

MANAGING SPORT EVENTS



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To my supportive parents, Zack and Leigh, and my wonderful family, Donna, Sam, and Molly.

—T. Christopher Greenwell

This book is proof that sometimes dreams do come true! This dream would not have been achieved without the support of my meticulous proofreader and husband, Tim Bussell; my best girl and daughter, Sophie Grace Bussell; my life-long supporter, my dad, Fritz E. Danzey; and my guardian angel, my mother, Barbara W. Danzey. Thank you to all who have supported me, tolerated me, and most of all encourage me along this journey, especially my students who have impacted my life more than they will ever know. I also owe a big debt of gratitude to Myles Schrag at Human Kinetics who put up with my persistent nagging before helping to make this dream a reality. Finally, thank you to my coauthors, Chris Greenwell and David Shonk, for allowing me to contribute to this amazing book.

—Leigh Ann Danzey-Bussell

I dedicate this book to six instrumental teachers in my life:

1. My father, the late coach and professor of physical education, William E. Shonk, who taught me how to teach and the important lessons of life.
2. My mother, Mary Aretta Shonk, whose unselfish love and persistent determination inspire me every day.
3. My brother, William S. Shonk, who taught me the importance of leadership and teamwork.
4. My wife, Jennifer R. (Brady) Shonk, who is my love, inspiration, and the natural born teacher in our household.
5. My uncle, James H. Shonk, who inspired me to write and taught me about team development.
6. My mentor, Chella, who always expected excellence and has given so much to the field of sport management.

—David J. Shonk

PREFACE

To have a successful career in sport, it is important to have some proficiency in sport event management because just about everyone involved in sport will be engaged in planning, promoting, or managing a sporting event at one time or another. Sport event management is unique among the many areas of sport management in that it integrates various areas of the sport industry including, but not limited to, marketing, sponsorship, budgeting, risk management, and personnel management. In addition, running a sporting event requires the skills to plan, organize, lead, and communicate. Users of this textbook should be able to demonstrate an understanding of event management principles unique to sport.

Managing Sport Events is written for those either working in or aspiring to work in the sport industry. One does not necessarily need to be working in event management per se, as everyone working with sporting events should be able to draw something from this text. This textbook is designed to familiarize readers with principles and practices related to effective event management. The text approaches sport event management from a practical standpoint, integrating theory to support suggestions for practice, and it takes readers through the entire process of organizing events, from event conception through postevent evaluation.

SCOPE OF THE BOOK

Considering the breadth of sporting events, this book covers a wide variety of competitions, from local grassroots events such as a youth soccer tournament to mega-events such as the Olympic Games. The reader should be able to glean relevant information that applies to events large and small, local and international. Further, *Managing Sport Events* accounts for the various purposes events serve (e.g., competition, revenue, tourism, promoting a cause) and for the various stakeholders

sporting events may serve (e.g., athletes, governing bodies, sponsors, communities). Whether the reader is working in parks and recreation or in high school, college, amateur, minor league, professional, or international sports, this book should be a resource for anyone involved in sporting events, regardless of size or scope.

ORGANIZATION

Each chapter covers key sport event management principles, and relevant examples from the sport industry are woven into each principle to illustrate how it applies to practice. In addition, each chapter begins with a profile of an industry professional in the form of an interview. These profiles give an industry insider's perspective into each concept being discussed. Each chapter ends with learning activities that apply what has been learned in the text. Numerous checklists, templates, and worksheets are provided throughout the book to illustrate tools that can be used to successfully plan and implement events.

Managing Sport Events covers the main topics necessary to plan, organize, implement, and evaluate an event. The book opens with an overview of the sport event industry and a chapter that educates readers on how to conceive and develop an event. Next, the book covers key planning areas such as staffing, budgeting, marketing, promotion, sponsorship, and legal and risk management. These chapters illustrate how different disciplines within sport management specifically apply to planning sporting events. Key operational areas such as event services and logistics and managing the event are then presented to encompass what happens during the event itself. The final chapter discusses what needs to happen after the event.

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BENEFITS OF THE BOOK

Managing Sport Events is intended for practitioners within the sport industry and students preparing to enter the industry. It provides a strong conceptual, theoretical, and practical basis for understanding the sport event industry and for selecting, planning, implementing, and evaluating a sporting event. The textbook helps the reader to better understand the conceptual aspects of a sporting event that form the basis of how the event will ultimately be run. Conceptual skills are vitally important to all managers, especially event planners, and help to differentiate top-level managers from middle- and staff-level managers and leaders.

Students

This textbook is written with the understanding that the primary audience will be undergraduate students. The majority of students will be studying sport management. However, the text is also applicable to students within any discipline of study who desire to learn more about the nuts and bolts of selecting, planning, implementing, and evaluating an event. Students interested in areas such as hospitality, entertainment, physical education, business, and nonprofit or public administration may also find the textbook useful.

Event management is an important course for almost every sport management program. More important, employers within the sport industry expect students to enter the field as young professionals with an understanding of event management and possessing the necessary skills to immediately engage in event production. Although not every student will have the title of event planner, every student within the sport industry will most likely be engaged in some type of event planning, even if it is only a meal function at your place of business. Our hope is that this will not be one of those books that students buy and sell back at the end of the semester. Instead, this text should serve as a continual resource as you graduate and enter the industry.

Professors

This textbook is written to assist faculty in teaching important theoretical and conceptual issues

within the context of sport event management. These are important concepts that add to conceptual and cognitive skill development in each student. At the same time, the authors of the book recognize the practical nature of event management. We have extensive experience within the industry in the area of event management, and because we are also current faculty, we understand the challenges of bringing fresh and relevant practical material into the classroom.

Handy resources such as an instructor guide, test package, and PowerPoint presentation are included in the package for professors. Specific instructions are provided should the faculty member want to engage the students in the process of putting on an actual event. Chapters are organized to follow the process of staging an event, and all chapters contain learning activities to assist the faculty member in engaging students. All chapters contain summaries that review key concepts. Furthermore, each chapter provides a short biography of a current industry professional that may assist professors in experiential learning using case studies.

Current Industry Professionals

Those currently working within the sport industry may need a refresher course in event management, and this text serves as an important resource. Those needing additional training or going back for a graduate degree will find the textbook helpful. In addition, the text is useful as an independent study and as a resource for writing industry reports or proposals. It will help industry professionals brush up on key definitions and is a refresher for key theoretical concepts. Every sport industry professional should keep this text on his bookshelf because of its practical nature.

NEED FOR THE BOOK

Most of us who attend an event do so as an invitee, not fully understanding the vastness of what it takes to host an event. *Managing Sport Events* provides a comprehensive look at what it takes to produce a successful event from conception to fruition to evaluation. As a dynamic field, sport management encompasses traditional business

segments (administration, finance, and marketing) requiring expertise. The uniqueness of the sport industry must be understood and applied to event management. This book marries the business side with the unique traits of sport to provide a fresh perspective on event management.

Marketing, risk management, staffing, budgeting, and sponsorship are just a few areas of concern for event managers. Being knowledgeable about these topics and the role each plays in the bigger picture is imperative for today's sport management students. This textbook provides a distinctive perspective on the "how to" aspects of sport management and its intricacies. The years of experience expressed throughout this book and the industry

profiles found in each chapter offer the students great perspectives and real-life examples to contemplate and critically analyze. Many textbooks focus on singular aspects of the sport management field, such as sport marketing, sport finance, or sport media relations, but this text represents an inclusive look at event management and how those singular aspects work together to provide a strong foundation for students considering careers in this segment of the industry. We have taken great effort to ensure this textbook addresses all pertinent areas of event management. Upon completion of this course, readers will have a comprehensive knowledge of event management and will be prepared to accept the challenges of the field.

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CHAPTER 1

Understanding the Sport Event Industry

Chapter Objectives

After completing the chapter, the reader should be able to do the following:

- Appreciate the role of sporting events from a historical perspective.
- Identify various types of sporting events.
- Recognize the employment opportunities in sport event management and the skills and knowledge necessary for success within the industry.
- Compare and contrast sporting events versus nonsporting events.
- Understand the relationship of sport event management to sport facility management and sport tourism.

Industry Profile ► Talty O'Connor

Talty O'Connor is the founder and president of Covey Communications Corporation, a media company that publishes nationally distributed magazines for targeted markets. Among its titles are *ConventionSouth*, one of the leading magazines in the United States for meeting and convention planners; *SportsEvents*, a magazine for planners of all types of sporting events held throughout the United States; *Condo Owner* magazine (Northern Gulf Coast Edition); *Coastal Design*, a high-end home-design magazine; and *Crossties* magazine, an internationally known railroad industry publication. Covey Communications also publishes *Skater's Edge Sourcebook*, an ice skating directory, and has also produced two additional sport facilities directories, *Soccer Fields & Facilities Directory* and *Baseball/Softball Fields & Facilities Directory*.

Q: How has the sport event industry changed over the years?

A: Organized sport competitions are simply big business these days. While we once based youth sports on local league championships, the industry now revolves around travel teams and elite athletes. Parents, coaches, and players spend enormous amounts of time and money participating in sport competitions, often traveling on a weekly basis to compete. The loss of "sports sampling" is another significant change and is a casualty of modern-day sports specialization. Rather than changing sports with the seasons, today's young athletes tend to settle on one sport on a year-round basis. Whether this is detrimental to the development of well-rounded athletic skills and conducive to early burnout are topics of hot debate and lengthy discussion. The industry shifts and changes slightly with each generation. Male athletes dominated the generation of Baby Boomer sports participants. Young female athletes did not have the opportunities to participate that they have today. Generation X tended to be more individualistic and less team oriented. They opened the door to extreme sports and introduced us to BMX racing and snowboarding. Generation Y are more team oriented and

are the force behind today's travel team sports. As for Gen Z, they are more social and connected than any generation. The jury is out as to whether we can attract them to organized sports, and the industry acknowledges the fact that we need to change our events in order to engage these digital natives.

Q: What skills are most important to students who would like to work in the sport event industry?

A: Although sport management revolves around modern technology and social media connectivity, it remains a business of relationships. In my opinion, the fundamentals for success are unchanged in that effective managers need excellent communication and people skills as well as good business management skills. If anything, excelling with these skills will be an even greater asset as we continue to slide into the digital world.

Q: How important is facility management within the industry?

A: Excellent facilities are available throughout the country. The differentiating factor is how well they are managed. Build it and they will come doesn't work. Build it and manage it better than the other facility is the key to success. I have been a member of the United States Olympic Committee's PLAYS committee. PLAYS is an acronym for Pipeline Leadership for America's Youth Sports. The question asked was "What is the best way to get more sport competitions at our sport facility?" The answer was universal: "Run excellent sport events at your facility, and the word will spread throughout the pipeline!"

Q: How has sport tourism affected the industry?

A: The revenue from sport tourism is the funding source for most modern sport facilities. Communities typically invest in new sport complexes with a goal of drawing visitors into the city. The visitors spend significant amounts of money staying in hotel rooms, dining out at restaurants, visiting local attractions, and

shopping in local stores. This direct spending circulates through the local economy long after the visitors return to their hometowns. If it wasn't for the economic impact of sports, most communities wouldn't be able to cost-justify the sport facilities they enjoy. Many local leagues don't like sharing their facilities with outside competitors, but the fact is, they probably would not have those nice facilities if it wasn't for revenues from sport tourism. Sport visitors include not only the participating athletes but also the family members, league officials, and other spectators. The industry exceeds \$7 billion annually in direct spending in local economies. This figure does not include spending for professional major league events or fixed events such as the Kentucky Derby or the Masters golf tournament. If you include most professional sport, TV, and network sponsorships, the revenues exceed \$170 billion annually. But that is not direct spending from sport tourism in local economies.

Q: What types of sporting events have gained in popularity?

A: Many people tend to think of traditional sports such as baseball, basketball, or soccer, but those are merely the tip of the iceberg when it comes to sport competitions. Sport events are held by hundreds of different sport organizations and range from well-known sports such as tennis, gymnastics, and archery to niche sports such as horseshoe pitching, disc golf, and cup stacking. There are also extreme sports (Tough Mudder, extreme laser tag) and even weirder events such as street bowling, wife-carrying obstacle races, and underwater hockey. Running sports

are gaining popularity after several years in decline. Half marathons are the most popular running events being held throughout the United States. Lacrosse is one of the fastest-growing sports and is now spreading from the Northeast throughout the country. Tennis has starting growing again. Traditional sports such as baseball, softball, and basketball are struggling to stay even. The most-played sport on earth surprises many people in the United States. It is badminton, which is the national sport of China and is being promoted heavily throughout Asia and now in the United States.

Q: What are some emerging trends in the industry?

A: The number of sport events being held in the United States has grown consistently throughout the last decade in spite of the economic woes our country has faced. However, what has not grown is the athlete base or the sponsorship base. Sport event planners are struggling to acquire funding as well as to grow the number of competitors in their events. Compounding the issue is the fact that 7 out of 10 kids who start playing organized sports quit completely by age 14. In addition, the number of kids who are completely inactive doubled between the years 2008 and 2011. Until we reverse this trend, we will continue to struggle to grow our events. Also, an adult is four times more likely to play organized sports if she competed as a youth athlete. So the challenge for the long-term health of our industry as well as our overall physical health is to grow our athlete base for the long term by keeping kids involved in sports.

The Pan-Hellenic Games in 776 BC, one of the earliest documented examples of a sporting event, attracted more than 40,000 spectators who traveled from all parts of Greece to be in attendance (Weed and Bull 2004). This festival was held in Olympia and was celebrated once every four years in accordance with the Greek calendar, occurring after the crops had been gathered and there was a

lull in which men could relax from a hard year's work (Swaddling 1999). Most cities in Greece had their own stadiums during this time, and touring was an important aspect of sport because athletes received awards for participating.

Today, sports participants as well as spectators engage in sport-related activities for numerous reasons. For active participants, playing in a

softball tournament is a means of relieving stress, and in a similar manner fans and spectators flock to professional sporting events on a weekend to relax after a long week of work. Even in the early years, stress relief was a motivational factor for those participating in various sport events. Sport derives its meaning from the word *disport*, meaning “carry away from”; as a noun the word means “diversion” or “display” or “amusement” (Struna 2009). The implications are that sport diverts a person’s attention away from the rigors and pressures of everyday life (Kurtzman and Zauhar 2003).

Many of today’s contemporary sporting events derive from England’s system of club sports managed by the wealthy elite (Masteralexis, Barr, and Hums 2009). When European settlers arrived in Virginia and Massachusetts, the only sports were those of Native Americans, who participated in activities such as archery, running, horse riding, and lacrosse (Gems, Borish, and Pfister 2008). However, as life became easier and values changed, the European settlers began to engage in various pastimes and later became concerned about health and fitness (Swanson and Spears 1995). The festive culture of 17th- and 18th-century Britain became a central component of sport in America (Rader 2009). Gambling became an important recreation, and many settlers in Virginia wagered on horses because of the excitement of the competition (Breen 2010). Harness racing soon became the sport of the common person and America’s first national pastime and professional sport.

The outgrowth of the success of harness racing was the various profit-oriented leagues we see today. Leagues such as the National Football League, the National Basketball Association, Major League Baseball, the National Hockey League, Major League Soccer, and others were created to develop a system for sport that would work in the United States. In addition, tournament sports such as tennis and golf evolved from England’s system of club sport brought to the United States (Masteralexis, Barr, and Hums 2009).

Over the years, the modern sport industry has seen tremendous growth. In 2011, Plunkett

Research estimated the industry at \$411 billion, and this figure comprises components such as sporting goods, advertising and marketing, professional sport, fitness and recreation, golf courses, racetracks, amusement and recreation, other spectator sports leagues, and NCAA sports (Miller and Washington 2012). Revenues for the top four professional sports leagues (i.e., NBA, MLB, NFL, NHL) in the United States were in excess of \$21 billion. Major sporting events such as the Super Bowl, NCAA basketball finals, World Series, NBA Finals, and Kentucky Derby attract millions of viewers. *Forbes* magazine assessed the value of professional teams such as the Dallas Cowboys (NFL), New York Yankees (MLB), and Washington Redskins (NFL) as being more than \$1.5 billion (Miller and Washington 2012). In addition, professional athletes such as Tiger Woods, LeBron James, Alex Rodriguez, and Peyton Manning earn millions of dollars in salary and endorsements for playing their respective sports.

The future of the sport event industry seems bright. As the nature of sport evolves, so do the various events that make up the industry. New sports, such as Trangleball, have recently entered the market with hopes of gaining popularity and distribution through large sporting goods companies. The objective of Trangleball is to throw a ball off the face of a pyramid in such a way that your opponent cannot catch it (Trangleball.com).

Technology has changed how sporting events are marketed. Social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Foursquare are now used to promote and market many sporting events. As new technologies emerge, sport marketers will continue to reach out to new consumers through these new mediums. The impact of the media allows sport marketers to promote their product to a global audience. In addition, as the sport industry continues to grow, there may be a greater focus on specialization within event management. Although many organizations currently employ a limited number of employees responsible for event planning, this may change as the roles and duties become more specialized in one or more areas within the industry.

Although the future is bright, there are also some concerns regarding the future of sporting events. As noted by Talty O'Connor in the industry profile, one of the primary concerns within the sport event industry is the dropout rate of youth sports participants. Research suggests that many youth drop out because of injury or a lack of enjoyment. Sport event planners must continue to examine new ways to build sport identity in youth. Often, sport identity is carried by a person throughout his life span, and parents will pass the torch of a favorite sport or team to a child.

Opponents also note the commercial nature of sport and the ever-increasing need for sponsorship. As the number of events continues to increase, the competition for sponsorship dollars becomes more competitive, with the largest events having a considerable advantage. The increasing level of commercialism within sport is also evident when considering the impact of the media on sport. Televised sporting events are now scheduled according to the timing of commercial breaks and for peak audiences. Moreover, this commercialism has led to the development of some sports at the expense of others. For example, in the United Kingdom, the top 10 sports receive 90 percent of all the money spent on sponsorships (Masterman 2009).

CAREER PATHS IN SPORT EVENT MANAGEMENT

As the sport industry continues to grow, so do the number of sport-related event management jobs. Almost every professional sport franchise and collegiate athletic program hires some type of event manager. Jobs with titles such as special events coordinator, game-day event staff, director of events, and associate athletic director for event management can commonly be found in an organization's marketing department, event department, or facilities management department. For students seeking entry into event management within the sport industry, there are an increasing number of opportunities for employment. Almost every organization within various segments of the sport industry recognizes the importance of

individual employees who specialize in planning and implementing different types of events.

According to the National Association of Sports Commissions (NASC) website (2011), more than 300 cities across the United States currently have a sports commission or a similar type of entity focused on attracting small-scale, youth, or amateur sporting events, and although many of these organizations are small, their employees spend a large amount of time involved in event planning. In fact, the NASC offers a certified sports event executive (CSEE) designation for those members who complete educational sessions related to sales and marketing, strategic planning, event management, technology, revenue generation, and the bid process. The enormous growth in the number of sports commissions is evident when considering that in 1993 there were only 30 such organizations in existence (Kelly 2000). Sport governing bodies and international federations offer potential applicants various event management opportunities. Organizations such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC), United States Olympic Committee (USOC), U.S. Masters Swimming, USA Volleyball, USA Swimming, and U.S. Lacrosse employ event managers. Also, amateur sanctioning bodies such as high school state athletic commissions (e.g., Ohio High School Athletic Association), Little League Baseball, Babe Ruth League, Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), Pony Baseball and Softball, American Youth Football, and American Youth Cheer are involved in planning events and championships.

Students and others seeking event management jobs should be flexible and think creatively as to the types of organizations to which they may apply and where to find these jobs. For example, organizations such as Disney's Wide World of Sports and Universal Studios in Florida offer sport event management jobs. Numerous non-profit associations (e.g., NCAA national office, National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics) hire people to plan their conferences and seminars. Recreational sport jobs are another consideration because almost every locality has a parks and recreation department, and most college campuses employ event managers at their campus

recreation facility. Some of the best free websites to consult for finding sport event management jobs include www.teamworkonline.com; www.ncaa.org; www.sportscommissions.org; www.aahperd.org/careers; www.bluefishjobs.com; and www.nrpa.org/careers. In addition, there are a number of fee-based websites such as <http://sportsjobboard.com/index.html> and www.workinsports.com.

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, AND TRAITS FOR SUCCESS

Beyond the sport- and event-specific knowledge necessary to run an event, a number of skills are critical for success in sport event management. Perhaps the most important skill is the ability to manage and maintain a strong personal life. The long hours required by many jobs within the industry can have a detrimental effect on an event planner's personal life. In fact, you may not have a professional career if you do not effectively manage issues such as interpersonal relationships and finances. The ability to organize, prioritize, supervise, and delegate is second to the ability to manage your time and professional resources efficiently and effectively (Goldblatt 2011).

Staging an event requires a multitude of management and business skills, and event managers encompass skills that derive from a multitude of disciplines. Among others, event managers may have backgrounds in law, marketing, accounting, and human resource management (Masterman 2009). Event planning requires a great amount of attention to detail, and event planners must have the ability to conceptualize, recognize, and implement all the key details of the event. More important, these details must be coordinated within a limited time frame. Thus, you must be able to effectively manage your time and resources. As new technologies continue to emerge, the ability to manage and use these technologies is critical for the implementation and marketing of an event. Event planners work within a network of people and companies and must effectively manage a wide variety of interpersonal relationships. This section highlights some skills that all students should work to further develop.

Interpersonal and Communication Skills

Interpersonal skills allow a person to work effectively with others. Vitally important is the ability to get along with others and to span diverse relationships. As will be discussed later in the chapter, event planners must network with a wide variety of people and organizations. Interpersonal skills also include written and verbal communication. Event planners are required to make numerous telephone calls and attend personal meetings. Developing written reports and proposals is a common task. The ability to listen is another important skill that allows the event planner to more effectively meet the needs and wants of a client.

Time Management Skills

When we suggest that an event planner should be an effective manager of his time, we are essentially saying he should have the ability to multitask. Graham, Neirotti, and Goldblatt (2001) claim the most common traits of sport event managers include the following:

- Comfortable with preparing and managing a checklist of activities
- Projects a positive attitude
- Can work independently or as a member of a team
- Accurate and quick at details
- Articulate on the telephone and in written and oral communication
- Creative and flexible
- Capable of working under extreme pressure for long hours
- Good at working with all levels of people, including volunteers
- Effective at balancing multiple projects simultaneously
- Excellent time manager
- Effective negotiator
- Finance- and budget-conscious
- Possesses good typing, word processing, and other office skills