

TRANSMITTED IDEAS: THE BIRTH OF MODERN SPORTS IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

The idea of modern sports in Malaysia existed during the British occupation in the 18th century. Initially, the practice of modern sports such as football, hockey, rugby, and other European games was only played by British expatriates, civil servants, and the military. After the establishment of the British Government in the Malay Peninsula, the idea of modern sports was spread to the local community, especially among the Malay elite, who were educated in British Government Schools. The huge impact of modern sports on the local community came after the elite created new sports platforms such as institutions, for example, Sultan Sulaiman Sporting Clubs in Kuala Lumpur. The establishment of this institution later became a model for creating other sports clubs especially in Penang, Malacca, Negeri Sembilan, and other states. In the 1930s, every single ‘modern sport’ was introduced by the British have its institution and it’s built up by the locals. Most interestingly, the foundation of this institution was based on ethnicities such as Malay, Chinese, and Indian. Most of sports historians analysed these things that happened as just an impact of colonialism, especially the practices of divides and rules policy by the British Government. But in this paper, I tend to use a different type of analysis. By using theoretical framework developed by Bernard Cohn (1996), I would like to argue that the idea of modern sports is a part of colonial knowledge. This kind of idea was transmitted using the elites, schools, and syllabus, to create the modern institution as the manifestation of modern sports in Malaysia.

Keywords: Malaysia, modern sports, Colonial Knowledge, History.