

Manageable cooperation – insights from sports management: best papers from the “Managing Sport” tracks at the European Academy of Management (EURAM) Annual Meeting in Paris 2016

The ways how sports organizations are able to act on the global market is changing quickly in a world where transportation and information technologies are expanding and where boundaries to the exchange of goods, services and knowledge are declining. Enhanced modes of (service) production together with new ways of value creation and distribution are emerging and growing. The roles of sports producers and sports consumers are not distinct anymore, meaning that value is co-created, jointly and reciprocally, in interactions among providers, intermediaries and users by means of integration of resources and application of competences. In this perspective, sports organizations are applying their knowledge and skills in the production and branding of the sports product. Intermediaries position themselves to extend markets and the global reach beyond the in-house capabilities of the sports organization. Consumers are applying their knowledge and skills in a distinctive use of the sports product in the context of their own environments. We further should not forget that it is not one single product, service or entertainment that is offered in professional sports, what could be termed as the competitive scope of sports organization. It is therefore the managerial task to evaluate, change, bundle and utilize the offerings of a sport organization, what is in many cases still small and medium sized. With this broader perspective on sports management, the key question becomes: are those cooperations manageable? Can knowledge about cooperation help the sports industry?

Today, sports businesses are looking for innovative solutions and reflective conceptualizations from academia to help meet their business needs of increase efficiencies across spatially dispersed and multi-faceted markets. Since its foundation in 2009, the Managing Sport strategic interest group (SIG) by purpose aims to avoid a “tunnel vision” where all know or care only about their own research, field of expertise without any close interaction with the industry. Over the years and in flexible formats, we involve the sport industry in discussion during a pre-conference workshop. Supported by Audencia Business School and organized by Anna Gerke, the Parisian sport innovation incubator Le Tremplin and several of the sports start-ups hosted by Le Tremplin have been invited for discussion. The perspective how sports events could be initiated by innovative actors and successfully developed by using and expanding networks through collaborations was added by Reidar Mykletun to the workshop.

Following the main theme of the annual conference by the EURAM 2016 in Paris on “Manageable Cooperation”, we selected five best papers among the 36 submissions received for the four conference tracks of the SIG on “Managing Sport” for this special issue. This selection was based on the overall reviewer scores and the general theme. It includes the best paper submitted to the Managing Sport SIG’s conference program by Wojciech Kulczycki, Jörg Königstorfer and Santoosh Milas on “Where to engage in CSR? The influence of social cause proximity on attitude towards small-sized (vs. large-sized) sporting goods retailers.” Their research aims to find out whether consumers’ attitude toward sporting goods retailers depends on who engages in corporate social responsibility activities and the geographic proximity of the supported social cause to the headquarters of the sports organization. We are also pleased to include Simon Gérard and Thierry Zintz on “Multi-level analysis of institutional formation and change: the case of the Paralympic movement” as one of the runners-up papers in this issue. Specifically, the authors put



forward the research question how and why do sport institutions form and change through the interplay of multi-level mechanisms. The selection is completed by Thomas Baker III, Kevin Byon and Natasha Brison on “Re-conceptualizing reverse meaning transfer: the moderating influence of meaning type,” elaborating the moderating effects of corporate-specific and product-specific negative meanings on an celebrity endorser’s credibility. Further, Carl Gabrielsson and Harald Dolles were included on “Value capturing in floorball: how equipment manufacturers and retailers contribute to the development of a ‘new’ sport,” exploring value capturing in floorball and the various contributions by different actors toward market development and increased professionalization of the sport. And, finally, Thomas Könecke and Grzegorz Kwiatkowski were included on “Tourism and recurring sport events – event tourists’ and regular tourists’ profiles and expenditures at the Windsurf World Cup on Sylt,” focussing on a comparative analysis of different spectator groups (highly engaged sports tourists vs regular tourists) attending sport events and their local impact. All articles have been at least double-blind reviewed to be accepted for presentation at the EURAM 2016 conference and revised afterwards in exchange with the reviewers assigned to each submission.

We are grateful to Emerald Group Publishing for continuing the strong bonds between *Sport, Business and Management (SBM)* and the Managing Sport SIG not only by sponsoring the annual Best Paper Award but also by supporting the enormous contribution to the conference program provided by reviewers. The Best Reviewer Award in 2016 sponsored by *SBM* was presented to Hallgeir Gammelsæter, with Géraldine Zeimers, Simon Gérard, Erik Lundberg and Anthony Gour as runners-up. Congratulations. The Award Committee included Christos Anagnostopoulos (receiving the Best Paper Award in 2015), James Santomier (as the SIG’s Treasurer) and Sten Söderman (as Past SIG Chair). Including the committee, and last but not least, we wish to thank all contributors and all the reviewers of the track for their excellent work.

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