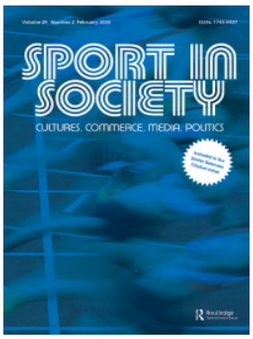

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Sport in Society
Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics

ISSN: 1743-0437 (Print) 1743-0445 (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/fcss20

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To cite this article: David Forrest (2026) These sporting lives: David Storey, Barry Hines, and the case of the author-athlete, Sport in Society, 29:2, 310-326, DOI: 10.1080/17430437.2025.2450799

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2025.2450799

Published online: 09 Jan 2025.

SPORT IN SOCIETY
2026, VOL. 29, NO. 2, 310–326
https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2025.2450799

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These sporting lives: David Storey, Barry Hines, and the case of the author-athlete

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ABSTRACT

This article introduces the concept of the 'author-athlete' as a mechanism for examining the sporting narratives produced by authors who have experienced high level sport. This concept is examined through the careers of David Storey and Barry Hines, two authors from Yorkshire who were prominent in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s and who turned to writing after careers in Rugby League and football respectively. The article draws on archival material alongside analyses of both writers' sporting narratives to identify common features and to reflect on the particular qualities of sporting narratives produced by ex-athletes, establishing a paradigm to consider the convergence of experiential and creative impulses that is created by this dynamic. In the case of Hines and Storey, it is argued that the concept of the author-athlete enables an understanding to emerge of the ways in which essentialist narratives of Northern sporting heroism and masculinity can be challenged.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 29 August 2023
Accepted 7 December 2024

KEYWORDS
This sporting life; Kes; author-athletes; the North of England; sport and class; sport and art

David Storey and Barry Hines were born six years apart and grew up just 15 miles from each other in the Lupset estate of Wakefield and the small village of Hoyland Common in Barnsley, respectively. Both came of age as writers in the 1960s, with Storey's novel (1960) and subsequent film adaptation *This Sporting Life* (1963), and Hines's *A Kestrel for a Knave* (1968), filmed as *Kes* (1969), landmarks of British working-class culture. Storey would later win the Booker Prize for *Saville* (1976) while Hines won a BAFTA for *Threads* in 1984. Both men died after living with dementia: Hines in 2016, and Storey in 2017.

Storey worked primarily as a playwright and novelist, while Hines wrote novels alongside television plays and films, and both are known for their collaborations with prominent British directors (Lindsay Anderson and Ken Loach, respectively). Their work was informed by shared geographical, socio-economic, and educational reference points: they were the sons of miners, were raised in the working-class West Riding of Yorkshire, England's largest county; and both passed the Eleven Plus, with Storey attending Queen Elizabeth Grammar School in Wakefield, and Hines Ecclesfield Grammar School, before leaving Yorkshire for Higher Education Storey for London's Slade School of Fine Art, Hines for Loughborough University, where he trained to be a PE teacher. These elements of background feature

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prominently throughout their oeuvres, as similar experiences did for a generation of young working-class, socially mobile artists, but Hines and Storey are distinctive for the shared emphasis on sport in their work, and throughout their lives. It is this focus that is the concern of this article, which argues that both writers' artistic and athletic identities were bound up with similarly formative discourses of class and region. In so doing, Hines and Storey's sporting oeuvres - viewed in the light of archival sources - are positioned as valuable resources to critically examine the ways in which Northern, and more specifically, Yorkshire narratives of sport are perpetuated.

Storey played Rugby Union at school, and upon leaving eschewed the opportunity to study Geography at Reading University in favour of an art course at the local college in Wakefield. In need of financial resources to sustain himself, Storey had a successful trial at Leeds Rugby League club, and played for the A side, signing a 14-year contract. While this dalliance with professional sport was short lived, with Storey ultimately pursuing his career as an artist at the Slade, the experience was an indelible one.

Hines played football rather than rugby and excelled at school. He represented England Grammar School Boys in 1957 and was scouted by Manchester United, Wolverhampton Wanderers, Huddersfield Town, and Barnsley, playing for the latter's 'A' side before beginning his studies at Loughborough University.At Loughborough Hines was in the same side as Bob Wilson, who would go onto play for Arsenal and Scotland, and while teaching in London in the early 1960s played for Crawley Town. Upon his return to the North he signed for Stocksbridge Works, playing there until the 1963-1964 season (Nannestad 2016).

Many of Hines's early writings concern football, including his undergraduate dissertation, 'The Flight of the Hawk', a creative work inspired by his own football career. This work evolved into his first novel, *The Blinder* (1966), while arguably the most famous scene in *Kes/Kestrel for a Knave* depicts a football match led by the narcissistic, bullying, PE teacher, Mr Sugden (played in the film by one of Hines's fellow teachers and a semi professional wrestler, Brian Glover). Hines's radio play, *Continental Size Six* (1967) concerns the impact of obsessive football fandom on a marriage, and his BBC 'Centre Play', *Two Men from Derby* (1976), drew on his grandparents' relationship as the titular scouts from Derby County visit the home of a talented footballer who never appears because he is in the pub, while his wife subtly but movingly reveals the extent of her domestic servitude. In 1977 Hines embarked on a commission to write a film entitled *Injury Time* (also known as *Tom Kite*), which charts the rise and fall of a George Best-like figure, Tom Quinn, who is exiled to the National American Soccer League (NASL). Hines's script explored the depression experienced by the central character and is highly critical of the perceived commodification of the sport in the United States, a stance which put Hines at odds with the proposed film's producer and director, who were attempting to curry favour with NASL's commercial partners. Hines returned to the sport again in the early 1990s with two television plays, *Shooting Stars* (1990), about the kidnap of a Manchester City player by poverty stricken Liverpudlians, and *Born Kicking* (1992), about a female footballer who plays for a men's team. Hines's unpublished final work, *Springfield Stars*, is set in the 1920s against the backdrop of the general strike and follows the fortunes of a workers' football team, and the child of a miner who is scouted by Herbert Chapman's Arsenal side. Hines's football works are united by a concern with the dehumanising effects of sporting commercialism, and the apparent divisions between academic, artistic and athletic impulses. The Hinesian footballer is therefore intellectually gifted, class conscious, and highly skilled on the pitch.

Hines's *The Blinder* was seen by Peter Stead as 'football's response' (Stead 2013, 245) to Storey's debut novel, *This Sporting Life* (1960) - described by Richard Holt as 'probably the most successful novel to deal with the question of sport and Northern identity' (Holt 1996, 157). The narrative concerns Arthur Machin (Frank [played by Richard Harris] in the film) and charts his rise from aspirational miner to star rugby league player, and his doomed affair with his landlady, the widowed Mrs Hammond (played by Rachel Roberts in the film). Recurring themes and characters stretch across Storey's plays and novels with sport one of his most common binding mechanisms. Malcolm Pittock notes that 'the symbiotic relationship between Storey's drama and fiction suggests that each provided alternative ways of articulating his experience', and thus the intense first person narration of *This Sporting Life* (on page and screen) contrasts productively with the ensemble of *The Changing Room*, first performed at The Royal Court in 1971, which depicts the changing room rituals of a Yorkshire rugby league team, before, during and after an offstage game (Pittock 1998, 198). Similarly, *Present Times* (1984) concerns an ex-rugby league star, Attercliffe, who has lost his job as a pundit, struggles to cope with his ex-wife's mental illness and the rebellious behaviour of his children, and writes a play, *Players*, which bears a close resemblance to *The Changing Room*. Storey moves away from rugby in the 1973 novel *A Temporary Life* where an ex-professional boxer teaches art and tries to come to terms with his wife's long-term incarceration in a mental hospital. While Storey himself was not a boxer he remarked of the novel's protagonist, Freestone, 'he's rather a boxer in the way that I was a footballer. He boxed for several years but found the audience was beginning to enjoy his defeats more than he was, so he opted out'; while we will go onto explore Storey's own experience of sport in more detail, this is a succinct summation of all Storey's sporting narratives (Hubbard 1972, 33). He is concerned with the contrast between 'the world of sport—with its clear rules and its unambiguous outcomes' (Hutchings 1987, 36), and the complexity of the world beyond. This is explored particularly in his most autobiographical work, *Saville* (1976), with the novel's central character a depressed grammar school boy, aspirant poet, and excellent rugby player, who is in existential conflict with the burdens of his working-class background. Storey's sports stories, like all his works, involve some expression of '[p]sychic disintegration, mental collapse, deep spiritual malaise, and 'madness' ', which bring into sharp focus his 'constantly reiterated theme […] of the divided self' (Stinson 1977, 132). This was manifested acutely in his personal life: '[t]hose two years in the north of England during which I attempted to carry out this dual role - of a young and very adolescent painter, and of a professional and equally adolescent footballer - were the unhappiest years of my life' (Storey 1972, 63).

These regional narratives of working-class sporting life are united by an unerring focus on the impossible melancholy of the divided sporting subject, a preoccupation that clearly emerges from Storey's own experience. Storey is remarkably frank about his struggle with mental illness, and the role of sport within it, and as early as 1960 he reflected on the 'queer duality' of his 'life'; 'the physical, muscular demands of my body, and its internal, spiritual necessities', which 'drove him to frenzy', 'spending hours alone at the tops of hills and slag heaps trying to shake off the feelings of depression' (Storey 1960a, 4). His memoir, published posthumously in 2021, provides further detail of his prolonged experience of mental illness, and its connection to sport. Storey recalls that he would 'play matches in a state of despair so profound that at times, because of my inertia, I calculated I was running the risk of being killed':

> It was on one such occasion, the ball coming loose, that instinct told me that, if I picked it up, the disposition of the surrounding players would result in my head being kicked in.
>
> The older player with whom I was partnered bent, took the ball and, as he stooped, was kicked in the mouth.
>
> His lips and his nose were a bloodied pulp. Without a moment's hesitation he turned to me. Through the blood, he said explicitly, 'You cunt!'
>
> The charge of cowardice lay with me for a year, looking for atonement. (Storey 2021, 95)

This visceral feeling of guilt, with Storey's inner conflict violently laid bare, would be 'the trigger for writing *This Sporting Life*' (Courtney 2008). The central, stimulating image of the novel (and the film) would become the bloodied face of Machin, a character 'hacked out' of Storey's inner conflict, 'isolating that half of my temperament, which confused and frightened me the most and giving it, I hoped, accommodation and understanding' (Storey 1963b, 9).

Storey's memoir shows evidence that his twinned experience of sport and depression informed a wider view of athletic pursuits. He describes seeing Sebastian Coe and Steve Ovett losing a race to Steve Cram in 1985, where he felt that Coe had 'given up two hundred metres from the line' (2021, 391). In his post-race interview 'his dark eyes, normally full of wry animation, gazed out, it seemed, from the back of his skull'; he 'was visibly, psychically assaulted, because his trainer was also his father [and] defeat had, for him, a profounder, certainly more complex connotation' (ibid). The brutal sense of sporting denouement and the impossibility of an 'athlete searching for his own return' is then connected back to Storey's own life as he is once more hospitalised: 'looking for help for a disability that, no doubt, I would suffer for the rest of my life' (Ibid.).

On the surface, Storey's focus on madness and mental distress in his fiction, and his frequent narrativisation of his own direct experience of mental illness in interviews, broadcasts, articles, and his memoir, suggests a point of distinction from Hines. It is true that Hines never explicitly drew reference to his own mental health, but his footballing protagonists are characterised by experiences of profound alienation and melancholy. In *Injury Time* when Tom is substituted by his conservative manager for showboating, 'arrogant buoyancy dissolves' as he enters the changing room alone, where he is shown to be 'crying'. Hines's stage directions suggest the scene should show 'him sitting there in the water, miserable, listening to the crowd's reactions to the game outside' (Hines n.d., 52). In *Born Kicking,* Roxy's debut in front 'of 40000 fans', should, according to Hines 'be shot in an impressionistic, fragmented way', with 'a feeling of isolation' and overall 'mood' that is 'tense and anxious'. Despite Roxy's sporting prowess, Hines is keen that her displacement - reflected in *Born Kicking* most obviously through her gender, but also her academic identity - is the most prominent element of the scene (Hines 1992, 56). Sporting figures who are caught, irreconcilably, between two worlds abound across both writers' work, and like Storey, Hines identified this in terms of a mind-body split exacerbated by class and educational displacement, writing in the introduction to his undergraduate dissertation that:

> I am deeply concerned and interested in the relationship between the physical and mental sides of man, believing that the two are equally important for the full development of personality. Too often I sense a deep rift between these two aspects […] (Hines 1964, no page numbers).

Despite these recurring similarities, there is little to suggest the two had a developed relationship, although Hines was a deep admirer of Storey's, describing *This Sporting Life* as his 'favourite Yorkshire book' (Hines 2008, 8). Beyond sport and education, there are marked aesthetic distinctions between the two authors' work, with Storey's naturalistic plays and the gothic stylisation of novels such as *Radcliffe* (1963) contrasting sharply with Hines's poetic realist style, twinned with a didacticism that leaves readers and viewers in no doubt as to his political sympathies. Nevertheless, it is in their descriptions of sport that Hines's and Storey's work appears remarkably similar and while the pitch can be a site of alienation it is, for both writers, also one of transcendental beauty. In *The Blinder* 'Lennie pivoted on his left leg and swung his right, pointing his foot like a ballet dancer' (Hines [1966] 1996, 12), while in the stage directions of *This Sporting Life* Storey has Frank finding freedom after 'his intense fighting', describing 'a feeling of space, and free-running, lyrical, as he runs down the centre of the field' (Storey 1961, 110).

Sport and art

These descriptions of sporting prowess and freedom reflect both writers' view of the artistic potentials of sport. Although Storey chiefly associated his time playing rugby with depression, he recalls a 'game played in pouring rain on a pitch that seemed to be 15 feet deep in mud [his] relations with the team […] at their worst', when 'suddenly something almost spiritual happened. The players were taken over by the identity that was the team. We were genuinely transported' (Duffy 1973, 69). Such moments transcend language, and the notion that sport merely operates as a representative mechanism to illuminate wider elements of society. In observing the athlete, Storey was 'moved by someone who feels that life is so important that he is driven to live it at the extreme' (Ibid.) such that the execution of athletic excellence was an end in itself: 'a runner running is as beautiful as an actor acting. It really is a beautiful sight. Sport is almost the wrong word for it. I think it is an art' (Hubbard 1972, 31). Storey's isolation of running suggests that his view of sport as art was textured enough to accommodate the specific aesthetic qualities of multiple disciplines. As his report for *The Observer* on the 1960 Rugby League Challenge Cup final shows, he 'noted a real art to [Wakefield] Trinity's style of play', one that was born from 'a parochial, singular skill, not universal' as in 'soccer' where pleasure comes from 'identification; of actually seeing the creation of the game, of censuring it or opposing it; or of offering verbal alternatives yourself. […] [t]he thing's done in Rugby League before you've time to think or see' (Storey 1960, no page numbers).

Hines's dissertation offers a clear articulation of his own view of sport's artistic possibilities through the musings of his narrator, Jack:

> Then there was the Town. Down there it was different, not as much time as when you were playing, they didn't like you being clever, they wanted footballers not music hall turns. You were in a team, they didn't want anybody slowing it down. 'Move it, Move it', they shouted from the line, they were too busy playing fast, too busy making money to notice the shifting patterns on the field, to watch the ebb and flow of the play, the running, the flight of the ball through the air, or to relish a pass which ran swiftly across the turf cutting sharp clean into the defence. (Hines 1964, no page numbers)

Here the commercial imperatives of 'the Town' impede the potential to appreciate the sport for its aesthetic qualities, a theme developed in *Injury Time* where Tom is only able

to express himself playing for a smaller club which develops 'cultured footballers', and plays 'open football'. Tom is stifled when he signs for a more successful club whose 'natural style is containment, meticulously worked out moves and brilliant organisation. Improvisation does not come into it' (Hines n.d., 3). Later in 'Flight of the Hawk', Jack, a proxy for the student Hines, imagines an alternative history where the Ancient Greeks had discovered football, where 'they'd have had judges and awarded prizes for ball control and t'way you moved with it'; 'they'd have wanted more than crunchers in their games, they'd have expected t'same kind of responses as they felt in't theatre and from poetry and music' (Hines 1964, no page numbers). Hines conceives a world where football is spoken about in the same breath as 'music, drama, wrestling, philosophy, athletics, maths […] a real mixture, not cutting one thing off from another' (Ibid.). While these embryonic philosophical positions were being developed in Hines's student writing, they were later applied in his career as a PE teacher in Barnsley, as he recalls the perception that: '[t]o do PE you must be thick […] It's a class thing. You'd never hear anyone denigrating ballet dancers […] If I see somebody, a footballer, or a cricketer, or a rugby player, and they do something that's graceful and so skillful, to me that's intelligent' (Anonymous 1996).

Both writers' identification of the artistic potential of sport is usefully contextualised through reference to Stephen Mumford's arguments that sport's combination of 'competition, indeterminism, and emergence' (Mumford 2019, 732) creates the conditions for particular aesthetic episodes within the sporting act. Here it is the 'competition' which creates 'aesthetic value' and the unique 'sporting aesthetic […] is produced most when the aim is not to produce it' (Ibid., 725). Thus, Storey's lyrical experience of 'emergent holism' (Ibid.: 724) on the rugby pitch, and Hines's appreciation of the flighted pass in football, are distinctive because they are poetic moments that occur within the frame of competition; enabled by, not separate from it. This sense of beauty is intimately connected to conflict and struggle, producing a compelling paradox which lies at the heart of the author-athlete's artistic project.

Despite the critical nature of their accounts of the sporting life, then these examples show that Hines' and Storey's author-athlete perspectives enabled an aesthetic appreciation of sport that characterised their hope that that itcould be redeemed. This works against William Hutchings's reading of Storey, which views *This Sporting Life* alongside Alan Sillitoe's *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* (1959/1962). Hutchings argues that despite the lyrical freedom they experience, 'the athletes in both novels soon find that they themselves—and, indeed, their respective sports as well—have been expropriated by the very same 'establishment' that they rail against' (Hutchings 1987, 37). The difference however is that unlike Storey (and Hines), Sillitoe had 'never practised any kind of sport', believing that 'sport only serves to enslave the mind and to enslave the body' (Sillitoe 1975, 84). In contrast, Hines's and Storey's direct participation in sport ensures that their sporting oeuvres are defined by complexity and ambivalence. Thisresists the totalising tendency (represented by Sillitoe) to view sport as a symbolic receptacle, as their narratives function instead as textured accounts of lived experience in and of sport. As Jeffrey Hill notes of *This Sporting Life* (both the film and the novel), 'there is an attempt to recreate the physical as the text reaches into the sensuous aspects of sport', and '[u]nlike an 'objective' academic study, *This Sporting Life* does not stand outside its subject. Sport and pain are not analyzed but described in an existential statement of what it is like to be in the sporting life' (Hill 2005, 412). Similarly, Lee McGowan identifies that *The Blinder*'s 'embrace of Hines's own experience of playing'

imbues the novel 'with a deep appreciation of football' (McGowan 2020, 26), and Peter Shepherd positions *Two Men from Derby*'s credibility in terms of Hines's 'insider understanding having worked in mining and football' (Shepherd 1993, vii).

Sport from the inside

On one level then, these insider accounts of sporting experience enable a sense of meticulous, authenticating realism. As John Russell Taylor argues, Storey's work as a 'tent-erector and a professional footballer' is just as visible in his oeuvre 'as his periods as an art student and as a teacher', such that his 'fine-spun human drama' is 'inextricably' entangled in 'a documentary depiction of the milieu' (Russell Taylor 1974, 23). Similarly, In *This Sporting Life*, Storey's connections in the game were critical to its credibility as a realist account of sport, with the film 'making use of Wakefield Trinity's players and coaching staff' and using footage of Trinity in the 1963 Challenge Cup for some of its action sequences (Collins 2017). Richard Harris, himself an ex-rugby player, was so ensconced in the social lives of the film's rugby extras that he was made an honorary chairman of Trinity (Courtney 2008), having proven himself as a player and a drinker, while Storey ensured that the cast of *The Changing Room* were trained 'under the tutelage of Bev Risman', who had played for England and the British Lions (Duffy 1973, 66).

Like Storey, Hines drew on his professional networks to authenticate the sporting elements of his work; he recruited boys that he had coached for the football scenes in *Kes*, and, as mentioned, Brian Glover, his friend and fellow PE teacher. In researching *Injury Time*, Hines's archive reveals that his contemporary at Loughborough, Allen Wade (who by 1977 was technical director the English FA), wrote to Rodney Marsh to set up a meeting between the writer, Marsh and his friend George Best, whose experience of the NASL matched Tom Quinn's (Forrest and Vice 2018, 93). Hines also drew on his contacts to travel to watch the New York Cosmos play, and to interview Geoff Barnett of the Minnesota Kicks on the specifics of American soccer and the life of a British footballer in the NASL.

In these cases, the resulting artworks stand as documentary records of a life lived *in* sport, and in doing so illuminate the wider elements of the sporting life. Ian Nannestad notes that *The Blinder*'s value as a historical source is found in 'the vivid descriptions of match play, which occasionally verge on the poetic, and the exploration of contemporary issues in football, a combination of artistic and documentary truth' (2016, 22). More broadly, however, these narratives enable, in the words of Brian Glanville, the 'gap to be bridged' between 'serious writers' and 'professional sport' (Glanville 1960, 80). Glanville - whose writing on the relationships between formal education and football Hines had read as part of the *Injury Time* project - was similarly engaged in the pursuit of an 'idiom' 'which [would] throw a bridge across the two cultures', and his novel *The Rise of Gerry Logan* (1963) can be seen alongside *The Blinder* and *This Sporting Life* as an attempt to explore the inner world of a male athlete (Glanville 1965, 84). The dynamic between Glanville's narrator and Logan mirrors the author's relationship with Danny Blanchflower, but while the authorial reference point is enmeshed within the lived experiences of the writer and the subject, it is still one removed from the direct account of the sporting life found in Hines' and Storey's work. In his review of *This Sporting Life*, Glanville describes Storey as "the real thing', a Rugby League pro. from a Yorkshire mining family', and it is this experience that enables him to bypass 'one of the chief difficulties of this sort of writing'. (Glanville 1960, 81) For Glanville,

> [s]port itself can ultimately only be material for entertainment, however skilful. The drama of an athlete's life takes place only marginally in the ring or on the football field. To fill out the picture, one must know - and have lived - his family background, his father and mother, his job, his friends, his women. (Ibid.)

The sporting 'novel rings…true' because of the author's lived experience of sport, and it is how sport is contextualized as part of a wider life (and lives) that it is elevated to the status of art (ibid.).

Hines and Storey emerge in the 1960s as author-athletes who were able to move beyond 'distanced', journalistic and/or biographical/autobiographical narratives of sporting life through their authentic assertion of the place of sport both as it is viscerally felt, and as it is situated within a wider social and cultural fabric. As such, these 'literary' author-athlete narratives stand in contrast to what Stephen Carl Arch terms 'the vast majority of 'classic' sports literature', which is 'written by outsiders who are often compelled to subordinate sport to other concerns such as morality, politics, or social change' (Carl Arch 2019, 772-773) - again, unlike in the work of Hines and Storey, what is missing from these accounts is the 'felt experience of sport' (Ibid, 774).

Sport written from the inside offers the means by which the (inner) sporting life is illuminated, and this has the potential to position sport as a mechanism to interrogate other elements of identity, with class, region and gender most immediately relevant to Storey's and Hines's work. To return to Holt's claim, if '*This Sporting Life* is probably the most successful novel to deal with the question of sport and Northern identity', we might begin to suggest that Hines's and Storey's work is not only viewed through the lens of their athletic endeavors but through their shared regional and class identities (1996, 157). As Stephen Wagg and Dave Russell argue, sport has been one of the central means by which narratives of Northern English identity have circulated, with an indelible and symbiotic connection to working-class culture underpinning sporting values of 'physical hardness and bravery, a cultural expression of the economic realities that many faced in their daily occupation' (Wagg & Russell 2010a, xiii). Athletes, teams, fans, operate as 'texts' which communicate and inculcate regional identity (Ibid, xv), which in turn contribute to wider 'mytho-poetic positions irrespective of their detailed realities - the hellish industrial North, for example, or the pastoral South' (Shields 1991, 215). Sport is central to the narrative 'spatialisation' (ibid.) of England, and as Holt argues, this is felt most keenly in the construction of the Northern sporting hero:

> The composite Northern hero was a tough competitor with a strong work ethic, not always a great stylist but highly effective; grit and competitiveness were very important as well as a debunking, blunt sense of humour that showed skill in dialect rather than received pronunciation. (Holt 1996, 161)

Northern mythmaking

Storey and Hines were concerned with exposing these myths of regional sporting heroism and identity. They were instead drawn to stylists; individuals, those who felt exiled from their community, prone to interiority, and willing to probe and illuminate the futility and instrumentalism of competition. As Stephen Wagg (2010) has argued, Northern sporting myths are most readily circulated and re-circulated in Yorkshire sporting narratives, most vividly through Yorkshire County Cricket Club, wherein particular and narrow codes of

masculinity are inscribed. More recently, this has been understood through the lens of racial exclusion, with the Yorkshire sporting myth operating as a proxy for 'a fixed breed of white masculinity' (Fletcher 2012, 227), a sentiment felt most acutely in Azeem Rafiq's startling disclosures of racial abuse at the county. In response, defensive staff wrote to *The Daily Telegraph* to say that Rafiq's experience was a consequence of his not sharing 'White Rose Values', suggesting the continuation of a hegemonic, reductive and exclusionary narrative of Yorkshire sporting identity (Morgan 2021).

In this contemporary context, Storey's and Hines's author-athlete narratives need to be viewed for what they have to say about or more precisely *against* these essentialist myths of regional identity. To return to the recurring feature of both men's work, the attempts to identify and examine a split between competing intellectual and sporting impulses can be traced through Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* (Hoggart, [2009] 1957), both a seminal text of cultural studies and of Yorkshire working-class life. Most obviously, Storey and Hines can be read in line with Hoggart's central notion of the 'uprooted and anxious working-class scholarship boy', caught between two social worlds, and never able to find accommodation in either (Hoggart [2009] 1957, 263). As Hughson, Inglis, and Free argue, Hoggart's reliance on binaries to conceptualize notions of community and exile, positions sport - and we might argue Yorkshire working-class sport - in terms of 'a general notion of community rather than a particularistic understanding of working class community', one which is either participated in fully or departed from unambiguously, its cultural significance all too easily imagined in terms of collective feeling rather than as a site of possible alienation and rupture (Hughson 2005, 36). Hines's and Storey's accounts of sport complicate Hoggart's binary. Their participation in sport compounds their social and cultural exile, making its shape triadic. The third component is the sports team, a site which further enforces rigid codes of competitive and homogenous working-class masculinity, and exacerbates the displacement engendered by the home and the grammar school.

Storey's rugby career brings this into focus acutely. When, under the encouragement of his father, he accepted the offer from Leeds Rugby League, and his 'signing was announced in the local paper […]' he was told by 'the deputy headmaster' at his former school that, he 'had ignominiously 'let [the school] down" (Storey 2021, 88). Storey found no solace in the other domains of his life. For example, when later dividing his time between the Slade in London and his rugby playing in Leeds he describes himself as the 'artist swanning in for matches', while at art school he was 'seen as a bit of an oaf' (Campbell 2004). Meanwhile, his father would return from the pit 'each day […] exhausted, shattered by fatigue', to find his son, 'a young man ideally physically equipped to do the job which now left him totally prostrated - painting a picture of flowers, or writing a poem about a cloud […] [t]here was […] no hope of reconciliation' (Storey 1972, 65). These intractable tensions across education, sport, and art find manifestation in *A Temporary Life* when the boxer-turned-artist, Freestone, finds common ground with the parents of his mentally ill wife as he reveals that his earlier career meant that he, like them, eschewed further education: "[w]e're both in the same boat, it seems', I tell her. 'Us on the outside, without it, level-headed; Yvonne, who's had it, on the inside, fastened up" (Storey 1973, 59), but moments later art, too, is presented as an affliction, as Yvonne's mother asks about Freestone's life after boxing: '[a]nd then you were an artist, after that? I've always been an artist, I suppose', I tell her. 'It's like having a club-foot. However hard you try, you can never quite disguise it" (Storey 1973, 60).

Hines's experience of displacement was similarly multifaceted; he was a reluctant grammar schoolboy, who resented being taken away from his friends, and found the curriculum 'completely irrelevant to my life' (Hines and Lundy n.d.). Sport was to provide his only salvation, keeping him 'sane' and making school 'tolerable' (Ibid.). He describes the feeling of 'being excluded' as something he 'felt very strongly' as a child, when, every year, his local working-men's club went on their summer trip. Hines's father was not a member, and as a child Hines 'couldn't understand why me dad didn't go for a pint like everybody else'. He later concluded that his father was teetotal - and thus excluded from this communal activity - because of the heavy drinking of his grandfather, 'a brilliant footballer' who 'spent most of his money and booze and had no feeling for his wife', who 'spent all her life bringing up children, nine of them' (Jenkins n.d.). In *Two Men from Derby*, Freda, a cipher for Hines's long-suffering grandmother, responds angrily to the football scouts' claims that working-class men find life harder than their wives: 'at least when you've finished your shift you've finished for the day. I've never done. And it'll get worse' (Hines [1976] 1993, 18). She wants her husband to play professional football not for the glamour or prestige but because 'I want to go somewhere, and do summat with my life […] And he wouldn't be able to go out drinking as much, would he, if he was a footballer?' (Ibid, 21).

Again, sport is not an unambiguous means of escape or source of community, it is instead a site of rupture which is enmeshed within the private struggles of working-class life. In a similar manner, although Hines was a well-regarded junior athlete, even his successes were tainted by a feeling of isolation. What should have been the highpoint of his footballing career, representing his country in the FA Schools Week, was marked by feelings of loss and difference as he encountered his teammates, who were predominantly middle-class: '[t]hey were so articulate and so assured. They had a collective air of massive superiority that staggered me. And suddenly I didn't want to talk. I was embarrassed by my clothes. I was a Northern Herbert in yellow socks and bumpers' (Hines 2009, 89).

Rather than offering him a linear path to social mobility and individual success, Hines's sporting achievements deepened his sense of alienation; he 'was seeing the class system at work close-up' and realising his confused place within it. Hines's disconnection from his middle-class teammates was only partially remedied when he joined them on the pitch, 'the only place where I could match them', but tellingly they 'lacked the urgency and determination of the working-class grammar schoolboys' (ibid.).

Hines's description of himself as 'a decent player' who 'would have been a lot better if the only alternative had been working all three shifts down the pit, like my dad' again speaks to the complex feelings of displacement that he experienced as a working-class grammar schoolboy, athlete and nascent writer (Hines 2009: 87). Again, these found articulation in his work from 'Flight of the Hawk' onwards, typically through the talented football player and scholar who is torn between the hopes of the father (football career), and those of the mother (education). Jack Barlow's mother warns him that 'you'll be better off going to University and getting a degree', in contrast to his father who is 'always edging him to sign on' as a footballer (Hines 1964, no page numbers). Later, Barlow walks around his empty classroom mulling over the choice between football or academia and notes of his mother that 'this was what she was always wanting him to try hard at' but 'she just had this vague notion of school' (1964, no page numbers). In *Injury Time*, Tom's mother speculates that he might 'get to Oxford or Cambridge if he worked hard', while her husband retorts that he'll be able to 'buy them when he's been in the game a few years'

(Hines n.d., 11). Similarly, Roxy's mother in *Born Kicking* bemoans her daughter's decision to abandon university for football to her jubilant husband: 'What a waste… The only book we had in our house was the rent book…She'd have had a degree. Letters behind her name. Respect' (Hines 1992). In these instances, the economic hardships of working-class parents are contrasted with the wealth of footballers in such a way that the vulnerabilities and fragmentations of working life are made achingly apparent. In *The Blinder* the schoolboy Lennie receives illicit payments as his career takes off, sparking an argument between his parents: 'Ten pounds a game. It's as much as you earn when you're working, Arthur.'/'Ten pounds, I was earning three times as much as that ont'face.'/You're not on't face now, though', 'No, but I wa' when I nearly got my bloody back broke wasn't I?' (Hines [1966] 1996, 66). The vulnerability of working-class fathers is further exposed in *Continental Size Six* as Stan, justifying the expensive purchase of football boots for his unborn child states: 'He'll have no bosses out there, it'll just be him and the ball, and the crowd roaring him on. He'll have no money problems and not have to worry about overtime and rent and being laid off, because he'll be a king, not a bloody slave like his dad' (Hines 1967, 22).

Here sport, education, and family life present complex economic and cultural burdens which reflect Hines's own struggles for belonging and indentity in working-class Yorkshire. Returning to the question of region, then, these tensions are further compounded by the fixity of images of working-class masculinity that Hines and Storey were born into, with sport cementing rather than providing a counterpoint to their isolation. Hines pursued PE teaching because sport was 'not work' when compared to his father who got 'up at half past four year in year out' (Hines and Lundy n.d.). Coal mining as a regionally specific, indelible marker of the working-class was for Hines and Storey another site of exclusion wherein the complex tensions of sport, art, and academia intersected. For both men, the landscape itself - shaped by the mining industry - gave expression to these struggles. Storey describes the strong 'sense of work' in the West Riding, felt keenly in the view from his childhood home, where he could see 'the chimneys of two collieries, a mill and a brickworks: from another I could see the lower, wooded slopes of the Pennines stretching towards Huddersfield'. This tension offered 'a split between the intentions of nature and those of man. If I went out on my bike I could, within half an hour, be lost amongst woodland; yet on my way back I would pass through streets which, it seemed, had never seen the sun. As I grew up I felt this division to be reflected very much in my own nature' (Storey 1966, 2). Hines offers a remarkably similar account of his childhood home, which is described as among 'streets of terraced nineteenth century houses, company houses, a council estate, the woods and fields around it', which contributed to that 'strange mixture […] you can look out of your front bedroom and there's the pit 200 yards away, and then you look out of the back window and it's all woods and fields' (Hines and Lundy n.d.). It is this 'mixture' that underpins the vivid poetic textures of *Kes*, filmed on location in Hoyland Common and continually contrasting the rural sites of Billy's liberation with the exclusionary spaces of the coal mine, classroom, and football pitch.

The contradictions that underpinned both writers' work are thus spatialised in the working-class landscapes in which they grew up; what Storey terms the 'the world of the colliery and that of the woodland: between the football field and the artist's studio; between other people and oneself' (1966, 3). In this formation, sport is understood as an extension of the physical world of labour, representing activity (and work) which is inextricably linked to

the region. For Storey, '[t]he world of the West Riding' was 'an acutely physical one', where the work of the body was privileged: 'in the working class, and in the mining community in particular in which I lived […] physical work is good and mental work is evil' (1972, 63).

In Storey's playing days the physical nature of the split was felt acutely as he returned to London after playing for Leeds: 'observing as late as Wednesday after a Saturday match the fingers still trembling, the joints still swollen, the delicate touch of my pencil or brush a shambling, quivering line' (Storey 2021, 9). Storey's physical exhaustion was such that he once lost consciousness during a gym session. His doctor told him that his position was unsustainable - that while his teammates, 'very physically fit guys' who were 'working in coalmines or in factories and mills', and 'eating steaks and vegetables', Storey was living on a diet of 'beans and tomatoes and toast' as a London student: 'you passed out because you are trying to do the impossible' (Courtney 2008). Here the contrasts of South and North are made manifest in Storey's body. People and place are enmeshed: 'a world of machines and labour and commerce, and one in which the artist, the man whose work had no apparent use or purpose, was not merely an outsider but a hindrance and a nuisance' (1963, 1).

This Sporting Life is the first step in an artistic attempt to resolve these tensions; to 'accommodate the two extremes of this northern, physical world and its southern, spiritual counterpart' (Storey 1972, 66). Having explored the 'physical', through 'the footballer Machin' his next novel *Flight into Camden* moved the focus onto 'the spiritual, interior […] feminine part of my nature', and the gothic excess of *Radcliffe* was an attempt to 'bring the two halves face to face embodied in two separate characters' (Storey 1963b, 15). Machin was 'a creature produced […] by the very physique of the north itself' and so must be read as central to Storey's wider critique of the region through sport (Storey 1972, 66). It is important, however, not to interpret him as an unambiguous expression of Northern, working-class masculinity, rather, as Storey repeatedly stated, he is born from the tensions inherent within that monolithic narrative of place. A handwritten note in Storey's archive sees him assuming the role of Machin, interviewing the author: 'You called me […] Arthur. Art, for short: a significance, being an artist yourself, which didn't escape you - appealing to you in a non-explicit way. So that when the other characters in your story refer to me as 'Art', a whole culture, a way of looking at things, is summoned up' (Storey n.d.). Although the proximity to Arthur Seaton (of *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*) precluded the name from being used in the film, the sense of Machin as an 'art-machine' - a purposefully paradoxical composite of Storey's inner world and the external world 'of machines and labour' that he found in Wakefield - is another way of bringing nuance to his characterisation: Machin is *not* simply a machine, despite what his early, ruthlessly efficient, performances on the pitch suggest (Storey 1972, 63). As the novel and film progress, and as Machin's relationship with Mrs Hammond degrades, he realises that a secure sense of belonging will always evade him, sport becomes a 'sporting life', as Storey puts it '[f]or an hour-and-a-half, life is meaningful within the parameters of the game. Various structures are all in place and they're all visible. I suppose *This Sporting Life* presents a contrast between that and the private life of the player, where the clouds gather' (Campbell 2004).

Storey struggled with the adaptation of the novel, and initially adopted a linear narrative structure with the screenplay divided sequentially: 'Sequence A: AMBITION', Sequence B 'WATCH ME RUN', Sequence C 'SUCCESS', 'Sequence D: BIG MAN, 'Sequence E, THIS SPORTING LIFE'. Taken together these mark Machin's rise and fall, and it is significant that 'THIS SPORTING LIFE' is the section that is most defined by melancholy: Machin leaves

Mrs Hammond's, finds exile in the boarding house, Mrs Hammond dies, his sporting powers recede irrevocably (Storey 1961). In the film's final moments, Machin cowers on the floor while the sound of the crowd penetrates the diegesis, a cut to the pitch lingers on a tired Frank in slow motion, as the stage directions put it, 'the game passes quickly from him', and a voice in the crowd is heard 'Come on, Machin, get a bloody move on!' (Ibid. 115). The machine is creaking, and the pitch no longer offers solace from life; it *is* life: 'His wildness is charged with all the despair of his situation. He fights his way through the sodden, black bodies, and is gradually beaten down as he runs into one figure after another' (Ibid. 107). In the corresponding episode in the novel the first-person narration underlines Machin's realisation of an irredeemable psychological rupture, made manifest through the sport:

> Ten years of this, ten years of the crowd - I could make one mistake, one slight mistake only, and the whole tragedy of living, of being alive, would come into the crowd's throat and roar its pain like a maimed animal. The cry, the rage of the crowd echoed over and filled the valley. (Storey [1960] 1963, 252)

That this 'rage' is spatialised should be no surprise given Storey's persistent positioning of the physical world of the West Riding (the valley in this case) against his own inner pain. When Frank is exiled from Mrs Hammond's home he moves to the boarding house where Johnson, the man who scouted him, stays. He shares a room with two itinerant workers, an unnamed Irishman, and a Lithuanian 'who depressed' Machin, 'because he seemed to be displaced in every sense' (Storey 1960, 189). In both the novel and the film, Machin leaves the boarding house hurriedly and views the city, alone, from a hill: 'From the top of the valley the sight of the town working normally, but without me, made me feel outcast, an outlaw' (Ibid.). Machin is overwhelmingly depressed; his physical isolation is all consuming:

> Three days on my own were enough to change the whole shape of things. It seemed as if the debt I'd accumulated had suddenly been shoved on me without warning, and I'd been told to pay, or else. The emptiness obliterated every other feeling I had for people or for places. (ibid.)

The expression of all pervasive misery, reflected in the image and experience of the isolated figure on the hill is replicated in Storey's own desperate narratives of his playing days and there is a remarkable symmetry between his and Machin's spatialised depression:

> I went on painting pictures, I went on playing football, but with increasing despair, obsessed with guilt at the one thing and by the futility of the other. I was driven to spending long periods alone; often I climbed to the top of the hills around; and there, poised above the industrial chaos below, I felt I was inhabiting a place so inaccessible as virtually to be non-existent. (1972, 65)

Again, in viewing Storey's own narratives of sporting life against those produced in his fiction, we are offered another means of challenging the dominant myths of Yorkshire sporting masculinity, through images of the broken, hopeless, endlessly conflicted athlete for whom the emotional world has become all consuming. We are far removed from the Northern sporting hero. As if to make this comparison explicit, shortly after the hill sequence in the novel, the narrator quotes 'Ed Phillips in The Guardian' as identifying 'three kinds of athlete - the animal, the nervous, and the scientific'. Most rugby league players are 'animal' but '[t]he focus of the three types is found in the scrum-half, for he needs the animal strength of a forward and the nervous agility of his 'backs if he's to succeed at all' (Storey 1960, 198). And it is Frank's best friend and teammate, the scrum-half, Maurice, who brings together these elements: 'tough, he was agile, and he was physically intelligent. He kept his place, Ed

said, because, to an observer, he appeared to be impervious to pain. Maurice was the most popular player at Primstone' (ibid.). In his domestic life, we see Maurice married, and starting a family, and in the novel, he is looking towards a secure financial future. Sport and life are entwined here and seem to function symbiotically; his is a very different sporting life to Frank's. It is Maurice who most represents Holt's 'composite Northern hero', while Machin's contrasting fortunes show us its underbelly (Holt 1996, 161). The end of Hammond's and Machin's relationship is the point of rupture, its demise is so significant for Machin because it shows us, as Storey notes 'this precise feeling that love, the capacity as much as the need, is in some drastic way in conflict with the intentions of the world around'; the relationship between Hammond, the widow, and Machin, the miner and athlete, is the means by which the 'split' is articulated in *This Sporting Life* (1966, 4). Its brutal conclusion on the pitch speaks to the irretrievable loss that underpins it, as Penelope Gilliatt notes of the film: 'The football game after her death is like the awful scene in a bullring when a Spanish audience whistles scorn at a matador because they suspect him of cowardice. His supporters are suddenly booing, and they are booing his pain. Something primitive and tragic is happening' (Gilliatt 1963, no page numbers). Here, the visceral, physical, sensation of sport returns, and Machin no longer has mastery of it.

'Fuck your thoughts!': value, loss and resistance

Hines is similarly interested in charting the athlete's alienation and degradation as they begin to recognise their diminishing value. In *Injury Time*, Tom reflects on his time in America: '[w]hen I first come over here I thought it was great, the way they approached the game', but he soon realises that 'I don't like having to sell myself all the time. I'm a footballer not a salesman' (Hines n.d., 48). For Ewan Flynn, *Injury Time*, 'foreshadows a future for football where commercialism runs rampant' (Flynn 2019, 35), and Hines uses Tom's wisdom, and questioning nature as a means of illuminating the implications of football's embrace of commercialism, noting of his American club's owner: 'If he gets a return for his money he'll be happy. If not he'll sell out and move into something else. It could be anything, cars, toothpaste, chewing gum, It's just another business interest that's all' (Hines n.d., 48). Tom's willingness to draw on his intellectual resources to question the underlying assumptions that govern the game are viewed with suspicion by almost all the authority figures he encounters. When he gives an unauthorised interview at the club (modelled on Leeds United) that he has been transferred to, his disciplinarian manager, Vickers, is livid:

> Tom: […] I expressed my own thoughts on what I thought was wrong with the game.
>
> Vickers: Fuck your thoughts! Who do you think you are, Chairman Mao? We'll do the thinking here, me and Johnny and the coaching staff.
>
> And you'll get out there and put It into practice.
>
> That's what you're paid for. (Ibid., 61)

Tom's depression emerges from the realisation that the business of football is stopping him from *playing* the sport he loves, he is described as 'on his own now, completely cut off from his roots […] just wanting, in his remaining years in the game, to be allowed to play football in the way that he knows best' (Ibid., 5).

While Tom is a very different sporting protagonist to Billy Casper, football is also shown to be a site of alienation in *Kes*, easily weaponised by those authoritarian bullies who are suspicious of any form of self-expression or departure from fixed codes of class and gender. Mr Sugden bellittles Casper, forcing him to strip naked in front of his classmates in the changing room because he has forgotten his kit, picking him last for his team, hitting him around the head when he makes a mistake, and later trapping him in the shower and subjecting him to gusts of cold water. On the pitch, Billy is shown to have no interest in football, and instead climbs impressively across the crossbar, entertaining his teammates and infuriating his teacher. In *Kes* football is, as Stephen Glynn puts it, 'shown (up) as playing its part in desensitising and depoliticising the (working) class', and this is because it is positioned by Hines as part of a wider critique of the education system, which stifles the creativity of Billy, whose passion and knowledge of falconry is ignored by a narrow curriculum and oppressive, unimaginative teachers (Glynn 2018, 216).

Conclusion

In bringing together the work of David Storey and Barry Hines, this article has explored a particular historical moment in which class bound tensions between region, work, education, and art are experienced through sport in complex, layered ways. On one level, the author-athlete functions as a resource to revisit through sport a period of social mobility and change where the traditional domains of physical and mental labour, and the narratives of hegemomic masculinity that underpin them, are central to the myth of the North. More broadly, it is possible to take this concept beyond the particular cultural and geographical contexts of 1960s and 70s Britain; the author-athlete has been deployed in this article as a means of identifying and privileging the distinctive qualities of art made by sportsmen, opening up the possibility that this process of narrativizing sport from the *inside* might generate insights which can counter dominant, collective identity myths that persist and intensify in professional sport under capitalism. The works of Storey and Hines are concerned with individual athletes whose inner pain, sense of difference, and isolation are produced by the slow realisation and tragic experience of the corruption of their sporting lives by the forces of capital. There is in all these narrative accounts of sport a deep, lyrical affection for and representation of the games their protagonists play, the games that they love. This sense that sport might be redeemed not only by art but *as* art emerges from the dual identity of the authors *as* athletes.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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