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## **The impact of sports on team performance management**

**Vanessa Ratten, Palumbo Donahue School of Business, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA**

### **Abstract**

**Purpose** – The purpose of this editorial is to introduce the special issue on the relationship of performance management to sports teams.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The paper explains the importance of performance management to sports teams and justifies the need for the special issue.

**Findings** – The paper finds that there are a variety of different types of teams that operate in the sports context, including professional league teams, college teams, teams at the workplace, volunteer teams and coaching teams.

**Originality/value** – This editorial provides an overview of this special issue, which comprises eight original papers that are best practice examples of the latest developments in the research on teams in the sports context. Each of these articles is briefly discussed in terms of its contribution to the literature.

### **Keyword(s):**

Performance management; Sports; Team management.

### **Introduction**

Welcome to this special issue of *Team Performance Management* on the topic of performance management in the sports context. I thank very much the editors of *Team Performance Management*, Martin McCracken and Fiona Lettice, for their support and help in guest editing this special issue. A number of submissions were received for this special issue and the articles included here are the best suited given the theme of the special issue. All articles submitted for the special issue underwent a double blind peer review process. I thank all the reviewers, including Eric Schwarz, Abdullah Opute, Dorene Ciletti, Gina Pauline, Jeffrey Pauline, Coyte Cooper, Siri Terjesen and Rasmus Storm. This special issue contains eight original articles. There is a mix of conceptual and empirical research in this special issue, which reflects a number of different perspectives of how teams are managed in the sports context.

### **Overview of the contributions**

This special issue of *Team Performance Management* comprises eight original articles that all deal with issues related to how to manage teams so they perform better. The first article, “Mentor functions in NCAA women's soccer coaching dyads”, by Eileen M. Narcotta, Jeffrey C. Petersen and Scott R. Johnson, examines how team performance includes players of a sport but also coaching staff. The management of teams of assistant women's soccer coaches are discussed, and it is stressed that mentoring is an important aspect of managing teams. The article states that social interaction of teams, including the coaches, plays a role in effective management.

The second article, “Team segmentation at the Big Ten Wrestling Championships”, by Coyte Cooper, states how a consumer's team affiliation influences the level of attendance at wrestling events. The article highlights how sport managers can identify marketing strategies to promote fans of wrestling teams attending events. The role of the Big Ten Conference in terms of wrestling teams in college sport in the USA is discussed.

The third article, “Relationships between pay satisfaction, work-family conflict, and coaching turnover intentions”, by Timothy David Ryan and Michael Sagas, examines how the performance of sports teams is often linked to the work satisfaction of coaches. Thus, coaches who have a better work-family relationship can positively influence their pay satisfaction level. The authors stress that an important issue for teams is the retention of sports coaches.

The fourth paper, “Managing legitimacy and uncertainty in professional team sport: the NBA's draft lottery”, by Brian P. Soebbing and Daniel S. Mason, discusses the politics of managing a team in professional sports like the National Basketball Association. The authors examine how a team's performance is often a result of the internal and external environments that exist within the National Basketball Association. The importance of how teams manage institutional environments is also discussed in this article.

The fifth paper, “Organizational structure and home team performance”, by William M. Foster and Marvin Washington, examines how home teams of Major League Baseball and the National Hockey League perform. The authors highlight how sports managers can improve their team's performance by focusing on the organizational structure of the team. The article discusses how different variables such as game location affect home and visiting team's performance.

The sixth article, “Volunteer motivation and demographic influences at a professional tennis event”, by Gina Pauline and Jeffrey S. Pauline, discusses how teams of volunteers perform at professional tennis events. The reasons why people volunteer their time at sports events and how they work in teams are discussed. The importance of managing volunteer teams is stressed as they are an important aspect of successful event management.

The seventh article, “Luxury suites and team selling in professional sport”, by Heather J. Lawrence and Christopher R. Moberg, examines the role of teams in personal selling and customer relationship cycles in the sports industry. The article highlights the importance of selling teams as being a core component of the profitability and sustainability of sports teams. In addition, luxury suite sales in the professional sports context are discussed in the article.

The eighth article, “NFL head coaches as sensegiving change agents”, by J. Goosby Smith, discusses the role of head coaches in managing their teams' performance. The article discusses how head coaches in the National Football League in the USA drive intentional change in their teams. The role of coaches in professional football teams is examined in terms of how they act as a sensemaker and giver.

## **Conclusion**

This special issue on sports teams in *Team Performance Management* shows the diverse contexts and applications of teams in the sports context. The articles included in this special issue touch on issues such as professional league teams, coaching teams, college teams, teams at the workplace and volunteer teams. More research inquiry in the context of teams in the

sport industry is required. A comparison of different types of teams utilised in sports would be a beneficial and useful theoretical framework for future researchers and practitioners of sport. In addition, the issue of culture and how this affects different types of teams in the sports context is an interesting research avenue that would be helpful to link the research areas of sport and team management. As evident in this special issue, the wide scope of how teams are managed in the sports industry merits more managerial attention on how to manage teams effectively. Depending on whether a team is driven by profit or non-profit motives, the way a team is managed and performs may differ. This special issue has raised a number of interesting avenues for future research and managerial attention on sporting teams. The increase in attention on sports teams means that there is a lot of very interesting and exciting work in this field still yet to come and it is a research area worthy of more attention.

### **About the Guest Editor**

Vanessa Ratten is an Assistant Professor at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh. She has published in numerous journals including *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business*, *Journal of High Technology Management*, *European Journal of Innovation Management*, *Journal of Management & Organisation*, *International Journal of Educational Management*, *Thunderbird International Business Review* and *International Journal of Innovation and Technology Management*. She has co-edited the books *Handbook of Research on European Entrepreneurship* (Edward Elgar, 2008) and *Handbook of Research on Asian Business and Entrepreneurship* (Edward Elgar, 2009). Her research interests include sport, entrepreneurship and team performance management. Vanessa Ratten can be contacted at: [vanessaratten@gmail.com](mailto:vanessaratten@gmail.com)