Comparative Sport History
Prelim Exam
Write one essay for each part of the exam

Part I: Assessing the Field

A) Why Sport History?
The field of Sport History resides in a peculiar place between the scholarly and popular history in the minds of many academics. Explore the possibilities of sport history in addressing questions of society, globalization, transnational flows, and colonial/postcolonial past/present. Discuss which scholarly works (books and articles) you would recommend to other historians and scholars as illustrative of why sport history is vital to obtaining a critical understanding of the workings of power and difference in different settings.

B) Syllabus Construction
A large public institution has hired you with the charge that you create a comparative sport history course geared for undergrads at the introductory level. How would you approach the task of designing a 16-week course? What major themes would you emphasize? What books would be assigned and how would they facilitate your ability to illuminate the course’s theme(s)? Please note that a detailed syllabus (weekly readings, page numbers, etc.) is not required. Write a rationale for the course and enumerate 3 major sections, elaborating on your themes with 3 books and 3 articles for each.

Part II: American Indian History & Sport: Critical Intersections

What does the historical study of sports offer the study of American Indian history? Please substantiate with specifics from a given sport and a specific dimension of American Indian history, or a specific era of each. If you are moved by it, trace the contours of the inverse: what does the historical study of American Indian offer to sports history.

Part III: The Possibilities and Limits of Sport History

A) Integrating Sports
Discuss the evolution of sport history over the past several decades in its attention to matters of race, gender, and sexuality. What are key works and articles that you find as compelling examples of scholarship in charting new possibilities for sport history? Also discuss how they build on and/or challenge earlier works in sport history?

B) Jack Johnson & The Uses of Sport History
Numerous scholars have analyzed the life of Jack Johnson to explore questions that extend beyond the boxing ring and sporting world. Discuss the manner that Jack Johnson serves as both subject and as a trope for exploring questions about modernity, sex, sexuality, and race, among others. What are some the benefits and limitations of Jack Johnson as historical subject and scholarly trope? Be sure to discuss key texts that underscore these benefits and limitations as well as how it enhances sport history.