Integrating Macro- and Meso-Level Approaches: A Comparative Analysis of Elite Sport Development in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom

MICK GREEN
Loughborough University, U.K.

ABSTRACT Drawing on a research study that analysed elite sport policy change in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom (U.K.), this article underscores the utility of integrating macro- and meso-levels of analysis. We illustrate how macro-level analysis can help explain both the membership of meso-level advocacy coalitions and the policy outcomes from them. The macro-level analysis takes two forms: (i) an exploration of State theory (neo-pluralism); and (ii) an investigation of two macro-political features of the State—the parliamentary support enjoyed by sporting interest groups and the organisational structure of the State. We conclude that despite all three countries being characterised as “least centralised States” where we would expect to find considerable checks and balances to a dominant “State presence” in a particular policy sector, federal/central governments (and their primary sporting agencies) in Australia, Canada and the U.K. have exerted considerable influence in promoting and shaping the values, organisation and activities of elite sport advocacy coalitions.

Introduction

In recent years the calls for public policy analyses to integrate different theoretical perspectives and levels of analysis have become ever more compelling (Marsh & Rhodes, 1992; Smith, 1993; Marsh & Stoker, 1995; Daugbjerg & Marsh, 1998). In part, this article is a response to such exhortations. It is beyond the scope of the article to investigate the micro-level of analysis, which examines individual actions and the decisions of
actors in a specific locale, and which must be underpinned by a theory of individual behaviour. Rather, our focus here is on an exploration of the efficacy of integrating the macro- and meso-levels of analysis. What follows is not purely a theoretical treatise: we draw on data from a comparative analysis of policy change in elite sport development in Australia, Canada and the U.K. conducted between 2000 and 2004 (see Green, 2003; Green & Houlihan, 2005). Our primary aim in this article is to illustrate how macro-level analysis can help explain both the membership of meso-level advocacy coalitions and the policy outcomes from them in respect of elite sport development. In particular, the article reveals both the utility and the limitations of advocacy coalition analysis. It cannot explain policy outcomes simply by reference to the structures of coalitions or the behaviour of actors therein. We need to understand why coalitions take the form they do, how they relate to the broader political system and thus how policy outcomes might be facilitated/constrained (Daugbjerg & Marsh, 1998, p. 71). In so doing, we hope to contribute more broadly to a better understanding of the similarities and differences of policy decisions and outcomes in different cultural/sporting contexts.

The broader context for this analysis lies in the increasing significance of sport as a politically salient cultural institution. In short, sport is now a particularly malleable and high profile policy instrument for countries as diverse as China, Singapore, Japan, Australia, Canada and the U.K. Governments increasingly utilise sporting programmes and initiatives to realise an array of objectives in a range of policy sectors. These include: social inclusion, crime reduction, urban regeneration, raising school standards, reducing obesity and the achievement of international sporting success. The key point here is that, today, sport as a cultural institution is a significant contributor to the vitality, vibrancy and international profile of a nation. Our focus in this article is on the achievement of international, and especially Olympic, sporting success. In recent years governments have become more willing to intervene directly in the elite sport development process requiring substantial changes on the part of national sporting organisations (NSOs) and national governing bodies (NGBs) of sport (for example, professional management, high quality coaching, and talent identification programmes) as a condition of grant aid. At the same time, NSOs/NGBs are also expected to realise government policy objectives (such as increasing physical activity) at the grassroots level. Thus part of the analysis in section three centres on the ways in which governments in Australia, Canada and the U.K. prioritise sporting objectives along the elite sport—mass participation continuum.

The first section of the article outlines the rationale for adopting a neo-pluralist, macro-level (State theory) approach. The second section sets out the key assumptions of the meso-level theoretical lens that informed the empirical investigation: the advocacy coalition framework. The third and substantive section draws together the material from the first two sections and, through an analysis of macro-level approaches, explores the patterns of inclusion and exclusion (in respect of elite sport development)
that characterise advocacy coalitions. This macro-level analysis takes two forms. First, we investigate the ways in which policy change might be better understood and explained through a neo-pluralist approach (for a fuller discussion of the potential linkages between different forms of State theory and meso-level approaches, see Marsh & Rhodes, 1992; Marsh, 1995; Daugbjerg & Marsh, 1998). Second, we draw on the work of Daugbjerg and Marsh (1998) who identify two macro-features of the State, which are key characteristics of a nation’s political system and, at the same time, have meso-level effects. Our argument is that, pace Daugbjerg and Marsh, “both the parliamentary support enjoyed by various social groups and the organisational structure of the State influence meso-level policy processes” (p. 62). Finally, brief conclusions are drawn in respect of the efficacy of integrating macro- and meso-level approaches in relation to elite sport policy outcomes in Australia, Canada and the U.K.

State Theory

In respect of the importance of the role of the State in public policy processes, Hill (1997), for example, argues that “Policy is the product of the exercise of political influence, determining what the State does and setting limits to what it does” (p. 41), while Connell (1990) notes that “Drawing boundaries around ‘the State’ is not easy” (p. 509). It is generally agreed then that the State is not unified. Conflicts can arise between elected politicians and non-elected civil servants over policy direction, between different departments or units of the State and between politicians at different levels of the State over policy and resources. Therefore, as Smith (1993) argues, “it is very difficult to identify the State’s interests because various parts of the State can have conflicting interests” (p. 2). It is crucial, therefore, that in the attempt to integrate the advocacy coalition framework (ACF) and State theory there is a need to disaggregate both the State and the relationships between the State and interest groups within civil society (cf. Daugbjerg & Marsh, 1998). The ACF fits well with this argument given its assumption of competing coalitions, comprising actors/organisations representing a broad array of interests, within a policy subsystem where “coalitions have a multitude of possible venues” for realising policy objectives (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1999, p. 142).

One further point is important here; namely, the problems arising from the ill-defined term, “public policy”. A number of potential routes through this definitional quandary have been suggested. Heclo (1972), for example, emphasises action in arguing that “A policy may usefully be considered as a course of action or inaction rather than specific decisions” (p. 85). Heclo’s reference to “inaction” is particularly apposite with respect to policy-making and relations of power. A rather more concrete definition is provided by Jenkins (1997), who suggests that public policy can be conceived of as a set of interrelated:
decisions taken by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specified situation where these decisions should, in principle, be within the power of these actors to achieve. (Jenkins, 1997, p. 30)

Although it would be wise to qualify Jenkins' definition by adding “non-decisions”, his definition usefully draws attention to two important “attributes” of policy relevant to this article. First, there is an emphasis on the interrelatedness of decisions, suggesting that policies cannot be viewed in isolation but as part of a sequence or cluster of decisions. Second, the reference to “political actors” signals issues of power and policy influence and “alerts us to the assumptions of pluralist politics where power and resource control are not monopolised by holders of formal offices” (Houlihan, 1997, p. 4). In line with these arguments, while we acknowledge the important contributions of various Marxist interpretations, corporatism and elitism (cf. Dunleavy & O’Leary, 1987; Held, 1996), the study on which this article draws adopted a broadly neo-pluralist perspective at the macro-level of analysis. A brief outline of this perspective helps to substantiate the persuasiveness of this approach.

**Neo-pluralism**

Given the conceptual and empirical problems (cf. Lukes, 1974; Held, 1996) associated with what we might term, the “classic pluralist” perspective, a number of “competing schools and tendencies” (Held, 1996, p. 214) have evolved, one of the most notable being the “neo-pluralist” position. Like its classical counterpart, neo-pluralism bridges several disciplines and is somewhat eclectic in the substantive views espoused by its exponents. Unlike the new right, radical elite theory or Marxism, neo-pluralism cannot be clearly located on the left–right ideological spectrum. It stresses the complicated design of contemporary social and political arrangements and the loss of realism and relevance involved in an over-emphasis on parsimonious theory construction. As Dunleavy and O’Leary (1987, p. 287) observe, neo-pluralist accounts do not privilege “a single dominant causal factor (whether it be market processes or the class struggle)”. As such, in order to obtain an adequate explanatory grip on modern social arrangements, neo-pluralists acknowledge the fragmentation of the State, the growth of decentralised networks of multiple separate agencies, and the role and influence of quasi-governmental agencies (e.g., Sport England). In short, there are “now relatively few areas of government which are run directly by central or federal government departments” (Dunleavy & O’Leary, 1987, p. 305). Therefore, in part, this article seeks to understand better the nature of public policy (sporting) outcomes within this complicated system of governmental relationships with sporting interest groups and agencies.

Neo-pluralism acknowledges that business interests are often in a stronger position than other groups and enjoy certain advantages over the consumer and the market (Dunleavy & O’Leary, 1987). Lindblom (1977) has been a
key proponent of the neo-pluralist position, arguing that policy-making is constrained by the workings of capitalism, particularly business interests and market forces. Smith (1995) provides a useful summation of this position in arguing that “The importance of business to the government means that the government will respond automatically to business’s interests. Power is structural rather than observable... power can be exercised in an unobservable way through structures, anticipated reaction and ideology” (pp. 223–224). These observations resonate with and draw attention to Lukes’ (1974) third dimension of power. Lukes’ third dimension of power involves “the exercise of power to shape people’s preferences so that neither overt nor covert conflicts exist” (Ham & Hill, 1993, p. 70). Of particular interest for this article is Lukes’ (1974) contention that a manipulated consensus may exist and may be maintained through the domination by a powerful group (here, elite sport interests), and that “the most effective and insidious use of power is to prevent... conflict from arising in the first place” (p. 23).

More generally, neo-pluralists contend that, although business interests might be disproportionately represented, this analysis can be broadened to account for the significant role played by “policy elites” in eliciting support for their policy ambitions; an underlying premise of the ACF (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1999, p. 133). In short, neo-pluralists accept that some groups are in a stronger position than others in the policy-making process. Our standpoint therefore is that neo-pluralist assumptions offer the greater potential to reflect both the interest group/State relationships of modern liberal democracies and the specific policy sector (sport) under consideration. Such a position assumes that there are multiple pressure groups but the political agenda is (potentially) skewed towards corporate power and/or policy elites; the State and its departments possess their own sectoral interests; and power is contested by numerous groups (cf. Dunleavy & O’Leary, 1987; Smith, 1993, 1995; Held, 1996). This line of reasoning is borne out by Houlihan (1997), who argues that meso-level analysis such as that provided by the policy networks approach or the advocacy coalition framework are instructive as metaphors for policy-making only when located within a broader theory of power, with neo-pluralist analyses suggested as one of the “most persuasive” models of power available (Houlihan, 1997, p. 257).

**Meso-Level Analysis—the Advocacy Coalition Framework**

Although the advocacy coalition framework (ACF) “has much in common with the policy network school”, the ACF “is a broader set of processes than that evoked by the network metaphor” (John, 1998, p. 169), and one that has a specific focus on explaining policy change. The ACF offers a connection between ideas and coalition formation in policy subsystems. Policy subsystems normally comprise between two and four coalitions, which compete for influence, although one might be a dominant coalition. Belief systems provide the source of cohesion within coalitions, with beliefs being disaggregated into three levels: first, “deep core” beliefs which refer to
basic values regarding, for example, gender relations and the sports considered appropriate for girls and boys; second, “policy core” beliefs which are the basic normative commitments within the subsystem, for example, the importance of Sport for All initiatives within the community relative to the support given to elite sport; and finally, “secondary aspects” which refer to more routine aspects of policy, for example, the range of sports prioritised for support by the Sports Councils in the U.K., and specific resource allocations in different programme areas such as physical activity, health and fitness and school sport.

Conflict between coalitions, often mediated by a “policy broker”, is a source of policy outputs and policy dynamics, although change can also occur as a result of medium to long-term “policy-oriented learning” (Sabatier, 1998, p. 104). Policy-oriented learning describes relatively long-term changes in beliefs that result from “experience and/or new information” (1998, p. 104). Although Sabatier accepts that coalitions will resist with greater determination the acceptance of information that challenges deep core beliefs, he argues for the essential rationality of coalition behaviour. Further sources of policy change include exogenous developments and “non-cognitive source[s] of change that can substantially alter the political resources of various coalitions and thus policy decisions” (1998, p. 105). According to Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1999) exogenous factors include changes in socio-economic factors (e.g., the growing awareness of child obesity), technology (e.g., the increasing emphasis put upon scientific approaches to identifying young talent); the systemic governing coalition (e.g., in the U.K., the election of the Labour Government in 1997); public opinion (e.g., the mobilisation of public opinion through the media on the issue of competitive school sport); and policy decisions in other subsystems that further or obstruct the objectives of competing coalitions (e.g., spillover from health and education). The application of the ACF thus prompts investigation of the impact of ideas and policy learning, the extent of policy advocacy by a dominant coalition of actors/organisations, and the nature and impact of exogenous factors.

Finally, with regard to our substantive interest in exploring the integration of theoretical perspectives and levels of analysis, the notion of a policy subsystem within ACF assumptions is pertinent to Dunleavy and O’Leary’s discussion of neo-pluralism (at the macro-level) and policy communities (at the meso-level). With respect to these two levels of analysis, it is argued that:

Wherever policy-making is split between different agencies or tiers of government, complicated systems of inter-governmental or inter-agency relations evolve. These systems create “policy communities” [or advocacy coalitions] where rational debate and education about issues can take place . . . . They are networks [or subsystems] of personal contacts, or more formalised channels for ideas and communication between diverse agencies. (Dunleavy & O’Leary, 1987, p. 306)
The Sport Policy Process, State Theory and Macro-Political Features of the State

This section explores the utility of integrating insights from the meso-level ACF within a macro-level analysis of State theory (neo-pluralism) and two macro-political features of the State: the parliamentary support enjoyed by various sporting interest groups and the organisational structure of the State. We begin each country analysis by outlining the key policy indicators that underscore the importance to government of elite sport success.

Australia

The establishment of the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) in 1981 and the creation of the federal government agency—the Australian Sports Commission (ASC)—in 1985 have, arguably, been the clearest manifestations of the country’s desire to reverse its “slide in international sporting competitions” (Adair & Vamplew, 1997, p. 93). Importantly, a large degree of political consensus across the country’s two main political parties underpinned these developments. What has emerged in the intervening years is a systematic, planned and increasingly scientific approach to developing the country’s elite athletes (cf. Bloomfield, 2003). Yet, a recurrent and significant theme in the development of Australian sport policy is the discourse surrounding the relative funding allocations for mass participation initiatives and those for elite sport programmes (Stewart, Nicholson, Smith, & Westerbeek, 2004). Indeed, an examination of Australian public policy since 1975 reveals an apparent reluctance to address both sport policy goals with equal commitment (cf. Booth, 1995; Armstrong, 1997). In short, as Hogan and Norton (2000) note, funding has been targeted towards “the skill development of talented athletes in the continuum of elite athlete ‘production’” (pp. 215, 216). We are now in a position to provide insights into the tensions arising from the federal government’s support for elite level sport and its relative lack of support for other interest groups involved in sport development more generally (cf. Commonwealth of Australia, 1999).

Although the overriding assumptions behind the study of public policy in Australia have been noted as pluralist (cf. Emy, 1978), recent changes have emphasised the limitations of a purely pluralist analysis of the policy process. Citing recent changes to pluralist analyses, Laffin (1989) notes that countries such as Australia and Great Britain can be characterised as ones in which policy-making is increasingly conducted within discrete policy communities/advocacy coalitions operating in different (meso-level) policy domains (see also Bevir & Rhodes, 2003). The basis for such policy communities/advocacy coalitions is perceived as the increasing specialisation in many public policy areas—an important aspect of the elite sport policy domain in all three countries analysed in this article. It is argued that an array of non-State actors is now increasingly significant in different areas of public policymaking, encompassing “senior public servants, experts and professionals in the field and representatives of ‘respectable’ interest groups” (Laffin, 1989,
The persuasiveness of a neo-pluralist standpoint is thus reinforced, which embraces a wider array of actors than would be expected from a corporatist analysis, for example.

However, corporatist approaches cannot be discounted in the Australian context (Matthews, 1989; Head, 1994). Corporatism stresses the existence of strong cohesive interest groups capable of acting purposefully on behalf of their members, while emphasising the capacity of government to co-opt and organise these interests (Houlihan, 1997; see also, for example, Held, 1996). In Australia, “corporatists” point to a number of structures and administrative arrangements that suggest corporatism as a primary mode of interest mediation. These include the “Statement of Accord” signed between the Labour Party and the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) in 1983, the staging of a National Economic Summit in the same year and the creation of a tripartite Economic Planning Advisory Council (cf. Head, 1994, p. 271). On one level, these arrangements appear to indicate evidence of corporatist practices that “integrate trade unions with the State/executive bureaucracy and associations of business in forming, legitimating and administering public policy” (Panitch, 1981, p. 29). However, Matthews (1989) suggests a more revealing examination is required. Crucially, Matthews argues, *inter alia*, that “business is not a party to the Accord” and that business is unwilling, for political motives, to be party “to tripartite arrangements between the ACTU and a Labour government” (p. 224). In short, Matthews concludes that, in Australia, governmental and group structures and mediation are in many ways incompatible with corporatism, while Stewart (1991) suggests that “the pattern of relationships between interests and government is neither corporatist nor pluralist but fragmented” (p. 361). It appears therefore that there is no broad consensus on whether Australia is characterised by either pluralist or corporatist conceptions of State/civil society mediation, at least at the level of macroeconomic policy. On the one hand, neo-corporatists identify the existence of monopolies of sectional interests within the policy-making process, reflected in closed policy networks, for example, but not necessarily tripartite ones (Evans, 1995, p. 245). On the other hand, neo-pluralists now acknowledge the privileged role of business as well as the increasing evidence of professionalised administration in many policy areas (cf. Dunleavy & O’Leary, 1987; Held, 1996). Thus, (any) faultlines between the two approaches become ever more opaque.

With these thoughts in mind, we can turn to the two macro-political features of the State noted earlier. With regard to parliamentary influence and policy networks/subsystems, Daugbjerg and Marsh (1998) argue that, in revealing how political parties “privilege certain interests, and not others, we can examine their ideologies, general policy positions and electoral appeals. These bias the policy process in a direction that favours some groups over others” (p. 62). Given that the only interest groups formally affiliated to a political party in Australia are the trade unions (Matthews, 1989, p. 220), there is an imperative to elicit some other way of identifying why particular groups in the sport policy process are privileged over others. In particular,
we are concerned to note the clear convergence between the two main political parties in Australia (and thus the values and belief systems underlying this convergence) in respect of the overriding support for elite sport development over the past 25 years (cf. Commonwealth of Australia, 1999; Stewart et al., 2004; Green & Houlihan, 2005). Logically, this argument presupposes an investigation of “other” levels or groups involved in sport policy-making that are not in such a privileged position, and which may form less dominant coalitions with different sets of values and belief systems to those involved with elite concerns—for example, community sport development or mass participation activities at state–territory/region/local levels. Yet, it is clear that the development of elite performers has been the primary sport policy objective of Australian federal governments for the past quarter century. As Stewart et al. (2004, p. 96) note, “The Commonwealth [federal] Government’s 2001–2005 sport policy confirms that elite sport development is still the driving force, as it was in the 1980s and 1990s”. Elite sport development in Australia has been dominated by a discrete coalition of interest groups (primarily, the ASC, AIS and major Olympic NSOs) with the federal government emerging as the dominant organisational actor. This is an important point. As Daugbjerg and Marsh (1998, p. 58) observe, when the State assumes a dominant role it enjoys considerable autonomy and the exclusion of weaker interest groups is therefore much more likely. That these conditions have contoured Australian sport policy for many years is clear from the argument that:

... despite the concerns of critics that recent sport policy is biased towards the elite, and disadvantages ordinary players, minority groups, and community sport in general, it has a strong political logic that is linked to the social benefits it generates, and its electorate appeal. (Stewart et al., 2004, p. 192)

Thus, while the social benefits from the federal government’s elite sport policy might have met expectations, there have been few tangible benefits at the mass participation levels of sport. Although Stewart et al. (2004) acknowledge that the most recent federal level sport policy goes some way to addressing this policy problem, they also maintain that “it is still the Achilles heel of Commonwealth Government sport policy” (p. 192), with no evidence that many years of federal government “investment has dramatically increased the level of sport participation” (p. 190).

With regard to State structures, “an important organisational configuration which influences meso-level policy processes is the internal division of authority within the State” (Daugbjerg & Marsh, 1998, p. 65). This argument rests on the assumption that States in which authority is dispersed develop competing decision-making centres which, in turn, limit the power of State actors interacting with interest groups. Daugbjerg and Marsh cite federal States as one example of the latter (States with strong parliaments which limit the power of the Executive is the other). A characteristic of federal States is fragmentation, with competition evident between national
and regional (or sub-national) decision-making centres. As Matthews (1989) notes in the Australian context, “federalism fractures and divides ‘the State’. Many powers are shared between the Commonwealth Government and the states” (p. 225).

Interestingly, Green and Houlihan (2005) found clear evidence of fractures and divisions in Australian sport policy, which can be partly explained by the federal government’s longstanding focus on elite sport while sporting objectives at state-territory/regional/local levels have been disproportionately neglected (see also Commonwealth of Australia, 1999; Stewart et al., 2004). An example helps to make the point. Fractures and divisions between different levels of policy intervention were evident in a report commissioned by the lobby group, Sport Industry Australia (SIA), and the Australian Sports Commission (ASC)—The status of sport in rural and regional Australia (SIA, 2001). Two issues raised in this report are instructive. First, in discussing the ties between promoting elite sport, and developing sport at the grassroots level, it concludes that, “with regard to rural and regional Australia it is even harder to see how elite funding would benefit the grassroots groups who are struggling in outlying areas” (SIA, 2001). Second, the role of organised sport in the process of promoting sport as a vehicle for healthy participation is problematised. If sport and leisure are to be promoted to increase the physical and mental health of the nation, for the benefit of the individual and the wider community, questions were raised in the SIA report as to whether delivery of funding and programmes through organised sport is the most efficient method. The report argues that an economically rational approach that seeks to get the best health outcomes from sports funding, “might not direct any funds to elite sport, or even sport in the narrow and traditional sense, especially if the desire was to deliver the benefit in rural and regional Australia” (SIA, 2001). What is very clear in the Australian case is that, although the country’s federal constitution allows for competing decision-making centres, the strength (and autonomy) of the federal government (and its primary sporting agency, the ASC) has enabled elite sport priorities to effectively “close down” opportunities for other voices to be heard that do not share the overriding belief in prioritising elite success.

Canada

Beginning in the 1970s, the Canadian federal government was responsible for the construction of a policy framework that underpinned the establishment of a cadre of elite athletes capable of achieving medal-winning success at major international sporting events, most notably at the Olympic Games (cf. Macintosh & Whitson, 1990). The unintended consequences of this drive for sporting excellence in Canada were brought into sharp relief with the Ben Johnson drugs affair at the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games. What followed were a number of inquiries into the values and belief systems underpinning Canadian sport in general, and Canadian high performance sport in particular (cf. Dubin, 1990; Blackhurst, Schneider, & Strachan,
1991; Canada, 1992). The subsequent debate over the values/belief systems underpinning the country’s amateur sport system resulted in the changing emphases evident in the new Canadian Sport Policy (Canadian Heritage, 2002) and subsequent legislation, *An Act to promote physical activity and sport*—Bill C-12 (House of Commons of Canada, 2002). In short, in Canada there is evidence of a significant shift in federal policy direction away from an overriding emphasis on high performance sport (Green, 2004b; Green & Houlihan, 2004). This shift in federal level policy priorities forms part of our ensuing analysis of Canadian sport policy outcomes.

As in Australia, there is some debate in Canada as to whether the policy-making process is (and/or has been) characterised by a pluralist or corporatist approach to interest group mediation (cf. Olafson & Brown-John, 1986; Pross, 1986; Harvey, Thibault, & Rail, 1995). On the one hand, Olafson and Brown-John (1986) suggest that “Policy outputs, be they related to sports or foreign policy, are, in one manner or another, a product of an interactive process referred to as pluralism” (p. 70). On the other hand, within an analysis of how the State has managed interest politics in Canada, Harvey et al. (1995) argue that “the political management system used by the government to manage its relationship with the various interest groups involved in amateur sport and fitness can be qualified as neo-corporatist” (p. 251). Indeed, it is perhaps misleading to treat interest group/government relations as either pluralist or corporatist. For example, different policy sectors may evidence characteristics of one, or the other, or both, and in either parallel or distinct temporalities. Thus, during the economic crisis of the early 1970s, an attempt to introduce corporatist arrangements was undertaken by the Trudeau Government to involve both business and unions in a tripartite relationship in order to achieve agreement on prices and incomes. However, in non-economic policy domains corporatist arrangements were unusual, with State/interest group mediation generally closer to a pluralistic policy community/advocacy coalition model (Houlihan, 1997, p. 38).

In terms of pluralism, the post-Second World War period has been characterised by the growth in a number of interest groups in different policy areas, in large part, actively encouraged by the federal government in order to help manage an increasingly burdensome set of policy responsibilities. For Pross (1986), the encouragement of interest group formation was indicative of an attempt by government agencies to establish policy communities or advocacy coalitions, characterised, not by zero-sum dependency relationships but by mutually beneficial relations between agency and interests. The perception of Canadian policy communities is one characterised by a commitment to a common set of values, an implicit organisational and authority structure, and where established patterns of behaviour are apparent (Houlihan, 1997, p. 37; Pross, 1986, p. 98). The utility of the ACF in the context of Canadian State/civil society interest group mediation is clear as advocacy coalitions are closely related to tightly-knit policy communities (cf. Green, 2003). Moreover, the following observations regarding Canadian policy networks/communities not only reinforce the
persuasiveness of the ACF’s focus on the relationship between endogenous and exogenous forces as significant factors underlying change but they also point to (variants of) pluralism as a salient macro-level approach. As Coleman and Skogstad (1990) note, “both basic socio-economic changes and accompanying shifts in values quickly lead to alterations of policy communities in this complex regime of organised pluralism” (p. 322).

Utilising the two macro-political features of the State noted in the Australian case it is clear that some groups have enjoyed significantly more support than others in Canadian sport policy outcomes. In relation to parliamentary support for different interest groups vying to influence governmental policies regarding sport, a fundamental question centres on the purposes of federal involvement in sport in Canada (cf. Macintosh & Whitson, 1990). From the mid-1970s until the early 1990s, when the Dubin Inquiry (Dubin, 1990) and the Best report (Canada, 1992) recommended a less elitist approach to sport, it is clear that Canadian governments, both Liberal and Conservative, have supported policies promoting elite level sport programmes but which have been criticised as being detrimental to wider social equity goals related to sporting activity for all (cf. Kidd, 1988, 1995). In many respects, the “national unity” motive underlies this disparity as, Pierre Trudeau, in particular, utilised (high performance) sport performances in order to achieve international recognition as one aspect of “his wider plan for a liberal federalist nationalism” (Zakus, 1996, p. 42).

A further significant factor underlying the federal government focus on the elite level is that, from the early 1980s, the discursive construction of sport policy, using the language of technocracy and science, has been the dominant discourse in Canada, “representing the efforts of an aspirant profession to link its own special knowledge with ideas in ‘good standing’” (Macintosh & Whitson, 1990, p. 110). We can see evidence here of a conjuncture of federal government interest with those actors/organisations involved in the increasingly scientific “production of performance” at the elite level of sport. Questions of power relations and influence are implicated in this conjuncture. As Daugbjerg and Marsh (1998) observe, “The structure of party loyalties has an impact upon the formation of meso-level policy networks [subsystems]. Political parties tend to favour some groups’ interests by giving them access to policy networks and excluding others” (p. 63). The potential for a more exclusive policy community or advocacy coalition comprised of the State actor responsible for policy (Sport Canada) and the privileged group (Olympic NSOs) is clear. Such a conjunction gives both sets of “actors” a central position within the policy network or policy subsystem and enables them (potentially) to exclude others. As Macintosh and Whitson (1990) observe in their analysis of Canadian sport policy, this conjuncture of interests has “involved real power struggles, in which some interest groups and coalitions of interests have gained influence ... while others have lost it” (p. 109).

At first sight, these observations appear to confirm Harvey et al.’s (1995) argument that corporatist or neo-corporatist tendencies have been the dominant mode of government/civil society mediation in respect of the
management of amateur sport in Canada. Such an approach is characterised by restricted access. As Hayward (1979) observes, "only those groups that have something to offer the State are candidates for such virtual 'incorporation'. Those that are simply making demands upon it, the pure pressure groups, are persona non grata" (p. 37). An important point is raised here, which reflects the above contention regarding high performance sport as dominating sport policy discourse in Canada. That is, as Harvey et al. (1995) have argued, "innovation is [not] possible or even expected in the corporatist structure, as representatives are selected by the State based on their similarities, not their differences. As a result, new initiatives are stifled before they reach the discussion stage" (p. 260). However, Harvey et al. also point to recent developments, which suggest "that efforts are being made to enhance the participation of interest groups in the future of amateur sport and fitness in Canada" (p. 262). This last suggestion is reinforced in two policy-related documents published in 2001: the discussion paper *Building Canada through sport: Towards a Canadian sport policy* (Canadian Heritage, 2001a), and *Towards a Canadian sport policy: Report on the national summit on sport* (Canadian Heritage, 2001b). The discussion paper, for example, detailed the federal government's intention to develop a Canadian sport policy "following a broad consultation with Canadians at the community, provincial, regional and national levels" (Canadian Heritage, 2001a, p. 2), through six regional conferences across the country with more than 600 selected representatives.

As noted, the outcome of the above deliberations on the future of Canadian sport has resulted in the publication of a new Canadian sport policy and *An Act to promote physical activity and sport*—Bill C12 in 2002. However, whether the policy and political rhetoric of a less elitist, and thus more inclusive approach to government/civil society intermediation in Canadian sport manifests a fundamentally different set of values/beliefs other than those centred on high performance sport objectives remains to be seen. Despite this caveat, the reference in the *Report on the national summit of sport* to "cooperation with the provinces" (Canadian Heritage, 2001b, p. 12) is instructive, as "An important organisational configuration which influences meso-level policy processes is the internal division of authority within the State" (Daugbjerg & Marsh, 1998, p. 65). This leads on to a summary of the second macro-level feature highlighted by Daugbjerg and Marsh, namely, "State structures". In short, the issue in Canada appears to centre on how recent proposals for increased integration of the Canadian sport delivery system might be compromised by the size and variety of the country, by the competing claims of different regional interests and the national interest and by federal–provincial/territorial jurisdictional divisions (cf. Macintosh & Whitson, 1990).

Historically, provincial/territorial governments in Canada have been perceived as peripheral in many key social and welfare policy domains (Pross, 1986). However, it should also be noted that the specific character of individual policy communities/advocacy coalitions may vary and should, therefore, remain open to empirical scrutiny. The representation of
provincial/territorial governments at the level of high performance sport policy-making processes is of particular interest here. Daugbjerg and Marsh (1998) suggest that federal States tend to be one example of “least centralised States” (p. 65) where competing decision-making centres are developed and which, in turn, influence the formation of meso-level policy networks and subsystems. It is important therefore at this juncture to investigate whether there is evidence that this is (and/or has been) the case in the context of Canadian sport policy. This issue is clearly related to the development of federalism and the values/beliefs underlying the notion of national unity. Historically, Pierre Trudeau is a significant actor in this respect, and one who is irredeemably linked to the nexus between sport, federalism and national unity. Trudeau (1990) wrote that he “believed in federalism as a superior form of government; by definition, it is more pluralist than monolithic and therefore respects diversity among people and groups” (p. 359). However, as Zakus (1996) notes, the federal nationalism that Trudeau conceived of as a positive development in Canada’s history appears to be contradictory in terms of sport. Macintosh and Whitson (1990, pp. 125–126) reinforce this point in suggesting that jurisdictional ambiguity between federal and provincial levels has resulted in duplication rather than complementary policies for sport and recreation; a scenario, moreover, that has led to a degree of policy divergence between the more prosperous (e.g., Québec, British Columbia and Alberta) and less prosperous provinces. As noted, in contemporary Canadian sport policy debates, serious questions have been raised at a federal level regarding the consequence of such elite-focused polices towards sport. As one of the key contributors to the National Summit on Sport argued:

We cannot achieve an integrated system without close collaboration between the senior orders of government [provincial, territorial and federal] . . . I call upon all parties to work towards something like a social accord for sport and physical education, recognising regional and cultural differences. (Kidd, cited in Canadian Heritage, 2001b, p. 10)

However, the desire for “an integrated system” in Canadian amateur sport is undermined to the extent that some Canadian provinces have high performance sport ambitions of their own. This is particularly true of Québec, which recognised the value of elite sport for its own “nationalist” programme (Harvey, 1999). As Macintosh (1991) has argued more generally:

In the rush to get on the high-performance band-wagon provincial governments abandoned their previously strongly held position as champions of mass sport . . . and commenced to compete with the federal government for the attention and glamour associated with international events. (Macintosh, 1991, p. 271)
In sum, despite the plethora of Canadian sport policy statements of the past 30 years or so espousing notions of inclusiveness and collaboration (see Green & Houlihan, 2005), questions remain as to whether shifts towards a more plural and inclusive approach to sport policy debates (cf. Harvey et al., 1995) will result in concrete policy outcomes that benefit interest groups other than those concerned with high performance sport.

**United Kingdom**

In the U.K., policy priorities towards developing a framework of support systems for elite level athletes have, traditionally, been rather more ambiguous than in either Australia or Canada. Yet, two factors in particular are central to the changing direction and emphasis of sport policy in the U.K. since the mid 1990s. First, in 1994, the National Lottery was introduced, with sport being one of five “good causes” to benefit from the monies raised. The significance of Lottery monies for the emergence of a more systematic approach to developing the country’s elite athletes cannot be underestimated. In 2001–2002, for example, “£22,550,608 was allocated from the World Class Performance³ programme to 33 U.K./GB⁴ sports, representing a total of 762 athletes” (U.K. Sport, 2002, p. 7). The significance of Lottery monies is clear if we consider that, in the same year, U.K. Sport distributed (just) £5,817,768 of Treasury funding to U.K./GB NGBs and other partner organisations to support, largely, their non-elite activities (U.K. Sport, 2002). Second, in 1995 the Conservative Government published Sport: Raising the game (Department of National Heritage, 1995), the first government policy statement on sport in 20 years. The two key strands of Sport: Raising the game—youth sport and excellence—were sustained in the Labour Party’s sport policy document, A sporting future for all (Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2000). A further instructive aspect of this document is the emphasis put on the modernisation of NGBs, to be achieved, in large part, by meeting objectives set at DCMS/U.K. Sport/Home Country Sports Council levels. Therefore, an important aspect of the following discussion centres on the significance of the changing pattern of resource dependency and the government prioritisation of elite sport success relative to other levels of sport development in the U.K.

As in the Australian and Canadian contexts, there has been considerable debate in the U.K. as to whether the policy process at the macro-level is (and/or has been) characterised by pluralism or corporatism (cf. Coalter, Long, & Duffield, 1988, p. 74). How, then, have these debates impacted upon sport policy outcomes in the U.K.? In the period before the GB Sports Council was established in 1972, although the significance of success in international competition and participation in sport as a “right of citizenship” were acknowledged, these were not considered as being of significant political importance. As Coalter et al. (1988) note, “The administration of governing bodies was regarded as a pluralist area which, while benefiting from State assistance, would be an inappropriate area for State direction” (p. 76).
The election of a New Right Conservative administration in 1979, however, signified a generally more directive governmental approach. Increasing emphasis on managerial efficiency, financial constraint, accountability, corporate planning and commercial sponsorship were all themes common to both government philosophy and Sports Council practice. Indeed, Rose (1996) argues that such forms of “advanced liberal” governance are characterised by “new mechanisms to link the calculations and actions of a heterogeneous array of organisations into political objectives governing them at a distance through the instrumentalisation of regulated autonomy” (p. 57; and for more detail on notions of advanced liberalism see Rose, 1999). Questions were thus raised during the 1980s as to whether the increasing congruence between government and the Sports Council was indicative of a shift from traditional pluralist approaches in the sport and leisure policy domain towards more corporatist tendencies. Although Coalter et al. (1988, p. 78) suggest that the 1980s witnessed elements of “a growing corporatism” in sport and social policy, the evidence does not appear strong enough to assert with confidence that interest group/government relations in the U.K. at this time (or in more contemporary analyses of sport policy-making) were corporatist in the sense most often employed in public policy-making analyses (cf. Matthews, 1989, p. 223). Our position in this article follows Evans (1995) who points to the potential for inclusion and exclusion of interest groups by policy elites where “An institutional setting for legitimate elite domination is created in which elite circulation is dependent upon the bargaining resources of the various sectional interests” (p. 245); a position that has clear neo-pluralist under-tones. Arguably, the “institutional setting for legitimate elite domination” in the case of sport policy-making in the U.K. is through the increasingly congruent relationship between central government objectives, via the DCMS and its attendant quasi-governmental bodies (Sports Councils), and not only in relation to elite sport policy objectives. We can explore this argument through a similar examination of the two macro-political features of the State considered in the Australian and Canadian contexts.

In respect of the relationship between interest groups and parliamentary parties, of especial concern here is the increasing dominance of the cluster of interests around elite sport, which have enjoyed considerable support from both Conservative and Labour administrations since 1995 (Green, 2004a; Houlihan & White, 2002). This is not to deny that other, less elite-focused, groups have enjoyed similar political support under the Labour Government since 1997. For example, it could be argued that those actors/organisations involved in “community level” sporting activity, and thus more in line with Labour’s social inclusion agenda, have enjoyed substantial political support over this period (cf. Sport England, 1999). Thus, the notion of welfarism that has always been evident in some form within the rhetoric of Sport for All (see, for example, Coalter et al., 1988; Sport England, 1999) moved more into the foreground under the Labour Government. Therefore, as Daugbjerg and Marsh (1998) note, “When a group’s interests are balanced in parliament by another group, then a policy network in which both
conflicting groups are represented together with State representatives may be constructed” (p. 63). These observations remind us that public policy is characterised by the interrelatedness of decisions with governments seeking to maximise resources in eventual policy outcomes across different policy sub-sectors (e.g., health, education, social inclusion, international success).

This argument resonates with Houlihan’s (2000) suggestion that “The present government’s broad ideological orientation is best reflected in the promotion of social inclusion and best value” (p. 176). However, the expectation that these ideological priorities should permeate all public services has to be reconciled with the existence of policy targeted at specific policy sub-sectors. Thus, the quest for Olympic medals may take priority over (or at least moderate) social inclusion goals to the extent that a disproportionate representation of social classes A and B will be accepted if it realises Olympic or other international sporting success (Houlihan, 2000). The relative support enjoyed by different sporting interest groups is further explored in the following section on State structures.

It is worth noting at the outset that, as Roche (1993) reminds us, the organisation and administration of sport in the U.K. “has been little short of a disorganised shambles” (p. 102). In relation to this, the government’s recent sport strategy (Game plan) recognises the challenges posed by the U.K.’s fragmented national structure (England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales) and the complications arising from devolution (DCMS/Strategy Unit, 2002). It is too soon to judge the efficacy of Game plan’s recommendations in this respect but it is an important point to bear in mind as we move to a similar analysis of the macro-level structures that were considered in the Australian and Canadian contexts.

As noted, least centralised States tend to be federal States and those with strong parliaments that limit the power of the Executive. The U.K. falls into the latter category, although before the 2005 general election the Labour Party (and the Executive, in particular) had been accused in various quarters of resisting parliamentary debate because of its large majority in the House of Commons (cf. Phillips, 2001). Whether this was the case is beyond the remit of this article, however, Taylor’s (1997) review of the “arm’s length” principle (enshrined in the 1972 Royal Charter for the GB Sports Council), governance issues, and the creation of the Department of National Heritage (DNH) is instructive. (It should be noted that in 1997 the DNH was reconfigured and renamed as the DCMS by the incoming Labour administration.) Drawing on the policy networks literature, Taylor argues that the creation of the DNH and its client relationships (for example, with the Sports Councils) “raises doubts about the extent to which the State has been ‘hollowed-out’ leading to the diminution of the ‘power’ of the central State” (p. 447). Taylor suggests that the governance thesis points to the development of self-organising networks in which the role of the State is to help set the conditions within which networks operate and help resolve the problems caused by complex patterns of interdependence which tend to blur the distinction between self-regulation and State intervention. Significantly, Taylor concludes that “the resulting pattern bears a close resemblance to
negotiation systems or to an *advocacy coalition* [italics added] which neither removes government from the equation, nor in structural terms does it challenge government centrality in a policy network” (p. 448). It is clear from Taylor’s analysis, however, that “the DNH is exerting a high degree of network control, not by direct intervention but by conditioning the networks’ operations” (p. 465).

The criteria outlined in the Labour Government’s publication *A sporting future for all* lend support to Taylor’s argument that the State plays a significant role in shaping the environment within which sport policymaking operates in the U.K. An excerpt from *A sporting future for all* is instructive: “The success or failure in achieving milestones or targets in performance plans will be an important factor in deciding future levels of funding [for NGBs]” (DCMS, 2000, p. 44). The DCMS therefore exercises influence through setting broad policy and audit guidelines for network bargaining—the arm’s length principle under which ministers set the financial and policy framework within which Sport England and U.K. Sport operate and implement policy (for more detail on the complex funding structures for sport in the U.K., see DCMS/Strategy Unit, 2002). However, NGBs’ dependency on resource allocations (Exchequer and National Lottery), conditioned by the DCMS and distributed by Sport England and U.K. Sport, reveals that the State has emerged as a (if not the) dominant actor and enjoys considerable autonomy in its relationships with sporting interest groups.

McDonald (2000) raises important issues in respect of government aspirations in the development of sport policy in England over the past decade which, not only give credence to Taylor’s (1997) argument regarding increasing central control of the shape and direction of sport policy, in general, but which are also pertinent to this article’s substantive focus on elite sport policy outcomes. McDonald suggests that “the development of excellence is the main objective of Sport England policy and the improvement of Great Britain’s status in the international sporting arena the main Government aspiration” (p. 84). Arguably, this is a somewhat over-determined reading of sport policy, given the Government’s commitment to grassroots sport, school sport and physical education, sport in the community, and the use of sport to tackle social exclusion (DCMS, 2000; Sport England, 1999). Yet, the existence of policy objectives other than the development of excellence is not denied in McDonald’s argument. Rather, his line of reasoning rests on the contention “that other objectives are either peripheral, or exist to support this fundamental strategic objective” (p. 85). In short, it is the commitment to the elite level that has conditioned strategic thinking and specific policy objectives over the past five to ten years (cf. Green, 2004a; Green & Houlihan, 2005). Indeed, Houlihan and White (2002) argue that it is possible to identify four potential advocacy coalitions within sports development in the U.K., “with one of the strongest being that focused on high performance achievement in Olympic and major team sports” (p. 220). It should be noted that Houlihan and White acknowledge that the interest groups involved in physical education and school sport
possess the potential to establish a formidable advocacy coalition (see also Houlihan & Green, forthcoming). However, much weaker by comparison are the clusters of interests concerned with community sport/Sport for All and those concerned with the provision of sporting opportunities at the routine competitive levels (Houlihan & White, 2002, p. 221). Moreover, the recent National Audit Office (NAO) report, which examined U.K. Sport’s support for elite athletes, underscores the potential for an even more circumscribed advocacy coalition around elite sport interests (NAO, 2005). Briefly, in the light of falling National Lottery funds, one of the key recommendations in the NAO report is the reduction of the number of sports supported at the elite level. It appears, then, that support for elite athlete development in the U.K. is shifting inexorably towards even greater prioritisation on those sports that can deliver (efficiently) the State’s (DCMS/U.K. Sport) objectives: namely, Olympic medals, and gold medals in particular.

Conclusions

Our starting premise was that it is not possible to explain either the membership or the outcomes of meso-level advocacy coalitions outside the context of the macro-level of analysis. Through an exploration of the ACF, State theory and two macro-political features of the State, it is clear that the sport policy sector in Australia, Canada and the U.K. is has been characterised by consistent structured privilege which needs to be explained to enable an understanding of policy outcomes. Although all three countries have been characterised as least centralised States, typified by competing decision-making centres and by checks and balances throughout different levels of their political systems, it has been shown that the interests of elite sport development have dominated the sport policy-making process in Australia and Canada over the past two to three decades, with a similar scenario emerging in the U.K. over the past 10 years. However, it is also apparent in all three countries that, although elite sport has enjoyed considerable federal/central government support, it would be difficult to defend the conclusion that this has resulted from sustained bargaining from effective elite sport advocacy coalitions.

Such a conclusion would be hard to endorse as it is clear in all three countries that State agencies have been crucial in specifying, constructing and maintaining through resource control and dependency the pattern of values and beliefs supportive of elite achievement. Although there has been a lobby on behalf of greater priority for elite development in all three countries it has often been marginal and has had to compete with other internal sets of interests that prioritised, for example, club development, regional development, or mass participation (Green & Houlihan, 2005). Thus shared values and belief systems that link (primarily Olympic) NSOs/NGBs and State agencies have been built upon and maintained by substantial resource dependency of the NSOs/NGBs. Therefore, given the strong complementarity between federal/central government policy and elite sport interests, there
was little need for advocacy to promote elite values by the latter, while competing interests found themselves increasingly confined to the margins of policy debate (cf. Macintosh & Whitson, 1990; Green, 2004a; Stewart et al., 2004).

In sum, it is important to recognise that the calls for public policy analyses to integrate different theoretical perspectives and levels of analysis have real merit. By locating our meso-level analysis within the context of a macro-level State theory and two macro-political features of the State, we have been able to provide a far more nuanced account of policy outcomes in respect of elite sport development in Australia, Canada and the U.K. First, by merely concentrating on the meso-level ACF it would have been difficult to downplay the effectiveness of elite sport advocacy coalitions, in Australian and Canada in particular, given our discussion of the dominance of elite sport interests in these two countries over the past 25 to 30 years. Second, our neo-pluralist standpoint enabled an exploration of the significance of policy elites, which revealed the State and its primary sporting agencies as the dominant actors shaping the environment within which elite sport objectives have flourished. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, by including an analysis of macro-political features of the State we have been able to show that, despite all three countries being characterised as least centralised States where we would expect to find considerable checks and balances to a dominant “State presence” in a particular policy sector, federal/central governments (and their primary sporting agencies) in Australia, Canada and the U.K. have exerted considerable influence in promoting and shaping the values, organisation and activities of elite sport advocacy coalitions.

Notes
1. “Elite sport” refers to those sports/athletes that compete at the Olympic Games and World Championships and we are therefore not concerned with “professional” sports such as soccer, rugby union, cricket, baseball and ice hockey. It should also be noted that we use the terms elite sport (U.K. terminology) and “high performance sport” (Australian and Canadian terminology) interchangeably.
2. The broader study involved an analysis of policy change in four key elements of elite sport development in swimming, athletics and sailing/yachting in Australia, Canada and the U.K.: (i) the development of elite level facilities; (ii) the emergence of “full-time” swimmers/athletes/sailors; (iii) developments in coaching, sports science/sports medicine; and iv) competition opportunities for elite level swimmers/athletes/sailors. Thirty-five in-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with senior officials in the respective NSOs/NGBs, at the Australian Sports Commission, Sport Canada and U.K. Sport, as well as with leading academic and sports analysts. Analysis of the interview data and policy documents (see below) involved both inductive and deductive processes. For example, key elements of elite sport (policy) development and (policy) change were identified inductively from an extensive review of the literature relating to elite sport policy in all three countries. This inductive process was also informed by deductive insights from the theoretical propositions discussed in the article. A key aspect of the study was the importance placed on gathering data relating to actors’ subjective perceptions, beliefs and experiences in relation to policy change through semi-structured interviews. Such
intensive interviewing allows people to talk freely and to offer their interpretations of events. This information helps to: (i) obtain a more (agent-) informed understanding of historically-developed processes and developments relating to elite sport policy direction; (ii) allow distinctions to be made between the “rhetoric” provided in policy documents and the “reality” of an agent’s perspective on a particular issue; and (iii) discern the normative values and belief systems underlying the agent’s perspective, as well as an assessment of her/his perception of the constraining/facilitating structural context within which she/he operates. The interview data were supplemented with analyses of sport policy-related documents in both countries, such as Annual Reports, internal NSO/NGB inquiries, and sport policy reviews by government and quasi-governmental agencies.

3. In addition to the World Class Performance programme funding distributed by U.K. Sport, the four Home Country Sports Councils (in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) award Lottery funding through their own “talented athlete” programmes (for more detail, see U.K. Sport, 2002).

4. Some clarification is required with regard to the use of the terms United Kingdom (U.K.) and Great Britain (GB). First, no other country competes internationally at two different levels: sometimes as U.K./GB, and sometimes as the Home Countries (see also Note 3, above). This means that there are five Sports Councils in the U.K., four of which deal with elite sport and grass roots sport (the four Home Country Sports Councils) and one of which deals with elite sport at a U.K. level (U.K. Sports Council, known as U.K. Sport). All five both fund and provide services. Second, the term GB refers to England, Scotland and Wales, while U.K. refers to the same three countries plus Northern Ireland (N.I.). Just to confuse matters further, when the U.K. competes in the Olympic Games it is referred to as GB and N.I. Third, space precludes an in-depth analysis of elite sport development specific to Scotland, Wales and N.I. However, while this article has a U.K./English focus, much of the discussion in respect of elite sport policy also pertains to the other three Home Countries.

References


A Comparative Analysis of Elite Sport Development


