

# **A comparison of East and West German media coverage of the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal**

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## **Abstract**

*During recent years there was a perceptible tendency towards the political and ideological use of sports journalism. The present study deals with this problem, and comprises a comparative analysis of the media coverage of the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal by East and West German media.*

There is a close interaction between sports and the media, with benefits for both. Top performance sports as such is not only very interesting, but the contest for medals, cups, and new records draws the attention of millions of people. These are also the people who are interested in the products of any medium. Whereas local sports draws local audiences, top performance sports not only draws national, but also international audiences.

The fact that media coverage of important sports events involves millions of people, increases the possibility that sports could be used for political and ideological purposes. This could happen in four ways.

Firstly, sports events can be used as political demonstrations, like the incident during the Olympic Games of 1972 in Munich, when the Israeli contingent was attacked. Secondly, teams could be excluded from international contests if certain political demands and requirements are not met in a country. An example would be the exclusion of Taiwan from the Olympic Games, because they would not participate under the name of the Republic of China. A third way in which sports can be useful to political aims, involves the case where a government refuses to take part in an international contest if certain demands are not met. Reference can here be made to the case of the Moscow Olympics and Russia's involvement in Afghanistan. Finally, sports journalism can be used for political purposes. Media coverage of sports can intentionally be influenced by internal and external political forces. The content and style of such politically influenced reporting can consequently determine the nature and extent of concurring political demonstrations.

The present study, in which coverage of the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal by East (DDR) and West German (BDR) journalists was compared, focused specifically on the fourth possibility, viz. the use of sports journalism for political and ideological purposes.

## **Method**

The objective of the study was to study the utilisation of sports journalism for political purposes by East and West German sports writers during the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal. A quantitative and qualitative analysis of selected newspapers and television channels was conducted.

### **Quantitative analysis**

#### *Newspapers*

Two newspapers, viz. the "*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*" (FAZ) of the BRD and the "*Neues Deutschland*" (ND) of East Germany were selected. Differences between the functions of mass media in the two countries were not incorporated in the present study. A few of the more important Canadian newspapers were also used in the interpretation. These papers included "*The Montreal Gazette*", "*The Toronto Star*", "*The Toronto Globe and Mail*" and "*Vancouver Sun*".

All 36 copies of the newspapers from 5 July 1976 to 14 August 1976 were included in the study (Krampe, 1977).

#### *Television*

The programme "Olympische Sömmerspiele Montreal — Zusammenfassung der Kämpfe vom Vortag", compiled and broadcast alternately by the West German television channels ARD and ZDF, was recorded.

In these programmes the edited highlights of the previous day were shown. The programme was scheduled daily for 115 minutes from 19 July to 2 August 1976, and represented 20% of the time volume of all West German sports reports of the Montreal games (Zumblick, 1977).

The East German programme "Olympia aktuell — Aufzeichnungen vom Vorabend", broadcast daily from 20h00 to 22h00, was also recorded. The time used for this programme was about 17% of the time used for Olympic reports in East Germany and could therefore be compared with the West German programmes.

Both the East and West German broadcasts were regarded as the result of the selection and edition preferences of the journalists from the two different societies.

#### *Categories*

The following categories were used in the content analysis of the television broadcasts:

- theme and time used for the programme

- classification of sports types
- time used for male or female sports
- positive, neutral or negative evaluation of sports highlights from the different countries
- reasons given for the successes or failures of athletes

### *Recording units of newspapers*

The individual articles and pictures were measured in terms of their positioning, that is whether they appeared on the sports pages or not. A timetable was constructed to place the analysis of newspaper reports on the same basis as that of the television programmes.

### *Reliability*

The coder reliability was ascertained by comparing the original analyses of two days' recordings with those of two trained colleagues. The correlation varied between 0,91 and 0,98, which indicated a satisfactorily high level of reliability.

## **Quantitative results**

### *Extent and positioning of press reports*

All 36 copies of FAZ as well as ND were analysed to determine the extent of coverage. The supplements of the newspapers were not incorporated in the analysis. A total of 808 pages of FAZ and 288 pages of ND were analysed.

During the period analysed the sports section of the FAZ comprised 11,8% and that of the ND 18% of the newspapers' total volume. The reporting was specifically intensive during the period 19 July to 3 August. The extent of the FAZ's sports section increased by 17% of the newspaper's total volume, while the increase in the ND was 30%.

During the peak time of the Olympic Games there was a clear decrease in the reporting of other sports topics in both newspapers. Furthermore, the Olympic Games was given considerable attention in the general pages of both newspapers. This amounted to 3,5% in the ND. In the case of the FAZ 50% of such general reports appeared on the front page, while the percentage for the ND was 75%.

The total reporting of sports during the period, in the sports section as well as the general pages, increased by 12,1% in the FAZ and 20,6% in the ND. In addition, the reports in the ND were generally better positioned than those of FAZ. It should be noted, however, that the actual space devoted to the Olympics was 14,9 square metres compared to only 9,7 square metres in the ND.

Beyond the fact that quantity cannot be taken as a measure of quality,

the comparison of the two newspapers also presented other problems. The value of any event for a newspaper should be seen in terms of an increase in readership figures rather than space devoted to the event.

The relatively higher percentage of reporting in the ND should also be seen in the context of the usual content of the newspaper, which normally consists of government manipulated political news or propaganda. In this sense the reports on the Olympics acquired a more positive connotation in the ND than in the FAZ, and provided the readers of the ND with a welcome diversion from the normal routine.

### *Broadcasting time and audience satisfaction*

The East German television used more broadcast time for Olympic reports than the West German channels. Proportionally East Germany used more hours (32:67) for the Games than the ARD and ZDF (53:137). During this period the DDR used 56,3% of the total broadcast time for sports, while the BRD used only 38,8%. In addition the BRD audience also had the choice of a third television channel.

It was not only the relatively little time the ARD and ZDF spent on Olympic reports, but other reasons as well that left the audience unsatisfied. As Jurgen Eick stated, "what we had to look at sometimes was terribly boring. For its film material the German television was dependent on their Canadian colleagues. Therefore the choice of the highlights could not always be appreciated by the German audience. . . . At some swimming contests shown, it sometimes took 15 minutes before the winners were ready to receive their medals . . . : During that time the audience had to stare at blue, empty swimming pools" (FAZ, 25.7.1976, p. 13).

The East German television on the other hand were not afraid of any costs to bring in large shows — frequently live — of their most successful athletes. In addition to their normal broadcast time of 125 hours (Eurovision and Intervision), the East German television bought another 52 hours of satellite time. One hour of satellite time cost them 5200 dollars. The normal renting tariff of the channels should be added to this amount. The two "bundesdeutschen" programmes were only supplied with a fraction of the leftover satellite time (FAZ, 26.7.1976).

West German television reserved only 13 hours unilateral time. A debilitating aspect of the planning was that it proved impossible to schedule live broadcasts of the winning performances of West German athletes and teams.

When the public demanded more direct information the television teams were forced to use any programmes from East Germany (FAZ, 27.7.1976). The ARD could not have shown their disorganisation more clearly. At first they paved on satellite time but then had to buy broadcast time from East German television. As the Olympic programme took up 5

to 6 hours of normal television programme time, the costs could not have been the only factor for the relatively small renting of satellite channels. The amount of 5200 dollars per hour was not so much if one considers normal programme costs. The East German functionaries, on the other hand, did not regard any cost as too much to show off their athletes. They bargained on possible records and winning chances of their athletes and planned satellite coverage of the shows accordingly.

### *Reports about winning events*

The East German journalists concentrated heavily on their own winners. It was possible to predict on which athletes the East Germans bargained for medals. The planning proved to be more correct than that of the FAZ ( $R=0,89$  respectively  $0,64$ ). The reporting on the Olympic and non-Olympic events correlated just as good in the ND ( $R=0,66$  respectively  $0,54$ ).

The following could be deducted from the broadcast coverage: The rank order correlation between time spent on different kinds of sports and quantity of medals won where  $\rho = 0,59$  in East Germany and  $\rho = 0,31$  in West Germany. Furthermore the rank order correlation between the broadcast time per type of sports and absolute membership of such sports organizations was higher in East Germany than in West Germany ( $\rho = 0,63$  and  $0,18$ , respectively). One cannot assume that the television journalists from East Germany orientated themselves more towards the members of the sports organizations in order to satisfy the audience interests. Most probably in East Germany, the sports types that were strongly represented in the Olympic Games, were also supported by sports organizations with a large membership. By recruiting more people, more money, and using better training, it is therefore possible to have more winners than West Germany, and get more time for the sports type on television.

East Germany did not take part in six of the 22 Olympic sports, but still won 90 medals. The athletes from the Bundesrepublik won 39 medals in 19 types of sports. Therefore we can assume that East Germany concentrated more on sports types spelling success.

This also applies to news reports. From the sports not mentioned by East German journalists on television, in three none of their athletes took part and in two there were no medals won. The West German television reported on basket ball, volley ball, and soccer, although none of their athletes were represented. These sports were expected to interest the audience in Germany and were also very popular programmes because of their dramatic contests.

On the other hand the ARD and ZDF did not show weight lifting or archery — they had no winning athletes involved. They also excluded judo, although they won a silver medal. The East Germans did, possibly

because of organisational reasons, not show yachting, although they won a gold and a bronze medal.

One can therefore say that the East German television journalists did not avoid those sports, in which they had no winners, more than the Bundesrepublik. The programme share in East and West Germany averaged 1,3% : 1,7%. But in comparison to the Bundesrepublik, East Germany selected with more specific criteria. In a detailed analysis the following reasons for preferences emerged:

- own athletes took second places;
- the chances for medals were good, but without success;
- athletes from other countries involved politically with East Germany won;
- in spite of the political differences, when athletes from other countries showed success, they could not be ignored;
- popular types of sports;
- technical, organisational, or confidential reasons.

### *Presentation of female sports*

East Germany is prominent in the primating of the emancipation of women. How were women treated during the Olympic games? Women in East Germany were more respected for their sports achievements. Women from East Germany won 286 (56,6%), and West German women won 30 (15,2%), of all the points gathered by their countries. The sports news were not much influenced by these facts. The ND spent 29%, and FAZ 23% on female sports coverage. Possibly the journalists from East and West orientated themselves on the share all female athletes had in the final games, being 24,7%. One can say that the East- and West German television presented more women sports than the rest of the world (39%, respectively 34%). Is this because most journalists were men, or were superstars like Nadia Comaneci or Karnelia Ender the reason for it? A more detailed study is necessary to answer this question.

### *Motives of pictures shown*

It is difficult to ascertain exactly how often and for how long own athletes were shown on television programmes. On the other hand, it is much easier with press photographs.

Both newspapers preferred pictures of their own athletes; of 260 pictures the FAZ showed 32% own athletes, and only 3,7% of East Germany; of 343 pictures the ND represented 70% own athletes and only 0,3% of the Bundesrepublik. For eight pictures of athletes in FAZ of East Germany, there was only one picture in ND of West German

women athletes. From this one could work out the following proportions:

- Medal points of Bundesrepublik versus East Germany was 1:2,55.
- FAZ: pictures with athletes from West Germany 1:8,6.
- ND: pictures with athletes from West Germany versus pictures with athletes from East Germany was 1:2,4.

Quite a range of pictures of different themes were shown in FAZ: about 16% gave an image of the host country, its population and the architecture of the stadiums. Another 16% were spent on every-day incidents. In comparison ND used only 5%, respectively 4%. East Germany, as a Communist country could not afford showing their population things they could never reach themselves. Therefore they did not show off Canada. but showed more of their own athletes (Gross, 1980).

### *Judging the countries and honouring the winners*

The ND spent more (15,1%) time on reports dealing with the number of medals won and honouring of winners than the FAZ (6,6%). The same tendency could be seen on TV programmes. ARD and ZDF showed nine honourings of their winners and eight times the stand of nations; the East German television showed 31 honourings and 24 times the stand of nations.

In proportion to the gold medals won by each country, their honourings were not overdone by the press. Taking the average of each judging of the countries, the East Germans had it on television for two minutes while the Bundesrepublik had it on for one minute. The reason for East German television teams to broadcast the stand of nations longer than West Germany did, probably lies in the belief that the capitalists can be won by the communists. The public had to be indoctrinated to forget the weaknesses in economical areas.

### *Background information*

The extent of background information about the Games could also serve as an indicator of the quality of the Olympic reports. FAZ spent half of its articles not on sports, but on items such as Olympic problems, sports and politics, and Olympia, while ND only spent 15% time on these. Material involving conflict was ignored by ND, for instance the Soviet fighter Orischenko, who was disqualified, and another Soviet athlete who attempted to flee.

FAZ used most of its time on themes like:

- Taiwanese boycotting;
- sports-medical problems such as doping;
- boycott of African countries;
- sports assistance in West Germany; and
- security precautions in Montreal.

Less important themes rounded off the picture. The FAZ reader was for instance informed on economic problems of the games in Canada, the black market trade of Olympic admission tickets, etc.

The East German reporters were more restricted in their themes. About 16% of the articles which did not exclusively deal with sports, included congratulations to East German winners. The high consumption of eggs in the Olympic city was mentioned twice in ND. The contacts between the "diplomats in track suits" and the host country and its people were reduced to a minimum. Interviews were usually redundant with trivialities. The bid show for television was more important than the human himself. The contact between nations was given an inferior position.

### *Stylistic methods*

The more variations in the contents of the articles in FAZ required more balanced stylistic methods. The formal text analysis of FAZ and ND yielded a dominance of *reports* and *results* that meant more elements referring to the event and the subjects.

FAZ used more stylistic methods giving opinion-like comments and features, than ND; in place of objective reproduction of sports events, they often gave a subjective reflection. Photoreports in the FAZ and ND took up more than a quarter of the space used for all Olympic reports (Güntsche, 1974). The number of Olympic photos in ND was 1,5 times more than in the FAZ.

While the East German athletes dominated the front page of ND, FAZ fundamentally never published photos on the front page. Caricatures of the Olympic Games were found in ND and the FAZ: mostly cutting satire in the West (e.g. July 19, 1976, p. 3) and affirmative sketches in ND (August 3, 1976, p. 2).

### *Evaluation of sporting achievements*

How were the positive and negative statements on sporting achievements in the Olympic reports divided between the athletes of the individual countries? Were all the athletes treated the same or were the own athletes being praised or scolded more than others? In the television analysis three trends could be observed, viz. positive evaluations like "fantastic success"; negative evaluations like "a weak game"; and judgements which were neither positive nor negative.

Of a total of 529 evaluations shown on TV in West Germany, 29,7% were of own, and 18,5% of athletes from East Germany (1:0,8). Of the 634 evaluations shown on the East German television only 3,5% were of West German athletes, and 46,7% of their own athletes (1:13,4). Therefore it seems that the East Germans avoided evaluations of the West Germans more than did the West Germans of their Eastern neighbours.



The SED functionaries were seemingly not interested to give the West Germans more praise than necessary. On East German television the ratio was 18:1, and on West German television the ratio was 7,5:1. The athletes of own country were more positively evaluated, but West Germany was nevertheless a lot more critical than East Germany. The ratio of positive to negative evaluations was 2,4:1 in the West and 8,2:1 in the East. The fact that the East German television accentuated their athletes more positively than did the West German programmes (ARD and ZDF), was not caused only by the degree of sports performance in that part of Germany, but also because of the proportions of the medals won.

The East German journalists had to consider whether critical statements would not harm the SED. Otherwise they had to emphasise the positive developments and use it as propaganda.

### *Reasons given for success or failure*

To what extent were the basic aims of the Olympic movement reached and how did the media in the two Germanies evaluate the extent of the success?

In the time between July 19 and August 14, 1976, FAZ published 238, and ND 153 arguments as to why their athletes succeeded or failed.

Seventy per cent of the statements of great success in ND concerned their own athletes. In FAZ the percentage was 51% for their own athletes. Success was mostly attributed to the athletes' own initiative: 42% of FAZ and 66% of ND. FAZ rendered the preparation of the athletes most prominently, while ND accentuated the mental attitude and psychological state of their athletes. The West Germans gave mostly psychological and physical reasons for failure. ND gave the same reasons, but also mentioned failure in tactics. In the FAZ 66 reasons were given of successes of own athletes, and 89 for failures (1:1,4), while the figures for ND were 83 and 28 respectively (1:0,3).

FAZ gave reasons for 64 successes and 19 failures of athletes of other countries; ND proportionally had 35:7. ND never blamed the trainer or the athlete for the failure. The successes of East German athletes were seldomly connected by ND to these people. This tendency is quite surprising, because the socialistic countries rely more on collective work than the performance of the individual. Furthermore, the East Germans had a few prominent trainers. The whole issue of training and preparation is kept in the dark (c.f. e.g. ND, 27.07.76, p. 7). This might be the result of the tendency not to give the rivals insight into the doings of their opponents. It is also possible that the organisation and techniques were displayed less prominently to promote the socialistic system.

The analysis of the television programmes showed that East Germany did not give reasons for success and gave only seven reasons for

failures. West Germany gave 25 reasons on each category. Possibly, the East German journalists were hesitant in live shows to give statements which might later lead to a political controversy. Critique on own contestants might also threaten the cohesion among socialistic athletes. The real reasons for failure or success were probably analysed internally and not for the consumption of the world.

### **Qualitative results**

The preceding quantitative basis should not lead to an under-emphasis of the qualitative characteristics of the media coverage. In this section a number of typical differences have been highlighted.

#### *Seeking sympathy for the government and social order*

FAZ and ND came to the same conclusions: the participation of East Germany in Montreal was actually a public relations action aimed at putting the SED government in the limelight of the world. The conditions were very favourable: firstly, the superathletes from East Germany, and, secondly, an army of journalists from all over the world, millions of readers, listeners and onlookers. Horst Fetten stated: "The days of Montreal were the days in which East Germany made its mark on the map in front of millions of people" (FAZ, 28.7.76, p. 14). Another journalist from the *Daily Mail* called the Olympic Games the *Karl Marx Games*. The national hymn of East Germany became better known than the winning song of the Eurovision song festival in 1976, viz. "Save your kisses for me" (FAZ, 3.8.76, p. 7).

The East German athletes were interviewed very frequently. They gave 300 press interviews. They had to ask permission from their team leader to be interviewed. There was also a show about the lives of the people in East Germany. A book with data of participating athletes was prepared beforehand.

The question on the reason for the sports successes always gave a chance to advertise the socialist system (c.f. *Globe and Mail*, 28.7.1976, p. 55). On a question put to Manfred Ewald whether it was possible to imitate the East German Olympic successes, he answered, "they must only see to it that Canada gets the same social order as East Germany" (See Knecht, 1978).

More effective were the interviews with the athletes, especially those who held political offices in their country. In a Montreal newspaper, *The Gazette*, a reporter compared the middle distance athletes Abby Hoffman from Canada and Gunhild Hoffmeister from the DDR. ND (30.7.78, p. 7) commented on this as follows: "The one — Gunhild — is a member of parliament, working out new laws, while the other — Abby — enjoys a good reputation, but is leading a hopeless fight for more rights for the youth and athletes". It was further printed that although Hoffmeister was an unmarried mother she held an official office, which was impossible in Canada.

By praising socialism, very real problems of a socio-economic and political nature were concealed. Politically they bargained that the time situation could be disguised by showing the happy faces of their winners. The Canadian press saw through this. For instance, the *Toronto Star* (23.7.76, p. 42) wondered, "How could a socialist country produce such athletic abilities if it cannot even produce enough accommodation?"

### *Critique delivered on Olympic Games and host country*

The striving for international recognition and honour for the socialist country, led to reduced critiques on the Games. As the Games was excellently suited for political aims, many negative incidents were intentionally ignored. It seemed that criticism which is commonplace in the West, like that of Vogel (FAZ, 17.7.76, p. 1), was not possible in the ND.

Children as precocious stars in the Olympic arena (e.g. FAZ, 24.7.76, p. 1) was a forbidden theme for the East German press, although that country sees itself as the real heir of the humanistic German tradition. It is understandable that the East German journalists did not comment on the deteriorating etiquette of the athletes. West Germany on the other hand, wrote about the inflation of competition (FAZ, 15.1.76, p. 12).

The opinion of Knecht (1978) was that the mass media in East Germany only reported on the positive effects of sports as such. They assumed that only other countries wrote about their manipulations during the Olympic Games. East Germany did not report any negative thing about Montreal or the host country. West Germany criticised the heavy security precautions imposed by the Canadians. On the other hand, East Germany showed more understanding for the security precautions. FAZ reacted more vicious. They often criticised the violent behaviour of security guards during minor incidents. The *Gazette* mentioned this approach and attitude of the West German journalists explicitly (e.g. 31.7.76, p. 4; 3.8.76, p. 3). While some East German journalists did complain about the heavy security precautions, most of them showed understanding and held an attitude of "safety first" (c.f. ND 24/25.7.76, p. 7 and FAZ, 27.7.76, p. 9). In the case of anti-Soviet provocations, like the escape of a Soviet athlete, they wished that the heavy security precautions would also apply to "Ukrainian fascists" (ND, 2.8.76, p. 8). Similar vociferous criticisms can be found in ND, 16.7.76, p. 5; p. 7; 27.7.76, p. 7; etc.

While the new stadium was called a concrete pancake by a West German journalist (FAZ, 13.7.76, p. 10), negative criticism was levelled at various other organisational and related aspects. Neumann observed that many spectators nearly fell asleep during the opening ceremony (FAZ, 19.7.76, p. 11). In contrast, ND (19.7.76, p. 6) described it as a glorious start of the sports festival and went on to describe it in exultive terms.

### *High performance sports as a method to reach political identification*

FAZ refrained from politicising the games and Chancellor Schmidt refused to visit the West German team (FAZ, 23.7.76, p. 3). In contrast the SED explicitly tried to further improve their relations with their athletes. Lerich Honecker personally received athletes. Special receptions were organized for them (ND 7/8.8.76, p. 1) and they were represented with national honors like the "Vaterländischen Verdunstorden" and the "Banner der Arbeit" (c.f. ND 25.8.76, p. 3). Knecht (1978) estimated that a gold medalist was awarded at least 25 000 DM.

Therefore, the East German athletes obviously saw success as political achievement. The SED hoped to decrease the distance between their critics and the population in the way the public often identifies with sports stars. Consequently it was necessary to build a better relationship between the athletes and the government to decrease the suspicion of the SED leadership. Young people who identified themselves with a well-known athlete, who had outspoken political viewpoints, experienced cognitive dissonance (Festinger 1957, 1970) when they did not agree with the SED regime. The party hoped that in such cases the youth would prefer the athlete and forget their own aversion to SED politics.

This is probably one of the reasons why East German politicians often tried to show off with prominent athletes in the media. The athletes knew when they had to thank for their privileges. For instance, Kornelia Ender replied to a question: "Surely I have the talent, but without the possibilities that are given to each talent in our Republic, I would never have reached my goal" (ND, 24/25.7.76, p. 8). Various similar examples could be quoted (e.g. ND, 27.7.76, p. 1).

In this way it was suggested that the East German citizens too did their part to support the high performance sports. The winners also formed a connection between the functionaries and the population. This is promoted by fan correspondence. Thousands of telegrams from home supported the athletes (e.g. ND 2.8.76, p. 8). In East Germany the supermen and women were shown as ordinary people to promote identification with them. For instance, many people probably enjoyed to read that Kornelia Ender's musical interests were similar to theirs (ND 31.7/1.8.76, p. 11).

The meeting between the "swimming queen" and her grandmother who fled from East Germany to the USA in 1959, was completely ignored by ND (see Gazette, 20.7.76, p. 2) while the Canadian newspapers reported about it in big headlines (e.g. *Globe* and *Mail* 23.7.76, p. 54).

Top performing sports has not only integrational functions in their own country, but also in the political scene elsewhere. East Germany and the Soviet Union accentuated their alliance with each other. The congratu-

lations from Honecker to the successful East German team members in March 1976, was an example of this: "You have represented the socialistic homeland honourably next to the fantastic Soviet athletes" (ND, 25.8.76).

The East German athletes had a very patriotic point of view, while Mac Wilkins, an American winner, commented, "I won my gold for myself and not for the USA" (FAZ, 27.7.76). Many athletes from West Germany might have thought the same way; in the SED country, such a comment into the world would be treated as treason.

### *The athletes' image in the press*

The East Germans called teams from Capitalist countries their greatest rivals. They had to be beaten as they represented a wrong social order. This was not stated overtly, but was a criterion for the evaluation of successes in sports by the head of the party. Triumphantly, the DTSP president Ewald spoke about the historical victory of the socialistic country at the Games in Montreal. With regard to their different social functions, the behaviour of the athletes from East and West were compared. The East German athletes were supposed to represent a socialistic personality, characterised by dogmatic beliefs, and high moral principles. As "diplomats in track suits" their behaviour may not discredit the socialist image.

In comparison with ND, FAZ often sketched athletes who failed physically, whose behaviour was unsatisfactory, and who were bad losers. This is illustrated by the following example: The four world champions of the year before, Klaus Steinbach, Peter Nocke, Werner Lampe, and Hans Joachim Geister, just missed bronze medals. This resulted in tears, swearing and uncontrolled outbursts of rage. Nocke, for instance, jumped around on his track suit (FAZ, 23.7.76, p. 13). Michael Kolbe, who won a silver medal, had not much to say and was seemingly disappointed. In comparison, Frank Baumgarter did not lose face when he fell and lost his chance in a fight for the gold medal. Within a fraction of a second he was over the shock, went after his opponent again, and managed to win a bronze medal. He himself commented by saying it would be wrong to say that "I would have won the grace otherwise" (ND, 2.8.76, p. 8).

The reasons ND (e.g. 23.7.76, p. 8) gave for the great victory of their athletes, were concentration, fighting spirit, and great strength of nerves. Not the one with the muscles, but the disciplined, controlled, athlete was the leading motive in the reports of the ND. The will to represent socialist home as successful as possible, is given as a reason for their strength. These factors collectively help to overcome the failures.

It was also mentioned that the East German athletes only went on

outings as a group. Only a few functionaries thus had to watch over the behaviour of the athletes (c.f. *Globe and Mail*, 28.7.76, p. 55).

The Olympic spirit was demonstrated by the East German teams, when they invited all their athletes, who did not win any medals, to a party in a restaurant. The ND (27.7.76, p. 7) said that the disappointed athletes could feel that a medal was not the only thing the team was looking for.

The Eastern and Western press presented a different picture of the female star athletes. ND tended to ignore the discussion, while Canadian papers (e.g. *Vancouver Sun*, 20.7.76, p. 18) dealt with the issue in great length.

Two other important facts that characterised the press reports of the ND, should be mentioned: they endeavoured to interest the masses in sports activities like walking, swimming and cycling (e.g. 31.7/1.8.76, p. 8). The SED functionaries probably hoped to transfer the readiness for achievement in sport to the working sector (c.f. Voigt, 1976, 1980; Voigt and Burger, 1977). In ND this was shown by a caricature: on the winning pedestal sat a worker with the laurels of victory (ND, 19.7.76, p. 2; 7/8.8.76, p. 9).

## References

*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 5 July 1976 — 14 August 1976.

*Neues Deutschland*, 5 July 1976 — 14 August 1976.