

**Opposing Apartheid Through Sport.**  
**The Role of SACOS in South African Sport, 1982 - 1992.**

**1.1 Background**

Generally sport has the capacity to generate a host of emotions. Throughout the world it is the same, irrespective of the code played or supported. Sports mad South Africa is no exception. Everyone, from the top ranking government official to the man in the street is involved. Mandela's participation in the 1995 Rugby World Cup was a prime example of how South Africans are involved in sport. However, sport in South Africa finds itself in a peculiar, though not unique, situation. Here reference is made to the issue of racism. Whilst racism in sport is a worldwide phenomenon, the manner in which it presents itself in South Africa is peculiar. In South Africa the crowds at sporting events are not racist; i.e. the crowds have not given any sportsman or woman a torrid time because of his/her colour. Instead the situation is that South Africans support the opposing team. Rugby in particular suffered from this unpatriotic behaviour. Whilst this type of behaviour has changed the spectre of racism presents itself in the administrative and organisational sport structures. Coupled with this is the maladministration of sport in South Africa. The three national codes, soccer, rugby and cricket have been accused of misadministration. Since unification the three codes have all been in the news for the wrong reasons. Financial mismanagement, poor preparation before major tournaments, the unprofessional treatment of players, administrators reaping the benefits, and in-fighting between administrators are just some of the problems plaguing South African sport.

Rugby and cricket have been accused of not supporting the transformation process. For this reason the quota system has been introduced. The inclusion of black players is constantly a cause for concern and therefore the selection of provincial and national teams invariably is controversial. The selection of the national soccer team has also been plagued by allegations of racial discrimination. In this case the dissatisfaction was one of too many Coloured players being in the team. The lack of success in the international arena is inextricably tied to the internal problems.

To understand this present juncture it is necessary to understand the evolution of this sporting nation. South Africa has capable people, the infrastructure and the finances to realise its full sporting potential. Yet this is not happening. One of the primary causes is the failure of the development programmes. Perhaps the failure of the development programmes could be attributed

to the lack of enthusiasm that accompanied its introduction and the haste to compete internationally. Before the majority of South Africans could vote, South Africa was competing in the Olympic Games. In an attempt to explain why the development programme failed, why South Africa was readmitted so hastily and why sport is in the current state, it is necessary to examine what happened before 1993. Therefore this study will examine the period 1982 to 1992 with the focus on the South African Council on Sport (SACOS).

## **1.2 Introduction**

The aim of this study is to establish why the strategies SACOS adopted between 1982 and 1992 lead to the marginalisation of the organisation after 1992. Its adherence to non-racial principles is perhaps its most significant contribution to the liberation struggle. Indeed, this principle became enshrined in the constitutions of anti-apartheid organisations. Given the above, why has an organisation such as SACOS been sidelined in current sport development; or why did it disappear as it did? In an attempt to answer these questions, this historical analysis will attempt to address the following hypothesis: External factors, rather than SACOS policies, led to the marginalisation of SACOS by 1993.

This study will investigate the influence of the following on SACOS: Government policy, international events and SANROC's position, the changing environment and the various political tendencies. It investigates how each of the role players individually and collectively impacted on the strategies adopted by SACOS. It focuses on the development of the objectives and policies of SACOS and the internal relations of the organisation during the decade 1982 – 1992.

Since no systematic analysis has yet been undertaken to analyse the strategies adopted by SACOS, which contributed to the marginalisation of the organisation, this study will reflect on the history of SACOS between 1982-1992, including the internal developments and the reaction of SACOS to government policy, to international reaction and to the changing environment. To achieve an in-depth historical account of SACOS during 1982-1992, thereby explaining its sidelining in opposition sport in the 1990's, primary material (i.e. the Biennial General Meeting or BGM reports of SACOS), media reports and secondary sources have been employed. These will reveal what happened within the organisation, what the line of thinking of the leaders and delegates was, and what drove their actions and decisions.

The BGM reports and minutes of meetings of SACOS used in this study are the property of Mr. R.A. Feldman. This literature is kept at his home. To assist the candidate with the undertaking of this study, R.A. Feldman graciously loaned the primary material in his possession. From discussions with Feldman, it became clear that a few members of SACOS possess their own copies. It was also intimated that they had planned to donate the material to a tertiary institution. Once this is done, all researchers will have access to it.

Newspaper reports and magazine articles also assisted the candidate with this study. The newspaper reports assisted by providing useful insights of the various viewpoints of the role players, and by placing the period under discussion in perspective with regard to the contested issues and prevailing conditions of the time. The newspaper reports enabled a greater understanding of the complexities SACOS faced in the struggle against sport apartheid. These were taken from both the mainstream English and Afrikaans press and the alternative press. The reports, from a cross section of the media, corroborated the information taken from the primary and secondary source material. In this way these reports assisted in providing a holistic view of the situation in which SACOS found itself.

## 2. Historiography



Generally not much has been written on SACOS. There is no comprehensive history of SACOS as an organisation in the liberation struggle. Cheryl C Roberts has done some research in compiling a limited perspective on the history of SACOS. Her book SACOS 1973 – 1988, 15 years of Sports Resistance<sup>1</sup> looks at it as a resistance organisation. In the book, the role, character and resistance efforts of SACOS are analysed. Roberts questions its failure to achieve legitimacy and to make meaningful inroads in the black townships. The limitations and weaknesses are investigated in order to explain why SACOS did not achieve legitimacy in the townships and thus did not become a broad based movement.

The other research that focuses on SACOS, is the book written by Robert Archer and Antoine Bouillon, The South African Game – Sport and Racism.<sup>2</sup> However, just as in the case of Roberts, the period under discussion ends in 1981-1982. In addition, the focus on SACOS is but a part of the

---

<sup>1</sup> C. Roberts: SACOS 1973-1988: 15 Years of Sports Resistance. University of Natal, Durban, 1988.

<sup>2</sup> R. Archer and A. Bouillon: The South African Game-Sport and Racism. Zed Press, London, 1982.

book, since it involves research on the modern non-racial sport movement in South Africa, and the history of how it evolved and the social context in which it operated.

Sam Ramsamy's book, Apartheid, the Real Hurdle<sup>3</sup> also looks at the role of SACOS and the State's attempt to control sport. This book offers a background to the sporting history of South Africa as well as the internal sports resistance movements. Ramsamy also deals with the role of the international community against apartheid in sport. The latter two books therefore do not have its focus solely on SACOS.

In other books dealing with the sport issue in South Africa, SACOS is generally mentioned. A case in point is Peter Hain's book, Sing The Beloved Country, the Struggle for a new South Africa.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, in the book Sport, Racism and Ethnicity<sup>5</sup> edited by Grant Jarvie, SACOS is mentioned as a part of the resistance campaign. However, both Hain and Jarvie readily acknowledge SACOS as part of the history of the struggle in sport. In contrast, Tony Koenderman's book: Sanctions The Threat to South Africa<sup>6</sup> hardly mentions SACOS. Here it appears as if SACOS and its activities were insignificant and did not warrant mentioning.

In The Race Game-Sport and Politics in South Africa,<sup>7</sup> Douglas Booth too does not focus on SACOS. This book discusses the history of sport broadly, focusing on many issues and extends to post-1994. SACOS features prominently but only to convey the story of how resistance was offered. Booth's primary aim is to show that sport, as a social activity, had a limited unifying influence. Nevertheless, in all of the aforementioned books, useful insights of the role, character and activities of SACOS are gained.

The organisation's role is also mentioned in a number of articles of which none however attempts to reflect on the history of SACOS.

Peter Hain wrote The Politics of Sports and Apartheid<sup>8</sup> in which he discusses the relationship between politics and sport. It attempts to establish the parameters of an analysis of sports apartheid,

<sup>3</sup> S. Ramsamy: Apartheid the Real Hurdle – Sport in South Africa and the International Boycott. IDAF, 1992.

<sup>4</sup> P. Hain: Sing the Beloved Country - the Struggle for the new South Africa. Pluto Press, London, 1996.

<sup>5</sup> G. Jarvie: Sport, Racism and Ethnicity. Falmer Press, London, 1991.

<sup>6</sup> T. Koenderman: Sanctions: The Threat to South Africa. J.Ball Publishers, Johannesburg, 1982.

<sup>7</sup> D.Booth: The Race Game – Sport and Politics in South Africa. Cass Publishers, London, 1998.

<sup>8</sup> P. Hain: "The Politics of Sport and Apartheid," in J. Hargreaves (ed.) Sport, Culture and Ideology. Routledge and Keegan, London, 1982.

and discusses the relationships between racism and sport and the strategies adopted by the government to counter the boycott through the co-option of blacks.

Douglas Booth wrote “The South African Council on sport and the Political Antinomies of the Sports Boycott,”<sup>9</sup> an article which considers the role of SACOS in the international sport boycott and the S.A government’s attempts to deracialise sport. It discusses the policies that SACOS used to challenge the state. In analysing and evaluating SACOS policies, Booth argues that it was too rigid in applying its policies. This, he believed, led to the formation of the rival NSC and to the decline of SACOS. At the heart of this discussion is the refusal by SACOS to negotiate and to persist in its policy of non-collaboration.

W.D. Basson wrote “South African Sport in the Nineties,”<sup>10</sup> an article in which the future of sport is discussed. Basson considers the different strategies that could be employed to organise sport in post-apartheid South Africa, discussing various forms of negotiation, that he believes could bring about a fruitful dispensation in sport. He also warns of the differences that exist amongst establishment sport, SACOS and the NSC.

“The Campaign against Sport in South Africa,”<sup>11</sup> written by Bruce Kidd, primarily concerns the boycott campaign against S.A., and the origins of the boycott movement in S.A. The article discusses the growth of the boycott campaign, and the role of the third world countries in persuading the rest of the world to support the boycott. Kidd briefly details the role of SACOS and SANROC in the boycott campaign.

“No Normal Sport in an Abnormal Society – Sport Isolation and the struggle against apartheid in South African Sport, 1980-1992”<sup>12</sup> was written by Cobus Rademeyer. This article discusses the attempts by the government to counter the boycott strategy. It assesses the National Party’s sport policy during the eighties, the role of the Broederbond in sport, and the split in the NP because of the sport policy. It also discusses the sport boycott and how it affected South Africans. Briefly, the roles of SACOS, the NSC, SANROC, and the SCSA are discussed as well as South African Rugby

<sup>9</sup> D. Booth: “The South African Council on Sport and the Political Antinomies of the Sports Boycott,” in Journal of Southern African Studies, Vol. 23, No.1, March 1997.

<sup>10</sup> W.D. Basson: “South African Sport in the Nineties.” in C.A. Taylor (ed.) The Challenge to Change in South Africa. University of Port Elizabeth, Port Elizabeth, 1991.

<sup>11</sup> B. Kidd: “The campaign against sport in South Africa,” in International Journal, XLVII, 1988.

<sup>12</sup> C. Rademeyer: “No normal sport in an abnormal society: sports isolation and the struggle against apartheid in South Africa in South African sport, 1980-1992,” in Journal for Contemporary History, Vol. 25, No.1, June 2000.

in the eighties and cricket. In this article a range of issues are briefly discussed, but in essence, it is a history of South African sport during the period 1980 – 1992.

“Illusions and Reality in South African Sports Policy,”<sup>13</sup> written by Barry Streek, analyses the international contributions to South Africa’s sport isolation. The ‘mistakes’ of the government are analysed to show how it contributed to the boycott campaign. Streek reveals the self-deception that existed and was encouraged by South Africa’s friends like John Carlisle. The article proves that the reality of the day was not taken seriously in such a way that it became, according to him, an illusion. One of the mistakes by the government and establishment sport, was not to come to terms with SACOS.

“Wanneer speel Suid Afrika weer Ware Toetsrugby,”<sup>14</sup> an article by P.de Vos, considers rugby in South Africa one year after the historic meeting with the ANC. This is an interview with Danie Craven and discusses how Craven intended to desegregate rugby. It portrays the views of E. Patel, president of SARU, with reference to SACOS and the NSC.

Leo Barnard and Cobus Rademeyer contribute to the debate by describing how SACOS lost its place as the leading opposition sport organisation. This is done in their article entitled “The Role of the English Rebel Cricket Tour to South Africa in 1989/1990 as a factor in the dismantling of apartheid in South African Sport,”<sup>15</sup> focusing on the English Cricket tour under Mike Gatting. They describe the background to the tour and the actual tour itself, the formation of the NSC and the role it played in ending this tour, and offers insight as to how the NSC overtook SACOS to become the dominant opposition sport organisation.

In the article “The challenge to non racial sport,”<sup>16</sup> C. Roberts briefly discusses the challenges facing SACOS in a changing environment. She observed that SACOS policies inhibited the organisation from becoming a mass based organisation, and adds recommendations about possible future strategies. This article is central to the debate as it places SACOS at the crossroads with

---

<sup>13</sup>B.Streek: “Illusions and Reality in South African Sports Policy,” in South Africa International, Vol.16 No.1, July 1985.

<sup>14</sup> P.de Vos: “Wanneer speel Suid-Afrika weer ware Toetsrugby?” in Die Suid Afrikaan, No.23, Oct .1989.

<sup>15</sup> L.Barnard and C. Rademeyer: “The role of the English Rebel Cricket Tour to South Africa in 1989/1990 as a factor in the dismantling of Apartheid in South African Sport”, in Journal for Contemporary History, Vol.27, No.3, Dec., 2002.

<sup>16</sup> C. Roberts: “The Challenge to Non-Racial Sport,” in Work in progress, No. 59, June 1989.

regard to its policies. She was of the opinion that the choices SACOS made at the time would determine success or failure of the organisation.

Other studies focus particularly on issues within SACOS. Cheryl Roberts edited a collection of contributions entitled Sport and Transformation, Contemporary Debates on South African Sport.<sup>17</sup> Some of the contributions are by former members of SACOS.

However, of relevance is the common thread that runs through many of the contributions. The issues that are highlighted are the democratisation and the building of a mass based sport organisation, the contributors considering these issues vital for organisations such as SACOS. It also gives valuable insight into changes in the way of thinking from certain sectors of SACOS.

In his contribution “The nature of sport in a Capitalist Society,”<sup>18</sup> D. Hendricks discusses the relationship between capital and the state and the place and importance of sport in society. With this he attempts to establish a correlation between capital and the state in organising sport. He offers an insight into why business felt the necessity to be involved in sport, thereby assisting in understanding the role of business in sport in South Africa and its opposition to SACOS.

Cheryl Roberts’ contribution, “Ideological Control of South African Sport,”<sup>19</sup> called for the anti-apartheid forces to review their agendas and to initiate an alternate sports discourse. This was regarded as necessary if SACOS wanted to secure a role in post-apartheid South Africa in offering the black working class different sport programmes to gain ideological control.

Alec Erwin also entered the debate with his contribution “Does sport have a role to play in the Liberation struggle?”<sup>20</sup> arguing that sport could play a positive role only if it was mass based and democratic. He advocated the lifting of the boycott against all facilities and the inclusion of all sportsmen, even those playing in multinational organisations such as the NPSL. He suggested that SACOS follow the route taken by the trade unions.

---

<sup>17</sup> C.Roberts (ed.): “Sport and Transformation – Contemporary Debates on South African Sport”, Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, 1989.

<sup>18</sup> D. Hendricks: “The nature of sport in a capitalist society” in Sport and Transformation- Contemporary Debates on South African Sport, Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, 1989.

<sup>19</sup> C.Roberts: “Ideological control of South African Sport” in Sport and Transformation- Contemporary Debates on South African Sport, Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, 1989.

<sup>20</sup> A. Erwin: “Does sport have a role to play in the liberation struggle?” in Sport and Transformation- Contemporary Debates on South African Sport, Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, 1989.

Yunus Carrim's contribution "SACOS: Towards Player control,"<sup>21</sup> is a response to another contribution entitled "A new perspective and direction for SACOS" written by NACOS. Carrim attempted to extend the debate on democracy and the building of a mass base by analysing the relationship SACOS had with the broader community and political organisations, and offers suggestions to enhance it. The democratisation and the restructuring of SACOS is also considered and greater participation from the rank and file membership of SACOS in the affairs of the organisation, is suggested.

The question of building a mass based sport organisation is addressed in Jakes Gerwel's contribution "Towards a disciplined, healthy sports movement in preparation for a post apartheid South Africa."<sup>22</sup> SACOS is encouraged to review its position and to accommodate the changing times. The Mass Democratic Movement was encouraged to assist SACOS in building a democratic mass based organisation.

By highlighting the positive contribution of sport to the social welfare of people, Sefako Nyaka acknowledged the "victories" of the non-racial sport movement in "Challenges and Transformation in Sport,"<sup>23</sup> considering how strategy and tactics had to change to build on past successes. He encouraged the non-racial movement to win over as many people as possible, urging that past associations with government structures should not become an obstacle towards the acceptance of such people.

A position paper, "A New perspective and Directions of SACOS Sport"<sup>24</sup> in which the nature of the role of SACOS within the prevailing environment was considered, was prepared by NACOS for purposes of discussion. The tasks SACOS needed to accomplish were identified, including the creation of a working class culture for sport and democratising SACOS.

---

<sup>21</sup> Y. Carrim: "SACOS – Towards Player Control" in Sport and Transformation- Contemporary Debates on South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, 1989.

<sup>22</sup>J. Gerwel: "Towards a disciplined, healthy sports movement in preparation for a post-Apartheid South Africa," in Sport and Transformation- Contemporary Debates on South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, 1989.

<sup>23</sup>S. Nyaka: "Challenges and Transformation in Sport" in Sport and Transformation- Contemporary Debates on South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, 1989.

<sup>24</sup> NACOS: "A new perspective and direction for SACOS" in Sport and Transformation- Contemporary Debates on South African Sport, Township Publishing Co-operative, Nov.1989, Cape Town.

There are also contributions that focused on the challenges faced by South African sport after 1990. These contributions assist in the debate by highlighting the growing influence of the NSC and the ANC after 1990, suggesting an indication of the diminishing role of SACOS that is examined briefly. One such contribution was the address by Steve Tshwete, entitled “Challenges facing Non-racial Sport,”<sup>25</sup> in which the main concern was that the non-racial sport movement needed to be ready to deal with issues in the transitional period. He warned that non-racial sport would be competing for control and that it was necessary to review their strategies and tactics. His concern was however largely with the NSC.

In his article “Is the present juncture not appropriate for the NOSC to revisit the International Moratorium?”<sup>26</sup> John Perlman encouraged the NOSC and the ANC to present a detailed plan on the international moratorium. By setting the pace through such a plan, the NOSC and the ANC would control a powerful weapon to initiate greater changes.

In the following two contributions, democracy within sport organisations is one of the issues that is examined. Haroon Mohamed examines the potential to democratise sport in “Sport, Democracy and Transformation,”<sup>27</sup> his concern being that the sport organisations needed to prioritise the democratisation and transformation of sport but he cautioned against haste towards international participation. This was therefore a proposal for the post-1990 period.

Lastly, there was the issue of school sport. In a study entitled “School Sport and Political Change,”<sup>28</sup> K.B.Powell addressed school sport and its influence in the then changing political climate. He considered the role of the non-racial school sports associations SAPSSA and SASSA in building democratic sport structures. By virtue of their membership to SACOS, useful insights are also gained of how the Coloured and Indian schools propagated the non-racial ideology of SACOS. He makes it clear that the legal constraints of the day prevented SACOS from organising sport in the black townships, thereby explaining why SACOS failed to become a mass based organisation.

---

<sup>25</sup>S. Tshwete: “Challenges facing non-racial sport,” in Challenges facing South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, 1990.

<sup>26</sup>J. Perlman: “Is the present juncture not appropriate for the NOSC to revisit the International Moratorium?”, in Challenges facing South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, 1990.

<sup>27</sup>H. Mahomed: “Sport, Democracy and Transformation,” in Challenges facing South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, 1990.

<sup>28</sup>K.B.Powell: School Sport and Political Change. Unpublished Mini-Dissertation, University of Western Cape, 1990.

However, none of the research up to the present attempted to reflect the entire history of SACOS. It therefore appears that no systematic examination or historical analysis of SACOS as a resistance organisation of the oppressed people has yet been undertaken. It is necessary to study the history of SACOS as an entity within the context of the liberation struggle. SACOS undoubtedly played an important role by filling a void created by the banning of the major anti-government movements and by adding a new dimension to the role of sport as a vital social activity. In fact, the current hiatus in South African sport can be traced back to the actions of the role players such as SACOS, SANROC, NSC and White establishment Sport.

This study is not a history of SACOS since its inception, but a historical analysis of the decisive forces that influenced its strategy by and since 1982 and which resulted in the marginalisation of the organisation by the early 1990's. In fact the formation, existence and character of SACOS is a direct consequence of the social order of the day: "SACOS came into being, and because of a social order where the expedient assumption of the 'inferiority' of people because of 'race' has been elevated to one of the basic principles of its ideology – Apartheid"<sup>29</sup> In its reaction to this ideology of apartheid, SACOS had adopted as its goal and guiding principle, the principle of non-racialism. SACOS not only challenged apartheid sport on the basis of this principle, but also exposed the fraudulent reformist acts of the state and instilled an awareness, locally and internationally, of the evils of apartheid. This is the new dimension SACOS added to the role of sport. This study will therefore present SACOS as the primary focus, with emphasis on the last decade of its existence.

### **3. The Development of SACOS**

The South African Council on Sport (SACOS) was formed in March 1973. The establishment of SACOS can be traced back to an organisation known as the South African Non-Racial Sport Organisation (SASPO) established in 1970. In effect, SACOS had evolved from SASPO. SASPO in turn was the initiative of a group of people who had been involved in the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (SANROC) prior to 1965. Finally the forerunner to SANROC was the South African Sport Association (SASA) formed in 1958. "SASA was not campaigning for true non-racialism in sport but for international participation for black sportsmen within the framework of segregation in national sport."<sup>30</sup> Thereafter it broadened its aims by campaigning against racism in sport. Each of the abovementioned four organisations was formed essentially to oppose segregation

---

<sup>29</sup>SACOS: Fifth Biennial General Meeting (BGM), Cape Town, March 1983, p.143.

<sup>30</sup>R. Archer and A. Bouillon: The South African Game, p. 191.

in sport since in line with the S.A. government's ideology of apartheid, there could be no sport integration between white and "non-whites". This policy was extended to international competition and the Olympic Games.

Only white South Africans could represent the country in international competitions and at the Olympic Games. SASA was formed to oppose this by calling for all to be granted the opportunity to be selected: "it merely demanded recognition and the right of black sportsmen to be selected for national (Springbok) sides on equal terms with white sportsmen."<sup>31</sup> With the broadened aims it campaigned against segregated participation of South Africa in international events. The IOC was requested to pressurise the South African Olympic Games Association (SAOGA) to open its membership: "...the IOC would pressure the South African National Olympic Committee to integrate black sports people".<sup>32</sup> Individual countries were requested to pressurise their teams not to compete against South African teams and "...SASA organized local protests against discrimination..."<sup>33</sup>

Whilst there was some success in persuading the international community to pressurise South African establishment sport, it was limited. The limitations of SASA's efforts resulted in the formation of SANROC in 1963. Its aims were to mobilise the international community more effectively and to establish itself as South Africa's official Olympic representative body. It was more radical than SASA as it opposed all racial sport structures and it called for the expulsion of South Africa from the Olympic Games. These actions were more 'radical' because they called for the expulsion of white (athletes) sporting bodies. In contrast SASA had campaigned for the inclusion of black sportsmen alongside whites: "It merely demanded the right of black sportsmen to be selected for national sides on equal terms with white sportsmen."<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, its creation marked the end of negotiations with white sporting associations and the start of a campaign to destroy racial structures in sport.<sup>35</sup> The radicalisation of sport organisations opposing official establishment sport corresponded with the offensive launched by anti-apartheid movements such as the ANC and PAC, which faced the repressive might of the state. SANROC's first president Dennis Brutus was jailed, another leader killed, and various other repressive measures were executed against SANROC, led to the weakening of its leadership, "within two years, so many leading members of SANROC and SASA had been rendered harmless that SASA suspended its activities

---

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 191.

<sup>32</sup> D. Booth: *The Race Game*, p. 77.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>34</sup> R. Archer: *The South African Game*, p. 191.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 192.

and SANROC was forced into exile.”<sup>36</sup> This in turn resulted in the self-imposed suspension of SANROC’s activities in 1965. It re-emerged in exile in 1966, but their actions did succeed in South Africa’s exclusion from the IOC in 1964.<sup>37</sup>

The self-imposed suspension of SANROC’s activities in 1965 was followed by a five-year period of relative inactivity by the anti-apartheid sport movement. However, the attempts by establishment sport and the state to gain re-acceptance internationally galvanised anti-apartheid organisations to re-organise through the leadership that was left in South Africa after 1965. They were alarmed by the efforts of establishment sport to encourage blacks to join them so that they could persuade the world that the situation had changed for the better. Establishment sport hoped to meet IOC requirements prohibiting discrimination. In 1970 the leadership that remained in South Africa re-emerged to reorganise the sport resistance campaign. People such as M.N. Pather, Norman Middleton, Morgan Naidoo and Reg Feldman<sup>38</sup> organised eight affiliates, namely, the SA Soccer Federation, SA Amateur Swimming Federation, SA Amateur Athletics & Cycling Board of Control, SA Table Tennis Board, SA Weight Lifting and Body Building Federation, SA Lawn Tennis Union, SA Women’s Hockey Board and the SA Men’s Hockey Board to form SASPO.

SASPO continued with the work of its predecessors, in trying to expose the efforts of establishment sport to be re-accepted internationally. In order to be re-accepted, establishment sport suddenly seemed willing to appease black sportsmen and sporting organisations. “White federations then began to initiate talks, even offering to select national teams on merit in cricket, athletics, tennis and weightlifting.”<sup>39</sup> However, as soon as white establishment sporting bodies saw an improvement in their international relations they did an about turn: “... at the first signs of improvement in their international relations they withdrew the various concessions that had been dealt out to the non-racial organizations”.<sup>40</sup> SASPO exposed such promises as false, wanting the S.A. government to change its sport policy to provide for total sport integration. The issue of non-racialism was prioritised amongst SASPO’s objectives, which also included a rejection of multi-nationalism, the permit system and the unequal distribution of sponsorships. However SASPO was in favour of negotiating with establishment sport bodies.<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 193.

<sup>37</sup> P. Hain: “The Politics of Sport and Apartheid,” in J. Hargreaves (ed.) *Sport, Culture and Ideology*, Routledge and Keegan, London, 1982, p. 238.

<sup>38</sup> R. Archer: *The South African Game*, p. 193.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 207.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 228.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 228.

The intransigence of establishment sport and the state's stubborn continuation with its policy of segregation resulted in the formation of a more aggressive organisation known as SACOS. In 1973 its formation resulted from the actions of the state in its quest to control all facets of life. "The meeting (which resulted in the formation of SASPO which later evolved into SACOS) was convened by the SASF on 6 Sept. 1970 and followed a decision of the Johannesburg municipality to disallow the SASF use of municipal grounds because they played integrated soccer."<sup>42</sup> Norman Middleton the SAFA president was elected the first president, M.N. Pather the secretary, and Hassan Howa the vice president. This development from SASPO to SACOS in 1973 was the result of the interaction between establishment sport organisations and the state. Clearly, the expulsion of South Africa from the IOC in 1970 did not have a lasting impression on both establishment sport and the state. Establishment sport did an about turn when they saw an improvement in their international relationships. White tennis players stopped complaining about official policy as soon as they were temporarily re-admitted to the Davis Cup in 1972. The white Olympic Committee and the SA Rugby Board both reneged on promised talks.<sup>43</sup> Simultaneously the state made it clear that mixed sport would not be tolerated, since the official policy was that no mixed sport would be allowed within the borders of South Africa.<sup>44</sup> This still held true in the new policy of multi-nationalism that was introduced in 1971 and finally unveiled in 1976.<sup>45</sup>

The aims of SACOS were to mobilise and organise sport along non-racial lines, to seek international affiliation for their codes, to obtain sponsorships for development and to reject the state's concept of multi-national sport. "To foster a spirit of goodwill, equality and fraternity among all people, without any discrimination whatever on the ground of race, colour or creed and to prevent racial, colour, religious, or political discrimination amongst sportsmen."<sup>46</sup> SACOS therefore continued in the footsteps of its predecessors. It is no coincidence that a number of leaders such as Pather and Reg Feldman, from SASA and SANROC, were now part of the SACOS leadership. SACOS would fight for the normalisation in sport, i.e. the elimination of discrimination in sport, and to have the principle of non-racialism embedded in sport. SACOS was prepared to negotiate with establishment sport, whilst it rejected multinational sport, the permit system, and the unequal distribution of sponsorships, actively seeking South Africa's expulsion from international sport, and

---

<sup>42</sup> C. Roberts: 15 Years of Sport Resistance, p. 17.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 228

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 46

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 218

<sup>46</sup> SACOS: Sixth Biennial General Meeting (BGM), Durban 1985, p.195.

international affiliation for the non-racial sporting codes. An examination of the above mentioned objectives indicate that SACOS was interested only in the sporting problems of the country. As a sporting organisation it therefore did not attempt to emulate organisations such as the ANC and PAC. However, just as its predecessor, the South African National Representative Olympic Committee (SANROC), SACOS can be viewed as an organisation that was responsive and pre-emptive to the repressive actions of the state.

In 1976 the Soweto riots changed much of the landscape for all. They coincided with the growing influence of the Black Consciousness Movement and in general, a greater turbulence amongst the black masses, radicalising the liberation struggle. From a SACOS perspective, this radicalisation was visible in the amendments to the (DSR) Double Standards Resolution (this resolution will be discussed in context later in Sec. 7.1) in 1978 and 1979. It also led to the expulsion of Norman Middleton and the SASF from SACOS because of his involvement with the Coloured Representative Council. In resolution five (5) of 1979, the DSR was specifically amended to include all forms of government bodies such as the “Coloured Persons Representative Council, the South African Indian Council, Local Affairs Committees, Community Councils, Management Committees and the like...”<sup>47</sup> This new radicalism was captured by the slogan “No normal sport in an abnormal society.”<sup>48</sup>

It cannot unequivocally be stated that the 1976 uprisings were the only contributing factor that changed the objectives of SACOS “...undoubtedly the riots of last year [in Soweto] were a great influence.”<sup>49</sup> It did however have a significant influence on the stated objective of SACOS, a natural or inevitable development. The intransigence of white sporting bodies within South Africa made this development a ‘natural process’, the state aiding it through its reaction to events at home and abroad. By 1982 SACOS was no longer interested solely in the removal of discrimination in sport, but had evolved into an organisation that demanded a free democratic government. “We rededicate ourselves to working towards the total abolition of discrimination in sport and society. We commit ourselves to strive for a single undivided democratic country free of discrimination, oppression and exploitation.”<sup>50</sup> This resolution was adopted by SACOS in 1981-82 at the Fifth

---

<sup>47</sup>R. Archer: The South African Game, p. 332.

<sup>48</sup>SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 23.

<sup>49</sup>R. Archer: The South African Game, p. v.

<sup>50</sup>SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 14.

Biennial Conference. It clearly indicated the shift from matters purely sporting, to matters concerning the daily life of people. This change in the outlook of SACOS is suitably captured by the following quote from Hassan Howa, president of SACOS (1976-1981), “Only recently did I become aware that to think only about cricket was wrong. I should not have fought from a cricket angle; probably I’ve become aware of politics.”<sup>51</sup> The history of SACOS can therefore be seen in its evolution from a sport body to an organisation engaged in changing the social structure of life in South Africa.

In policy and strategy meetings, this shift from solely sports to the broader social arena became a natural development. The issues discussed at SACOS meetings varied, but all had a bearing on its policies and strategies. Issues such as application for membership, use of ‘Bantu’ university facilities, sport in the homelands, members who defected to multi-national sport, private schools, the moratorium on sport, school sport and the inconsistent application of SACOS policy, were discussed at regular meetings.

Matters were dealt with through the existing policy framework, for example an application for membership of SACOS by SATTISA was ratified after assurances were received that it would accept SACOS policies and that it received no financial aid from the state.<sup>52</sup> The use of facilities at “Bantu” Universities impacted on the boycott strategy of SACOS, but, since no other venues were available, the boycott strategy was upheld for ASASA.<sup>53</sup> The above are two examples of matters discussed at SACOS meetings. A systematic elaboration of SACOS policies will follow. It had moved from the strategy of negotiation with white sport bodies to non-negotiation and non-collaboration. Before 1976, SACOS affiliates engaged multi national bodies in talks about merging of which an example is the merger discussions of the non-racial SACBOC with SACU, and SATTB with SATTU. The only code to merge was cricket, (SACBOC and SACU), whilst in the other codes, negotiations broke down. After 1976 no further such discussions were tolerated and affiliates were explicitly forbidden to enter into negotiations since SACOS adopted boycott and non-collaboration as a strategy. An example of this were the merger talks between the SASF and SANFA, which were described as collaborationist by SACOS due to George Thabe’s links with the Vaal Triangle Community Council. The SASF was severely reprimanded.<sup>54</sup> The principle of double standards

---

<sup>51</sup> D. Booth: The Race Game, p. 118.

<sup>52</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 14.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>54</sup> C. Roberts: 15 years of sports resistance, p. 33.

correlated with this non-collaboration strategy, which in turn was bolstered by the use of boycotts as a strategic weapon.

The history of SACOS can be reconstructed from its meetings, in particular its biennial general meetings. The meetings reveal the intricacies of the organisation, how it developed, and its strategic direction. Many of their decisions were weighed up in the context of state action, the reality, and SACOS principles.

SACOS, just as its predecessors, could be viewed as an organisation that responded to the situation in which they found themselves. It was formed because of the state's apartheid policy. "There can be little argument with the observation that SACOS was born out of struggle. Its establishment in March 1973 was during a period of limited covert political activity on the part of the oppressed in opposition to the S.A. Government. This organisation, like certain others, owed its existence to a combination of historical events, which appear not to have any direct link or relationship with it."<sup>55</sup> State actions led to a reaction from SACOS.

The following qualifies the statement concerning the state's attempt to control all facets of life:

"SACOS owes its existence to, and derives its character from, the unique system in which it operates. It was destined to emerge on to the S.A. sport scene because of factors imposed upon it by an ideology which determines and dominates all facets and aspects of life in this country."<sup>56</sup>

SACOS policies were thus formulated in accordance with its objective to eliminate discrimination in sport. Similarly the actions or lack thereof, of white establishment sport evoked reactions from SACOS, their policies and strategies being therefore formulated and adopted to address specific issues.

The principle of non-racialism was espoused to combat racialism and multi-nationalism. SACOS called for integration from school level, at club level and up to national level to combat multi-nationalism. It rejected the permit system since it was based on racially discriminatory legislation and because it was used by the state to control sport. On multi-nationalism, a resolution adopted in 1973 rejected any scheme or system that did not offer equal opportunities, facilities, training and experience. The concept of merit selection was rejected on the basis of the existing state implemented inequalities.

---

<sup>55</sup> SACOS: Ninth Biennial General Meeting, Cape Town, 1991, p. 31.

<sup>56</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 143.

A resolution was also adopted in 1979, which accepted a moratorium on all sport contacts with South Africa. The moratorium on international sporting contacts for all South Africans (non racial and racial) was adopted to force the state to remove apartheid in sport. In essence the moratorium was a call by SACOS to all international sport associations and federations to suspend their sport ties with South Africa until apartheid had been removed. Sport people could neither visit S.A. nor be visited by South African sportsmen, irrespective of their affiliation: “ SACOS accepts a complete moratorium on all sport tours to and from South Africa until all the laws and institutions of apartheid have been removed from South African sport.”<sup>57</sup>

On sponsorship, a resolution was passed in 1975, which condemned those businesses that supported racially orientated bodies, and called for the equal distribution of sponsorship.

The Double Standard Resolution (DSR) was adopted to combat the state’s overtures to coerce Blacks into accepting multi-nationalism and other apartheid structures such as regional councils, representative councils and boards. Anyone who therefore participated or associated him-or herself with multi-national sport, or (apartheid) state created institutions, could not be members of SACOS. The end result of such participation or association was the marginalisation of such an individual or association, and being branded a stooge or sell-out.<sup>58</sup> It also served to discipline members. Later in 1978 and 1979, the resolution on the DSR was amended to include the association of any SACOS member with any state initiative or institution.<sup>59</sup>

The facilities at ethnic universities, racially segregated institutions and white establishment sport bodies, were boycotted so as not to offer it credibility. Similarly non-collaboration with racist bodies and state institutions was called for to prevent the state from fraudulently presenting a ‘united’ South African look.

The above-mentioned policies, strategies and tactics remained the official SACOS position for a long time. By 1988 for example, none of the above had been placed on the agenda for review. However, specific issues developed prior to 1982, which justify special mentioning.

---

<sup>57</sup> SACOS: Third Biennial General Meeting, p. 18.

<sup>58</sup> C. Roberts: 15 years of sports resistance, p. 28.

<sup>59</sup> R. Archer: The South African Game, p. 332.

The president of SACOS in 1975 made a statement which was seen as a turning point in the history of South African sport: “I cannot force a non racial sports policy within a segregated political system. To have a non-racial sports policy, means a definite change in the political systems of the country. You cannot have the system of apartheid on the statute book and expect sport to be non-racial.”<sup>60</sup> Yet by the middle of the decade the bitter lessons of failed negotiations convinced SACOS that racist sport was an integral part of the apartheid system and that blacks would continue to experience discrimination in sport, while they suffered mass unemployment and poor living conditions, inadequate health services and transport, housing shortages, inferior education and subsistence wages.<sup>61</sup> From 1975 SACOS began to view sport as a microcosm of society as a whole. No longer would sport be viewed in isolation and SACOS would therefore no longer call for equality in sport, rather call for equality in all aspects of life; i.e. the total eradication of apartheid. “We reiterate our total opposition to racist sport and rededicate ourselves to working towards the total abolition of discrimination in sport and society. We commit ourselves to strive for a single, undivided, democratic country free of discrimination, oppression and exploitation.”<sup>62</sup>

The second development was about negotiating with establishment sport bodies. Before 1977 this was condoned. Examples of this were the talks between the rival cricket bodies, the rival table tennis bodies and the rival weight lifting and body building bodies. The failure of these talks, cricket in particular, ensured that dialogue was not entertained within SACOS ranks,<sup>63</sup> leading to the acceptance of non-collaboration and boycotts as forceful strategies.

The third development was the radicalisation of the anti-apartheid organisations, including SACOS. “From 1977 a militant tone begins to underpin SACOS conferences and the meetings of the provincial councils of sport ...”<sup>64</sup> The acceptance of the Double Standards Resolution and its subsequent radical amendment in 1979, was evidence of this. In essence SACOS had made a fundamental shift in its approach to the challenges of the state and establishment sport. It had realised that no change in sport would effect fundamental changes in the lives of the oppressed masses, this logic, and their radical approach, being appropriately captured by the slogan “No Normal Sport In An Abnormal Society.”<sup>65</sup>

---

<sup>60</sup> C. Roberts: 15 years...., p. 24.

<sup>61</sup> D. Booth: The race game, p. 117.

<sup>62</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 41.

<sup>63</sup> C. Roberts: 15 years...., p. 26.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>65</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 168

#### 4. SACOS, The Organisation Since 1982

##### 4.1 The Structure of SACOS

The manner in which SACOS was structured from its inception remained unchanged up to 1992. To ensure that there is an understanding of the operations of the organisation and to introduce the people who made SACOS what it was, it is necessary to explain briefly how SACOS operated by examining certain articles of the constitution.

A decade after its formation SACOS was firmly entrenched as the sport wing of the liberation front. Locally and internationally it was well known, as it was a well-organised body with a definite structure as set out by its constitution. A brief analysis of sections of the SACOS constitution will suffice toward the understanding of its operation.

The constitution of SACOS made provision for six officials (Article 4), the composition of the Council of SACOS, (Article 5), an executive (Article 6), the mandate for the executive (Article 8) and the hosting of the Biennial Conference (Article 8). According to its constitution, SACOS had six officials: a president, vice president, a secretariat composed of four persons viz. the general secretary, internal secretary, publications secretary and a finance secretary), i.e. a ten person executive council comprising the six officials and four members (delegates from each affiliate), all of whom were elected from the floor. Two delegates from the Provincial Councils of Sport completed the complement. They were responsible for running the organisation and had full authority between the biennial conferences. They were all elected for a term of two years, but would meet at least once a month. They were entitled to participate in the Biennial Conferences, which were held before the end of March. At these conferences reports were presented from the president, the secretary and all affiliates. General meetings of the full council were held twice a year to discuss the past events, to review strategies and tactics, to report on matters of concern and to plot the way forward.<sup>66</sup> A feature of all council meetings was the election of a resolutions committee that would compose resolutions on contentious issues facing them at the time.

All the presidents of the various affiliates met once a year, the purpose being to ensure that all affiliates interpreted policies and implemented tactics uniformly. This meeting was not provided for in their constitution.

---

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., pp. 196-197.

## 4.2 Leadership

### ( i ) Presidents of SACOS 1982 - 1993

Between 1981 and 1993 SACOS had three presidents, viz. Mr. Morgan Naidoo (81-83), Mr. Frank van der Horst (83-88) and Mr. Yusuf Ebrahim (88 – 93). All three men were tireless crusaders against apartheid, in sport in particular.

#### Mr. Morgan Naidoo (1981 – 1983 )

Naidoo hailed from a very humble background and he assumed adult responsibilities at the age of twelve when his father passed on. He was very involved in, and committed to, the sport of swimming, which him assume numerous positions in the swimming sporting structures.<sup>67</sup> He was the president of the non-racial swimming body (SAASWIF) before its merger with the black swimming body (SANASA), and was instrumental in the expulsion of the establishment swimming body (SAASU) from the world body (FINA). In 1973 Naidoo's passport was withdrawn and he could not travel to Yugoslavia for a meeting of the world body, at which meeting SAASU was expelled and Morgan Naidoo was served with a five-year ban.<sup>68</sup> However he was not deterred and continued to serve swimming and SACOS. He was instrumental in the merger of the non-racial swimming organisation, SAASWIF and the black swimming organisation SANASA. Up to the time of his death in 1988 Naidoo served as the general secretary of the new body, the Amateur Swimming Association of South Africa (ASASA). In 1981 he was elected as the president of SACOS, in 1983 as the general secretary and in 1985 as an executive member.<sup>69</sup>

#### Mr. Frank van der Horst (1983 – 1988)

In 1983, Frank van der Horst, an engineer from Cape Town, was elected as president. Described by C. Roberts as a fiery, outspoken anti-apartheid activist, he brought a new dynamic vision with him, something SACOS needed at the time. This was a vision of SACOS being part of the broader liberation struggle. Immediately after being elected he called for SACOS sport organisations "...to re-dedicate and re-direct our organisation to become part of the liberation struggle,"<sup>70</sup> and to help

---

<sup>67</sup> SACOS: Eighth Biennial General Meeting, Cape Town, 1989, p. 1.

<sup>68</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 122.

<sup>69</sup> SACOS: Eighth BGM, p. 1.

<sup>70</sup> C. Roberts: 15 years...., p. 51.

build the principled united front of organised sportspersons under SACOS, with the workers in the trade unions, residents in the civics, students, youth, women and other working community organizations.<sup>71</sup> SACOS needed this vision at the time if it was to become a truly mass based organisation. The composition of their membership was an issue, which van der Horst had identified as a problem that required being resolved, and to this end, Van der Horst urged SACOS to go to the black townships because “ its thrust must be centred in the mass of the people.”<sup>72</sup> Van der Horst was very involved in sport and SACOS structures. Before becoming president, he was the vice- president. In 1988 he resigned from the presidency but still remained active in organising sport. Throughout the period 1982 – 1993 Van der Horst was the secretary for the South African Hockey Board. He remained loyal to SACOS right up to the end in 1993. Frank.van der Horst was also responsible for organising the SACOS Sport Festivals in 1982 and 1988, and represented SACOS at numerous meetings with the other anti-apartheid organisations.

Mr. Yusuf. Ebrahim 1988 - 1993

Mr. Y. Ebrahim became acting president of SACOS in July 1988 when the president, Frank van der Horst, resigned. At the 8<sup>th</sup> Biennial General Meeting he was elected as president and was re-elected twice thereafter, until 1993. An advocate by profession, Ebrahim came from the Western Cape. In 1983 he was the chairman of WEPCOS and he was elected as Vice-President of SACOS, which position he occupied until July 1988. In 1991 after the defection of the S.A. Table Tennis Board to the NSC, Ebrahim became the president of the newly formed, SACOS affiliated, South African Table Tennis Federation (SATTF).<sup>73</sup> Apart from representing SACOS at numerous meetings he also presented its case to the UN Committee against Apartheid in Sport in 1992.<sup>74</sup>

( ii ) Executive Members, Presidents of National Affiliates and other influential persons.

Besides the presidents there were a number of other people who played important roles and were influential in the decisions and direction that SACOS took. Many were executive members, some were presidents or chairpersons, and executive members of national affiliates and provincial councils, whilst others were ordinary members. They also need to be mentioned. It is clear from the biennial-reports that the following people played a major role in leading SACOS. Firstly mention

---

<sup>71</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 63.

<sup>72</sup>C. Roberts: 15 years..., p. 51.

<sup>73</sup>SACOS: Tenth Biennial General Meeting, Cape Town, 1993, p. 9.

<sup>74</sup>SACOS: Ibid., p. 44.

must be made of two people who had become synonymous with the name SACOS, both men being influential and still active after 1982. They were M.N. Pather and Hassan Howa: “The name of Hassan Howa was virtually synonymous with that of SACOS. During his term of office as President, he and the late M.N. Pather, in particular, played prominent roles in ensuring that SACOS gained international respect and recognition.”<sup>75</sup>

Mr. M.N. Pather was a stalwart fighter to eradicate (discrimination) apartheid in sport, and just before his death in 1984 he was the secretary general of SACOS, having been a founder member. His colleagues and others held him in high esteem in the liberation struggle. It was in his office that the first meetings in 1971 were held with N. Middleton, and SACOS was born. He, together with others such as George Singh, is credited with getting establishment South African soccer (FASA) expelled from soccer’s world body (FIFA).<sup>76</sup> To honour his work the M.N.Pather Memorial Lecture was founded, an annual lecture that was funded by a staunch supporter of SACOS, Mr.D. Parker. At this lecture prominent people within the anti-apartheid movement were invited to address SACOS conferences. The inaugural lecture held in 1986 was delivered by the regional organiser of the National Union of Mineworkers, Mr. Gwede Mantsehe.<sup>77</sup>

Mr. Hassan Howa was an anti-apartheid stalwart and a founder member of SACOS. He was responsible for resuscitating cricket within the SACOS fold after the merger with SACU had failed under Rashied Varachia. He led the ‘new’ cricket body, the South African Cricket Board, as president, up to 1983, but due to ill health, he was not as active in sporting activities in the eighties. The senior inter- provincial SACOS cricket tournament was named after him as the ‘Hassan Howa Bowl’.<sup>78</sup> However he was best known as the person who coined and popularised the dictum ‘No Normal Sport In An Abnormal Society.’<sup>79</sup>

The rest of the leadership that will be mentioned, are organised into the respective provinces from which they came. This will assist us in identifying the geographic regions that were represented in SACOS.

---

<sup>75</sup> SACOS: Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>76</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 3.

<sup>77</sup> SACOS: Seventh Biennial General Meeting, Johannesburg, 1987, p. 63.

<sup>78</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 93.

<sup>79</sup> SACOS: Tenth BGM, p. 3.

Western Province Leadership.

Colin Clarke was another long serving SACOS member who served on the executive as part of the secretariat from 1982 to 1991 when he was the secretary for internal affairs and the general secretary. The fact that he was re-elected for such a long period, speaks volumes for the confidence placed in him by his colleagues. Up to 1983 he was part of the secretariat of WEPCOS, and from 1983 to 1991, the President. He was involved in tennis and served as the secretary of the Tennis Association of South Africa from 1985 to 1991. In 1991 he severed his ties with SACOS when he involved himself in the unity process.<sup>80</sup>

Mrs. I. Joseph was the secretary of WEPCOS from 1983 to 1989 and from her reports submitted to the B.G.M., her forthright criticism of SACOS and WEPCOS was apparent.<sup>81</sup> Nevertheless she was a firm and loyal supporter of SACOS and its ideals.

Mr. H.C.C. Hendrickse was another stalwart and long serving member. He was part of the SACOS executive from 1981 to 1987 and in 1989 was elected as the finance secretary, and in 1991, as the general secretary. He also served as the president of the S.A. Teachers Training College Sport Association and the Boland Council of Sport up to 1983. He led the S.A. Amateur Athletic Board for more than a decade from 1981 to 1993.<sup>82</sup> He was another member who stuck with SACOS to the end.



Mr. Abe Adams was an executive member of SACOS in 1987-89 and the publications secretary in 1989-91. He played a significant role in acquiring funds for the two delegates to travel to the ICAAS Conference. He presented a paper on the issue of alignment, arguing strongly against SACOS aligning with any political tendency,<sup>83</sup> but he also remained loyal.

Mr.G. Bam served on the SACOS executive from 1987 to 1989 and he was the president of SASSA from 1985 to 1987.<sup>84</sup>

---

<sup>80</sup> SACOS: Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>81</sup> SACOS: Eighth BGM, p. 148.

<sup>82</sup> SACOS: Tenth BGM, p. 70.

<sup>83</sup> SACOS: Eighth BGM, p. 174.

<sup>84</sup> SACOS: Seventh BGM, p. 4.

Dr. N. Maharaj was the vice president of the SAHB from 1985 to 1987 and thereafter, president up to 1993.<sup>85</sup>

Mr. Shun David was the president of the South African Darts Board of Control up to 1983, after whom Mr. W. Scholtz was elected president up to 1991. Mr. M. Johnson was the secretary from 1983 to 1991. Mr. M. Dharsey was elected as the president of SAPSSA from 1987 to 1991.<sup>86</sup>

In addition to the abovementioned members, F. van der Horst, Y.Ebrahim and H.Howa were also part of the Western Province leadership.

### Natal Leadership

Dr. Errol Vawda was the secretary of finance for 1981-1983 and an executive member of SACOS in 1987-89. He was the vice president of NACOS for the period 1985 –1989, and the president of the S.A. Table Tennis Board from 1983 to 1991. He was responsible for leading the SATTB into unity talks with the NSC and establishment sport.<sup>87</sup>

Krish Mackerdhuj served on the SACOS executive in 1981-1983 and was the finance secretary from 1983 to 1989. He was involved in cricket as the vice president of the SACB under Hassan Howa, and as president from 1983 to 1989. He was also the president of NACOS from 1981 to 1989, in which capacity, he was responsible for terminating the SACB membership of SACOS as well as making SACB part of the unity process.<sup>88</sup>

Clive Vawda led the Squash Rackets Federation of South Africa as president from 1981 to 1990 when they terminated their membership of SACOS. He was also the secretary of NACOS from 1981 to 1989.<sup>89</sup>

R.K. Reddy was the president of the South African Soccer Federation from 1981 to 1989. The secretary was Mr. G.K. Naidoo (1981-1987). The president of the professional wing of the SASF was Mr. A. Trikamjee (1981-1989) and the secretary, Mr.S.K. Chetty (1981-1989). Under their leadership the SASF terminated their membership of SACOS in 1990.<sup>90</sup>

---

<sup>85</sup> SACOS: Tenth BGM, p. 9.

<sup>86</sup> SACOS: Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>87</sup> SACOS: Ninth BGM, p.15.

<sup>88</sup> SACOS: Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>89</sup> SACOS: Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>90</sup> SACOS: Ibid., p. 8, p. 17.

Mr. Don Kali was an executive member of SACOS from 1981 to 1985, as well as being the vice president of TASA from 1981-1983.<sup>91</sup> In addition to the abovementioned members, M.N. Pather and M.Morgan were also part of the Natal leadership.

#### Transvaal leadership

Mr. N. Rathinasamy, a quiet, unassuming man and a veteran anti-apartheid activist, was the first president of SANROC and a founder member of SACOS. He was the president of the South African Senior Schools Sport Association from 1983 to 1985, and the president of the Transvaal High Schools Sport Association.<sup>92</sup>

Mr. R.A. Feldman is another veteran anti-apartheid crusader who was involved in SASA before the formation of SACOS. Very outspoken, he was one of several who incurred the wrath of the state,<sup>93</sup> yet he was never deterred and can be credited for holding the SACOS house together in the then Transvaal province. For years he, together with another veteran activist and the first president of SANROC, Mr. N. Rathinsamy, led the Transvaal High Schools Sport Association. He served on the SACOS executive in 1981-83 and in 1989 –91 and was the publications secretary in 1989-91. He was secretary of SASSA in 1983-85 and of SACB in 1985-89. He was also chairman of TRACOS from 1981 to 1991.<sup>94</sup>

Mr. Ebrahim Patel served on the executive of SACOS in 1985-87. He was the vice president of SARU in 1981-83, before being elected as president from 1983 to 1989. He led SARU in the talks with Dr. Danie Craven and the ANC in Harare in 1988.<sup>95</sup> In 1990 he terminated SARU's membership of SACOS and joined the NSC.

Mr. S. Gumede served as the internal secretary of SACOS from 1987-89 and as vice president from 1989 to 1993. He was involved in tennis as the vice president of TASA.<sup>96</sup>

Mr. Monnathebe Senokoanyane was the first president of the merged swimming body ASASA,<sup>97</sup> but held this position very briefly due to his untimely death in 1983.

<sup>91</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 131, Sixth BGM, p. 7.

<sup>92</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 204.

<sup>93</sup> SACOS: Ibid., p. 58, Tenth BGM, p. 10.

<sup>94</sup> SACOS: Tenth BGM, p. 10.

<sup>95</sup> SACOS: Eighth BGM, p. 107.

<sup>96</sup> SACOS: Tenth BGM, p. 8, Seventh BGM, p. 109.

<sup>97</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 121.

Mr. Thabo Seotsanyana was elected president in 1983 and occupied the position up to 1989. Before this, he was the treasurer of ASASA.<sup>98</sup>

Mr. Ahmed Mangeri was the secretary of SACB from 1983 to 1985.<sup>99</sup>

#### Eastern Province Leadership

Raymond Uren was another veteran anti-apartheid activist and chairman of EPCOS for a decade from 1981 to 1991. He was also vice-president of SACB and president of SASSA from 1987-1991.<sup>100</sup>

Mr. A.R. Zinn served as the publications secretary of SACOS from 1983 to 1987 as well as the general secretary of EPCOS from 1983 to 1989.<sup>101</sup>

Mr. K.C. March was the president of both the S.A. Baseball Association (1981-1989) and the S.A. Hockey Board (1981-1987). By 1990 the SABA had also terminated their SACOS membership, were part of the NSC and engaged in unity talks.<sup>102</sup>

Mr. T.R. Mackay was the president of SAPSSA and Mr. E. Yon was the secretary for the period 1983 to 1987.<sup>103</sup>

Mr. D. Jordaan was elected as the vice president of the SASF from 1985 to 1989<sup>104</sup> and was part of the leadership that opted to defect to the NSC.

#### Bloemfontein Leadership

Mr. James Letuka served on the SACOS executive from 1981 to 1985.<sup>105</sup> The small representation from Bloemfontein was indicative of the small SACOS membership in the O.F.S.

<sup>98</sup> SACOS: Eighth BGM, p. 4.

<sup>99</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 93.

<sup>100</sup> SACOS: Ninth BGM, p. 8, Seventh BGM, p. 80.

<sup>101</sup> SACOS: Eighth BGM, p. 7.

<sup>102</sup> SACOS: Ninth BGM, p. 55.

<sup>103</sup> SACOS: Seventh BGM, p. 4.

<sup>104</sup> SACOS: Eighth BGM, p. 113.

<sup>105</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 7.

( iii ) The Attributes of the SACOS Leadership

An examination of the leadership, results in the identification of a number of people who are mentioned repeatedly. Various people also served in various positions and codes at the same time. Frank van der Horst for example, was the secretary of the S.A. Hockey Board whilst being president of SACOS. Colin Clarke was chairperson of WEPCOS whilst occupying the position of general secretary of SACOS. Mr. R.A. Feldman was very involved in soccer before 1982, and later, in 1983/85, he was the general secretary of the S.A. Cricket Board. Simultaneously he was involved in the high schools sport organisations at national and provincial level. Mr. M.C.C. Hendricks was the vice president of swimming in 1983, in 1985 he was the vice president of the SACB and he was involved in high school sport whilst being the president of athletics (SAAAB). In addition many of the higher ranked officials of the various affiliates were often elected to the executive of SACOS.

The political inclination of the leadership became evident by the late eighties. It would be fair to assume that those persons who defected to the NSC were aligned to the UDF and the ANC whilst those who remained loyal to SACOS, were aligned to the leftist, socialist movements. This inference is drawn from the association of individuals with a particular political ideology.

The leadership of SACOS was not immune to problems. Norman Middleton, their first president, was unceremoniously dumped when he refused to end his association with the C.R.C. Hassan Howa also felt the censorship of the organisation when he had talks with establishment cricket.<sup>106</sup> Under the leadership of Frank van der Horst SACOS experienced traumatic times. At a General Meeting held in Paarl (1984), the president asked for a vote of confidence from SACOS affiliates,<sup>107</sup> and from the exchange, it was clear that there were conflicts within the SACOS executive. In clarifying his proposal for a motion of confidence in the president, Colin Clarke emphasised that he had not called for a motion of no confidence in the rest of the executive but that he had called upon them to commit to a collective leadership.<sup>108</sup> A similar situation presented itself again in 1987-1988: “During this period serious problems of an administrative nature developed in the executive.”<sup>109</sup> In addition, tensions caused by intolerance of views expressed and political posturing during debates, added to the crisis.<sup>110</sup> At that time, Frank van der Horst resigned as president in 1988.

---

<sup>106</sup> D. Booth: The Race Game, p. 116.

<sup>107</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 11.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>109</sup> SACOS: Eighth BGM, p.71.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 70.

In line with the vision of a broad mass based organisation, there was then a call for a change in leadership. In 1987, the Rev. Arnold Stofile was nominated as president by NACOS, this nomination being an attempt to link SACOS firmly with the townships, an implementation of its vision.<sup>111</sup> Unfortunately, due to procedural technicalities, Stofile's nomination was not accepted. The leadership of SACOS continued to be drawn from, according to C.Roberts, the black petty bourgeoisie.<sup>112</sup>

In general the leadership of SACOS was made up of people who were committed and dedicated to the struggle. In particular those who had remained within the SACOS fold after 1989, had shown themselves to be principled. Even at the risk of being marginalised, they stood firm on the principles of non-alignment, the total eradication of apartheid and the upholding of the moratorium against international competition

### **5.1 Membership**

As per the constitution, membership was open to “all National Associations and Provincial Councils of sport...”<sup>113</sup> on condition that members adhere to the policies, rules and regulations of SACOS. This rule applied to individuals as well. By 1982 / 83 twenty-two sporting associations were affiliated to SACOS, all national associations and all bearing the name ‘South African’ / ‘South Africa’ in their titles.

The affiliate members were the following: the South African Athletic Board, S.A. Baseball Association, S.A. Billiard and Snooker Control Board, Boxing Unity of South Africa, S.A. Cricket Board of Control, S.A. Cycling Association, S.A. Darts Board of Control, S.A. Hockey Board, S.A. Women's Hockey Board, S.A. Netball Union, S.A. Rugby Union, the S.A. Softball Association, S.A. Soccer Federation, S.A. Squash Racquets Association, Amateur Swimming Association of S.A., the S.A. Table Tennis Board, Tennis Association of S.A., Amateur Volleyball Association of S.A., S.A. Weightlifting and Bodybuilding Federation, S.A. Primary Schools Sport Association, S.A. Senior Schools Sport Association and the S.A. Teachers Training College Sports Association.

---

<sup>111</sup> C. Roberts: 15 Years..., p. 50.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p. 50.

<sup>113</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 195.

By 1985 the affiliated members increased to 24, the three new members being the S.A. Chess Association, the S.A. Life Surfing Union and the S.A. Amateur Boxing Council, previously known as the Boxing Unity of S A.

By 1987 the number had dropped to 22. The S A Billiard and Snooker Control Board had become dormant and the Cycling Board was suspended. This membership remained constant to the end of 1989. By 1990 circumstances began to change drastically as four national affiliates resigned, viz. the SASF, S.A. Squash Rackets Federation, S.A. Table Tennis Board and the S.A. Tertiary Institution Sport Association.<sup>114</sup>

In 1991 another affiliate, the S.A. Life Surfing Union resigned in addition to the S.A. Cricket Board severing its ties with SACOS when they joined the NSC.<sup>115</sup> One new member, the S.A. National Football Association (SANFA) joined. The affiliated membership was down to sixteen organisations by the end of 1991. A decade later, at its tenth biennial general meeting, the affiliated members of SACOS numbered 13. The defection of the S.A. Table Tennis Board led to the formation of the S.A. Table Tennis Federation, which affiliated to SACOS. The affiliates that had discontinued their SACOS membership after 1991 were, the S.A. Amateur Boxing Council, the S.A. Baseball Association, the S.A. Darts Board of Control and the S.A. Women's Hockey Board.<sup>116</sup> The reasons for this decimation of the membership of SACOS are discussed at a later stage. It must be noted that some of the affiliates that left SACOS were replaced by similar organisations, viz. the S.A. Table Tennis Board being replaced by the S.A. Table Tennis Federation, SARU by the SACOS Rugby Union, the S.A. Squash and Racket Federation by the SACOS Squash Federation, and the S.A. Soccer Federation by the already established S.A. National Football Association.<sup>117</sup>

Ironically, in the case of soccer, SACOS gained a member with whom they previously did not want to associate. SANFA was considered unacceptable because of the president, George Thabe's involvement with local councils. On the other hand one of its founder members, the SASF, had switched places with SANFA by terminating its SACOS membership.

From the above it is clear that SACOS was losing members. The decline in membership will be dealt with in another chapter. From its formation in 1973 with 8 affiliated members, SACOS grew

---

<sup>114</sup> SACOS: Ninth BGM, p. 41.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., pp. 8 – 22.

<sup>116</sup> SACOS: Tenth BGM, pp. 44 – 61.

<sup>117</sup> SACOS: Ninth BGM, p. 17.

to 24 (twenty-four) affiliates in 83/85 and then shrank to 13 (thirteen) in 1993. Clearly it was strongest during the period 1983 – 1985, the issue of membership being inextricably linked to SACOS policies, strategies and tactics. The question is how an organisation became a member and why certain organisations were accepted and others rejected? These considerations were directly linked to the people in the organisations affiliated to SACOS. An observation was made by the 1982 Human Sciences Research Council report that described SACOS as not totally representative of the people of South Africa.<sup>118</sup> SACOS was viewed by the government, and the HSRC, as a largely Indian and Coloured organisation with a small membership, the perception being that the black masses were not part of SACOS, nor supported it.

## 5.2 The HSRC Report of 1982

In 1979 the Human Sciences Research Council was mandated by the then Minister of National Education, Mr. T.N.H. (Punt) Janson to investigate sport in South Africa. The committee appointed by the minister was known as the main committee (Hoofkomitee) and consisted of twenty-six persons. Serving on this committee were four civil servants, eleven people attached to Afrikaans universities, two persons from black ethnic universities, four full-time members of the HSRC, and five people linked to establishment sport. Of these people possibly eight were members of the Broederbond.<sup>119</sup> The HSRC was approached "...in November 1979 genader met die versoek om 'n indringende ondersoek na sport in Suid Afrika te onderneem."<sup>120</sup> Their duty was to investigate the sport situation in South Africa regarding the physical needs and administrative problem areas ("fisiese behoeftes en administratiewe probleemgebiede").<sup>121</sup> More specifically they had to investigate South Africa's isolation in world sport; political problems created internally by joint participation in sport; the role played by the news media, sport bodies and individuals in disturbing race relations; the positive effect sport can have on race relations; the use of existing facilities for the public; the use of existing school facilities by both the school and surrounding communities and the level of co-operation between authorities in charge of existing sport facilities.<sup>122</sup>

The report was presented to the Minister in 1982 and its recommendations and findings were made public. Amongst the HSRC's findings were that "... SACOS verteenwoordig hoogstens 10% van

<sup>118</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, pp. 10 – 11.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., p. 167.

<sup>120</sup> Verslag van die Hoofkomitee: RGN- Sportondersoek, Nr. 1, Sport in die RSA, 1982, p. i.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., p. ii.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., p. iii.

alle sport deelnemers in Suid Afrika,” and “... dat steun vir die organisasie hoofsaaklik van Indiers, en in ’n mindere mate, van Kleurlinge afkomstig is...”<sup>123</sup>

Against this background, it could be assumed that to increase membership by accepting any and all black organisations would be a priority to SACOS, but this was not so. Membership was not sought at any price. In fact, those who did not comply with SACOS policies were unceremoniously ousted as SACOS preferred principles to members.<sup>124</sup>

In 1982 the newly formed swimming body ASASA applied for membership. Whilst it was procedure for every new member to apply, their application was by no means a *fait accompli*. The question of the use of facilities at segregated universities had to be resolved before the application would be considered. After a lengthy discussion it was accepted that if no alternate facilities were available, the facilities at segregated universities could be used. ASASA was thus accepted. Similarly, other applicants (S.A. Billiard and Snooker Board of Control, S.A. Teachers Training Colleges Sports Association) were thoroughly scrutinised before admission, but both codes were finally accepted.<sup>125</sup> In contrast, the South African Boxing Council’s application was rejected because of their president, Mr. Orrie’s links with multi-national sport.<sup>126</sup> Conforming to SACOS principles and policies remained important and deviations were only allowed for practical reasons, such as the absence of facilities for ASASA.

### **5.3 The composition of SACOS membership**

Who did SACOS represent? Was it, as the HRSC report stated, a coterie of Indians and Coloureds? An in depth analysis of the membership of SACOS will indicate who their membership was, and from which geographic regions support came. This will assist in gauging the support that SACOS enjoyed and consequently the influence it could wield.

According to article 2 of the constitution of SACOS, the stated aim of the organisation was the promotion of non-racialism in sport,<sup>127</sup> intimating that no restrictions on membership on the basis of race would be tolerated. The question remains whether blacks were in general considered part of SACOS? The answer is affirmative although their numbers were limited.

---

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>124</sup> D. Booth: *The Race Game...*, p. 158.

<sup>125</sup> SACOS: *Fifth BGM*, p. 20.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>127</sup> SACOS: *Sixth BGM*, p. 195.

Why that was the case, requires careful consideration of a number of examples. In the sport of tennis there were three tennis organisations before 1979. They were the white body, the South African Tennis Union, SATU, the non-racial body, the S A Lawn Tennis Union and the black S A National Lawn Tennis Union. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1979 the non-racial body, SALTU, and the black body, SANLTU, merged to form the Tennis Association of South Africa (TASA).<sup>128</sup> Its president was E A Fortuin, vice-president D. Kali, national secretary M.N. Pather and an assistant secretary, P.T. Xulu. This new association (TASA) affiliated to SACOS and automatically a group of blacks became members of SACOS.

Similarly, in swimming there were four national bodies viz. the white body (SAASU) S.A. Amateur Swimming Union, the Non-Racial body S.A. Swimming Federation (SAASWIF), the Black Soweto based S.A. National Amateur Swimming Association and the Coloured S.A. Amateur Swimming Association (SAASA). In February 1982 the non-racial body, SAASWIF, and the black body, SANASA, merged to form the Amateur Swimming Association of South Africa, ASASA. Its office bearers included the president Mr Monnathebe Senokoanyane, the vice-president Mr Hendricks, a national secretary Mr Morgan Naidoo and the treasurer Mr Thabo Seotsanyama.<sup>129</sup> The new body ASASA also affiliated to SACOS thereby automatically making blacks part of SACOS. In both of the organisations referred to above, blacks were members of SACOS proving their participation.

However, it must be conceded that both tennis and swimming were not sports supported by the black masses, so that the black representation was limited. It thus becomes necessary to examine the composition of the popular national codes, soccer, rugby and cricket. In soccer, arguably the most popular sport, it would have been a powerful weapon in the non-racial movement had the National Soccer League not been established. The three, “Coloured”, “Black” and “Indian” soccer organisations formed the SASF in 1951.<sup>130</sup> Playing inter-race games, the SASF was successful, incorporating teams such as Orlando Pirates and Moroka Swallows. However, FASA, with the assistance of the state, stepped in with incentives and the NPSL was born in 1961 - 62.<sup>131</sup> The NPSL was a soccer league that consisted of black teams, playing in the black townships and supported by the blacks. Teams such as Orlando Pirates and Moroka Swallows, previously part of

---

<sup>128</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 130.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>131</sup> Archer: The South African Game, p. 251.

the SASF, became part of this new league. A large section of the black community thus no longer supported non-racial soccer of the SASF, so that the black community was removed from the SASF and subsequently from SACOS. The Transvaal area in particular suffered from this move.

However, by 1982 many blacks were part of the SASF and SACOS, particularly in Natal and the Eastern Province. The merger of the non-racial Southern Natal Soccer Board and the African Soccer Board resulted in the formation of SonaKwazbo<sup>132</sup> in Natal in 1983, an example of black membership in Natal soccer. In the Eastern Cape the Kwazakhele Soccer Board and the non-racial EP Soccer Board took similar action,<sup>133</sup> both SonaKwazbo and the Kwazakhele Soccer Board affiliating to SACOS.

The organised rugby fraternity presented the following case. The black membership of SACOS rugby was drawn almost exclusively from the Eastern Cape Region. Between 1971 and 1975 five African rugby unions in the Eastern Cape area joined SARU and subsequently SACOS. They were the Kwazakhele Rugby Union (KWARU) from Port Elizabeth, South Eastern Districts Rugby Union (SEDRU) from Grahamstown, the King Williams and Districts Rugby Union (KADRU) from Kings William Town, the Victoria East Districts Rugby Union (VEDRU) from Victoria East and from Mdantsane the Mdantsane Rugby Union (MDARU).<sup>134</sup> Their affiliation to SARU resulted in SARU being one of the few non-racial federations to have a high black membership.

In the sport of cricket, Black membership of SACOS was negligible and the few blacks that did play SACOS cricket, also came from the Eastern Cape. Generally however, not many blacks participated in cricket.

It is correct to concur that the majority of black sportsmen were not members of SACOS but this statement needs to be put in perspective. From the above it is clear that the overwhelming majority of black sportsmen and black sports organisations were not members of SACOS. Why would people who suffered the most under apartheid not join or support an anti-apartheid sport organisation? Black membership of SACOS was curtailed by the government's repression via repressive legislation and actions, the coercive measures and incentives offered by the state, big business and establishment sport and the hard line policies of SACOS.

---

<sup>132</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 142.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., p. 139.

<sup>134</sup> Archer: The South African Game, p. 226.

The explanation requires an analysis of the situation in South African sport before 1970. As was the case with other aspects of life, sport was divided along ethnic racial lines. In most instances there were 'white', 'Coloured', 'Indian' and 'black' sporting organisations. In soccer for example there was the FASA (white), SA Coloured F.A., SA Indian F.A. and the SA African F.A. By 1982 this situation had changed. One found a white body, the National Football League (NFL), a black body, the South African National Football Association (SANFA) which was largely black and to which the small Coloured and Indian Associations belonged, and the non-racial body, the South African Soccer Federation (SASF)

In its response to the HSRC report and the speech by Dr Gerrit Viljoen, Minister of National Education, SACOS articulated the reason for its existence, their purpose and their principled nature. In 1983 their president opened the Fifth BGM in Cape Town by analysing the HSRC report. In his analysis, SACOS made it clear that their perceived "Coloured and Indian" membership was due to the HSRC's poor understanding of the complexities of government policy and because they were functioning within the framework of the states' multi-national policy.<sup>135</sup> He explained why blacks had not joined them 'en mass'<sup>136</sup> as SACOS perceived it to be impossible for blacks to join en masse because of legislation such as the Group Areas Act, the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act and the creation of Bantustans. SACOS felt that with fewer obstacles, many Blacks would join because they conformed to its ideals and principles. The cancellation of a soccer tour by clubs outside the SACOS fold confirmed this view and SACOS therefore felt that it did represent the aspirations of the oppressed.<sup>137</sup>

## **6.1 The Provincial Councils of Sport**

In addition to the National Sports Federations, there were Provincial Councils of Sport and which were made up of codes of sport found in the respective provinces affiliated to SACOS. A council could be constituted or formed by no less than five '*bona fide*' codes of sport.<sup>138</sup> Provincial codes, clubs and individuals could join SACOS via the Provincial Council.

The concept of provincial councils of sport was born in the Western Province. The formation of a third professional soccer team in the Cape, Cape Town United, and the subsequent collaboration or

---

<sup>135</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 11.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 196.

ganging up by various non-racial codes in the Cape, led to the formation of the Western Province Council of Sport (WEPCOS).<sup>139</sup> As a forum the non-racial codes assisted soccer in bringing about the demise of Cape Town United and in fighting against multi-national soccer. The new forum, consisting of the various non-racial codes, was adopted and WEPCOS was born, through which event non-racial sport displayed a united front in relation to their non-racial sport policy. The idea was favourably received by affiliates nationally and councils of sport were formed in other provinces as well.<sup>140</sup> At the time however, WEPCOS and the newly formed councils were not members of SACOS, being formed independently of SACOS.<sup>141</sup> However, the generally accepted role of the councils of sport and SACOS led them to seek affiliation, so that in 1975, the following Provincial Councils of Sport affiliated to SACOS. They were Western Province Council of Sport (WEPCOS), the Transvaal Council of Sport (TRACOS), the Natal Council of Sport (NACOS), and the Eastern Province Council of Sport (EPCOS). Each provincial council had two (2) votes as opposed to the four (4) votes of the national codes. In 1981 the Border and Boland Councils of Sport were formed and by 1982, they were joined by three more, the Griqualand West Council of Sport, the South Western Districts Council of Sport and the Victoria East Council of Sport. In total nine provincial councils of sport had affiliated to SACOS by 1982.

## 6.2 Aims and Purpose

As was evident by the Cape Town United soccer issue, the formation of the Council of Sport was motivated by the desire to support non-racial sport and to extend the activities of SACOS. “They were originally created to increase public awareness of, and support for, SACOS and the non-racial movement.”<sup>142</sup> The supportive role of the Councils coincided well with one of the aims of SACOS i.e. the promotion of non-racial sport within South Africa and ensuring that the international community was aware of the plight of the oppressed sport persons.<sup>143</sup> Whilst the international awareness campaign was doing well, locally SACOS had to ensure that there would not be any form of betrayal or misinterpretation by members due to government policy.

In the view of SACOS, the state and establishment sport were continually coming up with schemes to ‘confuse’ the masses, e.g. the ‘new’ multi national sports policy, which created confusion

<sup>139</sup> SACOS: Minutes of General Meeting, Kimberly, 1982, p. 3.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Archer: The South African Game, p. 230.

<sup>143</sup> SACOS: Minutes of General Meeting, Kimberly, p. 3.

amongst the non-racial sports administrators.<sup>144</sup> The policy allowed for the various race groups to compete against each other but many sport organisers realized that integration could not be interpreted as something that was for a select few i.e. at national level only. This was an attempt by the state to gain re-acceptance internationally. In many quarters it became clear, that unless the real purpose of the state's new sport policy was expressed, the progress made by the oppressed sports persons would be nullified.<sup>145</sup> The problem SACOS had, was to communicate these dangers to all concerned. The problem was exacerbated by the vastness of the country since SACOS did not have the necessary machinery or support structure to reach everyone concerned.<sup>146</sup> Decentralisation was the solution and the Provincial Councils of Sport were appropriate. The Councils of Sport were the structures that would communicate with everyone on the ground.

At its sixth Biennial General Meeting in 1985, it was reported that four of the nine councils viz WEPCOS, TRACOS, NACOS and EPCOS were performing excellently. The other four, Boland, Border, Griqualand West and Victoria East were experiencing administrative problems. The ninth council, the South Western Districts Council on sport had ceased to function by 1985.<sup>147</sup> Of the eight councils, only six viz. Border, Eastern Province, Griqualand West, Transvaal, Western Province and Natal submitted reports on their activities to the SACOS biennial meetings. Two years later, in 1987, the number of sports councils was reduced to seven after the collapse of the Boland Council of Sport, due to the large geographical area this council had to cover and the failure to establish smaller regional councils. The state of emergency also contributed towards hindering the establishment of these regional councils, since it became difficult to organise, host and attend meetings due to prohibition laws, police harassment, and the detention of members.<sup>148</sup> By 1984 there were seven provincial councils of sport that persisted to 1991. However, of the seven, only five councils, viz. EPCOS, NACOS, VECOS, TRACOS and WEPCOS submitted reports on their activities. The submission of reports indicated which councils were functioning.

By 1991 a change was made by changing the names of the councils by adding 'SACOS' as a prefix, as in SACOS Western Cape and no longer Western Province Council of Sport. This was done with all seven affiliated councils their being referred to as regional structures in SACOS reports. At the 9<sup>th</sup> Biennial General Meeting there were reports from SACOS Transvaal, SACOS Uitenhage, SACOS Natal and SACOS Western Cape. By 1993 the former Provincial Councils of Sport were

---

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., p. 4

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 68.

<sup>148</sup> SACOS: Seventh BGM, p. 59.

referred to as Regional Councils of Sport. They then numbered twelve and included Border, EP, Griqualand West, Karoo, Malmesbury & Districts, Natal, Paarl, Transvaal, Uitenhage, Victoria East, Wellington and Western Cape. At this Biennial General Meeting only four of these regional councils of sport tabled reports detailing their activities.

The discussion above briefly explains how and why the councils of sport were formed, how many councils there were, which councils were functional and the name changes they underwent between 1990 and 1993. It is now necessary to consider what role these councils of sport played and how they developed up to 1993.

By 1993 there were regions representing smaller geographical areas compared to others that represented larger areas such as the Transvaal and Natal. This will be of special concern to us as this new development was indicative of the situation facing SACOS at the time. An analysis of the reports given by the councils will assist in describing their roles.

### **6.3. The Role of the SACOS Councils of Sport**

The role of the councils of sport gradually increased and they began to play an important part in the affairs of SACOS. “They reinforce local organisation, help individual clubs and sportsmen resist intimidation and harassment. They encourage the formation of new clubs particularly in sport for which national federations have not yet been established and they provide a line of communication between the central body and individual sportsmen.”<sup>149</sup> By 1982 the councils were viewed as controversial due to their growing influence, although the actual problem was about duplication of representation and accountability. This led to a debate on the role of Provincial Council vis-à-vis national affiliates. Mr.Y.Ebrahim presented a paper on the role of the Councils of Sport at a general meeting of SACOS held in Kimberly in 1982. In this paper Ebrahim discussed the problem and proposed how it could be resolved, the essence of this being briefly discussed forthwith.

The councils of sport were not responsible to organise sport. National, provincial and regional affiliates were responsible for organising this and their associations were guaranteed autonomy.<sup>150</sup> However since provincial associations were affiliated to their national body and the provincial councils simultaneously, the question of accountability arose. In the case of women’s hockey,

---

<sup>149</sup> Archer: The South African Game, p. 231.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., pp. 229 – 231.

NACOS entertained a splinter body which body was accountable to the existing hockey association, without consulting the existing association.<sup>151</sup> This, argued the SARU president, Mr. E. Patel, was a form of interference as he felt strongly that SACOS or the provincial councils had no right or mandate to interfere with the internal affairs of its affiliates.<sup>152</sup> The implementation of the DSR provided a stern test for SACOS and its affiliates with regard to duplicity. Patel, for example, would not sanction any person who watched multi-national sport as he felt it was not prejudicial to the objectives of SARU.<sup>153</sup> This line of thinking was, according to Archer, justifiable by the reality that non-racial sportsmen could not isolate themselves completely from the apartheid environment surrounding them.<sup>154</sup> However after much debate and after the presentation of the paper by Mr Y Ebrahim, a proposal concerning affiliation to the councils of sport was adopted, the debate centring on whether provincial associations should be compelled to join their respective provincial councils. The proposal “That all national codes of sport shall be obliged to see that their provincial units affiliate to the nearest Provincial Council of Sport” was adopted.<sup>155</sup> With the adoption of this proposal, and the fact that since 1977 they were represented on the SACOS executive with one vote, the influence of the provincial councils in SACOS increased considerably<sup>156</sup>.

In essence the controversy was resolved through the amendments of certain aspects of its policy. To accommodate the issue of interference, the councils of sport undertook to (i) assist all affiliates of National organisations to understand SACOS policy comprehensively without wilfully infringing on the autonomy of the code or that of the national body; and (ii) the councils would report to SACOS on any wilful breach of SACOS policy to enable it to resolve the problem.<sup>157</sup> So from 1982 onwards, in addition to its redefined roles as set out in the presentation of Ebrahim, the Councils of sport played an important promotional role in SACOS activities.

These councils considered the use of venues to determine which venue could or could not be used and why not, thus assisting SACOS with such sensitive issues and sensitised the organisation on local conditions. NACOS described the issue of venues as “a vast thorny and vexed question.”<sup>158</sup> They also made it clear that if the councils did not give serious attention to issues such as venues,

<sup>151</sup> SACOS: Minutes of General Meeting, Kimberly, p. 59.

<sup>152</sup> Archer: The South African Game, p. 271.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., p. 271.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., p. 231.

<sup>155</sup> SACOS: Minutes..., p. 75.

<sup>156</sup> Archer: The South African Game, p. 230.

<sup>157</sup> SACOS: Minutes..., p. 5.

<sup>158</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 142.

they would be unable to terminate the luring away of SACOS members to venues such as Kings Park.<sup>159</sup> In Kimberley, GWCOS went to court to obtain an interdict to gain control of the Diamond Park Country Club facilities for non-racial sport.<sup>160</sup> In the Cape the WEPCOS campaign against the Regional Services Councils was intensified after a number of sport fields were confiscated from non-racial sporting associations.<sup>161</sup> Through the Councils of Sport, sport boards such as the Kimberley Central Sports Board of Control and the Athlone Sports Board of Control were formed specifically to control sport facilities.<sup>162</sup> Similarly in Natal, NACOS successfully brought together sportsmen and community organisations to devise strategies with regard to the new stadium in Chatsworth.<sup>163</sup>

Furthermore the councils promoted SACOS by hosting SACOS general meetings, conferences, sports festivals and award functions. The Biennial General Meetings were hosted by the various Councils, as were general meetings. In Natal NACOS hosted a conference in Durban (1989) to discuss the sport issue and challenges facing the anti-apartheid movement.<sup>164</sup> In this case, NACOS brought a number of organisations together: "Fifty four organisations were represented, eighteen of these organisations were trade unions, political and community organisations."<sup>165</sup> Various councils hosted the annual sports person of the year award. They also organised and hosted sports festivals and thus guaranteed maximum exposure to SACOS in many parts of the country. Events such as the sport person of the year awards were a highlight for sport persons and it served to motivate them.<sup>166</sup> As stated before, the Councils of Sport also engaged with other anti-apartheid movements, supported their cause and also sought support from them, thus making concerted efforts to broaden the mass base of SACOS. "The decision to work closely with progressive community organisations has opened up a very wide and exciting field for extending our influence."<sup>167</sup> In 1982 the General Workers Union was supported by SACOS in their dispute with Coca-Cola.<sup>168</sup> "On issues of common interest our council works with Trade Unions and other community based organisations."<sup>169</sup> Whilst the NACOS president, Clive Vawda, made this statement, it was a

---

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 143.

<sup>160</sup> SACOS: *Seventh BGM*, p. 121.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121.

<sup>162</sup> SACOS: *Eighth BGM*, p. 149.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 141.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>166</sup> SACOS: *Sixth BGM*, p. 139.

<sup>167</sup> SACOS: *Eighth BGM*, p. 142.

<sup>168</sup> SACOS: *Fifth BGM*, p. 18.

<sup>169</sup> SACOS: *Sixth BGM*, p.143.

sentiment generally accepted within SACOS as it actively supported the anti-apartheid movement outside sport through the councils of sport. Even before the directive of SACOS on contact with COSATU / NACTU was received, EPCOS had been making overtures to the local trade union with a view to introducing non-racial sport to their members.<sup>170</sup> EPCOS assisted trade unions and civil organisations in the anti-election campaign<sup>171</sup> a similar campaign being supported by NACOS in Natal. Both campaigns were aimed against the tri-cameral parliament. In 1985 WEPCOS launched the anti-tour campaign against the proposed New Zealand Rugby Tour with the SARU. Through this campaign they managed to get various community based organisations to work together, AZAPO, the UDF, NUM, the Cape Action League and the Muslims Students Association being some of the organisations involved.<sup>172</sup> The issue of the rugby tour was used by WEPCOS to galvanise support across the board, highlighting the unity of purpose, which the Councils of Sport had facilitated. The NACOS also conducted an anti - tour campaign against New Zealand Rugby and Australian Cricket.<sup>173</sup> The Councils of Sport therefore saw it as necessary to work with other progressive movements because “ In this country we realize that all aspects of our lives are inter-linked and indivisible.”<sup>174</sup> In line with its policy of non-alignment, SACOS sought out all the progressive movements to support them. This was in line with their philosophy that sport could not be divorced from everyday life and politics i.e. there could be ‘No normal sport in an abnormal society’.

Besides disseminating information of SACOS policies and activities the council also served as a link between the grass roots level and the highest level as quoted, “In so doing we hope to ensure that the feelings and the views of the grass roots players are conveyed to the highest level.”<sup>175</sup> Attendance and involvement in SACOS activities was encouraged by placing no restriction on the number of delegates at council meetings,<sup>176</sup> an attempt by EPCOS to democratise and broaden the mass base of SACOS.

The Councils of sport also spearheaded the formation of regional councils of sport, to ensure that information would reach all affiliates and grass roots players. The ever-increasing living and travelling costs added another dimension to the councils’ earlier decision to explore and encourage

<sup>170</sup> SACOS: Eighth BGM, p. 138.

<sup>171</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 140.

<sup>172</sup> SACOS: Seventh BGM, p. 127.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., p. 123.

<sup>174</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p.143.

<sup>175</sup> SACOS: Seventh BGM, p. 123.

<sup>176</sup> SACOS: Eighth BGM, p. 137.

the formation of regional councils of sport.<sup>177</sup> By 1989 the Pietermaritzburg and Chatsworth regional councils of sport were formed and by 1991 regional councils were also formed in Malmesbury, Paarl, Wellington and Uitenhage.<sup>178</sup>

The councils of sport involved themselves in community concerns such as the “Uitenhage” incident, when the local Uitenhage Management Council deprived non-racial codes of the use of Rosedale and Jubilee Park Sports fields, and EPCOS joined and supported the community inspired uprising. The effect of this support was that SACOS gained considerable exposure as they were afforded opportunities to address various meetings.<sup>179</sup> By taking such action the councils of sport provided guidance to SACOS with regard to issues outside sport. The SACOS entry into mainline politics was not accidental, rather a conscious decision taken not only because members of SACOS were personally affected, but since members in their particular communities were also affected through arrest, detention without trial, and harassment. During the State of Emergency (20<sup>th</sup> July 1985 and 12<sup>th</sup> June 1986) many members felt the wrath of the state. Mr Jim Summers, past General Secretary of SARU as well as his wife, Dorothy, were detained on 12 June 1986. Many trade unionists and community leaders and workers, disappeared into detention.<sup>180</sup> It was much more than personal sacrifices of members. SACOS and the Councils of Sport in particular, were aware of the State’s actions, and took it upon themselves to alert the masses of the actions of the state. When the state amended the liquor laws and withdrew permits, WEPCOS took the initiative to inform its members of what had really happened, “Unfortunately, many sports administrators view the Amendment to the Liquor Law and the withdrawal of permits at venues as victories”<sup>181</sup> but SACOS observed it as an attempt by the state to be re-accepted into international sport.

Similarly the councils of sport highlighted issues that exposed the state’s intentions such as the Menlo Park School affair, when the Menlo Park Management Committee refused to allow a black athlete permission to compete in an inter-provincial athletics meeting at the school in 1987.<sup>182</sup> By highlighting such issues the councils of sport acted as the watchdogs of SACOS.

---

<sup>177</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 143.

<sup>178</sup> SACOS: Ninth BGM, p. 76.

<sup>179</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 147.

<sup>180</sup> SACOS: Seventh BGM, p. 121

<sup>181</sup> Ibid., p. 129.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid., p. 72.

## 7.1 Policies of SACOS

The constitution reveals that SACOS was an organisation that represented the aspirations of the oppressed people of South Africa, yet it did not represent the majority of the oppressed. Reasons have been offered as to why that was the case. In its quest to oppose sport apartheid and apartheid in general, SACOS developed policies, tactics and strategies to direct its actions, aiming broadly to unite the oppressed people in sport under one umbrella, to oppose apartheid uniformly and to ensure that its members did not collaborate in their own subjugation. However, in particular instances SACOS policies had the direct opposite effect on its members and potential members as quoted by Booth, "... Paradoxically its policies discouraged African members" and resulted in others leaving the fold.<sup>183</sup> By 1982 the majority of these policies and strategies were in place, an examination of which and their implementation, will offer an insight as to how SACOS operated.

## 7.2 The Double Standards Resolution (DSR)

This resolution, introduced in 1977 and later amended in 1979, had an enormous impact on the membership of SACOS. It was designed to "... reinforce the non-racial movement against splits and secessions, by defining non-racial sports persons as those who did not support, and were not actively involved, in the activities of officially recognised sport bodies and all official government institutions."<sup>184</sup> The resolution was first issued in 1977 following a dispute within the S.A. Cricket Board of Control as a result of its relationship with its white counterpart, the issue being the proposed merger between SACBOC and the SACU, which some within the non-racial fold opposed. The DSR forbade any ties with officially recognised sport bodies but it was amended in 1979 to include all official institutions, sporting or otherwise, that supported apartheid. SACOS had, through this amendment, moved beyond the arena of sport.

Since 1980 the Double Standards Resolution and the strategy of non-collaboration were enforced vigorously. Within the organisation, it did not matter who you were or how big you were; all affiliates were treated equally. SACOS policy prohibited members from applying for the use of facilities from the local authorities or the use of segregated facilities. When SARU was allegedly guilty of inconsistency, it was rebuked, despite the fact that SARU was one of its biggest affiliates. Similarly, another of its bigger affiliates, the SASF, was reprimanded and pressurised for using

---

<sup>183</sup> D. Booth: The Race Game, p. 158.

<sup>184</sup> Archer: The South African Game, p.235.

international hotels.<sup>185</sup> The South African Soccer Federation (SASF), had difficulty in implementing the double standards resolution. However at a general meeting of SACOS, there was little if any sympathy for the SASF position, and it was strongly condemned for the support shown to their president, Mr.N. Middleton. The SASF was summarily ejected from the meeting. Its large membership, it was unequivocally stated by the president, did not afford the SASF any special favours.<sup>186</sup> No alternatives were offered by the meeting and the SASF were commanded to get its house in order, as no collaboration would be entertained. Mr Middleton's ties with the CRC were not acceptable and he was forced to resign as president, reflecting the harsh line of action taken against one of the founding members of SACOS. Notwithstanding the fact that he was a founder member and head of one of the oldest and strongest affiliates, he and the affiliate were expelled. In one swoop SACOS lost considerable membership of which a notable proportion was black.

More significant however was the issue of the merger with the largely black South African National Football Association (SANFA). In 1979 talks between the SASF and SANFA were initiated to form a single organisation, but the president of SANFA, George Thabe, was a Vaal Triangle councillor and that was equally unacceptable to SACOS as was Middleton's position. The talks were ended and the SASF reprimanded,<sup>187</sup> denying SACOS of a huge Black membership. Whilst there were other examples, the SANFA/SASF incident is the most glaring one of how SACOS, through its policies paradoxically excluded the very people it sought to represent. The Double Standard Resolution lay at the heart of the exclusion of blacks from SACOS.

Similarly, the DSR affected many blacks who enrolled their children at private white schools in an attempt to escape the perpetual crisis in black education.<sup>188</sup> SACOS did not agree with this view. The DSR was relaxed in respect of teachers and pupils who were forced by their schools to participate in multi national sport. Such persons were allowed to participate in SACOS organised activities.<sup>189</sup>

### **7.3 Permits and the Multi-National Sport Policy**

Since its inception in 1973, SACOS opposed the application for permits and the multi national sport policy. As stated earlier, the meeting led to the formation of SASPO, a direct result of the SASF

---

<sup>185</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 39.

<sup>186</sup> SACOS: Minutes of General Meeting, Kimberly, 1980, p. 8.

<sup>187</sup> C. Roberts: 15 Years.... p. 33.

<sup>188</sup> D. Booth: The Race Game, p. 177.

<sup>189</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 188.

being denied the use of a soccer stadium. This policy of SACOS was a direct consequence of government action as the state had introduced permits to facilitate the introduction of multinational sport whilst simultaneously preventing the organisation of non-racial sport.<sup>190</sup> The state soon realised that the permit system was an embarrassment to them and a potent weapon in the hands of SACOS. The following statement must be seen in the context of the aim of the state's multinational policy viz. to effect the international readmission of South African sport. Through the implementation of the permit system, SACOS could identify and distinguish between racial and non-racial bodies. The state's response was to whittle the permit system away gradually by issuing annual permits, selling tickets in advance, and by issuing permits at short notice.<sup>191</sup> Such manoeuvres complicated matters for SACOS since it confused the rank and file. The membership of SACOS was unsure of which facilities could, or could not, be used. The resolutions concerning permits and the use of facilities were thorny issues that contributed to the exclusion of membership, particularly of blacks, who had no options. Since facilities are an integral part of any sport, the alternative was not to participate in sport. In 1973, SACOS refused to use facilities that required a permit, even blanket permits, so that any club, individual or code would not be granted membership if they used or intended to use such facilities. Even in terms of membership, such an alternative was suicidal. "Facilities have always played a major role in the growth of our affiliates. Hand-in-hand goes the rejection of the permit system. So when De Beers stadium in Kimberley could be used only under permit, our affiliates in that province found they could no longer function and we lost a strong affiliate."<sup>192</sup> The reality was that not all sportsmen and women were prepared to make such sacrifices.

### Venues

The use of facilities at universities was strongly discouraged, since SACOS could not allow credibility to be given to such institutions by practising non-racial sport on their facilities. This was in line with a request by students to disallow sport on campuses after the 1976 Soweto uprising.<sup>193</sup> In addition, the SACOS perspective of segregated universities was that they were racial institutions and not true universities. Before 1983 there was a total ban on the use of facilities at segregated universities: "SACOS had a standing resolution that no sport would take place on the campuses of ethnic universities"<sup>194</sup> However the students themselves were keen to play sport under the auspices

<sup>190</sup> D. Booth: The Race Game, p. 232.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., p. 233.

<sup>192</sup> C. Roberts: 15 Years.... p.30.

<sup>193</sup> SACOS: Seventh BGM, p. 34.

<sup>194</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 193.

of SACOS, even organising their own sport days. However, due to the lack of facilities, particularly in the rural areas, supporters of SACOS were experiencing problems to uphold the resolution. “The non use of facilities on campuses was a problem since at Fort Hare and its surrounds no other sport facilities were available.”<sup>195</sup> Through this policy SACOS lost potential black members to multi-national sport, so, at its 1982 September general meeting, the total ban on the use of university facilities was relaxed - “...if there was no viable alternative, swimming would be allowed to use the pools at ethnic homeland universities...”<sup>196</sup>

Similarly, SACOS came to realise that its hard line policy resulted in multi national sport replacing non-racial organised sport: “Mr C Clarke indicated that where clubs had refused to apply via the Management Committee, they had been forced to disband. Multi-national clubs now operated at these venues.”<sup>197</sup> Consequently SACOS issued the following directive at a general meeting held in September 1982; “The chairman stated that where no viable alternative exists to venues with racist permits, or entry to locations under permit stake, then such venues will be used under protest.”<sup>198</sup>

In November 1986 at a special SACOS Conference this resolution was placed on the agenda for discussion, because the state tightened its grip on community facilities and due to the lack of facilities at schools.<sup>199</sup> After a lengthy debate and a vote, the standing resolution on the use of facilities at the segregated universities was rescinded. The question of using facilities at segregated universities led to a decision to formulate a clearly defined resolution, which differed slightly from the existing one. It was agreed that the facilities at tertiary institutions erected for the oppressed, could be used, but that students had the responsibility to oppose multi-national sport actively and to support non-racialism. Students had to oppose any attempt to foist multi-national sport on them.<sup>200</sup>

The use of facilities at segregated tertiary institutions produced a robust debate, and, it required a two-thirds majority to rescind the standing resolution and every member had to vote to get the new resolution accepted.<sup>201</sup> This debate highlighted the differences in approach to counter the state. A delegate from WEPCOS put it in perspective by saying that one school of thought, those who were

---

<sup>195</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 26.

<sup>196</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 38.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>199</sup> SACOS: Seventh BGM, p. 9.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., p. 41.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

against using facilities at segregated universities, supported the principle of non-collaboration, while the other, supporting the use of the facilities, supported negotiation politics.<sup>202</sup>

#### **7.4 Sponsorship**

The issue of sponsorship was a very difficult one for an organisation such as SACOS. The system of apartheid made it difficult since many of the potential sponsors supported the state and derived its profits from cheap migrant labour. Business in general did not actively or purposefully oppose apartheid and it was only when the economic crisis deepened that they began to call for the abolition of apartheid.<sup>203</sup> In addition, establishment sport was actively supported by big businesses that benefited from their support for establishment organisations, such as the NPSL. SACOS therefore had political and sporting reasons for opposing sponsorship, but the dilemma faced by SACOS was that their affiliates could not do without sponsors. Realising that their members needed financial support and that they would seek sponsorship regardless, SACOS formulated a specific resolution. At the 1977 Biennial General Meeting a resolution, viz. “ SACOS calls on all sponsors to positively support non-racial sport as against sport played on a multi-national or racist basis. SACOS calls on all affiliates to consult with the SACOS executive to scrutinise the terms of any sponsorship before its acceptance,”<sup>204</sup> was passed.

#### **7.5 The Moratorium**

The moratorium on sporting contacts with South Africa was issued as Resolution 2 at the Third Biennial General Meeting of SACOS in 1979. It called for a cessation of all sporting contacts with South Africa until apartheid had been abolished. The moratorium included non-racial organisations such as SACOS because it was believed that, it was impossible to play truly non-racial sport under apartheid. The moratorium did not prohibit SACOS affiliates from seeking international affiliation to their respective international codes eg. in 1982 ASASA applied for membership to the world body FINA,<sup>205</sup> the S.A. Table Tennis Board SACOS affiliate, was recognised by the world body (ITTF). According to Archer and Bouillon the moratorium was one resolution that had the complete support of all affiliates and political organisations.<sup>206</sup> Affiliates were keen to receive coaching from abroad, resulting in relaxation of the moratorium but only in 1986 it was relaxed to allow non-racial sportsmen and women to receive coaching abroad. At the general meeting in 1982 the issue had

---

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>203</sup> D. Booth: *The Race Game*, p. 255.

<sup>204</sup> SACOS: *Third BGM*, p. 16.

<sup>205</sup> SACOS: *Fifth BGM*, p. 16.

<sup>206</sup> Archer: *The South African Game*, p.239.

been raised by various affiliates,<sup>207</sup> but at the 1984 meeting, it was noted that no reply had at that stage been received from the U.N.'s Special Committee Against Apartheid.

The International Blacklist was a consequence of the moratorium, being a list of all the sportsmen and women who, by visiting South Africa, had violated the Rule of the moratorium adopted by the U.N. in 1976.<sup>208</sup> This resulted in an internal blacklist of all sportsmen and women who had defected from SACOS to multi-national sport, being drawn up. In 1982 the General Council agreed in principle to accept the internal blacklist and a Register of Policy Offenders was drawn up.<sup>209</sup>

## **7.6 Political Alignment**

The diverse membership of SACOS brought the issue of political alignment into sharp focus. By its very nature as a facilitating body, SACOS, like sport, had to be neutral as quoted: "...because of the nature of SACOS the organisation could not align itself with any political tendency but will promote the broader liberation struggle"<sup>210</sup> In the first decade of its existence neutrality was achieved relatively easily. At a General Meeting of SACOS held in 1984, the president raised the problem of alignment when he stated that it had been made clear to other anti-apartheid organisations that alignment to any political leaning would cause the demise of SACOS, and a statement to this effect was issued at the SACOS Sport and Liberation Conference held in August 1983.<sup>211</sup> At the subsequent SACOS conference held in Lenasia during November 1983, the meeting agreed to meet with other anti-apartheid organisations, demonstrating its non- sectarian approach.<sup>212</sup> The issue was taken further when the meeting agreed that no official of SACOS could simultaneously hold office in an anti-apartheid organisation although the right of members to affiliate to any political organisation of their choice was guaranteed.<sup>213</sup> With the increased momentum of anti-apartheid movements in the eighties, alignment became a contentious issue. The formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF), the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) and the National Sport Congress (NSC) greatly exacerbated the alignment issue within SACOS ranks as the NSC openly declared its allegiance to the UDF and the ANC.

---

<sup>207</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p.16.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid., p. 60.

<sup>210</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 11.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid., p. 149.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., p. 24.

## 8. SACOS, The S.A. Government and Business

### 8.1 Legislation and state action

Even with the advent of non-racial bodies, South African sport remained divided, for legislation such as the Group Areas Act and the Separate Amenities Act enforced and perpetuated the division. Together with other legislation the impact of such laws was to restrict the various race groups to particular areas, and consequently, to prevent any mixing amongst the groups. The homelands policy further contributed towards such division. The implementation of the Group Areas Act discouraged blacks from joining SACOS or from remaining in it. Collectively these laws and the homelands policy actively discouraged freedom of association as was acknowledged by the HSRC's interpretation of the Act: "Dit raak in beginsel die teenwoordigheid van mense op grond, persele en in klubs. Dit is in beginsel belemmerend ten aansien van die beoefening van sport tussen verskillende bevolkingsgroepe. Dit raak dus direk die vryheid van assosiasie en die bevoegdheid van 'n sportorganisasie om sportreelings te tref."<sup>214</sup>

The creation of the homelands was the manifestation of the apartheid policy. One example of its impact on sport was when the Bantustan authorities disrupted a rugby match in the Ciskei. Squads of policemen from the Ciskei brought an early halt to the King and District Rugby Union's (KADRU) fixtures when they gave players and spectators ten minutes to vacate the fields near Zwelitsha.<sup>215</sup> KADRU was an affiliate of SARU, which in turn was affiliated to SACOS. It was reported in the Cape Herald (12/06/82) and is but one of many examples of state interference in sport,<sup>216</sup> and SACOS sport in particular. In this way people were discouraged from being part of SACOS. Secondly, as was reported in PACE magazine (Dec / Jan 1983), General Sebe, head of the Ciskei homeland, was livid at the merger between KWADRU and the "Coloured" King Central Rugby Union to form the King Central and Districts Rugby Union (KCD), as he felt it was undermining Ciskei's territorial integrity and he vowed that KCD would only play where Coloureds live.<sup>217</sup> In the abovementioned events, "the freedom of association" and "the autonomy of sports organisations to organise" were violated, yet the official policy was to keep the various race groups apart, which meant that groups such as SACOS, advocating non-racialism, were not tolerated. The state also used harassment and intimidation to prevent the various racial groups from organising and

<sup>214</sup> Verslag van die Hoofkomitee: RGN- Sportondersoek, Nr. 1, Sport in die RSA, 1982. p. 31.

<sup>215</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 96.

<sup>216</sup> B.Streek: "Illusions and Reality in South African Sports Policy", in South Africa International, Vol.16, No.1, July 1985, p. 37

<sup>217</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 103.

uniting in sport, as illustrated by the example of Alan Zinn and Ihron Rensburg who were arrested and found guilty of entering a black township without a permit in February 1985 when they had attended a sports meeting to discuss non-racial school sport.<sup>218</sup> In this way SACOS was severely hampered and obstructed from organising in black townships. They could not encourage blacks to join because they were not allowed to meet them. Even when certain laws were amended, the initial aim and intention of apartheid did not change. The TASA president Mr. A.E. Fortuin, who was commissioned by SACOS to study the amendments, made the following finding:<sup>219</sup> The Liquor Act, (No. 87 of 1977) which was amended by the Liquor Amendment Act (No 117 of 1981), contained discriminatory stipulations that were not applicable to sport. Similarly the Group Areas Act (No 36 of 1966) was amended in such a way that it did not apply to people attending ‘*bone fide*’ sporting events. These amendments are mentioned here to illustrate the state’s attempts to de-racialise sport, simultaneously removing the accusation by SACOS that the state was responsible for the racial division in sport. Anyone could attend a “permitted” sport event in any area and be served with alcohol and refreshments at such an event without breaking the law! After these amendments were made, both Acts still existed and were being implemented,<sup>220</sup> but the impact on SACOS was that it did not improve its capacity to organise. Both amended Acts were meaningless since, (i) in the case of the Liquor Act and the Amended Urban Areas Act, the Admission of Persons to the Republic Act could be invoked and (ii) in the case of the Group Areas Act the more restrictive Reservation of Separate Amenities Act (No. 49 of 1953) could be revoked.<sup>221</sup> The amendments mentioned above did not make it easier for SACOS to continue its activities as nothing had changed and the environment had remained the same. The amendments were made to appease the international community including the Kenyan based I.O.C. resident who readily believed that the S.A. government had made tremendous changes for black South Africans.<sup>222</sup> SACOS used the findings mentioned above to structure an adequate reply to a report given to the I.O.C. by the Kenyan I.O.C. resident, on the changes in South African Sport.

## 8.2 Amenities

In the same vein, these amendments did not prevent the various ordinances that empowered provincial government and local authorities from denying SACOS affiliates the use of amenities and restricting their activities. The local councils did exactly what the homeland governments did,

---

<sup>218</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p.140.

<sup>219</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, pp. 183 – 185.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid., p. 185.

<sup>221</sup> P. Hain: The Politics of Sport..., p. 244.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid., p. 181.

i.e. they actively attempted to prevent and disrupt SACOS organised activities. SACOS resolved not to apply for permits to use facilities, thus also adopting a confrontational strategy by refusing to acknowledge the legitimacy of the acts. The local councils frustrated SACOS activities and thereby discouraged people from being part of SACOS or from wanting to join it. An example of this attempted disruption was reported by the Griqualand West Council of Sport: “...the Kimberley City Council and their puppets, the IMC’s and CMC’s are delaying developments at the Eddie Williams Oval in the hope of frustrating our sportsmen...” but “... We shall not be blackmailed into forsaking our principles and choose rather to continue playing sport on stones and on makeshift fields.”<sup>223</sup>

Such actions by the authorities made it difficult for SACOS, both to retain members or to recruit new members, but in some instances they failed as alternative venues were found. Other sport codes suffered when there were no alternative venues. Volleyball in the Border region was placed in jeopardy in 1987 when the council withdrew all facilities. Unfortunately the sport could not be played outdoors due to strong winds.<sup>224</sup> A clear distinction was made between the non-racial sport bodies and establishment sport with regard to the granting of facilities as illustrated by the following quotes: “In contrast the privileged SAVU has access to numerous halls,” “...in direct contrast, the Eastern Province non-racial unit has seven clubs and is forced to play outdoors in unsuitable weather conditions.”<sup>225</sup> The situation in the rural areas, which were largely in the homelands, was much worse as there were very few available facilities and the homeland authorities controlled them. Blacks wanting to play sport, had very few options open to them so that becoming part of SACOS was definitely not an option taken easily. It did appear as if the actions of local councils throughout the country had the sole intention of destroying SACOS organised sport. It was clear that facilities were used as mechanisms to disrupt activities they organised but they were also used as a means of discouraging sportsmen and women from joining SACOS affiliates, or to encourage participation in multi-national sport. Schools, for example, were barred from affiliating to sports boards of control<sup>226</sup> and were provided with facilities although the Department of Education and Training (DET) would determine who could use which facilities. In this manner the state helped to ensure that schools participated in multi-national sport activities. The problem of venues and facilities was an ongoing discussion since the whittling away of the permit system by

---

<sup>223</sup> SACOS: *Sixth BGM*, p. 141.

<sup>224</sup> SACOS: *Seventh BGM*, p. 115.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

the state ensured that it would remain on the agenda.

SACOS had a standing resolution that forbade the use of facilities at universities but in 1982 the problem was again raised, due to the changed circumstances since the meeting was informed that since 1980 various organisations had presented their specific views on the boycott. Mr. J. Letuka differentiated between urban and rural universities and pointed out why rural universities should be exempted from the boycott, as in specific areas, particularly the rural areas and the homelands, no other facilities were available. The newly formed swimming association (ASASA) supported this view and the meeting agreed that facilities at segregated universities could be used where no other were available.

After another lengthy discussion, the president proposed that the councils of sport liaise with student groups on this matter, after which they had to spell out the various options and present them at a SACOS meeting.<sup>227</sup>

At the 1984 meeting held in Kimberley, it was decided to apply for the use of playing facilities under protest. In addition it was decided that the national bodies, SARU and SASF, should apply for playing facilities for all its affiliates for the 1985 season. The idea was to determine whether or not a uniform policy could be implemented by SACOS.<sup>228</sup> The issues of community facilities and university facilities were two of three major items up for discussion at the November 1986 general meeting when the standing resolution was to be reviewed. After a lengthy heated discussion, the standing resolution was amended and students were henceforth allowed to use university facilities albeit with certain conditions.

The use of facilities was an ongoing problem due to the response of SACOS members to their use. SARU, for example, applied the policy inconsistently, claiming that there were no other available facilities.<sup>229</sup> In 1998 WEPCOS reported that it was aware of their members using 'permitted' facilities, this inevitably leading to confusion amongst the SACOS members.

Similarly the magnificent sport facilities built at the ethnic universities were being used as bait as recorded in the following quote: "It is, however, important to note that the sport facilities at these universities are the best in the country, people are now clamouring to use these facilities often

---

<sup>227</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 37.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>229</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 20.

because of a low rate of hire and because of the acute shortage of facilities in the community. These problems distract from the struggle of the community to fight for facilities. This artificial shortage of facilities is being exploited by the state to compel people into the folds of multiracial sport.”<sup>230</sup> Strategically, the government sought to divide the communities and in particular SACOS, by opening such facilities to all although it was well aware of SACOS policies on the use of facilities at segregated universities and knowing full well that any SACOS member using them would be ostracised. From the WEPCOS report of 1987, it was clear that the state’s strategy had some success: “it was found that the codes themselves were indiscriminately contributing to the breaking down of discipline by using ‘ethnic’ facilities...”<sup>231</sup>

### **8.3 Business and Sponsorship**

In similar fashion, business also played its part in discouraging sports persons from joining SACOS, whilst encouraging them to participate in multi-national sports. In particular, mining companies supported the state’s multi-national policy and their facilities on the mining companies’ premises were second to none. However, only employees of the mines were allowed to use them, as sport on the mines was reserved for whites and was strictly controlled by the Hostel Management. The players had no decision-making powers with regard to finance, policy and affiliation. The mining management gave the pro-government sport bodies the sole right to organise sport there so that the miners were only aware of organisations such as SARA, SAABU, SAAAU and the NPSL.<sup>232</sup> Consequently, SACOS was prevented from organising the huge potential of black sports persons on the mines because they were not allowed there. Business leaders encouraged the formation of industrial leagues, as in soccer,<sup>233</sup> the entire administrative and running costs being borne by the owners. These leagues were not part of the SACOS organisation and subsequently these workers as players were automatically excluded from of it.

Another method used to curtail Black membership of SACOS was through sponsorship as multi national sport was heavily sponsored whilst the SACOS activities received very little support. “Whereas the non-racial Board (SAAAB) affiliated to SACOS does not enjoy any sponsorship, the white Union (SAAAU) was sponsored by Nashua with R16000-00 and by Saambou National Building Society to the tune of R25000-00.”<sup>234</sup> Individuals were also encouraged by certain multi-

---

<sup>230</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid., p. 129.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid., pp. 65 – 67.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

<sup>234</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, P. 64.

national sport organisations to abandon SACOS and join them as illustrated by the S.A. Hockey Union. Hockey players from the non-racial SAHB were offered incentives by the white S A Hockey Union to join them.<sup>235</sup> Mr Frans Khunou, the President of the Black Federation and Vice-President of the SA Amateur Bodybuilders Union (SAABU) addressed a meeting in Port Elizabeth where he stated that he had R15000-00 offered to him by the Department of Sport to promote bodybuilding and weightlifting.<sup>236</sup> With this type of financial assistance the state hoped that people would leave the SACOS affiliated federation (SAAWBF) to join the SAABU. The attractiveness of these incentives was harmful to the SACOS affiliates, as it enticed their members to leave especially those sportsmen who were struggling financially.

This scenario manifested itself in most codes as well as the schools, thereby 'denying' SACOS black membership. SACOS suffered most in soccer, which was and is the most popular sport in South Africa by virtue of the number of people participating in and supporting the game. At this stage the majority of soccer enthusiasts supported the NPSL as opposed to the SASF-PL. Since the advent of professional football in 1959, the fortunes of these two bodies were very different. The NPSL, the multinational body formed by government to combat the rising non-racial SASF-PL, grew from strength to strength. By 1982 the SASF-PL was denied sponsorship whilst the NPSL enjoyed backing to the tune of approximately R800000-00, including R450000-00 from the state controlled SABC.<sup>237</sup> Many of the top teams and players from the FPL were enticed to join the multi-national NPSL, its support being the main issue, and this, according to Archer and Bouillon, "...lies at the heart of the government's multi-national strategy."<sup>238</sup> The multi-national strategy envisaged the organising and control of sport by each of the four race groups. The NPSL, as a black organisation, run and supported by blacks was a perfect example of a multi-national sporting entity and fitted very well into the state's sport strategy. The successful growth of the NPSL, which was largely the result of its sponsorships, was a victory for the governments' multi-national policy. Had the NPSL been an affiliate of SACOS in 1982, it would have been able to claim a huge black membership. Soccer, more than any other sport, could have provided the numbers SACOS needed to become a broad-based organisation, but sponsorship, together with facilities, played a major role in depriving SACOS of black members.

---

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 134.

<sup>237</sup> SACOS: *Sixth BGM*, 107.

<sup>238</sup> Archer: *The South African Game*, p. 251.

#### 8.4 Schools

In a very similar manner the state's control of black schools also deprived SACOS of an immense black membership and was prohibited from organising black school sport, so that it was denied the opportunity of spreading its non-racial gospel. As was the case with other aspects of South African life, education too was racially segregated, each race group being controlled by its 'own' Department of Education and no mixed school sport and inter-school competitions were allowed.<sup>239</sup>

Each department and each racial group had to organise its own sport, in line with the apartheid policy. However, there was a marked difference between how Coloured and Indian schools on the one hand, and black schools on the other hand, could organise, the Coloured and Indian schools having greater "freedom".<sup>240</sup> Coloured and Indian schools had organised themselves into national and provincial sport bodies. The national bodies, SAPSSA for primary schools and SASSSA for high schools, organised sporting tournaments in which the provinces competed against each other. The provincial bodies, such as the Transvaal High Schools Sports Association organised sport for the schools in its specific province. In black schools such bodies did not exist to belong to and this relative freedom could not exist, due to the tight government control through the Bantu Education Act. To compound matters the state created the South African Schools Sports Council (SASSC)<sup>241</sup> SASSC was formed to counter SASSSA and SAPSSA, the two sporting organisations that were affiliates of SACOS, their aim being to promote multi-national sport.<sup>242</sup> SACOS debated the formation of SASSC and agreed to do everything in its power to oppose it. A resolution condemning SASSC and its aims was passed<sup>243</sup> although it was not spelt out in detail exactly how this was to be done. During discussions various ideas were put forward as to how the SASSC could be opposed, the following being some of the proposals: SACOS could embark on an information and an education publicity campaign to inform the people of the implications of accepting SASSC; they had to ensure that SRC's at schools were mobilised; SACOS was to meet and to consult broadly with other liberation movements; and to meet and to consult with teacher organisations to ensure that SAPSSA and SASSA became fully fledged national organisations.<sup>244</sup>

The second issue affecting the schools was the role of the Regional Service Council (RSC). The RSC's was the local government development of the Tri-Cameral System that controlled services

---

<sup>239</sup> K.B.Powell: School Sport and Political Change, p. 64.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>241</sup> SACOS: Seventh BGM, p. 13.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

such as water supply, electricity and sport facilities. SACOS was concerned that the RSC's control of facilities would make it necessary to apply to them for the use of sporting facilities. As schools generally did not have their own facilities, the power of the RSC's would have a major impact on schools sport, although, however, at the time (1986), the role and functions of the RSC's were not crystal clear. The state had not spelt out to which extent the RSC's would affect sport. SACOS resolved that the RSC's would be dealt with similarly to the SASSC, "the basic approach evolved to deal with the SASSC would apply to RSC's too."<sup>245</sup> In this instance SACOS was not only responsive but also being proactive to the states' manoeuvres.

The third issue affecting schools was the general attitude of students in black schools, their being more concerned with daily survival than school sport and democracy.<sup>246</sup> Their daily struggles impacted on their capacity to form organisations such as SAPSSA and SASSA, and very few, if any black schools, belonged to SACOS via SAPSSA and SASSA.<sup>247</sup> Coupled with the restrictive statutory framework, and state created sport bodies such as SASSC, SACOS was effectively prevented from gaining a substantial membership.

## 9. SACOS and the Anti-Apartheid Political Organisations

The relationship between SACOS and anti-apartheid organisations was relatively healthy, up to a point. SACOS attempts to support all anti-apartheid movements and the support they received in turn, was indicative of a healthy relationship. However there were not many active anti-apartheid organisations operational before 1982 due to state repression. The growth in the number of organisations in the eighties changed the environment, which SACOS acknowledged and sought to adapt. The change was that sport, and by extension SACOS, no longer topped the anti-apartheid agenda. However the changing environment necessitated a change in tactics for particular movements. Certain fundamental differences emerged around the strategy of including or excluding particular groups of people, resulting in the deterioration of the relationship between SACOS and the UDF, the MDM and the ANC.

The statement above will be placed in perspective by a brief discussion of the relationship SACOS had with progressive movements. SACOS, through its councils of sport and affiliates, supported and sought the support of anti-apartheid movements since they had a common aim viz.: the

---

<sup>245</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>246</sup> K.B.Powell: *School Sport and Political Change*, p. 75.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78.

eradication of apartheid. Therefore SACOS supported campaigns against inter alia, the Presidents Council, the entire concept of the Homelands, the HSRC and all other government institutions. Community issues and workers' grievances were also supported. With the growth and re-emergence of organisations on the anti-apartheid side, two opposing camps from within the anti-apartheid ranks appeared in the form of the National Forum (NF) and the United Democratic Front (UDF). SACOS had to formulate its position relative to these new organisations.

Since SACOS membership represented various political inclinations, it pursued the route of political non-alignment.<sup>248</sup> The growing trade union movements, COSATU and NACTU and other community based organisations, found them in a similar situation and SACOS supported them all. SACOS did not enter into any formal agreement with any of the anti-apartheid movements with regard to policy and strategy, but would offer mutual support in the fight against apartheid. An analysis of the minutes of the Biennial General Meetings, reports and messages indicates how the relationship with anti-apartheid movements was unfolding. By 1987 the status quo in terms of the SACOS relationship with anti-apartheid organisations of the previous fourteen years had been retained.

In 1988 matters changed and two of the major sport codes, soccer and rugby, had meetings with the ANC. At the meeting with the rugby code, both the establishment sports body, SARB and the non-racial SARU, were represented, the message emanating from this meeting, confusing SACOS members. This was because SARB reneged its agreement of confidentiality regarding the discussions, which centred on unifying rugby. The rank and file membership of SARU and SACOS, being told one side of the story via the press, naturally became confused and understandably critical of SARU and SACOS.<sup>249</sup> The confusion was caused by reports of a split between SARU and SACOS, which fuelled speculation of a SARU political sell-out, by implication accusing the SACOS executive as well.<sup>250</sup> In essence, both SARU and SACOS were accused of aligning themselves with the ANC. In his secretarial report at the 1989 Biennial General Meeting, the general secretary pointed out the mischief that resulted from the rugby meeting, by reporting: "The use of SACOS mastheads and emblems in these publications seem to fuel suspicion of alignment. SACOS is being used surreptitiously to attack other tendencies and organisations."<sup>251</sup> SACOS was

---

<sup>248</sup> SACOS: *Sixth BGM*, p. 62.

<sup>249</sup> SACOS: *Eighth BGM*, p. 23.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 69.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*

forced to defend its position on alignment, a contentious issue and a divisive factor within the organisation. This example illustrates the tensions that existed within SACOS as a result of the divergent political views held by its members.

In 1988, SACOS experienced problems with the anti-apartheid conference organised by COSATU and the UDF, who had invited certain groups to the conference that were unacceptable to SACOS in terms of their established policies.<sup>252</sup> SACOS wanted to clarify its position and raise its objections about these groups that had also been invited to the conference.<sup>253</sup> This incident displayed the fundamental differences between SACOS and the MDM, who would not be dictated to by SACOS, nor consult with SACOS as to whom they could invite to the conference. In addition, the decision by SACOS to raise its objections was not fully supported by some of the SACOS affiliates and they made their objections known. The president Mr. Y. Ebrahim, expressed his concern about affiliates' ability to deal with these disagreements in the following matter: "Logic as well as the democratic process demands that we cannot allow an affiliate or any persons to insist on the right to publicly differ from a decision which has been approved of by the majority of our affiliates"<sup>254</sup> This statement was made in the context of the anti apartheid conference to which SACOS had certain objections. Clearly there were tensions within SACOS that revolved around the strategies advocated by the divergent political tendencies.

At the 8<sup>th</sup> Biennial General Meeting (March 1989) SACOS received messages of support from COSATU, NACTU, the New Unity Movement (NUM) and advocate Dullah Omar, the four messages reflecting the opposing views within the anti-apartheid movements. From COSATU they were urged to build a mass based sport movement, whilst NACTU commended them on their principled position on the question of unity.<sup>255</sup> The (NUM) New Unity Movement praised SACOS for its "principled adherence to its principles and its commendable ability, through its non aligned position to harness the interest of all non racial sport persons"<sup>256</sup> Dullah Omar's message, although given in his personal capacity, reflects the thinking of the UDF; "in struggle one's personal views cannot be allowed to conflict with our general political position in organisations."<sup>257</sup> (at the time D. Omar was chairperson of the UDF - Western Cape Region). In his message Omar said that SACOS

---

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 21.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 30 – 31.

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

needed to locate itself within the broad democratic movement and move in conjunction with it.<sup>258</sup> In general these represented two opposing views, COSATU and Omar on the one hand, who propagated alignment with the broader liberation movement, and NACTU and New Unity Movement on the other hand, supporting non-alignment. Similarly divergent views were found within SACOS viz. “ At this juncture the dominant trend in South Africa is the fragmentation amongst diverse categories of the dominated classes, between the contrasting demand and strategies of various oppositional forces...understandably the debates were to enter the SACOS forums.”<sup>259</sup> The debates that ensued around this issue of alignment caused serious tensions within SACOS as an analysis of the conflicting strategies emerging by the end of the 1980’s indicates how, which ever tendency won the day, would determine the future of the organisation. This is the case because a mass based movement and alignment to a particular political tendency, were linked in the then South African political context.

By 1990 SACOS found itself in a difficult situation since the NSC was formally launched and declared its alignment to the UDF and the ANC; the interim NOSC had been formed and unity talks were taking place between the opposing sport organisations; SACOS finally met the internal wing of the ANC; Nelson Mandela was released and “talks about talks” between the State and the ANC had started. The other anti-apartheid movements such as the PAC, AZAPO, NUM and WOSA were not in favour of these ‘Talks about Talks’. In a similar vein SACOS was not entirely in favour of the unity talks in sport, since no fundamental political change had not yet taken place.<sup>260</sup>

Fundamentally, SACOS and groups such as the PAC, AZAPO, NUM and WOSA had the following in common viz.: “All were against negotiation with the establishment until all the vestiges of apartheid had been removed. In addition, these political groups also supported the principle of non-alignment.”<sup>261</sup> Without doing it consciously, or deliberately, SACOS drifted into the camp of the Socialists and Africanists.

The establishment of the NSC precipitated this split. Shortly after its formation in 1988, it declared its opposition to SACOS in 1989 and publicly declared its alignment to the UDF and thus, to the ANC.<sup>262</sup> Coupled to this development, the relationship between the UDF and SACOS never

---

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*, p.34.

<sup>259</sup> C. Roberts: *15 years...*, p. 252.

<sup>260</sup> SACOS: *Ninth BGM*, p. 35.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

improved. As an organisation, SACOS never really had an intimate and good relationship with the ANC. SANROC, under Sam Ramsamy, was courting the NSC thereby souring the previously extremely healthy relationship it had had with SACOS, and affiliates of SACOS were talking to the ANC.

Within SACOS, a split was looming. By 1989, some executive members of SACOS and officials of certain affiliates were initiating a breakaway to join the rival NSC,<sup>263</sup> resulting in the formulation of a resolution that prohibited dual membership. When this resolution, the Dual Affiliation Resolution (DAR) was passed in November 1989, it automatically declared the NSC a rival body.<sup>264</sup> The DAR forced affiliates and members to exercise a choice to indicate support for, or support against, the principle of non-alignment. Since the NSC was linked to the UDF, MDM and the ANC, the abovementioned breakaway initiative added to the deterioration of the relationship between SACOS and the UDF/MDM/ANC alliance. Mr. Y. Ebrahim further identified the ANC as the culprits who created false expectations for the masses, and that the sport trade-off by the ANC had only benefited establishment bodies, and not the sport bodies representing the oppressed.<sup>265</sup> This criticism of the ANC reflected the poor relationship between the two organisations, this poor relationship being conveyed at the Meeting of the Commission against Apartheid in Sport (Oct 1992). Here SACOS was increasingly identified as embracing socialist thinking. The meeting, held in New York in 1992, was convened to establish whether the work of the Commission against Apartheid in Sport should continue. Members of the committee felt that the political developments in S.A. were of such a nature that there was no further need for the commission to function.<sup>266</sup> Both SACOS and the NSC together with the ANC and PAC, were requested to report on developments within South Africa. The two reports, from SACOS and the NSC were in direct contradiction to each other, their camps being clearly demarcated - "With the NSC and ANC attempting to get the report to reflect the political situation in S. A. in a far more favourable light, SACOS and the PAC on the other hand opposed these efforts".<sup>267</sup> SACOS' relationships with progressive movements were stipulated by their principles. Its policy of alignment forbade it from joining the Charterists. However, if they were not with the Charterists, with whom were they? The question is whether, in the context of South Africa politics, SACOS could afford to remain non-aligned?

---

<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>265</sup> SACOS: Tenth BGM, p. 30.

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

No formal agreement was reached with any of the anti-apartheid movements,<sup>268</sup> as SACOS felt strongly about not aligning themselves with any particular movement,<sup>269</sup> which was in line with its policy of non-alignment. In 1984 meetings with the UDF, COSATU and the National Forum Committee were held. These meetings resulted from a resolution adopted at the Lenasia SACOS conference in 1983, a resolution which mandated the SACOS executive to meet with anti-apartheid organisations. Discussions were reported to be constructive with the UDF, and conducted in an excellent spirit with FOSATU and they agreed to establish and maintain links.<sup>270</sup> Between 1982 and 1987 the relationship that SACOS enjoyed with the anti-apartheid movements can best be described as relatively good.<sup>271</sup> It was paradoxically boosted by the rebel tours, which ‘persuaded’ the anti-apartheid organisations to unite. The 1985 All Black tour resulted in a meeting of various organisations held at Khotso House, where some of the organisations present included the UDF, the National Forum Committee, (NFC), New Unity Movement, FOSATU, The Council of Unions of S A, AZACTU, the General and Allied Workers Union (GAWU), the S.A. Council of Churches and the Muslim Judicial Council (MJC).<sup>272</sup> The aim of the meeting, convened by SACOS, was to plan a joint strategy to oppose the tour.<sup>273</sup> Similarly the Springbok Rugby tour to New Zealand was the catalyst for a historic meeting. Under the auspices of NACOS “the three major political organisations in the country, the UDF, the African Peoples Democratic Union of S A and the Azanian People’s Organisation,” acted jointly to oppose the tour.<sup>274</sup> From the above it is clear that SACOS was prominent in the struggle, but this situation gradually changed after 1987, leading to changes in SACOS’ relationships with some of the anti-apartheid movements.

Sport was no longer the main focus of SACOS’ activities, as “for a long time SACOS operated in a political vacuum and with the development of recent years of progressive political and community organisations, we, who represent the anti-apartheid sport persons, should now take our rightful place within the broad liberation struggle as a small though significant part of that struggle. In the prevailing circumstances SACOS (and its affiliates) can only be supportive of the struggle.”<sup>275</sup> How to convey such support, SACOS was uncertain. Certain fundamental differences between SACOS and particular anti-apartheid movements, made SACOS’, support difficult. At their first meeting

---

<sup>268</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 23.

<sup>269</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 11.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid.

<sup>272</sup> SACOS: Seventh BGM, p. 51.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid., p. 64.

<sup>274</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 75.

<sup>275</sup> SACOS: Seventh BGM, p. 123.

(between the UDF and SACOS) fundamental policy differences, such as the role of the liberals, NUSAS and workers supporting the NPSL, were raised,<sup>276</sup> although in 1986 it was not much of a problem it later developed into one that would change the relationship between the UDF and SACOS. By 1988 certain developments set in motion the direction for SACOS with respect to its relationship with particular anti-apartheid movements. These developments included 1) the launch of the UDF and the ensuing relationship with SACOS; 2) the formation of the NSC and the ensuing relationship with SACOS and 3) the re-emergence of the ANC as a 'player' within South Africa. The issue of alignment henceforth largely determined the direction of SACOS and its relationship with other anti-apartheid movements. The fact that the issue of alignment and their relationship with anti-apartheid movements was placed on the agenda at the 1989 Biennial General Meeting, reflected the concern of SACOS.<sup>277</sup> A brief elaboration of the abovementioned developments follows.

1). From the beginning the relationship between SACOS and the UDF was strained. Firstly SACOS did not attend the launch of the UDF in 1983 as it was hosting its own liberation conference at the same weekend. At the first meeting between the UDF and SACOS, policy differences emerged. The UDF made it clear that it would not automatically isolate people associated with the state or its appendages.<sup>278</sup> SACOS was not happy with the invitees to the anti-apartheid conference called by the UDF and COSATU. Even though the anti-apartheid conference never materialised (it was banned),<sup>279</sup> SACOS sought a meeting with the organisers to voice its stance on the basis of its principles. The meeting did materialise, and SACOS was afforded the opportunity to state its non-collaborationist stance.<sup>280</sup>

2). The formation of the National Sport Congress in 1988 created serious tension within SACOS, attributed directly to the issue of alignment. The two organisations met for the first time in May 1988 when the NSC stated that it regarded SACOS as the authentic non-racial sport organisation in the country, but that its intent was to organise non-racial sport in areas SACOS had been unable to penetrate.<sup>281</sup> However, shortly hereafter the NSC decided to go it alone, and for the first time since 1973, an opposing anti-apartheid sport body had been formed. The domain previously occupied by SACOS now became contested. The NSC also publicly proclaimed their alignment to the UDF and, by implication the ANC. To rub salt in the wounds, the majority of founding members of the NSC

---

<sup>276</sup> SACOS; Sixth BGM, p. 72.

<sup>277</sup> SACOS; Eighth BGM, p. 10.

<sup>278</sup> D. Booth: The Race Game, p. 159.

<sup>279</sup> SACOS; Eighth BGM, p. 21.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid., p. 73.

had previously been high profile SACOS members, as “These included the NSC president, Mluleki George (rugby), vice presidents, Arnold Stofile (rugby), Ebrahim Patel (rugby) and Krish Mackerdhuji (cricket), general secretary Mthobi Tyamzashe (rugby), administrative secretary Errol Heynes (cricket), publicity secretary, Cheryl Roberts (table tennis), and executive member, Rama Reddy (soccer).”<sup>282</sup> This desertion and the SACOS policy of non-alignment adversely affected the relationship between it and the UDF.

3). The re-emergence of the ANC in the South African political arena, sidelined SACOS. Suddenly everyone needed to travel to Lusaka - soccer, rugby, Danie Craven, Van Zyl Slabbert; everyone wanted to meet with the ANC. In fact, many people were meeting the ANC but the government had successfully kept such meetings from the public.<sup>283</sup> However, it was Louis Luyt’s meeting with the ANC that set the cat amongst the pigeons in S.A. politics. Luyt, acting as Craven’s emissary, met the ANC to get its blessing for a centenary tour. The media publicised it enormously, the government was furious, and the ANC scored a publicity coup.<sup>284</sup> The reforms of President de Klerk further enhanced the ANC’s stature and increased its sphere of influence.

The meeting between SARU, SARB and the ANC engendered a long and robust deliberation. It was agreed that the meeting was in line with an established practice and was therefore supported. However, the media reports after the meeting had caused great confusion and bickering as it was maintained that codes allegedly placed themselves above SACOS and its leadership. “Codes should realise that in order to prevent unfair speculation, there should be closer contact between themselves and the SACOS executives.”<sup>285</sup> The challenging environment prompted SARU to recognise the ANC so that such a meeting could take place but, on the other hand, the meeting elevated SARU to an even more powerful position.

The involvement of the ANC was also contentious for SACOS as it resurrected the issue of alignment, which was also raised in discussions on the invitation to SACOS to be part of the Mandela Reception Committee. Note was made of the fact, that whilst all political organisations were invited to serve at an honorary level, only one political organisation dominated at a functionary level.

---

<sup>282</sup> D. Booth: *The Race Game*, p. 200.

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.

<sup>284</sup> B. Kidd: “The campaign against sport in South Africa” in *International Journal*, XLVII, 1988, p. 662.

<sup>285</sup> SACOS: *Eighth BGM*, p. 23.

Collectively these events conspired against SACOS in the sense that the organisation had become alienated from the role players, who were to become prominent. SACOS's situation was further exacerbated by the actions of their international allies, so that the changing political environment no longer accommodated SACOS sympathetically.

#### **10. SACOS, SANROC and International Relationships**

The international community played an immense role in supporting the aims and objectives of SACOS. Abroad SACOS could depend on support from many organisations, including The United Nations Centre against Apartheid, the South Australian Council of Churches, the International Campaign against Apartheid Sport (ICAAS), the Belgium Committee against Colonialism and Apartheid, the French Anti-Apartheid Movement (FAAM), the American Coordinating Committee for Equality in Sport and Society (ACCESS), the Holland Committee of Southern Africa, the Federation Sportive and Gymnique du Travail (France), the Liquor Trades Union and the Vehicle Builders Employees Federation of Australia, Halt all Racist Tours (Hart), the Campaign Against Racial Exploitation (CARE Australia), the Australian Workers Union (AWU), the South Australian Campaign Against Racial Exploitation (SCARE), the Multi-cultural Art Workers Committee of South Australia, the Irish Anti-apartheid Movement (Chairperson – Kader Asmal) and even the then New Zealand High Commissioner, Chris Laidlaw.<sup>286</sup> The list is a clear indication of the support SACOS enjoyed abroad by 1982.<sup>287</sup> It was also an associate member of the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa (SCSA) and as such, was recognised by the OAU. By 1982 even the IOC knew of, and recognised SACOS, but their greatest ally abroad was SANROC. What SACOS attempted to achieve locally, SANROC attempted to achieve abroad, these two organisations working in tandem, SANROC even being considered as 'our external wing'.<sup>288</sup> SACOS kept the flame alive at home and kept SANROC informed of the latest development, while SANROC kept the flame alive abroad by calling for the isolation of South African sport. Whilst the gains at home could not be fully measured, the gains of the international campaign were obvious and convincing. By 1982 the international campaign had served notable results. South Africa was expelled from international sport in the following codes, Wrestling (1970), Weight Lifting (1972), Swimming (1973), Netball and Amateur Cycling (1970), Amateur Boxing (1968), and Basketball (1978). The most notable of

---

<sup>286</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 29 – 54.

<sup>287</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 63.

<sup>288</sup> SACOS: *Sixth BGM*, p. 58.

these expulsions were those from the Olympic games in 1970 and football in 1976. Cricket also, had its membership cancelled.<sup>289</sup>

Since its re-emergence in exile in 1966, SANROC played a pivotal role in isolating South African sport, the leaders compromising its president, Mr Rathinsamy, its secretary Mr Reg Hlongwane, Chris de Broglio, George Singh and Dennis Brutus. Three of these leaders, De Broglio, Hlongwane and Brutus, fled South Africa and re-established the organisation in exile with the opening of an office in London in 1966.<sup>290</sup> Dennis Brutus later went to America where he opened another SANROC office and Sam Ramsamy took over the leadership in London.<sup>291</sup> SACOS enjoyed a very good relationship with Mr Sam Ramsamy, and by implication with SANROC, as indicated by the following quote, “SACOS and its affiliates have always had a healthy relationship with SANROC in London.”<sup>292</sup> Ramsamy was elected as a SACOS patron at the 5<sup>th</sup> Biennial General Meeting but after 1989 this relationship changed.

At each Biennial General Meeting between 1982 and 1989, Sam Ramsamy sent greetings to the conference on behalf of SANROC. A brief examination of the contents of these greetings will shed some light on the development of the relationship. In his messages to SACOS at their 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Biennial General Meetings, one common thread emerged, the message of building a mass based sporting structure: “...it is imperative that SACOS now actively lobbies all the oppressed people...”<sup>293</sup>; “...my appeal to you is to embark on a massive campaign to mobilise all the oppressed people into a united people’s anti-apartheid organisation...”<sup>294</sup>; ...we need to embark on mass mobilisation so as to strengthen the anti-apartheid sports campaign and to build infrastructures...”<sup>295</sup> It is evident that a mass based organisation was perceived to be the solution for the future. We may assume that these messages were appeals to SACOS to become more involved in the black townships, as supported by the following statement taken from Ramsamy’s message in 1987: “We can harness this wide-ranging goodwill and support into a positive front if we try to seek ways and means of accommodating, albeit reluctantly, followers of the anti-apartheid policy who are themselves forced by circumstances to accept certain trappings of apartheid. This should not in any way mean that SACOS is accepting these trappings. My appeal is for SACOS to give

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 191.

<sup>290</sup> Archer: *The South African Game*, p. 194.

<sup>291</sup> SACOS: *Fifth BGM*, p. 121.

<sup>292</sup> SACOS: *Eighth BGM*, p. 82.

<sup>293</sup> SACOS: *Sixth BGM*, p. 46.

<sup>294</sup> SACOS: *Fifth BGM*, p. 45.

<sup>295</sup> SACOS: *Eighth BGM*, p. 36.

consideration to this aspect.”<sup>296</sup> The appeal made in 1987, was significant in being contrary to the DSR and the policy of non-collaboration.

SACOS realised that it urgently needed to build a mass based structure and also realised that it could only achieve this by going into the townships. It was hamstrung by the reality that black township dwellers were like all South Africans, inextricably bound to the trappings of apartheid. The solution was for SACOS to relax or abandon the DSR and the policy on non-collaboration but was unwilling to do so, “ To adopt such a change will mean a re-defining of the parameters within which we function as well as altering our stance on the policy of non-collaboration.”<sup>297</sup> Another sporting organisation, the NSC, was not restricted by such resolutions or policy and its birth and the steadfast stance of SACOS, eventually contributed towards weakening the SACOS – SANROC axis. SACOS identified a rift in the relationship with SANROC in 1987 when Ramsamy “in various communiqués deliberately refrained from referring to SACOS as the authentic sports wing of the liberation struggle.”<sup>298</sup> Whilst SACOS attempted to restore this relationship, matters were compounded by Dennis Brutus’ request to represent SACOS and after some deliberation, SACOS decided that it would recognise Ramsamy in London and Brutus in America. The decision was taken at an executive meeting held in Cape Town in 1988.<sup>299</sup> Add to this, the deteriorating relationship between SACOS and the NSC. The 8<sup>th</sup> Biennial General Meeting revealed that high profile members of SACOS such as Mr. E. Patel of SARU, Mr. K. Mackerdhuj of the SACB and Dr.E. Vawda of SATTB had decided to join the NSC, while still being members of SACOS. They were sowing confusion in the ranks of SACOS affiliates in an attempt to get them to join the NSC. When a meeting was convened in 1989 in an attempt to resolve the friction, the NSC indicated that they no longer regarded SACOS as the sport wing of the liberation front,<sup>300</sup> but by this time the NSC and Sam Ramsamy had already begun working together.<sup>301</sup> Since 1987, SANROC represented both SACOS and the NSC. In 1988 the SACOS affiliation to the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa was usurped by SANROC<sup>302</sup> and SACOS’ influence and contacts were diminishing. In 1990 when SANROC chief Sam Ramsamy visited South Africa as an ANOCA representative, he refused to resolve the SACOS-SANROC relationship, refusing to speak as a SANROC representative

---

<sup>296</sup> SACOS: Seventh BGM, p. 46.

<sup>297</sup> SACOS: Eighth BGM, p. 59.

<sup>298</sup> SACOS: Ninth BGM, p. 42.

<sup>299</sup> SACOS: Eighth BGM, p. 18.

<sup>300</sup> SACOS: Ninth BGM, p. 41.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>302</sup> SACOS: Eighth BGM, p. 18.

indicating that he was in S.A. as an ANOCA representative.<sup>303</sup> During this very same visit he met with the NSC (now the NOSC) and SANOC and agreed to form a five-man coordinating committee for S.A Sport.<sup>304</sup> The five-member committee comprised of two representatives each from the NOSC and SANOC and one from SANROC i.e. Sam Ramsamy. The formation of this committee heralded the beginning of an era of marginalisation of SACOS. At the start of the rebuilding of a post-apartheid era, SACOS was excluded.

Sam Ramsamy's messages must be seen in the following context. He appealed to SACOS to build a massed based organisation even if it meant to, "albeit reluctantly", accept people who through circumstances had ties with the state. SACOS would not, in any way, give way on the double standards resolution, the very same DSR, which prompted the NSC to go it alone.<sup>305</sup> In 1989/1990 SACOS was not only losing members, but was also excluded from the initial body spearheading the country's sport drive. In March 1990, SACOS ruled that Dennis Brutus would be their representative in London thereby drawing the line and effectively signalling the end of its relationship with the Sam Ramsamy led SANROC.

Matters were deteriorating for SACOS, a number of 'small' incidents proving its growing marginalisation. They did not receive an invitation to the 4<sup>th</sup> ICAAS Conference but after some hasty arrangements, delegates were sent to Stockholm, arriving a day late. When the meeting of African Sport Leaders was held in Harare in Nov 1990, some of SACOS Olympic codes were excluded,<sup>306</sup> while the NSC and its codes were invited. The organisations attending this meeting included SACOS, the Confederation of S.A Sport (COSAS), the S.A. National Olympic Committee (SANOC), and the NSC. SACOS had no agenda for this meeting. The president of SACOS, Mr. Y. Ebrahim, interpreted these developments "... as an attempt to marginalize SACOS and to render it ineffective as a force within non-racial sport in S.A."<sup>307</sup>

At the ANOCA meeting it was proposed that an interim committee, comprised of eight members, be formed, including one representative each from COSAS and SANROC, and two representatives each from SACOS, SANOC and the NOSC. Since SACOS had not been part of the five-man committee, their representatives requested a postponement to consult with their constituents. The proposed date for postponement was 16 January 1991. However by the 12<sup>th</sup> of December, SACOS

---

<sup>303</sup> SACOS: Ninth BGM, p. 42.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid., p. 46.

was informed that the committee had been increased to ten and that the first meeting would be held on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 1991. SACOS representatives on this Committee of ten were Mr. Colin Clarke and Mr. Reg Feldman.

It became clear that SACOS did no longer spearhead the drive for unity. The committee met on 12<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of January and 18 February 1991, chaired by Mr Sam Ramsamy and the secretary was Johan Du Plessis. They also had a meeting with the ANOCA monitoring committee in Botswana, Mr Reg Feldman submitting reports of these meetings.<sup>308</sup> Issues on the table were unity and the moratorium and working commissions were elected. The meeting with the ANOCA Monitoring Committee (9th March 1991) provided the most compelling information on unity. In his address, the president of ANOCA, Mr Jean Claude Ganga, said that establishment sport bodies would be entitled to apply for international membership when apartheid ended in June 1991, effectively ending the sport moratorium. He repeatedly warned that any sport body which blocked unity, would be left behind.<sup>309</sup> This was contrary to the policy of SACOS who felt that such a decision "... must be taken by the sport organisations inside the country in consultation with progressive political organisations"<sup>310</sup> To complicate matters, Ramsamy supported Ganga, both feeling that the formation of an Interim National Olympic Committee was extremely urgent.<sup>311</sup> The interim NOC would decide which codes were ready for international affiliation and would deal with unity. The fact that Ramsamy supported the NSC, and not SACOS, did not auger well for SACOS.

Ganga's second statement left none of the organisations a choice, for those who were out, would be left out. SACOS believed that the unity drive was being led from abroad, and supported by the chairman, Sam Ramsamy. Y. Ebrahim, the SACOS president, encapsulated the situation with the following remark: "One cannot avoid the impression that individuals who have not been directly involved in our day to day struggles, are attempting to prescribe solutions to us."<sup>312</sup> Ganga set the agenda. The coordinating committee was disbanded at this conference and the Interim Olympic Committee of South Africa (NOCSA) was established.<sup>313</sup>

---

<sup>308</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>309</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>310</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 58.

<sup>311</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

<sup>312</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

<sup>313</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

By 1993 SACOS no longer enjoyed the international support that it had had in 1982, as it had severed its ties with its closest and oldest ally SANROC, and had lost the support of Africa and a large section of the international community. The decline of the relationship SACOS had with its international allies is reflected in the ninth and tenth publications of the Biennial General Meetings. At the 1991 Conference SACOS received messages of support from the City of London Anti-Apartheid Group, the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement and SANROC under Prof. D. Brutus. At the 1993 Conference, messages were received from the City of London Anti-Apartheid Group, the Oz-Afro Club, the Azania Komitee and the U.N. Centre Against Apartheid. The number of supportive messages received between 1991/1993 and 1982/1989, differ noticeably (approximately sixty percent).

### **11.1 SACOS THE VANGUARD OF THE SPORTS STRUGGLE**

In the preceding chapters a picture of the South African Council of Sport as an anti-apartheid organisation, has been exposed. In the early chapters there is a description of where SACOS came from, what the nature of its organisational structure was by 1982, what the broad leadership was, its diverse membership, and the policies and strategies used to direct the organisation's activities. The purpose of this is to have an understanding of why the organisation acted as it did. By 1982 their philosophy and their guiding principles were firmly in place. Much of what they did during this period under review (1982-1992) was based on their past experiences. In the following chapter the relationship SACOS had with the other anti-apartheid movements and their international allies, is described. These relationships were important as they had a tremendous impact on the future of SACOS. Lastly there is a brief description of some of the state's actions and that of business in promoting the multi-national policy. What has not been described fully, is the role of the state in determining the direction of these relationships.

The preceding chapters have to be consolidated to offer a holistic picture of SACOS during this period, but the role of the state in determining the direction of these relationships and the response of SACOS, need to be discussed.

SACOS as an organisation responded to the state's actions and it attempted to pre-empt them. The state was thus the primary role player that set the agenda to which SACOS responded or which SACOS pre-empted. The state was influenced in its actions by other factors such as the global recession, international pressure, labour unrest, and the response of various anti-apartheid

organisations to its actions, to name but a few. SACOS was inextricably part of this environment. Just as the state was influenced by the actions and reactions of other role players, so too, were all the other role players reciprocally caught up in this battle. The actions of the state and the reactions of the other role players must be described to indicate how this affected SACOS. This section thus sheds light on SACOS in a holistic manner. It will indicate why SACOS was not a mass based organisation, why its membership declined in the early nineties, and why it was not part of the unity process by 1993. The actions and reactions of the other role players formed part of the basis upon which this discussion is based.

SACOS can best be understood when its operations are divided into two phases - the period 1982 – 1987 and the period 1987 – 1992. Since the organisation was guided by its principles, policies and strategies, the periods will be examined using these as points of departure. This approach is adopted since an examination of the primary material indicates that invariably their discussions would centre on their policies and strategies.

SACOS was not a reactionary organisation, even though it responded to the actions of the state. SACOS' responses were carefully considered. The in-depth discussions on issues and the presentation of papers on specific topics bore testimony to this. The following are examples of the topics discussed at meetings and on which papers were presented: The Permit System, Open Hotels, The Urban Foundation, the Homelands Policy and Non Racial Sport, Un-enfranchised Children at Private White Schools, the Presidents Council, Dummy Councils, Human Sciences Research Council and Sport in the RSA, Sport and the Media, the amendments to laws by the state and the effects thereof. Some of the above-mentioned topics were not sport related, yet they were addressed by SACOS, since it was in line with their view of sport as an integral part of society, and that sport mirrored the society in which it was performed. This was the underlying philosophy of SACOS, as captured in their slogan "No Normal sport in an Abnormal Society". Armed with this philosophy, SACOS sought the total eradication of apartheid, not only in sport.

## **11.2 The period 1982-1986. A Critical Analysis**

The international isolation of South Africa troubled the state to the extent that Prime Minister B.J. Vorster introduced limited concessions in the seventies. However, it was his successor who began

to restructure the state, the sport isolation not being the sole cause,<sup>314</sup> but the world-wide economic slump playing a major role. Vorster resigned in 1978, trapped between the demands of the ‘verligtes’ and the conservatives. P.W. Botha then introduced his concept of a total strategy, which included his notion of free enterprise, by which he hoped to create a middle class amongst the nations of South Africa as a buffer against communism.

Coloureds and Indians were to be co-opted into government whilst Africans were granted greater trade union rights. The concessions for urban Africans and the trade unions were set out in the Riekert and Wiehann commissions of inquiry report. Business then added to this pressure by calling for a more flexible urbanisation policy, which they believed, would reduce administration duties, urban wages and black militancy.<sup>315</sup> In further attempts to deracialise society, the Presidents Council, which proposed that urbanisation be stabilised instead of being prohibited, was formed.

Subsequently the state abolished influx control, allowed informal employment and informal housing, public amenities were opened to all, the Immorality Act, the Mixed Marriages Act and job reservation were revoked. The public service was desegregated and their salaries equalised. There were changes in the state’s sport policy as well.

The abovementioned changes should be seen as the catalyst for future events, sport and non-sporting issues. The intention of the state’s changes was essentially to calm the masses enabling the state to control them more effectively as business too, sought a stabilised labour force. The Wiehann commission proposed the granting of trade union rights to unregistered Black trade unions. Why? It was hoped that such rights would prevent shop floor labour organisation and make them part of the established structures. However it had the direct opposite effect and by the eighties, the trade unions were so powerful that the level of opposition was raised considerably. The struggle was shifted from the shop floor to the community and to broader social and political issues. This in turn, made the masses bolder, “... a myriad of new groups: civic organisations, student, youth and labour organisations, boycott committees, each with a specific local grievance – exploited the space created by restructuring to challenge and undermine apartheid policy.”<sup>316</sup> This collective resistance to the state’s reforms led to the formation of the UDF and the NF. The oppositional ‘space’ previously occupied solely by SACOS in the seventies, was now filled by many and the liberation agenda was no longer set by SACOS. Paradoxically, the state itself had provided this ‘space’.

---

<sup>314</sup> D. Booth: The South African Game, p.128.

<sup>315</sup> Ibid., p. 129.

<sup>316</sup> D. Booth: The Race Game, p. 147.

In response to the intense internal and external pressures, the state attempted to deracialise and reform the state without relinquishing power.<sup>317</sup> Sport too was part of the restructuring. In 1979 the Minister of Sport, Mr. F.W. De Klerk, announced the government's policy on autonomous sport authorising sport associations to administer their own sport, independent of the government. This move was intended to create distance between establishment sport administrators and the government so that the Department of Sport and Recreation could be disbanded in 1980. In its place, the Directorate of Sport Promotion was subsequently established within the Department of National Education, which, according to Booth, was an attempt to hide from the public financial aid that establishment sport received from the government.<sup>318</sup> Similarly the School Management Committee received autonomy in matters of school sport in the early eighties. To aid their policy of multinational sport, the government amended specific laws, since both the Liquor Amendment Act of 1981 and the Group Areas Amendment Act of 1982, facilitated the organising of multinational sport.<sup>319</sup> The state also relaxed its stance on permits. In his opening speech at the National Sport Conference, the Minister of National Education F.W. de Klerk, declared that: "...sport facilities may be used by all population groups, no permit or other legally prescribed permission is required for a sportsman or sportswoman to practise or to participate on any sports field in South Africa..."<sup>320</sup>

Establishment sport initiated propaganda campaigns to convince the world that all was well with South African sport. So in 1983, the SARB hosted a media conference for foreign journalists.<sup>321</sup> Former Springbok cricketer, Eddie Barlow was employed by SANOC, SARB and SACU as the South African Sport ambassador to London, his duty being to convince the world that sport had returned to normal in South Africa.<sup>322</sup> In 1983 SANOC produced a set of booklets to inform the world about the situation in South Africa. Among the titles of these booklets were "Towards the elimination of discrimination in Sport" and "The anti-forces: The South African Council on Sport and the South African Non Racial Olympic Committee". The booklets were intended to convince the world that the government and establishment sport had normalised conditions for sport and that

---

<sup>317</sup> C. Rademeyer: "No normal sport in an abnormal society: sports isolation and the struggle against apartheid in South Africa in South African sport, 1980-1992," in Journal for Contemporary History, Vol.25, No.1, June 2000, pp. 18–19.

<sup>318</sup> D. Booth: The Race Game, p. 228.

<sup>319</sup> Department of National Education: The standpoint of the government on the provision of sport in the RSA. Government Printer, Pretoria, 1985, p. 4.

<sup>320</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>321</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, p. 148.

<sup>322</sup> Ibid., p. 59.

it was therefore unfair to keep SA isolated, SACOS and SANROC being therefore portrayed as counter productive forces.<sup>323</sup>

The attempts by establishment sport (SANOC) to get back into international competition was noted and rejected immediately. No time was really given to discuss the memorandum of SANOC, which called for SACOS' participation.<sup>324</sup> The release of this memorandum to foreign countries was considered an exercise in futility. SACOS was confident that SANOC's plea would fail because it regarded itself as the only authoritative sport body.<sup>325</sup> Another event that had an effect on SACOS and its activities was the launching of the UDF and the NF in 1983, which drew the various groups that had emerged in the eighties, together, another response to the restructuring of the state. The significance of the emergence of these various groups and the UDF and NF, is that they contested the terrain previously dominated by SACOS and the trade unions. These new anti-apartheid organisations actually challenged the leadership role of the 'vanguard' organisations, of which SACOS was the champion.

The above had clearly changed the environment. The government's reforms and the subsequent mushrooming of religious, community and political groupings meant that SACOS no longer determined the agenda and consequently, sport no longer topped the agenda of the liberation movement.

Part of the SA government's strategy was to discredit SACOS. The 1982 HSRC report (discussed in 5.2 above) attempted to discredit SACOS by alleging that it had Indian and Coloured members only. Mr. Abe Adams, a prominent member of SACOS, analysed the HSRC report, pointing at the contradictions present.<sup>326</sup> In his criticism he made it clear that the membership of SACOS was not based on race. Co-incidentally at the time, the newly formed swimming association (ASASA), a merger between the black and non-racial swimming bodies, applied for membership of SACOS and the first president, Mr. Seotsanyana, was black. SACOS dismissed the findings of the HRSC report and pointed out that they had black members in soccer, tennis, swimming, weightlifting and rugby. SACOS also pointed out that, because of their principled position on non-racialism, they did not identify their members on the basis of race. It claimed that it represented the aspirations of blacks, which claim was backed by the fact that the black soccer body, under George Thabe, had declared a

---

<sup>323</sup> D. Booth: *The Race Game*, p. 135.

<sup>324</sup> SACOS: *Fifth BGM*, p.26.

<sup>325</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>326</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 179 – 180.

commitment to the moratorium. SACOS interpreted the commitment as a result of its views on all international tours.

However, this HSRC observation reflected the actual composition of SACOS' membership and was acknowledged in 1983 by its president, Frank van der Horst who claimed, "SACOS will go into the ghettos, into the townships because its main thrust must be centred in the mass of the people."<sup>327</sup> The acknowledgement was not to the HSRC but to SACOS itself, which had begun to realise that it was not a mass-based organisation. This in turn led to a softening of attitude towards the question of using university facilities and applying for their use through management councils, albeit under protest. Through the stringent application of its policies, SACOS automatically excluded the people in the townships and homelands, which did not mean that SACOS had no influence in the townships, but rather that membership from the townships was limited, and people were discouraged from actively associating with SACOS because of its policies.

The general-secretary, Mr. M.N. Pather, in his criticism of Dr. Viljoen's attack on SACOS, clarified certain issues in saying that it rejected multi-nationalism and the token selection of a few blacks. It was also not interested in the removal of discrimination through constructive negotiation. In a speech at the State President's Sport Awards, the Minister of National Education, Dr. Gerrit Viljoen criticised SACOS as an organisation run by political fanatics linked to a variety of political organisations. SACOS' response was, that whilst it supported, and was supported, by various organisations,<sup>328</sup> it was not aligned to any political organisation. Pather also stated that it had no links with any political organisation and that SACOS itself was not a political organisation. The fact that SACOS had entered the political arena was, according to him, not by their choice,<sup>329</sup> but their strategies were reactions to conditions of the day. As in the HSRC report, the issue of SACOS' membership to politics was rejected and defended by referring to it as the only non-racial co-ordinating sport body in South Africa and the only authoritative one accepted by the international community.<sup>330</sup>

This issue of political alignment was topical throughout the eighties, and at various meetings between 1982 and 1986, it was discussed. Invariably during this period, the emphasis was on the

---

<sup>327</sup> C. Roberts: 15 Years..., p. 51.

<sup>328</sup> C. Rademeyer: "No Normal Sport...", p. 26.

<sup>329</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 23.

<sup>330</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

nature and role of SACOS that precluded it from aligning itself to any particular political movement. It was at pains to emphasise its autonomy but it acknowledged being part of the liberation struggle, and wanted to be acknowledged as the sport wing of the liberation front. In 1982 the general secretary, Mr. M.N. Pather, explained that SACOS had no links with any political movement. In 1983, the president of SARU, Mr.E.Patel, spelt out the non-alignment stance of SACOS, at its 'Special Conference on Sport and Liberation' to which many of the anti-apartheid organisations had been invited. When a decision to meet with other anti-apartheid movements was taken, it was emphasised that none of the anti-apartheid movements would be excluded in order to demonstrate its non-sectarian approach. It was emphasised that, when meeting with the other organisations, the role of SACOS would be spelt out and its founding principle of non-alignment reconfirmed. In 1986 meeting with other anti-apartheid organisations was questioned regarding its autonomy. The ongoing discussion on alignment revealed the diversity of political philosophies amongst SACOS members.

The matter of meeting with other anti-apartheid movements also indirectly revealed the inherent political and personal differences of members. A decision was taken at the general meeting held in Lenasia in 1983 that the SACOS executive would meet with the other anti-apartheid organisations. These meetings did not materialise and the president, Mr. F. van der Horst, called for a vote of confidence in him from the meeting. As president, he had made a call to meet with other organisations, but it went unheeded. He believed that there was a crisis and division. The SARU president, Mr. E. Patel, made a call for solidarity and unity within the executive, as it seemed that members were busy with their own agendas. He informed the delegates that it was common knowledge that certain political organisations had infiltrated certain affiliates and that they were sowing seeds of dissention. The general secretary, Mr. C. Clarke, referred to the fact that although the president was elected with a small majority, it was assumed that he would be fully supported.<sup>331</sup> The aforementioned incident was an example of the personality differences between members and the different emerging political philosophies within the organisation. The nature of political issues discussed at the 1982 BGM illustrated their departure from non-involvement in politics. The following papers presented to a general SACOS meeting in 1982, indicated this departure: 'the President's Council- Recommendations,' 'Dummy Councils' and 'Homelands Policy and Non-racial Sport' and these discussions also revealed the divergent political convictions prevalent in SACOS. Whilst all rejected both the local councils and the president's council, the strategy to

---

<sup>331</sup> SACOS: Sixth BGM, pp. 11 – 16.

oppose these institutions became the focal point. Some felt that sport people would have to play a more active role by not playing sport; others disagreed and felt that sporting organisations had to become more political and join with the progressive organisations; others again felt that sport bodies should co-operate on a greater level with workers' organisations; other members felt that sport persons had to be more than just sport people by acting as the workers had done and there were those that felt that non-collaboration was not a solution.<sup>332</sup>

The abovementioned strategies were examples of the dynamics that confronted the organisation. It also serves to give an insight into the personality and political differences within the organisation. Thirdly, it clearly indicated how far SACOS had moved from solely sporting issues, to the broader issues of life.

The question of alignment (discussed in Sec.7.6 and Sec.9 above) had an influence on other problems such as meeting with other anti-apartheid movements and the use of facilities. Some members felt that if SACOS had consulted with the anti-apartheid organisations, the use or non-use of facilities could have been solved. Other members felt that SACOS could not be dictated to by any of the anti-apartheid organisations. The problem, some members believed, was that other organisations would tend to take a sport policy to SACOS whilst it was SACOS' priority to take the sport policy of the oppressed to the progressive organisations.<sup>333</sup>

The issue of venues and facilities was another ongoing discussion. The whittling away of the permit system by the state ensured that this issue would remain on the SACOS agenda.

Perhaps the most significant aspects of the period between 1981 and 1987 were the following: SACOS recognised that the environment had changed, that by 1982 the terrain had become contested by other anti-apartheid movements and that it no longer alone determined the agenda. It recognised that the students and workers had taken the initiative in the liberation struggle and it realized that it had to align itself to the broader liberation movement and emulate the trade unions in their operation tactics. SACOS realised that it required a stronger mass base if it was to be successful so that it would have to review its strategies and tactics.

---

<sup>332</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, pp. 29 – 32.

<sup>333</sup> SACOS: Seventh BGM, p. 36.

This remark is based on comments and statements made at various meetings. At the general meeting in 1982, the following quotes emerged: “the workers of this country have shown us the way”; “sporting organisations must join with other anti- apartheid organisations”, “new methods have to be adopted to take our policy to grassroots level”; and “new developments occurred at the universities because of the changing nature of the student population”.<sup>334</sup> In 1984, the President remarked on the influence of the working class organisations and their progress. He referred to the involvement of students and workers regarding their input, a matter SACOS had to inculcate in its organisation. Its bureaucratic style had to be replaced by a democratic one.

A second phenomenon that was recognised was the input of the mass based struggle, which SACOS believed it had (fortunately) already begun. The mass based struggle initiatives of SACOS, were the formation of the councils of sport, the staging of the 1982 SACOS Sport Festival, the formation of the Sport Action Committees and the hosting of the 1983 SACOS Conference on Sport and Liberation.<sup>335</sup> To build on the mass based programme, there was a call for mass demonstrations, which was an indication that SACOS had not yet employed mass demonstrations as a strategy. The president perceived that these mass demonstrations had been successful in the past and he mentioned the example of the successful demonstrations against the Cape Town City Council after it had increased the hiring tariffs of sports fields. In 1984 workshop resolutions advocated that SACOS should strengthen its bases, viz. it had to take over the PTA’S and school committees to get the parents more involved; more public meetings had to be held to expound the non-racial philosophy, “to gain the support of the people so that SACOS shall become a people’s organisation;”<sup>336</sup> SACOS and its affiliates had to educate the broader public in respect of the non-racial ethics; national codes had to give greater support to the provincial Councils of Sport and national codes had to give greater support to school sport and to teachers who faced punitive action.

Similar mass building strategies also emanated from the meeting of presidents in June 1984. It was recommended that SACOS utilise its annual general meeting and several regional conferences to discuss its policy as it recognised that players in general, were apathetic. It hoped to fight this apathy through mass based functions such as fun runs, sport festivals and by allowing players to attend national meetings. At the special conference held in Cape Town in 1986 these calls were repeated and once more the president accentuated the fact that the working class was the vanguard

---

<sup>334</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 29 – 32.

<sup>335</sup> SACOS: *Sixth BGM*, p. 10.

<sup>336</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

of the struggle, that players had to be more involved in the making of decisions, and that SACOS should align itself with other anti-apartheid organisations.<sup>337</sup> He again referred to their current strategies and tactics that had to be reviewed, but stressed that the principles of SACOS remained immutable.<sup>338</sup> In 1987, the president called for unity amongst the anti-apartheid groups outside of SACOS as unity amongst the anti-apartheid groups would ensure success as exemplified by the example of the unified action taken against the All Black Rugby tour in 1985. To him the choice for SACOS was clear: it had to align itself to the working class movement.

SACOS recognised its shortcomings and developed proposals to combat them, but its strategies after 1987, showed very little change. Its efforts to become more mass based were unsuccessful. Failure resulted for varying reasons, including the ineffective implementation of their proposals, and it would appear that much of what SACOS had proposed, was mere rhetoric and was not implemented.

## **( II ) The period 1987-1992; A critical Analysis**

In this period SACOS went through a traumatic experience, the preceding six years having partially prepared it for difficulties. There were many signs that all was not well within it and that the onslaught against the organisation would increase. This may be said with the wisdom of hindsight. The warning signs were there - the recurring issue of alignment, the divergent political philosophies within the organisation, the continuation of state reforms, the growth of the UDF and COSATU, the birth and growth of the NSC, and the re-emerging presence of the ANC.

The fact that the issue of alignment could not be laid to rest should have alerted the organisation of its inherent problems, the root of which was the divergent political philosophies within SACOS. They were too diverse to be reconciled. Those members who supported the non-alignment principle, stood by SACOS and consequently supported the DSR, non-collaboration and the continuation of the moratorium, while those who supported alignment, abandoned the organisation and forged ahead with the unity process. Consequently SACOS was decimated of its membership and effectively marginalised.

---

<sup>337</sup> SACOS: Seventh BGM, p. 12.

<sup>338</sup> Ibid., p. 11.

The membership of SACOS, or any organisation for that matter, is the lifeblood of the organisation as strength in numbers could afford one bargaining power and subsequently determine who would lead. In the confrontational situation, SACOS increasingly found that numbers were important, but through the decimation of its membership, it could not fight from a position of strength. The above statements should be understood in the context of negotiations that took place in the nineties, before which period that it began to lose members. The following discussion, whilst it follows on the role of the state in restructuring the environment, will emphasise the issue of membership, revolving around the policies and strategies of SACOS.

The environment of the eighties differed dramatically from that of the seventies, eliciting reactions that had a profound effect on the activities of SACOS. It was the South African government through which the changed environment came, the state's actions bringing about reactions both at home and abroad. These actions and reactions, which culminated in the 1994 elections, played a major role in the eventual marginalisation of SACOS. Added, with emphasis that the actions and reactions referred to, played a major role but were not the only role players.

The state's reformist actions emboldened the masses, leading to widespread protest actions and in turn, to repressive measures from the state, such as a partial state of emergency in 1985 and 1986 and the imposition of economic sanctions against South Africa which caused deterioration of the economy. Besides denouncing the government, business called for the abolition of apartheid and largely travelled to Lusaka for talks with the ANC for which the state had indirectly provided "space". This re-introduction of the ANC, led to further repression when the state banned several extra-parliamentary organisations including the UDF in 1988. During this period of immobilisation, the resistance movement reassessed its strategy of non-collaboration, concluding that it unfortunately had gained nothing tangible by boycotting and not collaborating with the state created institutions, such as the Presidents' Council, community councils and black local authorities. Alec Erwin placed the significance of non-collaboration in perspective, by saying: "Use or non use of apartheid facilities is no longer a crucial political question – it does not take us forward strategy-wise."<sup>339</sup> Just as had gradually happened since 1976, the broader liberation movements collectively adopted a different strategy by becoming profoundly radicalised, as proved by the adoption of non-collaboration and boycott as the primary strategies. By 1988 the broader liberation movement had

---

<sup>339</sup> SACOS: Eighth BGM, p. 161.

begun to move away from this strategy since, the state had indirectly provided the impetus for change. However, SACOS was one of the anti-apartheid organisations that still believed that non-collaboration and boycott were the appropriate strategies. These fundamental policy differences ensured that SACOS would not be part of the mass based trade union movement (COSATU) and the UDF, thus causing negative consequences for it.

### MEMBERSHIP

It is interesting to note that in the early eighties the membership of SACOS was influenced by its policies on the permit system, non-collaboration, the DSR and the use of segregated facilities on the one hand, and on the other hand, the policy on the moratorium, political alignment and non-racialism had little influence on membership, since those issues were not contentious in terms of membership issues. By 1990 the sensitivity around matters was partially reversed - permits and facilities had very little impact on its membership. By contrast, the policy of alignment, the moratorium, non-collaboration, the DSR and the resolution on dual affiliation had now developed a more intensive impact on SACOS' membership in the late eighties and early nineties. Since its formation, it experienced a growth in membership, reaching its zenith in 1982 – 1986 followed by a gradual decline as result of a combination of factors, including its hard line policies.

1) Due to the growth of the trade unions, the MDM/UDF and other anti-apartheid movements, the issue of sport was relegated and being a sport organisation, SACOS too was relegated in terms of priority, the importance of sport and the commitment to sport were abandoned and energies were directed rather to issues such as housing and employment purely because they were “allowed” as opposed to the previous period in 1980, when they were brutally repressed. The oppressed became bolder because the greater liberty of the trade unions, due to the Wiehann Commission, were not kept in line as had been the intention, but were “allowed” to grow, thereby indirectly emboldening the masses.

2) SACOS was no longer perceived to be the leader in sport on the anti-apartheid side but they now had to share the stage with the emergent NSC. Prior to the appearance of the NSC, non-racial sport persons had no other choice but SACOS followed by competition for influence between it and the NSC. The NSC declared that it was not in opposition to SACOS but rather sought to organise and operate in areas where it had failed to penetrate. Sports persons who were against apartheid, yet could not meet SACOS' stringent criteria, had a home within the anti-apartheid movement within the NSC. The formation of the NSC resulted in a loss of membership from SACOS.

3) Central to the issue of SACOS' declining membership was the fundamental policy differences between it and the NSC. The NSC was not originally formed as opposition to SACOS, but in September 1989, ties between them were severed. The NSC declared that it no longer viewed SACOS as the sport wing of the liberation struggle,<sup>340</sup> the bone of contention being the DSR, which NSC viewed as an obstacle to forge unity with progressive sectors of apartheid sport. Subsequently SACOS passed the Dual Affiliation Resolution (1989) and declared the NSC a rival body. Simultaneously the NSC openly declared its alignment to the MDM / UDF, and, by implication, also to the ANC thus contradicting the SACOS policy of non-alignment. Nevertheless, six affiliates of SACOS, the largest and strongest, most important and popular codes viz. SARU, SATISA, SATTB, SASRAF, SASF and the SACB joined the NSC in 1990. The defection of SARU left SACOS rugby in tatters and its sell out to the NOCS in 1990-1991, totally destroyed rugby in SACOS.<sup>341</sup> Similarly, the merger of SACU with the SACB left SACOS cricket immobilised. The SASF terminated its membership of SACOS in 1990 and merged with the PSL to take firm control of soccer in South Africa. By 1991 SACOS virtually had no influence in three of the nation's more popular sports, soccer, rugby and cricket.

4) Some of the SACOS membership were confused by the reforms of the state although being confined to the anti-apartheid organisations. There was only one sports body left, SACOS. Did it have to continue with the sport struggle? When De Klerk announced reforms, the reaction of some people created the impression that freedom had been obtained.<sup>342</sup> The removal of the Proclamation, which dealt with the use of public facilities and the then impending removal of the Group Areas Act in 1990, further strengthened such perceptions. Within South Africa many sportsmen and women began to think about international competition. "Amongst our players are those who have been blinded by their own potential and are now seeking greener pastures for themselves."<sup>343</sup> White establishment sport had always aimed for this, but now they were joined by some of their former adversaries.

The decimation of SACOS membership was compounded by its failure to build a mass based organisation, their policies and other factors being responsible for this failure.

---

<sup>340</sup> SACOS: Ninth BGM, p. 41.

<sup>341</sup> SACOS: Tenth BGM, p. 51.

<sup>342</sup> SACOS: Ninth BGM, p. 35.

<sup>343</sup> Ibid., p. 36.

In the eighties SACOS held two national sport festivals in Cape Town. In 1982 the games were presented in areas populated by Coloureds and Indians, but in contrast, a number of events during the 1988 games, were held in black townships in line with the aim of broadening its base. Another example of SACOS' attempts to broaden its mass base was the nomination of Reverend Arnold Stofile as president in 1986. Mr. Stofile was black, came from the townships, was respected and part of the liberation struggle. In 1986 the resolution on the use of segregated facilities was rescinded, and by this decision, SACOS attempted to ensure that the students would not automatically be excluded from their organisation. Clearly, these efforts of SACOS were far too limited to have any impact on the broadening of its base, but its failure to make meaningful inroads into the townships was not entirely its fault. Other factors played an important role in preventing it from developing into a mass based organisation.

The political consciousness of the man in the street as opposed to the leadership of SACOS was minimal. Most members of SACOS simply wanted to play sport. They were probably aware of the injustices of apartheid but were not willing to be part of a sustained campaign to oppose it.

The general rank and file membership of SACOS did not make concerted attempts to organise or play sport with black township dwellers, this position being even more pronounced in the rural areas and homelands. For example the Victoria East COS reported that SACOS had support in the homelands, but, due to non-reciprocal visits by the urban codes, this support had dwindled,<sup>344</sup> as the urban members were not aligned with this way of thinking. The mass of black sport people did not join SACOS, either through habit, or in many cases because of circumstances, even though they were fully aware of the influence of apartheid in sport.<sup>345</sup> The low level of political consciousness of students was an important factor that resulted in dwindling membership in the homelands.

A proposal to correct this situation suggested that grassroots support had to be enhanced by taking SACOS policy to the people and raising the political awareness amongst sport persons and students. The implementation of this proposal is best exemplified by the school situation in South Africa. The success and failure of SACOS is evident in this situation. SAPSA and SASSA were the controlling bodies for primary and high school sport respectively, both affiliates of SACOS. Both organisations organised sport for Coloured and Indian schools only, (by law, Coloured people had to attend

---

<sup>344</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 31.

<sup>345</sup> W.D. Basson: South African Sport into the Nineties, p. 73.

Coloured schools and Indians Indian schools), as their composition not being of their own making. In these schools SACOS was successful, but it did not organise sport for black schools, permitting the state to establish the SASSC, which operated mainly in the rural areas. Because SACOS had limited access to the townships, an opportunity was afforded to the state to operate there, “SAPSSA and SASSA (SACOS affiliates) operate primarily in the urban areas.”<sup>346</sup> It was acknowledged that in the areas on the fringes of the urban areas, e.g. Langa, Guguletu, etc, SACOS’ influence was virtually non-existent. It could not organise in the black schools as it was constrained by the strict control the state had over the black schools through the Bantu Education Department. This constraint prevented it from building a mass based organisation through the black schools.

The environment in which SACOS operated during the seventies differed markedly from the operational environment in the eighties. Due to a heightened awareness and boldness partly caused by the restructuring of the state, the resulting changed environment caused sport to be relegated on the liberation struggle agenda. Most of the township residents wanted low cost housing and state subsidised rents, so that sports facilities were largely of low priority. The emergence of a number of new groupings/organisations, each with its own agenda and each regarding its personal concern and grievances as important, further made it difficult for SACOS to build a mass based organisation. To achieve this mass base, SACOS was encouraged to join the broader liberation struggle movements. In the eighties there was an opportunity to rectify its lack of action in the seventies by joining with the UDF. However, this opportunity was spurned through its principle of non-alignment.

As had happened in previous meetings, the president of SACOS painted a picture of the changed environment, which had made it necessary for SACOS to review its strategies and tactics and by the time of the 8<sup>th</sup> Biennial General Meeting, it appeared that it affected SACOS fundamentally. The challenges were not only coming from the state and its allies, but also from within the broader liberation movements and SACOS itself. At the 8<sup>th</sup> BGM three points on the agenda provided an indication of the challenges from within. The points were:

- a) The meeting between SACOS and the NSC,
- b) The position of SACOS on non-alignment and its relationship with progressive political tendencies, and
- c) Proposals for the restructuring of SACOS.

---

<sup>346</sup> SACOS: Seventh BGM, p. 17.

In his opening remarks the acting president, Mr. Y. Ebrahim, referred to the internal disputes particularly referring to the recognition of the validity of various tactics and strategies within the broader liberation movement and alignment. He stressed the need for unity in the understanding of different viewpoints and requested that discussions be conducted in a comradely fashion. The president's eagerness for a unified SACOS was evident but tension amongst delegates was equally evident. Ebrahim admitted that SACOS' problems were of its own making but that a careful analysis and subjection to the principles of democracy, could lead to success for the organisation. He criticised the unfair criticisms levelled at SACOS for having adopted, amongst others, non-collaboration and requested those who differed, at least to respect SACOS' stance. He chided affiliates and codes for acting independently and called for the maintenance of organised discipline "... we cannot allow an affiliate or any person to insist on their right to publicly differ from a decision which has been approved of by the majority of our affiliates."<sup>347</sup>

The reconstruction of SACOS, he felt, should be correctly done, acknowledging that it had been loyal to the same principles over the years but found insufficient justification to establish an alternative organisation. Similarly the principle of non-alignment should be respected, his defending it on the basis that it would exacerbate the existing divisions within the liberation movement.<sup>348</sup>

Such was the response of SACOS to the crisis it faced. The NSC was declared a rival body, and non-alignment and their relationship with other anti-apartheid organisations, were maintained.

### NON- ALIGNMENT

By 1992, issues such as non-collaboration and the permit system were no longer regarded as critical and SACOS itself was involved in unity talks initiated by the African Council of Sport. Non-alignment was still most contentious, the NSC/NOCSA having openly aligned to the UDF and the ANC. SACOS based its stance on the fact that the Olympic Charter prohibited sport bodies from being aligned to any political tendency. Secondly, it felt that political alignment would worsen tensions amongst the liberation movements and that no one should be marginalised in sport because of their political affiliations. This principled stance did not prevent affiliates including major codes such as cricket (SACB) and rugby (SARU) from aligning themselves to the UDF/ANC. Once more

---

<sup>347</sup> SACOS: Eighth BGM, p. 59.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid., p. 63.

the principled stance of SACOS resulted in the adoption of a resolution (DMR) that terminated large sections of their membership, further decimating its size.

### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

The formation of the NSC and the defection of SACOS affiliates impacted negatively on its international influence, while the state would not alter direction until there was a reaction from abroad.

The isolation of South African Sport can be attributed to the efforts of SACOS. As an organisation it cannot claim that it only was responsible for effecting this isolation, as it should rather be seen in the context of the evolution of SACOS. Together with SANROC, SACOS played a major role in highlighting the inequality of South African society and sport, causing isolation. By 1986 the position of SACOS on the international front began to change, influenced by the formation of the NSC, whom SACOS no longer recognised. Mr Sam Ramsamy began to ignore SACOS whilst accommodating the NSC, although it is not certain why tensions arose between Mr Ramsamy and SACOS, and it lost its position as the sport wing of the liberation front. SACOS responded by appointing Dr. Dennis Brutus as their international representative and severed ties with the Sam Ramsamy led SANROC. The subsequent marginalisation of SACOS was more sensitive as it was done without their knowledge. Reference must be made to the establishment of the five man co-ordinating committee for S.A. sport formed by Sam Ramsamy, the NSC and SANOC, as a consequence to SACOS' severed relationship with Ramsamy. By 1992, SACOS was no longer a factor influencing sport unity. Ironically, members of establishment sport were allowed more representatives on the committee of ten than SACOS itself.

In 1990, the South African state, under the leadership of F.W. de Klerk, introduced reforms that hastened the marginalisation of SACOS. The state created space for more role players. The period between 1990 and 1993 witnessed some of the most extraordinary events ever seen in South Africa, such as the unbanning of the liberation movements, the release from prison of Nelson Mandela and other stalwarts, the return of political exiles, the repeal of the legislative pillars of apartheid (Group Areas Act, Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, the Native Land Act and Population Registration Act), the suspension by the ANC of its armed struggle and the signing of the National Peace Accord in 1991. They were only some of the extraordinary developments leading to extraordinary reactions. Establishment sport believed that De Klerk's actions had opened the door

for re-admittance to international competition, the press splashing banner headlines to declare the imminent return of South Africa to international sport.

However, the most unexpected reaction, which set the tone henceforth, was that of the IOC and the United Nations Committee Against Apartheid Sport. They immediately lifted the sports boycott and terminated the blacklist of sport violators without consulting any of the S.A. sporting organisations. Establishment sport organisations, to whom international competition was all that mattered, were the only ones that were content with this reaction. To many of the establishment sport organisations, SACOS lost most ground from its initial position, as the vanguard of opposition sport. De Klerk's reforms had set off a chain of events that led to unity in South African sport and re-acceptance by the international sporting community, events over which SACOS had no control.

The international sporting community set the agenda for future sport relations in South Africa. After the initial reaction of the IOC and UNCAAS, ANOCA stepped in. The ANOCA president, J.C. Ganga, declared that, "the boycott would only be lifted after all sport had united according to non-racial principles and after apartheid had been abolished in all forms."<sup>349</sup> This was in line with SACOS. This would change when ANOCA foisted the Committee of Ten, comprising of two representatives each from SANROC, NSC, SACOS, SANOC and COSAS, on South African Sport without consultation. Previously this was the committee of five from which SACOS had been excluded. The Committee of Ten had to report back to ANOCA in Botswana in 1991, at which meeting they were reconstituted as the Interim National Olympic Committee of South Africa. Again without consultation, Ganga also announced that the moratorium would be lifted to coincide with the repeal of the Population Registration Act in June 1991. In July 1991, the IOC restored South Africa's Olympic membership and the lifting of the moratorium paved the way for unity talks amongst South Africa's sporting organisations. SACOS believed that the order in which these events happened should have been reversed, i.e. they wanted unity in sport before the lifting of the moratorium.

Events followed their course. SACOS, through its affiliates, was part of this unity process although, as reported by a number of its affiliates, the SACOS viewpoint was not acceptable. It did not have the necessary support for its principled unity stance, the man in the street not seeing the reason for such organisations as SACOS that opposed the unity process in South African Sport. The new

---

<sup>349</sup> SACOS: Ninth BGM, p. 44.

political dispensation and the repealing of the discriminatory laws were the democracy they had fought for.

There were also other role players with their own agendas who for different reasons greeted De Klerk's reforms with joy, and simultaneously deserted SACOS. An example is Sub-Saharan Africa who had strongly supported South Africa's isolation, but because of their financial difficulties, De Klerk's speech in February 1990, "created hope amongst the bankrupt African countries, that the south might offer solutions to some of their manifold problems."<sup>350</sup> SACOS could not influence such perceptions nor the actions following.

SACOS also felt very strongly that the ANC had played a major role in facilitating the apparent unity and re-acceptance, regarding it as the ANC's vote winning strategy. The NSC opposed SACOS and therefore opposed its opinion even though there were times when they agreed: "The NSC wanted to deracialise and democratise sport; its objective was to create united non-racial structures that would empower sport people in disadvantaged communities."<sup>351</sup>

The actions and reactions of the state played a major role in creating an environment for growth and space: the resistance movement grew because of certain reforms and occupied the oppositional space. Similarly the ANC was given credence through the growing economic crisis precipitated by the state's actions, enabling it together with the UDF, to occupy a major portion of the oppositional space.

Before 1990, many in the international and local communities sought the total eradication of apartheid. After De Klerk's announcements in 1990, which did not constitute the total eradication of apartheid, this aim was forgotten and unity amongst sporting organisations was forged. Now SACOS was outnumbered and out manoeuvred.

The principles, policies and strategies of SACOS could not be implemented in such an environment of pragmatic politics. By insisting on its principled stance, it did not take cognisance of the changed environment and the reality of the day.

---

<sup>350</sup> SACOS: Tenth BGM, p. 38.

<sup>351</sup> D. Booth: The Race Game, p. 181.

## THE MORATORIUM

The confusion following De Klerk's political reforms was exploited by white establishment sport, to drive for international readmission. This, in turn, led to a drive for unity of sport codes in all spheres. F.W. de Klerk's political reforms had an impact on the international community as well and they, too, pushed for South Africa's re-admission. The establishment of the Committee of Ten, later known as the Interim National Olympic Committee of South Africa, was indicative of this newfound euphoria. Comprised of members of all the sporting associations, and backed by the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA), it facilitated South Africa's re-entry to international sport. The changes in the domestic politics of South Africa, as well as its own hard line policies, resulted in a further decline in SACOS membership by 1989 / 1990.

In the period between 1982-1987, the moratorium issue was not a priority and codes were encouraged to seek international affiliation. This was, as Y.Ebrahim stated, a major advantage for SACOS, as it placed tremendous pressure on the racist sport bodies,<sup>352</sup> a strategy used by it to expose South African sport to the world. Whilst maintaining the moratorium, SACOS affiliates requested that the moratorium be lifted with regard to coaching but it was adamant that all South African sportsmen and women, non-racial and establishment, were subject to the moratorium. SACOS did not want to be found guilty of practising double standards, hence the inclusion of non-racial sport organisations in the moratorium. In discussions at their response to Dr. Viljoen's outburst, it was again accentuated that SACOS was not interested in competing internationally until a new social order had been established.<sup>353</sup> Two decades after its inception, SACOS still unwaveringly adhered to its principles and policies. In 1993, at its Tenth Biennial General Meeting, it still supported the moratorium as it was believed that international contacts were an important buffer against what it perceived to be "sham-unity". The only departure from the existing moratorium would be tolerated when competing against other non-racial teams, and the double standards resolution would only be reviewed in the light of competition against such non-racial teams. The lifting of the moratorium was therefore regarded as a mistake for which the international community and the ANC were blamed and the strategy to counter this "mistake," was to call upon the international community to review the decision. The other method proposed was the printed publication of information to expose the "fraud of unity,"<sup>354</sup> thereby also exposing the issue of alignment to a particular political tendency. Non-alignment was a prerequisite for membership of

---

<sup>352</sup> SACOS: Fifth BGM, p. 29.

<sup>353</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>354</sup> SACOS: Tenth BGM, p. 17

the Olympic movement. In this way SACOS hoped to convince the international community to review its decision on the lifting of the sport moratorium.

### UNITY

Contrary to popular perception, SACOS was in favour of unity, their published goal being the establishment of a single, united South African sport body. According to it the South African government had prevented this from taking place through its policies. The SACOS president referred to it as the pioneer in the process of uniting the sports bodies,<sup>355</sup> the formation of the Tennis Association of South Africa (TASA) and the Amateur Swimming Association of South Africa (ASASA) being two examples of its commitment to principled unity, the key words being 'principled unity'. SACOS was of the opinion that unity could not occur until apartheid had been totally eradicated and demanded the elimination of discrimination, exploitation and oppression in every sphere of life, socially, politically and economically.<sup>356</sup> The parties involved also had to commit themselves to embracing clearly defined principles.

However SACOS was not in control of the situation. After the meeting of the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA), there was an air of expectancy within the general sporting fraternity of South Africa. Unity between non-racial and racial sport bodies was imminent, the news media being largely responsible for the perception. Flowing from this meeting was the establishment of the Committee of Ten, and a mandate from ANOCA that a single sport body would be created. At a subsequent meeting, the ANOCA president, Mr. Ganga, declared that the moratorium would be rescinded and that those who opposed unity would be left behind.<sup>357</sup>

Under these circumstances SACOS had no options. It had to deal with the dilemma arising from the fact that the autonomy of all affiliates was guaranteed and that it consequently was a facilitating body only. It could not dictate to their members, only provide guidelines. An example was the position of SATISA, who had affiliated to the NSC whilst retaining their SACOS membership; they would decide whether or not to abide by decisions taken by SACOS and they also felt that their own members had the right to disregard decisions of SATISA.<sup>358</sup> The personal preferences of individuals, and the preferences of individual affiliates, had become a factor that SACOS was

---

<sup>355</sup> SACOS: Ninth BGM, p. 34.

<sup>356</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>357</sup> Ibid., p. 52.

<sup>358</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

forced to deal with. Further complicating matters were that certain individuals were very senior and influential members of SACOS before their defection, this being indicative of the individualism prevalent in the organisation. The issue of non-alignment was apparently the cause of their defection, which not only decimated the membership of SACOS, but also provided the impetus for the unifying process.

In this environment of expectancy, aided by the aspirations of certain individuals, SACOS could not stem the tide of unity. By 1991, twenty codes including the three most popular sports, soccer, rugby and cricket were engaged in unity talks, being led into unity by their respective presidents who were former senior executive members of SACOS. The mere fact that these three codes were involved in the unity process made it extremely difficult for SACOS to argue against it.

By 1991 the question of unity dominated the agendas of the affiliates, in most cases with major concerns. On the issue of unity, SACOS demanded that the imbalances of the past had to be redressed through development programmes to bring about equality, the lack of development programmes being claimed by numerous affiliates. To underline its point, SACOS referred to a statement made by the Rev. Arnold Stofile, a member of the NSC and the ANC: "Sport, and in particularly rugby, has died in the black township areas throughout South Africa since the inception of so-called sport unity."<sup>359</sup> Secondly "bad faith" had developed when many of the affiliates reported that certain agreements, deals and promises had been disregarded. Cricket, for example, pleaded for re-admission to the ICC before the conditions of the Declaration of Intent had been fulfilled,<sup>360</sup> their intention being to be readmitted internationally.

A number of new organisations suddenly appeared on the South African sport scene. The formation of the S.A. Amateur Athletic Congress (SAAACON) in 1990 and the S.A.Hockey Congress (SAHCON) in 1991, are two examples of such organisations. These newly formed organisations were all affiliated to NOSC, being all created as a foil to the SACOS affiliated organisations.<sup>361</sup> In this way, NOSC ensured that unity would continue with or without SACOS. All the international community wanted to see, was a merger between a non-racial sport body and an establishment one. By being part of the anti-apartheid movement, NOSC and its affiliates were seen to represent the non-racial component of South African sport.

---

<sup>359</sup> SACOS: Tenth BGM, p. 74.

<sup>360</sup> Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>361</sup> Ibid., p. 72.

As far as SACOS was concerned, the developments on the political and sporting fronts were inadequate. Before and during the unity process, it had consistently been loyal to its principles and the demands for an apartheid free South Africa, but its demands had not been met. To compound matters, the unity process was not conducted in a principled manner, which revealed to SACOS that those pushing for unity were only interested in international competition and to advance their personal positions as illustrated by the quote: “it is clear from what we have stated that the entire unity process has been bedevilled by bad faith, behind the scenes machination, jockeying for positions and corruption. There is not a single example of unity being established in good faith and on a principled basis, nor have the previous gains made by non-racial sport been entrenched. Imbalances are not being redressed and development programmes are non-existent. The little money available is being mis-spent on outrageous salaries and numerous perks for administrators and officials.”<sup>362</sup> The response of SACOS to this state of affairs, was to apportion the blame on the international community and the ANC, to withdraw from the unity process,<sup>363</sup> and to call upon the international community to review its decision to lift the moratorium.

## **12. CONCLUSION**

Before a conclusion can be reached on the marginalisation of SACOS, it is imperative to reconsider the reasons for the formation and existence of SACOS. SACOS was formed and existed to oppose the SA state and its apartheid policy in sport and to fight for the total eradication of apartheid in sport. Its strategy was twofold - to keep SA sport isolated from international competition and to organise the sport movement in SA on a non-racial basis with the aim of establishing a single united SA sport body. Together with SANROC and other international agencies, SACOS could claim to have succeeded partially in their first aim, i.e. to keep SA isolated. Its success was moderate as SACOS could not prevent the lifting of the moratorium in 1990. With the second aim, it also succeeded only partially. For sixteen years, from 1973 to 1989 SACOS was the only non-racial sport body in SA. In this time, it had successfully facilitated the organisation of various sport bodies under the non-racial banner. When it withdrew from the unity process in 1992, a single, united sport body had not yet been formed. In addition, the sporting codes that had unified had not met the requirements as expounded by SACOS. Therefore they too were only partially successful.

---

<sup>362</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.

<sup>363</sup> D. Booth: “The South African Council on Sport and the Political Antinomies of the Sports Boycott” in *Journal of Southern African Studies*, Vol. 23, No.1, March 1997, p. 63.

The partial success or failure of SACOS can be attributed to a number of reasons that were all inextricably linked. Similarly, the two aims, South Africa's sporting isolation and the formation of a single united sport body, were linked. From a SACOS perspective, the one aim had a direct bearing on the other, first create a single united body on a principled basis, and then the isolation will be ended. This did not happen.

On the one hand there is evidence that SACOS' inflexible attitude regarding its policies, was the reason for its failure. Whilst it is true that SACOS did not dispose of any of its policies, it is not correct to assume that the retention of these policies had prohibited it from achieving its aims. Evidence of this was the fact that SACOS was part of the unity process when it commenced. During this time it maintained all its policies, irrespective of the fact that it was coerced into being part of the unity process. What its policies did was to prevent SACOS from attracting and retaining members, inhibiting it from building a mass based movement. This is particularly so in the case of the policy of non-alignment, the DSR, and the Dual Affiliation Resolution.

The failure to build a mass based organisation, was not a result of its policies alone. The constraints placed on SACOS were enormous. South Africa is a large country making travelling a problem, which in turn was exacerbated by financial implications. Sponsorship was also not readily available. Its capacity to organise, particularly in the rural areas and the homelands, was consequently severely hampered. The state further curtailed their already limited capacity to organise, through its legislation and other coercive methods. The simple action of entering a black township was a problem.

Another problem was that SACOS did not effectively propagate the organisation and its activities, it being hamstrung by a lack of finances. Printing its own newsletters and pamphlets had financial implications that effectively limited the organisation. In addition, the news media, which was largely controlled by the state and its business allies, were not accommodative towards SACOS.

The only way for SACOS to build a mass based organisation was to abandon its policy on non-alignment although it did not provide any guarantees for achieving its goals. Evidence of this was the NSC's inability to control the unity process effectively and to prevent the lifting of the moratorium at a time that the NSC was aligned to the UDF and by extension, the ANC. In the end, the alignment or non-alignment to a mass based movement, did not reap the expected benefits for the non-racial sport movement.

The ongoing political developments influenced matters considerably. From 1990 onwards, it was so eventful that one could confidently assume that the broad anti-apartheid movement was unprepared for it. The important point here is that SACOS had no control over these political developments, the consequences of these developments, nor over the agendas and programmes of the state and the ANC.

SACOS was of the opinion that the indecent haste that accompanied the push for sporting unity, was a vote winning strategy of the ANC. Given the fact that the NSC subscribed to the policies of the ANC and that they could not control the unity process, proved the assumption of SACOS as correct. Therefore, whether or not it was mass based, no sporting body stood a chance of determining the agenda for sport. The international community played an important, similar role to that of the ANC.<sup>364</sup> Their input was heavily influenced by the political developments. That is why the president of ANOCA could announce, without consultation, when the moratorium would be lifted. ANOCA determined the agenda and programme for South African sport. In the face of such pressure, even a mass based organisation was irrelevant, nor did it assist the process when SANROC, under Sam Ramsamy, supported the ANOCA initiatives and withdrew support from SACOS.

Perhaps a mass based and fully democratised structure would have made a difference. In this respect SACOS had failed to democratise the organisation and critics have pointed to this as part of the reason for its failure. It was proposed that SACOS should follow the lead of the trade union movement in democratising the organisation, but there is a difference between a trade union, which deals with bread and butter issues, and a sport organisation that deals with a leisurely, voluntary and social activity. The grass roots membership of the trade union movement were compelled to be involved, as it affected their very own survival and determined their living conditions. In sport such compelling incentives for the oppressed masses were non-existent. Therefore, to democratise a sport organisation in an environment where sport was low on the list of priorities, was a daunting task. The criticism against SACOS for not democratising the organisation is somewhat ironic when considering that collectively, the leadership did not adhere to democratic principles. On numerous occasions the issue of uniformly implementing SACOS policy was raised as various affiliates failed to comply with its directives, a prime example being the defections from SACOS due to the

---

<sup>364</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

leadership failing to reach consensus on the principle of non-alignment. If the leadership could not agree to conform, what could one expect from the rank and file membership in a confusing political environment? An environment that unrealistically raised their expectations, and which in turn, was get worsened by the news media, was one in which SACOS stood no chance of determining the course of the unity process or in delaying the lifting of the moratorium. The fact that the unity process was fake, was immaterial, for by 1993, the playing fields had not been sufficiently levelled and SACOS viewed the process of unity and development programmes as being crucial pre-requisites for re-admission. To SACOS, the unity conceived was unreal because the proper structures had not been put in place to redress the imbalances of the past adequately.

What SACOS had failed to do was to achieve unity within the organisation, but the work SACOS had done in ensuring that the state and establishment sport did not succeed, justifies recognition. Before 1990 SACOS was recognised at home and abroad as the sport wing of the liberation movement. By its actions it indicated that it was a principled driven organisation, not willing to compromise on its stated aim and mission. This immutable stance was based on its slogan and philosophy, "No Normal Sport In An Abnormal Society". SACOS wanted the ideal of levelled playing fields literally implemented in every aspect of South African Life.

In the light of the above it must be concluded that external factors, more so than the hard line policies of SACOS, were responsible for the marginalisation of SACOS.

## **Bibliography**

### **Primary Sources.**

SACOS: Minutes of General Meeting. Kimberly, March, 1982.

SACOS: Fifth Biennial General Meeting. Cape Town, March, 1983.

SACOS: Sixth Biennial General Meeting. Durban, March, 1985.

SACOS: Seventh Biennial General Meeting. Johannesburg, March, 1987.

SACOS: Eighth Biennial General Meeting. Cape Town, March, 1989.

SACOS: Ninth Biennial General Meeting. Cape Town, March, 1991.

SACOS: Tenth Biennial General Meeting. Cape Town, March, 1993.



### **Secondary Sources**

#### **Books**

Archer, R. and A.Bouillon.: The South African Game - Sport and Racism. Zed Press, London, 1982.

Basson, W.D.: “ South African Sport in the Nineties” in C.A.Taylor (ed.) The Challenge to Change in South Africa. University of Port Elizabeth, Port Elizabeth, 1991.

Booth, D.: The Race Game – Sport and Politics in South Africa. Cass Publishers, London, 1998.

Hain, P.: Sing the Beloved Country - the Struggle for the new South Africa. Pluto Press, London, 1996.

Hain, P.: “The Politics of Sport and Apartheid, ” in J. Hargreaves (ed.) Sport, culture and Ideology. Routledge and Keegan, London, 1982.

Jarvie, G.: Sport, Racism and Ethnicity. Falmer Press, London, 1991.

Koenderman, T.: Sanctions: The Threat to South Africa. J.Ball Publishers, Johannesburg, 1982.

Ramsamy, S.: Apartheid the Real Hurdle – Sport in South Africa and the International Boycott. IDAF, 1992.

Roberts, C. (ed.): Sport and Transformation – Contemporary Debates on South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, 1989.

Roberts, C.: SACOS 1973-1988: 15 Years of Sports Resistance. University of Natal, Durban, 1988.

### Articles

Barnard, L. and C. Rademeyer.: “The role of the English Rebel Cricket Tour to South Africa in 1989/1990 as a factor in the dismantling of Apartheid in South African Sport”, in Journal for Contemporary History. Vol.27, No.3, December, 2002.

Booth, D.: “The South African Council on Sport and the Political Antinomies of the Sports Boycott” in Journal of Southern African Studies. Vol. 23, No.1, March 1997.

Carrim, Y.: “SACOS – Towards Player Control” in Sport and Transformation- Contemporary Debates on South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, November, 1989.

De Vos, P.: “Wanneer speel Suid-Afrika weer ware Toetsrugby?” in Die Suid Afrikaan. No. 23, October, 1989.

Erwin, A.: “Does sport have a role to play in the liberation struggle?” in Sport and Transformation- Contemporary Debates on South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, November, 1989.

Gerwel, J.: “Towards a disciplined, healthy sports movement in preparation for a post Apartheid South Africa” in Sport and Transformation- Contemporary Debates on South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, November, 1989.

Hendricks, D.: “The nature of sport in a capitalist society” in Sport and Transformation- Contemporary Debates on South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, November, 1989.

Kidd, B.: “The campaign against sport in South Africa” in International Journal. XLVII, 1988.

Mahomed, H.: “Sport, Democracy and Transformation” in Challenges facing South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, 1990.

NACOS: “A new perspective and direction for SACOS” in Sport and Transformation- Contemporary Debates on South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, November 1989.

Nyaka, S.: “Challenges and Transformation in Sport” in Sport and Transformation- Contemporary Debates on South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, November, 1989.

Perlman, J.: “Is the present juncture not appropriate for the NOSC to revisit the International Moratorium?” in Challenges facing South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, 1990.

Rademeyer, C.: “No normal sport in an abnormal society: sports isolation and the struggle against apartheid in South Africa in South African sport, 1980-1992” in Journal for contemporary history. Vol. 25, No.1, June 2000.

Roberts, C.: “Ideological control of South African Sport” in Sport and Transformation- Contemporary Debates on South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, November, 1989.

Roberts, C.: “The Challenge to Non-Racial Sport” in Work in progress. No. 59, June 1989.

Streek, B.: “Illusions and Reality in South African Sports Policy”, in South Africa International. Vol.16, No.1, July 1985.

Tshewte, S.: “Challenges facing non-racial sport” in Sport and Transformation- Contemporary Debates on South African Sport. Township Publishing Co-operative, Cape Town, November, 1989.

### **Unpublished Thesis**

Powell, K.B.: “School Sport and Political Change” from an Unpublished Mini-Thesis, University of the Western Cape, 1990.

### **Government Publications**

Verslag van die Hoofkomitee: RGN – Sportondersoek Nr.1. Sport in die RSA. Pretoria, 1982.

Department of National Education Report: SANEP – 181: The standpoint of the government on the provision of sport in the RSA. Government Printer, Pretoria, 1985.

**Newspapers and Magazines**

Argus 6/3/85; 10/2/87; 1/3/89; 13/1/92;  
 Business Day 1/7/92; 2/7/92;  
 Cape Herald 12/6/82; 31/7/82; 26/3/83; 3/9/83; 22/3/84; 19/1/85; 23/2/85;  
 Cape Times 20/6/84; 6/3/85; 30/11/85; 4/3/89; 18/1/92;  
 Citizen 17/8/81; 5/8/82; 23/11/91; 21/11/91; 3/1/92;  
 Daily News 24/9/82; 24/9/82; 19/8/82; 25/1/83; 1/11/83; 7/3/85;  
 Diamond Fields Advertiser 1/7/92  
 Die Burger 29/12/84; 24/1/90; 24/1/90; 13/1/92  
 Die Transvaler 25/6/82; 30/1/90; 11/1/90; 15/8/91  
 Evening Post 6/1/83; 13/1/92  
 Golden City Press 6/6/82; 18/7/82; 26/3/89; 17/11/91;  
 Natal Mercury 8/11/82; 16/8/83; 4/6/84; 29/11/84; 12/2/85  
 New Nation 12/1/89; 16/3/89;  
 Pace Magazine – Oct. 1982; Jan. 1983; Feb. 1983  
 Post Natal 23/12/89; 18/1/92; 1/7/92;  
 Pretoria News 17/7/82; 13/1/92;  
 Rapport 1/10/82; 21/1/90; 12/1/92;  
 Sunday Times 7/7/81; 18/11/84; 19/8/84; 9/9/84; 13/1/85; 10/1/85; 3/12/89;  
 Sunday Tribune 17/10/82; 4/12/83; 26/2/84; 23/12/84;  
 The Citizen 8/7/88; 3/7/92;  
 The Rand Daily Mail 26/6/80; 16/9/82; 1/9/84; 11/2/84; 15/3/84;  
 The Sowetan 3/12/85; 22/2/87; 15/9/89; 1/7/92;  
 The Star 24/3/84; 18/10/84; 18/3/85; 23/2/93; 6/11/90; 2/7/92;  
 Voice 7/2/82; 14/2/82;  
 Weekly Mail 7/12/89; 17/3/89; 19/10/90; 18/1/90 .



