In 1988, the German sports history journal *Stadion* published my bibliographical essay entitled “The Study of Medieval Sports, 1927-1987.” In that piece I tried to assay the field of studies on medieval sports and pastimes from the pioneering essay of Charles Homer Haskins in 1927 to the 1987 North American Society for Sport History annual conference. Although I used these two events as mileposts, I realized that I had to go backward in time from 1927 to give credit, where it was certainly due, to British and European scholars such as Joseph Strutt and J. J. Jusserand.

From Haskins’ generation, including G. G. Coulton, H. S. Bennett, and Johan Huizinga, to the formation of Sports History as a viable discipline in the 1970s, the study of medieval sports, games, and pastimes has grown sporadically. The period from World War II to the 1970s was somewhat barren in the history of the slowly emerging subdiscipline. During the 1970s, scholars in North America, Europe, Australia, and elsewhere began to mine the sources (mostly secondary) in search of medieval sports, games, and pastimes. Interestingly, almost none of those second-generation pioneers were trained medievalists, and one would suspect, had a rather difficult time with the sources. They all apparently decided that: (a) The field was wide open and needed some original studies in the wake of important works published on ancient and modern sports history topics; (b) Medieval historians were probably not interested in the sports and pastimes of the medieval period; or (c) There were really no such activities as sports in the Middle Ages in the modern sense of the word. The efforts of these scholars, however, must be applauded. They widened the scope of sports history by pointing to the need for research into the sports, games, and pastimes of the Middle Ages and challenged trained medievalists to pick up the gauntlet.
Although some noteworthy studies by trained medievalists appeared in the 1980s, 90s, and the beginning of the new century, especially from scholars working in medieval literature, they were only a beginning. Nevertheless, I wish to chronicle the next stage of the development of medieval sports and pastimes—from 1988 to the present. A reflection on medieval sports history studies over the past fifteen years is an obvious addendum to my previous bibliographical essay; however, it might be a useful and handy addition to our bibliographical knowledge of medieval sports, and could possibly suggest some avenues for further research.

I shall use the following mileposts to serve as chronological turning points in medieval sports historiography: (a) before Haskins—the period from the time of Strutt and his contemporaries to around the time of the First World War; (b) the Haskins Generation—the period from Haskins’ assumption of the deanship of medievalists in North America and the creation of the Medieval Academy of America to the time of the Second World War; (c) the post-World War II period—from the Second World War to the 1970s; and, (d) the period under investigation in this article, what I call the period of Inventing Medieval Sports History (which might imply that I’ve been reading too many of Professor Cantor’s “Inventing” books!).

Now, I confess that I realize that there really is not a discipline of medieval sports history. Nor, as I have called it before, is it a subdiscipline of sports history. The optimism with which I ventured into what I thought was the field of medieval sports history in the 1970s has cooled and, as I look back (not only on the last fifteen years but the past one hundred), I conclude that no discipline of medieval sports history has been created. At one time I thought that one was developing; now, I know that then I was a gullible younger scholar who was charging with the zeal of a crusader atop the Saracen-covered walls of some Christian-besieged fortress to be, in the words of General Nathan Bedford Forrest, the “fustest with the mostest.” Actually, I suppose Richard the Lionhearted might have said words akin to those of General Forrest; I couldn’t find them anywhere, however, and so had to mix the metaphor—sorry! But, seriously folks, I think that in my ignorance I was trying to will a subdiscipline into existence.

I went to conferences: local, national, and international; I was fortunate to receive research support from a number of U.S. and foreign sources; I did research, I wrote and I actually got a few of my studies published in what were then considered to be the up-and-coming journals in the field of sports history (and subsequently they did become the top journals in the field). I basically let my original research field go for my new would-be subdiscipline. Why? Professional, but probably more personal reasons, were involved. I was always involved with sports as a child, in elementary and junior high school, in high school, and, to a lesser degree, in undergraduate school. After graduation from undergraduate school, I coached basketball, baseball, and football at the high school level. After receiving the M.A.