 21, 1948, with France holding 50, Tuthill 40, and Ossinsky 10 shares of stock. NASCAR set and enforced rules, ensured that promoters paid purses, paid bonuses to top drivers based on a points-earned system, and sought insurance for drivers. The first year began slowly with only nine races, mostly promoted by France. The following year, France's novel idea to hold a new car race catapulted stock car racing into the limelight.

The new race used regular cars directly from show-
rooms, thus the term “stock.” Spectators finally were able to see which American-made cars that the average person drove were the fastest. The fans could more easily identify with the Fords, Chevrolets, Pontiacs, Hudsons, and Plymouths, among others, than the nondescript modified lightweight cars with big engines previously run in stock car races. The June 19, 1945, race on a 75-mile dirt track in Charlotte, North Carolina, attracted over 13,000 paying fans and instituted NASCAR’s Grand National Division. This track evolved into the Charlotte Motor Speedway, a 1.5-mile track completed in 1960. In neighboring South Carolina, Harold Brasington, a construction worker and heavy-equipment owner, built an Indianapolis 500-type, oval, 1.25-mile speedway for stock cars in Darlington in the summer of 1950. To overcome the deep sand that bogged down the cars on the Daytona Beach course, France built a 2.5-mile triangular oval off the beach, where he staged what would become, after the Indianapolis 500, the second most attended car race—the Daytona 500.

Bill France, as president of NASCAR, made stock car racing a national sport. France actively courted politicians, to prevent interference with his tracks and to thwart unfavorable legislation that might ban racing. As a self-styled benevolent dictator, he kept the reputation of the sport uppermost, often to the disgruntlement of owners and drivers seeking an edge. When one car manufacturer modified a model to gain an advantage, France placed restrictions on it to bring all cars back to parity. Driver Bobby Allison, often frustrated with constantly changing rules, recognized that “Big Bill knew there were a lot of people who wanted to see those cars on the track, and he knew that having them look like the ones at home in the driveway was important. He made the rules where there wasn’t anyone who could run away and hide. Another thing he did was keep the rules where it didn’t take a young fortune to get started.” But France also ruled with an iron fist. Allison remarked, “There were no arguments, no back talk, no nothing. If you were going to race in NASCAR, you were going to do it his way and not say anything until you were asked” (Glick 1992, C2). In the 1950s, when Curtis Turner and Tim Flock tried to form a drivers’ union, France suspended them from NASCAR racing for four years. When France retired as president of NASCAR in 1972, his son Bill France, Jr., assumed control of the organization. The elder France continued as the head of the International Raceway Corporation, which operates Daytona International Speedway and Alabama International Motor Speedway at Talladega (the 2.66-mile track constructed in 1969), until his death in 1992.

The Drivers

Before stock car racing succeeded in Daytona and blue-collar, working-class White men entered stock car racing as owners, drivers, mechanics, and fans, upper-class men had dominated motor sports in America. As the sport branched out from the South, drivers from northern and western states began to win their share of races. Except for Wendell O. Scott, who raced full-time between 1949 and 1973, African Americans have lacked a presence in NASCAR. Women also have remained on the sidelines, unlike drag racing’s Shirley Muldowney, as relatives or race queens; the male network does not welcome women drivers or mechanics.

The mainstay of NASCAR remain the tiers of racing that bring the sport to short dirt tracks (for the Modified, Sportsmen, and other lesser divisions) near small, rural towns in the South (like the old three-eighths-mile clay Lanier Raceway in north Georgia), short paved tracks under one mile (like Richmond), and to the speedways of Charlotte and Atlanta for the Winston Cup Grand National Circuit. From the 10 races run in 1949, NASCAR increased the number to 40–60 races each year through 1971. The modern era of 30–33 major races began in 1972. Among its 11 divisions, NASCAR sanctions about 2,000 stock car races annually. Fans in Martinsville, Virginia; Jennerstown, Pennsylvania; Loudon, New Hampshire; and Indianapolis flock to what NASCAR claims is the fastest growing spectator sport in America. The France family—run organization fosters loyalty from the drivers, who earn bonuses in special NASCAR programs. Successful drivers such as Richard Petty and Darrell Waltrip never considered racing Formula One cars in the Indianapolis 500; Dale Earnhardt and Bobby Allison briefly attempted to cross over to Formula One but soon returned to stock car racing.

NASCAR is a family affair in more than its organizational control. Three generations of the Petty family—father Lee, son Richard, and grandson Kyle—successfully race stock cars. Other racing families include the Bodine brothers (Geoff, Brett, and Todd); fathers and sons Ralph and Dale Earnhardt and Ned and Dale Jarrett; and brothers Terry and Bobby Labonte, Dale and Michael Waltrip, and Rusty and Mike Wallace. Kyle Petty remarked that since racing is a time-consuming sport, with racing from February through the middle of November and building and testing cars in January, “If you’re going to hang out with your family, you have to hang out at a racetrack. So when you grow up in that environment and look for something for your children, you say: ‘Well, it wasn’t too
bad when I was growing up, it can't be too bad for them, either. So you bring them along” (Denlinger 1995, C3).

The sport also attracts families as fans. As the race car craze outgrew its southeastern roots, northern, midwestern, and western middle-class families flocked to the racetracks and watched televised coverage. Compared with other sports heroes, stock car drivers make themselves accessible to their fans for autographs, pictures, and personal contact. The fans, in turn, root not for a particular car, but its driver. They identify with the human in control rather than the brand name of the car or its sponsors.

**Sponsors**

Long before baseball erected billboards or colleges sought corporate tie-ins, stock car racing depended on sponsors to underwrite the costs of running the expensive machines. In exchange for financial support, the owners embazon corporate logos on the cars and drivers’ uniforms. Initially supported by beer and tobacco companies such as R. J. Reynolds, which lends its product name to NASCAR’s primary series, the Winston Cup, stock car racing appealed equally to other corporate sponsors, who recognized the advertising potential in having their product visible on every lap of a televised race. Sponsors include McDonald’s, Budweiser, Valvoline, and their product competitors Burger King, Miller Genuine Draft, and Pennzoil. Even country music performers see the benefit of sponsoring a rolling billboard.

When R. J. Reynolds backed the sport in 1971, Bruton Smith saw a wise investment future in stock car racing. He developed the Charlotte Motor Speedway into a well-respected, and perhaps the finest, racing oval in the country. Smith constructed condominiums overlooking the track in 1984. When he purchased the Atlanta Motor Speedway in 1990, he vowed to convert it into a world-class speedway that would attract fans from among the over 3 million people in the countryside surrounding Atlanta, and return the NASCAR to its roots in the Atlanta area.

—Susan Hamburger

*See also*

**Community Celebrations; Recreational Activities; Sport.**

**References**


Sugar Industry

The production of raw sugarcane and sugar beets and their transformation into marketable sweeteners. This entry will address international and U.S. governmental issues related to the sugar industry before focusing on production and processing of sugarcane and sugar beets in the United States. Implications of the industry for labor and the environment are then discussed.

Sugar and International Relations

Most sugar produced worldwide is consumed domestically, often at government-controlled prices. A large portion of the world sugar trade is conducted under bilateral agreements and preferential terms, such as the European Community’s Lomé Agreement. As a result, slight shifts in total world production or government policy can have a substantial impact on prices. Governments can block exports in times of scarcity and dump surpluses in times of excess production. Price variability, in turn, increases risk, particularly to producers who do not have mechanisms available to smooth price variations.

The United States traditionally has maintained domestic sugar prices both for producers and consumers at or above world market prices since the mid-1930s, a practice followed in many countries due to the great fluctuation annually in sugar production worldwide. Price maintenance has been accomplished by limiting sugar supplies.

**U.S. Sugar Legislation**

Until the 1900s, sugar tariffs were a major source of revenue for the federal government. Refiners wanted to import raw sugar as cheaply as possible, but imports provided competition for U.S. growers. The Sugar Act of 1934 (also known as the Jones-Constigan Act) was intended to isolate domestic U.S. sugar production from price-depressing conditions. The U.S. secretary of agriculture