

Socialism Applied to Sports

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The whole concept of sporting events is the antithesis of socialism. The sports arena is highly competitive and only the fittest win. Ownership of victory titles is reserved only to those who work hard for them. No team has any community right or ownership of victory titles. Teams do not share victory titles. Teams who study and work hard to develop new concepts to win by defeat those teams who are satisfied with the status quo. Thus, sports represents the concepts of free enterprise. Free enterprise is also known by a word generally used with negative connotations - capitalism. Free enterprise sounds too good to be against it but capitalism can be presented in such a negative way that it is easy to be against it.

Advocates claim that socialism is superior to capitalism (a.k.a. free enterprise) because then everyone gets their fair share of the wealth - life is wonderful for all - nobody loses - nobody gets left behind - equality for all. After all, isn't sportsmanship about fairness? Isn't fairness the same thing as equality? If this is true then it seems that sports could be improved by the application of socialism. Speaking in the language of a socialist, let me illustrate how that could work.

In baseball, just because a batter is lucky or fortunate and makes a lot of base hits and home runs thus helping his team win ball games does not mean that he or his team is better than the other team. Just because a pitcher just happens to throw pitches that the other team has difficulty hitting does not imply any superiority. Clearly one team is representing greedy capitalism - working hard to get ahead. Where are points for the other team? Aren't they entitled to a share? Doesn't the other team aspire to win too? Why does one team have to win at the expense of the other team? There is a gap between teams that score points and those that do not. The socialist solution is to transfer half of the points from the team that scored the most points to the other team. It would certainly be unfair to make the less fortunate team share any points with the fortunate team - that would be welfare for the rich. This means that if the less fortunate team scored anything at all then they would win the game. But in any case they would not lose - that is the most important thing. The fortunate team is then put in its proper place - there is no place for greedy hard work. Greed can cause the fortunate team to lose. Equality for all!

Football discriminates against teams not fortunate enough to have the better players. Hard work could not have anything with the luck that a quarterback happens to throw a foot ball to a spot a catcher happens to be. It seems unfair for one team to have to struggle to overcome the good fortune of the leading team. Socialists would level the playing field by transferring half of the points scored by the fortunate team to the unfortunate team. This insures that the unfortunate team can not lose and might even win. Equality for all!

Basketball rewards those who are fortunate enough to get the ball to drop through the hoop. What about those who aspire to do this? Why should they have to work hard to develop a skill that someone else is fortunate enough to just have? What if they work

Socialism Applied to Sports

hard and still can not make good shots? Is that any reason for them to be less than equal to someone who can? When do they get their turn to be a star on the team? Where is social justice? The star player is the unfair beneficiary of the failure of so many people to match the star's performance. The star should be grateful and be required to evenly share points and salary to maintain equality for all!

In tennis an individual aspires to defeat another individual. This is cut throat capitalist competition for personal glory. The fact that one can get ahead inspires one to get ahead. A good socialist would not have such aspirations. How can there be equality if someone gets ahead? Again, the socialist solution to this greed is to share points so that no one loses. Equality for all!

Boxing is probably the most offensive example of the mean-spirited capitalist desire to win. People suffer real pain in order that someone else can be exalted as a winner. Where are the victory rewards for the suffering loser? Where is his fair share? Under socialism there would not be a loser. Equality for all!

The sport of racing cars is a particularly egregious example of how one group of people conspires to get ahead of another group of people. Using a lot of money, one team may develop a better method to make an engine to produce more power for a longer time than another team. This valuable information is not shared with the other teams. Under socialism, this team would be required to share the knowledge with the other teams so that no team would be unfairly left behind. This is economic justice. Equality for all!

Like car racing, yacht racing is another sport that is a vicious example of capitalism. A lot of money is used by one to develop knowledge of new hull and keel designs. This knowledge is not shared with the other teams thus providing the greedy team with an unfair advantage. Socialism would correct this by applying economic democracy. Equality for all!

Why should sports be limited to just those who are fortunate enough to score points for themselves or their team. Why should high point scorers be paid large salaries? Don't the less fortunate players need money too? What about the unfortunate who are denied a place in the spotlight only because they can not score as many points as someone else? It seems very unfair to judge some one based on the points they score. This is mean-spirited capitalist discrimination and leads to an unfair gap between the haves and have-nots. Under socialism, people would be recognized for their aspirations rather than greedy hard work. This would close the gap between the greedy haves and the discriminated against have-nots. Equality for all!

It would seem that the socialist method of scoring that gives the less fortunate teams and individuals an equal chance to win would generate a lot of interest by the fans. By making it easy to win without hard work, people will surely be inspired to work hard. More people will surely attend sporting events thus making everyone better off. Everybody except the greedy goes home a winner. Equality for all!

Socialism Applied to Sports

Now, speaking as a realist (after having thoroughly washed my mouth - socialist speak leaves an awful taste), perhaps there are reasons why sports has not embraced socialism. Perhaps those same reasons also apply to the rest of life. Equality is often confused with equality or fairness. Equality is one of those nice sounding trick words that can have a very different meaning from the assumption of its common definition. Equality is often defined as equality but beware of the equality being referred to. As used by socialists, equality is equality by imposed equal sharing as opposed to equal right or fairness. These two meanings of equality are hardly equal. Equality then refers to equal sharing regardless of effort while equality or fairness refers to the equal right to put forth effort to improve one's status. Equality does not imply anything about rights. Equality does not imply anything about the outcome of effort or lack there of. Equal right does not imply equal status. Democracy and free enterprise (a.k.a. capitalism) are about equal right. Socialism is about equal sharing - often imposed. Equal right and equal sharing are very different and incompatible philosophies. Confusion about this makes one vulnerable to manipulation by socialists.

Clearly, the examples I have presented are absurd in the context of sports. It amazes as well as frightens me that the same examples used outside the context of sports seem to make sense to a number of people. I never have been and never will be a player in any sport as my lack of physical ability is beyond any hope. In this domain I would clearly be the beneficiary of socialism because then I could not lose. But the price I would have to pay for not loosing is that I also could not win in other domains where I have worked hard to develop outstanding abilities. Under socialism, all I can aspire to be then, is mediocre. To aspire to anything higher would mean that I am not a good socialist and should be reformed. *That* is equality.

It is interesting to note that in socialist countries, many exceptions are made to socialist concepts when it comes to sports. As a result, the population is able to enjoy the sports arena unlike their economic arena. This hypocrisy is interesting. It makes one wonder if there is not some ulterior motive behind socialism.