

Power and Politics in World Athletics

A Critical History

This book provides the first detailed history of one of the most powerful international sport organisations, the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF), since 2019 known as World Athletics. The book critically assesses the internal power relations within the IAAF by focusing on the IAAF leadership. Based on extensive archival research, *Power and Politics in World Athletics* offers a nuanced analysis of the institutionalised strategies that developed as a reflection of the IAAF's interests and aims to create a broader understanding of the global sport system. With only six presidents in over a century of existence, the IAAF's leaders had profound impacts on other international institutions, national stakeholders and sporting participants. Through four sections, the book identifies various key turning points in the history of the governing body of athletics, and explores the IAAF's foundation, the policies of past IAAF presidents, and controversial issues such as doping, corruption and manipulation through a socio-historical lens. The book shows that while anyone could take part in athletics, policies enacted by each president served to ostracize those groups who did not fit into the IAAF's vision of an equal playing field. This book is essential reading for anyone with an interest in sport history, sport sociology, the politics of sport, sport management, sport governance, or international organisations.

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