

THE OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF PHYSICAL CULTURE IN THE PROVINCE OF TERNOPIL IN THE YEARS 1920–1939

Eligiusz Małolepszy

Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa, Faculty of Social Sciences, Poland
ORCID: 0000-0003-2373-6048 | e-mail: e.malolepszy@ujd.edu.pl

Teresa Drozdek-Małolepsza

Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa, Faculty of Health Sciences, Poland
ORCID: 0000-0002-0482-9655 | e-mail: t.drozdek-malolepsza@ujd.edu.pl

Abstract The aim of the paper is to present the outline of the history of physical culture in the province of Ternopil in the years 1920–1939. The province of Ternopil was established on 23 December 1920, as one of the very first provinces on the South-Eastern Borderlands of the Second Polish Republic. In the interwar period, physical culture flourished in the province of Ternopil. In the twenties and thirties of the 20th century, new social and sports associations and sports clubs were being established. What is more, sports organisations gathering Polish, Ukrainian and Jewish citizens that had been active before the outbreak of WWI became active again. Football was the most popular sports discipline practised alongside boxing, gymnastics, cycling, athletics, archery, water sports, shooting, gliding, table tennis. A contest whose main prize was the State Sports Badge played an important role in propagating physical activity in society.

Key words province of Ternopil, the interwar period, physical culture, sport

Introduction

The aim of the paper is to present the outline of the history of physical culture in the province of Ternopil in the years 1920–1939. It should show various forms of participating in physical culture, such as physical education, sport, physical recreation and matters concerning military training.

The province of Ternopil was established on 23 December 1920, as one of the very first provinces on the South-Eastern Borderlands of the Second Polish Republic. Likewise, the date of its establishment constitutes the starting point of this work. The final point is the year 1939 – the outbreak of WWII. On 1 September 1939, Poland was invaded by Germany, and on 17 September 1939 the Soviet Union followed suit. In the aftermath of these events, the territory of the province of Ternopil was occupied by the Soviet Union.

The province of Ternopil covered the territory of 16,533 km² and counted 1,600,400 inhabitants (*Mały Rocznik Statystyczny, 1939*). The eastern border of the province was the border with the Soviet Union; the southern border of the province was also the border with Romania; from the western side, the province of Ternopil was adjacent

to the provinces of Stanisławów and Lviv; in the north it neighboured the province of Wolhynia. The province of Ternopil included the following districts: Borszhchiv, Brody, Berezhany, Buchach, Chortkiv, Kamianka, Kopychyntsi, Pidhaitsi, Peremysliany, Radekhiv, Skálat, Ternopil, Terbovlia, Zalishchyky, Zbarazh and Zolochiv (*Mały Rocznik Statystyczny, 1939*).

Polish citizens constituted the majority in the province of Ternopil – 49.3% (789,100), while there were 45.5% (728,100) people of the Ukrainian origin, 4.93% (78,900) of Jews, and 0.17% (2,700) of Germans (https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wojew%C3%B3dztwo_tarnopolskie [Entry: Województwo tarnopolskie]). The cities were inhabited by 16.8% of people, whereas 83.2% lived in the rural region (Gradowski, 1989).

As far as the former research is concerned, the work by Stanisław Zaborniak entitled *Physical Culture of the Ukrainians on the territory of Poland (1868–1939)* (*Kultura fizyczna ludności ukraińskiej na ziemiach polskich (1868–1939)*) (Zaborniak, 2007a) is of the biggest scientific importance. The author presented physical culture of the Ukrainian minority on the territory of the following provinces: Ternopil, Wolhynia and Lviv, located in the Second Polish Republic. The publication used various research methods such as: synthesis, written sources analysis, induction, deduction and comparative method. The following research questions were discussed:

1. Which sports clubs and youth and social organizations were active in the area of physical culture in the province of Ternopil in the years 1920–1939?
2. Which physical activity types were developed in the province of Ternopil in the interwar period?

The activity of clubs and societies in the area of physical culture

In the ranks of the Shooting Association (SA) – on the territory of the province of Ternopil – the 6th Lviv region was active (together with Ternopil sub-region). The SA Ternopil sub-region was established in 1930 (Zakrzewska, 2007). The territory of the SA Ternopil sub-region activity overlapped with the territory of the province. In 1936, the SA Ternopil sub-region counted about 31,000 members and 4,823 eaglets (as of 1937). In the years 1935–1939, 8 members of the sub-region took part in SA courses. The commanding officer of the SA Ternopil Sub-Region was colonel J. Lachowicz (Zakrzewska, 2007). Members of the Polish Teachers Association were engaged in the sub-region's activity. In the school year 1937/1938, there were 564 of them. The SA Ternopil Sub-Region possessed some infrastructure, among all, as of October 1938, it had 20 shooting houses, 11 other ones under construction, and 600 youth clubs. Only in the districts of Kopychyntsi, Ternopil (land one) and Zboriv shooters did not have any shooting houses that would be fully developed or under construction. In the training year 1932/1933, two shooting and archery courses were attended by 38 members of the sub-region (Zakrzewska, 2007).

“Sokół” Gymnastics Society (GS) on the territory of the province of Ternopil ran its activity within the structures of Lesser Poland Area of the following regions (as of 31 December 1925): Brody (6 nests and 454 members), Berezhany (4 nests and 661 members), Chortkiv (9 nests and 387 members) and Ternopil (9 nests and 703 members) (The report of the Management of “Sokół” Gymnastics Societies Association in Poland). In particular regions (as of 31 December 1925) the following nests were active: in Brody region – Olesko (15 members), Brody (230 members and 56 teenage members), Busk (88 members and 27 teenage members), Lopatyn (35 members), Dubno (45 members), Zaliztsi (41 members); in Berezhany region – Berezhany (216 members and 76 teenage members), Rohatyn (133 members and 152 teenage members), Pidhaitsi (107 members and 59 teenage members), Peremysliany (205 members); in Chortkiv region – Khorostkiv (60 members), Husiatyn, Buchach, Chortkiv (207 members), Kopychyntsi, Melnytsia (50 members and 9 teenage members), Zalishchyky (70 members and

126 teenage members); in Ternopil region – Pidvolochysk (130 members and 36 teenage members), Mykulyntsi, Skálat, Zbarazh, Zolochiv, Ternopil (352 members and 38 teenage members), Terebovlia (96 members), Zbarazh (125 members and 40 teenage members), Krugiv.

In another written source (Kłóś, 1926) we find information on the number of “Sokól” nests in the province of Ternopil, as of 1 January 1925. In Brody region, these were the following places: Olecko (founded in 1903; 25 members – 21 men and 4 women); Brody founded in 1891; 210 members – 143 men and 67 women); Busk (founded in 1904; 86 members – 63 men and 23 women); Lopatyn (founded in 1904; 37 members – 26 men and 9 women); Dubno (founded in 1922; 44 members – 31 men and 14 women). As for the region of Berezhany in Lesser Poland Area, the numbers were as follows: Berezhany (founded in 1892; 227 members – 192 men and 35 women), Rohatyn (founded in 1881; 144 members – 106 men and 38 women); Pidhaisi (founded in 1898; 112 members – 83 men and 29 women); Peremyshliany (founded in 1904; 215 members – 163 men and 52 women). The region of Chortkiv hosted the following “Sokól” nests: Khorostkiv (founded in 1908; 46 members – 41 men and 5 women); Husiatyn (founded in 1906; 64 members – 42 men and 22 women); Chortkiv (founded in 1891; 217 members – 173 men and 44 women); Kopychyntsi (no information on the date of nest foundation and number of members); Melnytsia (founded in 1906, no information on the number of members); Zalishchyky (founded in 1892; 93 members – 84 men and 9 women). The region of Ternopil had the following “Sokól” nests: Pidvolochysk (founded in 1903; 172 members – 120 men and 52 women); Mykulyntsi (founded in 1900; 59 members – 48 men and 11 women); Skálat (no information on the date of nest foundation and number of members); Strusiv (no information on the date of nest foundation and number of members); Ternopil (founded in 1885; no information on the number of members); Terebovlia (founded in 1892; no information on the number of members); Zbarazh (founded in 1893; 150 members – 120 men and 30 women). What is more, Lesser Poland Area (on the territory of the province of Ternopil), as of 1 January 1925, comprised the region of Zolochiv with the following nests: Zolochiv (founded in 1892; 189 members – 163 men and 26 women); Krugiv (founded in 1924; 24 members – men only); Zboriv (founded in 1903; 54 members – 30 men and 24 women); Zalitzsi – founded in 1892, 72 members – 52 men and 20 women (Kłóś 1926). 183 “Sokól” members from the region of Brody, Berezhany and Zolochiv participated in a military training activity (including 39 persons who took part in summer military training camps) (Kłóś 1926).

The Ukrainian Gymnastics Society (UGS) “Sokil” was very active in the area of physical culture, tourism and cultural-educational activities in the province of Ternopil. As of 1928, the province of Ternopil hosted 158 nests belonging to the UGS “Sokil” and the biggest number of them was located in the districts of Chortkiv (22), Peremyshliany (19) and Pidhaisi (22) (Zaborniak 2007a). “Sokil” was active in 14 districts of the province of Ternopil; it gathered 11,567 members, including 8,319 men, 2,648 women and 630 teenage members.

A year later (1929), there were 228 UGS “Sokil” nests in the province of Ternopil (Trofimiak, 2001). The province of Ternopil prided in the biggest number of “Sokil” nests, whereas the province of Lviv had 189 nests and the province of Stanisławów – 91.

On the territory of the province of Ternopil, the following rural youth organizations were promoting physical activity: Central Association of Young Villagers (1935–1939), Lesser Poland Youth Association at Lesser Poland Agricultural Society (1919–1931), “Wici” Rural Youth Association of the Republic of Poland (1928–1939) (Małolepszy, 2004).

In the province of Ternopil, Ukrainian sports associations and clubs propagated physical activity, too. Among them there were “Podilla” (“Podolia”) Ukrainian Sports Association (USA) in Ternopil (1908–1939); “Meta” Ukrainian

Sports-Workers Association (USWA) in Ternopil (1928–1937); “Radostawka” Ukrainian Sports Club (USC) in the village of Kriva near Radekhiv (1928–1939); “Skała” Ukrainian Sports Club in Dobromirka, district of Zbarazh (1934–1939); “Rusalka” Ukrainian Sports Association in Zolochiv (1937–1939) (Zaborniak, 2007a). Among the aforesaid organizations, “Podilla” USA in Ternopil displayed a wide range of activities and ran the following sports sections: boxing, women’s sports games, ice hockey, swimming, football, volleyball, chess, table tennis. “Podilla” USA members were also active in the area of tourism and culture and education (choir, theatre, library). There were also other organizations active on the territory of the province of Ternopil, e.g. “Płast” Ukrainian Scout Organisation, “Łuh” Gymnastics and Firefighting Society, “Kamenjari” Ukrainian Society (Trofimiak, 2001).

As far as Lviv Regional Football Association (RFA) is concerned – in the years 1921–1939 – football sections from the following sports clubs and associations participated in the league: “Kresy” Military-Civil Sports Club (MCSC) from Ternopil, “Janina” Zolochiv (it was founded under the name “Złoczovia” – Zolochiv), “Gwiazda” Brody, “Jehuda” Ternopil, “Kresowiaczy” Polish Sports Club (PSC) from Zbarazh, “Legion” Ternopil, “Lubicz” Brody, “Sokół” Gymnastics Society (GS) from Chortkiv, “Sparta” Trembovla, “Podilla” USA Ternopil, Military Sports Club (MSC) from Ternopil, Jewish Workers Sports Club (JWSC) Ternopil, Jewish Workers Sports Club (JSC) Zolochiv (Goksiński 2012). Apart from the aforesaid organizations, Lviv RFA included as well: “Strzelec” SC from Chortkiv, “Trembowelski” SC from Trembovla, “Strzelec” Polish Shooting Team (PST) from Zolochiv, “Gordon” JSC from Ternopil, “Trumeldor” JSC from Kopychyntsi (Halys, 2020).

The best football teams were: “Kresy” MCSC from Ternopil, “Janina” Zolochiv, “Jehuda” Ternopil, JSC Zolochiv and “Podilla” USA from Ternopil. Beginning with the sports season of 1927, the footballers of “Janina” Zolochiv played in Class A matches of Lviv RFA (Goksiński, 2012). In the season 1927, they took a very good third place in Class A matches, and were defeated only by two Lviv clubs – Military Sports Club (MSC) and Lechia. In the sports season of 1930, in Class A matches of Lviv RFA, they took the last ninth place, winning 2 matches, drawing 1 and losing 13 of them (Mandziuk, 2016). They were moved to Class B matches of Lviv RFA. Class A matches of the sub-region of Ternopil (belonging to Lviv RFA) were organized for the first time in 1935. The matches were played by the teams of “Janina” Zolochiv, “Jehuda” Ternopil, “Podilla” USA and “Kresy” MCSC from Ternopil. The footballers of “Jehuda” Ternopil became the champions of Ternopil sub-region. In the following seasons, the best teams of Ternopil sub-region were: “Kresy” MCSC from Ternopil (season 1936/1937), “Jehuda” Ternopil (season 1937/1938), “Janina” Zolochiv (season 1938/1939) (Mandziuk, 2016). The team of “Kresy” Ternopil played in the league matches from the season of 1921, taking part in Class C matches. From 1934, the club was under the auspices of military circles and adopted the name of “Kresy” MCSC from Ternopil (Goksiński, 2013). Among other Ukrainian sports clubs with a football section, “Podilla” USA from Ternopil was the strongest one. It is worth mentioning that only two provinces of the Second Polish Republic lacked RFA structures. Among them were the provinces of Novogradok and Ternopil.

Sport was practised in military units which were stationed in the province of Ternopil. Major Tadeusz Komorowski was an officer of the 9th Uhlan Regiment of Lesser Poland. The regiment was stationed in Chortkiv and Trembovla (Porada, 2021). In 1924, it qualified for the Polish national team in horse riding for the Olympic Games in Paris. Major Tadeusz Komorowski on his horse “Amon” took part in the Eventing Competition and was individually given the 26th place, whereas as a team they were 7th (Porada, 2021).

The province of Ternopil, together with the provinces of Lviv and Stanisławów, belonged to the structures of Lviv Regional Association of Athletics (Lviv RAA). “Sokół” GS from Zolochiv belonged to Lviv RAA (Król, 2015). On the territory of the province of Ternopil athletics events were held in e.g., Ternopil, Zbarazh and Zolochiv.

Lviv Regional Table Tennis Association had its sub-regions in Jarosław, Przemyśl, Rzeszów, Stanisławów and Ternopil (Pięta, 2008).

Towards the end of October 1935, there was a race for the championship of Ternopil. There were three contests within that competition. A 5-kilometre race was won by Branicki, who arrived at the finishing line before Solski; a 2.5-kilometre cycling race for junior competitors was won by Broszkiewicz who defeated Lautsch; whereas Solski and Nalepa won a 3-kilometre double race, overtaking Koszot and Branicki (Kieruzel, 2016). It is worth mentioning that “Rusałka” Ukrainian Sports Association in Zolochiv had a cycling section (Zaborniak, 2007b).

A strong boxing section could be found within the structures of “Podilla” USA from Ternopil. In the sports season of 1936/1937, the boxers of “Podilla” took part in Class B league matches of Lviv Regional Boxing Association (Lviv RBA). They were classified on the 2nd place and won their participation in play-offs for the team’s promotion to Class A of Lviv RBA (Zaborniak, 2007a). In play-offs they were defeated by boxers from “Polonia” Przemyśl and “Czarni” Lviv Sports Club.

The region of Ternopil witnessed the development of gliding and water sports. There was Podolia Flying Club and Ternopil Rowers Society (Grabowski, Malinowski, 2013).

On the territory of the province of Ternopil, there were resort and sports centres. A resort of Post Military Training (PMT) was run in Zalishchyky (Kowieska, 1997). Moreover, holidays for teachers were organized in Zalishchyky, too.

Contribution of province of Ternopil inhabitants in gaining the State Sports Badge

In June 1930, Poland introduced the so-called qualifiers to obtain the State Sports Badge – SSB (Małolepszy, Drozdek-Małolepsza, 2020). It was a very important task in the interwar period, also in the province of Ternopil, to propagate and disseminate the idea of making effort to obtain the SSB. It is worth mentioning that a person rewarded with the SSB had to demonstrate fitness and skills not in one sports discipline or physical activity, but in a few ones – in six different groups (disciplines): I – gymnastics or swimming, II – jumps, III – running, IV – throws, fencing or sports games, V – marching, trips, ski runs, cycling, horse riding and rowing or sports games, VI – shooting (Małolepszy, Drozdek-Małolepsza, 2020). Meeting the minimum requirements in all the groups qualified an individual to obtain the SSB. A document authorizing this individual to carry the SSB was a certificate issued by the District Committee of Physical Education and Military Training (DCPEMT), on the basis of a decision of the Province Committee of Physical Education and Military Training (PCPEMT).

Table 1. A List of the numbers of SSBs obtained in Poland (in particular provinces) in the years 1931–1932

Province	Education		Army		Other organisations and associations		Total	
	1931	1932	1931	1932	1931	1932	1931	1932
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Białystok	888	1,339	1,352	8,395	281	2,697	2,521	12,431
Kielce	426	2,765	–	2,278	147	1,885	573	6,928
Cracow	251	2,659	–	4,246	30	787	281	7,692
Lublin	355	1,712	316	5,268	193	4,025	864	11,005
Lviv	1,210	2,971	730	8,847	714	3,378	2,654	15,196
Łódź	282	2,528	195	2,324	50	3,200	527	8,052
Novogradok	243	751	858	8,153	33	1,023	1,134	9,927

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Polesie	297	768	564	4,076	80	1,443	941	6,287
Pomerania	554	2,653	203	6,657	385	4,335	1,142	13,645
Poznań	1,599	6,248	435	9,732	155	7,811	2,189	23,791
Stanisławów	49	1,270	–	1,420	4	980	53	3,670
Silesia	350	1,360	367	4,004	383	2,496	1,100	7,860
Ternopil	240	841	61	3,728	51	821	352	5,390
Vilnius	145	1,966	657	4,072	121	1,247	923	7,285
Volhynia	190	619	440	4,201	76	1,881	706	6,701
Warsaw (province)	472	2,620	158	7,874	156	3,955	786	14,449
Warsaw (city)	448	2,576	298	6,942	68	1,811	814	11,329
Total	7,999	35,646	6,634	92,217	2,927	43,775	17,560	171,638
Women							1,112	10,468
Men							16,448	161,170

Source: Małolepszy, Drozdek-Małolepsza (2020).

The number of SSBs obtained by the inhabitants of the province of Ternopil was still growing (e.g., Table 1). Next year (1933), the inhabitants of the province of Ternopil obtained 8,046 SSBs; where 814 of them were obtained by students, 4,443 by soldiers and 2,789 by members of organizations and societies (State Archives in Piotrków Trybunalski – APPT, Starostwo Powiatowe Piotrkowskie – SPP, sygn. 1258, no pagination). Taking into account the number of obtained SSBs, the district of Kopychyntsi was the leader, whereas the district of Zbarazh occupied the last place. In the following years, the number of SSBs obtained in the province of Ternopil grew; in 1934 it counted 11,121 SSB, and in 1935 – 11,126 SSB (APPT, SPP, sygn. 1872, no pagination). It should be emphasised that as for the number of obtained SSBs (as of 1935), the province of Ternopil was only outstripped by the province of Polesie (8,337) and Stanisławów (6,086). In the province of Ternopil, in the years 1934–1935, a number of organization and society members who obtained the SSB grew (5,330 and 3,839 accordingly). The biggest number of SSBs was obtained in the province of Silesia (40,970 – in 1935).

Conclusion

The interwar period witnessed the development of physical culture in the province of Ternopil. In the twenties and thirties of the 20th century, new social and sport societies and sports clubs were being established, and sports organizations that had been active before WW1 experienced their renaissance. Among all, “Sokół” Gymnastics Society, the Shooting Association, rural youth organizations, sports clubs and societies developed their activity. “Janina” Zolochiv and “Kresy” MCSC from Ternopil were the best sports clubs. Sports societies and clubs among Ukrainian citizens were also quite active. Among them one should mention “Sokil” Ukrainian Gymnastics Society and “Podilla” USA. The territory of the province of Ternopil was also home to sports societies and clubs run by Jewish citizens.

Football was the most popular sports discipline. Boxing, gymnastics, cycling, athletics, archery, waters sports, shooting, gliding and table tennis followed. SSB contests also played an important role in promoting physical activity. SSB competitions were organized in educational and military institutions, youth, social and sports societies and organizations.

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