The economic impact of major sports events: a review of ten events in the UK

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Introduction

Over recent years there has been a marked contrast between the discussions around the economic impact of major sports events in North America on the one hand and most of the rest of the world on the other. In the USA the sports strategies of cities in the USA have largely been based on infrastructure (stadium) investment for professional team sports, in particular, American football, baseball, basketball, and ice hockey. Over the last decade cities have offered greater and greater incentives for these professional teams to move from their existing host cities by offering to build a new stadium to house them. The teams sit back and let the host and competing cities bid up the price. They either move to the city offering the best deal or they accept the counter offer invariably put to them by their existing hosts. This normally involves the host city building a brand new stadium to replace the existing one which may only be ten or fifteen years old. The result is that at the end of the 1990s there were thirty major stadium construction projects in progress, around one-third of the total professional sports infrastructure, but over half of all professional teams in the USA have expressed dissatisfaction with their current facilities.

Baade (2003) argues that since 1987 approximately 80 per cent of the professional sports facilities in the United States will have been replaced or have undergone major renovation with the new facilities costing more than $19 billion in total, and the public providing $13.6 billion, or 71 per cent, of that amount. The use of taxpayers money to subsidize profit-making professional sports teams is justified on the basis that such investment of public money is a worthwhile investment since it is clearly outweighed by the stream of economic activity that is generated by having a professional sports team resident in the city. Such justifications are often backed up by economic impact studies that show that the spending of sports tourists in the host city more than justifies such a public subsidy. Crompton (1995, 2001) has illustrated that such studies have often been seriously methodologically flawed, and the real economic benefit of such visitor spending is often well below that specified in such studies. This is

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particularly the case given the need for such huge infrastructure investment needed to attract the professional teams.

In Europe, however, city sport strategies have concentrated more on attracting a series of major sports events, such as World or European Championships, again justified on the economic impact generated through hosting such events. Whereas many American sports economists (eg, Baade, 1996; Noll & Zimbalist, 1997; Coates & Humphreys, 1999) now consistently agree that studies show no significant direct economic impact on the host cities from the recent stadium developments, it is not so evident that European style hosting of major sports events is not economically beneficial to the host cities. This chapter looks at ten major sports events, all World or European Championships hosted by UK cities over recent years, all of which have been studied by the current authors. The difference from the North American situation is that these events move around from city to city in response to bids from potential host cities and in all ten cases did not require specific capital infrastructure investment to be staged but rather were staged in existing facilities. Before we look at these events, however, we briefly review the literature on the economic importance of major sports events. The biggest by far of such events is the summer Olympic Games, in particular in the infrastructure investment required to host the event, and the next section is devoted just to that event before the literature relating to all other major sports events is considered.

The economic importance of the summer Olympic Games

Despite the huge sums of money invested in hosting the summer Olympics, there has never been an economic impact study of the type described in this paper to assess the economic benefits of hosting the event. Kasimati (2003) summarized the potential long-term benefits to a city of hosting the summer Olympics: newly constructed event facilities and infrastructure, urban revival, enhanced international reputation, increased tourism, improved public welfare, additional employment, and increased inward investment. In practice, however, there is also a possible downside to hosting the event including: high construction costs of sporting venues and related other investments, in particular in transport infrastructure; temporary congestion problems; displacement of other tourists due to the event; and underutilized elite sporting facilities after the event which are of little use to the local population.

Kasimati (2003) analysed all impact studies of the summer Olympics from 1984 to 2004 and found, in each case, that the studies were done prior to the Games, were not based on primary data, and were, in general, commissioned by proponents of the Games. He found that the economic impacts were likely to be inflated since the studies did not take into account supply-side constraints such as investment crowding out, price increases due to resource scarcity, and the displacement of tourists who would have been in the host city had the Olympics not been held there. Although no proper economic impact study using

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primary data has ever been carried out for the summer Olympics, Preuss (2004) has produced a comprehensive analysis of the economics of the summer Olympics for every summer Olympics from Munich 1972 using secondary data, and employing a novel data transformation methodology which allows comparisons across the different Olympics.

Despite collecting a massive amount of secondary data, Preuss's conclusion on the estimation of the true economic impact of the summer Olympics is the same as Kasimati's: 'The economic benefit of the Games . . . is often overestimated in both publications and economic analyses produced by or for the OCOG [Organizing Committee of the Olympic Games] . . . multipliers tend to be too high and the number of tourists is estimated too optimistically' (Preuss, 2004: 290). Preuss, however, does make some strong conclusions from his analysis. He shows, for instance, that every summer Olympics since 1972 made an operational surplus that the OCOG can spend to benefit both national and international sport. Popular stories in the mass media relating to massive losses from hosting the Olympics have nothing to do with the Games' *operational* costs and revenues. Rather it is to do with the *capital infrastructure investments* made by host cities on venues, transport, accommodation and telecommunications. These are investments in capital infrastructure that have a life of possibly 50 years or more and yet many commentators count the full capital cost against the two to three weeks of the Games themselves. Preuss points out that in strict economic terms this is nonsense:

> it is impossible and even wrong to state the overall effect of different Olympics with a single surplus or deficit. The true outcome is measured in the infrastructural, social, political, ecological and sporting impacts a city and country receive from the Games. (Preuss, 2004: 26)

Estimating the true economic impact of a summer Olympic Games properly therefore requires a huge research budget in addition to the other costs associated with the Games. Research needs to start several years before the Olympics and continue several years after they have finished. So far nobody has been willing to fund such research. There is increasing research output, however, relating to other major sporting events.

The economic importance of other major sports events

The study of hallmark events or mega-events became an important area of the tourism and leisure literature in the 1980s. The economic benefits of such events have been the main focus of such literature, although broader based multidisciplinary approaches have been suggested (Hall, 1992; Getz, 1991). Within the area of mega-events, sports events have attracted a significant amount of attention. One of the first major studies in this area was the study of the impact of the 1985 Adelaide Grand Prix (Burns, Hatch & Mules, 1986). This was followed by an in-depth study of the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics (Ritchie, 1984;

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Ritchie & Aitken, 1984, 1985; Ritchie & Lyons, 1987, 1990; Ritchie & Smith, 1991).

Mules and Faulkner (1996) point out that hosting major sports events is not always an unequivocal economic benefit to the cities that host them. They emphasize that, in general, staging major sports events often results in the city authorities losing money even though the city itself benefits greatly in terms of additional spending in the city. They cite the example of the 1994 Brisbane World Masters Games which cost Brisbane A$2.8 million to put on but generated a massive A$50.6 million of additional economic activity in the state economy. Mules and Faulkner's basic point is that it normally requires the public sector to be involved in the role of staging the event and incurring these losses in order to generate the benefits to the local economy:

> This financial structure is common to many special events, and results in the losses alluded to above. It seems unlikely that private operators would be willing to take on the running of such events because of their low chance of breaking even let alone turning a profit. The reason why governments host such events and lose taxpayers' money in the process lies in spillover effects or externalities. (Mules & Faulkner, 1996: 110)

It is not a straightforward job, however, to establish a profit and loss account for a specific event. Major sports events require investment in new sports facilities and often this is paid for in part by central government or even international sports bodies. Thus, some of this investment expenditure represents a net addition to the local economy since the money comes in from outside. Also such facilities remain after the event has finished acting as a platform for future activities that can generate additional tourist expenditure (Mules & Faulkner, 1996).

Increasingly, sports events are part of a broader strategy aimed at raising the profile of a city and therefore success cannot be judged simply on a profit and loss basis. Often the attraction of events is linked to a re-imaging process and, in the case of many cities, is invariably linked to strategies of urban regeneration and tourism development (Bianchini & Schengel, 1991; Bramwell, 1995; Loftman & Spirou, 1996; Roche, 1994). Major events if successful have the ability to project a new image and identity for a city. The hosting of major sports events is often justified by the host city in terms of long-term economic and social consequences, directly or indirectly resulting from the staging of the event (Mules & Faulkner, 1996). These effects are primarily justified in economic terms, by estimating the additional expenditure generated in the local economy as the result of the event, in terms of the benefits injected from tourism-related activity and the subsequent re-imaging of the city following the success of the event (Roche, 1992).

Cities staging major sports events have a unique opportunity to market themselves to the world. Increasing competition between broadcasters to secure broadcasting rights to major sports events has led to a massive escalation in fees for such rights which, in turn, means broadcasters give blanket coverage at peak

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times for such events, enhancing the marketing benefits to the cities that stage them.

Methodology

The ten events under survey are detailed in Table 1. All but one of them, the 2002 World Snooker Championship (which was a contract for the host city, Sheffield), were studied as part of a UK Sport funded research project to estimate the economic impact of the events. UK Sport is the body responsible in the UK for a 'World Class Events Programme' that supports sports governing bodies in their attempts to bring major sports events to the UK. Financial support is provided from lottery funding for both the bidding process and the staging of the event if the bid is successful. Two of the events studies (the World Boxing Championships in Belfast, and the World Half-Marathon Championships in Bristol) were joint contracts with both UK Sport and the host cities (ie, Belfast and Bristol).

The ten studies featured in this chapter were conducted using essentially the same methodology. This, therefore, provides the added value of having a dataset in which the events are comparable. It is the results of cross event comparability and the issues arising from such comparisons upon which this chapter is

Table 1: *Major sports events surveyed in the U.K.*

Year	*Event*	*Abbreviation*	*Host City*
1997	World Badminton Championships	WBC	Glasgow
1997	European Junior Boxing Championships	EJBC	Birmingham
1997	European Junior Swimming Championships	EJSC	Glasgow
1998	European Short Course Swimming Championships	ESCSC	Sheffield
1999	European Show Jumping Championships	ESJC	Hickstead
1999	World Judo Championships	WJC	Birmingham
1999	World Indoor Climbing Championships	WICC	Birmingham
2001	World Amateur Boxing Championships	WABC	Belfast
2001	World Half Marathon Championships	WHM	Bristol
2002	World Snooker Championship	WSC	Sheffield

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primarily concerned. The methodology employed in the economic impact studies was divided into ten stages, which can be summarized as follows:

- Quantify the proportion of respondents who live in the host city and those who are from elsewhere;
- Group respondents by their role in the event, eg, spectators, competitors, media, officials etc;
- Establish basic characteristics of visitors, eg, where they live and composition of the party;
- Determine the catchment area according to local, regional, national or international respondents;
- Quantify the number of visitors staying overnight in the host city and the proportion of these making use of commercial accommodation;
- Quantify how many nights those using commercial accommodation will stay in the host city and what this accommodation is costing per night;
- Quantify for those staying overnight (commercially or otherwise) and day visitors, the daily spend in the host city on six standard expenditure categories;
- Quantify what people have budgeted to spend in the host city and for how many people such expenditure is for;
- Establish the proportion of people whose main reason for being in the host city is the event;
- Determine if any spectators are combining their visit to an event with a holiday in order to estimate any wider economic impacts.

Much of this analysis was undertaken using a standard questionnaire survey to interview key interest groups at an event and the data collected was then analysed using a specialist statistical software package and spreadsheets to calculate the additional expenditure in the host economy.

Multipliers

It is the direct impact attributable to *additional expenditure* that this research concentrated upon, in order to allow for meaningful comparisons between events. That is to say, the comparisons do not include induced impact derived from the application of multipliers to the additional expenditure calculations. To do so would be to compare host economies rather than specific events, as multipliers are specific to a given economy. Moreover, the information needed to establish a multiplier for a given local economy is not always readily available. As a result, historically, consultants have used highly technical and ambitious multipliers that are not empirically based and are often 'borrowed' from other sectors (eg, construction), or other economies. This 'borrowed' type of multiplier analysis can be considered only a poor approximation at best and any findings are most likely to be erroneous – not least because the multiplier is unique to the prevailing local economic conditions and, to reiterate, this type of research is about *comparing events and not economies*. Most of John Crompton's criticisms of poor methodology in the carrying out of economic impact studies

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of major events are related precisely to the incorrect choice or use of multipliers (see Crompton, 1995, 2001).

Results

Absolute impact

Graph 1 details the absolute additional expenditure directly attributable to staging each of the ten events. The most significant economic impact is attributable to the 2002 World Snooker Championship closely followed by the 1997 World Badminton Championships. Both these events took place over a two-week period and this extended period for the events did lead to higher economic impact. The World Half Marathon Championships was different from the other events in the sense that it did not take place in a stadium or fixed seating area and there were no tickets sold for spectators. Consequently the crowd at this event has been estimated in conjunction with the local organizing committee, city authority and the police. This estimate of the number of spectators, which has been used to calculate the economic impact, is on the conservative side.

In five of the ten events, the additional expenditure generated in the host economies exceeded £1.45 m, which might be termed a 'major' impact. Although the majority of the events detailed in Graph 1, however, could be described as 'major' in the sporting calendars of those who organize the events, closer inspection of the figures reveals that it does not follow that a 'major event' in sporting terms necessarily equates with having a 'major' economic impact. For example, although the two swimming events, the 1997 Junior Swimming Championships in Glasgow and the European Short Course Swimming Championships in Sheffield, were both European Championships, they made a relatively small contribution to the economy of the host cities.

In a similar manner to the word 'major', the words 'world championships' do not necessarily mean that there will be a large downstream economic impact. The 1997 World Badminton event generated economic impacts of £2.2 million, whereas the 2001 World Half Marathon and 1999 World Indoor Climbing Championship generated more modest impacts of £584,000 and £398,000 respectively.

Impact per day

Although the absolute economic impact attributable to a given event is important in quantifying the overall benefit that an event might have, it is a somewhat flawed basis for comparison as the duration of events is invariably different. For example, the World Badminton Championships took place over 14 days and the World Half Marathon was over inside one and a half hours. Thus in order to make a standardised comparison of the economic impact attributable to events it is useful to examine the economic impact *per day* of competition. The results of this analysis are shown in Graph 2.

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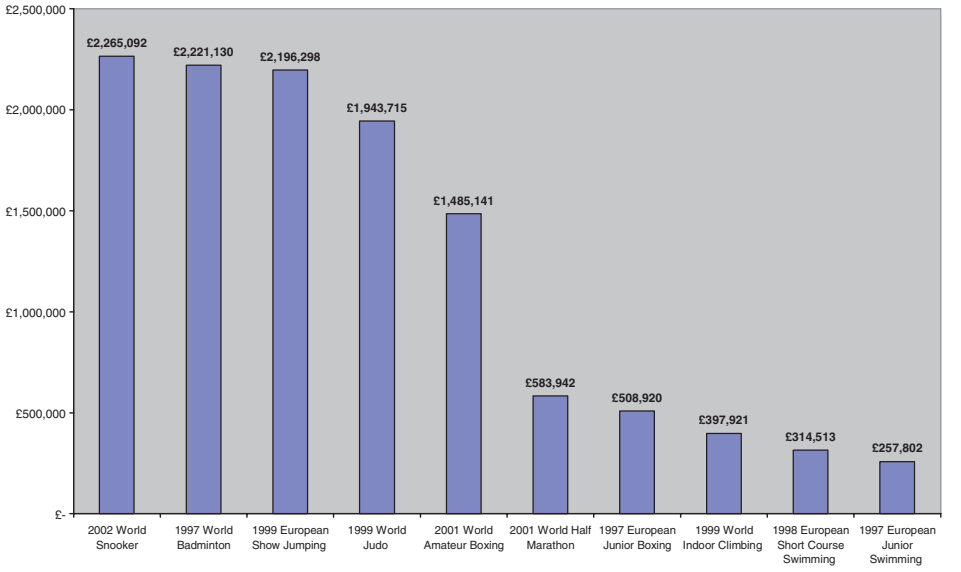
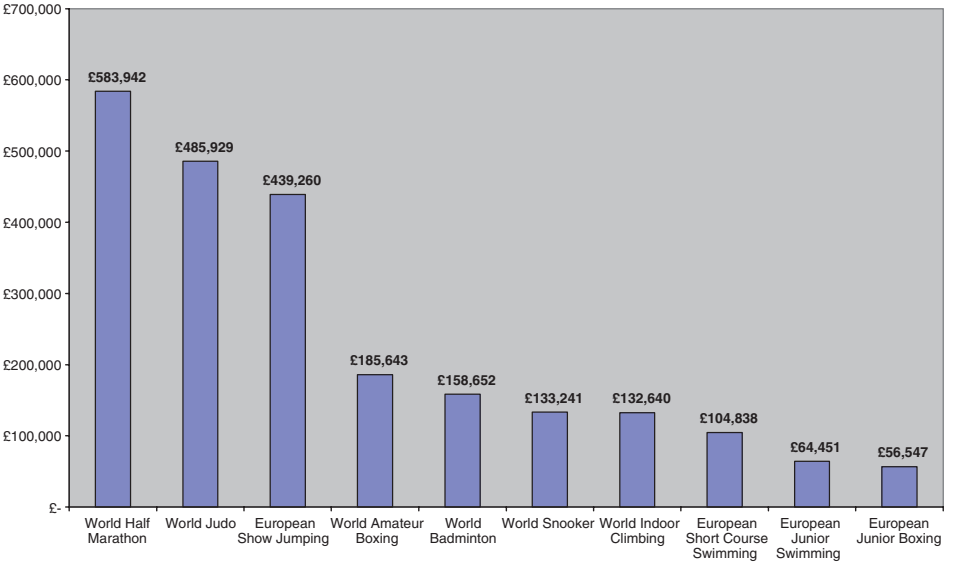


Graph 1: *Economic impact of 'major' sports events.*



Graph 2: *Daily economic impact of major sports events.*

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In Graph 2 we see that the events with the highest absolute economic impact, The World Badminton Championships and the World Snooker Championship, are only fifth and sixth in importance in relation to economic impact per day and it is the World Half Marathon Championship which is most important on this measure, where the daily impact and the absolute impact are identical, closely followed by the World Judo Championships and European Show-Jumping Championships.

Visitor and organizational spend

Generating economic impact is not UK Sport's rationale for attracting major events to the UK. As previously suggested, however, it is a useful device by which to justify the funding of an event in economic terms. Therefore in order to be able to forecast economic impact it is essential to understand the components that create economic impact. In broad terms these can be identified as:

- Organizational expenditure, ie, expenditure made directly by the organizers of an event in the locality where the event is taking place.
- Competitor or delegation expenditure, ie, expenditure made directly by those taking part in the event and their support staff in the locality where the event is taking place.
- Other visitor expenditure ie, expenditure made directly by those people involved with an event other than the organizers and delegations. Other visitor groups include officials, media representatives and spectators.

In the interest of simplicity the three types of expenditure can be collapsed into two categories, ie, organizational expenditure and visitor expenditure (delegation and other visitor expenditure combined). Using the ten events in the sample, the relative amounts of expenditure attributable to organizational and visitor expenditure can be seen in Graph 3.

Graph 3 indicates that for all except one of the events (the European Junior Boxing Championships), the economic impact attributable to organizational expenditure was a minor part of the total economic impact with a highest percentage score of 26% (World Amateur Boxing Championships) and a lowest percentage score of 0% in the European Junior Swimming (not illustrated). The European Junior Boxing Championships was a relatively small event which did not attract significant numbers of spectators.

For the events included in this sample, the vast majority of the economic impact (greater than 80%) was caused by visitors and therefore it is logical to concentrate the subsequent secondary analyses on visitor expenditure. The reason why the majority of events in this research have relatively low levels of organizational expenditure is because they were all events that took place within existing facilities and existing infrastructure. There was no need to build or upgrade existing facilities and therefore virtually all expenditure incurred by organizers was on revenue items necessary for the operational running of the event.

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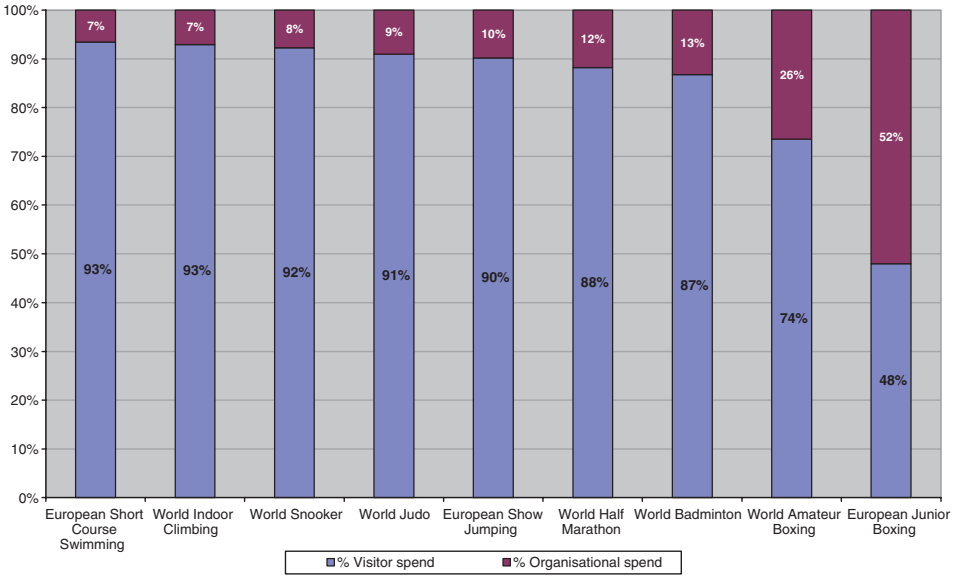

Graph 3: *The relative proportions of visitor and organizational spending at major sports events.*

Visitor expenditure

At this point it is worth disaggregating total visitor expenditure into its component parts of spectator, competitor (delegation) expenditure and other visitor expenditure. In 1997 the six events studied were illustrated along a continuum of 'spectator' to 'competitor and others'. Using the results of the ten events studied since 1997, this continuum can be upgraded to indicate the composition of visitor expenditure at an event. The revised continuum is shown in Graph 4 and this disaggregates the expenditure of 'others' from that of 'competitors'.

From Graph 4 it can be seen that at five of the ten events featured, the majority (at least 51%) of the economic impact can be attributed to spectators and these would be categorized as 'spectator driven' events. By contrast, at the remaining events the economic impact was driven by other groups (principally competitors), in particular at the two swimming events. The Short Course and Junior Swimming events are characterized by having large numbers of competitors staying in commercial accommodation and relatively small numbers of spectators (990 and 640 admissions respectively) most of whom are either the friends or families of the competitors; such events are categorized as 'competitor driven'.

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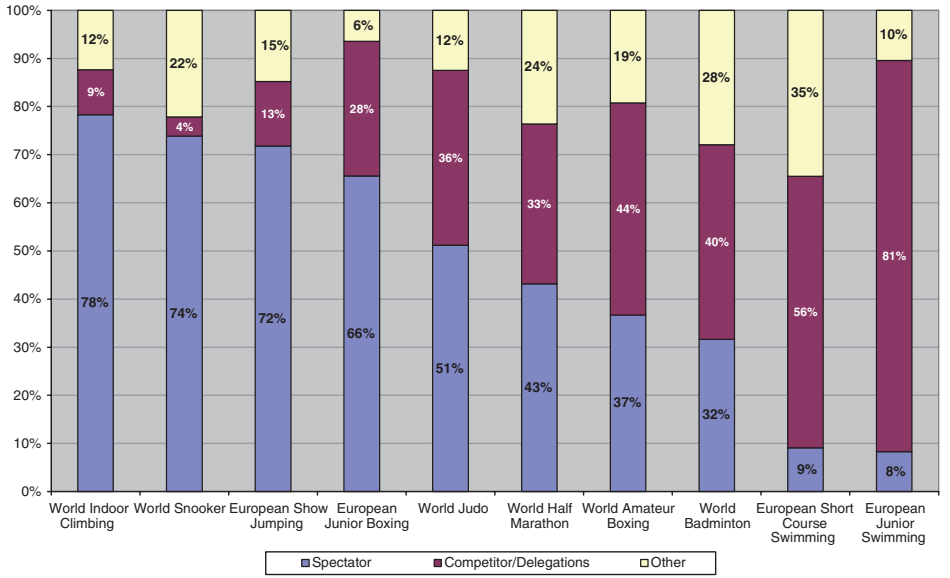

Graph 4: *The continuum between spectators' and other visitors' expenditure.*

Key determinants of economic impact

In order to investigate the relationship between the absolute scale of an economic impact and the number of people who generated it, we now examine economic impact against the total number of spectator admissions as shown in Graph 5. This does not include events which were not staged in stadiums and where the spectator admissions were approximations, as there were no audience data available (eg, the World Half Marathon). Graph 5 indicates that there is a very high correlation ($r = 0.91$) between the number of spectator admissions at an event and the economic impact attributable to that event. Therefore it can be concluded that if economic impact is an important consideration in determining whether or not to support an event, then the number of spectators is the principal determinant of absolute economic impact. As a consequence of this finding it can be concluded that in elite level sport (ie, the type of event likely to be supported by UK Sport), 'competitor driven' events are unlikely to generate as much economic impact in absolute terms compared with 'spectator driven' events.

It could be argued that if all or most of the spectators attending an event were local people, then the economic impact attributable to that event would be relatively small as there would be only a small net change in the economy ie, most expenditure would be 'deadweight'. In order to investigate this possibility

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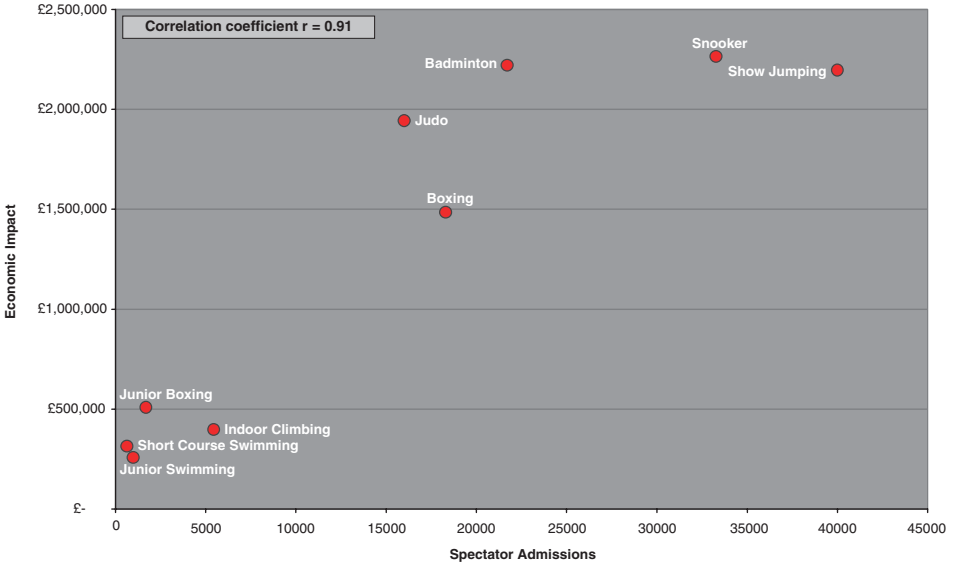

Graph 5: *The relationship between spectator admissions and absolute economic impact.*

further, we examine the relative proportions of local to non-local admissions as detailed in Graph 6.

According to Graph 6, there was only one instance of local admissions exceeding those of non-local people: the World Half Marathon Championships. The World Half Marathon had 55% of spectators from the local area. This was a direct result, however, of the Bristol Half Marathon running alongside the elite event, hence there were many people from Bristol supporting family and friends in the mass participation event. Moreover, of the remaining events, the event organizers at the European Show Jumping and the World Amateur Boxing interfered with the market conditions, in that significant numbers of complimentary tickets were passed to local people in order to increase the attendance at the events. Hence it is reasonable to conclude that the majority of spectators to events come from outside the local area and this therefore confirms the earlier assertion that absolute economic impact is critically dependent on the number of spectators attending an event – a point emphasized still further when one considers that the correlation between non-local admissions and absolute impact while still high ($r = 0.87$), is not as high as the correlation using total spectator admissions.

The key points emerging from this initial results section can be summarized as follows:

- The most appropriate way to compare the economic impact attributable to various events is on an economic impact per day basis;

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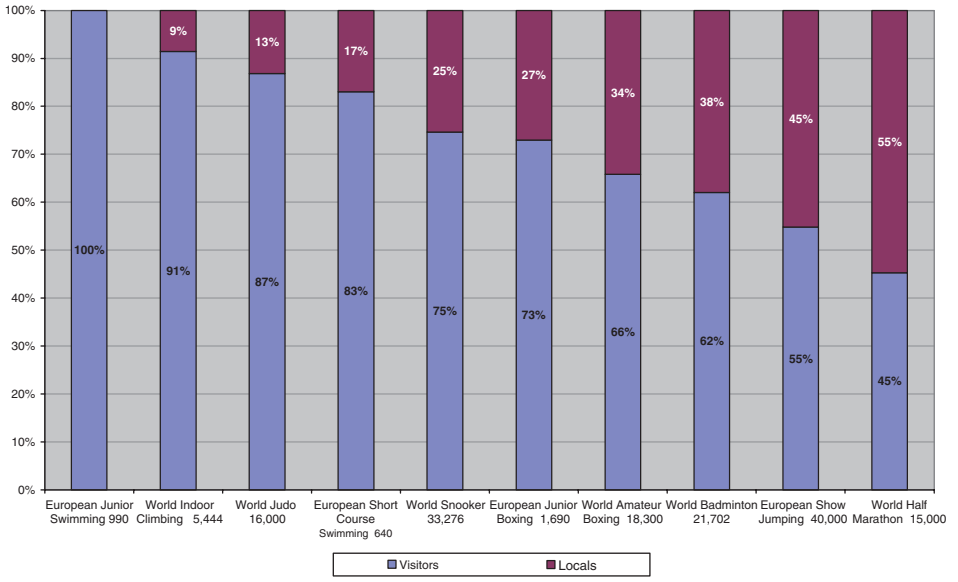

Graph 6: *The relative proportions of non-local and local spectators at events.*

- Spectator driven events are likely to have a higher economic impact than competitor driven events;
- The key determinant of total economic impact is the number of spectators attending an event;
- For most major sporting events, visitors from outside the immediate area are likely to account for the majority of admissions.

Additional benefits

The Balanced Scorecard approach to event evaluation

This final section may interest event organizers and practitioners, as well as social scientific analysts, in that it acknowledges that the benefits associated with events are far reaching and not merely confined to economic impacts. This section uses the 'Balanced Scorecard' approach to event evaluation (see Figure 1) developed from original work at Harvard Business School.

Apart from an event's economic impact, additional aims and benefits might arise in the form of media value linked to coverage at home or internationally. Moreover, linked to such coverage may be place marketing benefits for key aspects of the host city or area, which could ultimately impact upon tourism by increasing the number of visitors to the area in future as a result of media coverage afforded to an event. Public perceptions of places can also improve as a

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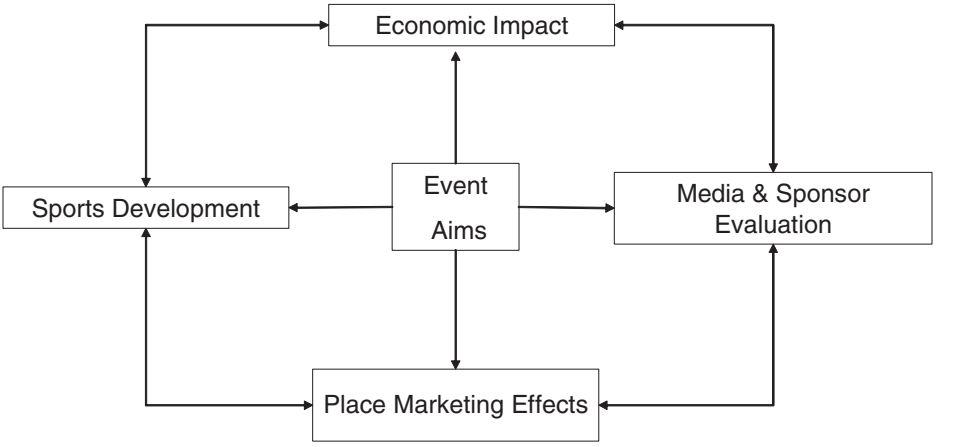

Figure 1: *The 'Balanced Scorecard' approach to evaluating events.*

result of people's experiences at major sports events, which in turn might lead to repeat visits as evidenced by qualitative feedback from spectators at some of the events. Furthermore, an immediate benefit of staging an event might involve some form of sports development impact which could encourage more people to take up a sport being showcased. The long-term effect of any increase in participation could be tracked, although it may be difficult to prove causality. To illustrate some of these points, examples are drawn from three events: the European Short Course Swimming Championship, World Amateur Boxing and World Half Marathon.

Examples of additional benefits

Apart from revealing an economic impact on Sheffield of almost £315,000, the research into the European Short Course Swimming Championships at the time also audited the public profile by analysing the television coverage of the event. In addition to the UK television coverage the event was also shown across Europe in Germany, Finland, Italy and Croatia. Audience data and broadcasts were confirmed by the Broadcasters' Audience Research Board (BARB) and calculations using industry standard methodologies were made relative to:

- Percentage Share: The proportion of people watching a given programme expressed as a function of the total number of people watching television at that time.
- Television Rating (TVR): This is the key performance indicator of the size of an audience for any given programme. TVR is expressed as the percentage of all the people in a country with access to a television actually watching the programme or programme segment in question.

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Table 2: *Television coverage of the European Short Course Swimming Championships*

Indicator	*UK*	*Other European*	*Total*
Number of Programmes	6	12	18
Total Duration (Minutes)	369	718	1,087
Cumulative Audience (000s)	5,451	2,522	7,973
Highest Share Achieved	23.0%	9.8%	23.0%
Highest TVR Achieved	4.9%	9.0%	9.0%

Using the five countries from which the broadcast and audience data were available, the European Short Course Swimming Championships attracted a cumulative audience of 7,973,000 of which 5,451,000 were UK viewers as summarized in Table 2.

The data has two practical applications:

- For event promoters, in order to acquire a greater appreciation of the commercial value of the event in terms of related advertising and sponsorship sales. Commercial revenues contribute to the operating costs of an event and hence achieving value for money is the key when advertising and sponsorship sales are being made.
- For host venues, advertisers and sponsors, who can evaluate the return on their investment. For example, the total value of the Sheffield City Council support of the event was £25,000. This can be traded off against the value of the place marketing achieved. Using the data in Table 2, a degree of quantitative evaluation of place marketing can be made. A 'Sheffield National City of Sport' advertising board was on display at pool deck level alongside the advertising board of the main sponsor (Adidas). Using sponsorship industry standard methodology, it is relatively easy to calculate the proportion of the 1,087 broadcast minutes during which the board was on full view promoting the city of Sheffield.

The World Amateur Boxing Championships in Belfast achieved a total cumulative audience of 6.6 million in the UK, which included 330,000 young people under the age of 16 (ie, potential for a sports development impact). Across 13 programmes (mainly on BBC2), the event was screened for a total of 551 minutes (9 hours 11 minutes), with live feed and highlights screened to more than 20 countries. The UK viewing figures peaked at 2.06 million with the audience share at this point being 22%.

Based on analyses of the television coverage using specialist sponsorship evaluations, estimates suggested that a major sponsor enjoyed media exposure worth £51,014 in the UK alone. Data such as this provides a sound baseline against which sponsors can assess the extent to which they have achieved a return on

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their investment. In this instance the sponsor invested £63,000 and in return they received exposure that would have cost more than £51,000 to purchase in the commercial marketplace, ie, 81% of their total investment. In addition to UK television coverage, broadcasters from other countries also bought the rights to screen the event and thus there would be additional media value obtained for the sponsor from this worldwide exposure. Although the worldwide television exposure was not analysed in this instance, it is possible to access the audience data as demonstrated by the European Short Course Swimming Championships example, or alternatively where this is not possible, sponsorship evaluation companies can apply a 'rate card' based on a flat rate for 30 seconds of advertising time on a particular channel.

A similar methodology can be adopted in order to estimate the place marketing effects associated with television coverage. At the World Half Marathon, Bristol City Council was responsible for underwriting the event and for a significant proportion of the running costs. In return the place marketing benefits linked to the exposure of the 'Bristol' brand, amounted to a notional £42,000 of exposure. In order to maximize any place marketing benefits for a particular location, event organizers should consider working closely with the host broadcaster in order to ensure the showcasing of key local attractions as the backdrop to human-interest features around the event coverage. Sheffield City Council used such human interest features (known as 'postcards') to great effect during a major snooker event in 2002 such that the combined place marketing effects for the city were a notional £3.2 million, ie, the commercial cost of the exposure created by the event, based on the cost/1000 viewers of a 30 second television commercial.

Apart from media value and place marketing, the 'Balanced Scorecard' approach also refers to sports development effects and these were analysed during the research at the World Amateur Boxing in Belfast. In the run-up to and during the championships a community development programme with boxer Wayne McCulloch entitled 'Train with Wayne' provided young children and potential future champions with the opportunity to become involved in the sport of boxing. Up to 100 youngsters participated during the televised build up to the Championship. During the event 'Come and Try It' sessions were enhanced by concessionary tickets to the event, school visits and discount packages. Furthermore, training for potential young boxers was also strengthened through the involvement of 300 local volunteers in the event, training for technical officials, time-keepers, judges, medical personnel and competition managers. This event has therefore left a broad legacy of enhanced skills which maybe used to maintain the impetus provided by the staging of the event.

As well as the economic impact attributable to the World Amateur Boxing (£1.49 m), the profile of Belfast as a city of world-class sport was enhanced through the marketing of the event and the televisual exposure of the 'Belfast' brand throughout the world. Collectively, the boxing and the previous success of the World Cross Country Championships provided the catalyst to formulate

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an events strategy for Northern Ireland, designed to help re-image the Province through sport.

In summary, given the complex aims and objectives increasingly associated with major sports events, in future more detailed analysis and evaluation will be necessary to satisfy the needs of different partners. Adopting a methodology linked to (for example) the 'Balanced Scorecard' could move beyond simple economic impact studies, to include TV, media and sponsorship evaluations as well as sports development, home soil advantage and other legacies.

Conclusions

This chapter has provided a detailed overview of ten economic impact studies undertaken at major sports events, all World or European Championships, in the UK since 1997. Each study represents a value-for-money appraisal of an event, by quantifying the net change in the host economy that is directly attributable to the event and measurable in cash terms using detailed audit trails. The evidence presented vindicates (in economic terms) the decisions made by UK Sport to use Lottery funding via the World Class Events Programme to attract many of the events. Moreover, the detailed database of event evaluations possessed by UK Sport provides the evidence to inform future strategic decisions relative to the type of events that the UK may consider bidding for in years to come. According to such evidence and in order to maximize potential economic impact, the following should be considered prior to bidding:

- The ability of the event to attract people from outside the host area and thereby reduce the 'deadweight' percentage of those attending;
- Generally the greater the absolute number of spectators the more significant the economic impact and junior events are likely to have the smallest impacts as they rarely attract many spectators;
- The economic impact is not necessarily a function of the status of an event in world sporting terms;
- The number of days of competition and the availability of local commercial accommodation to allow visitors to extend their dwell times in the host area.

Beyond the development of the economic impact model, this chapter has demonstrated how the event evaluations have evolved and should continue to evolve in order to better understand the likely legacies of events long after any medals have been presented. These legacies could be in terms of media value, place marketing effects for the host area, as well as sports development impacts which may stimulate young people to get more involved in sport. The evidence presented above suggests that the European model of attracting major sports events to cities that do not require additional infrastructure investment in order to host the event can generate significant economic benefits to the host cities.

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