

Department of History
University of Wisconsin
Madison, WI 53706

History 572, Spring Semester 1988: SportsWorld USSR

The class will examine the sports system in the USSR -- its organization, its operation, its politics, its operating assumptions, its demonstrated values.

Sports offers a unique window for the study of Soviet society. Soviets are freer in speaking about sports than about most other activities, and here one can see the contradictions of the system. The difficulties in introducing baseball, for example, illustrate perestroika and glasnost' in action; the bureaucratic infighting within the sports federations offers some insights into politics generally; and certainly there is the better publicized issue of the role of sports in Soviet foreign policy, but there is more to be said about the internal sacrifices necessary to keep up this aspect of the Soviet image.

The course should be of interest to students in history, international relations and even Russian language. The History Department is funding a subscription to **Sovetskii sport** for one year to provide material for students who read Russian -- in turn the course should enrich the vocabularies of students of Russian language.