
Introduction

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One of the predominant reasons for the growth of the sport industry is the influence of sport communication. Sport and sport communication opportunities continue to expand worldwide. For example, although ESPN is based in the USA, in 2006 the cable television network's *SportsCenter* debuted in Japan, the 10th non-US, locally created *SportsCenter*. As an ever expanding and influential aspect of sport, communication in and through sport ranges from newspaper sports sections and all-sports cable channels to satellite radio, weblogs, and podcasts. This segment of the sport industry has had a profound impact on sport through its myriad activities associated with covering, delivering, publicising, financing, and at times even shaping sports. When looking at the sport media in particular, "sport and the media have become associated to such an extent that it is often difficult to discuss sport in modern society without acknowledging its relationship with the media" (Bernstein and Blain, 2002, p.3). Beyond the sport media, sport communication is an integral aspect of every sport industry segment and activity, from the interpersonal interactions between sport management colleagues to the impersonal consumption of sports programming by millions of television viewers.

Despite the prevalence of communication in and through sport, there has been a dearth of published research related to this field. Therefore, the impetus for this special issue was to encourage increased scholarship in this area through the dissemination of sport communication research. The aim of this special issue is to examine some of the unique aspects of and divergent activities within the field of sport communication. This special issue represents a broad, international examination of various associated topics. A total of 22 scholars have contributed to the eight research articles that were accepted for this special issue. The locations and foci range from England to Canada, the sports covered vary from soccer to basketball, and the mass media examined range from newspapers to new technologies.

This special issue's first article – 'The juxtaposition of sport and communication: defining the field of sport communication' – expands the conceptualisation of sport communication by providing a new paradigm by which to view the field. Next, Harris and Clayton examine the nationalistic and masculine narratives surrounding a sport celebrity. McEvoy and Morse investigate the relationship between televised sports coverage and game attendance. Through the use of sport ethnography, Battenfield and Kent identify five themes related to the culture of sports information departments.

Staying with this area of sport communication, Whisenant and Mullane examine sports information directors and the structure which exists within sport organisations. O'Reilly and Knight apply the concept of knowledge management to National Sport Organizations. This is followed by the work of four authors who examined through qualitative textual analysis the recurring themes with the dominant discourse of female tennis players. The final article of this special issue is by Schimmel *et al.* These scholars apply the concept of the marketing communications audit to one company's involvement in a professional golf tournament. All eight of these articles cover a plethora of sport communication topics, activities, and personnel.

Thanks to the dozens of anonymous reviewers who provided valuable feedback. Each article that was submitted to this special issue was anonymously reviewed by at least three outside reviewers. It has been my pleasure working as the guest editor of this special issue for the *International Journal of Sport Management and Marketing (IJSMM)*, which is now in its third year of publication.

Reference

- Bernstein, A. and Blain, N. (2002) 'Sport and the media: the emergence of a major research field', *Sport, Media, Culture*, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp.1-30.