



Blood in the Water at 65: Cold War and Contemporary Perspectives **Johanna Mellis, Ursinus College**

The Hungary-USSR water polo match at the 1956 Summer Olympics in Melbourne earned the sobriquet "Blood in the Water" after Hungarian player Ervin Zádor emerged from the pool with a profusely bleeding eye after taking a Soviet-thrown punch in the final minutes of the event, one of the most politically tense in Olympics history, taking place in the shadow of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and its brutal suppression by Soviet forces. This talk explores both the common narrative of the match as an emblem of Hungarian anti-Soviet sentiment as well as many additional meanings that go beyond traditional intra-Bloc rivalries.

Johanna Mellis is Assistant Professor of History at Ursinus College. A specialist on the history and role of sports during the Cold War, whose scholarship has focused on Hungary in particular, she also writes about issues of sports and equity in the contemporary United States for such media outlets as *End of Sport*, *Guardian*, and *Washington Post*.

***Tuesday, November 30
@ 12:15 pm via ZOOM***

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