

# Contents

**Abbreviations and Acronyms — XIII**

**Table of Toponyms — XV**

**General Introduction — 1**

## **Part 1: Interwar Years and World War II (1924 – 1945)**

**Introduction: Football along the Danube — 13**

### **Chapter 1**

**Football in the Admiral's Country (1924 – 1927) — 16**

- 1.1 Who Deserves to Represent Hungary? — 16
- 1.2 Sport, Trianon, and International Competitions — 27
- 1.3 Tours and Politics: Football Relations with the Little Entente — 33
- 1.4 Italy: An Example to Follow? — 42

### **Chapter 2**

**Sport and Revisionism (1928 – 1938) — 49**

- 2.1 Sport at the Service of Territorial Revision — 49
- 2.2 Crisis and Recovery: The Gyula Gömbös Years — 57
- 2.3 A Precarious Balance: Football and the Little Entente — 62
- 2.4 Sport Relations During the Rise of Fascism — 69
- 2.5 From Berlin to Paris — 81

### **Chapter 3**

**A New Spirit for Hungarian Football (1939 – 1944) — 92**

- 3.1 The Weight of International Policy — 92
- 3.2 The State Enters the Field: The Reformation of Hungarian Football — 104
- 3.3 National Tournaments and Territorial Revisions — 110
- 3.4 Football Diplomacy in a Europe at War — 114
- 3.5 Serving the War Effort — 118

**Interim Conclusion — 125**

## **Part Two: People's Republic (1945 – 1960)**

### **Introduction: People's Republic (1945 – 1960) — 129**

#### **Chapter 4**

##### **A Fragile Democracy: Football Before the People's Republic (1945 – 1948) — 132**

- 4.1      Reconstructing Hungarian Sport — **132**
- 4.2      Gaining Consensus Through Sport: The Socialist and Communist Models of Sport — **138**
- 4.3      The USSR as Shining Example — **143**
- 4.4      Tensions and Friendships: The Eastern Bloc — **148**
- 4.5      Fascist States? The Western Bloc — **154**
- 4.6      Seeking Hegemony in Sport — **159**

#### **Chapter 5**

##### **The Most Beautiful Product Of Socialism (1948 – 1954) — 170**

- 5.1      Imitating Soviet Structures — **170**
- 5.2      The Home Front: Living Socialist Sport — **175**
- 5.3      The Birth of the Mighty Magyars — **181**
- 5.4      The Golden Team: The Helsinki Olympics (1952) — **190**
- 5.5      Great Victories in the Name of Socialism: Rome, London, and Budapest — **196**
- 5.6      Socialism's Best Ambassadors — **210**
- 5.7      Wider Impacts: The Mighty Magyars — **215**
- 5.8      The 1954 World Cup and its Consequences — **229**

#### **Chapter 6**

##### **The End of the Mighty Magyars (1955 – 1960) — 240**

- 6.1      A Dream Called the Olympics — **240**
- 6.2      Between World Cup and Revolution, 1955 – 1956 — **246**
- 6.3      Football after the Golden Team — **257**
- 6.4      The Limits of Socialist Patriotism — **273**
- 6.5      Fifteen Years of Socialism: The Great Exhibition of Hungarian Sport — **281**

### **Conclusion: A Multifaceted Bloc — 289**

### **Bibliography — 291**

### **Index — 310**