Bale

Running Cultures

Racing in Time and Space



Running is one of the world's most widely practiced sports and recreations but until now it has intended to elude serious study outside of the natural sciences. John Bale brings the sport into the realm of the humanities by drawing on sources including literature, poetry, film, art and sculpture as well as statistics and training manuals to highlight the tensions, ambiguities and complexities that lie hidden beneath the commonplace notion of running. The text explores both local and personal, as well as communal and global aspects of running and its practitioners. It examines the streets, tracks and stadiums where athletes run, the races in which they compete, and the running relationships such as exist between the athlete and the coach, between runners and between the athlete and spectator. It discusses the importance of speed and records, how running has been used to symbolise resistance and transgression, and the extent to which it can be associated with a healthy lifestyle. Running Cultures provides new ways of seeing a familiar sporting phenomenon. it will appeal to both students and researchers with an interest in running in particular, and sport and leisure cultures more generally.

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