





Iconoclast Publications 5  
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**“IT DIDN’T  
TAKE PLACE”  
DOES NOT MEAN  
IT DIDN’T  
HAPPEN**





Run and Die  
Race is  
Everything





Wäinö Aaltonen, *Paavo Nurmi* (1922/1955), Turku, Finland. Paavo Nurmi (1897-1973), *'the Phantom Finn'*, was a legendary athlete and Olympic champion, extremely important to the identity of a young nation, who "went beyond the limits of Man" as *Le miroir des sports* wrote in 1924 following Nurmi's triumphs in Paris. Wäinö Aaltonen (1894-1966) was a sculptor, who took part in the creation of an idea of a pure Finnish race in the 20's and 30's. Despite his interest in cubist experiments, this is the style the official Finland requested from him – heroic "nazistische Kunst", as one foreign visitor to the Wäinö Aaltonen Museum in Turku once commented to his hosts in disgust.



# Theses on the Body Politic

*Theses on the Body Politic* is a continuing series of tableaux, depicting a secret society of men in different positions. The positions are renderings of social and political processes, using human bodies as building blocks. Previously, the Theses have appeared in *Framework: The Finnish Art Review 1/2004* ([www.framework.fi](http://www.framework.fi), ISSN 1459-6288) and in *Truth/In/Formation* (Iconoclast Publications 4, 2003, ISBN 952-91-5799-1)



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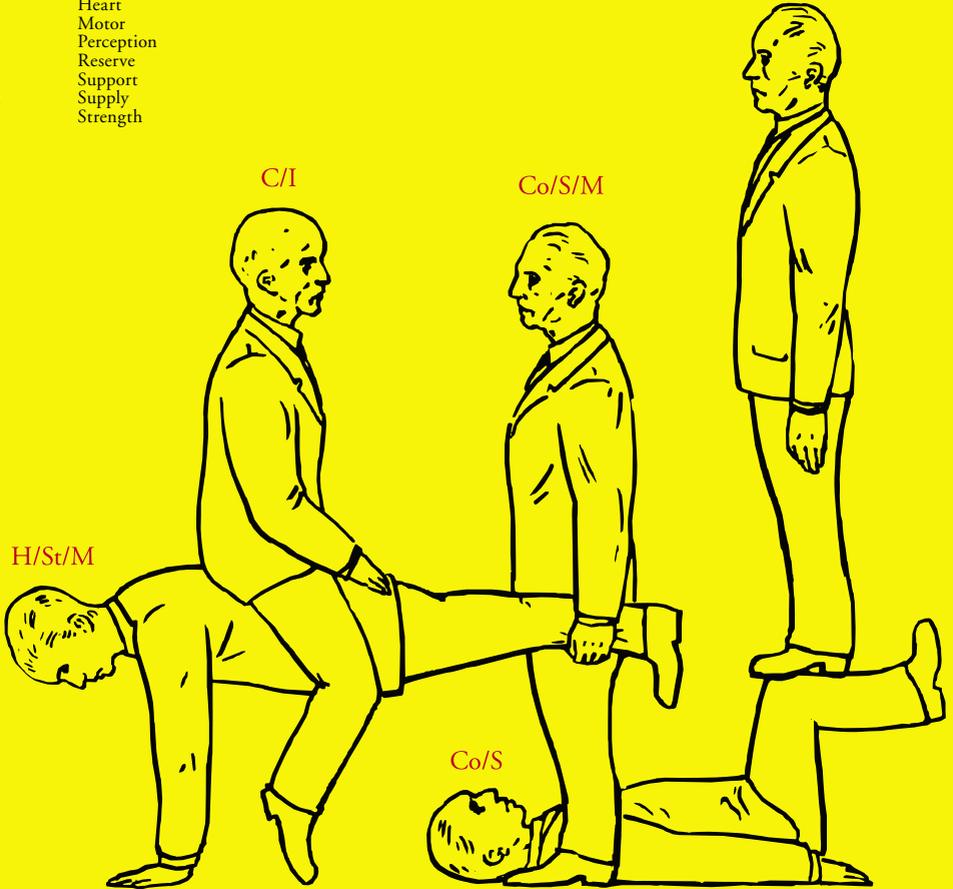
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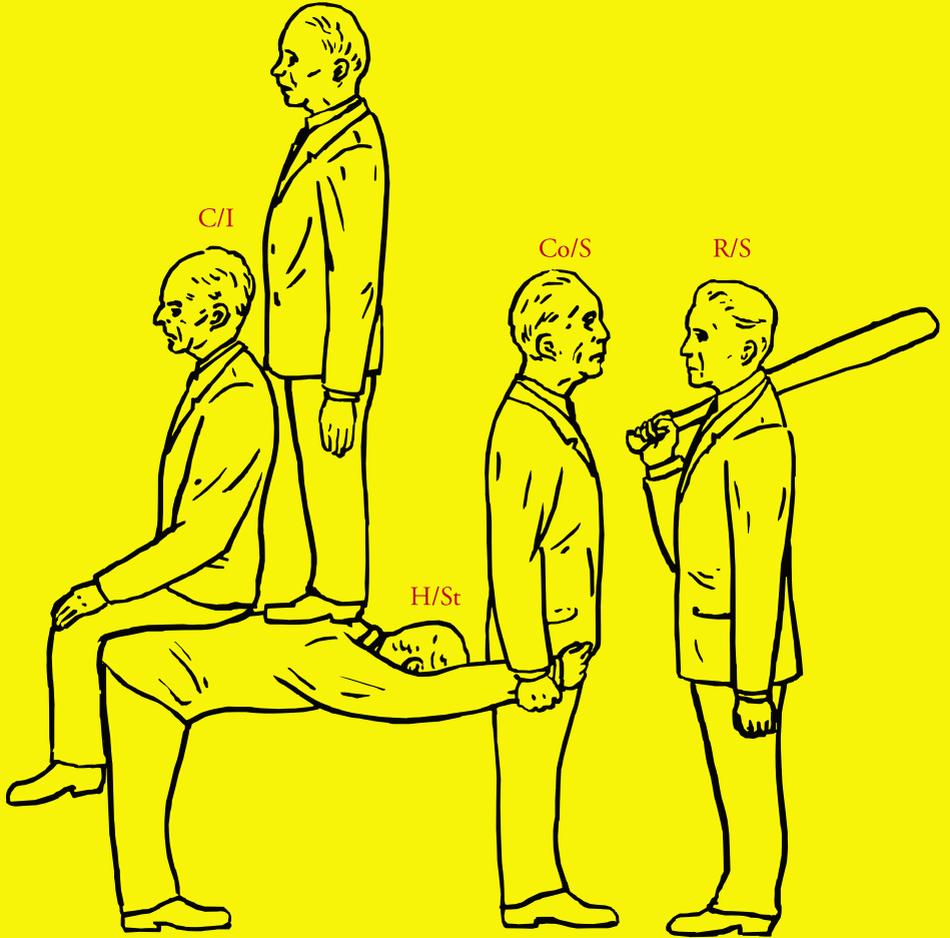
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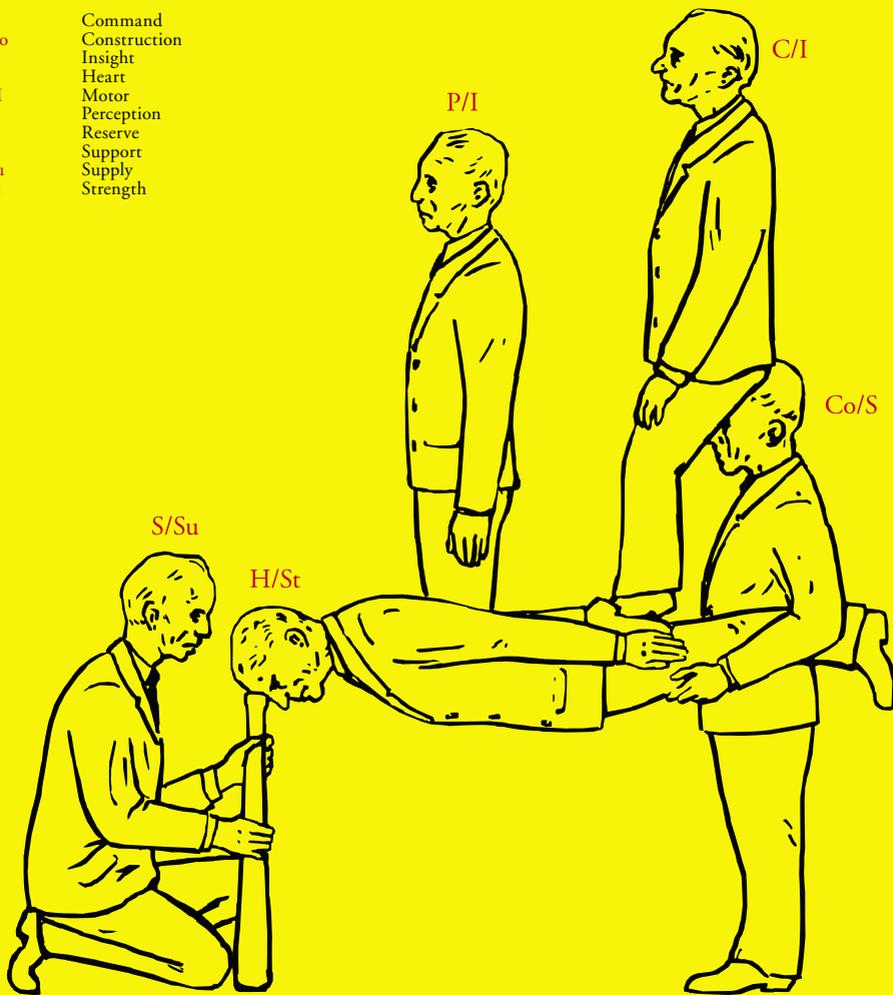
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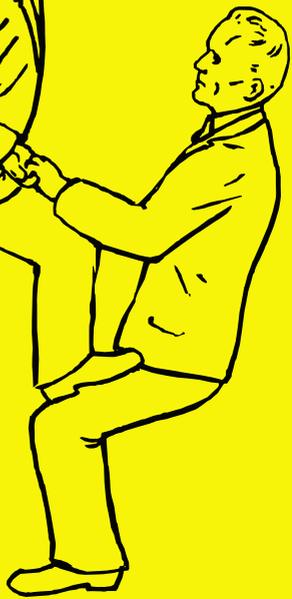
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# Recollections 00

I hated the fact that I never could hit the ball. You had three strikes, and every time you missed. Then you automatically burned and were moved to the deads section – until your turn came up again. Not a very motivating sport, I thought at the time. I'd rather have played football, which we of course did half of the time.

And when my team was playing the field, I was situated at the far end near the baseline as I had no real interest in the game. When the star athlete of the opposite team hit the ball – I could hear the firm snap as the bat hit the ball in perfect angle – I had to try to catch it... and failed every time, apart from a couple of dreamlike catches. So the ball, at an almost unnatural speed, rolled further and further, over the black charcoal track towards the far end of a full size football court. I ran behind, the always unbelievably over-enthusiastic team-mates yelling and the opposite side clearing their bases. At this point, I had all the time in the world to return the ball to the home base.



# Recollections 01

In 1980 my grandfather Kalevi Virtanen (a social-democrat traitor of the communist cause) brought me a souvenir from the Moscow Olympics: the mascot of the games in a cheap pin format. '**Mishka the bear**' came in stamped copper, smiling, wearing something green or red. This was kind of a disappointment, as I knew there were large teddy-bear type Olympic Mishkas available. The other day, I googled Mishka and got this one which definitely isn't the bear of my memories!



# Three Models:

'Run and Die'

'Run and Swerve'

'Run and Flee'



# 'Run and Die'



## 01 Law-Lawless

- a) Law/Rule
- b) Lawless/Desert/Smooth space

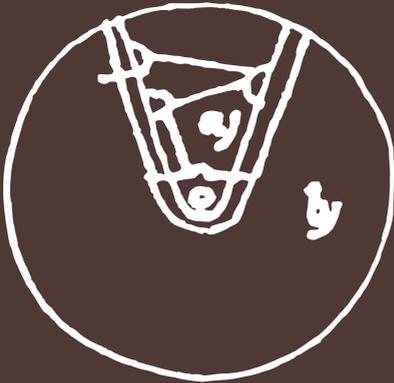
The controlled space of Finnish baseball is a sector drawn on the plane of everyday experience where the subject is situated in the middle. The game has coherent rules and shared objectives – an internal logic trying to legitimize itself as a stratum. The outside is 'lawless', without a cartography or any ratio.

## 02 Means to an End

- a) Straight line to an end/Rule of Law
- b) Horizon
- c) Death/Sacrifice/Suture/Actualisation/Transcendence

The arrow of 'Run and Die', a straight line to an end, beyond the horizon. The idea, postponed and transcendental, can only be reached through rigorous practise and willingness to ultimate sacrifice. The realisation of an idea is everything, even if it means the death of an idealist. This could also be called the 'Marathon model'.

01



02



# 'Run and Swerve'

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## 01 AlphaOmega-Expedition

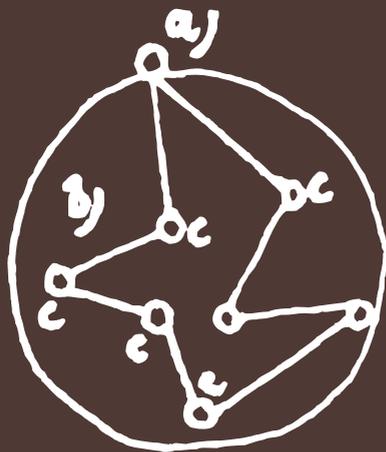
- a) Outside/Start-Finish
- b) Desert/'Wilderness'/Smooth space
- c) Control point

The hybrid space of orienteering consists of the alpha-omega point of reference and a path structured around control points that are situated in the 'wilderness', the outside or the object of reason to be mastered. An expedition is launched, but it must be effective, fast and careful not to stray from path.

## 02 Failure of 01

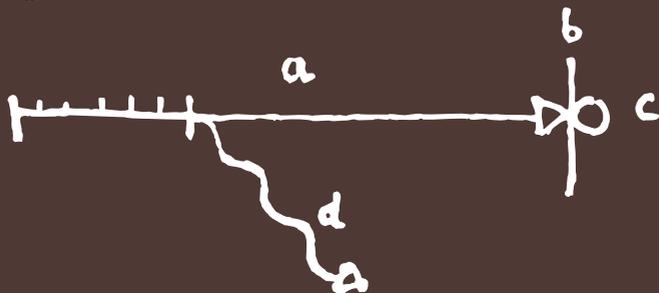
- a) Straight line to an end/Rule of Law
- b) Horizon
- c) Death/Sacrifice/Suture/Actualisation/Transcendence
- d) "She Swerved from the path of Reason."

This corresponds to the arrow of 'Run and Die'. The journey starts well, but at some point the track is lost. The cause could be anything, most likely lack of practise or disdain for the rules. The path of 'Run and Swerve' has potentially no end or it could wind back to either to the start or to the finish. This could also be known as the 'Odyssey Model'.



01

02



# 'Run and Flee'

## 01 Openings

Grid = Striated space/City-State-Routine

Symbol = An opening into multiplicity/Virtual space

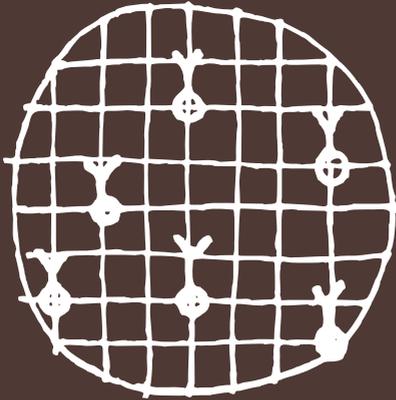
In state models (despotic models, state capitalism, market capitalism), the field of experience is usually striated, that is the Rule of Law has become immanent. Or you could say that the 'wilderness' has been charted. What is needed, are openings/interruptions to the virtual space of multiplicity, where all the past, present and future possibilities are present at the same time.

## 02 The Middle

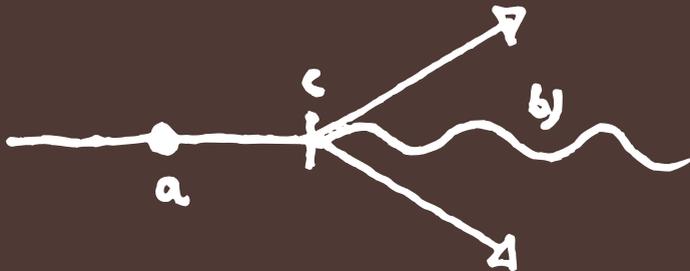
- a) The Middle (not-start-nor-finish)
- b) Multiplicity/The outside of Law
- c) Situation/Interruption

The model 'Run and Flee' is based on the idea of being always in the middle and to trace multiple lines of flight, of adventure, to be always ready to bounce to or forth, to escape, to open up. Often help is needed to achieve this. A little reminder... Thus the beyond is lost forever, it can't last, it has no meaning anymore.

01



02



# The Reminder

This time the Reminder is a sign. An abstract version of the time-tree, depicting paths of time. The design lies – actually, time flows in a fractal dimension, it is a multiplicity of different times, of different rhythms and directions.

Seeing the sign should remind of a reality, where all the possibilities, both actual and virtual, are present. The path we have taken or, more often, someone has taken for us, is only one possibility. The sign urges to draw a line of flight, to be adventurous, to ... be a romantic in the age of reason?

Remembering that which did not happen is often of utmost importance. And that which did happen, always follows a certain pattern. Every past moment, in which the present doesn't recognise itself, is about to be irrevocably lost. Time is not outside of us – it is created in our acts. Thus we can say: "It didn't take place" does not mean it didn't happen.



# The Adventure

Bicycles and the spirit of adventure. A bit naïve, but in a good way. Below is an extract from our portfolio, giving an overview of 'Adventure' (*Social Toolbox 5*), an Iconoclast project carried out in the summer of 2003 in Lahti, Finland.

The Seikkailu (Adventure) bicycles were a project for Kekesi city art exhibition in Lahti, Finland. The project consisted of two parts: the bikes (two of them) which were left unlocked in the downtown area of Lahti and a digital print for the actual exhibition space, depicting Iconoclast venturing into the landscape.

The bikes were decorated with Adventure logotypes and ornamental motifs, pointing to various archetypal genres of "classical" adventure (the pirates, the cowboys, the knights...). In addition to these the bikes were equipped with the more official looking badges reminding the user of the time-tree opening to a vast set of possibilities (front) and of the fact that the bike was no-one's property (back; "free of exchange value").

The concept was quite simple. The bike was an embodied, fully functional sign of the idea of adventure. To encounter one suddenly, in city space, was an almost magical call for adventure, a call demanding the person to break the routine and to choose a path never taken before. In this sense to name the bikes simply "Adventure" - in fact quite a childish or naive act; we call this attitude "conceptual naivism" - was to emphasise the connection to one's own memories of childhood when the magic of the everyday was directly experienced. Of course the bicycle itself is a comment; in the early 20th Century it was seen as the ultimate tool for experiencing unrestrained freedom, and still today the bike takes you to places with the kinetic energy produced by yourself, free of any external energy sources or vast technological systems.

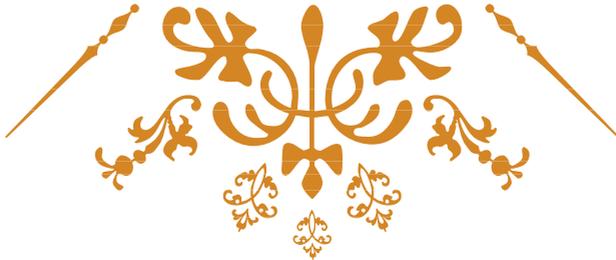
"Adventure is about taking a path not taken before. It is to break the routine, to revolt against the obvious... Before, in childhood, it was: indians, cowboys, pirates, detectives, mysteries, lost cities, unseen worlds, far-away planets and foreign kingdoms and realms... You don't have to read this to connect to the spirit of adventure. All you have to do is to tap into your own memories, your own unconsciousness and see how it was to see the world for the first time."





*Not the End  
Nor the Beginning*

*But the Middle*



# A Game of Adventure

## Concept for a Book

>Adventure is becoming, *becoming-other*. Adventure is about multiplicity, the greatest (infinite) set of possibilities, in other words: virtuality. Adventure is a desert, a smooth space, open time. It has no direction, just movement, momentum, a force if you want. Nor is there, obviously, any goal – the horizon is beautiful and there is no need to see the beyond. Adventure is not about ideas. >Game has rules. Rules are the only thing that make the game coherent. Often there is a goal, a strategy and methods to accomplish the objectives. Sports – a coherent system upon itself, irrational, or arbitrary seen from outside. In a game, you have to play by the rules or the game will become obsolete. Game is *becoming-like-other*. >So: *a game of adventure*... A game with no rules. A game closer to play. A gamely set of situations, of possibilities. Perhaps we don't even need the concept of game here; but it creates a tension, an oxymoron – it forces to think *through* goal-thought. What would a game with no rules be like? And what does the lack of rules and the lack of objectives do to a game? >Perhaps... To be more pragmatic... And to implement some objectives, after all. Perhaps we should say: to hell with rules, perhaps some parameters... do you think? Just to be able to actually *do* something to/for/about/with something, apart from the act of speech. So we come to the Game of Adventure, a set of parameters to unleash the forces of the virtual, to actually *act*. >Now, we have to imagine the parameters – a system open enough, not a system, a set. A set of little machines, able to build upon each other, able to merge and play together, able to open up – and keep open. Yes... A little book, perhaps? A little machine-without-wheels. *A book of instructions*. >Thus, we have a book of instructions, helping in an act of adventure. Truly *A Game of Adventure*. A book, a booklet very familiar to us in principle: the catechism, the wheel of Buddha – a set of steps to an end. Only this time the end is obscure – it would, of course, be tempting to say there's no end (and be honestly consistent in the discourse developed above). But: The book would have an author, and thus, at least a hidden – unconscious? – ends. At this point, in the name of honesty, the only possible option is to reveal ourselves. We are an artist duo called Iconoclast. We define ourselves as social and political, always critical, actors in the field of everyday life. We have an objective: to change this life for better. And to fight against fascist tendencies, against the political and economical superstructures that seek to undermine what is truly human. >An adventure. A game with no rules but parameters. No objectives but still a hope for something else. Thus the book, *A Game of Adventure*, must start with a practical critique of rational thought. It must denounce the very principle of the Rule, the ratio, and substitute it with a free rhythm, an element which has no coherent structure but an ability to bring forces together. We need to take a trip to the desert, to the steppe, to high seas. Not up to the mountain or deep into a cave – we want to keep moving, not to stay put. We need escape velocity. But alone we are nothing. Freedom is not independence. Freedom is a joint effort – free individuals, free communities. No man is an island as they say. Rather, we are integral parts of the same fluctuating field. We might sometimes start alone, but we end up together. >So, the book enables this. The book is always the same, but the path is always different. The parameters remain, but the circumstances vary. And it might take an hour or a lifetime, or many rounds, to accomplish what we wanted you to want to accomplish. It is a kind of a Bildungsroman, not a picture of something, but an active part of it. Neither another book on how to improve yourself, because the results may vary and this is the whole idea. The book is for you, and you are free to use it and to thrash it. In our very first project we wrote: "We have given you the tools. Use them, thrash them – and build your own instead."■

# Tahko Remembers

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In 1898 Lauri "Tahko" Pihkala was first introduced to a ballgame, which he later was to develop into the modern Finnish baseball. The memory from the school yard is not a good one.

*"I became inspired in the game right away, but almost immediately I ran into a bitter experience... My team was in a desperate situation – one of us had to reach the home base to keep our game alive. Without asking anybody, I made an attempt, ran for my life and burned at the last inch hearing the roar of my team-mates in the background. We lost according to the unwritten rules of the game that were never explained to us. The rest of the semester I was repeatedly reminded of the incident. This made me bitter: how can a whole team be penalised just because one player dares to be vigorous?"*

Tahko was bitter, because the ultimate sacrifice he had given to the team didn't buy him the status of a hero. A new game, a new set of rules and a new ideology leading the way were obviously needed.



# Tahko Contributes...

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Lauri "Tahko" Pihkala (1888-1981) was the father of the Finnish national game, *pesäpallo* (Finnish baseball) and his role was significant in the Finnish national fitness training programme from the 20's to the 40's. For Pihkala, himself an Olympic athlete, sport was training for war. Sport and fitness for war were 'twin brothers': records on the field and track correlated directly with activity in the frontline as both required top performance. Thus he also equated national fitness with national sentiment and saw that the civil duty of every Finnish man was to keep in shape. Courage, discipline and contempt for death were of highest value.

Pihkala visited the United States in 1912-1913. He was impressed by the national fitness of the Americans, though he thought baseball was boring. Later, in Finnish baseball, the players were to be trained in throwing, catching and throwing back a hand-grenade, and ducking or throwing oneself into the trenches. Later in life, he thought one of his greatest achievements was to root Finnish baseball in the curriculum of elementary school physical education.



# and Writes History

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In the first part of his *Sports in the Classical Period and Athletics in Modern Olympics* from 1924 Pihkala states in the very beginning that the spiritual development of Man did not precede but followed the physical. Thus sport is as old as is the Man as a species. Sport, and thus civilization itself, were born in the sub-arctic region, where hunting was necessary to stay alive.<sup>1</sup> He writes: *"What else than training for hunting and fighting was the basis of sport in those times: running and jumping, throwing, clubbing, shooting, wrestling and boxing. In those times every man who wished to stay alive had to be an able huntsman and a soldier, that is a good athlete – thus became sport both an everyday task and a national service."* To stress the point, Pihkala cites Socrates, one of the Ancients: *"In regard to physical exercise no citizen is to be an amateur: his civil duty is to keep in good shape, to be ready to serve his fatherland in the blink of an eye."*

According to Pihkala, those who were less reluctant to train themselves, succeeded in life, stayed alive longer and produced more offspring. Gradually, training became an instinct as the weak disappeared. But acting upon instinct was just play: *"Only man is capable of training, an activity requiring systematic, far-sighted deliberation and patience that are essential for sport."* Pihkala proceeds to give a definition of sport:

*"Sport is more or less methodical training for martial tasks that appeal to our instincts either because of their ancient origins or because of the speed they implicate in order to gain the maximum performance."*

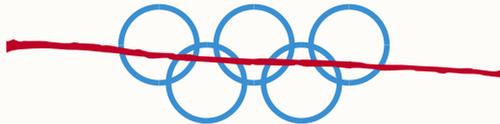
<sup>1</sup>The superiority of North over the South Pihkala handily deduces from the Olympic results of the previous games.



The long-ball team of the 7th Machine Gun Company with its trophy in 1921.

# Facts 01

USA, among others, was boycotting the Moscow summer games in 1980 because of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. This was cold war and the Muja'Hadeen were still friends of the CIA. I was six years old at the time and had a recurring nightmare of squadrons of bombers on the orange-red sky. The same year, a Finnish punk-rocker called Pelle Miljoona sang about a sky filled with hot steel and advised wild children to flee and take the spark of hope with them.



# XII OLYMPIA HELSINKI 1940

AS THE IDEA MATERIALIZES  
THE DREAM DIES

# Recollections 02

There was an aura of mystery especially in one of my great-grandfather Einari's affairs. He had a miniature Finnish flag, approximately 40 cm in height, with a bear supporting itself by means of the pole. It dated back to the year 1940, my father informed me, when the Olympics were to be held in Helsinki, but had eventually been cancelled. This fact, the flag being a material part of something that never was, made the item very valuable, my father told me. No one ever asked great-grandfather, though, how the bear came to his possession.

However, Einari often liked to tell another story, dating back to 1910's: in his youth he was working as a farmhand for a land-owner in the Southwest of Finland. The Civil War had just started and the Reds and the Whites were fighting ferociously. Einari's friend at the farm thought it was a duty to join the Reds. Einari himself thought it was better just to stick to the work he was hired to do. Anyway, the friend took off and was never seen since. This great-grandfather always said laughing: "What a stupid fellow my friend was to take to arms!" Not taking to arms, nor choosing sides, Einari died at the age of 94 in 1994, the year I turned 20.

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# Facts 02.1

The bear originally had Olympic rings in its claws and, instead of the Finnish flag, there was the Olympic flag. 8000 pieces were manufactured and they were sold for 50 marks a piece to help to raise money for the games. After the games were cancelled and modifications made, the bears were sold at two separate events at the Olympic Stadium in 1940: the Finnish-Swedish-German international and the memorial games for those killed in Finno-Russo war of 1939-1940. The profits went to the disabled veterans.

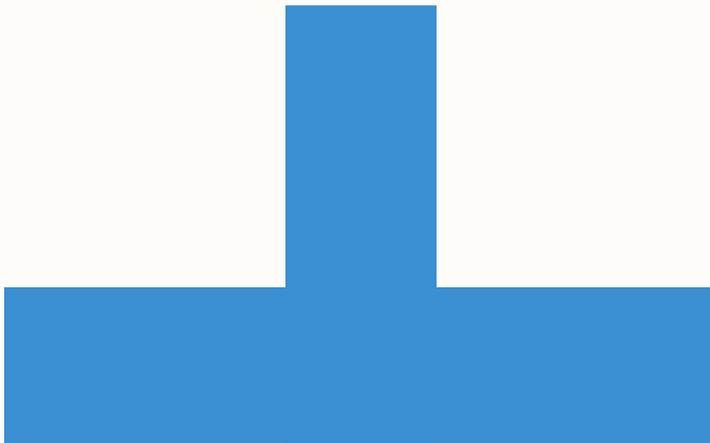


Toivo Jäntti & Yrjö Lindgren, *Helsinki Olympic Stadium*, 'The White Symphony' (1938)

# Facts 02.2

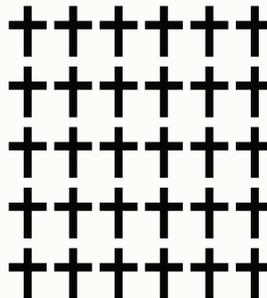
In Finland the Second World War broke out when Stalin launched his attack following a secret pact with Nazi Germany. What followed, was a winter war which ended in March 1940. The Olympics were cancelled and the athletes were called to arms. Summer games became a winter war – and sport became what it originally was: death.

Later, in the Preface to his *Training Companion to the Finnish Man* (1943) Lauri Pihkala characterized the outbreak of the war a couple of years earlier as an almost welcome release of tension. The war realised his vision of a nation of fit men battling for “everything that is dear and sacred”, as Commander-in-Chief Mannerheim wrote in his last order of the day which announced the peace on March 14th 1940.



Finland lost 22 830 men, 43 557 were injured. Soviet Union lost (in the estimate of the Finnish Army) circa 200 000 soldiers, and 600 000 were injured.

The war continued in 1941: 66 000 dead, 188 000 injured. On the Soviet side, an estimate of 305 000 is given.



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### The Marathon, the Bear and the Origin of Olympic Games

We are all familiar with the story of Philippides the messenger, who died after delivering a message of victory and a warning to Athens. The achievement was crowned with a heroic death, the only way of ensuring a life after a great deed. Thus Marathon is literally ‘Running and Dying’, a tiger’s leap to the beyond, a transcendence.

According to Tahko Pihkala, the origin of Olympic games is a ceremonial burial of a war hero, where the hero is remembered by competing in the skills the slain had excelled in. The Olympics are originally memorial games and thus undeniably tied to war and ultimate sacrifice. Pihkala uses the term ‘*peijaiset*’ which in the Fenno-Ugric tradition refers to an appeasement ceremony held in honour of the lord of the forest, the bear killed in the chase.



Flea market in Turku, Finland, May 2004

# Recollections 03

I remember taking part in endless orienteering rounds in the school's nearby woods. There sometimes were perverts in the woods, one with an orange Citymarket plastic bag in his head or covering his genitals. The control points were of the same orange. None of us ever understood how the compass and the map should be used correctly – these were familiar woods, after all, so we just walked around and hoped to find a control point by accident.

*n*



# Facts 03

Orienteering was part of the White Civil Guard movement's military training in the 1920's. '*Scout running*,' as the primitive form of orienteering was then known, wasn't very popular. It lacked coherent rules. There were no maps – the location of the control points was just described verbally. At this point there were exercises at the controls, too. Many times there were no winners or losers as nobody could perform the route correctly or the control points just weren't found by any of the contestants. From sport/military practise's viewpoint, getting lost and not getting the job done, was of course seen as a failure.

Intertextual Reference

**MONTY PYTHON'S  
FLYING CIRCUS**

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SEEK FINAL**

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Aired 12/14/1972

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Run and Die, 2004

*[www.socialtoolbox.com](http://www.socialtoolbox.com)*