

Women and Sport

The long road ahead

Against the Grain: Women and Sport in South Africa is a book written by South Africa's table tennis champion, Cheryl Roberts. Review by Rosalee Telela

In her book, Roberts offers a clear picture of the position of women in South African sport.

Using research and a range of interviews, she looks at why so few women play sport.

Roberts argues that South African sport is controlled by mainly white, middle-class men. This she sees as the biggest problem.

She found that women who have gone into this "male world of sport", are judged in social, sexist, racial and religious ways. "Women get judged

before, after and while they play sport."

Another reason why women do not get involved in sport is because society says a woman's place is in the home. This, she says, influences how they spend their free time.

The women she interviewed in her book agree with her.

"As breadwinners, women see to their families, take care of them after work and have to cook and clean. That gives them no leisure time at all," says Kedi Tshoma, a cricket coach.

"If I want to play sport or go to a sports event, I cannot go alone because I'm sure to be raped, mugged or attacked," says Nonke Mali, a netball administrator.

Roberts' message is encouraging: "Gender and sport is not an issue for women only but must involve sportsmen, who must change their sexist attitudes."

An interesting book to read whether one is interested in sport or not. ☆

COMPETITION

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What is the name of the book about women and sport written by Cheryl Roberts?

Answer

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Rules of the competition: The decision of the judges is final. This competition is only open to people living in Southern Africa. Employees and relatives of employees of SPEAK are not allowed to enter. The closing date is 25 January 1994. The winner will be announced in the March 1994 issue of SPEAK..

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