

Aesthetic Investigations

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The Best Way to Locate a Purpose in Sport In Defence of a Distinction for Aesthetics?

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Abstract: The paper highlights the centrality of some concepts from philosophy of sport for philosophical aesthetics. Once Best (BJA, 1974) conclusively answered negatively the fundamental question, ‘Can any sport form be an artform’, what further issues remained at the intersection of these parts of philosophy? Recent work revitalizing this interface, especially Mumford’s *Watching Sport* (2012), contested Best’s fundamental distinction between purposive and aesthetic sports, and insisted that purist viewers are taking an aesthetic interest in sporting events. Here, we defend Best’s conception against considerations Mumford hoped would bring the aesthetics of art and sport closer together, thereby elaborating the aesthetics of sport. But, against Mumford’s resolutely psychological conception of an aim, we follow Best to defend the centrality, for purposive sports, of the means/ends contrast remains, even when taking an aesthetic interest in such sports. We conclude with general speculations about the potential future of the discussions originated here.

I. INTRODUCTION

The death of David Best in 2013 went largely unremarked in the philosophical literature, even in those locations (philosophical aesthetics, philosophy

of education, philosophy of sport) where the impact of his ideas should still have been clear; places where he was a ‘founding father’ or a significant contributor. For Best’s discussion of the aesthetic in sport raised in a sharp way the relationship of aesthetic interest to art; and his version has largely been ignored by aestheticians. Further, his differentiation of a group of sports as ‘aesthetic sports’, as well as being potentially fundamental for the philosophy of sport, raises questions both about the nature of aesthetic interest, and about the interest one might take in the grace, line, and elegance of sports other than those in the ‘aesthetic sports’ classification. In part, no doubt, this neglect reflects the passage of time: his last book was published in 1992; but, in part, it reflects the ways in which his work provided a framework from which later discussions took off—where, sometimes, the effect of that trajectory was to minimise Best’s own importance.

The fact that Best’s concerns have hitherto passed most aestheticians by might have been thought to be of little consequence during that ‘quiet period’, but now (to us) it seems much more like identifying a blind spot. After this quiet period following Best’s contribution, then, the issues posed have recently returned to the forefront of considerations in the wake of a trend in the philosophy of sport—exemplified in the excellent *Watching Sport* by Stephen Mumford—that has brought to the surface one place where Best’s innovations in the philosophy of sport intersect with philosophical aesthetics.¹ In this paper, we aim both to reintroduce Best’s ideas to those currently unfamiliar with them (perhaps through the vagaries of memory) and to show their continuing relevance. Our method will involve assessing aspects of Mumford’s discussion in the light of a more detailed reading of Best’s texts. But this should not be seen as just a dry memorial. For not merely did Best identify a question in aesthetics not widely taken up by aestheticians (namely, one concerning the character of aesthetic interest in sporting events); it also highlighted a field of human endeavour where previously the aesthetic questions asked seem to by-pass aestheticians; but where there is now a discussion, flowing from those ideas on sport presented by Mumford (perhaps known best as a metaphysician).² Of course, as will become clear, we think Mumford has just re-introduced old confusions or wandered into new ones, but now those confusions have a respectable face again, then there is work to do to, as it were, put all the furniture back in the right place. So we will conclude with some general speculations about the potential future of the discussions originated here.

Mumford begins with the thought that the sports fan ‘... taking an aesthetic attitude to sport may “see a different game” to the committed fan ... even though they observe the same event.’³ This leads Mumford to idealise a classification of *fan-types* on a kind of spectrum from partisan to purist (see below), and to recognise that one’s watching can develop: that one needs ‘... a degree of expertise’ in watching any particular sports to move beyond the perspective of the novice.⁴ Hence, there is a developmental story to be

told here: ‘...one learns how to watch.’⁵ Of course, such concerns are familiar within aesthetics, where the need for informed perception is a commonplace. But what is common to all appreciation of sport? We do not assume that a single answer must be available here, to cover all sorts of appreciation (as player or as spectator, say) in *all* sorts of contexts and at *all* sorts of levels (for instance, sport for one’s children or professional sport). But any answer—even if not general—must reflect the need for informed perception. So, looking for something *in general* to the appreciation of sports, Mumford settles on *aesthetic appreciation*: here, the purist provides a target, since he watches sport ‘...for more aesthetic and intellectual reasons while the motivation of the partisan is more emotional and victory seeking’.⁶ Hence Mumford insists, first, that ‘...one reason to watch sport ... [is] because it gives aesthetic pleasure’⁷ and, second, that the purist’s interest in sport is an aesthetic interest; that Mumford’s purist was seeing ‘...only aesthetic aspects of sport’, or something of that sort.⁸ In Mumford’s defence, it is agreed on all sides both (a) that the movement sequences involved in any sporting event can, on some occasions, be graceful or elegant, or some such; and (b) that, for some sports, this is fundamental to the winning or losing. In making this second point one is, in effect, granting a distinction that we wish to insist on in this paper, and that Best correctly argued to be fundamental: that between *purposive sports* and *aesthetic sports*. Then Best’s idea is that, despite the similarities implicit in point (a) above, there is a profound distinction here, reflected in point (b). More particularly, aesthetic sports should be identified through the character of winning and losing in those sports, in a world where winning and losing is crucial in all sports.⁹ For this distinction allows us to separate our (occasional) concern in some sports with the grace, line and beauty of the constituent movements from cases of sports where a similar focus on the manner of achievement, and hence on the quality of the movement, is fundamental to the character of that sport. In effect, we begin to see why (despite their distinctiveness) there is no single account of the nature of sport: moreover, why Best’s ‘aesthetic sports’ are doubtfully aesthetic.

II. BEST ON TWO KINDS OF SPORTS

At the centre of Mumford’s interest, then, is the idea that, often, the value of sport for its audience is more helpfully seen as aesthetic interest, an idea running directly counter to some arguments Best had first offered in a fundamental paper in *British Journal of Aesthetics*.¹⁰

Best had drawn a sharp distinction within sport, such that typical sports are of one of two kinds.¹¹ In the first kind (aesthetic sports), the scoring depends on the *manner* of performance, as in gymnastic vaulting or ice-skating, so that one is not just trying (say) to get over the vaulting horse but to do so in a particular way; and this is what scores the points that lead, ultimately, to victory in the sport. For the second kind (purposive sports),

the manner of scoring does not matter, as long as it is within the rules. In particular, for purposive sports, the grace or elegance of scoring is beside the point, since it is not reflected in the scoring in the sport. Most sports will be of this purposive kind. Thus, in football (soccer), the goalmouth scramble counts as much, or as little, as the elegant volley, as long as it is within the rules (as, say, Maradona's 'Hand of God' goal against England in the 1986 FIFA World Cup should not have been). All count as just one goal, even when one is elegantly achieved and the other is not. Notice that this is a comment concerning the nature of sport, related to the character of success in that sport, and is not just a recipe for spectatorship in that sport. For, although a spectator may admire the grace or elegance of the pass or the shot, that admiration is formally irrelevant. For aesthetic sports, on the other hand, the views of at least one group of spectators—the judges—*determine* the winning and losing (or partly determine it).¹²

Neither of Best's terms is entirely happy.¹³ For purposive sports, such as typical team sports, each side aims to score (and to prevent opponents from scoring); and, by scoring more than opponents, to win. And, although the purposive is usually characterised in a means/ends fashion, here talk of *result*, say, rather than *end* might be more usual. Still, this too could confuse: the result of the game or match, for example, is constructed from such events of scoring, or defending successfully, and the like. Then Best's terminology does roughly capture this structure of such sports, since what is distinctive *is* the application of that means/end structure, such that what is achieved (end) is specifiable independently of *how* it is achieved (means).

Likewise, one might agree that the valuing in aesthetic sports is broadly aesthetic, since it is concerned with the grace, line and elegance of the actions within the sport; yet, even there, a positive valence is typically implicit when explicit reference to the aesthetic is made. But is the concern genuinely aesthetic? For must the thrilling game of soccer count as more aesthetic than the even game? How about a flowing game but with many surprising changes? Further, do these interests all count as aesthetic? The reasoning here—for those endorsing a 'yes' answer—may be indirect. With Kant (and us), Mumford agrees that aesthetic interest is . . . well, *disinterested*.¹⁴ And to be ' . . . apart from any interest' in that way is certainly to be non-purposive, since *purposive* interest is elaborated in terms of its end-directedness.¹⁵ Yet is non-purposive interest automatically, and thereby, *aesthetic* interest? We doubt this, although it is not a fundamental step in our argument here. Rather, we simply notice that much of the distinctive interest in aesthetic sport is not, strictly, *aesthetic* interest, if one understands the aesthetic as involving the (positive?) appreciation of grace, line and such like. So, although the attention to aesthetic sports is to the *manner* of performance, that attention (by judges and such like) is really directed to what is identified for consideration (and reward) by the rules and technical specifications. On the one hand, the genuinely aesthetic qualities of aesthetic sports can be limited:

the look and line of ice-skating is forever blighted by the ugly boot—attempts to conceal the boot itself (say, with a flesh-coloured cover)—cannot mask the right-angle turn at the ankle; just the thing ballet dancers avoid by pointing their toes. On the other hand, the judges award points regulated by the pre-specification of the movements: it is meeting these pre-specifications that is really rewarded—a collection of ‘... jumps, spins, footwork, “moves-in-the-field” like spirals and spread-eagles, edgework, turns, and basic forward and backward skating’.¹⁶ And, given that the rules do “... not seem to encourage creativity or originality”, the movements need not be graceful, and such like; nor can the skaters easily modify them in this respect.¹⁷

Nevertheless, of course, judges ultimately reward the manner of performance of the skills, however it is characterised: and, insofar as this does indeed reflect a concern with line and grace, success in aesthetic sports depends on the recognition of such aesthetic virtues. By contrast, these features have no bearing on the ‘winning-and-losing’ in Best’s purposive sports.

Moreover, when aesthetic features (such as grace and line) are stressed in *purposive* sports, there is no general suggestion here to reward the aesthetic elements in such sports; say, by giving extra points to the elegant touch-down in grid-iron football or the elegant try in rugby (a point to return to). Instead, for the spectator, taking an aesthetic perspective in purposive sports often means not considering the *sport* at all, but rather some abstraction from it. The classic example here would be the ‘Goal of the Month’ competition in soccer on television, in which the audience joins a panel of experts to discuss the best goals: but, of course, each will be a goal; and, since all these goals are detached from any place in a match or competition (we do not know, nor care, if they were, say, winning goals), the panel can only address the grace and elegance with which *this goal* was scored.¹⁸ Here, the interest is more properly aesthetic; but only once the purposive element integral to the sport is independently satisfied. As Best notes, these considerations help us understand why we are more likely to watch a slow motion replay with a greater level of aesthetic appreciation than we have watching sport under normal circumstances.¹⁹ This, he suggests, is partly because, first, there is more time available to us to appreciate the manner in which the athlete executes the task, and, second, the purpose of the movements being performed is of less significance in relation to the action replay than it is while we are watching sport under normal circumstances. For the result of the match or competition is typically set aside (either as known or as irrelevant).

But what really marks out aesthetic sports (for Best, and rightly, we urge) is rather that one cannot specify *what* is to be attained (say, a double-salchow, in ice-skating) without simultaneously saying *how* it is to be achieved—that is, describing the double salchow. The point is that such sports depart from the norm in this respect: for most sports will aim at ‘... the achievement of some ... independently specifiable end ... [that] is the mark of success’.²⁰ Hence the aesthetic sports are characterised such that ‘... their purpose cannot be

considered apart from the manner of achieving it. There is an intrinsic end which cannot be identified apart from the means'.²¹ Ice-skating, gymnastic vaulting, and diving will be typical examples here—although this is by far the smaller category. Thus '... it would make no sense to suggest to a figure-skater that it did not matter how he performed his movements, as long as he achieved the purpose of the sport, since that purpose inevitably concerns the manner of performance'.²²

Here, Best is explicitly making three points: first, '... the non-purposive character of the aesthetic is often misunderstood',²³ for it amounts to denying that the collector who values a painting for its cash-value *thereby* takes an aesthetic interest in it—his interest is extrinsic to any aesthetic (or artistic) value;²⁴ second, aesthetic sports such as diving or ice-skating still differ fundamentally from artforms in this respect, in that they have a 'purpose' directed to winning or losing—the kind of thing with no place in art (except perhaps in certain art competitions); and, third, even in aesthetic sports, what action is performed still depends on the rules.²⁵

He continues by noting, for a purposive sport, a point contrary to one above: 'It would make perfectly good sense to urge a football team to score goals without caring how they scored them'.²⁶ Yet recognising that *any* manner, within the rules, is equally good here does not differentiate between the cases in other respects.

For example, it might seem that one difficulty in respect of aesthetic sports is that, since the manner of performance is the element applauded, the results in such sports must always depend on the informed judgement of panels of judges: that the best one could do is to improve the quality of the judges, offer better vantage points, and such like. Again, this might even be offered as a similarity with aesthetic appreciation: that aesthetic judgements have to 'prove themselves on the pulses' of those who made them, to put the point figuratively. But, as above, it is clear that, in many aesthetic sports—especially gymnastic vaulting, diving and ice-skating, the judges are given close specifications of the merit in that activity associated with each manner of performance: in this way, there can easily be a public standard to recognise.

All these points come to the fore when one returns to the majority of sports; what Best calls 'purposive sports'.²⁷ For here the means/ends distinction makes sense, and can helpfully be used to characterize these sports: in them, to repeat, the end can be reached by any means, as long as those means are within the rules. If the end of the marathon were, say, to cross the tape first (thereby winning), one's running may be graceful or the opposite—but the rules preclude, say, the use of a bicycle! Or, as above, the goal-mouth scramble in soccer contributes one goal to the team's total, as does the elegant volley.

Best's target, then, is the recognition that, for such sports, the manner of achieving one's aim is not relevant to whether one is successful; and thereby to contrast this set of cases with the other. And the discussion will only become

more complicated once one admits those places where, say, the referee counts as a goal what should not have been (say, Maradona's 'Hand of God' goal): the referee's error is not that he thereby values the manner in ways that it should not be valued, but that he *mistakes* whether such-and-such occurred—roughly, he permits what should have been excluded.

Further, as noted above, those who value the aesthetic element in events in purposive sports do not typically suggest a change to the rules here. Thus, when Sebastian Coe, a runner noted for his beautiful running style, finished second in the Olympic 800 metres final in Los Angeles in 1984, behind Joachim Cruz, who possessed an ungainly (many would say 'ugly') running style, it was not suggested that Coe should be awarded the gold medal because he ran much more beautifully and almost as fast. The winner in an 800 metres race is determined by who runs the distance (within the rules) fastest, or who crosses the finishing line first after having run 800 metres within the rules (strictly speaking, getting one's torso to the line first in a manner that is within the rules). Quite rightly, there is nothing in those descriptions, of what determines who wins, about the aesthetics of the running style adopted during the race. By contrast, in Best's *aesthetic sports*, the reference (built-into the scoring) to the manner of performance certainly suggests aesthetic interest, in at least some cases.

Nevertheless, an aesthetic interest can be taken in events in a purposive sport: one can be struck by the grace of *this* pass, or by the elegance of *this* runner (especially in contrast to *that* one); or again when the Cruyff turn strikes one as not merely ingenious (a combination of clever and creative) but somehow cheeky. This possibility might seem to undermine Best's distinction, but does not do so. For the valuing within purposive sports remains irreducibly purposive—that is why, when someone takes an aesthetic interest in events in purposive sport (such as soccer), the purposive element is typically then set aside, or assumed to have been successful: the elegant pass must succeed as a pass; and graceful dribbling of the ball requires that the dribbling be aimed towards some purpose in the game, explicable in terms of the aim of the game—otherwise it is just self-indulgent. If what was needed in context was, say, a pass or a shot-on-goal, then to applaud the attempted pass that failed, or the shot off target, will be at best to applaud *the attempt*. And its failure as a pass is what precludes its being a beautiful *pass*: but that beauty ties it into the point of the game—it would be sporting beauty (or footballing beauty) not merely beautiful movement.²⁸ Further, what occurs can contribute to the broad aim of winning, without doing so immediately: in the simplest case, by thwarting the opponents. But it should be seen in terms of the broad aim of 'winning and losing', when one's concern is with soccer matches. As we noted above, the 'Goal of the Month' competition can only address the grace and elegance with which *this goal* was scored: here, the interest is more properly aesthetic; but only once the purposive element integral to the sport is independently satisfied. Indeed, there is a clear sense

which watching these goals differs from, for instance, watching highlights of football matches: in that sense, watching them in the ‘Goal of the Month’ competition is not really watching soccer at all.

Further, Best also argues convincingly that no sports-forms can be, or become, artforms. His point here, expressed in language reminiscent of Danto, is that while art involves what Best calls ‘a conception of life issues’ or of ‘life situations’—and hence is *about* something—one cannot justifiably say this of sport.²⁹ In effect, this re-iterates Danto’s conception of art as embodied meaning—and hence as embodying its *aboutness*.³⁰ Then one can deny the parallel point for sport. For it makes sense for sport to be a *subject* for art (as, say, in Douanier Rousseau’s painting of Rugby players, of 1908) but, as Best rightly put it, ‘... art cannot be the subject of sport. Indeed, the very notion of a subject of sport makes no sense’.³¹ For sport has no subject in this sense: nothing that it is *about*.

For instance, its concern with winning and losing is not its subject. Still, might not the sporting context somehow be *about* winning-and-losing, making the nature of particular sports concrete and/or manifest? Certainly, we can imagine a parallel account of the ‘aboutness’ of some Abstract Expressionist paintings: that they were somehow *about* the properties they exemplified — say, *colour* for some Rothkos, *flatness* for some Pollocks, or *edges* for Barnett Newmans.

To apply: on such a view, all sport would equally be ‘about’ winning and losing; yet there is nothing specific that all art is *about*; moreover, those artworks that exemplify their *aboutness* are unusual in this respect—we would expect something similar for sport if a parallel with sport were sustained.³² But, of course, even if these accounts were true of the *aboutness* of some works, the feature *those* works exemplified were actually shared by other works—including those with, on this account, a different *aboutness*.

One might look for a subject for sport in its cultural value: a football match between historic rivals (say, Barcelona against Real Madrid) has a dimension that flows from the historic rivalry. As a shorthand, let us speak of the *cultural weight* provided to the work by rivalry. And, of course, artworks too can acquire similar cultural weight: thus, the whole story of Picasso’s *Guernica*—its commission, its final subject, and the atrocity that produced that subject, the Spanish-ness of the realisation, and much more—guarantees the cultural weight of the work. But that is not its *aboutness*; on the contrary, we could be sure of its cultural weight without ever seeing it. Genuine access to its artistic properties, though, will require our viewing it.

Roughly the same consideration explains why sporting events cannot be ascribed an aboutness based in their cultural weight: this is true of them, but is not what they are about (in Danto’s sense). And we recognise that in granting that a match epic in terms of its cultural weight may turn out to be uninteresting sport. Indeed, this often happens when both sides—feeling the cultural weight—are afraid to lose; and hence become boringly defensive.

So art has, but sport cannot have, a subject, or an aboutness, in this sense. Again, the point is not just a verbal one: as Best recognised, the book entitled *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding* used the term ‘art’ in a sense other than that under discussion.³³ So his denial was aimed squarely at the ‘fine art’ sense of the term. And, for the case of art, Best correctly urges that the distinction between means and ends collapses because ends of art cannot be described independently of the means of achieving those ends. (It would be ludicrous to reduce Poussin’s ends to, say, making a painting—that leaves out all that is fundamental to the achievement once it is completed.) Since the end is inseparable from the means in art, the question of an extrinsic goal for art makes no sense, while it certainly does make sense in relation to sport.³⁴ Further, the difference in what is required to win (the primary purpose) in the two categories of sport might be expressed by urging that the gap between means and ends in aesthetic sports is much narrower than it is in purposive sports, even when purposive sports are considered from an aesthetic point of view.³⁵ Yet the gap does not always disappear. For at least with aesthetic sports, and unlike art, a kind of means/ends contrast is still applicable.

III. MUMFORD ON (ABSENCE OF) A PRINCIPAL AIM

In elaborating his position, Mumford does offer an account of art of a broadly institutional kind. But that is not the chief relevance of his argument for aesthetics.³⁶ Rather, it builds on his contrast between *purist* and *partisan* perspectives on sport-watching, here applied to team sports, where the partisan ‘... is a fan of one particular sports team ... identifying with a team and watching their progress in the media.’³⁷ By contrast, the purist:

... is a fan of a sport, and may deeply love the sport concerned, but with no allegiance to any particular team. They may attend games and enjoy them despite having no preference for either side to win.³⁸

Here, we concentrate on Mumford’s claiming first, that ‘... one reason to watch sport ... [is] because it gives aesthetic pleasure’ and, second, that the purist’s interest in sport is an *aesthetic* interest; that Mumford’s *purist* is seeing ‘... only aesthetic aspects of sport’, or something of that sort.³⁹ Hence, this defence of purism admonishes us to adopt ‘... a life enjoying sport for its purely positive and aesthetic aspects.’⁴⁰

To make out his position, Mumford focuses on one argument from Best:⁴¹ although he offers no name it might with justice be called ‘the purpose argument’: thus, as Best identifies it, ‘[a] purposive sport is one in which, within the rules or conventions, there is an indefinite variety of ways of achieving the end which at least largely defines the game.’⁴² For here, as Best urges, ‘... an activity ... could not count as football if no one ever tried to score a goal’—here we see the *purpose* implicit in football, by reference to which any

other attainment (such as defensive ones) will be considered.⁴³ As a result, for Best, '[h]owever successful a sportsman may be in achieving the principal aim of his particular activity, our aesthetic acclaim is reserved for him who achieves it with maximum economy and efficiency of effort.'⁴⁴

Here, Best is making two points fundamental to our discussion. First, he is identifying the 'aesthetic acclaim' with the positive valence of aesthetic judgement—we will applaud these sportsplayers for their grace, economy, and such like. Second, he is insisting on the primacy, for purposive sports at least, of the purposive aspect directed at winning-and-losing. For, even in aesthetic sports, insofar as the movements valued through the rules are not genuinely aesthetically-attractive—such as, perhaps, the ugly boot on the ice-skater—the winning-and-losing aspects will still constitute the target (the aim in that sense) of the activity, since they are precisely the activities valorised by the rules!

On Mumford's version of Best's argument, differently inflected than the original, what we are calling 'the principal aim argument' runs as follows:

While beauty is certainly to be found in sport, can we not see that it is merely incidental? It is a kind of by-product of good sport, but it is not the goal for which it aims. In sport, the aim is to win; it is not to be beautiful. Similarly, the sports fan wants to see a win, at least the partisan does, not to see beauty. It is alleged that there is a contrast with the arts here. The primary aim in art is to produce beauty, by which I mean something with positive aesthetic value. This is intrinsic to the practice of art. The intrinsic aim or goal of sport is winning.⁴⁵

This cannot be quite right as it stands. For, certainly, Mumford recognises that the winning here will not be at any cost: that this is contrary to some 'spirit of sport'. Yet Mumford clearly recognises the central nerve of Best's position when, to give exposition of Best, he quotes Elliott:

The goddess of sport is not Beauty but Victory, a jealous goddess who demands an absolute homage. Every act performed by the player or athlete must be for the sake of victory, without so much as a side-glance in the direction of beauty.⁴⁶

And then Elliott, like Best, seems to identify winning as the 'principal aim' for sport. But, of course, the claim above that '[t]he primary aim in art is to produce beauty' cannot be sustained: clearly that view is inconsistent with much of the history of art and of aesthetics in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, at least. And this is a big part of Danto's discussion of the kind of visual irrelevance of art: here, Danto was effectively following Duchamp's dismissal of '... what he called "retinal art"—art that gratified the eye'.⁴⁷ Moreover, as Danto noted, '... if there were no visible differences [between some artworks and some "real things"], there must have been *invisible* differences'—the sorts of differences perhaps explained by reference to the

narrative of art history.⁴⁸ Of course, there is a general issue to be considered when one approaches art: in part, it is reflected in the examples of artworks one would offer as uncontentious—thus Danto offers, as an example, ‘... an exhibition of David Hammon’s recent work consisting of fur coats on stands, slathered with blood’.⁴⁹ And then one does not know what to make of people whose account of art fails either to accommodate the variety of cases licensed by modern practice (the fur coats have little or nothing to do with ‘the aim ... to produce beauty’) or to recognise the differences between our appreciation of artworks and of (say) the wallpaper on the wall on which a painting hangs—since that wallpaper too is an object made for, roughly, some kind of aesthetic appreciation.

For Best, then, the emphasis on winning-and-losing is primary in sport. But for Mumford, this picture of sport is misleading when the comparison is drawn with art: insofar as art has a principal aim, it is not just ‘to produce beauty’, but something more specific. Thus, Mumford ‘displays’ these artists having something different, and more local, as a ‘principal aim’: ‘... to experiment in contrasting colours and shapes’ or ‘to convey the loneliness of human existence’, such that ‘[a]t this specific, fine-grained level of description, none of our sample artists are aiming either directly or principally at the attainment of beauty’.⁵⁰ But still, ‘[b]eauty may emerge from these endeavours’.⁵¹ And they ‘... have a primary association with aesthetics’, understood in line with Mumford’s characterisation of ‘positive aesthetic value’ as beauty.⁵² So, first, beauty remains as a kind of secondary aim or (at least) by-product; and, second, this account clarifies the nature of the aim as Mumford imagines it, by showing us who does the aiming; namely, (in this case) artists—more generally, the individual agents involved. This highlights the character of all the aims under discussion (as far as Mumford is concerned): they are to be treated in terms of the psychology of particular individuals. Then, looking across to sport, sports players too can be ascribed a subsidiary aim towards beauty emerging ‘from ... [their] endeavours’; or where spectators find ‘positive aesthetic value’ in their actions—thus reinforcing the analogy with the art-case.⁵³ Likewise, ‘[t]he sports fan can adopt an aesthetic attitude to any of these actions, regardless of the fact that beauty was not the player’s principal aim: in both cases, and not just in sports, the beauty can be understood as a by-product of the activity’.⁵⁴ In this way, both art and sport ‘... ultimately answer to our aesthetic sensibilities’.⁵⁵

Best, though, is clear (first, and as above) that artists need have no such concern with beauty, a point Mumford concedes; and (second) that the contrast of such aesthetic appreciation with the appreciation of art here is sharp. Hence the analogical argument here looks unpromising. For, at most, such an interest in ‘positive aesthetic value’ is precisely not an interest in art. To distinguish appreciation of graceful movement from appreciation of art—here, typified by dance—Best raises three related considerations in a Danto-esque vein. First, in watching dance performed by Ram Gopal in an Indian dance-

form (Bharata Natyam), a form of which Best is ignorant, he recognised that he was just enjoying the quality of the movement that comprises the dance (as when enjoying the movement-sequences in purposive sports). Indeed, Best reports himself ‘... enthralled by the exhilarating quality of his movements’.⁵⁶ But he recognises that, in the case as described, he is not really confronting the dance, since he is not confronting it with the understanding appropriate to dance of that kind—not recognising what it is *about*, as Danto might put it—although (since the dance is an artwork) it *is* about something: it has a meaning that, as he imagines the case, Best misses. And one of the indicators of his failure here is that a slightly different sequence of movement, although in reality about something different (it could, say, have a different subject), could have the same ‘exhilarating quality’.⁵⁷ And one might recognise a similar point in noting that genuinely hearing a poem in French—that is, hearing it *as a poem*—requires an appropriate mastery of French, but also of poetic form. Then, second, Best recognises that artworks typically involve the transfiguration of the commonplace partly in offering a commentary on other elements of the human world: this was both the sense in which they (but not their confusable-counterparts) were *about* something, and the sense in which—unlike sport—they could have a *subject*.⁵⁸ The third point, to which we must return, concerned the possibility of ‘closing the gap’ between means and ends. But no such purely external conception of means-and-ends will apply to art. Then, although it really made no sense for art, that might be approached in cases where appreciation itself was the end (say, with some wallpaper).

Yet these are not the sorts of cases elaborated by Mumford. Therefore, let us set aside this line of objection. Instead, Mumford pursues his thought that Best had merely recognised some disanalogies between sport and art.⁵⁹ So he summarises the outcomes of the arguments as follows:

Some disanalogies between art and sport have been alleged, While there is an aesthetic of sport, it is alleged that it is never its principal aim.

Mumford’s target here is that this supposed ‘disanalogy’ ‘... will be dismissed and thus the aesthetics of art and sport brought closer together’.⁶⁰ So what exactly is supposed by Mumford to be *analogous* to what? Art is not really like anything else—that is the point here in recognising that our appreciation of art is not (really) aesthetic appreciation; or, perhaps better, it is distinctive in being *of art*—with all that implies about the location of any artwork both in categories of art, and in art-history more generally.⁶¹

But, as noted above, clarifying Mumford’s understanding of the ‘principal aim’ argument requires consideration of his use of terms such as ‘aim’ and ‘goal’. And that will be our concern here. For, as Mumford reads it, Best’s argument is primarily concerned with what artists and those playing sport are trying to do. Consider the following examples (emphasis added):

The player creates beauty as they play and they may be conscious of the fact that they are doing so. But their direct aim is not to create such beauty. Their aim is to win, even if they know that winning could happen to be beautiful.⁶²

The thought, then, is that one might applaud—or at least recognise—the subsidiary aim here (‘to create such beauty’), although granting it is not the chief aim. Equally:

Even if they produce beauty in their contests, they do not do so for the reason that it will be beautiful.⁶³

So here we are asked to address the performer’s *reasons*; further:

To see why it can be claimed that beauty is not the athlete’s aim, we need only consider what would be more important to the competitor. The athlete would, in virtually every case, prefer to win ugly than to lose pretty.⁶⁴

The idea of the athlete’s direct aim, combined with consideration of the athlete’s reasons and what he or she would prefer, shows that, for Mumford, the focus of the principal aim argument is what the athlete is trying to do (intention-in-action). Thus, Mumford asks us to imagine a case in which a ski jumper decided not to aim for a long jump, but rather to perform a series of aesthetically pleasing movements while in the air.⁶⁵ Mumford claims not only that the ski jumper has, in doing so, opted out of the sport, but that he should be regarded as having opted out of the sport even if he manages to jump further than the opposition. This treats the thing that the ski jumper is trying to *do* (his aim or target) as the focus for the ‘principal aim’ argument. So rejecting the ‘principal aim’ argument leaves Mumford with a focus on what artists are trying to do.⁶⁶

But what are our artists ‘trying to do’? It will come as no surprise within aesthetics that no single answer, across the arts, is forthcoming. That need not daunt us. The knack here, for Mumford, involves recognising the need for a very specific description of the target of each artist: yet then, ‘[a]t this specific, fine-grained level of description, none of our sample artists are aiming either directly or principally at the attainment of beauty. They are aiming to represent some very specific thing, for example, or convey some story or emotion, or to express themselves’.⁶⁷ So, for Mumford, while tracking the psychology of sports-players yields only a sub-ordinate ‘aim,’ towards the aesthetic (understood as, roughly, ‘the attainment of beauty’). The same is true of artists, we are told, when their individual psychologies are consulted. Thus Mumford finds, to his satisfaction, that positive aesthetic value is a by-product of art: combining that claim with the thought that positive aesthetic value is a by-product of sport, he concludes that ‘[s]port and art are thus in the same boat in relation to aesthetic aims’.⁶⁸

One might wonder at the argument for this parallel. Sport and art are surely not regarded as ‘in the same boat’ economically, even though neither might be thought of as having the financial aim as primary. So we would not really regard them in the same way, as Mumford’s argument enjoins us to. Hence, Mumford’s argument about parallels cannot be sustained.

For Mumford, this might represent a serious difficulty.⁶⁹ However, when Best talked about ‘purpose’ here, he was not referring to the purpose a particular person might have in doing such-and-such; instead, he referred to the purpose inherent in the activity, and hence in the action. Thus, once we see that this is sport-playing, we must acknowledge that it follows that the actions have what Best is calling a specific purpose—equally, we might have said a specific intention behind them. But this would not suggest, nor require, specific acts of intending on the part of, say, the players.

It is perhaps here that aesthetics has most to offer the philosophy of sport; for, in conjunction with the philosophy of law, philosophical aesthetics has surely included the fullest discussion of a non-psychological conception of intention. Thus, asked what Shakespeare meant or *intended* here, aestheticians have long realised that this was not typically a request to unpack Shakespeare’s mental states, the kind of prior planning he engaged in before writing the relevant passage. Moreover, we recognise that what is not accidental is thereby intentional, or meant.⁷⁰ And that this requirement cannot typically be over-ridden by specific acts of intending: one cannot typically make one’s words amount to something new and distinctive merely by planning or intending that they will. As Stanley Cavell put it:

... an individual’s intentions or wishes can no more produce horses for beggars, or home runs from pop flies, or successful poems out of unsuccessful poems.⁷¹

Even Richard Wollheim, whose account of intention has a psychological dimension, recognises both that a non-psychological view of intention underlines the responsibility inherent in action and that such a view operates as well inside art as out of it: for ‘... the standard pattern of explanation in which understanding is preserved ... [will be maintained when one adopts the] ... perspective of the artist, which in effect means seeing the art and the artist’s activity in the light of his intentions’ (our order).⁷² Thinking otherwise is slipping back towards a generalisation of the kind of broadly Gricean conception of linguistic meaning that Charles Travis has repeatedly demonstrated to be unsatisfactory.⁷³ For, *pace* Grice and his tradition, we should not interpret intention simply in psychological terms: that is, in terms of specific intentions or claims of specific individuals. Instead, there is something positive to be said here, roughly in terms of the artist’s fulfilled intentions as they are embodied in the artwork, while recognising this intention-as-embodied in recognising the artwork’s meaning, by granting that the artwork necessarily flows from human decisions and intelligence. So that the context is inten-

tional. And addressing the broadest sketch of this topic is all that is needed to reject Mumford's view. So that the reference to intention here does not commit us to the mistaken conception of intention whereby, to determine the intention implicit in this practice or rule-system, one interrogates its practitioners. For this is to turn meaning into a species of the television programme *Family Fortunes* (*Family Feud* in the USA) where the strategy for determining what is required on a particular topic is to poll a number of people: as though what they *do* say reflects what they *should* say. So, here, speaking of purpose will typically amount to a recognition of such a purpose (or intention) implicit in the project of—here—the sport, the sort of thing that is implicitly adopted by those undertaking to play that sport. Hence this is what Best means in calling his reference to purpose here a 'logical point': it is the purpose, or set of purposes, implicit in those actions.⁷⁴

By contrast, Mumford seems to imagine that—if there were a 'principal aim' here—it must be located in specific acts in the psychology of, say, the sports' players. One suggestion, then, is that the philosophy of sport might benefit from an injection of the rich discussion of intention from aesthetics: might, for instance, find materials useful in its debates in the discussions of hypothetical versus actual intentionalism.⁷⁵ And this could aid even those who recognise how far Mumford's account is from the realities of art (and art appreciation) in the twenty-first century.

IV. BEST ON CLOSING THE GAP

We have seen that no serious justification might be offered for treating sport-forms as genuinely 'analogous' to artforms, at least in respect of their amenability to means/ends analysis. So, when Best writes of 'closing the gap', does he intend us to see aesthetic sports as, somehow, *more* like art than purposive sports?⁷⁶ Or, at the least, to see that they fit less well with the means/ends contrast (which applies directly to purposive sports; and, indeed, could be used to explain why the manner of scoring is unimportant in such sports, as long as it is within the rules; namely, that these represent different means to the same end)? These questions are complicated in at least two ways: first, by the difficulty in ascribing anything approaching a purpose to individual artworks that parallels the commitment in all sport (aesthetic as well as purposive) to winning: this would not conflict, of course, with (say) the Danto-esque requirement that artworks be *about* something—for it will not be enough to aim at making an object *about* something; the artist must, at least, also *embody* that aboutness in the object. But this just sounds like a recipe reading, 'Make art!'. And then, in the second way, the diversity permitted within aesthetic sports introduces a complication. For aesthetic sports, of course, permit variety in the means of scoring, and that variety is typically reflected in what score is achieved. Certainly Best saw that the kind of 'intrinsic end' characteristic of aesthetic sports '... cannot be identi-

fied apart from the means': we cannot give a rich account of what we aim to achieve in our gymnastic vault divorced from the manner of its (intended) performance—indeed, we will scarcely mention the specific aim except (as typically in competitions) by saying what vault we are attempting.⁷⁷ For, obviously, aesthetic sports must also achieve the purpose of the sport. As Best puts it:

Maximum aesthetic success still requires the attainment of the end, and the aesthetic in any degree requires direction on to that end, but the number of ways of achieving such success is reduced in comparison with the purely purposive interest of simply accomplishing the end in an independently specifiable sense.⁷⁸

He stresses that terms such as 'vault' and 'dive' have an aesthetic dimension implicit in their meaning. For example, he points out that '...to vault over a box is not the same as to jump over it, or to get over it somehow or other'.⁷⁹ Equally, 'not any way of dropping into the water could count as even a bad dive'.⁸⁰

Two features must be stressed, however. First, the need for a judge or umpire to determine *what* was achieved is not unique to aesthetic sports. On the contrary, without a huge technological improvement in the determination of what precisely occurred (and when), there will always be the need for informed judgement, even in purposive sports. Two brief examples (one outdated) make the point. Prior to a rule-change in competitive dinghy sailing, the ability of one dinghy to manoeuvre in proximity was fixed by whether one dinghy was 'mast abeam' (that is, for the thwart of one to be ahead of an imaginary line through the mast of the other). The exact detail is not important here: the crucial facts are, first, that whether one dinghy is indeed 'mast abeam' was, of course, a factual matter: but, second, for a long while it was sorted out, in practice, by the informed judgement of the umpire or judge. So here the informed perception of the judge was what counted, faced with the issue of whether dinghy A was 'mast abeam' of dinghy B. But the judge only determined that it was so—there was no judgement (and so no specific scoring addition) to the *manner*. Similarly, whether a grid-iron footballer, having caught the ball, lands 'in control' of the ball does not seem a decision easily given over to technology. But it remains a crucial decision. Of course, the judgement is aimed at the epistemological issue: knowing what actually occurred—for instance, whether (in rugby) the ball was satisfactorily touched down.

The presence of such informed judgement in the practice of purposive sports does not, of course, render such sport subjective, since what is decided, in such cases, is a public and shareable fact. And the judgements must be informed, and the vantage points good, to reduce the likelihood of error. But it does suggest that the judgemental role may differ less in this respect than some writers have thought.⁸¹

But, second, there remains a major difference between the two cases for the two kinds of sports: for purposive sports, the judgement was basically what occurred—whether the receiver indeed had control of the ball; while, for aesthetic sports, the judgement involves the scoring system, itself tied to the manner of performance—the judge scores what has occurred. It might seem that—given the specification provided by the rules—of what should be performed (say, in ice-skating) that here too the judge was just determining whether this (elaborately specified) event occurred. In fact, in both kinds of sports, the situation is not radically changed if one can more exactly specify what is required: for the distinction Best notes concerns the manner of winning and losing in each sport—so that minimising the impact of judges in aesthetic sports (say, by finding better ways to have those judgements reflect the *merit* of the performances) would not have a bearing here. As above, that seems merely a contribution to the epistemological issue. The discussion here concerns the *nature* of that merit, not—or not directly—its recognition.⁸² And this enduring emphasis on different kinds of merit both grounds Best’s insistence that his point is a *logical* one, and explains his repeatedly setting aside the appreciation of grace, line and beauty (and such like) in purposive sports.⁸³

This gets us to the meat of our discussion here: as we have seen, for Best, it is central to the character of purposive sports that their outcomes permit many different realisations, within the rules. Thus, for example, one can score a goal in football (soccer) in many ways—although not with one’s hand (excluding some complications around own-goals). So (a) the purpose of the actions one performs to score the goal in soccer can be traced back to the more general purpose within the sport—just as the actions in a chess match could all be traced back to its goal in checkmate, even when (for instance) specific moves are purely defensive. And (b) ascription of that purpose (we might say ‘intention’) to the sports-player in typical cases is simply a consequence of his being a player; in football, as in chess. And they are not defeated if, occasionally, one does not exactly try to win—as one might not when playing against a child. But that would be a part of one’s teaching the child the game: and then it would not be incorrect to say that one was not really playing the game at all. These points come together in recognising that the actions that constitute part of, say, the soccer game retain their purposive dimension: for to explain what is required of a player at a particular moment will reflect in just this way on the purpose of those actions. Thus, one might with justice ask if some activities—say, flashy dribbling of the ball, or playing ‘keepie-upie’—counted as genuine actions within football. Of course, they can occur; and are not then part of some *other* game. But the player who did them might with justice be criticised both by fans and by team members (as well as the manager): ‘What are you doing? That has no place in the game!’ And if, sometimes, there is an explanation—the goal-keeper playing ‘keepie-upie’ so as to run-down the clock—that explanation operates by relating the seemingly

irrelevant or unsuitable activities to the general goal, if in an unfamiliar way.⁸⁴ Hence, showing that it was, after all, an action *within* soccer; and, thereby, simultaneously an action understood by reference to the purpose or goal in soccer. But then what was found aesthetically pleasing would not be, say, just a human gesture but rather an *action* within a (rule-governed) activity—here a sport. Hence it will be graceful (say) only in the way such actions can be graceful; which means that it must succeed as a pass. That, to repeat, means that purposive sports retain their purposive character, even when we take an aesthetic interest in them.

V. CONCLUSION: A FUTURE FOR THE AESTHETICS OF SPORT?

Thus far we have first laid out some fundamental ideas from David Best, and explored them partly through the contrast with Stephen Mumford. In doing so, we hope to have identified some key issues for aesthetics raised by concepts from sport or the philosophy of sport.

It might have seemed that the aesthetics of sport comprised just one question; namely, the question, ‘Can any sport-forms (also) be artforms?’; and, further, that Best’s argument had correctly answered that question in the negative. But, as Mumford’s discussion illustrates, there are other issues here for aesthetics. For, as he reminds us, many spectators of sport rightly identify their interest in that sport in terms aestheticians recognise as broadly aesthetic. And, in doing so, we can bring to our discussion a more robust conception of art than that Mumford deploys. Further, Best had already helped us to localise some of the major contours of philosophical inquiry into sports-aesthetics by contrasting the situation for what he called ‘purposive sports’ with that for his ‘aesthetic sports’—a distinction we regard as a permanent contribution to both philosophical aesthetics and the philosophy of sport. Contributions to the understanding of aesthetic sports, and especially to the nature of their scoring (or awarding merit more generally), have the potential for a positive benefit within the field, while the interactions between fandom and the disinterested character of aesthetic pleasure—which vexed Mumford—require elaborations that might at least reach beyond philosophy of sport to aid commentators.

In addition, this is a suitable venue for consideration of what to say when aesthetic appreciation leaves us cold: for most of us cannot find something in every game of soccer, as Mumford alleges is possible.⁸⁵ Of course, we should here remind ourselves that, at least sometimes, a night at the opera or the ballet does not generate the hoped-for rush of artistic appreciation—too much of the art available in any period (and hence in this one) is mundane! But, given the *potential* for rapturous experiences provided by artworks, perhaps the demands of sport (and especially of those sports played in the open air) need not be treated less charitably.

Then a further elaboration both of aesthetic sports and of the aesthetic appreciation of purposive sports seems grist for the aesthician's mill, an elaboration prefigured in the work of Best and sketched to some degree in that of Mumford. Or so we have urged. That is a recipe for an expansion of the philosophy of sport in its own terms. More interesting may be a consideration of the scope of that contrast (or one like it) in the light of recent developments in electronic gaming: can one be confident that this contrast—which seems to us sound for traditional, 'run-of-the-mill' sports—will stand up in a world of electronic gaming? Might some of those games constitute (or become) sports? This remains a profound discussion about the nature of sport in contemporary society: and part of that debate begins from our commitment neither to abandon the past of sport nor to preclude its future.

It is important for that interface between philosophy of sport and philosophical aesthetics that Best's use of the term 'aesthetic' was directed towards his purposes in elaborating his contrast (whatever terms might be used to characterise it) rather than as a clarification of the notion of aesthetic appreciation; although, of course, the term was not chosen adventitiously. If the notion of *the aesthetic*—really meant, in ways Best did not—were to be a useful tool, its contours must first be explored and understood; and then one of those contours would reflect our genuinely aesthetic appreciation of *some* grace, line, elegance, and such like in some sports. Adopting this, suitably qualified, position strikes us as an improvement over seeing aesthetic appreciation in *all* or most of the right, or anyway the best, way to engage with sport (as Mumford urges).

Moreover, concern with intention, purpose, point (and the means/ends contrast) manifest here—especially through our discussion of Mumford—points towards various more specific contexts for the application of these notions. And, too often, space has meant that we have merely gestured towards more extensive debates. Here it is useful to learn about examples of institutional-agency with less at stake than might be the case outside the sporting arena. Thus, once one grants Best's recognition that one may intend such-and-such, or have such-and-such as one's purpose, without doing so explicitly, one has begun to develop understanding of a simple class of actions—ones with explicit rules—against which to explore the deployment of excuses, defeaters, interferers, and the like.⁸⁶ Indeed sports, as rule-based activities, often offer objects of comparison for moral decisions and actions⁸⁷—although, as Wittgenstein noted, most of what could be said is not sport-specific; and hence could have been elaborated just through discussion of chess.⁸⁸ But that is only true because chess provides a wide variety of occasions (or contexts) to address our obligations to one another; or to identify the alternatives to frivolity or other kinds of non-seriousness. Here, it now seems unsurprising that Duchamp was a chess enthusiast. For, like art, sport has something of the joker or the dilettante about it: human life does not require sport, although excluding it may be a recipe for an impoverished life. Then this is

also the place to remind ourselves of sports' ultimate claim to seriousness: that it is *not life and death*, but *more important* than that!⁸⁹

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NOTES

1. Mumford 2012c.
2. Or, as he would insist, a 'metaphysicist'. See Mumford 2012a, 100-101.
3. Mumford 2012c, 3.
4. Mumford 2012c, 3. A complication: Mumford 2012b, 372 now feels the need for an account oscillating between '[t]he fully-fledged purist [who] sees only the aesthetic aspects of sport and the fully-fledged partisan [who] sees only the competitive aspects'. For criticisms of that account, see Culbertson 2015.
5. Mumford 2012c, 3.
6. Mumford 2012c, 7. Consideration of anti-essentialism in aesthetics might have made Mumford more wary here: in so far as he has a reply, it seems to draw on ideas from Dickie 1974 and Dickie 1984: see Mumford 2012c, 31-40.
7. Mumford 2012c, 41.
8. Mumford 2012b, 372.
9. This might be denied: certainly, it is not true of all games. But, if necessary, let it be a stipulation here.
10. 'The Aesthetic in Sport', 1974, later reprinted—in an expanded version—in his ground-breaking collection *Philosophy and Human Movement* (1978), from which quotations in this paper are drawn.
11. Or, as with ski-jumping, a mixture of both. In this way, the contrast is rightly taken to be exhaustive. Best 1978, 104-105.
12. Again (see note 5), the judges provide only some of the success in ski-jumping.
13. McFee 2015, 83.
14. Mumford 2012c, 60-61.
15. Kant and Pluhar 1987, 53: '...devoid of all interest'.
16. Adams 2011, 195.
17. Adams 2011, 194.
18. McFee 2015, 208.
19. Best 1978, 108.
20. Best 1978, 101.
21. Best 1978, 104.
22. Best 1978, 105.
23. Best 1978, 101.
24. In fact, we would distinguish *artistic interest* (that is, one's interest in works in fine arts) from *aesthetic interest* more generally; and correspondingly for value: see McFee 2011, 1-17.) Best 1978, 115-116 might well concur. But his point was expressed concessively: it just aligns the broadly *aesthetic* with the non-purposiveness implicit in the attention here of Kant and Pluhar 1987, 53 to what is '...devoid of all interest'.
25. 'the laws of the game': Best 1978, 103.
26. Best 1978, 105.
27. Best 1978, 104.
28. A fuller account would have to consider 'getting one's just deserts'; and might well incorporate the literature on moral luck: see, for instance, Williams 1982.
29. Danto 1997, 195; Danto 2013, 37; Best 1978, 115.
30. Danto 2013, 37.
31. Best 1978, 122.
32. At best, 'a conception of life issues' is just a place-holder: McFee 2011, 58-63.
33. Best 1992, 174.
34. One way to elaborate this is to stress that the artist aims to do X in such a way as to..., where '...' is completed by inserting something *aesthetic* in nature in what Best (1978, 99-100) calls the *conceptual* use of 'aesthetic' (which includes the beautiful and the ugly), whereas the sports-person just aims to do Y within the rules. X and Y need not be aesthetic (in the relevant sense), but '...' is. Someone might argue that, although some art aims to be neither beautiful nor ugly, such an aim is, in itself, properly evaluable in aesthetic terms; to aim to be aesthetically neutral

- in the context of art* is still an *aesthetic* aim in the sense of ‘aesthetic’ of relevance here.
35. It is important to stress that the distinction between purposive and aesthetic sports is not a distinction between the competitive and the non-competitive; aesthetic sports are normally just as competitive as purposive sports.
 36. Mumford 2012c, 31-40.
 37. Mumford 2012c, 9.
 38. Mumford 2012c, 10.
 39. Mumford 2012c, 41, and Mumford 2012b, 372.
 40. Mumford 2012c, 18.
 41. Or two, if one also considers what we would call ‘the drama argument’. See Culbertson 2015, 192.
 42. Best 1978, 104-105.
 43. Best 1978, 104.
 44. Best 1978, 106.
 45. Mumford 2012c, 41.
 46. (Mumford 2012c, 43); Elliot 1974, 111.
 47. Danto 2013, 25.
 48. Danto 2013, 37.
 49. Danto 2013, 131.
 50. Mumford 2012c, 44.
 51. Mumford 2012c, 44.
 52. Mumford 2012c, 45.
 53. Mumford 2012c, 44.
 54. Mumford 2012c, 44.
 55. Mumford 2012c, 44.
 56. Best 1978, 115.
 57. Best 1978, 115.
 58. Danto 1981, see Best 1978, 122 quoted above.
 59. Mumford 2012c, 7.
 60. Mumford 2012c, 7.
 61. Walton 2008.
 62. Mumford 2012c, 41.
 63. Mumford 2012c, 42.
 64. Mumford 2012c, 42.
 65. Mumford 2012c, 43.
 66. Mumford 2012c, 44-45.
 67. Mumford 2012c, 44.
 68. Mumford 2012c, 45.
 69. See Culbertson (forthcoming) for something on this ‘by-product’ argument.
 70. This is a hugely vexed issue in the literature. Here, we have chosen simply to assert our view, with some references, as reflecting all that is strictly needed here.
 71. Cavell 2002, 36.
 72. Wollheim 1987, 37.
 73. see Grice 1989, esp. 25. Travis 2008, 9-11; 19-64; 65-93.
 74. Best 1978, 104.
 75. See Carroll 2001, 190-213; Levinson 2006, 302-313.
 76. Best 1978, 105.
 77. Best 1978, 104.
 78. Best 1978, 107.
 79. Best 1978, 104.
 80. Best 1978, 105.
 81. Contrast Mandelbaum 2004, 24 for the suggestion that ‘[b]aseball, football and basketball are more clearly contests of merit than ... individual competitions’.
 82. Perhaps this might conflict with some cases in aesthetic sports if, there, the failure to be seen doing such-and-such might count as a failure to do it!
 83. As Cavell 2002, x points out, remarks such as ‘so on’ are hugely misleading here in suggesting either that the other cases will resemble at all closely those given previously; or that there was a finite list here.
 84. A referee for the journal suggested the following case of a famous moment in footballing history when an Ajax player (from their great period: 1970-1973) in the Real Madrid stadium performed such ‘keepie-upie’ five or six times, while in a winning position; and commented: ‘It was a gesture of superiority too, part of the game, and historically so!’ We agree—this example shows a justifiable occasion for what might otherwise be self-indulgent or even harmful to one’s side. It also highlights the connection of some sporting events to cultural events: this would have been a significant game for the ‘cultural memory’ of both sides—and that fact is beside the point of whether the match itself was interesting. [Our thanks to the referee for this excellent case.]
 85. Mumford 2012c, 17.
 86. See Geach, in Anscombe and Geach 1961, 102.
 87. As recognised by Mumford 2012c, 87-98, among others.
 88. Wittgenstein 2003, 223.
 89. An earlier version of some of this material benefitted from its discussion at the meeting of the Pacific Division of the American

Society for Aesthetics, Asilomar, California, April, 2015; our thanks to them all, and especially to Alva Nöe. It has also

benefitted substantially from the referees from this journal.

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