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## Strategic Paradigms in International and National Sport Federations

### Abstract

This chapter examines the dominant strategic paradigms, or analytic lenses, that have shaped and will continue to shape the management of strategy in national and international sport federations. A brief review of the more seminal literature reveals that the overriding strategic influence on sport federations to date has been the management of strategic change in response to pressures for professionalisation. A discussion of current trends and issues suggests that managing pressures for change will continue to dominate the thinking of those formulating and executing strategy in sport federations. The discussion is organised around strategy and notions of good governance, stakeholder engagement, brand governance, and new stakeholders with emerging issues for sport federations. A closing discussion explores the strategic implications of the foregoing issues for sport federations in an era characterised by the global pandemic, with recommendations for future research.

**Keywords:** Strategy; strategic management; sport federations; sport governance; stakeholder management

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## Introduction

The management of strategy is at the core of an organisation's ability to achieve positive outcomes for stakeholders. This is no less true for sport organisations as it is for organisations in the wider, non-sport business environment. The interesting thing about strategy in the sport context, however, is the diversity of *raisons d'être* that exist on the continuum from not-for-profit to for-profit organisations that make up the industry. Regardless of a sport organisation's profit or non-profit orientation, however, strategic management not only provides the road map, but defines the capabilities and capacities for the organisation's journey from inception through to its various destinations.

This chapter focuses on strategy in a very specific type of sport organisation – that of governing bodies at both the national and international level. Henceforth referred to as National Sport Federations (NSFs) and International Federations (IFs), or just, “sport federations,” these organisations are responsible for nurturing the growth and development of particular sports at national and international levels. As Nagel, Schlesinger, Bayle, and Giaouque (2015) stated:

The tasks of sport federations especially include representing one or more sports, acting on behalf of their interests in relation to society and to (inter-)national sport organisations (NSOs), promoting competitive sports and organising competitions, championships and sport events, as well as articulating rules and regulations which govern them (pp. 407-408, parentheses in original).

There has been considerable research focused on IFs and NSFs over the years. This chapter starts by examining some of this work to understand past strategic paradigms germane to sport federations. In this context, the term, “paradigm” refers to, “a way of viewing the world (or ‘analytic lens’ akin to a set of glasses) and a framework from which to understand the human experience” (De Carlo, 2018, ¶2; *parentheses in original*). The purpose of this chapter

is twofold; first, to understand past approaches to strategy by sport federations and those who research them; and second, to then consider factors likely to shape the formulation and execution of strategy in sport federations in the coming decades. Thus, before looking to the future, it is important to understand the past.

### **Where Have We Been?**

While formalised sport federations have been around for well over a century, empirical research aimed at understanding them in a strategic sense is a relatively recent phenomenon. Of course, the nature of governance profoundly influences if and how a sport organisation manages strategy, so strategic management is in fact a function of governance. Thus, the work by Trevor Slack, Bob Hinings and their various doctoral students from 1991 to 2004 on organisational change in Canadian NSFs was ground breaking (Amis, Slack, & Hinings, 2004a, b; Kikulis, Slack, & Hinings, 1992, 1995a, b; Slack & Hinings, 1992, 1994; Thibault, Slack, & Hinings, 1991, 1992, 1993). This body of work was among the first empirical sport management research that truly engaged with the wider management literature, and used organisation theory to chart Canadian NSFs' strategic responses to pressures for professionalisation. The major contribution of Slack and Hinings and their colleagues was in helping us understand how sport federations, and sport organisations more widely, strategically respond to pressures for professionalisation.

More recently, Milena Parent led authorship on a 2018 piece that compared recent governance changes in Canadian NSFs with structural archetypes proposed by Slack and colleagues nearly three decades ago (Parent, Naraine, & Hoye, 2018). Parent et al. (2018) concluded that the early work still has resonance, with convergence around the same manifestations of increasing professionalisation, “vis-a-vis principles of organizing, specialization, standardization/formalization, and centralization” (Parent et al., 2018, p. 564). Interestingly, however, the authors noted that the three-tiered depiction of governance

archetypal structures (kitchen table, boardroom and executive office) proposed by Slack and colleagues was no longer present, and important new stakeholders and issues had emerged. As a result, strategic responses to professionalisation over this period saw kitchen table and boardroom archetype structures all but disappear as NSFs coalesced around the executive office archetype.

The contextual pressures for the professionalisation of sport organisations that prompted the work by Slack and colleagues and, more recently, Parent and colleagues, continue to exert a pervasive pressure on sport federations around the world. Lesley Ferkins, David Shilbury and Gael McDonald went beyond the structural focus of previous studies to examine actual strategic processes at board level. This produced a body of work around the seemingly ubiquitous pressure for professionalisation in the context of New Zealand and Australian NSFs, developing a clear picture of board strategic processes in sport (Ferkins, Shilbury, & McDonald, 2005; 2009; Ferkins & Shilbury, 2010; 2012; 2015). Importantly, Ferkins and Shilbury (2012) identified how the presence of, “people around the board room table who can think and act strategically, have knowledge of the sport, and can be inquisitive and impartial” (p. 78) leads to individual sport board members escalating their involvement in strategy development and developing overall board strategic capability.

More recently, Fahrner and Harris (2020) concluded that trust among NSF board members was key to successful implementation of strategic control mechanisms because professionalisation produced, “conditions of high task interdependence and skill differentiation between board members and ... high virtuality of the board” (p. 14). It is interesting that Fahrner and Harris raise this issue of “virtuality” and specifically, the challenge of building interpersonal trust on a board in which members rely heavily on virtual, online communications. The implicit question here is, how can board members effectively engage in planning strategy if they do not fully trust each other? Relatedly, Hoye and

colleagues (2020) noted that the strategic challenges facing modern boards are vastly different to those of previous decades. Hoye et al. (2020) declared that researchers, “no longer consider rationalization, professionalism, planning and quadrennial plans as major influencers of structural change, but instead consider contemporary issues such as commitment to good governance, stakeholder involvement and engagement (particularly through social media) and brand governance” (p. 586, parentheses in original). What these studies suggest is that the modern international sport landscape has changed dramatically, thus demanding equally significant shifts in strategic responses from IFs and NSFs.

In the interests of parsimony, the lineage from Slack, Hinings, and colleagues’ early work to the present day has been dramatically condensed in this brief review. But one thing is clear, the dominant strategic paradigm driving research in the sport federation space to date has been that of change. That is, there is a scientific consensus within the sport management community that managing strategic change, largely in response to pressures for increasing professionalisation, has been an overarching phenomenon underpinning the study of sport federations. What is also evident is the increasing maturity of the sport management literature to the point where we can now look to the past for conceptual insight to interpret the present and prepare for the future. The chapter now turns to the present and seeks to understand the likely drivers that will shape the formulation and execution of strategy in sport federations into the second quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Where Are We Now?**

If the dominant strategic paradigm affecting NSFs and IFs in previous decades was that of change, the events stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 make this preoccupation with change unlikely to dissipate anytime soon. Pandemic aside (dealt with later), pressures stemming from professionalisation have, in many countries, resulted in NSFs and IFs modernising governance and management systems, structures, and processes, and making the

required augmentations to values and cultures. What is left now is continually evolving professional standards in terms of good governance, stakeholder involvement and engagement, and brand governance (Hoye, et al., 2020).

## **Good Governance**

In many countries, professionalisation has manifested in sport federations as a largely top-down process whereby national governments have used sport funding policies to impose wide-ranging changes on NSFs. For example, federal funding may be withheld from an NSF until it demonstrates adoption of legitimate sport development strategies and structures. Similar mechanisms have been used to drive diversity representation on boards, senior management appointments and in some cases, national team selection. Meanwhile, although non-profit sport boards are voluntary in nature, they are still capable of attracting considerable expertise. Thus, few would argue against the logic of moving away from traditional delegate structures and building strategic capability on sport boards by recruiting members on the basis of their skillsets rather than constituency representation (Ferkins & Shilbury, 2012).

Relatedly, Sport Australia, the federal body responsible for sport funding in that country, recently launched an initiative called “One Management” that involves, “the establishment of a single operating model for a sport, which brings together a sport’s strategy, financial systems and workforce ...” (Sport Australia, n.d., p. 4). Although the One Management model professes to embrace the traditional federated model of sport governance that many NSFs still adhere to, Sport Australia appears to be encouraging NSFs to phase out these federated models that are notoriously political and beset by factional infighting and turf protection (O’Boyle & Shilbury, 2016; Shilbury & Ferkins, 2015). One Management seems very much a move towards a unitary system of governance where individuals become financial members of their local club and their NSF, without the need for state sport

governing bodies in between. For this reason, these unitary structures are seen as more streamlined and efficient than federated models (O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016).

The sport of cycling in Australia presents an interesting case in point because in 2019-2020, the chief executive officers (CEOs) of Mountain Bike Australia (MTBA), Cycling Australia (CA) and BMX Australia (BMXA) collaborated on a strategic plan to gain support for the merging of their three NSFs to create one unified voice for Australian cycling. This restructure involved not only merging three NSFs, but also scrapping the formerly federated structures of CA and BMXA (MTBA already had a unitary structure) to form a single, unitary governance structure. The outcome is AusCycling, one of the most ambitious governance reform projects in the history of Australian sport. Pre-merger, including all national and state sport governing bodies, Australian cycling consisted of 19 organisations, 11 CEOs, 19 boards, 110 directors, \$26.9m in revenue, many voices to government and stakeholders, and equally numerous fragmented pathways. As Shane Coppin, Acting CEO of AusCycling, reflected in interview, "If you were to set up a company today, there's no way you'd set it up with such a cumbersome structure!" (Shane Coppin, Acting CEO, AusCycling, Feb. 24, 2021, personal communication). Post-merger, the unitary structure of AusCycling consists of one organisation, one CEO, one board, 12 directors (to be gradually reduced to 9), \$27.8m projected revenue in FY21, 3-6% projected membership growth, \$186,000 p.a. in anticipated administrative cost savings, clear and consistent rider pathways, and a single unified voice to government (Shane Coppin, Acting CEO, AusCycling, Feb. 24, 2021, personal communication). On comparing the federated and unitary models, O'Boyle and Shilbury (2016) found that,

The unitary model appeared to offer a number of other unique benefits in the network involving the sharing of knowledge and resources across all unified bodies, the ability to create shared understandings by working in one common strategic direction, and a



more stable financial position for those states that comprise the unitary network. (p. 370)

This wholesale realignment of Australian cycling is unusual because it was self-regulated and driven by the agency of CEOs from the sports themselves, rather than any top-down, policy-led directive from federal government. Lang et al. (2020) explored the challenges and opportunities arising from self-regulated versus policy-led professionalisation processes in a Swiss NSF. Ultimately, Lang and her colleagues declared that, "... for far-reaching professionalisation processes (e.g., shift of decision-making authority from volunteer to paid staff), the opportunities arising from self-regulated professionalisation processes might outweigh the challenges" (p. 402, parentheses in original).

Thus, following the logic of Lang, et al., Australian cycling's self-regulated strategic change stands a good chance of conferring sustainable benefits to stakeholders. At the NSF level, perhaps a moderating variable is the level of federal government sport policy intervention – that is, the extent to which professionalisation is policy-led or self-regulated. With the minimum cost of entry being the existence of strategic planning, more than ever before, the success of sport federations will increasingly be tied to the strategic capabilities of boards, the relationships those boards have with their executives, the entrepreneurial orientation of those executives, and the satisfaction of ever more diverse stakeholders.

### **Stakeholder Involvement and Engagement**

Most sport federations are non-profit organisations, and it has long been held that non-profit organisations are responsible to a larger number of, and more diverse, stakeholder groups than for-profits (Hoye & Cuskelly, 2007). Due to resource relationships, one stakeholder that many NSFs rely heavily on is federal government. As suggested above, federal governments around the world vary in their levels of engagement with and recognition of sport as an important societal institution. For example, the federal governments of Japan, the US and

Australia are among the only to have “fully and consciously embraced sport as a vehicle to boost diplomatic and foreign policy ends” (Murray, 2017, p. 845). This phenomenon, referred to as sports diplomacy, involves the use of sport to “engage, inform and create a favourable image among foreign publics and organizations, to shape their perceptions in a way that is conducive to the sending government’s foreign policy goals” (Murray & Pigman, 2013, p. 1102-3). With worsening trade relations between countries such as China and some Western nations, and omnipresent geopolitical tensions in other parts of the world, the involvement of sport federations in international sport diplomacy initiatives seems likely to factor into the future strategic planning of NSFs and the IFs they are a part of.

Equally, as sport federations increasingly professionalise and mirror the practices of the commercial sector, there comes a need to diversify revenue streams. Depending on home country, traditional revenue streams for sport federations include government grants, membership fees, ticketing, sponsorship, and broadcast rights fees. Stakeholders exert power over a sport federation commensurate with that federation’s reliance on them for resources such as funding, legitimacy, or other assets such as exposure. In an example of sport’s shifting landscape, Parent et al. (2018) demonstrated the rise to prominence of social media as a stakeholder over more traditional forms of print, radio, and television media in connecting sport organisations with current and potential fans, sponsors, and athletes.

The rise to prominence of new stakeholders to sport through revenue diversification is even more pronounced at the IF level. Indeed, the heavy reliance of long-established IFs like the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the *Fédération Internationale de Football Association* (FIFA), World Rugby and the International Cricket Council (ICC) on huge linear broadcast deals for revenue generation is shifting. The availability of new broadcast technologies combined with international shifts in sport participation trends have fundamentally altered the playing field. Streaming technologies are presenting alternative

broadcast platforms, while simultaneously, some of the world's youth are opting out of established sports such as football and basketball and gravitating towards more individual, less formalised "lifestyle sports" such as skateboarding, climbing and surfing (Hajkowicz, Cook, Wilhelmseder, & Boughen, 2013; Wheaton & Doidge, 2015).

Surfing provides an interesting case in point. Broadcast of major events was a perennial problem in this sport because of the unpredictability of its "playing field" – the ocean. Unable to attract major broadcast deals, the Association of Surfing Professionals (ASP) – formerly the world governing body for professional surfing – pioneered the live broadcast of events on newly available web-based streaming technology. Then, in 2013, the ASP and its World Championship Tour was purchased by an American media conglomerate, ZoSea, and rebranded as the World Surf League (WSL). This meant that the pinnacle of professional surfing was no longer a non-profit sport governing body, but a commercial media content creator owned by an international media conglomerate. The WSL's current CEO, Erik Logan, formerly President of the Oprah Winfrey Network, brings his commercial media savvy to professional surfing. As such, the WSL produces and broadcasts all its own media content and on-sells some of its event content to select streaming and linear broadcasters. With surfing now viewed by more people in more diverse locations, and with the advent of surf parks that makes surfing away from the ocean a real possibility (O'Brien, 2021), global participation is growing by over 30% annually (World Surf League, 2019). And, for the first time in Tokyo 2021, surfing will feature in the Olympic Games. The International Surfing Association and its various NSFs that feed into the professional WSL level thus need to build capacity to handle the sport's new Olympic status, alternative entry paths, and growing participation numbers.

The emergence of streaming technologies produces both challenges and opportunities for sport federations. The Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), the governing

body of European football and the umbrella organisation for 55 national associations, has eschewed the traditional approach to sport broadcasting which would see the sale of broadcast rights to a sport marketing agency that then on-sells those rights to broadcasters. Rather, UEFA has taken advantage of Over the Top (OTT) technologies to create their own online broadcast network, UEFA.tv. This allows UEFA and its constituent bodies to create and distribute their own content that connects them directly with key stakeholders – consumers, as well as driving revenue through the on-sale of key matches to affiliate specialist OTT providers. Meanwhile, large sport management and marketing agencies like IMG and Perform Group, among many others, have also created their own subscription-based OTT sport broadcasting services (Strive Sport TV and DAZN, respectively) that now also dilute the sport broadcast revenue pie. Thus, where Naraine and Parent (2016) noted that NSFs are increasingly using social media to communicate with their publics, OTT broadcasters can be added to that list as it is now not only an important communication medium, but a key factor impacting revenue generation and brand governance.

### **Brand Governance**

The use of sport-based content by non-sport OTT streaming giants like Netflix is also forcing strategic responses from sport federations. For example, the Netflix documentary, “Athlete A”, forced the *Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique* (FIG) and gymnastics NSFs worldwide, particularly in the United States, to confront cases of systemic sexual, physical, and emotional abuse of children. One investigation in New Zealand prompted by the “Athlete A” documentary uncovered, “... allegations of a culture that normalised emotional manipulation, fat-shaming and athletes being forced to compete on serious injuries” (George, 2020, p. 2). To date, separate investigations prompted by the documentary’s empowerment of survivors have been launched by NSFs and Olympic federations in the US, New Zealand, UK, Australia, the Netherlands and Belgium (Macur, 2020). With sport providing the

ultimate “reality TV” and OTT providers’ increasingly voracious appetite for content, there is an opportunity for NSFs and IFs to be proactive in “cleaning house.” How many other sports have outdated value structures and obsolete practices such as those brought to light in gymnastics by “Athlete A”? Sport as reality TV programming provides IFs and NSFs the opportunity to be morally courageous, to acknowledge their past, and to strategically position their sports’ brands favourably in the hearts and minds of their respective publics. But again, this will require proactive, engaged and entrepreneurial leadership.

Indeed, there is evidence that OTT sport programming will create opportunities for savvy NSFs and IFs to strategically plan with commercial partners for mutual brand positioning, growth and community development outcomes. British Telecom (BT) is one of the world’s largest telcos and a major sponsor of the Football Associations (FAs) of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. BT describes its partnership strategy as a “4-3-3 strategy”, meaning it covers the four nations mentioned, is focused on three communities (para, grassroots and women’s football), and has three main goals. The first goal is developing technology to enable new pathways for people to play the game; the second is to better connect grassroots football clubs through entry-level digital skills programs; and the third is to inspire a new generation of women to get involved in the sport (Vizard, 2020).

Pursuant to this third goal, the six-part reality series, “Ultimate Goal,” developed and screened in 2020 by BT’s OTT sport broadcast service, BT Sport 3, tracked 31 women and their quest to make it through to a trial showcase in front of agents to ultimately become professional footballers (Burhan, 2020). As well as the obvious competitive aspects, the series depicts how participation in football has helped the featured athletes confront issues such as inequality, bereavement, mental health and discrimination. BT’s director of marketing explained that the strategy forms part of BT’s “Beyond Limits” brand positioning and that, “it’s more than just putting a logo on a shirt (but) ... being an enabler and creating

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opportunity and possibility across the country” (Vizard, 2020, p. 4, parentheses added). For sport federations, being clear on mission and using new media for the strategic positioning of their respective sport’s brands in national and international psyches will play an increasingly vital role in attracting entrepreneurial partners that are willing to not only invest in “names on shirts,” but achieve mutually beneficial outcomes for sport, corporate and community development.

### **New Stakeholders, Emerging Issues**

Of course, the pervasive influence of technology is not limited to broadcast and OTT. Online gaming, virtual reality (VR), and the esports juggernaut are also coalescing to present challenges and opportunities for sport federations. While FIFA has successfully partnered with EA Sports to produce wildly successful esports products, the technology will continue to evolve and sports, to varying degrees, will be obliged to evolve with them, lest be left behind. Professor Andy Miah, Chair in Science Communication and Future Media at Salford University, Commission Member of the Global Esports Federation, and Deputy Editor of *International Journal of Esports*, boldly declared that, “The future of all sports is esports” (Miah, 2019, p. 1). While Miah concedes that the “real” world of sport remains far bigger than the competitive esports community, he suggests that esports is showing consumers a new kind of future.

One of the major criticisms of esports from sport purists is that, being played out on flat screens, they seem detached, two-dimensional, lack interactivity and are not “real” sport. However, Miah points out that advancements in VR might soon make possible a true unity between sports and esports. He uses the example of HADO – a new, two versus two sports arena-based game that consists of VR battles where combatants, “can see each other’s actions and fling virtual fireballs at each other – a sort of digital version of dodgeball” (Miah, 2019, p. 4). He goes on to state that, “One of the reasons that HADO is so important is that it brings

a three-dimensional experience to an esports arena, where otherwise they are played out on flat screens for spectators to watch. Sony is even working on a spectator VR system to watch esports in virtual reality” (Miah, 2019, p. 4). While HADO might not be everyone’s sporting cup of tea, the fact that full-body exo-suit VR systems are no longer the stuff of science fiction, and that the IOC is interested in VR as a possible route for esports inclusion in the Olympic program, means that NSFs and IFs will ignore developments in this space at their peril.

There is another major stakeholder that will exert pressure on IFs that NSFs in the short and longer-term future – the environmental lobby. The fact is that the global climate *is* changing and having major impacts on sport worldwide. In his report titled, “*Playing against the clock: Global sport, the climate emergency and the case for rapid change*,” David Goldblatt presents a sobering commentary on how global sport is not just a victim of climate change, but a major contributor to it. McCullough, Orr and Kelliston (2020) concur, arguing that, “The relationship between sport and the natural environment is bidirectional; that is, sport impacts the natural environment and is impacted by the natural environment” (p. 509). Given the significance of the crisis, they propose a new sub-discipline of sport management, called sport ecology, that encompasses sport, the natural environment and the relationship between the two.

Reflecting on this bidirectional relationship between sport and the environment, Goldblatt (2020), notes that, “The IOC has a carbon footprint close to that of Barbados, global football’s is even larger” (p. 3). Added to this, he points out the vast carbon footprints of major sport events, the same major sport events that are at the centre of many sport federations’ revenue models – “...massive levels of aviation, carbon heavy stadium construction, and mountains of unrecycled garbage, all making a significant contribution to

the catastrophe now engulfing us” (Goldblatt, 2020, p. 3). Goldblatt specifically calls out the inaction of the world’s IFs and NSFs on these issues:

The state of sport’s environmental commitment and governance is woefully inadequate. Only a tiny fraction of the world’s thousands of sporting bodies, federations, tournaments, leagues and clubs have signed up to the UN Sport for Climate Action Framework, even fewer have actual carbon targets and plans to deliver on these commitments. At the same time, the petrochemical and aviation industries have a huge foothold in sport through their multiple global sponsorships. (Goldblatt, 2020, p. 4)

Based on the foregoing discussion, sport’s collective inability to manage climate change responses, combined with the stark realities of the COVID-19 pandemic, present huge strategic questions for sport federations, particularly in terms of the viability of major events. Indeed, the very feasibility of major sport events is now challenged on both ecological and COVID-safe grounds. With the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games postponed until 2021, then subsequently declared a crowd-free event, the financial cost is monumental. Clausen and Bayle (2017) noted the centrality of major sport events to the resource strategies of IFs. They concluded that,

... events are a necessary prerequisite for federations to attract sponsors, potential buyers of broadcasting and commercial rights. Without them, federations can no longer carry out either their historical mission or the activities they have developed over the years and the structures necessary for their maintenance. (Clausen & Bayle, 2017, p. 52)

Ironically, that which makes a mega-event “mega,” is in large part the liminal spectacle of the huge and diverse crowds attracted to attend them. With this core element taken away, the question can reasonably be posed, is the mega-event already a thing of the past? And, if so,



how will this impact lower-tiered events? And, how will the IFs and NSFs that rely on mega and large events for resources and survival strategically respond? Returning to Goldblatt's report, he observes that sport federations can take lessons from the COVID-19 crisis in responding to the climate emergency: "Coronavirus is not climate change, but there are a number of clear lessons from the current crisis: take the science seriously and assume the worst-case scenario can happen, act now not later, and act radically" (Goldblatt, 2020, p. 2).

### **Closing Discussion: Looking Forward**

Most would agree that the coronavirus pandemic represented a global watershed event for humanity. The domestic and international travel that we took for granted was no more, as were many jobs and other aspects of everyday life. The phrase, "existential threat" was for once, not an exaggeration. The pandemic has forced widespread social dislocation and unemployment, disrupted supply chains, and fundamentally shifted how people view and value work and leisure. And, as Amis and Greenwood (2021) observed, "What has also become starkly apparent is that the structures of advantage and disadvantage that characterise organisations have become more pronounced during the pandemic" (p. 1). As a microcosm of society, sport has inevitably mirrored these shifts.

Crises often prompt revision of how we do things and have a way of distinguishing those organisations that can endure, even flourish, and the reasons for their success. Amis and Janz (2020) suggest that successful post-pandemic organisations will be characterised by, (i) a people-centred approach founded on trust that creates an environment where people are empowered to share ideas and information; and, (b) organisations capable of rapid transformation to take advantage of the new economic environment.

What might all this look like in sport federations? The questions for future researchers in sport management are wide and varied, but following Hoye et al. (2020), three categories of questions emerge across the domains of good governance, stakeholder involvement and

engagement, and brand governance. In terms of good governance, what types of governance models will best cope with the new and potentially fragmented marketplace of sport? What skillsets and value structures will board members and senior executives require to best devise strategies to sustainably guide their sports? Will more streamlined, unitary structures prove to be more resilient in increasingly diversified resource environments?

With respect to stakeholder involvement and engagement, how will shifts in how federal governments value and engage with sport influence strategic opportunities and threats for sport federations? And, if pandemic and ecological concerns result in sport events becoming smaller and more regional in focus, how will this impact traditional broadcast platforms and sponsors of sport? Will this drive the pursuit of more diversified revenue streams for sport federations, thus ushering in new, non-traditional stakeholders to sport? If the structures of advantage and disadvantage in society become more pronounced as a result of the pandemic, how will this impact access to sport streaming services for consumers from lower socioeconomic strata?

In terms of brand governance, how will such changes in the media distribution of sport impact diversity in sport participation and development structures across the different socioeconomic strata of society? Will sport supply chains become shorter (and therefore, more local) to avoid delays caused by international border protection regimes? Will this more local focus, in turn, lead sport federations to focus more on community-based social and ecological issues and increase the currency of corporate social responsibility initiatives and sport-for-development approaches? Clearly, these suggestions for further research are indicative rather than exhaustive, but they portend fundamental shifts to process and practice in IFs and NSFs that will require highly engaged, diverse boards in reimagined governance structures that empower agile, entrepreneurial executives, employees and volunteers.

Indeed, where the dominant strategic paradigm for sport federations in the first quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> century centred around pressures for change and professionalisation, the second quarter will be more about change and entrepreneurship. Vamplew (2018) described sport entrepreneurship as, "... those persons who act as change agents in the supply of sports products, who attempt to increase the output of the industry, improve the consumer experience, or raise interest in sports products by such means as developing new markets and creating new products" (p. 188). Ratten (2020) argued that embracing entrepreneurship will enable sports to recover faster from crises by conceiving and enacting new strategies that deal with changing environmental conditions. In an earlier piece, Ratten (2011) conceived of seven categories of sport entrepreneurship – community-based, corporate, immigrant, institutional, international, social and technological. The IFs and NSFs that survive and thrive in the coming decades will embody strategies, structures, and governance that value entrepreneurship, innovation, diversity and adaptability. They will nurture and empower change agents with the discernment to know how and when to enact which types of entrepreneurial strategies for the betterment of their respective sports, key stakeholders and wider society.

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