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## The mainstreaming of disability cricket in England and Wales: Integration 'One Game' at a time

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### ABSTRACT

Disability sport in Great Britain has, since its genesis over sixty years ago, gained greater public profile with each passing decade. Arguably, this is a result of a more direct, interventionist approach from the British government and the Sport Councils into the field of disability sport over the past twenty years. In this paper we highlight a case of integration within sport by examining the process of mainstreaming disability cricket within England and Wales. Following a review of the extant literature in this area we will draw upon Bourdieu's practice theory in order to examine the impact of the implementation of policy on the management of issues of disability in mainstream cricket. Longitudinal ethnographic data (including participant observation and semi-structured interviews) was collected on the organizations involved in this mainstreaming process. Informants were either involved in the delivery of disability cricket or in the management of disability sports partnerships. Preliminary findings suggest that true integration is still unrealized. Whether the policy seeks true integration or whether mainstreaming is simply another modernizing process seeking greater efficiencies from sport organizations is unclear. Nevertheless a number of institutional pressures from the proximal and distal external environments have provided support for generating mainstreaming initiatives at management levels. In addition to these findings we argue that an additional outcome of this research is to demonstrate the suitability of a relational approach for conceptualizing policy, its interpretation by sport managers and the implementation strategies that follow.

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### 1. Explanation of terms

Before outlining some key definitions in this paper it is important to stress that understanding nomenclature as it relates to disability sport is a social constructed terrain. Terms are given meaning by a variety of cultural practices and discourses. Two perspectives that present opposing approaches to how disability is considered in the management practices of leisure, culture and sport (see Aitchison, 2003, 2009; Darcy & Taylor, 2009) are the medical and social models. The medical model posits that it is the structure and organization of medical institutions which place limits on individuals who are perceived as disabled. One of the leading figures in the development of disability studies Oliver (1990) referred to this as the main tenant of a social (oppression) theory of disability. Following Oliver we will explore through this paper the manner in 'which

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disability is 'produced' as an individual and medical problem within capitalist society' (Oliver, 1990, p. 11). Specifically of course here we are looking at one component of the capitalist system English National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and how they manage and organize the integration of disability cricket. In order to achieve this aim we ground our understanding of disability in the social model. The social model of disability challenges the medical model that may be seen to enhance oppression by arguing that 'the responsibility for the disability lies with society rather than with the individual' (Thomas, 2003, p. 106). In reading this paper, we ask readers to be mindful of the social model, which is a useful tool that frames the social construction of disability. With this social model in mind we now attempt to examine three further concepts that require elucidation; mainstreaming, integration and inclusion.

What is meant by mainstreaming in the context of disability sport? Thomas (2004) study into the modernization of English NGBs found that Sport England (the English Sports Council) deemed that sporting systems and structures for people who have a disability should be the same for those who are able-bodied. Hence, the Sport England wanted 'the responsibility for the organization and provision of sport for disabled people' placed within 'sport-specific governing' NGBs (2004, p. 114). Therefore, mainstreaming in this paper is defined as the process of integrating the delivery and organization of all organized sporting opportunities to ensure a more coordinated and inclusive sporting system. This definition clearly raises some issues that require further clarification. In the first instance integration and inclusion require differentiation. Integration strives to increase opportunities for the participation of a person who has a disability within sport's clubs and governing bodies (adapted from *Advocacy for Inclusion, 2013*) and hence is concerned with the placement and location of athletes with disabilities within sport's governance structure. Integration takes numerous forms. Berry's (1996) theory of integration demonstrated the relationship between a wider culture that seeks to integrate a particular subculture. This theory posits four modes of relationship; the first true integration which can be seen as harmony between both cultures where each other's values are adopted and integrated. The second type is assimilation whereby the minority culture, and its values is merged into the values of the majority culture. Third is segregation whereby each culture keeps its values by avoiding integration. The final relationship is marginalization, in which individuals or groups withdraw from the values of the majority or minority culture. Each of these relationships can exist before, during and after integration is adopted. Ideally policy makers might wish for true integration however this is seen as the most difficult relationship to foster.

Inclusion can be defined as the full participation of a person who has a disability within the programmes of a mainstream sports organization (adapted from *Advocacy for Inclusion, 2013*) and is concerned more with equitable participation. Inclusion implies 'a more systematic and social meaning' (Norwich, 2007, p. 19) about restructuring how sport organizations and their programmes are managed in order to accommodate all people who want to get involved. While inclusive environments can be seen as 'a place where everyone belongs, is accepted, supports and is supported by his or her peers' (Stainback & Stainback, 1990, p. 3). True integration and inclusion clearly imply slightly different meanings however for our purposes their similarities rule out any further separation, hereafter the term integration is used. Whether cricket in England and Wales has achieved true integration or another version is the focus of the following article.

## 2. Introduction

Few studies have examined how mainstreaming policies are implemented within the workplace (Howe, 2007; Sørensen & Kahrs, 2006; Thomas, 2004). Policies seeking the integration of persons who have a disability into mainstream provision in related fields, such as physical education have, so far, struggled to achieve their intended aims (Smith, 2009). Within NGBs, the researched evidence of integration has shown limited success and more work is required. Sørensen and Kahrs (2006) found that Norwegian disability sport was assimilated into the values of the able-bodied sport system and only "the best athletes with disabilities survive in mainstream sport" (p. 200). In addition Thomas (2004) found that some NGBs adopted mainstreaming purely as a means to illicit greater funding. He suggested that these approaches were possibly bought about by a lack of clear direction from the peak agency, the English Federation for Disability Sport (EFDS). Howe (2007) examined integration at Athletics Canada and revealed that true integration had not been achieved but a level of accommodation was occurring. This accommodation still marginalizes athletes who have a disability within Canadian athletics and demonstrates, somewhat the inability of the peak agency Sport Canada to effectively influence the sort of change that was seen in other areas of governing body modernization (Kikulis, Slack, & Hinings, 1995; Slack & Hinings, 1992).

Notwithstanding the paucity of studies examining the integration of disability sport, mainstreaming policies have continued to be a key feature of sport policy for disability sport. The purpose of this paper is to situate management action and experience within the process of integration in the sport of cricket in England and Wales. In order to do this we adopt a relational approach that aims to better understand the nuances of the relationship between individual and organizational actors who operate at various levels across the organizational field. This paper seeks to contribute not only to the integration of disability sport literature but focus upon how integration is viewed and implemented by practicing sport managers.

Following this introduction we present a brief examination of the industry setting where the key organizations that are the focus of the study exist. In place of a traditional theoretical framework and methodology sections we provide an overview of the social praxeology (Everett, 2002) of Pierre Bourdieu. As his theoretical and methodological approaches were intertwined we will demonstrate how a relational and reflexive sociology can enlighten the study of integration. This section will also provide detail of the ethnographic approach deployed and the challenges faced by the researchers. The results are organized using key elements of Bourdieu's practice theory as key markers and highlight a multitude of initiatives from the

governing body and grassroots organizations to further integration. The paper finishes with a discussion, conclusions and recommendations for further research into the integration of disability sport.

### 3. Industry context

In England and Wales the sport of cricket is managed by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) who are responsible from grassroots levels up to the elite. Domestically the game is managed through partnerships with thirty-nine County Cricket Boards (CCB). Nineteen of these boards are considered First-Class<sup>2</sup> County Boards and each of these organizations have a say in the management of the game through delegate membership, along with the ECB and the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) – the sport's law makers), of national governance structure (Kitchin, 2008). Disability cricket was traditionally organized by one of four Disability Sport Development Organizations (DSDOs) covering most physical, learning and sensory impairment groups; the British Association for Cricketers with Disabilities (BACD), the Cricket Federation for People with Disabilities (CFPD), Blind Cricket England and Wales (BCEW) and the England Cricket Association for the Deaf (ECAD). Other organizations may have used disability cricket as a programming option but are not considered central to the development of disability cricket.

Sport England manages their investment in the development of cricket through the implementation of the Whole Sport Plan (WSP). This plan requires the ECB to consult with the CCBs and draw up mutually agreeable targets that they then submit as the WSP to Sport England. Collins (2010) noted that the targets set within the first WSP for cricket were ambitious claiming a significant boost in recreational participation (8.75%). To meet these targets the ECB receive an allocation of funds at the national level that are used to provide programmes. These funds are then allocated to the National Sport Foundation (a not-for-profit organization that are charged by the ECB with providing participation based cricket in schools and after-school clubs) and the CCBs. To assist work at the grassroots level funds can be transferred to Voluntary Sport Clubs (VSCs) or other junior organizations to assist in the implementation of cricket programmes for schools, women and girls and for people with a disability. These programmes are not always established in this top down fashion. For example an organization called Big Six Cricket devised a programme for young people who have a disability called 'All the Way' which contributed to the targets required by a number of CCBs. It is within this programme that the lead researcher was embedded while examining the wider process of integration in cricket. For the purposes of this paper all organizations (with the exception of the NGB<sup>3</sup>) and individual respondents remain anonymous and pseudonyms are employed.

### 4. A relational and reflexive approach

The decision by Sport England to encourage the mainstreaming of disability cricket needs to be articulated by a framework that considers multiple institutional agents (individuals or organizations). Issues concerning the importance of structure and the level of individual agency are paramount in the wider analysis of institutional and organizational change (Cunningham, 2002; Slack & Hinings, 1992; Stevens & Slack, 1998). Given the increasing levels of government intervention in disability sport (Thomas, 2004) we argue that shifting institutional pressures situate managers within a state of continual change. However, it could be argued that managers within these environments can pre-empt these institutional pressures in order to facilitate or resist change. By adopting a relational approach we can consider both structure and agency simultaneously and can investigate the circularity between agency and structure and reject the idea that these concepts exist on a continuum (Tsekeris & Lydaki, 2011). Emirbayer (1997, p. 295) defined relational analysis as "a sociology of occasions... that takes as its unit of analysis gamelike, unfolding, dynamic processes" like those seen in organizations undergoing change. A relational approach fosters a systematic and multi-layered analysis while accounting for temporal considerations. Temporal analysis permits the historical observation of how mainstreaming as a policy is implemented as integration and how it is subsequently managed. Alternatives may have to rely on incumbent managers' reflections of the history of their organization (Mutch, Delbridge, & Ventresca, 2006; Vaughan, 2008). To explain this we contend that sport and taste have a temporal relationship. Sports like cricket which were formally developed by the upper classes have, over time been celebrated by other socio-economic groups as collective tastes have been transformed (Bourdieu, 1998).

To examine the interchange between the field (macro) level and decision-making at the management (micro) level a theoretical framework that considers the relationships between these levels is necessary (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Crossley, 2011; Emirbayer, 1997). According to this viewpoint, relations between agents create the substance of the social-world as they contextualize a field's social positions. Hence relations between various organizations, such as the NGB, DSDOs, CCBs and other providers of disability cricket are required for analysis. These relations shift over time and agents have the opportunity to change positions within the field. A relational approach also provides a more complete understanding of the two-way relationship between the objective structures of social fields (and therefore the likelihood of decision-making and strategy development) and the incorporated structures of the habitus (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Bourdieu, 1998). This implies that the field of disability cricket has its own rules, regulations and generative practices that

<sup>2</sup> First-class is a term used to indicate that the cricket played by the CCB representative teams is of the highest standard up to and excluding international representative competition.

<sup>3</sup> As the focus of this paper is on integration in cricket in England and Wales it is unworkable to protect the anonymity of the governing body.

agents are attuned towards understanding. The creation and maintenance of these relations generate the core and the periphery of the field, with the core comprising agents who most readily ascribe to the field's doxa (Crossley, 2011).

While Bourdieu's concepts have been used in organizational studies, they have been used in a piecemeal and isolated manner (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008; Kitchin & Howe, 2013). Using Bourdieu's concepts in disjointed fashion can reduce their explanatory power, and we would argue could fail to understand certain complexities of integration. A relational approach to integration is required that draws upon Bourdieu's interpretation of practice theory deploying field, habitus, and capital. These terms are deployed in this study in the following manner; *field* represents the contested space of organized sport in Britain. The wider field encompasses all organizations that have some role in the development of sport either at grassroots or elite levels. Cricket is a field that encompasses agents (organizations and individuals) who have a stake in the development of the sport. While the NGB, the ECB maintains a position of dominance within this arena the field can still be seen as a contested space. These contests are focused on the acquisition of power or *capital*. A series of resources, such as; economic, cultural, social and symbolic capitals are sought by agents where the more limited the resource the more intense the competition. The final concept is that of habitus. In Bourdieu's opus habitus is the dialectical link between an individual agent and the field(s) in which they exist. The individual habitus therefore is a generative system of 'durable, transposable dispositions' that provides individuals with a 'feel for the game' they are playing. In this paper we explore the existence of McDonough's (1998) concept of organizational habitus, which is seen as "the impact of a cultural group or social class on an individual's behaviour through an intermediate organization" (p. 187). The concept was empirically tested to find that the organizational habitus of schools influenced the students' personal choice of college programmes (rather than any particular individual careers-councillor or teacher). Kitchin and Howe (2012) argued that organizational habitus could be suited to the study of sport organization theory because it provides the meso-level link between the macro and micro levels of analysis, allowing the impact of legislation, policy and corporate strategy to be analyzed through the experiences of managers inhabiting organizations.<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that the concept of organizational habitus is merely an adaptation of Bourdieu's habitus (even though he never referred directly to it). Hence, organizational habitus' use is contested in the educational research area that devised it (see Atkinson, 2011). As the focus in this paper is on organizations and the individuals within them it could offer another lens of understanding management actions.

In addition to Bourdieu's conceptual tools his methodological approach was intertwined to form a social praxeology (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Everett, 2002). Although it remains a theoretical framework practice theory is also a relational and reflexive sociological method that combines conceptual tools with procedures in an attempt to overcome social theory's issue with dichotomies (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Bourdieu and Wacquant justify this approach by outlining how the universe consists of two orders and therefore requires a relational approach;

... the 'objectivity of the first order' constituted by the *distribution of material* resources and means of appropriation of socially scarce goods and values; and in the 'objectivity of the second order', in the form of systems of *classification*, the mental and bodily schemata that function as *symbolic* templates for the practical activities - conduct, thoughts, feelings, and judgments - of social agents. (Emphasis in original text) (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 7)

Therefore this approach requires two steps to frame the social world. The first is to determine the objective structure of the social world under study, in this case sport development and within disability cricket. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, p. 7) suggest that this should be determined from 'the outside'. The second step is to understand the 'social phenomenological view' (p. 8) that examines the taken-for-granted assumptions, experiences and meanings that reproduce organizations.

This approach seeks to avoid the limitations of any single understanding the integration of disability cricket in England and Wales. A relational approach is of particular benefit to sport management research as it can reveal the social world of sport as it actually is. By relying on objective, managerial viewpoints of what practice should be, but is not (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) we only reveal part of the social world. Ethnography is a suitable methodology for examining the impact of institutional pressures, such as mainstreaming on management practice. Clegg, Kornberger, and Pitsis (2011) define it as an approach 'to research that attempts to understand social phenomena, such as organizational life, as it happens and in its own terms' (p. 236). This methodology intends to reveal the contested nature of the institutional field and how power works to (re)produce systems that are in the interest of some agents, while at the expense of others (Vaughan, 2008). It does so by shifting the unit of analysis between the objective and subjective structures that inform organizational life. Ethnography can also make use of a number of data collection tools to facilitate this shifting analysis.

Ethnography uses the researcher as the research instrument to collect the data, but essentially one does so with empathy towards those observed (Reeves-Sandy, 1979). Spaaij's (2013) account of his ethnographic approach for his examination of Somali Australian's participation in organized team sport provides a thorough review of the considerations required to utilize this tool effectively. His overview of how data was collected, how the nature of observation altered, and how these changes resulted in a blurring of the distinction between himself and the participants highlights how it may be useful in this current study. Spaaij also built rapport and trust with participants and dealt with ethical issues provides a solid review of the key ethnographic concerns of interest to sport management researchers. Given the dearth of ethnographical accounts in the sport management literature we hope to contribute to this discussion by sharing our related experiences but in this instance the setting is within formal organizations.

<sup>4</sup> For a more comprehensive review of Bourdieu's master concepts and their relationship to sport management please refer to Kitchin and Howe (2013).

Ethnography within organizations is particularly well suited to sensitivities regarding the 'hidden dimensions of organizational life' and for understanding the interplay between agents and context (Yanow, Ybema, & van Hulst, 2012). The first sensitivity deals with how the researcher can reveal the taken-for-granted aspects of organizational life and challenges members' positions and practices. Participant's views and expectations of integration can be gathered and placed within the context of the organizations in which they work. As the researcher is embedded within the field organizational life can be examined in all its complexity as it occurs. Hence the data for this study was gathered as part of the lead author's PhD study which is a longitudinal study into institutional and organizational change affecting a community cricket organization. Access was granted by Big Six Cricket<sup>5</sup> who, amongst other programmes delivered cricket for young people who have a disability. The *All the Way* programme was delivered in partnership with the County Sports Council, a number of CCBs, and some DSDOs. This programme contributed towards the ECB's grassroots participation targets and its operation coincided with efforts to integrate all disability cricket into the NGB. Access was granted so the lead author could assist the organization in formalizing a number of its operating procedures and this seemed like an appropriate opportunity to collect data. Although the lead author adopted a consultative role it was a voluntary position where no fees were taken or expenses reimbursed. The data-set was collected during the primary fieldwork phase between January 2008 and September 2010 and built upon through a series of follow-up interviews taking place between October 2010 and November 2012. This paper draws upon the data collected from observations, informal and formal interviews and partnership and organizational documents. The observations were conducted across multiple-sites across London and South-East England where either disability cricket events or programmes were run and/or steering-group meetings were held. Where steering group meetings were not observed the meeting minutes were reviewed. These observations enabled the lead researcher to gather extensive field notes. To provide a basis for the reflexive approach adopted a diary was maintained for the length of the project to provide an on-going, longitudinal review of the research.

The second sensitivity for ethnography in organization outlined by Yanow et al. (2012) permits the researcher to adjust the mode of observation, for instance from direct observation to participant-observer. This can allow them to shift their focus by peering deeply into, or standing back from the individuals and organizations under examination. Multiple modes of observation were adopted by the lead author as the location of the study shifted around the partnership network. At formal management meetings a direct-observer role was adopted for the initial meetings and this was gradually replaced in a more participatory manner, and later using an active-member role (Adler & Adler, 1987) as tasks such as recording meeting minutes were adopted. The use of variants of participant observation has become a well deployed data collection tool for sport management researchers (Misener & Doherty, 2009; Silk & Amis, 2000; Silk, Slack, & Amis, 2000; Skinner, Stewart, & Edwards, 1999; Spaaij, 2013). At the events and tournaments the lead researcher's role as assistant coach provided another angle, allowing him to witness the implementation of the steering group's initiatives. The unease felt by the lead author during the fieldwork phase about direct observation necessitated the shift to a more participatory role in many activities.

The lead author had to establish trust with managers and staff who worked across the partnership. Contact with managers and staff outside of Big Six Cricket was relatively limited to events or meetings. A couple of strategies to build trust were used. Getting involved in the programme delivery was an important step in establishing trust (Crabbe, 2007). These entailed taking meeting minutes, doing presentations to staff, taking part in the sport sessions, even making tea and coffee. The aim of these tasks was to break the researcher-participant distinction. If the lead author was seen as that the quality of information gathered through observation and interview would have suffered. The presentations were designed to explain the role of research in management and draw a distinction between research-related questions and what a few managers assumed would be a journalistic style of questioning. Interestingly it was as participant-as-observer role where rapport was established which then assisted the break-down of the researcher-participant barrier with many of the research participants. As a result this eased the facilitation of the formal interviews with the partners involved in integration.

A purposive sampling strategy was initiated to gather staff who could speak informatively on the process of integration. These participants were gathered by snowball sampling (Edwards & Skinner, 2009) with the aid of one of Big Six Cricket's managers. Although purposive sampling has some limitations it was deemed necessary as the participants were required to have responsibility within disability cricket. It was found that many of the CCB participants managed disability cricket within a wider remit for community development. In total 14 interviews were undertaken with a range of partners from across the disability cricket network in England and Wales. These interviews lasted on average between 60 and 90 min, with two lasting over 2 h. Each interview was transcribed verbatim in preparation for data analysis. Follow-up interviews were conducted with seven participants to seek further clarification on the original interviews, or to update the original data with further developments.

Secondary data was collected from a series of internal and public documents which provided the historical context for integration in cricket. A range of internal documents and reports, meeting minutes and publicly available documents were selected in order to frame the research in an appropriate context. The internal documents ranged from memos and meeting minutes to disability cricket strategies between various partnership members. The publically available documents included Sport England and NGB strategies, government policies focusing on the initiation of the Whole Sport Plan, and also communications between organizations, the participants, volunteers and parents. Documents were selected based on their

<sup>5</sup> A pseudonym.

**Table 1**  
Key developments in the mainstreaming of cricket in England and Wales.

Date	Development	Organization	Data source
December, 2002 2004	<i>Game Plan</i> Launched <i>The Framework for Sport in England</i> (outlining of Whole Sport Plans for sport)	DCMS/Office of PM Strategy Unit Sport England	x
19th April, 2005	<i>Building Partnerships: From Playground to Test Arena: Strategic Plan 2005–2009</i>	ECB	x
2005/06	National school's programme launched	NSF	
7th December, 2006	Active People Survey APS1 data released	Sport England	x
5th September, 2007	<i>One Game</i> strategy launched	ECB	
31st October, 2007	Appointment of National Disability Cricket Manager	ECB	
January, 2008	<i>All the Way</i> Youth Development Programme launched	Big Six Cricket	
18th March, 2009	The launch of the initiative for mainstreaming in English Cricket – <i>Memorandum of Understanding</i>	ECB	x
17th July, 2009	<i>Whole Sport Plan 2009–2013</i>	Sport England	x
2009	1st published CCB <i>Disability Cricket Development Plan</i>	West CCB	
1st January, 2010	Appointment of 1st full-time County Level <i>Disabilities Cricket Development Officer</i>	West CCB	
2010	<i>Grounds to Play: Strategic Plan 2010–2013</i>	ECB	x
December, 2011	<i>Playground to Podium</i>	EFDS	
2012	<i>Proposal for the Re-structuring and Development of Physical and Learning Disabled Cricket in England &amp; Wales</i>	Disability Cricket Development Forum	x
2013	Launch of grassroots development programme for disability cricket in England and Wales based on but not called <i>All the Way</i>	ECB/The Official National Charity/The Lord's Taverners/CCBs	

relevance to integration efforts, hence internal documents examining the wider issues of community or performance cricket were not included (see Table 1).

Although this research focused on integration of disability cricket within the ECB the lead author was not positioned within the NGB but within Big Six Cricket, a relatively junior grassroots cricket provider. This led to some limitations that may have affected the quality of the data analysis. First, the researchers' analysis could be biased towards one region, potentially viewing one geographic region of disability cricket provision in England and Wales as representative of all disability cricket across these two countries. Secondly, the lead author was embedded within Big Six Cricket. Being positioned at a level where policies and strategies were implemented and not formulated necessitated an outsider (etc) approach to data collection (Fetterman, 2010). In order to reduce the likelihood of geographic and situational bias, additional data was collected from outside the partnership region via formal semi-structured interviews with cricket organizations across England (CCBs and NSDOs) as well as a senior staff for disability cricket within the N G B. Their thoughts, feeling and opinions provided the data-set with wider perspectives on the integration process in disability cricket.

#### 4.1. Data analysis

One of the main limitations with qualitative studies is managing the volume of data that it produces (Silverman, 2001). To make sense of the data our analysis was guided by the work of Cushion and Jones (2006) who suggested analysis by overlapping levels. The first level used the field notes to create a collection of themes that represented management in practice. This included the observations from internal management meetings, programme activities and informal conversations. The second level created a descriptive account of the management of integration and changes required in order to satisfy the perceived shifting priorities of the organization's stakeholders. In order to examine the inter-subjectivity of the policy and management environments and potential issues in this final level, we situated the data within Bourdieu's practice theory. Although this does not strictly follow Strauss and Corbin's (1990) grounded theory approach it does enable an additional step for reflexivity. As the research took places over an extended time period it was possible for fieldwork to be undertaken in conjunction with this reflexive process (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) primarily through the maintenance of a research diary. Considering the role, background and experiences of the researchers and any potential impacts on data collection and analysis throughout the three levels benefitted this relational and reflexive approach.

## 5. Results

A relational analysis of field, habitus and capital has revealed an institutional context supporting change and a range of organizational initiatives that channelled this transformation by encouraging mainstreaming in English cricket. The myriad of environmental shifts, policy and legislative developments, and NGB and grassroots initiatives provide a story of progress. However, whether this progress leads cricket towards true integration or simply the rationalization of cricket's delivery system will be addressed in the following sections. Table 1 above outlines the range of policy statements, reviews and management initiatives that provide the context for the integration of disability cricket in England and Wales.

The environment surrounding the integration of disability cricket can be characterized by constant flux. The process of document analysis has revealed the context for change and innovation within disability cricket. A feature of the wider distal environment is the continuing political desire to pursue improvements in the provision of public services. Legislative developments like the *Disability Discrimination Act 2005* and the *Equality Act 2010* have required many organizations to address their systems and procedures to eradicate any possibility of discrimination towards people with disabilities, and encourage these organizations to increase their diversity. Nevertheless in England and Wales the onus remains on a person with a disability to demonstrate where discrimination has occurred in order to enforce these legislative rights. Hence change is stressed but not imposed.

Within the institutional field of sport development (the proximal environment) this context for change has seen policies aimed at increasing the accountability of sport organizations. The *Game Plan* strategy launched in late 2002 recommended alterations to the delivery of sport throughout the UK. Within England this was interpreted as the separation of funding and delivery from Sport England (DCMS/Strategy Unit, 2002). In the wake of this report Sport England became the main funding distributor for the development of sport. Sport England's *Framework for Sport in England*, released two years later suggested the adoption of the WSP which would streamline the funding of all development opportunities through the NGB. Funds would be given for NGBs to meet mutually agreeable targets that reflected what Sport England established as priorities. Coinciding with this target setting was the launch of the Active People Survey (APS) which intended to document ongoing participation rates for all of Sport England's priority sports, such as cricket. This APS would provide Sport England with an independent monitoring system to report the progress of their funding initiatives for the development of sport across the country. On the 17th of July 2009 the WSP for cricket was agreed and it provided the impetus to achieve a number of participation-related goals.

Given the dependence of many English sport organizations on funding from central sources the WSP created the potential to increase the accountability of the sport system. Despite the fact that participants with disabilities were a key target group of the WSP it was observed that the monitoring of participation and the streamlining of formerly duplicate programmes were prioritized over inclusivity. The *Sports Equity Index* (Sport England, 2002) outlined that target groups who experience multiple barriers to their participation (demographic, gender and ethnicity) require significant support to get active. Interestingly, this complexity was not reflected in outline statement for cricket's WSP which restricted targets by classification (physical, deaf, blind, learning) (Sport England, 2010). These general categories seemingly reduced the onus on cricket to target the hard-to-reach segments noted by the *Sports Equity Index*. Observations from a variety of events and from the management meetings suggested that most organizations were satisfied to focus upon groups of white, middle-class and well educated, women and girls, and people who have a disability. By focusing on these groups, whom were faced with fewer barriers to participation, allowed the sport to lift participation rates in an economical fashion.

A variety of strategies were implemented by field agents to capture and/or increase their volume of valued resources (capital). Unlike other non-sporting industries the heavily regulated organization of sport (with cricket as no exception) within certain geographic regions restricts, somewhat the possibility of altering the dominant power structures (which occurs through position-taking) within the field. For instance, one CCB that excelled in the delivery of disability cricket is unlikely to leverage their capital resources to challenge the position and status of the NGB. In addition to financial resources CCBs also gain symbolic capital within the cricket community. Indeed the long-standing competitive rivalry between counties ensures that there are numerous stakes to be won, if not for power and wealth, then for this elevated status (a form of symbolic capital) amongst their organizational peers.

In response to the policy of mainstreaming the ECB launched a series of strategies that sought to foster integration and build participation from the disability community. Participants from CCBs assumed that managers within their governing body saw the issues facing other NGBs, and employed Sport England's *Equality Standard* to address mainstreaming in cricket before they were forced to do so (Field Notes, August, 2010). Four initiatives have been launched by the NGB that directly and indirectly meet these concerns. First, NSFs launch of their national school's cricket programme in 2006 increased the participation rates of cricket in schools. This programme was an opportunity for the NGB to work with their grassroots delivery-partner to coordinate outreach work that did not exist prior to its implementation. The inclusion of young people who have a disability that attended mainstream schools subsequently increased the participation of cricketers who have a disability. While these were merely incidental figures, i.e. it was unlikely from the observations that took place that any adaptations were made to make the lesson inclusive these were still claimed as total participation numbers (Reflective Diary, April, 2009).

Second, the 'One Game' initiative was launched on the 5th September 2007. Through this the ECB aimed to provide a vision of a more inclusive game. The intention of this initiative was to allow anyone to participate in any form of cricket; women and men, girls and boys regardless of their ability, gender or race. Third, the appointment of Ian Martin as Head of Disability Cricket on the 31st October 2007, provided a focal point for the leadership of disability cricket which as a result coordinated the development of the game in England and Wales. The fourth initiative was the March, 2009 signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (partnership agreement) between the ECB and all four cricket DSDOs, along with the EFDS in an attempt to provide a united approach the ECB's disability cricket integration. This approach contrasts with other NGBs and DSDOs as Thomas (2004) found in a number of sports these parties were reluctant to respectively accept or give-up the responsibility for managing disability sport; whereas in this case the ECB intervened.

The ECB views these developments as reinforcing the importance of disability cricket to its overall priorities within the sport and also to provide the pathway from grassroots to elite for all players within the One Game (Interview, ECB Officer, 19th November, 2012). The ECB's attempt to provide 'pathways for all' through One Game actually provided the catalyst for a number of grassroots programmes that could assist the achievement of the sport's wider agenda. First, in January 2008 Big Six Cricket

launched *All the Way* – a cricket programme for young people with physical, sensory and learning impairments. The programme supported the work of the metropolitan regions of the Home Counties, CCBs and the NSF who, at the time had little coverage of inner-city schools for children with special needs. As a result *All the Way* was ‘rolled out’ with CCB as supporting partners placing Big Six Cricket in a central position for the delivery of youth disability development cricket in and around London. Following three successful years in this region the delivery agent entered into a partnership agreement with another, larger and national cricket charity to extend the programme’s scope. The programme’s adoption by ten cricket counties as their main junior disability cricket development programme seemed to prove to the ECB that it was an effective method for boosting participation rates. This has convinced the ECB to also launch a national development programme for young people who have a disability in England and Wales. A similar version will also be used as cricket’s preferred option when seeking to take cricket to adult recreational participants who use the services of Adult Learning Centres across Britain (Interview, ECB Officer, 19th November, 2012). Nevertheless, even though Big Six Cricket devised *All the Way* they are not included in these new developments.

The second grassroots initiative occurred at the regional level with West CCB adding the position of Disability Cricket Development Officer to their personnel in January 2010. This was the first full-time, disability cricket position of any county across the country and reflected the appointment of a National Manager by the ECB. The incumbent’s mission was to develop disability cricket across the county. In the following two years the structure of disability cricket in the West has been formalized, the staff member responsible has stated that participation numbers have increased and other counties see this as a model of best practice that they are seeking to adopt (Field notes; July, 2011). Some regions share the intent to adopt a Disability Cricket Development Officer however the position is seen, even by the NGB as ‘a luxury resource’ which was not an option given the many competing priorities at county level (Interview, ECB Officer, 19th November, 2012).

Much action has been instigated in light of the shifting policy frameworks for quality and mainstreaming. Nevertheless, we argue that it is the dispositions towards the importance/role of disability cricket habitus of the various agents within its delivery that has been the most significant influence on the propensity for change and/or resistance. Differences were observed between the rationales and potential outcomes for disability cricket. Some managers saw the focus on developing disability cricket to be another theatre for inter-county competition, some as a way of developing young people with disabilities to access more opportunities in society and some as a way for people with disabilities to engage in recreational sport;

A competitive league across England is the desire of some of the counties. Indeed the lack of competitive focus [caused the bewilderment of some] “It’s not even in the strategy!” (referring to the recently released ECB disability cricket strategy). I thought Jack from the NW board was pretty insightful when he redirected their complaints about this lack of competitive focus with his desire to simply increase mass participation in his county. Actually the difference in the approach to mass-disability cricket approach in the NW region and the competitive logic that drives both North and East is clearly apparent. The West were non-committal choosing to sit on the fence during the debate, John chose to focus on the positives like (a successful club that accepts cricketers with disabilities) and how the county, the club and the charity came together to slowly build a system. Kyle re-stated the charity’s emphasis on changing the lives of the young people involved which not many of the counties seemed to be concerned about - but I guess that’s the difference between them and the others. (Field notes, 3rd June, 2010)

These differences relied heavily on the perspectives of the individual development manager and/or officers within the CCBs and the DSDOs. The responsibility given to the position holder suggests that their personal beliefs and values can influence their rationale for developing cricket for people who have a disability. Nevertheless these managers are positioned within organizations who have been traditionally concerned with turning junior athletes into high-performing or elite sports people. Hence, this development and rationalized pathway logic that runs through all but a few of the organizations in this study; one of the DSDOs, NW, and Big Six Cricket. Even counties that demonstrated significant developments in disability cricket infrastructure still prioritized the rationalized, pathway approach to managing junior players;

Yeah and you say [to a potential venue] ‘if you want we’ll come up and do a cricket session once a month for you’ and suddenly you’ve got 20 kids there who are interested in sport, and then you just link the pathway to the [local] club. . . I don’t like to be doing things that are just a one off, you’ve got to have the relevance to the pathway. Sometimes organizations come to us and say ‘oh can you come and do a coaching session?’ The kids love it [and] I don’t mind doing that but I don’t want to just do that and walk away and say ‘see you next year’ sort of thing because all you’re doing is just introducing them to something and then that’s it. . . (West CCB development officer, Interview, August, 2010)

These differences are made more apparent by examining the *All the Way* programme in greater detail. The programme included a range of cricket-related activities that also were delivered through a pathway approach but more than this the initiative’s popularity amongst young people who have a disability was due to numerous factors. First, the informality of *All the Way* sessions placed an emphasis on fun and engagement. At competitions multiple matches simultaneously took place on the one cricket field and players were garbed in bright team, school or county colours. This stood in direct contrast to the traditional (and more recognizable) game where only 13 players are on the field taking part in only one match at any one time. The programme also demonstrated to many in the game that some young people, both boys and girls,<sup>6</sup> and even those

<sup>6</sup> Although disability cricket is designed to offer men and women, boys and girls with disabilities the chance to play cricket, the county game and international representative sides are dominated by male players.



with severe learning difficulties and limited mobility can enjoy cricket. Importantly for Big Six Cricket, the deal with the larger national charity allowed them to expand the programme away from London to achieve wider national coverage. Rather than seeing the *All the Way* programme purely as a management idea to create a scalable and easily accessible version of cricket it is interesting to consider Big Six Cricket's role in its creation. We argue that it is the very specific organizational ethos and values of the delivery agent that created such a programme as it is representative of the people within the organization. In contrast, other cricket organizations would possibly not have conceived this idea because their value orientations were different. From observations throughout the study these organization's values are underpinned by the natural accession of young players who show greater promise than other through pathway systems. While *All the Way* focused on players with talent the first priority appeared to be focused on fun and engagement of all.

## 6. Discussion

For the ECB mainstreaming at this stage appeared to be centred on efforts at bringing the various delivery organizations together under the one ECB banner. Nevertheless, while the difference in the structure of the game is easily seen on organizational charts it is the adaptation of the culture and values of the game towards true integration is still unmet. Regardless of the many initiatives and developments implemented since the appointment of a Disability Cricket Manager disability cricket is still segregated from the mainstream, even if it is managed and funded within the NGB system. The potential for real change is limited because participants felt that disability cricket was a minor concern within the ECB. This is evident as the manager for disability is positioned only as a member of middle management team, and one that based within the community section of the NGB. There has been no attempt to place a board member on the executive of the NGB to champion disability cricket across the breadth of the sport. Essentially this limits participation by people with disabilities in the sport of cricket to either participants and/or match officials. This is also reflected at the CCB level where disability is a minor consideration which receives little funding, irrespective of whatever commitments were made in the WSP, which targeted participation from cricketers with disabilities.

The trouble is with the whole sport plan is you get a certain amount of money, you sit down with the team and this is what we're gonna do for the next 12 months but actually, we just do the same thing, we spend the money on the same thing, so even if we say to ECB we're going to concentrate on Welfare for example, we don't put any extra money towards it cos that money's still gotta pay for what we do anyway so it doesn't kinda work. So all the money for disability is from external forces. The North's Board won't put anything towards that. So... Women and Girls [get less than a thousand pounds] from the Board, [while] disability [gets] nothing (Interview with North Development Manager, July, 2010)

The only opportunity that exists for players with disabilities to play 'mainstream' cricket are for those promising and potentially elite disability cricketers who are placed within a mainstream club in order to improve their cricket performance, which is actually designed to benefit the national squads for disability cricket. This involvement is dominated by a logic of competition that guides the sport. As Sørensen and Kahrs (2006) found, there are opportunities for the average sports person (cricketer) with a disability, but these opportunities are not the focus of governing body as a whole, merely for those with disability cricket as their remit. Underpinning this separated position is the coaching education framework within the sport which is standardized within the One Game. The attention given to disability cricket at level 2 is limited and at levels one and three is non-existent and what does exist focuses on general modifications that coaches should make to individuals to ensure they can play the mainstream game (Interview; Level 3 ECB Coach, 23rd November, 2012). This lack of interest reinforces the marginalization of disability cricket. There is no consideration of differing values. This could be addressed by examining disability awareness training and/or the inclusion of modules specifically examining the nuances of various categories of disability cricket.

The classification<sup>7</sup> (termed profiling within the sport) of cricketers with disabilities causes some operational issues. While efforts have been made to improve profiling within the sport (by entering partnerships with outside experts) it still presents some operating issues for the management of disability cricket. Given the limited resources for disability cricket some classifications benefit at the expense of others. Critically, some classifications of disability have fewer barriers to participation than others and it is these that have seen the greater benefits under the MoU. Some DSDOs benefit because there is an international version of their modified game which provides an elite platform for success, some capitalize on their historical significance to disability cricket (i.e. being the original DSDO for cricket), and some do not have to manage the complexity and multiplicity of severe disabilities within their activities. Various respondents reflected upon the difficulties

<sup>7</sup> The various forms of disability cricket each have their own classification system, for instance players participating in blind cricket must adhere to the ophthalmological rules of the International Blind Sport Association which establish categories of B1, B2 and B3. A player who is categorized B1 if they experience an impairment from no perception of light in either eye, up to perception of light but an inability to recognize the shape of a hand at any distance in any direction. A player who is categorized B2 if they experience an impairment from the ability to recognize the shape of a hand up to a visual acuity of 2/60 and/or a field of 5 degrees or less. A player who is categorized B3 if they experience an impairment from a visual acuity above 2/60 up to 6/60 and/or a visual field of more than 5 degrees and less than 20 degrees. British Blind Sport also includes a B4 classification for national purposes. Athletes included in this category experience visual impairment from 6/60 to 6/24 that does not take into account field considerations (adapted from British Blind Sport, 2012). The laws of blind cricket are detailed but effectively ensure that each team has a certain number of athletes who are categorized as B1.

of including people with severe, and multiple learning and/or physical disabilities within pathway approaches. It is more likely therefore, that the resources required to facilitate gains in participation from these target groups would be difficult, and costly to secure. Hence the focus will not fall upon them. Within the context of this study, the ECBs demonstrated competence in forming partnerships should be extended to seeking the assistance of outside organizations for consulting on addressing these needs much in the same way they consult on profiling advice. However, this investment in external support would require representation at senior management levels in order to argue for increases in investment. At the present time all investment decisions in disability cricket would be one aspect of the wider development agenda, and unfortunately for disability cricket it is only one of many competing concerns.

As a result of the MoU between the ECB and DSDOs did not truly integrate these stakeholders but it did maintain their identity within the wider cricket framework, effectively moving the segregation that existed before into the auspices of the ECB structure. For instance, an organization such as the CFPD go about their own business as before but can now use the ECB logo and receive guaranteed funds; 'We're happy with the situation because we're getting extra [money] for junior cricket now and perhaps a little bit more for equipment and stuff' (DSDO Director, Interview August, 2010).

Some management initiatives demonstrated an attempt to assimilate disability cricket praxis into the dominant logic and values of the mainstream game. Many DSDOs were already instilled with the mainstream value of competition, which is based on segregation by ability. However, segregation still exists more widely as there is little initiative shown on the part of the mainstream game to seek out opportunities to work with disability groups; what work is done is from disability cricket stakeholders seeking to work with mainstream clubs. There are pockets of good practice in CCBs, like the West CCB where players with children who have a disability have been brought them into their local clubs who as a result have expanded their provision. Hence there is a mixture of assimilation and segregation across the country, regardless of the numerous initiatives that have been launched. True integration has not been achieved, what is present can be termed accommodation (Howe, 2007). This effectively restricts the level of two-way integration and does not challenge the majority culture of the game. At the current time this accommodation by the ECB for disability cricket reflects the previous treatment of athletes with disabilities in Canadian athletics (Howe, 2007).

The policy of mainstreaming is interpreted therefore through a logic of competition and rationalized pathways that reflects the individual dispositions and expectations of the majority of the managers within the cricket organizations in this study, including the DSDOs. That the DSDOs reflect this competitive logic is possibly unsurprising as their development as organizations was down to the efforts of volunteers who sought to create opportunities for competition between cricketers with disabilities, who in the first instance were likely to be the children of the volunteers. The dominant competitive values of the majority and minority culture are shared and effectively integrated post MoU. These values underpin nearly every action taken by sport managers in order to develop the game. While this competitive value dominates cricket other values such as inclusivity will remain marginalized. However whether these issues could be extended to provide support for the existence of an organizational habitus (McDonough, 1997, 1998) is unlikely at this stage. Although the ethnography was able to examine integration in action and provision through an organizational partnership it is too far to stretch these observations to imply that the cross-sectional data collected from managers of disability cricket represents their entire organization. Indeed issues remain throughout the game about how inclusive the sport truly is:

The women's game, sadly the women's game and the Disability game is always gonna be behind the men's and [the ECB] talk a lot about the game as One Game, they don't think Disability's separate but actually when you get down to the board level, no offence, but you walk into our board at North Cricket and they don't give a toss about Women's Cricket or Disability and. I'm serious! So until you get that bit right it's not gonna change, it's not gonna change cos they don't give a damn. (Interview with North Development Manager, July 2010)

In rare situations where these values do not dominate is within the individual habitus of certain individuals who perceive disability cricket's purpose differently. Unfortunately for achieving true integration, these views are in the minority. Hence, while some sport can be seen for individual manager's habitus more work is required in future research to establish this at an organizational level.

The presence of this competitive logic throughout many individuals who manage cricket makes true integration very difficult. Some discussion within the ECB Board about achieving true integration would be interesting, particularly if conducted within discussions about equality in the wider governance of the sport. From the findings of this research study, however, it is more likely that the NGB have integrated disability cricket in England and Wales within the governing body more to simplify the coordination of the game, albeit to adhere to any supposed pressure to conform with the *Equality Act 2010* than any genuine attempt to achieve true integration. Hence the wider initiative of One Game can be seen as an umbrella approach covering (and controlling) all of cricket that has been unable to effectively bring about real change (true integration) at regional levels to form one actual game, which could be open and accessible to all.

## 7. Conclusions

The extent to which integration is aimed at achieving an inclusive game or whether it is aimed at rationalization is unclear. This study has provided an important and timely case study of the integration of disability cricket in England and

Wales. We argue that at this stage, the policy of mainstreaming simply reflects a rationalization of sporting structures and systems rather than any systematic approach to achieve true integration. We found little evidence of any critical examination of what mainstreaming intended to accomplish; most respondents saw mainstreaming as a necessary and logical (du Gay, 2000) way of ‘improving’ the sport. The initiatives devised and implemented by managers in the NGB, CCBs, and other organizations did little to address integration and more to reform the pre-existing (and exclusive) competitive structures within the game. Thus at this stage, accommodation is the most accurate description of what has been achieved (Howe, 2007).

The purpose of this paper was to situate management actions and experiences within the integration of disability cricket. Hence we aimed to focus both on the managers and their general experiences within disability cricket and with the process of integration itself. To do this we adopted a relational approach to better understand the nuances of the relationship between individuals and organizations that exist at various levels across the organizational field. This relational and reflexive approach was guided by the social praxeology of Pierre Bourdieu. The organizational field of cricket in England and Wales is a contested arena and agents use various capitals at their disposal to achieve their goals. In this paper we have shown that the ECB initiated the process of integration both as a method for rationalizing their sport and potentially preventing any possible sanctions from Sport England for not doing so. The ECB drew on their vast resources of capital to facilitate action within the organizational field they governed. As a result the process of integration was mainly structural and superficial. The appointment of a National Disability Manager and the signing of a MoU to bring the DSDOs and other disability cricket providers together under the NGB’s influence characterized these structural changes. Following this agreement efforts were made to increase participation of cricketers who have a disability. Participation increases were achieved through programmes such as *All the Way* and the NSF’s schools programme – thus satisfying the requirements of the WSP. Regardless the majority of programming focused on individuals who were relatively high-functioning. Apart from *All the Way* and the work of certain DSDOs cricket did little to target the involvement from individuals who face multiple barriers to participation. Essentially these groups remained marginalized. Integration was sought by the NGB and its partners for cricketers with disabilities who were potential international representatives or those who could have a role officiating or coaching, however this was only a small percentage of overall participants and none of these roles carried much organizational power. The lack of true integration could have also been due to the role of disability cricket managers employed within CCBs – many of whom acted as gatekeepers over their domain. The habitus of these individuals varied but was dominated by many who suggest that disability as simply another part of community programming and its function was, like these other areas dominated by a competitive, pathway logic that sought to create representative teams. Few managers in this study contradicted this view. These actions merely reinforced the game’s existing competitive values and can be seen as only one step on the pathway to true integration. None the less we agree with Thomas (2003) who argued that mainstreaming, as envisaged by Sport England deals less on true integration and more with developing and simplifying sporting systems. Therefore, we will add that with this focus on structural and superficial change the policy lacks the impetus to impress on the dispositions of the sport’s gatekeepers. Under this assessment the mainstreaming of cricket in England and Wales has been successful in looking substantial, although what now exists is merely accommodation and not true integration. By using Bourdieu’s social praxeology in sport management we have demonstrated that it can provide a useful conceptual and methodological tool for viewing developments and their consequences upon the relationships between agents.

Invariably there are limitations of this study. First, the lack of involvement from disability cricket players restricted the data to organizational viewpoints only. Players’ perspectives could have provided other views on mainstreaming. Second, notwithstanding the researchers’ efforts over the period of study the National Disability Cricket Manager declined to participate in the wider study. His perspective would have been crucial for understanding the challenges of advocating disability cricket within the NGB.

Despite these limitations this paper raises a number of ideas and opportunities for further investigation. Future research could examine further sport managers’ dispositions towards integration and mainstreaming in order to develop the literature in this area. While mainstreaming policies might differ internationally in name there could be some consistency in the approach taken to increase true integration in sport. In addition the concept of organizational habitus requires further examination. Within this study it was clear that an individual’s habitus framed their thinking about disability cricket. For some it was just another programme but for others it was a chance to address shortcomings in wider cricket provision. What cannot be determined from this study, even with its ethnographic approach is what influence the organization plays, if any, on the interpretation of macro-policy initiatives. The interpretation within the organization and whether it can influence the individual dispositions of sport managers towards certain areas of provision needs further consideration.

Regardless of any particular shortcomings of the ECB’s approach to true integration, opportunities exist for organizational field members to reflect on progress-so-far and how true integration could be achieved. The range of initiatives in the area of disability cricket has increased dramatically over the past five years. However, in order to move from accommodation to true integration a different tack may be required one that examines the culture of the game rather than the myriad of potential development initiatives. By examining the cultural and business practices of the sport itself, cricket could move from some of its exclusive practices to create an inclusive environment (Lusted & O’Gorman, 2010; Thomas, 2003). The practice of placing a potentially elite player who happens to have a disability into a mainstream club moves the sport towards integration, even

if the current motives are to improve the national performance of the disability team. If true integration is a goal of the One Game approach then the ECB could potentially start with two aims. The first is to ensure the boards of governors at all cricket organizations are diverse. This diversity will then provide a platform for examining the sport's true culture. Second, they should support every player with a disability to access a mainstream club, not for the benefit of the elite disability teams but for cricket in general. Possibly it is the competitive mind-set that was prevalent in most informants' views that could mean that this vision is unlikely.

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