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SZÉLES-KOVÁCS GYULA, SERES JÁNOS

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THE OBSERVATIONS OF THE ASSESSMENT ABOUT THE FANS OF THE 2013 MAN'S HAND- BALL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP IN MADRID

A 2013. ÉVI MADRIDI KÉZILABDA-VILÁG-
BAJNOKSÁG SZURKOLÓINAK KÉRDŐÍVES
FELMÉRÉSE, TAPASZTALATAI

Összefoglaló

A 2013. évi madridi férfi kézilabda-világbajnokságon végeztünk kérdőíves felmérést a magyar válogatott két mérkőzése alatt, mind a magyar, mind az aktuális ellenfél szurkolóinak a körében. Kíváncsiak voltunk, hogy a világbajnokságon szurkoló drukkerek milyen turisztikai „magatartással” érkeztek erre a világbajnokságra. Ezen kívül kíváncsiak voltunk arra, hogy a helyszínen jelen lévő szurkolók milyen erősségű kapcsolatot ápolnak a kézilabda sportággal, és milyen költségvetéssel érkeztek erre a világeseményre. Végezetül összehasonlítottuk a házigazda csapat mérkőzéseinek helyt adó sportcsarnokok csoportmérkőzések alatt produkált nézőszámait a madridi és a 2011. évi göteborgi helyszínek tükrében.

Kulcsszavak: kézilabda, világbajnokság, sportturizmus, szurkolók

Abstract

We have done a survey at the World's Men Handball Championship 2013 in Madrid during two games of the Hungarian team among the Hungarian's and the opponent's fans. We was curious about how are the fans, who are coming to the World Championship, are behaving in this enviroment. I was also interested how strong bonds they have with the handball as a sport and what are their financial budget for this global event. At last I compared the number of the sport fans visiting the stadiums in Madrid in 2013 and in Gothenburg in 2011.

Keywords: handball, worldchampionship, sport turism, fans

Prelude

The term sports tourism covers all trips the motivation of which is doing or watching sport.

Sports-recreational tourism is regarded as active tourism (e.g. fishing, water sports, horse riding, etc.) as Hungarian Tourism PLC uses this term for all recreational-free time motivated holidays in its professional materials and recommendations.

Active tourism is a tourism form, where the motivation of the tourists' travel is to do any kind of physical activity as free time and sport activities. Among others hiking, biking, natural water sports, horse riding belong to this phenomenon. As its active tourism products, Hungarian Tourism PLC lists adventure and extreme sport tourism, golf, fishing, hunting and camping here, as well. (http://itthon.hu/documents/28123/7654442/aktiv_turizmus_szakmai+seg%C3%A9dlet_final_2014-03-25.pdf/155dabcb-6b28-4062-9acb-93961e7f5d71) So, we put participating in sport events (active tourism) and people watching, supporting them (passive tourism) in this category in the first place.

Here, we can mention other definitions, concerning passive participants of sport events as sports tourists as it follows:

“Sports tourism refers to travels the purpose of which is not trading but doing sports or watching sport events – all this happens in different places away from their home environment.” (Hall, C.M., 1992.)

“Sports tourism refers to people who travel from their permanent living places to take part in sport, either in competitions or in recreational activities, but also event sport tourism, which refers to travel to watch a sports event; and nostalgia sport tourism, which includes visits to sports museums, famous sports venues, and sports themed cruises.” (Hudson, S., 2003.)

Holiday activity including sports activities – pursuing sport or watching sport “ (Weed, M. – Bull, C., 1997.)

(Tematikus szakmai háttéranyag, Sportturizmus. In: www.itthon.hu/szakmaioldalak/turisztikai-termék/sport-turizmus)

1. Graph: Division of sports tourism



Sports tourism can be grouped on the basis of several aspects:

Considering the physical activity of the tourists we can differentiate active and passive sports tourism, both of which can be professional and leisure time tourism.

Active tourism forms can further be divided into outdoor activities when sport is done in natural environment and indoor activities when sport is done in sports establishments.

Referring to the sports activities themselves, sports tourism forms can be varied just as the branches of sports: e.g. biking, horse riding and water sports. In this sense, sports tourism serves as a collective phenomenon referring to different sports travels in connection with sports activities.

Participants of passive tourism can be further classified on the basis of their purpose for travelling: people accompanying leisure time or professional sportsmen (coach, family member, and doctor), supporters whose aim is to support and cheer in the sports events, and also people who visit sports venues. In this way, passive sports tourism – as long as it is international – involves a greater amount of people than active sports tourism.

The Research Method

I have done a survey ($n = 192$ people), which focus was to study the fans' touristical habits and their relationship to handball as a sport. The survey included eleven questions. Hereinafter I will list the most important findings by topic.

Results

At one of my most important questions I was curious about that how often the fans are attending sport events every year.

*Table 1: How often do you attend sport events?
táblázat: Milyen gyakran látogat sporteseményeket?*

	Respondents (number)	Respondents (%)
Once/Twice a year	60	31,3
Every month	54	28,1
Weekly or more often	78	40,6
Summary	192	100,0

As you can see in the table 40,6% of the respondents are attending sport events weekly or even more often. 28,1% of the respondents are monthly, while 31,3% of them only attend once or twice a year any sort of sport event. From these

answers it can be stated that two third of the attendees at the handball world championship in Madrid are visiting sport events regularly.

With my next question I focused on revealing how often these fans are following handball games in live.

Table 2: How often do you attend at handball games?

2. táblázat: Milyen rendszerességgel látogat kézilabda-mérkőzéseket?

	Respondents (number)	Respondents (%)
Once/Twice a year	57	29,7
Monthly	48	25,0
Weekly or more often	72	37,5
Whenever my favourite team plays	15	7,8
Summary	192	100,0

Compared to the previous table's results there's not a big difference between the proportions. The number of fans who are attending sport events once or twice a year decreased just at a very small rate. As we can see from the results, most of the fans on the site are specifically visiting handball games out of all sport events.

In my next question I was interested that how many games did the attendees had tickets for during the championship.

Table 3: How many games you have a ticket for during the World Championship in Madrid?

3. táblázat: Hány mérkőzésre van jegye a madridi VB keretein belül?

	Respondents (number)	Respondents (%)
1	21	10,9
2–5	150	78,1
Purchased tickets for after group matches	21	10,9
Summary	192	100,0

As we can see from the numbers, a high percentage of the attendees purchased more than tickets during the group stage. There's a really small number of fans who held only one ticket or bought tickets to the play-off rounds. This can be explained with pre-planning, since the set up of the groups was already public a few months before therefore it was easy to arrange the accommodations and travel plans. Besides that we can't avoid the fact that the championship haven't been even close to be sold out so it was relatively easy to purchase tickets to the later rounds.

In my next question I was researching how many nights did the fans spent in Madrid.

Table 4: How many nights you spend in Madrid?

4. táblázat: Mennyi éjszakát tölt el Madridban?

	Respondents (number)	Respondents (%)
1	6	3,1
2–5	123	64,1
More than 5 nights	63	32,8
Summary	192	100,0

We can come to the conclusion that the number of fans who precisely arrived for only one game to Madrid is really low. Following the previous table we can see it here also that most of the visitors spend two to five nights in the city to visit the preplanned group games. But the number of people who are staying for more than 5 nights are not irrelevant either.

Finally as the conclusion of the tables before, I was interested of how much is the budget of these fans.

Table 5: What is your financial budger for your stay at the World Championship all in all?

5. táblázat: Milyen költségvetéssel számol a VB alatt eltöltött idő alatt összesen?

	Válaszadók (fő)	Válaszadók (%)
100-200 euros	3	1,6
200-300 euros	9	4,7
300-500 euros	45	23,4
More than 500 euros	135	70,3
Summary	192	100,0

As we can see from the table, more than 90% of the attendees are planning their visit with a budget over than 300 euros for the world championship. Since the fans filled out their surveys individually these budgets are for per person. I believe we can sum up from these numbers that the visitors of the world championship came with a big budget. It's seems like they planned their visit well ahead of the championship in their personal calendar.

Number of visitors

Depending on my personal experpienses that I gained at the world championship I need to make the statement that regardless the low ticket prices it wasn't a good experience to see that only one or two thousands of fans were wondering around in the stadium that accomodate more than ten thousand attendees. Maybe

it would have been a good idea to include more smaller stadium, just as it was at the world championship in Sweeden, since even the host Spain's group games never filled up the stadium. Even so that some of the games (such as the ones against the Hungarian and Croatian teams) were almost sold out, thanks to the fact that the organizers invited elementary school students and members of the youth team.

Table 6: Comparision of the average supporters figures
6. táblázat: Átlag nézőszámok összehasonlítása

	2011 Göteborg	2013 Madrid
Average number of visitors at the host team's group games	6596	4126

Summary

I believe that after studying my research we can come to the conclusion that most of the fans who were attending at the world championship are also visiting games at their home town too. Furthermore we can see that the handball games are one of those events that the respondents are visiting regularly. Since the tickets went on sale relatively early for the world championship we can state that the attendees had the time to set up their budget which can be seen from the fact that most of them haven't just spent only one night in the Spanish captiol.

After closely studying the number of visitors during the host country's group games, it has been found that there were a much higher number of fans at the 2011 world championship in Sweeden. The reason for this could be the fact that the handbell is a highly popular sport in Sweden and also that the Sweedish championship was functioning as a qualification round for the 2012 Olympic Games, whilst the Spanish championship didn't give qualification to any other further games. Even so we need to applaud the Spanish organizers for the fact that they took on the challenge of this championship and they could organizer an almost sold out stadium for the host team's games which had its final result since the Spanish team brought home the title of World Champion.

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