

Emerging frontiers in sport management research. Best papers from the “Managing Sport” tracks at the EURAM Annual Meeting in Warsaw 2015

The European Academy of Management (EURAM) Annual Conference’s general theme in 2015 was “uncertainty as a great opportunity”. The current challenges faced in industry by emerging players in the world of sports, experiences of rapid rise in popularity of “lifestyle” sports, the growth of adventure races pushing participants to their physical and mental limits, the development of effective retailing branding strategies, the unique role branded merchandise can play in furthering sports brand equity, and a sport marketing environment characterised by “fragmentation” of audiences, “media overflow” and “information overload” provide emerging frontiers for research. Thus we are challenged to think beyond traditional answers. Nowadays, being omnipresent, uncertainty touches all spheres of our life. However, its perception depends mostly on our attitude. We prefer to take a positive approach looking at it as an immense opportunity for both, advanced industry practice and research. Bearing this perspective in mind, the strategic interest group (SIG) on “Managing Sport” within EURAM did its best to create a space for constructive and creative discussion about emerging frontiers within the field of sports management, sports governance and event management in a variety of its forms at the EURAM conference and by means of this special issue.

We are grateful to Emerald Group Publishing for continuing the strong bonds between *Sport, Business and Management* and the Managing Sport-SIG also by sponsoring an annual Best Paper Award and a Best Reviewer Award. Year 2015 saw a high number of paper submissions and high-quality reviews conducted. We are proud to announce the following Best Paper Award Winners: Christos Anagnostopoulos and Tom Bason for their paper entitled “Corporate social responsibility through sport: a longitudinal study of the FTSE100 companies” and the runners-up Reidar J. Mykletun and Laura Mazza submitting an article on “Psychosocial benefits from participating in an adventure expedition race” as well as Anna Gerke with her submission on “Interorganizational linkages in sport industry clusters – types, development, and motives”. The Best Reviewer Award in 2015 was presented to Dominik Schreyer (WHU – Otto Beisheim School of Management, Germany), with Birnir Egilsson (Molde University College, Specialized University in Logistics, Norway) as runner-up. We wish to thank them and all the reviewers of the track for their excellent work. The Award Committee included Emilie Malcourant (as 2013 best reviewer), Mathieu Winand (as the SIG’s Programme Chair) and Sten Söderman (as Past SIG Chair). In addition to the submission by Reidar J. Mykletun and Laura Mazza we selected the following four articles for this special issue aiming to bring forward some emerging frontiers of sport management research. These are “The impact of brand associations on brand loyalty in the football industry: a comparison of fans from developed and emerging football markets” by Daniel Maderer, Dirk Holtbruegge and Rachel Woodland; “Sport-related branded entertainment: the Red Bull phenomenon” by Reinhard Kunz, Franziska Elsässer and James Santomier; “How industry competition ruined windsurfing” by Stuart Thomas and Jason Potts; and “Professional football clubs retail branding strategies” by Adam Szymoszowskyj, Mathieu Winand, Dimitrios Kolyperas and Leigh Sparks. All articles have been at least double-blind reviewed to be accepted for presentation at the EURAM 2015 conference and revised afterwards in exchange with the reviewers assigned to each submission.