
Abstract
This thesis examines the rise of mainstream soccer in the United States from 1960 to 2005 with a national, a regional (Oklahoma), and then a local (Edmond, OK) focus. It argues between 1960 to 2005 conservative-leaning capitalists and politicians redefined mainstream soccer as a commercial investment aimed not to truly popularize the international sport in the United States, but to Americanize it with the mindset of producing capital for them. For example: Alan Rothenberg, a lawyer who conducted the soccer tournament in the 1984 Olympics and coordinated the 1994 World Cup in the United States, established the most recent professional soccer league, Major League Soccer, as a single-entity to promote more revenue earning for the investors. Between 2002 and 2005, MLS considered Edmond, Oklahoma, as a potential new location for an expansion team with a desire to promote soccer in the area and capitalize on the strong youth presence of the sport. Even though the attempt failed, the Oklahoma Regents for Higher Education approved funding to the University of Central Oklahoma for renovations to the school's football field Wantland Stadium, which the school needed for the possible expansion club.

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The rise of compelling American names in the game all playing together in a top-flight league helped to increase the profile of the sport, and attendances topping 10,000 were not at all uncommon. The Fall River Marksmen take on Bethlehem Steel in an ASL match. The golden age of American soccer fell victim to the power struggles of an emerging landscape and a volatile global economy. Upturned by its own might, the sport grew far too quickly to an unsustainable size — it collapsed under the weight of its own ambition like a young star, flushed into the vacuum by a world-wide economic implosion. Crossbar Soccer. A collection of stories about the beautiful game from North… Follow. 15. Americanizing the beautiful game During its tumultuous tenure from 1968 to 1984, the North American Soccer League (NASL) likewise attempted to Americanize the professional soccer league by altering the rules of the game and limiting its reliance on foreign players. The rules. Downloaded By: [University of California, Berkeley] At: 01:35 26 October 2010. Playing America the beautiful: the San Francisco Soccer Football League (SFSFL) The historical efforts to Americanize soccer in the United States appear to be connected to both reducing foreign influence on the game while espousing a commercialized sport ethic. The North American Soccer League (NASL) is a professional men's soccer league with ten teams in the United States and Canada. It is sanctioned by the United States Soccer Federation (U.S. Soccer) as the Division II league in the American league system, under Major League Soccer (MLS) and above USL PRO. The league is named for, but not affiliated with, the original North American Soccer League. The modern NASL was founded in 2009, and began play in 2011. Increasing numbers of Americans, having played the game in their youth, are now avid spectators. The annual ESPN sports poll has shown soccer as the fourth most popular team sport in the United States every year since overtaking hockey in 2006;[36] as of 2011, 8.2% of Americans rank soccer as their favorite sport (compared to 3.8% for hockey).[37] A 2012 Harris Interactive poll showed soccer to be the fifth favorite team sport, with 2% of Americans ranking soccer as their favorite (compared to 5% for hockey).[38] A 2011 ESPN sports poll ranked soccer as the second most popular sport in the co