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A Policy Analysis of the Development of Elite Swimming in China between 2000 and 2012: A National Team Perspective

Abstract

This article attempts to analyze underlying policy factors behind China's recent recovery in elite swimming in particular its success in the London Olympiad through the application of the multiple streams framework in general and its concept of policy windows in particular. The poor performance at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games was a 'wake-up call', which in conjunction with Beijing's successful Olympic bid in 2001, opened policy windows prompting large-scale review and reform from which a broad range of 'heavyweight' policy actions were introduced and implemented. However, the road to recent success has been 'bumpy' during which there were other key events that have left an indelible imprint on Chinese swimming. Therefore, the multiple streams framework in general and the concept of policy windows in particular afford a theoretical gateway to structure policy analysis of elite swimming in China. Moreover, as a Western-derived theory the application of which to a sports context has been very sporadic, of the multiple streams framework is evaluated regarding its applicability, or 'compatibility'. Five semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders were conducted, accompanied by comprehensive document analysis of official documents and website information of associated sports governing bodies and associations, and influential domestic and foreign media.

Keywords: China; elite swimming; revival; multiple streams; policy windows

Introduction

Swimming¹ in China has a relatively long history. As early as 1936, the then Nationalist Government sent a delegation including two swimmers to the Berlin Olympic Games.² In the 1950s, Chinese swimmers broke the world record for the men's breaststroke five times.³ At Barcelona 1992, China's swimming achieved a breakthrough as the 'five golden flowers'⁴ won four gold medals. However, because of drug scandals in the mid-1990s, Chinese swimming suffered a sharp decline and reached its nadir at Sydney 2000, winning no medal.⁵ The team gradually rebounded at Athens 2004 and Beijing 2008, and finally reached a new high at London 2012, where Chinese swimmers won five gold medals and ranked second in the swimming-specific gold medal table. Table 1 presents a summary of China's performance at the six most recent Olympic Games, which is characterized as a U-shaped curve.

(Table 1 about here)

This article focuses on a policy analysis of factors behind Chinese elite swimmers' recent success on the international stage. A broad range of policy measures – covering areas ranging from organizational structure, financial support, talent identification and athlete development, to coaching, training regimes, competition opportunities, and more importantly, anti-doping – have had a profound impact on China's recovery and revival in elite swimming during this 12 year period and beyond. These measures, which have largely formed the key elements of China's current elite swimming system, were propelled by a succession of pivotal events (most notably poor performances at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games and the 2007 Melbourne World Championships) and the landmark milestone of Beijing's successful bid to host the 2008 Olympic Games in 2001. These events have resonated strongly with the concept of 'policy windows' within Kingdon's (1995) multiple streams framework⁶. The multiple streams framework in general and its concept of policy windows in particular serve as a heuristic device for the policy analysis in this article, particularly with respect to policy making. Despite its limited application to elite sport policy thus far, the framework provides this article

with a highly illuminating theoretical gateway. In addition to the analytical function, this article also provides an exploratory evaluation of this theoretical framework and its concept of policy windows in the area of elite sport in a country which, in many aspects, contrasts strikingly with the birth country of the framework – the United States. This article concludes by proffering some context-specific localizations, adaptations, and theoretical developments of the concept of policy windows.

Theoretical Framework: The Multiple Streams Framework and the Concept of Policy Windows

The multiple streams framework, derived from the ‘garbage can’ model,⁷ is characterized by its emphasis on ‘the ambiguity, complexity and degree of residual randomness in policy-making in marked contrast to the dominant assumptions of actor rationality’.⁸ Instead of rationality, multiple streams assume that public policy is predicated on a ‘temporal order’.⁹ The framework is a powerful analytical tool for explaining policy generation under conditions of ambiguity. A policy system comprises three largely separate streams: the problem stream, policy stream, and the political stream. These three streams, in addition to policy windows and policy entrepreneurs, are the five structural elements of the multiple streams framework.¹⁰

(1) The problem stream refers to issues that governments address and plan to resolve through three sources: focusing events (most notably crises; e.g., poor Olympic performance), indicators of the changing scale of a problem (statistics on obesity rates), and feedback on current policies.

(2) The policy stream is described as a ‘primeval soup’ within which ‘ideas, backed by particular policy communities, float around’¹¹ and vie for acceptance by policy makers. In brief, there are two criteria for determining whether ideas survive: technical feasibility and value acceptability. Notably, in many cases, policy change and policies are not static. Travis and Zahariadis (2002) adopted an incrementalist approach to the multiple streams

model, arguing that the adoption and development of policies can be gradual and some policies tend to be enduring.¹²

(3) The political stream primarily consists of three elements: the national mood, organized political forces such as party ideology and interest groups, and government.

Normally, the three streams are largely independent of each other. However, at critical junctures, the problem, policy, and political streams are joined. These moments are termed 'policy windows' – representing 'an opportunity for advocates of proposals to push their pet solutions, or to push attention to their special problems.'¹³ There are two types of policy windows: 'problem and political windows.'¹⁴ More precisely, policy windows can be opened by either compelling problems or events in political streams.

Furthermore, policy windows can be further reified. Exworthy and Powell (2004)¹⁵ introduced the concepts of 'big windows' at the national level and 'little windows' at the local level. A slight 'localization' is necessary for this article, in which 'big windows' refer to events beyond elite swimming per se (e.g., prominent political and economic events in China and events affecting the entire elite sports scene in China), whereas 'little windows' are 'swimming-specific windows'. In addition, policy windows can also be categorized according to their predictability, which has been most systematically discussed by Howlett (1998)¹⁶ in analyzing federal agenda-setting in Canada. Howlett (1998)¹⁷ argued that there is a predictable–unpredictable distinction regarding policy windows, identifying four types of policy windows: routine, discretionary, spillover, and random. There is a certain degree of predictability of policy windows in the area of elite sport policy, most notably evidenced in the performance pressure covering each 4-year Olympic cycle and the policy review and evaluation after each major sporting event, particularly the Olympic Games and, to a lesser extent, the World Championships.

Coupling the three streams requires not only policy windows but also a promoter – a policy entrepreneur. Policy entrepreneurs are defined as 'advocates who are willing to invest their resources – time, energy, reputation, money – to promote a position in return for anticipated future gain ...'.¹⁸

Considering the five elements together, the successful launch of a policy change is the result of opening a policy window in the interplay of streams: 'Solutions which have been floating around become attached and coupled to a problem and policy entrepreneurs seize the opportunity to change the decision agenda'¹⁹ (Figure 1).

(Figure 1 about here)

The multiple streams framework has been successfully applied across a wide range of policy areas, particularly in Western contexts, despite a dearth of exploratory research in relation to sport policy (the limited sport-related research involves New Zealand, Norway, and the United Kingdom ²⁰). Regarding country contexts, the multiple streams framework has seldom been applied to non-Western contexts in general or to China in particular. Zhu (2008)²¹ is one of the few scholars to apply this framework in China to the detention and repatriation system. His research observed that the essential elements of the multiple streams framework in particular the concept of 'policy windows' are reasonably compatible with China's system, despite the necessity of the possibility of achieving politically feasible but technically 'infeasible' policies in China²². In summary, the multiple streams framework in general and the concept of policy windows in particular serve as a heuristic device for guiding data collection and provides a theoretical gateway to structure the policy analysis of elite swimming in China.

Research Methods

This article draws on empirical findings derived from both semi-structured interviews and qualitative content analysis of documents. First, five semi-structured interviews were conducted in China with major stakeholders in elite sport in general and elite swimming in particular: two retired senior officials of the General Administration of Sport of China (GAS), a senior official of the National Aquatics Management Centre – the current team leader of the National Swimming Team, a senior coach of the National Team, and one of the most renowned sports scholars in China. The interviews were conducted

in 2013, as part of a wider study focusing on a comparative analysis of sport policy processes between China and the United Kingdom. Interviewees were identified according to their seniority, relevance, and availability. Therefore, changes after 2013 were not included. Reams of data were gathered from these interviews, each lasting between 50 minutes and 2 hours. The interview questions encompassed a wide range of policy areas of elite swimming development in China. The interviews were recorded digitally and conducted in Mandarin Chinese by the author. A copy of the transcripts in Chinese was provided to each interviewee for accuracy verification and error correction. To ensure the high-quality of translation, the transcripts were back translated to detect and correct linguistic inconsistencies before they were subjected to formal coding and analysis.

The interviews were accompanied by comprehensive document analysis derived from official documents and website information of associated sports governing bodies most notably GAS, Chinese Olympic Committee, National Aquatics Management Centre, Chinese Swimming Association (CSA), and *Fédération Internationale de Natation* (FINA), in combination with influential Chinese and international media such as China Central Television, Xinhuanet, People.com.cn, iFeng and *the Daily Telegraph*.

This article focuses on 2000–2012 for four reasons. First, China's poor performance at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games was a watershed in the development of elite swimming in China, from which many 'revolutionary' approaches have been adopted and the current structure of the National Swimming Team was established. This period also largely coincided with Beijing's successful bid in July 2001 to host the 2008 Olympic Games, which had a marked and irreversible impact on elite swimming in China. Second, from a theoretical perspective, 2000 and 2001 formed two of the most consequential 'policy windows' in the policy development of elite swimming in the country, one being a problem window and the other a political window. Third, this 12-year period effectively corresponds with the main theme of 'recovery' and revival of this article, thus warranting particular focus. Fourth, data that are more substantial are available from all three sources – interviews, policy documents, and, most notably, website information for 2000–2012. Data prior to 2000 were more limited and less systematic.

However, some information regarding Chinese swimming in the 1990s is mentioned for providing background information and/or making a comparison. The most notable example is China's doping history and anti-doping policy trajectory.

Another issue worthy of clarifying is the primacy given to the national team level and the concomitant data collection focused on the national team. This relative 'exclusion' of provincial perspectives is due to (1) the origin of this article – a wider study focusing on a comparative analysis of sport policy processes between China and the United Kingdom at the national level; and (2) the unavailability of most potential interviewees at the provincial team level because of 2013 being a National Games year when different provinces were busy preparing for the event. Recent interview requests to them were in most cases rejected because of their identification of policy as a sensitive issue and their concern about disclosing valuable information to rival provinces. By comparison, interviewees at the national level tended to be more willing to share information.

An Analysis of Key Policy Factors

Elevated Policy, Financial and Scientific Support

Swimming in China has been a beneficiary of the Chinese government's policy support and the government's concomitant financial and scientific support. The *119 Project*, launched in the early 2000s, was a clear manifestation of deliberate policy support from GAS for China's non-traditional sports including swimming. The *119 Project*, advanced by the then Director of GAS – Weimin Yuan, was prompted by the dissatisfaction of the narrow range of sources of (gold) medals for China at Sydney 2000 and the poor performance in athletics, swimming, and other water sports²³. In Sydney, despite China's notable gold medal increase and the achievement of overtaking Germany as the world's top-third sports power, China won only one gold medal in athletics and failed to win any medal in swimming, rowing, sailing, or canoeing. The total gold medals from these sports at a single Olympic Games was 119, accounting for more than one-third of the total gold

medals available. However, China's market share was extremely limited, which was perceived as incommensurate with China's pursuit of being a major sports nation. Coupled with the increasing quest for more Olympic gold medals from broader sources derived from Beijing's successful Olympic bid in 2001, the *119 Project*, which aimed at improving China's Olympic performance in athletics, swimming, canoeing, rowing, and sailing, was officially implemented in the early 2000s. From the perspective of the multiple streams framework, poor performance at Sydney 2000 and Beijing's acquisition of the right to host the Olympic Games in 2001 formed two significant policy windows prompting policy changes for elite swimming in China, with the former being a swimming-specific window as well as a *problem*, while the latter more general in both political and sporting senses. *119 Project* was the most landmark product in the policy stream. Regarding the *119 Project*, designated sports including swimming obtained substantial financial, scientific and other forms of support. In addition, the National Team regime was reformed, and foreign communication, including the recruitment of world leading swimming coaches and overseas training, from small- to large-scale, was markedly enhanced following this fundamental project, which elevated the strategic profile of swimming in the Chinese elite sports scene. Akin to athletics, swimming is officially identified as a foundation and lagging sport in China.²⁴

Substantial government policy and financial support for elite sport in general and swimming in particular needs to be understood within the wider context of the one-party system and the pro-Olympic (gold) medal success national mood, which is illustrated by the political stream of Kingdon's (1995) multiple streams framework. There is a high degree of overlap between party ideology and government in the one-party system in China. The CCP represents and monopolizes government actions in China. Concerning the national mood, it is strongly shaped and influenced by the CCP and the government. A salient example was the high degree of enthusiasm for the staging of the Olympic Games and Olympic medal success in China. Although there were criticisms of the cost of staging the Olympic Games and of the Olympic-gold-medal-only philosophy as well as of some specific

issues such as the recruitment and training of child athletes, they were only expressed by a limited group of people and had a limited impact on national mood.

The *119 Project* has been instrumental in further enhancing China's Olympic gold medal performance and eventually contributing to China's rise as a superpower on the Summer Olympic stage. As shown in Table 2, China's sources of gold and other medals increased dramatically since Athens 2004, the first Olympic Games after the implementation of the *119 Project*. China won four gold medals in 119 sports at both Athens 2004 and Beijing 2008 as opposed to one in Sydney. China achieved gold medal breakthroughs in canoeing in 2004 and in rowing and sailing in 2012. Athletics also welcomed its best ever performance in 2004 with two gold medals. Chinese swimming's Olympic gold medal productivity soon recovered and its competitiveness reached a record high after Beijing 2008.

(Table 2 about here)

The *119 Project* was developed as a result of both the dissatisfaction with certain sports performances at Sydney 2000 and increased gold medal expectation and pressure for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. This corresponded with China's fundamental Olympic strategy shift from 'shortening the battle line and emphasize the focus' prior to the 2000s, to 'seeking new sources of Olympic gold medals' in the 2000s', as specified in *The Outline of the Strategic Olympic Glory Plan: 2001–2010*.²⁵ The *119 Project* provided a golden opportunity for the development of many non-traditional sports in China and laid a solid foundation for the recovery and revival of Chinese swimming where the impact of the project tends to be the most profound and enduring.

The holistic support derived from the *119 Project* is evidenced in funding and science. Annual GAS funds allocated to the National Water Sports Management Centre (responsible for rowing, sailing, and canoeing) doubled in 2001 compared with 2000, reaching CN¥20 million yuan (approximately £1.3 million then). In addition, 3 million yuan was directed to equipment

purchase and 1 million for international competition visits²⁶. Similar to rowing, sailing, and canoeing, swimming received substantial funds in the 2000s.

State funds constitute the most crucial financial source for the Aquatics Management Centre and the CSA. The annual government investment in the National Swimming Team was approximately CN¥13 million yuan for the London Olympiad.²⁷ GAS is in charge of allocating funds to all sports including swimming, according to the number of administrative appointments.

In recent years, swimming has attracted substantial commercial money, particularly in the Olympic year (e.g., from Audi, Midea and Ping An).²⁸ However, state funds are largely sufficient and hence there has always been a surplus of commercial money. The balance of the Aquatics Management Centre account has reached CN¥100 million and the annual tax is more than CN¥10 million.²⁹ A main area in which commercial investment makes a great contribution is the overseas training of the National Team, where commercial sponsoring money was approximately 10 million CNY each year at the London Olympiad, accounting for 50% of the total expenditure.³⁰ Notably, sponsorship and commercial money are strictly controlled by the Economic Department of GAS,³¹ which, instead of the Aquatics Management Centre and the National Swimming Team, is the sole recipient of the money and regulates its use. Commercial money can be used only for training. This demonstrates the hierarchical relationship between GAS and the Aquatics Management Centre as well as the latter's financial dependence on the former.

Scientific support was another illustration of increased governmental support for *119 Project* sports including swimming. GAS and the China Institute of Sport Science send a specialized team including top sports medical experts from leading comprehensive and sports universities in China to the National Team training centre and the scientific team stays with the team to provide daily support. Key athletes, particularly those who have a chance of winning gold medals at the Olympic Games and FINA World Championships, receive additional care.³² They are accompanied by 'bespoke' scientific and medical teams and personal masseurs.³³ These are notable examples of a series of scientific support from GAS for swimming since the Beijing Olympiad.

Centralization: An Increasingly National Governing Body-Led Approach

Before 2000, there had been no regular National Swimming Team, only a loose ‘federalized’ team.³⁴ Provincial teams were often reluctant to send top athletes to the National Team because it conflicted with their provincial interests and the National Team was hence largely depleted.³⁵ Provincial teams provided more substantial benefits including financial rewards to swimmers in order to enhance performance at the National Games, thus influencing athletes’ preferences.³⁶ The training of elite swimmers, including those representing China, relied overwhelmingly on provincial teams. However, the lack of resource concentration was proven detrimental to the performance of the National Team at major competitions. The poor performance at Sydney 2000 was a turning point (policy window) resulting in a sea change in the national team structure. The national team structure and training regime for the National Team swimmers were identified a key problem (problem stream). Consequently, the event-oriented transitional National Team system was established, but only before major events such as the Olympic Games, the FINA World Championships, and the Asian Games did elite swimmers from different provinces congregate in Beijing and undertake intensive training for a short period. Finally, a stable and regular National Team was established after the 2002 Busan Asian Games, following the 119 Project and led by new Director and Vice Director of the Aquatics Management Centre. The average annual training time for swimmers on the National Team is approximately 340 days.³⁷ These were effective policy solutions identified and adopted in response to the aforementioned problems. The training base of GAS is the headquarters for the National Swimming Team. At the London Olympiad, the size of the National Team, including preeminent reserve athletes, remained between 100 and 200 swimmers.

Currently, elite swimming in China is characterized by a highly centralized organizational structure in which national governing bodies dominate and provincial teams are largely cooperative with national team requirements, instead of the previously prevalent national–provincial tension. The Aquatics Management Centre, subordinate to GAS, is the highest swimming-specific

organ of state administration.³⁸ With respect to fundamental issues and basic principles and directions, GAS holds the decision-making power, whereas the Aquatics Management Centre acts as a policy implementer. However, the Aquatics Management Centre is highly autonomous in addressing swimming-related issues as long as it conforms to the fundamental principles of GAS.

The National Team focuses on the management and operation of the athletes, coaches, and other staff members of the National Team. The overriding interests inside the policy community are to pursue Olympic glory and elite sport success. According to the team leader of the National Swimming Team, the decision-making process is highly hierarchical.

Key decision makers mainly come from the National Team Committee and the Swimming Department of the Aquatics Management Centre. The current director of the Team Committee is also the secretary of the Aquatics Management Centre. He is a key decision maker, working with the team leader and the head coach of the National Team and so on. In general, decision making involves four to five people. They form the core of the policy making community. Olympic gold medal coaches join the decision making if it concerns the National Team. When it comes to non-National team issues such as competition schedules, the Swimming Department takes the responsibility ... Athletes are seldom involved in the policy-making process. There is no athlete committee inside the Aquatics Management Centre or the Swimming Department. The exclusion of athletes from the policy making process helps enhance the efficiency of policy implementation. ... Provincial teams regularly provide suggestions and feedback to the Management Centre, and the National Team, and the Management Centre and the Swimming Department often exchange opinions with provincial teams regarding issues such as competition schedules and the method for Olympic squad selection. But the leaders of the Management Centre, the Swimming Department and the National Team make the final decisions.³⁹

The CSA, founded in 1956, is nominally a non-governmental organization.⁴⁰ It represents Chinese swimming and is a FINA member.⁴¹ However, the CSA

follows the will and requirements of GAS and the Aquatics Management Centre.

At the regional level, swimming-related management centres and departments are affiliated with regional sports bureaus or administrations and hence 'belong' to regional governments. In principle, the Chinese Aquatics Management Centre does not govern provincial aquatics management centres and the relationship is in the form of 'professional guidance' and 'mentoring.'⁴² However, there are many cases where provincial teams serve the needs of the National Team particularly in relation to fundamental policies such as the *Olympic Glory Plan*.⁴³

An Improved National–Provincial Relationship: 'Big National Team' and the National Team-Led Collective Training for Reserve Swimmers

Swimming has been an illustrative example of the improved national–provincial relationship and inter-provincial cooperation. This increasingly compliant, or rather, cooperative national/provincial relationship was propelled by both (1) the centralized structure in which the national government and national team obtain more substantial resources and power to demand lower-level policy implementers; and (2) a series of effective measures by the National Team that have mediated the tension between the National Team and provincial teams and reconciled their interests, eradicated provincial boundaries, and benefited swimming development in a broader range of provinces.

First, there were innovations regarding the National Team system at the Beijing Olympiad; the most notable example was the introduction of the concept of the 'Big National Team'. Previously, the National Team was in charge of only recruiting swimming talent from provincial teams and managing the National Team. Following the 'Big National Team', the National Team, to some extent, transcends the top-down hierarchy between the National Team and provincial teams by fully taking advantage of provincial resources including facilities, scientific support, coaches and young talent, and by including these talented swimmers and coaches in the broader scale of the National Team. Pre-eminent young talent of provincial teams can be directly

recruited to the National Team irrespective of age.⁴⁴ The concept of the 'Big National Team' integrates domestic resources more effectively and transcends provincial boundaries. Coaches of one provincial team (coaches serving the National Team also work for their provincial teams) are often in charge of swimmers from different provinces. Thus, provincial rivalry has been ingeniously transformed into inter-provincial support, and an atmosphere that provincial teams fully consider and respect the interests of the National Team has been gradually formed.⁴⁵ Moreover, the National Team has become more active in communicating with provincial teams and absorbing the young swimming talent of provincial teams. The most salient example is the collective training for reserve swimmers organized by the Aquatics Management Centre and the National Team since the Beijing Olympiad.⁴⁶

The collective training, generally held three to four times annually, congregates almost all young talented swimmers and coaches from provincial teams. Coaches of the National Team guide young coaches and swimmers. In the collective training for reserve swimmers, provincial teams are divided into several large groups, each of which contains several provincial teams from both Northern China (whose team members are generally deemed more adept physical training) and Southern China (generally considered more proficient at skills). Teams in the same large group, including coaches and athletes from different provinces, follow a unified plan and train together. More importantly, these innovative measures have unified the interests of the National Team and provincial teams. In addition to its contribution of many world-leading swimmers (e.g., Olympic champion Shiwen Ye) and some Olympic gold medal coaches (e.g., Guoyi Xu and Haitao Liu, the coaches of the Olympic champions Shiwen Ye and Liuyang Jiao, respectively),⁴⁷ the collective training for reserve swimmers has also helped with the progress of lagging provinces such as Henan and Anhui because of the deliberate policy bias regarding venue selection.⁴⁸ The home team can send two coaches and eight reserve swimmers to the collective training compared with one coach and four reserve swimmers for non-home provincial teams.⁴⁹ This demonstrates the Aquatics Management Centre's deliberate policy of improving the overall development of swimming nationwide.

The head coach of the Chinese National Swimming Team is appointed by the Aquatics Management Centre,⁵⁰ but the appointment must be approved by GAS.⁵¹ Coaches of the National Team also ‘belong’ to their corresponding provincial teams and lead them in major domestic competitions such as the National Games.⁵² However, as noted, when they fulfill roles for the National Team, according to the concept of the ‘Big National Team’, coaches are often in charge of athletes from different provinces because coaching transcends provincial boundaries. This relatively flexible coaching structure is conducive to both the National Team and provincial teams.

The contribution of provincial resources to the National Swimming Team is also illustrated by the geographical breadth of training bases. In addition to Beijing, there are training bases for the National Team in Hangzhou, Dalian, and other locations in China.⁵³ To improve the aerobic capacity of swimmers on the National Team, since 2006, many coaches have taken their swimmers, to the Duoba National Plateau Sports Training Base in Qinghai Province, or to the base in Kunming, Yunnan Province for annual high-altitude training.⁵⁴ The duration is normally 4 to 5 weeks each time.⁵⁵

Finally, in the case of the Olympic Games, scientific and medical staffs from provincial teams may join the National Team to support some key swimmers such as Yang Sun and Shiwen Ye.⁵⁶ This is an additional demonstration of the integration of provincial resources to serve the National Team in swimming.

A Vanguard in Globalization: ‘Invite In and Go Out’

Chinese swimming is widely accepted as an illustrative example of the globalization movement of Chinese elite sport.⁵⁷ As the leading sports team in conducting a long-term ‘Invite In and Go Out’ strategy,⁵⁸ the Chinese National Swimming Team has been committed to the recruitment of foreign coaches and overseas training. The trigger was the non-gold performance at the 2007 Melbourne FINA World Championships. This poor performance, from Kingdon’s (1995) perspective, was a policy window prompting major reforms in coaching, which was identified as a culprit, or *problem* from the perspective of the multiple streams framework. Subsequently, the Director of GAS – Peng

Liu promoted four points including the recruitment of high-level foreign coaches and the organization of key swimmers for overseas training in leading swimming countries.⁵⁹ Thus, GAS-level political leader's role as a policy entrepreneur prompting the National Swimming Team's recruitment of world-leading foreign coaches and the expanded overseas training was evident. Foreign coaches and overseas training became two most notable outcomes in the policy stream. Training with Denis Cotterell (the coach of Grant Hackett) since 2007 helped to improve Lin Zhang's performance AT Beijing 2008, where he became the first Chinese male ever to win an Olympic swimming medal.⁶⁰ The Chinese National Swimming Team has maintained cooperation with Denis Cotterell and regularly sends key swimmers including Yang Sun to Australia for training. The contract with Denis Cotterell does not specify any goals, but Denis Cotterell and other foreign coaches such as Ken Wood are financially rewarded by the Aquatics Management Centre and the National Team for Olympic gold medal performance.⁶¹ Denis Cotterell occasionally visits the national training base in Beijing to guide swimmers of the National Team. The cooperation with leading foreign coaches and the 'Invite In and Go Out' strategy were continued and the recruitment of foreign coaches was strengthened after London 2012.⁶²

As early as 2006, the Chinese National Swimming Team began sending top swimmers abroad for overseas training, but training in the United States was unsatisfactory.⁶³ The Management Centre and the National Team learned lessons and concluded that overseas training should be more targeted and selective, and that training destinations should have world-leading facilities, coaches, and swimmers.⁶⁴ The first major breakthrough occurred after Lin Zhang's cooperation with Denis Cotterell after Melbourne 2007. Lin Zhang and Peng Wu's successes consolidated the Aquatics Management Centre and the National Team's determination to continue overseas training. The Aquatics Management Centre has expanded individual overseas training to large-scale collective group overseas training since 2010,⁶⁵ a process referred to as the 'modern self-strengthening movement⁶⁶ of Chinese swimming'.⁶⁷ The vast majority of the National Team regularly travels abroad for overseas training, and Australia has become the main destination.⁶⁸ The Chinese National Swimming Team sends a group of

athletes to Australia each year for training that generally lasts 4 to 6 weeks. Olympic medal favourites go to Australia twice a year. In addition to Australia, the United States, Germany, and the United Kingdom are also destinations for overseas training.⁶⁹

Consistent with the 'Invite In and Go Out' strategy, the National Team has sent key swimmers to Hong Kong Polytechnic University for rehabilitation.⁷⁰ Moreover, the team invites experts from Hong Kong for long- and short-term scientific support.⁷¹

Clear Strategic Plan and Step-by-Step Quantified Performance Targets

A clear, feasible, and detailed strategic plan has been another contributory factor underpinning Chinese swimming's notable progress in the aftermath of Beijing 2008. This was a recent development at the London Olympiad, triggered by the reflection of the limited progress on home soil in Beijing where Chinese swimmers had won only one gold medal, and was led by the new national team head coach and the team leader,⁷² who played the role of policy entrepreneurs in this case. However, they were internal entrepreneurs inside the *Juguo Tizhi* (the whole country support for elite sport system) rather than exogenous non-governmental advocates, because head coach and team leaders are also sports officials enjoying administrative power and status in elite sport in China. Also, as noted above, centre directors, team leaders and leading coaches dominate the policy agenda and decision making of the National Swimming Team, with the evidence of influence and intervention from the general GAS level (mainly GAS officials and political leaders) in the case of more fundamental issues. Therefore, there is very little evidence of the influence of policy entrepreneurs outside GAS and Aquatics Management Centre, although it would be overstating the matter to say that there is no evidence of policy entrepreneurs outside the government machinery. Sponsors, despite their substantial financial contributions, are prohibited to participate in decision making and internal affairs of the National Swimming Team, as clearly stated in the sponsorship contracts⁷³. Media criticisms can pressurise the National Swimming Team, but rarely has this type of criticisms and suggestions been adopted by the Aquatics Management Centre that is

primarily accountable to the orders and principles of GAS (government). There are occasions where scholars are involved in the decision making in the forms of meeting attendance and advice consultation⁷⁴. However, the centre director, vice director, team leader and head coaches hold the final decision making power.

Step-by-step, or rather, year-by-year quantified medal targets were a dominant characteristic of the Chinese National Swimming Team's strategic plan in the post-Beijing 2008 era. According to the *London 2012 Preparation Plan*, the Chinese National Swimming Team's objectives were as follows:

- 2009: To win at least three gold medals at the 2009 Rome World Championships;
- 2010: To beat Japan at the 2010 Guangzhou Asian Games;
- 2011: To achieve additional breakthroughs in pivotal events;
- 2012: To achieve gold medal breakthroughs in men's events and to outperform themselves at Beijing 2008 in women's events at the 2012 London Olympic Games.

All these policy objectives were successfully met, while the overall competitiveness of Chinese swimmers gradually increased and reached a peak at London 2012 (Table 3). The notable gold medal progress at London 2012 provided an optimal examination for proving the value of a series of approaches including the centralization of the National Team and the concept of the 'Big National Team' and the 'Invite In and Go Out' strategy. The cooperation with foreign coaches and overseas training, collective training for reserve swimmers, and quantified performance targets and evidence-based strategic plans were maintained and even strengthened in the aftermath of London 2012. Thus, policy windows can be opened by successful performance rather than a crisis. In addition, instead of policy termination and new policies, policy change is evidenced in the form of policy continuation and strengthening. It is also clear that in the context of elite sport, major sporting events in particular the Olympic Games acts as a periodical examination for most sports in a wide range of countries (e.g., elite swimming in China in this article) and the performance at the Olympic Games often largely influences

policy direction and the necessity of policy change in the subsequent 4-year cycle. This demonstrates the predictability of certain types of policy windows in certain contexts. Thus far, China has maintained its competitiveness in swimming at the two World Championships at the Rio de Janeiro Olympiad.

(Table 3 about here)

There is evidence of policy convergence from China's quantified performance target identification. This approach echoes UK Sport's 'No Compromise' strategy⁷⁵ and Australia's recent *Sports Tally* – performance-contingent funding strategy, promoted in *Australia's Winning Edge: 2012–2022*.⁷⁶ Finally, it is pertinent to mention that Japan has been a major rival and comparator for Chinese elite swimming in Asia. A competition result with Japan often forms a valuable indicator for measuring China's performance, leading to performance review and policy change in some cases – for example, the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games and the 1998 Bangkok Asian Games.⁷⁷

Leverage of Competitions

Competitions were identified by GAS as crucial for delivering China's elite sport excellence, explicitly stated as early as in *The Outline of the Strategic Olympic Glory Plan: 1991–2000*.⁷⁸ The 2001 Moscow decision to award the right to host the 2008 Olympic Games to Beijing and the ambition for success at the 2008 Home Olympic Games provided a powerful impetus to the refinement and further development of the domestic competition structure in China. Domestic competitions' role as a domestic platform for and 'rehearsal' for the Olympic Games became increasingly salient, with the functions of which comprising athlete and coach identification, athlete development, and the familiarity with the rules of Olympic sports. Although the National Games of China, as the most high-profile domestic multi-sport competition in China and the ostensive Olympic Games for provincial teams,⁷⁹ has been Olympic-standardized (regarding sport, discipline and event setting and Olympic rules; the only exception is the inclusion of the traditional Chinese sport of Wushu) since the 1997 Shanghai National Games and the 'policy medal'⁸⁰ approach

was adopted even earlier in 1993, there were further developments in the new century focusing on greater success at Beijing 2008. Since the 2005 Jiangsu National Games, an Olympic gold medal has been counted as two for the home province at the National Games and an additional gold medal has been conferred on the National Games if the champion breaks a world record according to the principle specified in *2008 Olympic Glory Action Plan*.⁸¹

For many coastal provinces and municipalities, the performance in swimming largely determines or, at least, influences their positions in the medals table. For example, at the 2013 Liaoning National Games, Zhejiang Province won 35 gold medals and ranked seventh in the medals table. Swimming contributed 25 gold medals to the delegation, accounting for more than two-thirds of the total gold medals that Zhejiang won. However, only 15 gold medals were actually won during the National Games because the remaining 10 gold medals were 'transferred' from the 2012 London Olympic Games.⁸² These transferred gold medals are referred to as 'policy medals'. A double-point system was also adopted for athletes representing the People's Liberation Army (PLA) team according to which both the home province of the PLA athlete and the PLA team win a medal at the National Games if the medallist represents the PLA team.⁸³

GAS adopted this medal calculation method as part of its strategy for implementing national policy to coordinate regional interests more effectively with those of the national teams, thereby enabling provincial sports teams, which prioritize the National Games, to serve GAS goal of Olympic success. This policy secures provincial teams' morale to serve the national team's priority of Olympic gold medals. Furthermore, the Zhejiang swimming boom in the past decade is a clear manifestation of the GAS adoption of the policy instrument of incentives and inducements.

Swimming-specific competitions' leveraging role is equally discernible and they are increasingly instrumental in contributing to athlete cultivation. The National Swimming Champions Competition (in the first half of a year) and the National Swimming Championships (in the second half of a year), both held annually, are the two most crucial swimming-specific domestic competitions.⁸⁴ They are fully exploited by the Aquatics Management Centre to provide provincial teams with incentives to invest in the development of swimming in

general and to improve certain events in particular. The most salient example is China's recent progress in the men's 4×200m freestyle relay.

On the final day of the National Swimming Champions Competition, all the best 16 swimmers in the men's 100m freestyle and men's 200m freestyle events are assembled. They are divided by lot into four relay teams for a star relay competition. This measure is purposive policy support for men's freestyle events and has led to more substantial support for men's freestyle at the provincial level. Several world-class male freestyle swimmers have emerged from this competition.⁸⁵

Anti-Doping: From Ignominy to 'Zero Tolerance' despite 'Fluctuations'

Chinese National Swimming Team, particularly the Women's Team, markedly improved at the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games and dominated the 1994 Rome World Championships. However, the team experienced a nadir between the late 1990s and the early 2000s, and large-scale drug use was the main culprit.⁸⁶ Notably, the eruption of doping incidents was closely related to the recruitment of former East German coaches and medical staff.⁸⁷ The policy learning and transfer from East Germany led to nightmarish consequences. Moreover, the use of drugs disseminated by many East German coaches to their swimmers reflected the 'street-level bureaucrats' bottom-up implementation theory.⁸⁸ These doping incidents, most notably the scandals at the 1994 Hiroshima Asian Games and the 1998 Perth FINA World Championships,⁸⁹ were the most notorious doping scandals in Chinese elite sport history, and have had a profound impact on not only Chinese elite swimming but also the entire Chinese elite sport domain.⁹⁰ The overall competitiveness of Chinese swimming was vastly eroded.⁹¹ These two humiliating scandals, officially identified as 'subversive incidents' in Chinese swimming history,⁹² became the catalysts for GAS and the Aquatics Management Centre to take strict measures to crack down on drug use. Thus, China became one of the first countries to adopt blood tests in 1999.⁹³

The poor performance at Sydney 2000 further consolidated the Aquatics Management Centre's determination to eradicate drug use. For example, the

Aquatics Management Centre and the CSA promoted a policy including regulations stating that registered athletes are ineligible to participate in the National Games until two years after the registration, and registered athletes must compete in at least two competitions annually; that swimmers not participating in the collective training organized by the National Team are ineligible to represent China; and that athletes found guilty of drug use can never return to the National Team and will receive a long-term ban.⁹⁴

The approaching of Beijing 2008 accelerated the development of anti-doping in China. The establishment of the China Anti-Doping Agency (ChinaDA; affiliated with GAS) in 2007 was a milestone, signalling China's determination to combat doping.⁹⁵ Regarding swimming, in addition to general anti-doping codes of the World Anti-Doping Agency and ChinaDA, the Aquatics Management Centre and the CSA have required registered swimmers to provide non-competition whereabouts and have increased the frequency of out-of-competition tests since 2005.⁹⁶ 'A zero tolerance' policy has been adopted, which was exemplified in the Aquatics Management Centre's lifelong ban on Kunpeng Ouyang, approved by GAS.⁹⁷ The establishment of a regular National Team enables strictly tracking and detecting whether key swimmers use a banned substance. In addition to the tests conducted by the World Anti-Doping Agency and ChinaDA, swimmers who regularly train on the National Team have been required to take weekly blood tests since 2008.⁹⁸ These stringent measures on anti-doping have created a healthy environment for Chinese elite swimming and the number of doping cases has dropped considerably over the past 10 to 15 years. To summarize, the policy windows for anti-doping policy development in Chinese elite swimming included (1) notorious scandals at Hiroshima 1994 and Perth 1998; (2) poor performance at Sydney 2000; and (3) the approaching of Beijing 2008 and the concomitant pressure from GAS, domestic and international media and the general public. Some windows, in particular Chinese elite swimmers' notorious incidents in 1994 and 1998, have left a profound impact on anti-doping movement in China the imprint of which has transcended elite swimming *per se*.

However, despite China's notable progress in anti-doping between the Athens Olympiad and London Olympiad, there is a widespread suspicion

across Western nations that Chinese elite swimming success is still reliant on doping. In particular, doping again became a puzzling issue confronting Chinese elite swimming since the Rio de Janeiro Olympiad. The National Swimming Team was widely accused of its late report of Yang Sun's doping cases in 2014. In addition, Beijing's anti-doping laboratory was suspended by the World Anti-Doping Agency in early 2016. More recently, a doping incident plagued Chinese swimming at Rio de Janeiro 2016, which again brought China's inadequate anti-doping activities into the focus of global media.

Discussion and Conclusion

China's dramatic progress in swimming in the aftermath of Beijing 2008 was not achieved immediately. It has been the product of a series of policy approaches adopted after the nadir at Sydney 2000. Its policy trajectory in the past 15 years could be aptly illustrated according to Kingdon's (1995) multiple streams framework.⁹⁹ First, the aforementioned policy developments in Chinese elite swimming must be understood within the wider political and economic contexts of a single-party political regime. The governmental policy agenda in China represent the Chinese Communist Party's ideology, longstanding governmental support for elite sport, increased political salience and concomitant heavy policy, financial support for elite sport and in particular elite swimming after Beijing's successful Olympic bid, and an Beijing-2008 centred pro-elite sport national environment as well as China's economic surge, resource boom, and accelerating pace of globalization. The policy developments have formed the political stream. The problem stream has comprised not only poor performances at Sydney 2000 and Melbourne 2007 (in addition to limited gold medal progress relative to other sports at Athens 2004 and Beijing 2008), but also the performance pressure and expectations derived from the hosting of Beijing 2008 and Shanghai 2011, as well as a series of successes since Rome 2009 including Shanghai 2011, London 2012, Barcelona 2013, and Kazan 2015. These events also acted as policy windows prompting policy change and policy strengthening at various critical junctures. Policy windows were opened by Chinese elite swimmers' 'examinations' at various international major events most notably performance declines at

Sydney 2000 and Melbourne 2007. However, prominent events beyond swimming and even beyond elite sport (i.e. Beijing's successful Olympic bid in 2001, China's entering of the World Trade Organization; WTO) have also left an indelible imprint on elite swimming in China by shaping and shifting its pathway. Concerning doping, notorious large-scale doping scandals at the 1994 Hiroshima Asian Games and the 1998 Perth FINA World Championships were also defining moments prompting the development of anti-doping policy in China; hence, these moments were also policy windows for anti-doping for the entire Chinese elite sport landscape. Through the largely internal (GAS, the Aquatics Management Centre and the National Swimming Team) discussion, review and reflection, problems including a loose national team structure, the low quality of training and coaches, the lack of a global horizon, the limited power of the national team, the lack of cooperation from provincial teams, the unbalanced swimming development between different provinces, the lack of scientific support, and the prevalence of doping were identified, and accordingly, a wide range of policy solutions were advanced and implemented. Crucial policy solutions, or approaches mainly included elevated policies, financial and scientific support through the landmark *119 Project*, the adoption of a centralized approach to the national team, measures taken for improving national-provincial relationships and eradicating provincial segmentation most notably the establishment of a 'Big National Team' and the organization of collective training for reserve swimmers, the appointment of new key leaders, the commitment to 'Invite In and Go Out' evidenced in notable developments in overseas training and the cooperation with leading foreign coaches, a clear strategic plan and the adoption of a quantified performance target system and a series of measures strictly for combating doping. Because of the top-down relationship with GAS and the largely 'hermetic' decision making process and the centralization of decision making power, there is no evidence of the influence of policy entrepreneurs outside GAS and the Aquatics Management Centre. There is a high degree of overlap between influential decision makers and entrepreneurs of the afore-mentioned policies; namely, key political leaders of GAS, political leaders of the Aquatics Management Centre (centre director, associate director) and the National Team (director of the team committee, team leader,

and key coaches including the head coach and Olympic gold medal coaches). Policies have been influenced by the notable progress and relatively stable international performance of Chinese elite swimmers since 2009, as well as the improved national–provincial relationship, burgeoning of talented young swimmers and coaches, and the lack of doping incidents at recent international competitions. Table 4 presents a summary of the development of elite swimming since 2000 from the perspective of the multiple streams framework.

(Table 4 about here)

Despite its strong pluralist foundation, the multiple streams framework provides a valuable lens for analyzing elite sport policy in relation to swimming in China. The concept of policy windows has proved to be particularly useful and helped identify pivotal events and actions following policy responses to such events in the development of elite swimming in China.

Although the multiple streams framework in general and the concept of policy windows in particular is useful in directing attention to problems and the policies that they prompted, there are distinctive features of elite sport in general and elite swimming in particular that necessitate some adaptations and localizations in the context of elite swimming in China. This research suggests that the three streams are not necessarily independent of each other. Although policy windows may accelerate the coupling of the three streams, China's sport policy including swimming-specific policy approaches (the policy stream) is well interiorized within the nation's unique pro-elite sport government (synonymous with the CCP party) philosophy and political system (the political stream). Concerning the problem stream, as evidenced in this article, problems often act as an agent prompting the opening of policy windows, or in many cases, form the policy windows. Therefore, this article, similar to many recent studies, challenges the mutually independent nature of the three streams, originally argued by Kingdon (1995). At least, the degree of this independence tends to vary according to different political systems and policy domains.

For policy windows, the scale of policy windows advanced by Kingdon (1995) tends to be oversimplified and hence it needs careful specification.¹⁰⁰ Exworthy and Powell's (2004) categorization of 'big windows' at the national level and 'little windows' at the local level provided this thesis with inspiration.¹⁰¹ In this thesis, policy windows are divided into 'big windows' and 'swimming-specific windows'. Examples of the former include China's joining the WTO and increased pace of globalization, as well as the success of Beijing's bid to host the 2008 Olympic Games. Concerning swimming-specific windows, poor performances often became 'wake-up calls' for actions and change for corresponding sports. Hence, it is apparent that policy windows can be coupled at different levels; for example, evidenced in the confluence of the poor performance at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games and Beijing's successful Olympic bid in 2001, and the impact of the confluence on the introduction and acceleration of the implementation of the *119 Project*.

Another concern regarding policy windows is their predictability, which has been most systematically illustrated by Howlett's (1998) categorization of routine, spillover, discretionary and random windows.¹⁰² Policy windows are highly predictable in the area of elite sport policy. As noted, performances at major international competitions often opened a window for either policy change or policy continuation and consolidation. Although the detailed results or the outcomes at the Olympic Games, for example, have tended to be unpredictable, the 4-year cycle of the Summer Olympic Games has commonly led to regular and routinized general and sport-specific reviews and summaries. The Olympic Games has become a regular examination of Olympic sports in China, including elite swimming and the policies for the new Olympiad, whether in the form of policy continuation and development or substantial policy changes, which are often contingent on the performance at the Olympic Games and the evaluation. The performances at the World Championships and Asian Games have also provided periodic smaller-scale examinations of elite swimming policies. Furthermore, poor performance often opens a policy window for policy change, as evidenced in the overseas training in Australia and cooperation with leading Australian coaches, prompted by China's non-gold performance at the 2007 Melbourne World Championships.

The final issue is closely associated with the 'inertia' of some policies discussed in the policy stream section. As noted, some policies are not established immediately and some policies tend to be long lasting. The gradual adoption, consolidation and continuation and development of some policies, as evident in the development from tentative overseas training and cooperation with foreign coaches to the large-scale and regular overseas training and import of world-leading foreign coaches of Chinese swimming demonstrate that some policies are not completed 'within' one policy window. Instead, they are developed more incrementally way, typically involving more than one policy window covering a certain time span. This demonstrates the incremental and cumulative nature of some policies through several policy windows.

Finally, as in the discussion of the problem stream, policy windows can be opened by events other than a crisis or events in the political stream. Chinese elite swimmers' recent success since Rome 2009 raised its performance expectations and concomitant pressure. This pressure could be identified as a policy 'problem' that requires, at least, further actions and developments of existing policies, if not new policies. Policy windows can be opened by positive events (the raised bar effect) rather than by a crisis in the problem stream.

Notes

¹ The English term 'swimming' is often confused with 'aquatics'. Therefore, consistent with the International Olympic Committee's terminology, swimming studied in this article does not include diving, synchronized swimming and water polo. International Olympic Committee, 'Swimming', International Olympic Committee, <http://www.olympic.org/swimming> (accessed 20 September 2013).

² Sports-Reference, 'China Swimming at the 1936 Berlin Summer Games', Sports-Reference, <http://www.sports-reference.com/olympics/countries/CHN/summer/1936/SWI/> (accessed 21 September 2013).

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Development and Achievements of Swimming in New China]', in General Administration of Sport of China (ed.), *Pinbo licheng huihuang chengjiu: Xinzhongguo tiyu liushinian (xiangmujuan)* [A Hard-Fighting Journey and Brilliant Achievements: A Sixty-Year History of Sport in New China (Sport Volume)] (Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2009), 230.

⁴ 'Five golden flowers' refer to five prominent Chinese female swimmers in the late 1980s and early 1990s: Wenyi Yang, Hong Qian, Yong Zhuang, Li Lin and Xiaohong Wang.

⁵ Zhongmiao Ye, 'An Analysis of the Status Quo of Chinese Elite Swimming', *Sports Sciences Researches* 8, no. 3 (2004), 83.

⁶ John W. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies* (Reading, NY: Longman, 1995), 173.

⁷ Michael D. Cohen, James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, 'A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice', *Administrative Science Quarterly* 17, no. 1 (1972), 1.

⁸ Barrie Houlihan, 'Public Sector Sport Policy: Developing A Framework for Analysis', *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 40, no. 2 (2005), 171.

⁹ Nikolaos Zahariadis, 'The Multiple Streams Framework: Structure, Limitations, Prospects', in Paul A. Sabatier (ed), *Theories of the Policy Process* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 2007), 65.

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¹¹ Barrie Houlihan, 'Public Sector Sport Policy: Developing A Framework for Analysis', *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 40, no. 2 (2005), 171.

¹² Rick Travis and Nikolaos Zahariadis, 'A Multiple Streams Model of U.S. Foreign Aid Policy', *Policy Studies Journal* 30, no. 4 (2002), 498.

¹³ John W. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies* (Reading, NY: Longman, 1995), 165.

¹⁴ John W. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies* (Reading, NY: Longman, 1995), 173.

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- ¹⁵ Mark Exworthy and Martin Powell, 'Big Windows and Little Windows: Implementation in the "Congested State"', *Public Administration* 82, no. 2 (2004), 263.
- ¹⁶ Michael Howlett, 'Predictable and Unpredictable Policy Windows: Institutional and Exogenous Correlates of Canadian Federal Agenda-Setting', *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 31, no. 3 (1998), 495-524.
- ¹⁷ Michael Howlett, 'Predictable and Unpredictable Policy Windows: Institutional and Exogenous Correlates of Canadian Federal Agenda-Setting', *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 31, no. 3 (1998), 495-524.
- ¹⁸ John W. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives and Public Policies* (Reading, NY: Longman, 1995), 179.
- ¹⁹ Wayne Parsons, *Public Policy: An Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Policy Analysis* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 1995), 194.
- ²⁰ Nils Asle Bersgard, 'A Garbage Can-Analysis of the Debate on National Facilities for Ski Sport – Nordic Disciplines' (paper presented at Pre-Olympic Congress in Sport Science, Sports Medicine and Physical Education, Brisbane, Australia, 7–12 September 2000); Laurence Chalip, 'Critical Policy Analysis: the Illustrative Case of New Zealand Sport Policy Development', *Journal of Sport Management* 10, no. 3 (1996), 310-324; and Neil King, *Sport Policy and Governance: Local Perspectives* (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2009).
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- ²² Xufeng Zhu, 'Strategy of Chinese Entrepreneurs in the Third Sector: Challenges of "Technical Infeasibility"', *Policy Sciences* 41, no. 4 (2008), p. 329.
- ²³ Interview with a retired GAS official who was a key policy maker, 15 May 2013.
- ²⁴ See Hua Yang (ed.), *Woguo aoyunhui beizhan cansai de lilun yu shijian (shang)* [Theory and Practice of China's Olympic Preparation and Participation (Volume 1)] (Beijing: China Legal Publishing House, 2012), 321.

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