



THE LSDP TOP 100 SPORTS THINKERS OF 2012



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SPORT AS AN ART, SPORT AS AN INVESTMENT.



> Mauro Berruto, Head Coach of the Italian volleyball team, bronze medal at the Olympic Games in London 2012

I have been into professional sports for many years. I have always wanted to find ways for sports to be recognized both as an educational tool and an inspiration for someone's full personal growth. It may be a coincidence but my story, just like that of many other sports personalities, began at a parish recreation centre, in a very simple way. But, deep inside, a lot of dreams were already growing.

Nowadays, we are faced with a sort of "moralism," often connected with hypocritical intellectualism, which tries to "sanctify" basic sports and "demonize" competitive sports activities. The latter is seen as aberration, exasperation, business, violence and nonetheless doping, corruption and money laundering. Athletes are often required, (hypocritically) to be perfect models. I believe it is much nicer and even fairer to look at sports the way they are. Nothing more and nothing less. Not a mythological paradise where everything is perfect, but a "mere" expression of culture.

Games, both the uniquely serious ones of children and the more casual, free and individual games of



adults are a complex thing. The outcome of games can even get to influence our role in society, our social prestige and economic situation. Playing is a key tool to approach and better understand the culture of a people. The ball game could be useful to approach the mysterious world of the Aztec civilization. A basketball game on a playground down in the Bronx will tell us something about American society. A football game, including all that happens in and out of the pitch, will help shed some light on the Italians.

Culture is a broad term which covers the knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by a man as a member of a society. Among these skills you will certainly find games and sports. Sports today are indispensable educational tools, as capable as art and music to speak a universal language. A splendid definition of the role of literature by the Latin American writer Julio Cortazar explains that novels based on social problems are much appreciated by those who do not have a lot of problems. The aristocrats want to read books on the suffering of poor people. On the contrary, poor people do not need to read about their problems, because they live them every day and prefer fantasy novels, the ones that make you dream. Even those who go to a football game do so for the fun and maybe to forget other problems. If one can enjoy sports just as an emotional event, one can also enjoy sports in technical, tactical, aesthetic, harmonious, and cultural terms. In one word, sports as art.

Every day, one hour of sports in every school: this would be the largest investment you could make, both in economic and emotional terms. The practice of

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sports is a financial investment because, in an increasingly ageing society, it would be the most powerful tool to reduce the costs for the national health care system (evidence suggest by over 30%) and protect our constitutional right to health. Sports are an emotional investment. They teach you to train with passion and dreams, which are those things that make you move on without necessarily knowing where you will end up. Maybe, from the parish center to the Olympic Games.

The work of the friends of Lo Spazio della Politica is a wonderful example of what "good policy" can be, which is nothing else than clearly setting the hierarchy of important things. This ranking of "Sports Thinkers" reminds us in an extraordinarily effective way that sports today are a really serious matter.

WHO KNOWS ONLY ABOUT SPORTS KNOWS NOTHING ABOUT SPORTS, AND WHO KNOWS NOTHING ABOUT SPORTS DOES NOT KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT POLITICS AND ECONOMICS.

Lo Spazio della Politica tries to think of politics and economics in an increasingly globalized world. The ranking of the top 100 Global Thinkers of the year, which is our most renowned project since 2009, is the perfect symbol of our collective research. Starting from this year, the traditional list is accompanied by a ranking of “*Sports Thinkers*.” While the traditional list

is inspired by the work of the American magazine *Foreign Policy*, the LSDP List of Sports Thinkers is new, both at the Italian and international stage.

The methodology is similar: not only people, but also groups, cities, companies, and institutions can achieve the status of “global thinker.” Worth mentioning, we have reserved ten

> *di Moris Gasparri, editor of the list*



places to Italians as a homage to our national background.

Why did we decide to consider sports an object of study and research?

In a nutshell, we did it to overcome three very frequent clichés. First, sport is just practice, action, movement, physical effort, emotions. It is something unrelated to ideas, studies and



books. Second, the world of sports is not related to anything that happens outside its perimeter of action. Third, as opposed to serious things such as politics or economics, sports is considered as pure entertainment, something trivial and unnecessary or, even worse, a weapon of mass distraction.

We want to challenge these prejudices: **who knows only about sports knows nothing about sports, and who knows nothing about sports does not know everything about politics and economics.** The deep meaning of our list lies in this formula. In our global era, sports can have many meanings and many shapes, and their boundaries now overlap those of geopolitics, economics, science and technology. Sports are transformed by these fields, but are often able to transform them at the same time. The list tries to represent these overlaps, in an innovative and original way, according to some guidelines we tried to summarize in this introduction.

Sports between geopolitics and globalization. The dreams and disappointments of the vast community of supporters of European football clubs are now closely connected with foreign investments by the small Gulf States, and consequently to the energy bounty on which their wealth is based. Not surprisingly, the royal family of Qatar, with the purchase of

Paris Saint Germain, the mega-sponsorship deal between Barcelona and Qatar Airways and the award of the 2022 Football World Cup, chose football as a privileged tool for its global expansion strategy: this is why this year the Qataris appear in both our rankings. Competitions such as the Champions League, the Premier League and the NBA are now followed in every corner of the globe and they are able to create common and truly universal cultural codes. The emergence of new geopolitical powers affects the geographical balance of many sports. A traditional English sport, such as horse racing, is becoming much more popular in Asia than ever before. During the London Olympics, the traditional Eurocentrism of fencing has been on the wane. Thus, the relationship between sports, geopolitics and globalization is carefully addressed in our ranking.

Sports events are major political events. First, because they can exist only because of huge amounts of public money invested by host countries. Second, because they represent truly global opportunities for attention and participation: their historical origin is entirely political, at the intersection between nationalism and cosmopolitan dreams. As the American historian Barbara Keys reminded us, the spectacular Olympics as we know them



today (from the Olympic village at the opening ceremony to the great sponsorship agreements) date back to the 1930s, perhaps the most tragic decade for world politics in modern history.

Sports as engine of social change. Due to their ability to attract and influence the media, sports are capable to enhance the promotion of diversity – ethnic, gender, physical ability – often causing symbolic breakthroughs. In our ranking, several figures represent this.

Sports and the future of welfare state. Scientific evidence suggests that those who practice regular physical activity are able to reduce the risk of mortality by 20-40%, especially for cardiovascular diseases. This is not just a matter of individual health, but also public health. In increasingly ageing societies, health care is a substantial and expensive issue on the political agenda. The more people keep themselves healthy, even when they get older, the more public budgets become sustainable, and this is particularly relevant for the many countries affected by fiscal crises. It is an issue of concern for both Western and developing countries. In order to face this appropriately, there is an increasing need to create environments where people are able to study, work and conduct a healthy lifestyle. These issues

remain all too often ignored in the public debate and have a central place in the ranking. Sports, doping and the rise of nerds. Italian journalist Gianni Mura once said that sports journalists of the future are likely to have a master degree in chemistry. This is already happening. Breakthroughs in medical sciences affect sports performances, continuously rewriting the boundaries between licit and illicit and between socially accepted, uncertain and demonized practices. Consider the Armstrong case: the intensification of doping controls is rewriting the history of a popular sport like cycling. The sports journalists of the future will also have skills in statistics and computer sciences. In the United States, many people already openly speak of the “rise of nerds in sports,” referring to the use of increasingly sophisticated softwares for data processing as a strategic factor in the organization of a professional team.

Sports and the urban environment. Living in a city which hosts a winning team is an indicator that should be included in the measurements of well-being because it acts as a multiplier of shared happiness. This happens everywhere, as it is shown by many examples in the list. Sports clubs also shape the historical and cultural identity of the places in which they are based. Stadiums and arenas condense



human relations, and they are museums of memory, open-air film sets displaying shows with unknown outcomes. It comes with no surprise the existence of an academic discipline called “sports geography.” Sports arenas are also interesting from a purely economic perspective, as a unique combination of public and private investments. Thus, the list includes a special focus on these issues too.

Sports intellectuals. In the ranking, we identified a lot of journalists, academics, research centers, and bloggers: through their precious work they make visible a true global culture of sport, helping overcome the stereotypes listed above.

Why are Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo and LeBron James not in the list? The essence of sports still lies in the definition given by the Greeks more than two millennia ago and upgraded by the British two centuries ago: competitions, duels, winners and losers, records, comparisons. As the reader will easily guess, our list is based only marginally on the results of 2012. We want to leave the work on the “list of the top athletes” or record breakers of the year to sports magazines and more popular rankings. However, there are some exceptions. It has been said that the magnitude of an athlete is proportional to his ability to

excite as many people as possible. Therefore, it is impossible to ignore the impact and charisma of some personalities: throughout their career, they became “emotion builders” on a very large scale, becoming global leaders, icons and sources of emulation in every part of the world.

The path of study and research that led to the creation of this ranking would have never been possible without the crucial experience of the working group on sports promoted by veDrò during the 2011 edition, and without the friendship and collaboration of both Mauro Berruto and Michele Uva. They are two great personalities of Italian sports culture and they deserve a warm and heartfelt thanks.

THE LIST



n° 1

THE ENGLISH TAXPAYERS



(Political community, United Kingdom)

Because without their “*good will*”, estimated at nine billion pounds, we would not have enjoyed seventeen days of Olympic unforgettable emotions.



n° 2

ROBERT MARCHAND



(Cyclist, France)

Because he has obtained a double track cycling record (both on one hour and 100 km) at the young age of 100 years old. The concept of “*longevity sports*” has been moved a lot forward, and this has forced the UCI create a new category “*over 100*” just for him.

n° 3

PARKOUR IN GAZA



(Sports practice, Palestine)

Because there is no other place in the world where a sport based on overcoming physical obstacles makes more sense.



n° 4

INTERNATIONAL PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE



(Sports organization)

For the first, great and historical media success of the Paralympic Games, for the record numbers of viewers and for the 2.700.000 tickets sold (900.000 more than Beijing 2008).

n° 5

ACADEMY OF MEDICINE

(Research Institute, France)



For the report on the relationship between sport and health care edited by Jacques Bazex, which draws the lines of a very near future in which physicians prescribe to their patients a certain “*dose*” of physical activity in addition to traditional drugs. In the city of Strasbourg an experiment of this kind has already started.



n° 6

DIDIER DROGBA

(Soccer player, Ivory Coast)



For his crucial contribution to Chelsea's historic first victory in the Champions League and for his enduring role of peace symbol in his native Côte d'Ivoire.



n° 7

FELIX BAUMGARTNER



(Skydiver and base jumper, Austria)

Because he has expanded the concept of human physical capabilities through his jump from over 39,000 meters, breaking the speed of sound. He has also achieved the highest result of share in the history of Austrian television.



n° 8

CHRIS KLUWE



(Football Player of the Minnesota Vikings, United States)

For his defense, as a heterosexual happily married with two children, of the rights of homosexuals, contained in a letter addressed to the Maryland state assembly delegate Emmett Burns. The latter had strongly criticized a colleague of Kluwe, Brendon Adyanbadejo, because he publicly supported gay marriage. Kluwe's gesture is the stronger political stance by any professional athlete in the last thirty years.

n° 9

ALEX ZANARDI



(Hand-biker, Italy)

Because his second life in sports, full of amazing achievements, is one of the best sports wonders of all time.



n° 10

TIANJIN EQUINE CULTURE CITY



(Hippodrome, China)

Because the geopolitics of horse racing is becoming more and more Asian, as it is shown by the mega-investment of two billion dollars for this first Chinese racecourse. The construction work has started this year, and it is scheduled to open in 2013. It would be able to contain 4,000 stalls, five training tracks, two race tracks.

n° 11

SERTAÇ SEHLIKOGLU



(PhD Candidate in Anthropology at the University of Cambridge, Turkey)

Because sports play an important role in the women revolution in the Arab world. Her “*Muslim Women in Sports*” blog is an essential source of information on this issue.



n° 12

THE BEARD OF JAMES HARDEN



(Religious icon, United States)

Because the Beard, among the world’s youth, has quickly become a cult object. This confirms that the NBA, before being a sports league, is today a universal cultural code.

n° 13

THE ROYAL FAMILY OF QATAR



(Royal Family, Qatar)

Because with their many investments are showing us how sports can be an extension of geopolitics, and soccer fields an extension of gas fields.



n° 14

SEBASTIAN COE



(President of the Organizing Committee of London 2012, Great Britain)

Because, if the organization of London 2012 has been a success, it is mostly due to him.

n° 15

ROGER FEDERER



(Tennis, Switzerland)

He's Roger Federer.



n° 16

USAIN BOLT

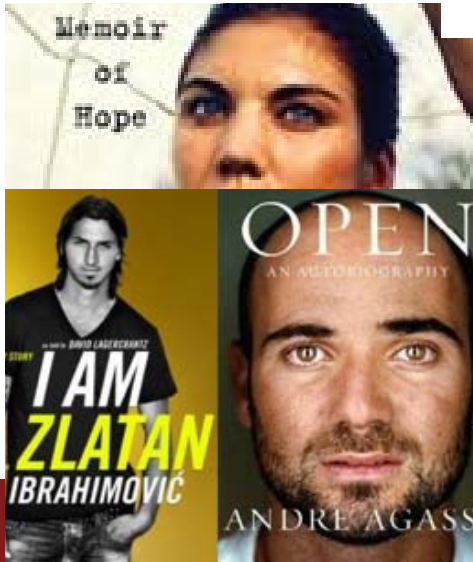


(Sprinter, Jamaica)

He's Usain Bolt.

n° 17

ZLATAN IBRAHIMOVIC, ANDRE AGASSI, HOPE SOLO



(Soccer player, Sweden – Tennis player, United States – Soccer player, United States)

Because their autobiographies have shown us how the inner life of great sports figures, often difficult and tormented, could be interesting as much as their athletic ability.



n° 18

IAN POULTER



(Golfer, Great Britain)

Because his charismatic performance at the Ryder Cup was a geopolitical miracle: an Englishman leading Europe in order to defeat the United States.

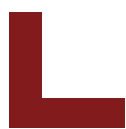
n° 19

MICHAEL PHELPS FOUNDATION

MICHAEL PHELPS
FOUNDATION

(Foundation, United States)

Because it represents a concrete example of what every successful athlete should do during and after his career: engage more people in sports.



n° 20

LUOL DENG FOUNDATION



(Foundation, England)

See above, with basketball in place of swimming.

n° 21

DAVE ZIRIN



(Political scientist, United States)

Because from his observatory in Washington he analyzes the dense links between American sports and politics in a unique way, also denouncing their many dark sides.



n° 22

LOVE STADIUM



(Tumblr Profile, United States)

Because every day it shows that stadiums and sports arenas are fundamental elements of architecture and urbanism of the XXI century.

nº 23

THE MUSEUM OF BARÇA

(Sports museum, Spain)



Because, with over a million tourists a year, it is the third most visited museum in Spain, showing how the Catalan club is worth in historical, cultural and economic terms.



nº 24

DAVID RUDISHA

(Distance runner, Kenya)



Because his victory and world record in the 800 meters at the Olympics is the only athletic achievement of the last decade comparable to Roger Bannister's famous one.

n° 25

PIERMARIO MOROSINI AND VIGOR BOVOLENTA, IN MEMORIAM

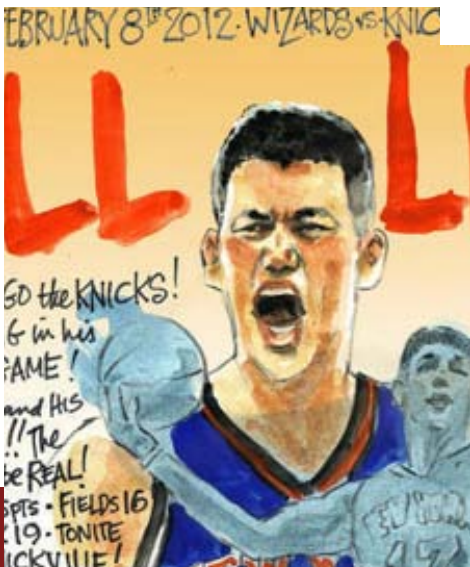


(Soccer player and volleyball player,
Italy)

Because in 2012 the Italian sport scene suffered of two great tragedies occurred on the playing field. We lost two athletes who were always in love with the beauty of sport. Moro and Bovo, we will never forget you.

n° 26

JEREMY LIN



(Houston Rockets basketball player,
USA / Taiwan)

Because he is a symbol of the deep demographic changes in American society, but also because “*Linsanity*” is a perfect case study of emotional irrationality among sports spectators, even those of the most advanced city in the world.

n° 27

MANCHESTER CITY



(Sports club, England)

Because with the opening of the site “*MCFC Analytics*” it has created the first example of “open data” applied to the world of professional sports. And also because it has started a remarkable urban transformation in the eastern suburbs of Manchester, first with the building of Etihad Stadium, now with the youth sports center. The money, of course, is “*Made in the Gulf*”.



n° 28

FEDERICO BUFFA



(Journalist and storyteller, Italy)

Because he has a unique – and perhaps godly – ability of sports storytelling: from the NBA and American society to Maradona through countless other stories. Unfortunately, his broadcasts are only in Italian: this is the only reason why the vast family of the “*Buffa-nation*” is still limited.

n° 29

KAKHABER KALADZE



(Politician and former soccer player, Georgia)

Because being a Champions League winner and Minister of Energy in the same life, and in just nine years, is quite an achievement. His appointment shows that high-level sporting careers are now part of the power elite, especially in some countries.



n° 30

PETER WEHLING



(Founder of the Center for Molecular Orthopedics of Düsseldorf, Germany)

Because he is the inventor of the controversial Orthokine therapy for the treatment of arthritis. This therapy has turned Düsseldorf into a city of pilgrimage for many sports stars in search of healing, like Kobe Bryant.

n° 31

GLASGOW RANGERS SUPPORTERS



(Religious community, Scotland)

Because every weekend his community of people keeps supporting its team, despite Rangers went bankrupt and were relegated to the third division. This proves that Pasolini was right when he thought of football as the last holy representation of our times.



n° 32

PUMA



(Sportswear company, Germany)

Because thank to Usain Bolt and other Jamaican athletes, and the uniforms drew by Bob Marley's daughter, they managed to break the long standing sports marketing duopoly of Nike and Adidas at the 2012 Olympics.

n° 33

ALESSANDRO DEL PIERO



(Footballer, Italy)

Because he certainly is a global sports ambassador. After the conclusion of his career in Italy, he moved to Australia and even took the time for a lectio magistralis at the Sorbonne University in Paris. The Australian experience, moreover, not only deals with sports, but means something important for geopolitics as well. The Australian government, indeed, wants to use football's appeal as a means to enhance the diplomatic and commercial relations with Asian countries: Australia will host the final stage of the 2015 Asian Cup.



n° 34

ALAAELDIN ABOUELKASSEM



(Fencer, Egypt)

Because their Olympic medals show the big geopolitical transformations that are affecting fencing, a sport which was traditionally considered as a Eurocentric fortress.

n° 35

RICHARD SCUDAMORE



(Manager, GB)

Because he made the Premier League the biggest sport show of the world (PL's matches are broadcasted in 211 countries, a cumulative share of 5 billion viewers per sease) and he is conquering Asian, African and North American markets.



n° 36

TECHNOGYM

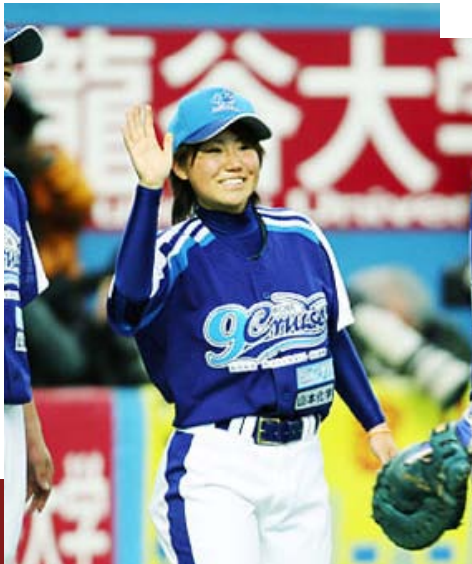


(Private Company, Italy)

Because it is the most advanced business project dealing with wellbeing and physical activity in the world, both in terms of market shares and the philosophy behind. In September 2012, Technogym inaugurated the first Wellness Campus of the world, with the participation of Giorgio Napolitano and Bill Clinton.

n° 37

ERI YOSHIDA



(Baseball player, Japan)

Because she tried to play with men, and she was successful.



n° 38

LINDSEY VONN



(Skier, USA)

Because she tried to compete with men and she failed, but not for her fault. Only the opinion of the Council of the International Ski Federation stopped her.

n° 39

CHRIS COOPER



(Biochemist and sports scientist, England)

Because he famously said: *"I think sports fans should be engaged with the science underpinning human performance and doping"*, and because his book *"Run, Swim, Throw, Cheat"* is the best tool to put this advice into practice.



n° 40

UK LOTTERY

(Lottery, GB)



Because by seeking the fortune they funded the Olympic successes and became a global sports superpower.

n° 41

RED BULL



(Energy drinks producer, Austria)

Because they made sport marketing a collective and generational artwork.



n° 42

OKLAHOMA CITY THUNDER



(Sport club, USA)

Because the revelation team of the last NBA season helped a community coming out of an enormous tragedy and showing itself and the world a symbolic redemption.

n°43

KONTINENTAL HOCKEY LEAGUE



(Sport league, Russia)

Because Hockey is the repetition of the Cold War in sport. Born in 2008, it is a big success in terms of audience, its geography is similar to that of the former Soviet Empire (Kazak, Ukrainian, Slovak and Czech teams play together with Russian ones) and the new NHL's lockout is enhancing it.



n°44

MINO RAIOLA



(Agent, Netherlands / Italy)

Because of his unique ability of squeezing money out of rich football teams' owners from the Persian Gulf and give it to his athletes (and himself).

n° 45

DECLAN HILL



(Journalist, Canada)

Because of his pioneer research on the role of Asian criminality in match-fixing scandals in football, reported in his book *"The Fix"*. His battle in defence of the most important thing in sport, the unpredictability of the final score, is inspiring.



n° 46

NATE SILVER



(Political analyst, USA)

Because the career of the best electoral-trends analyst of the USA started from statistical analysis of Baseball.

n° 47

SAHAR EL HAWARY



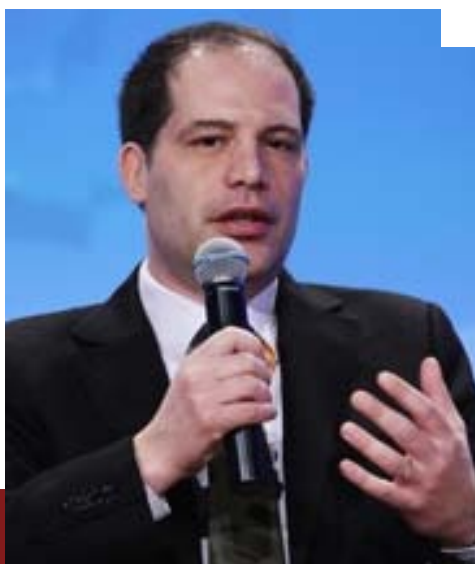
(Football Manager, Egypt)

Because of her revolutionary role in spreading and developing female football in Arabic countries.



n° 48

SIMON KUPER



(Essayist and Columnist, Netherlands)

He is to football columnists what Andres Iniesta is to Football: Each and every article written by him for the Financial Times is an invaluable source of thought in order to understand the transformations of contemporary football.

n° 49

DAVID WALSH



(Journalist, Ireland)

Because the results of the enquiry carried out by the USA Anti-Doping Agency proved he was right about Lance Armstrong.



n° 50

JOSEFA IDEM



(Rower, Italy)

Because she is smart, well-educated and engaged in spreading the values of sport activities. Her participation to 8 Olympics in a row is a unique record of sport longevity.

n° 51

DARTFISH



(Software company, USA)

Because video-motion-analysis softwares are an essential tool for the training of sports professionals.



n° 52

JIMMY BURNS



(Writer, GB)

Because “*La Roja*” is the ultimate book on the slow but inexorable rise of Spanish football on the world stage. His book is about the evolution of the style of play, from pure contentiousness to reasoning and ball possession.

n° 53

CHRISTOPHER GAFFNEY



(Geographer, USA)

Because his blog “*Hunting white elephants*” is one of the few critical voices against big Brazilian sports events, denouncing the risk of using huge public money to build up structures for the 2014 Football World Cup and the 2016 Olympics, which will later be completely useless.



n° 54

LIU XIANG



(Hurdler, China)

Because the affection provided to him by Chinese fans after his Olympic rout demonstrates that you can be a legend even if you lose.

n° 55

PABLO SANDOVAL



(Baseball player, Venezuela)

His three homeruns in the first World Series match made him a Baseball legend. Moreover, by looking like some sort of a “panda-man”, he is making San Francisco (one of the richest and most advanced cities of the world) crazy.



n° 56

ROSS TUCKER AND JONATHAN DUGAS



THE SCIENCE OF SPORT

Scientific comment and analysis of sporting performance
Ross Tucker, PhD & Jonathan Dugas, PhD

(Sports scientists, South Africa)

For the historic and scientific depth of their reflections on the Armstrong case and the fight against doping, and for the technical analysis of the main events in athletics.

n° 57

JOHN FOX



(Antropologist, USA)

Because his book *"The Ball"* is a profound historic and ethnologic research on the meaning of ball games in the various stages of human history.



n° 58

DAVE BRAILSFORD



(Technical director of British cycling and GM of Team Sky, GB)

Because he made GB the leading country in one of the few sports they didn't invent: cycling. He also contributed to the cycling mania that is affecting lots of Brits.

n° 59

BANGLADESH SURF CLUB



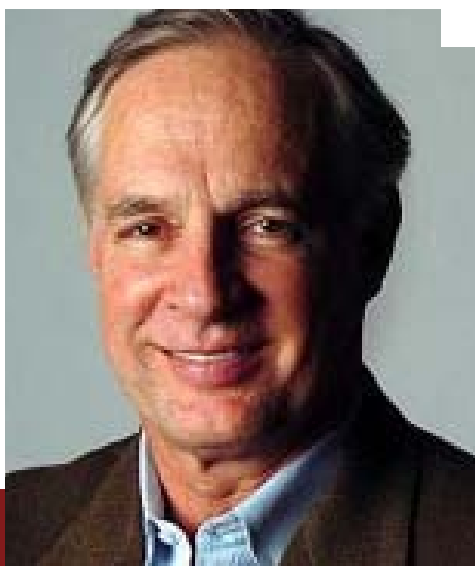
(Sports club, Bangladesh)

Because it is the first surf club born on the shores of Bangladesh, and the first with a perfect gender balance, in a traditionally male sport.



n° 60

RICK TELANDER



(Journalist and Writer, USA)

For having recalled on Sports Illustrated why Brooklyn's playground can be considered as the world birthplace of Basketball. This year, for the first time ever, a NBA team settled there.

n° 61

ADRIAN NEWEY



(Engineer and designer of Red Bull Racing, UK)

Because, after a long and successful career, he is still the man who gave Red Bull Racing the best F1 car of the last three years.



n° 62

ORLANDO CRUZ



(Boxer, Puerto Rico)

Because with his coming-out in October he became the first openly gay boxer in history, unleashing a very strong blow to the last great taboo of the sporting world.

n° 63

SIMONE FARINA



(Community-Coach of Aston Villa and former player of Gubbio, Italy)

Because with his rejection to combine the match between Cesena and Gubbio he has become a global symbol of courage and integrity.



n° 64

CYCLE-CHIC



(Blog, Denmark)

Because from the streets of Copenhagen and thanks to photography of Mikael Colville-Andersen this cultural movement is now a global phenomenon, able to make cycling and cyclists a central feature of the new urban identity, also in terms of fashion-style.

n° 65

CARMELO EZPELETA



(General Manager Dorna, Spain)

Because with the agreement that brings the organization of MotoGP and Superbike under his control, he has become the King Midas of the motorcycling race.



n° 66

BAKU



(City, Azerbaijan)

Because, thanks to the geopolitics of energy, it has become the world capital of women's volleyball. As one volleyball manager remarked: *"Azerbaijan is a very rich country and gets more and more billions of money every year, it allows us to buy any player our clubs want."* All seven teams in the league are in Baku and they all play in the same building.

n° 67

FENERBAHÇE S.K.

(Multisport Club, Turkey)



Because with the opening of the Ülker Sports Arena in January, the Turkish sports club (almost 310,000 members, with important achievements in football, basketball, volleyball, swimming and athletics) became the best club in the world in terms of sports facilities.



n° 68

VINCENZO MONTELLA' STAFF

(Contributors of the A.C. Florence coach, Italy)



Because their use of GPS system to monitor the movements of the players and finetune their specific training is the perfect case study of intellectual and scientific expertise applied to professional sports. It envisages a world in which coaches will be the central nodes of an intellectual network, athletes will be lifelong learning students, and teams will have constant relations with universities and research centers.

n° 69

OPTA SPORTS

(Data processing company, Great Britain)



Because its use of data and statistics represents the vanguard of the “*nerd-revolution*” in worldwide professional sports.

L



n° 70

KERRI WALSH

(Beach volleyball player, United States)

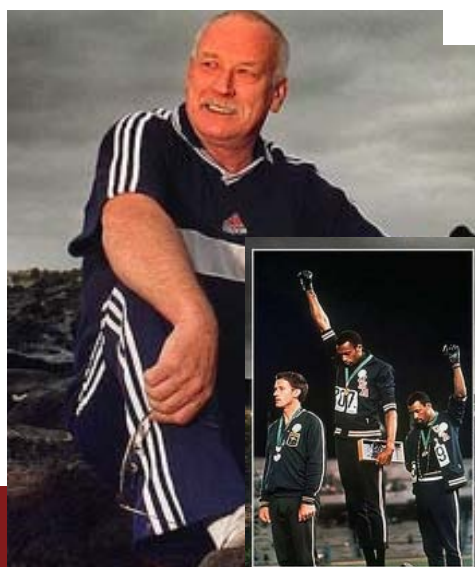


Because she won her third Olympic gold medal of her extraordinary career while she was five weeks pregnant.

L

n° 71

PETER NORMAN, IN MEMORIAM



(Runner, silver medal in the 200 meters at the 1968 Olympics in Mexico, Australia)

Because during his life the Australian authorities banned him from any public role in retaliation to the solidarity expressed towards his colleagues Tommie Smith and John Carlos, who wore the badge of the Olympic Project for Human Rights on the most famous podium ever. Last August the Australian Parliament passed an official apology to him.



n° 72

THE FOIL FENCING SCHOOL IN JESI



(Sports club, Italy)

Because the amazing achievements of its Olympic athletes have made this small Italian club one of the centers of excellence in the sports world.

n° 73

KOREA SHOOTING FEDERATION



(Sports Federation, South Korea)

Because it is another example of laboratory dedicated to the “*mass production*” of Olympic medals.



n° 74

JASON WYNYARD



(Lumberjack, New Zealand)

Because with his victory at Stihl Timbersports World Championships (the 110th world championship title in his career) he has become the living legend of the timbersports.

n° 75

EA SPORTS DIGITAL LABORATORY



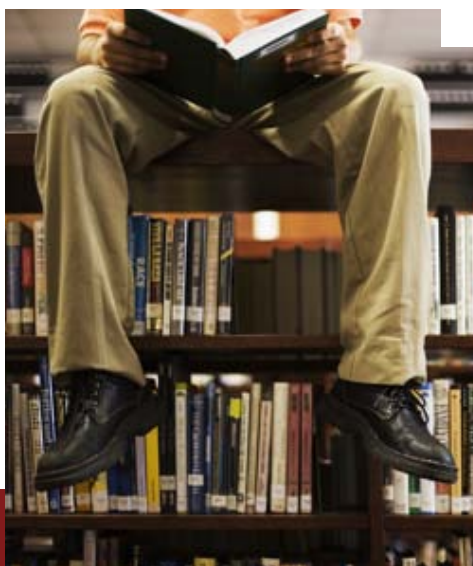
(Centre for Research and Development,
Canada)

Because it is heaven on earth for every fan of
sports video games.



n° 76

NEW BOOKS IN SPORTS



(Radio program, United States)

Because it is a unique place of distribution
and dissemination of global academic sports
culture.

n° 77

LIZ CAMBAGE & BELINDA SNELL

(Basketball players, Australia)



For the show they gave us in London, the first one slamming, and the second one with a buzzer beater from downtown.



n° 78

ALEXANDER STUBB

(Minister of Foreign Affairs, Finland)



Because there is no single politician more into sports than him, thanks to his participation in marathons and triathlon competitions. He also shows how the lack of time due to work commitments is not a good excuse for not practicing physical activity.

n° 79

GINNASTE



(Television format, Italy)

Because it is a TV format able to make children fall in love with a sport.



n° 80

SIMON CHADWICK



(Professor, Great Britain)

Because he is the best analyst of sports marketing.

n° 81

CURITIBA



(Town, Brasil)

For the plan approved last June which aims at expanding the network of bike lanes from 170 to 410 kilometres, making the city of Curitiba one of the centres of Brazilian revolution in urban extent of sports.



n° 82

GABBY DOUGLAS



(Gymnast, United States)

For her double victory in the individual competition at the London Olympics against the competitors and against racial prejudice encountered early in his career in the gym of his native Virginia Beach.

n°83

RICHIE MCCAOW



(Rugby, New Zealand)

Because he is the strongest player in the history of the All Blacks.



n°84

OTTOBOCK



(Company, Germany)

Because the development of prostheses and wheelchairs for people with disabilities also goes by supporting Paralympic athletes in competitions, as the history of this German company, global leader in this field, shows.

n° 85

BOB MUNRO



(MYSA founder, Canada)

Because the activities of the Young Sports Association in the Mathare slums of Nairobi show how sports can improve in a concrete way the life of disadvantaged communities.



n° 86

PANYEE FC



(Sports club, Thailand)

Because the story (dated 1987) shown in the spot of TMB Bank of these children of a Thai fishing village who invent "*football on lake dwelling*" is the most beautiful lesson of sport as a universal language, one which can even transcend physical barriers. What is more, the Paynee since then has gradually become one of the leading youth clubs in Thailand.

n° 87

JEROME PUGMIRE

(Journalist, France)



For his proposal to have the Tour de France going also through the banlieux.

n° 88

SOCIAL REPORTS OF FIGC & FIPAV



(Sports federations of football and volleyball, Italy)



Because the social report in which FIGC and FIPAV report their activities in details is a vital element of transparency in the management of public money given to sports.

n° 89

MICHIGAN WOLVERINES



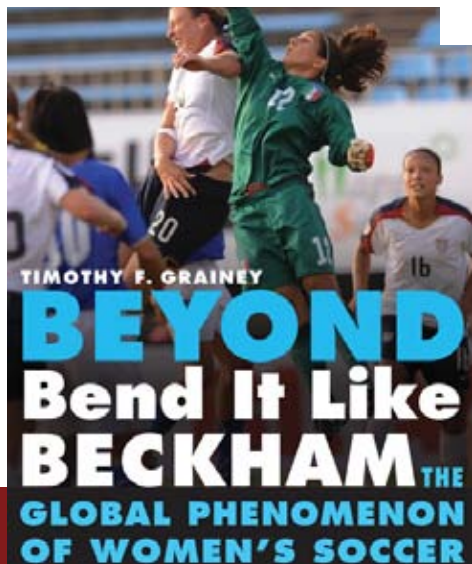
(NCAA college football team, United States)

Because with 112,179 viewers per game (data for 2011) Michigan Wolverines is the team most seen live in the world.



n° 90

TIMOTHY GRAINEY



(Journalist and sports manager, Canada)

Because in his book "*Beyond bend it like Beckham*" he has shown how women football has become a global phenomenon in less than thirty years, and the most practiced sport in the world by women.

n° 91

JAMES DORSEY



(Journalist, United States)

Because his blog "*The Turbulent World of Middle East Soccer*" continues to document impeccably the links between football and politics in the Middle East.



n° 92

FC UNITED OF MANCHESTER



(Sports club, Great Britain)

For showing how, at the management level, football in England is not only the country of billionaires, but also the one in which an amateur team owned and operated by a community of fans is able to raise a million and a half pounds through subscription to build its own stadium.

n° 93

ARY GRACA



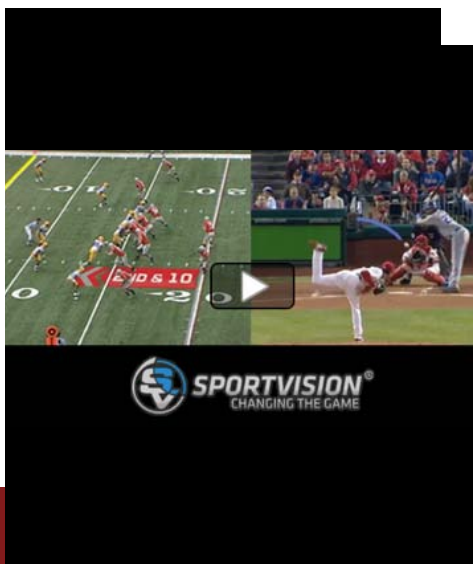
(President of the Fédération Internationale de Volleyball, Brazil)

For being elected President of the FIVB, which certifies the role of Brazil as a geopolitical power in volley. It's a tasting of what will happen in few years, when Brazil will be a geopolitical power in all sports.



n° 94

SPORTVISION



(Hi-tech company, United States)

Because it is the maximum of technological excellence applied to the broadcasting of sporting events.

n° 95

ERIC MURRAY



(Rower, New Zealand)

Because the Olympic gold medal, until not too long ago worked as laminator in a shipyard in addition to training twice a day.



n° 96

NICK HARRIS



(Journalist, England)

Because his "*Sportingintelligence.com*" is the best site of economic analysis on revenues of professional football clubs.

n° 97

DANISH INSTITUTE OF SPORT STUDIES

(Think tank, Denmark)

Because the project "*Play the game*" is one of the main places of international reflection on the culture and politics of sport.



n° 98

GREGG POPOVICH

(Coach of the San Antonio Spurs, United States)



Because some coaches are also great intellectual figures, and he is the perfect representation of this category. His organizational work made the San Antonio Spurs the only team in NBA always at the top in the last fifteen years, and the apologue of the stone that he has posted in the locker room should be the inspiration of every human community, in sports and outside. And finally, because he said he has spent the last summer reading a thick biography of Vladimir Putin.

n° 99

GREEN SPORTS ALLIANCE



(Lobby, United States)

Because it is one of the best examples of global lobbying in favour of the social responsibility of sports clubs, in particular referring to energy conservation in the management of stadiums and arenas.



n° 100

PIER PAOLO PASOLINI, IN MEMORIAM



(Poet and writer, Italy)

Because his reflections on football as a language and football as an artistic expression (in our opinion valid for all sports) represent the most authoritative source of inspiration of this list.

LO SPAZIO DELLA POLITICA.

Lo Spazio della Politica is an independent think tank based in Italy and Brussels, founded by young Italian professionals and scholars in several fields (geopolitics, public policy, economics, energy, web sciences, urban studies, cultural policy).

Lo Spazio della Politica provides a daily analysis on international and Italian politics, social affairs, arts and creativity, and global economics. It also publishes ebooks and policy papers.

Our associates closely collaborate with Limes, the leading publication in Italy on international affairs. We also collaborate with veDrò, a prominent network of Italian talents, and with several other associations, such as Societing and RENA. We organized events and panels at the European Parliament and at the Italian Parliament, as well as events and projects on technology policy together with Google, Telecom Italia and RENA. Recently we published an ebook on the future of unions and one in Spanish and Italian on the "parallel crises" in Italy and Spain. In December we will publish a collective work on "*Italy after B.*". All our publications are freely available on our website.

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