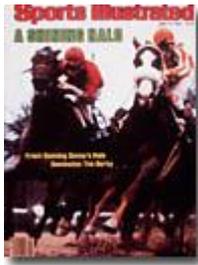

May 16, 1983



Swirling Shades Of Gray

By permitting some integration in sports, as in this soccer game in Soweto, South Africa has created an illusion of progress where little change exists

The only way South Africa gets back into the Olympics is through the bush, with AK-47s.
—A KENYAN DELEGATE TO THE SOCCER WORLD CUP, MADRID, 1982

Every time we clear the high jump, they put the pegs a notch higher.
—A SOUTH AFRICAN CONSULAR OFFICIAL, NEW YORK CITY, 1983

Over the past 10 years, in newspapers throughout the U.S. and Western Europe, certain low-key advertisements have been appearing. Paid for by the South African government, they usually feature a bland message offering "information regarding progress and development in South Africa." A picture shows black and white athletes in competition together. It is captioned THE CHANGING FACE OF SOUTH AFRICA. If you respond to the invitation from the Minister (Information) of the South African Embassy in Washington, D.C., you might receive some South African government bulletins, such as No. 8/82, which is entitled Multiracial Sport Is Taken for Granted. This publication makes the claim, among others, that sport in South Africa is "multiracial" at all levels and that sports clubs are free to admit players and spectators "regardless of race, religion or politics." The clear inference is that the world is no longer justified in excluding South Africa from its great sporting occasions.

For more than a quarter century South African sport has been one long, drawn-out war, at its ugliest internationally in the violent demonstrations that have taken place from Scotland to New Zealand. It's a war that started with a shot that was scarcely heard around the world when, in 1956, the International Table Tennis Federation expelled the all-white South African Table Tennis Union but that, in 1964, led to the barring of South Africa from the Tokyo Olympics and suspension from FIFA, which governs international soccer.

By the late '70s, South Africa's sporting isolation was virtually complete, and for obvious reasons. Whatever sins and excesses were committed by other nations, South Africa, uniquely, had enshrined race discrimination in its constitution, which disenfranchised 80% of

its population and bound those citizens in a cruel net of apartheid laws that, as a byproduct, made normal sport impossible.

Slowly, though, and principally in the past four years, the government claims that, in the matter of sport at least, it has set its house in order. Most recently, early in 1982, it amended two keystones of apartheid, the Group Areas Act and the Liquor Act, insofar as they applied to sporting events. The first reform meant, for instance, that a white soccer team could go into a black township to play a game against blacks without needing a permit. The second made it possible for players of different races to have a drink together after the game and to use the same locker rooms and toilets. Combined with earlier easing of government policy, these acts allowed teams themselves to be mixed racially.

Substantial reforms, you might think, but to many South Africans they have been merely cosmetic. The dissenters charge that underneath, South African sport is still the mirror of an evil regime, but a mirror the government has distorted to confuse outsiders into believing that, while things aren't perfect, they are getting better and that South Africa deserves encouragement, not boycotts. And in one respect the opponents of the regime are right. Once in the country the outsider finds, at first anyway, that his preconceptions are tossed into a whirligig of motion and color that resolves itself into a gray, mazy pattern, like a TV with the tube blown.

Because of all you have read, because the name of the place has become a symbol, you go first to Soweto. It's still very hot this Saturday afternoon in the southern hemisphere's late summer, so as you head west out of Johannesburg, past worked-out gold mines and through a kind of DMZ of empty, scrubby country, there's no sign of the great pall of smoke that, you have been told, hangs for much of the year over South Western Townships, a.k.a. Soweto, where, officially, a million and a half blacks live and, unofficially, many thousands more reside. Each tiny gray matchbox of a house sprouts a stovepipe to carry away the smoke of winter fuel. In most of Soweto there's no electricity.

But the streets are electric enough. Streaming down the dirt road that leads to Orlando Stadium are thousands of fans heading for the big soccer game, the local Orlando Pirates vs. the Iwisa Kaizer Chiefs for the Champion of Champions—their Super Bowl championship for all South Africa. On this afternoon Orlando is their Disney World. Joyfully they chant and sing the Orlando club song, Baba Monomzana Sivulele Singene (Sesame, Open the Door). It takes some effort to recall that the stadium is near the school where 10,000 black students demonstrated in 1976 and triggered more than a year of riots that left, it's thought, more than 600 people dead—no official figures were released.

By game time more than 55,000 people will be crammed into the stadium (capacity: 45,000), with thousands more left outside. Drums beat, not to the joyful samba rhythm of Brazilian soccer drums, but with the kind of menace that put 19th-century explorers off their campfire suppers. Entirely African, also, are the dancers. No cheerleaders these, throwing high kicks. These girls shuffle rhythmically in the dust, wishing, with their feet, a hard time on the Chiefs.

Which is what they got: The Pirates were 2-1 winners after a fast, skillful game. To the visitor, though, it wasn't just the caliber of the match that made the afternoon fascinating. The

two players at the heart of the Pirates' defense, Stewart Lilley and Mike Lambert, were white. Another white kept goal for the Chiefs. The referee was white, as was one of the coaches.

And in that vast black assembly, there were more than a handful of white fans. One of them, Paul Miller from Jo'burg, claimed, "I'm here every week." He was somewhat breathless, having just detached himself from a dancing group of black Pirates supporters who were celebrating the win. "The world has got to look at this thing!" he gasped. "This is real multiracial! All those various councils on world sport that keep us out are a load of——!"

After the big game on Saturday, of course, Miller would have had no reason to return to Soweto the following day. Had he done so, he would have seen two local black amateur sides playing in explosions of dust on a dirt strip less than 30 yards wide, cut out of an arid slope. One of the forwards came to the sideline limping and, engaged in conversation, showed only a bitter interest in Saturday's Pirates-Chiefs game. "That's all special," he said. "Those men are special pros, the whites help them. We have nothing. No training facilities, nothing." His voice rose angrily. "Look at it! Look at it!" he shouted, pointing at the scabby patch of earth. In a more normal voice he said, "The people here are crying." He didn't want to give his name.

Inevitably you are drawn to a pleasant, carefully spoken man, George Thabe, who is the president of the black South African National Football (i.e., soccer) Association.

He too is a worried man. He has just had word of an unpleasant incident down in Western Cape Province. There, on its way to play a black side, a colored (i.e., of mixed race) soccer team from Glenville had been turned back at a roadblock outside the black township of Nyanga, where the game was to take place. The police action was apparently illegal under the recent amendment to the Group Areas Act, of course, but that fact was of little comfort to the Glenville team when it met the rural Cape cops. "Nothing like this has happened for three years," Thabe insisted. Seated in his Johannesburg office, he was furious as well as worried. His association—indeed he himself—is a symbol of the government's new sporting look, of its new multiracialism." Here he is, a black man at the head of one of the nation's most important sports bodies, directing a sport that could claim to be the most successfully integrated in South Africa. "In 1978," he said in a later conversation, "we decided that the only criterion for both players and officials should be performance. We were way ahead of the government. I should have been put in jail for some of the things I did before the government amended the law."

It was not only the Glenville incident, though, that worried Thabe. It was also the criticism, not from the government but from a group he refers to darkly as "those people," who, he says, "tell us to do nothing, boycott everything, polarize everybody, stop playing segregated sport. Well, we did stop the segregation in our sport, and now they're saying that's useless. They are politicians who are using sport as a tool. We say that sport is strong enough to bring change on its own. And there are results to show."

To discover just who "those people" are, you visit a house situated on the lower slopes of Devil's Peak in Woodstock, a colored section of Cape Town that overlooks the dockyards. Here a small, voluble man named Frank van der Horst offers you a soda and pink cookies and gives his views on Thabe and others like him who are involved in the promotion of multiracial sport—a weasel phrase, in van der Horst's opinion.

He is the newly elected president of the antigovernment South African Council on Sport—"those people"—hereinafter referred to as SACOS, and he does not mince words. "My organization," he says, "regards Thabe as a collaborator. He's part of the apparatus, a paid agent of the government. He plays right into their hands. The white racist soccer bodies struck a deal with Thabe and Co. He has been totally corrupted."

Twelve years ago, the government established what it called "umbrella" bodies to govern each sport with which, in its own words, "sports organizations of all population groups could affiliate...." In soccer, for instance, the umbrella is the Football Council of South Africa, under which are gathered the Football Association of South Africa, a white body; Thabe's South African National Football Association, which is for blacks; and the South African Football Association, an organization for colored athletes. If all that is confusing, then, in the opinion of SACOS, it is meant to be so. SACOS was formed in 1973 as an alternative.

"Prior to SACOS," says van der Horst, "organizations had to be content to negotiate with white bodies and affiliate with them. What the whites were looking for were stooges to parade for outside consumption. The aim of the government is to fragmentize the whole country, and that includes sports."

SACOS created a series of alternative organizations for what it calls nonracial, as opposed to multiracial, sport.

Opponents of the regime, for example SACOS, claim that essentially nothing has changed in the apartheid concept, that its chains have been strengthened, while appearing, as in sport, to have been weakened. Thus, millions of blacks are officially no longer South Africans, but nationals of eight different "homelands" that they may never have seen, while coloreds and Asians are being courted with the promise of limited representation in government.

Hence, says SACOS, the separate bodies under the umbrella sports associations; hence, indeed, the much-banded word "multiracial," which, if it is looked at closely, has nothing to do with mixing or integration but reflects differences. "It must be emphasized," writes Sam Ramsamy (of whom more later) in his book *Apartheid—The Real Hurdle*, "that the term 'multiracial sport' has a different connotation in South Africa from that in other parts of the world. The South African definition refers to the bringing together of various racial groups for specific sports events where individuals are identified according to the racial label which apartheid attaches to each and every person in South Africa. Sports...thereby [become] 'inter-racial' or 'multi-racial' rather than non-racial."

North of Durban, in the province of Natal and, as always, separate from the city, is a black township called Kwa Mashu. There resides Vincent Ngongoma, 44, a Zulu who would seem a perfect example of what the South African government says it is trying to do to open up sport racially. Ngongoma is the first black in Natal, and the second in the nation, to become a member of the Jockey Club of South Africa and be awarded his own colors as a racehorse owner. He lives above one of his six food stores, the Zamokuhle Trading Centre, and his address is, in the curt way of South African townships, C 15 25.

His business has enabled him to become the leading black thoroughbred owner-breeder of South Africa, and on this sunny morning he is heading the 45 miles to Pietermaritzburg to

inspect two horses in which he has half shares.

On the drive out he's eloquent about the way he has been treated by the Jockey Club. "Racing has no color bar," he says. "As an owner I get into the most exclusive areas of the clubs. My badge makes me welcome wherever I go." At Victory Lodge, where his horses are stabled, he is treated deferentially by the white trainer's wife. He's a prosperous and successful man.

But he still has to go home to C 15 25. He isn't allowed to move to another township unless it is designated for blacks. And while he may have the freedom of the clubhouse in Durban, his fellow Zulus are still segregated in a special section at the track.

To meet another nonwhite South African sportsman who has done well under the new dispensation, you must head from Cape Town over the Hottentots Holland Mountains by way of the tortuous Sir Lowry Pass to the town of Caledon, or, more properly, the colored township that lies outside it.

This is the hometown of Errol Tobias, the first, and so far only, nonwhite to wear the green and gold colors of the Springboks, South Africa's national rugby side. His first words when you locate him are, "No politics, O.K.?"

He is understandably gun-shy. To play for the Springboks is the ultimate honor in the nation's sport, because for white South Africans, the Dutch-descended Afrikaaners especially, rugby is the undisputed glory game. Tobias is the government's prize exhibit in its multiracial sports presentation. In his position it was hardly a surprise that he spoke in support of the Establishment.

This was in his own rugby trophy room, in a house elegantly constructed and furnished, a world away economically from the cabins of most of his townsmen. Rugby Union is an amateur game, but, as he says, "Any Springbok who is a businessman is going to do well." He has a construction company employing 20 men. He has made it in the toughest area of South African sport, and sees himself as just a forerunner.

"In five or six years," he says, "the whole Springbok back division will be blacks. They have the speed from the mark, the jinking, the sidesteps. We're not very big, but we have speed and quick hands." Tobias is thinking here of his own colored people, not blacks as such. "There's no reason now why the Springboks shouldn't play in other countries. When they first boycotted us, they said, 'Look, we want you to play mixed teams. Use the blacks.' And that's been done. They can't expect to see eight or nine blacks on the side at this stage, but I think they should give us the chance to play now."

For only a moment he reveals what it must feel like to be a South African sportsman abroad, and his own feelings of isolation on the team. "I was alone with the Springboks in New Zealand," he says, suddenly and simply. That tour, in the summer of 1981, sparked some of the most violent anti-apartheid demonstrations yet, and he had been widely derided as a kind of Uncle Tobias figure. "Some games," he recalls, "we had to sleep in the stands the night before them." That was because the team's safety could not be guaranteed in hotels.

Later, for a workout, he heads up to the field where his colored home team, the Caledonians,

plays. At first the visitor assumes that this is just a sort of practice ground, so primitive it is, with the un-painted goalposts obviously lopped down and trimmed in the nearest wood, but it is the club's home. It is a far cry from Loftus Versfeld in Pretoria or Ellis Park in Johannesburg, those magnificent national shrines to white South Africa's worship of rugby, but Tobias doesn't apologize for it.

And, indeed, he can still say, "The coaching for colored boys is better now than the whites get. A lot of young talent is coming along. In the last six or seven years, Danie has done some wonderful things for colored rugby."

You take another drive out of Cape Town, this time to the University of Stellenbosch, idyllically placed in a town of colonial Dutch houses at the heart of the wine-producing region of Western Cape Province. There you meet the redoubtable Dr. Danie Craven.

Craven, a hale man in his 70s, wearing a business suit—he explains he has to attend a cocktail party later—is imparting some wise words to the forwards on the college side, enormous young whites who are practicing the rugby scrum, pushing against a formidable pile of rocks set up on a wood frame.

Since 1956 he has been president of the South African Rugby Board, and thus the most important sports administrator in the nation. He's a man of such gruff charm that even his most outrageous remarks are qualified by the good humor with which they are uttered.

As when, for example, he says, "The Zulus, the Swazis, the Xhosas; it's almost impossible to brine them together. They speak different languages, have different religions, different magic beliefs. The clans fight one another. You know, 'I'm a Lion Man, you're an Ape Man.' "

Then he says just as unequivocally, "In sport there's no apartheid! No! My rugby board is autonomous. The government cannot tell me what to do, as it could at one time. Since 1979, anyone can play with whom he wants."

The subtle old man, you soon realize, is only testing you. He is more complex than you would have suspected, and honest, too. "There was a time," he tells you, "when we were not even aware that blacks and coloreds were playing rugby. Or any game. Because to us it didn't matter. There was no friction. We were the bosses and they were the servants. There's no doubt that South Africa has been wrong in many ways. And what we have, we brought on ourselves."

Then he's teasing you again. "You people outside know more about the apartheid laws than I do," he goes on. "I have never taken any notice of them. I've detested them, and I've said so openly." He claims that when he became president of the rugby board he started to work to bring blacks and coloreds into his sport, but that not until the last six or seven years did the changes in government policy permit him to set up coaching plans involving nonwhites. Everything is not perfect, he says, and it is the implementation of the government's reforms, especially in the small farming communities, that is still a problem.

"Our clinics now," Craven explains, "take us right into the hinterland of South Africa, into the highly conservative country districts, the tough areas." But the little dorps (country towns)

and municipalities away from the big cities fight a bitter resistance movement even toward multiracial sport, as Craven knows full well. Last year in the East Rand, 15 white schools boycotted his own Craven Week Rugby Tournament because it involved non white sides.

"Because of our history," he admits, "there are some white schools that won't participate in our program. The others who don't come are our enemies, the SACOS people. They refuse to let their children play against whites.

"I wish I could meet that Sam Ramsamy," Craven says suddenly. "But he'll stay clear of me."

A lot of people in South Africa would like to meet Sam Ramsamy, but he's safe in London, chairman of the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee, SANROC, with its links to the influential Supreme Council for Sport in Africa and the United Nations' Centre Against Apartheid.

And to the truly verkrampte (racially hard-line) South African white, though not to the pragmatic Dr. Craven, Ramsamy is everything from a representative of the Politburo, financed by Moscow gold, to the worst kind of traitor. It might be instructive for them to see the London base from which he works, a tiny, cluttered office in the basement of a cheap hotel in the Marble Arch district.

Ramsamy's own sporting credentials are impeccable. He is 43, small-built but square-set, by race an Asian but preferring to be called black. (In the interests of nonwhite unity, most activists against the government's apartheid policies now refer to themselves as black, be they Asian, colored or native African.) In Ramsamy's native Durban, unconcerned with politics at the time, he represented Natal Province in track—black Natal, of course—in the 100 yards. Later he became national coach of the (black) South African Swimming Federation. Only gradually did the indignities imposed on his race translate themselves into his present political stance. "We'd be herded into a corner of the field for a soccer match," he recalls. "We had to urinate in the gutters. All the facilities were for whites.

"I had some very good swimming kids under my care," he says, "but I could see what a low ceiling there was for their achievements." By this time he was lecturing in a teachers college, and his views had started to form. "In '71," he says, "I was President of the Natal High Schools Athletic Association, and the government had set up big celebrations for the anniversary of the founding of the republic. So secretly I organized the high school kids in a boycott of the festivities, which became a shambles.

"I thought I'd gotten away with it," he goes on, "but the following year I didn't get the tenure I was expecting, and my white head of department—he's dead now, so I can mention him—went to inquire, came back and said, "Sammy, get out of the country. The police are investigating you and the boycott."

With hindsight, the police might wish they had left him alone, for Ramsamy outside the country is a far worse scourge to the apartheid system than he would have had the power to be if he had stayed home. That basement office in London fuels many of the international boycotts South Africa suffers from, and it's certainly the intelligence-gathering center for the U.N.'s Special Committee Against Apartheid and its special blacklist of international athletes

who have taken part in South African sport.

Meantime, within South Africa, Ramsamy's chief concern is about that shade of gray, that blurring effect that, he and his allies say, is merely a government tactic to bamboozle the world. His worry is all the greater because of the tendency of many nonwhite South African athletes, and especially the more highly skilled ones, to play in the well-sponsored government-backed sports system for greater rewards and recognition, and to turn their backs on the generally impoverished and unsponsored SACOS leagues.

It turns out to be surprisingly easy, in the maze of South African sport, to miss your turn. Golfers may recall the name of the late Sewsunker (Papwa) Sewgolum, Pappy to all, whose career came to a peak in the entirely verkrampste days of the '50s and '60s. Pappy, an Asian, was the best nonwhite golfer the nation had ever produced and, in the opinion of some, the best golfer in the country at that time. In 1963, after he had won the Dutch Open in '59 and '60, and after much international protest, he was finally permitted to compete in the South African Championship. He placed second to Retief Waltman, but wasn't permitted to use the locker room or the clubhouse, or even to appear at the awards ceremony.

Recently, it seemed that similar treatment was being given to a young and promising golfer, an Asian like Pappy and known, perhaps not coincidentally, as Peppy Govender. Reportedly, he had been barred from the Port Shepstone Country Club in Natal, where he had regularly played, after a club official had seen him about to tee off in a match with another Asian and two whites.

Govender is a rural teacher. He has no phone and was unreachable on this occasion, but one was told that in Durban he has a friend, another young Asian teacher living in the city, who could speak for him. He turned out to be Rowan Ramtahal of the Central Durban Golf Club and, oddly, he seemed at first to dismiss Govender's problem. "He's, well, just outspoken," said Ramtahal. "He just went out and had some unfortunate exchanges with the whites."

He was eager, though, to stress his own racial loyalties. "I caddied for old Pappy, did you know that?" he asked. "He used to change in a car. They wouldn't let him use the clubhouse. Of course, there's no way that would happen today. We have five black players on the Sunshine Circuit. They have their cards. Uh, of course, they wouldn't have the same privileges on ordinary weekends. It would depend on the clubs...."

His voice grew more confidential. "There are waves, you know. We are weathering a stormy point. Cutting South Africa off from international sport does not help. My club has to use municipal courses now, but when we have our own we will affiliate to a white association. The talent we have is unreal, man," he said, and issued an invitation to see it in action the following morning.

The date at the Papwa Sewgolum Municipal Golf Course turns out to have an embarrassing start. Innocently inquiring for Ramtahal, you get the deep-freeze treatment from a group of golfers about to start a round. It takes a talismanic note from Ramsamy in London before you are accepted by what turns out to be the SACOS-affiliated Durban Golf Club, a body which uses the same public course as Ramtahal's group but which regards the latter with contempt.

Lambie Rasool, president of the SACOS-led club, is eager to erase any gray shadows. "Whatever you are told," he says, "there are only five courses in South Africa really open to

blacks. You'll hear that other clubs are open, but you won't be told how there suddenly becomes a six-year waiting list and about the Liquor Law problems in clubhouses."

Rasool walks his visitor to a small, single-story building that contains shower stalls and lavatories for both sexes, but nothing else. "What you are viewing," he says grandiloquently, "is the most modern clubhouse for blacks in the nation. Our original course," he says, pointing eastward, "was over there. The government expropriated it to build a railroad, and they promised to compensate us with 400,000 rand [a rand is worth around one U.S. dollar] for a new clubhouse. What we got was this. It cost 28,000 rand.... How much gets spent on those tournaments in so-called Bophuthatswanaland, in Sun City? Two million?"

Meantime, Ramtahal is nowhere to be seen, and Rasool leads his members off for their morning's sport. The group includes one white, whose request not to be named or photographed is hereby honored.

This is sensible of him. SACOS is a legal organization, but it is subject to constant police surveillance and to harassments, major and minor. When he took office Rasool found that business fell off sharply at his garage.

Morgan Naidoo, the president of SACOS until this past March, suffered a five-year "Banning" sentence in 1973. There are various forms of banning, including confinement to quarters at night and for weekends; surveillance; being forbidden to write anything, even a diary; or essentially house arrest. In this case Naidoo was banned from publishing anything, being quoted anywhere, and from attending "meetings" of more than two people. It's thought that this was because he published an article on discrimination in sport and gave evidence to the Federation Internationale de Natation Amateur (FINA), the world governing body of swimming, in favor of South Africa's expulsion from that body, though he himself can't be certain. "They don't have to give a reason," he says.

Van der Horst had spoken of petty harassments experienced in Cape Town. Last fall, for instance, SACOS announced a week-long Festival of Sport there. Suddenly thousands of leaflets appeared giving false dates and venues for the events. Then the Cape Town City Council took a stand. "They knew we'd booked a stadium for a big rugby game on the Saturday night," van der Horst says. "We'd booked it in March, for October. Then, only just before the event, we were told there had been a double booking, that the Girl Guides had arranged a jamboree there for the same evening. Eventually we played. We had to wait for the Guides to finish and had to clear up after them, and we had only 10,000 there when it should have been a full house [35,000]. Another time we planned a cycling event. Three days ahead of it the City Council dumped 40 tons of topsoil dressing on the road surface. You realize," he adds to the slightly startled visitor, "that it's known you are with me this morning."

There are white casualties, also, in the South African sports war. Switch the scene now to Bellville, a leafy suburb of Cape Town, bright with bougainvillea, a symbol of white affluence, and give yourself the pleasure of meeting Annette Cowley, a bonny, bright and, of course, white 16-year-old swimmer who this spring came home from the national championships at Bloemfontein with six gold medals, one South African record and, in the 200-meter obstacle race (part of the South African Lifesaving Championships), a world best,

bringing the time down from 2:23 to 2:15.

But her achievements count for little. "We're not allowed...I mean. South African times aren't accepted by FINA," Annette says hesitantly. South Africa was expelled from FINA 10 years ago. "Isn't it unfair! It's just stupid," she says, employing what you feel is the most pejorative word she knows.

Four years ago she had taken a trip to Midland, Texas, for five weeks of intensive coaching, and there she had been told that, if she could have stayed a year, she would have made the U.S. nationals. But her citizenship would still bar her from both the Olympics and the FINA world championships. "It's hard that politicians rule sports," she says. "I figure I'm just outside the top 25, world class, in the 100-meter freestyle. I love swimming, and I won't give it up because I'm blocked off this way. All I can do is try to set world records. If you get one, you've got it. How can they say differently?"

Well, Annette, they can and they do, and you might well understand why if you had happened to travel with your visitor, a few days later, to the Balkumar Singh Swimming Baths at Asherville, in an Asian section of Durban. You would have met another fine young South African swimmer, colored and, like yourself, 16. Her name is Anita Giguel. She has also won everything she has been allowed to win, but she has hit the racial barrier. Understandably, she's shyer than you are when it comes to speaking with a white, and mostly she lets Aslok Patel, president of her SACOS-affiliated swimming association, do the talking.

"Anita," Patel says, "has been swimming for Natal Province since she was nine. She was swimmer of the year four times successively, from '78 to '81. But," he adds significantly, "she doesn't swim against whites.

"The whites would like her to swim against them," he says, "but that would give them credibility. No black school in Durban has a pool," he says, "and look what we have here. This pool is municipally owned, only 25 meters long, built in 1955 to serve a community of more than 200,000. For serious practice we are permitted two lanes, 40 swimmers, for two hours each evening. It would therefore be an unequal contest."

Now Anita is confident enough to speak. "You can't beat records in 25-meter pools," she says. "The whites have exercise machines, heated pools. They train through the winter. All I can do here, when it gets down to 12 degrees [mid-50s F], is run on the beach and swim out to the shark nets."

Anita might be surprised to learn that Cape Town has only one heated pool for whites; but it's unlikely that she would sympathize, even though in a sense she has the same goal as Annette—to head to the United States and practice her sport freely. "I'd like to go to college in Miami. I have an application form," she says. "I'd study phys ed, then come back and teach."

Surprisingly, there's a guarded sympathy for the white girl's frustration from Hassan Howa, a gentle-mannered man of 60 who is an elder statesman in the struggle against apartheid in sport. Howa, currently president of the South African Cricket Board, was president of SACOS from 1977 to 1981 but now is a bit removed from it. "I feel badly about Annette," he

says when the topic is broached. "I haven't got it in me to hate white people, certainly not this little girl. That is not the way I would like pressure to work. But what she is getting is the backlash from what the government is doing, from the years of repression of black sport.

"Whatever facilities they make available, when a child comes to be coached in any sport and he's not white, there's an imbalance which makes it nearly impossible for him to compete with a white child, an imbalance in nutrition, education and psychology. A black kid in a township is only going to see a white when he comes in an official capacity, someone who threatens his parents, an inspector of passes, for instance. Now take this kid and put him with white children. He's afraid. A white person is authority. How can he compete? He has no shoes to go to school, let alone running shoes. His father, down in the mines, is earning about 140 rand a month now, and the poverty level is around 350 rand. You don't want us to mix politics with sport?" he asks ironically.

He swiftly discards any notion that the black in South African sport is in the same position U.S. blacks in the South might have been in 50 or more years ago. Howa says, "Here it is legislation, the constitution, that keeps them down. In the U.S. it was mainly tradition—and you can fight against that." A parallel strikes him. "Marian Anderson," he says, drifting away from sport, "a voice that comes once in 10,000 years. If she had been South African she would never have seen a concert hall."

In its legal system, Scotland allows a jury to return a verdict other than the familiar "guilty" and "not guilty." It is simply "not proven," and in the end, perhaps cravenly, the visitor would like to take refuge in some such phrase to assess South Africa's record in regard to the recent changes in the laws that govern its sport. It is certainly true that the lot of the first-class black athlete has improved, that he has an entree to national and provincial sides he never had before. At base, though, nothing has significantly changed. Hassan Howa's now famous phrase "No normal sport in an abnormal society," uttered in 1977, is still relevant.

In Cape Town, Sue Cowley, Annette's mother, had poured Earl Grey tea into delicate cups. "When the government changed the law," she said, "we invited the coloreds to join our club. Only two or three came. I think we were about 20 years too late."

Recently, in New Delhi, Juan Antonio Samaranch, president of the International Olympic Committee, said, "We decided two years ago that we would consider sending a factfinding mission to South Africa, but we didn't set any date. We will certainly wait until after the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles. After that we will decide whether it is the right time...to see what changes have taken place."