

SOCCER VS. THE STATE

Tackling Football and Radical Politics

Gabriel Kuhn

Soccer has turned into a multi-billion dollar industry. Professionalism and commercialization dominate its global image. Yet the game retains a rebellious side, maybe more so than any other sport co-opted by money makers and corrupt politicians. From its roots in working-class England to political protests by players and fans, and a current radical soccer underground, the notion of football as the “people’s game” has been kept alive by numerous individuals, teams, and communities.

This book not only traces this history, but also reflects on common criticisms: soccer ferments nationalism, serves right-wing powers, fosters competitiveness. Acknowledging these concerns, alternative perspectives on the game are explored, down to practical examples of egalitarian DIY soccer!

Soccer vs. *the State* serves both as an orientation for the politically conscious football supporter and as an inspiration for those who try to pursue the love of the game away from television sets and big stadiums, bringing it to back alleys and muddy pastures.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gabriel Kuhn was born in Innsbruck, Austria, in 1972. He was deeply immersed in soccer culture as a teenager, and became one of the country’s youngest semi-professional players. Tired of both the demands and the politics, he abandoned his career for studies, travels, and activism, but still joins pick-up games whenever he gets the chance. Gabriel has published widely on underground culture and politics, and founded the DIY publishing outfit Alpine Anarchist Productions in 2000. Previous publications with PM Press include *Life Under the Jolly Roger: Reflections on Golden Age Piracy* (author, 2010), *Sober Living for the Revolution: Hardcore Punk, Straight Edge, and Radical Politics* (editor, 2010), and *Gustav Landauer: Revolution and Other Writings* (editor/translator, 2010).

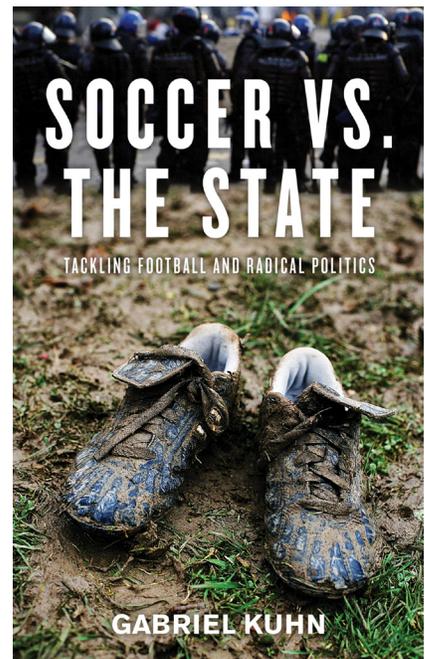
ACCOLADES

“There is no sport that reflects the place where sports and politics collide quite like soccer. Athlete-activist Gabriel Kuhn has captured that by going to a place where other sports writers fear to tread. Here is the book that will tell you how soccer explains the world while offering means to improve it.”

—Dave Zirin, author *Bad Sports: How Owners are Ruining the Games We Love*

“I was greatly encouraged by this work. It provided me with alternative ways to play, enjoy, and talk about football, leaving behind nationalism and the exclusiveness of elite athletes. When we applied the clues and tips included here to the anti-G8 football matches in Japan in 2008, we were able to communicate, interact, and connect with many people, regardless of nationality, race, and religion. I recommend this book to all who seriously hope for an alternative space in sports. Unite the world through football, and reclaim sports!”

—Minobu, Rage Football Collective (RFC), Japan



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