

MANAGING GLOBAL SPORT EVENTS

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MANAGING GLOBAL SPORT EVENTS

Logistics and Coordination

BY

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Emerald Publishing Limited
Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2022

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-80262-042-9 (Print)

ISBN: 978-1-80262-041-2 (Online)

ISBN: 978-1-80262-043-6 (Epub)



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book was conceived with the assistance of several key people. We would like to thank our colleagues at the University of Technology Sydney and the Vienna University of Economics and Business for their support and critical feedback that helped to shape this book. We also wish to acknowledge the encouragement and professionalism of the Emerald editorial team: Nick Wallwork (Books Commissioning Lead), Sheena Reghunath (Production Team Leader) and David Jak Mulvaney (Content Development Editor). And perhaps most importantly, we would like to express our gratitude to our families who cheered from the grandstands as this book evolved.

As an interdisciplinary team of authors, we were conscious of the need to make this book research driven yet accessible and relevant for a wide audience of students, academics and practitioners of event management. Hence, we aimed to combine and explain theory and practice across this book and included applied and contemporary examples wherever possible. We also subjected all chapters to strenuous editorial feedback – a process that has been important to secure continuity and connections in the development of the concepts and issues presented. We are confident that our applied approach has resulted in an attractive book that brings sport event management studies to life, and that assists in making reading and learning relevant, meaningful and enjoyable.

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A LOOK BEHIND THE SCENES OF GLOBAL SPORT EVENTS: DELIVERING THE SHOW – LITERALLY!

Welcome to the world of global sport events! In this book, we provide a critical look behind the scenes of global sport events by combining the significant yet often overlooked and inextricably bound areas of sports, logistics and coordination management. In other words, we will look behind the scenes of global sport events and what it means to deliver the show – literally! A focus on these areas presents a critical step forward to provide sport event planners, managers, researchers and policymakers with the necessary knowledge to make informed decisions about global logistics and coordination efforts. Where previous books on event management have focussed predominantly on the overall planning and organisation of events and festivals in a text-book form (see [Allen, O'Toole, Harris, & McDonnell, 2020](#); [Stone & Parry, 2004](#)), the strategic opportunities for creating and leveraging event impacts and outcomes ([Grix, 2014](#); [Misener, McPherson, McGillivray, & Legg, 2018](#); [Schulenkorf, Schlenker, Rammal, Welty Peachey, & Morgan, 2022](#); [Taks, Chalip, & Green, 2016](#)) – or where they have placed their attention firmly on specific events like the Olympic Games or Football World Cup ([Frawley & Adair, 2013, 2014](#)) – this book focusses specifically on operational aspects that are critical for global sport event success. In particular, we provide the reader with the theoretical foundations, tools and new conceptual advances to examine, categorise and understand the logistics and coordination activities in and around global sport events. Moreover, we share interesting logistical insights into two of the most prominent sport events worldwide: the Formula One and the Olympic Games.

In a global sport event context, the areas of logistics and coordination management are critical and complex, but from a consumer's perspective, they

are often overlooked. Fans and spectators take it for granted that parking and security are working flawlessly, that sports equipment is available on the field or on the tracks, that athletes arrive to the spectacle fit and on time, that food and beverages can be purchased and that there will always be a staff member at hand who can provide help and support. People rarely acknowledge – or realise – that the flawless execution of logistics activities at global sport events involves extensive planning that is often associated with a significant number of staff and volunteers as well as huge space and assets requirements to store, transport and deliver the right sporting goods and equipment.

To better understand and appreciate the scope and scale of these massive logistics operations, we want to provide a glimpse behind the scenes of some of the most prominent global sport events. For example, for the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia – where 32 teams participated and almost 3 million fans visited – coordination efforts included 2,128 employed staff and more than 17,000 volunteers for a total of 64 matches across 12 different venue sites. This led to more than 3.1 million food and beverage transactions at the games but also to more than 450 tons of waste across all venues (Fidelitone, 2018; FIFA, 2018a). For the logistics operations, FIFA produced a dedicated *FIFA World Cup Russia 2018 Customs & Freight Forwarding Manual* that comprised 87 pages with detailed logistics and coordination requirements before, during and after the global event (FIFA, 2018b). In regard to broadcasting, FIFA made sure that TV production and coverage was extensive, so that nobody would miss a crucial moment. In addition to the 34-camera plan for each game, 12 technical operation centres were trucked from Munich to Russia and more than 53,000 pieces of cable had to be assembled. But logistics processes went far beyond the stadium itself, including for adjacent ancillary events such as fan and entertainment zones outside the venues. For example, 3,240 official World Cup footballs were needed and supplied directly out of Pakistan (Fidelitone, 2018).

Another example are the logistics and coordination efforts behind what North Americans call ‘the biggest show on earth’: the National Football League’s (NFL) Super Bowl. While official statistics suggest that the FIFA World Cup and UEFA Euro Championships easily outdo the Super Bowl in terms of global attendance, it is fair to say that it presents one of the greatest logistical exercises on the planet. For example, during the 2019 Miami Super Bowl that was played in front of 62,000 fans in the stadium, more than 6,000 workers were directly involved in preparing the event (Palotta, 2020; Wine, 2020). In Miami itself, logistics including transport for an additional 200,000 visitors at the surrounding Super Bowl festival needed to be managed, and dozens of private jets need to be coordinated and managed

(Brown, 2020; Herold, Schulenkorf, Breitbarth, & Bongiovanni, 2021). The famous halftime show alone – which lasts for about 13 minutes only – is another huge logistical effort: the main stage is wheeled in on 38 separate carts (equipped with 12 staff each), while an additional 18 carts (equipped with 6 staff each) transport the audio equipment. In a nutshell, the event management team has eight minutes for the setup and six minutes for the removal of all equipment before the teams come back on the field for the second half (Brown, 2020).

From a global event coordination perspective, there are also practical examples that highlight the critical importance of this field in the global sport event world. For instance, the coordination of a sport mega-event such as the Olympic Games involves many stakeholders including various levels of government, multiple international sport federations, broadcast and media organisations, commercial partners and sponsors, athletes and of course the event owner the International Olympic Committee (IOC), just to name a few. The coordination role of sport mega-event organising committees therefore becomes a highly complex task that is constrained not only by time but also by limited financial resources.

These real-world examples show that sport event coordinators and logistics managers have to attend to complex processes that often happen in parallel (Herold, Breitbarth, Schulenkorf, & Kummer, 2020; Minis, Paraschi, & Tzimourtas, 2006). The idea behind *Managing Global Sport Events: Logistics and Coordination* is to introduce the reader to this critical yet poorly understood and field of event logistics. As such, this book aims to open a new chapter in sport events management literature by expanding and integrating logistics and coordination research as a critical part of event operations. This book intends to share the latest sport event logistics (SEL) insights with students, scholars and those working in global sport management positions. We do so by building on established theoretical foundations and newly proposed conceptual advancements that are designed to assist in the examination, categorisation and understanding of logistics and coordination activities in and around global sport events.

As authors, we are optimistic that this book not only provides a starting point for critical debate in a newly introduced ‘playing field’ (pun intended!), but that it also serves as a launching pad for the establishment and promotion of logistics and coordination as key pillars in the sport event management literature. Against this background, we have divided this book into two separate but interconnected sections, namely *Sport Event Logistics* (comprising Chapters 2–4) and *Sport Event Coordination* (comprising Chapters 5–7). The first section focusses on the role of logistics in global sport events; here, we

provide an overview and working definition of SEL management, propose a new SEL framework that can guide future investigations into this important area and present and discuss a Formula One case study that illustrates the critical role of logistics in staging global sport events. The second section focusses on coordination and coordination theory in a mega-event context; here, we provide an overview of current research and practice in the field, discuss the Olympic Games and suggest a new sport event coordination framework based on design thinking for sport events. Finally, in our concluding Chapter 8, we provide a summary of our book and discuss future avenues for SEL research and practice.

In summary, sport events hold significant value to countries and communities around the world. With this book, we are exploring a number of critical concepts and developments that underpin successful global sport event management. With a specific focus on logistics and coordination efforts, throughout this book, we offer a combination of theoretical approaches as well as contemporary examples and case studies from a variety of contexts. In doing so, we aim to address the logistics and coordination management gap in sport literature and contribute to current debates in the field of global sport event studies. We also propose avenues for future research by introducing new perspectives to (sport) event management scholarship. We hope that the applied nature of this book will provide a stimulating environment to explore, learn about and discuss the latest concepts and trends in event-specific logistics and coordination management. With this in mind, we turn to Chapter 2, where we introduce the significant role of logistics in and for global sport events, and where we provide a new working definition of ‘Sport Event Logistics’.

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THE ROLE OF LOGISTICS IN AND FOR GLOBAL SPORT EVENTS

2.1. INTRODUCTION

In the world of global sport events, the area of logistics has not commanded as much attention as other management activities such as sponsoring, marketing, media relations or athletes' performances. Fans and spectators seldom spare a thought for the complex logistical activities that satisfy their material needs. Put simply, logistics represents the movement, storage and handling of materials. Activities are often scattered throughout organisations, and as a consequence, logistics tends not to be seen as an industry in its own right (McKinnon, 2021). Even for many businesses and companies, it often remains a peripheral activity – and while this lack of focus may be explained by logistics' relatively small share of total expenses, the associated services are critical for most business' competitiveness and success. This also holds true for the management and staging of sport events, and as such, we argue that it is critical to advance our limited understanding of logistics in a sport event context (Herold, Breitbarth, Schulenkorf, & Kummer, 2020).

The negligence – or even disregard – of logistical activities and their management in and around sport events is somewhat surprising, given that venue and sport managers are often required to adopt sophisticated logistics management practices in today's competitive and globalised sport business world. For example, the transportation of Formula One race cars (Jenkins, Pasternak, & West, 2016); the scheduling and organisation around home and away games in professional sports (Herold, Schulenkorf, Breitbarth, & Bongiovanni, 2021b; Kendall, Knust, Ribeiro, & Urrutia, 2010); or the planning and provision of critical infrastructure for fans, teams and athletes (Frawley,

Cobourn, & Adriaanse, 2016) can be regarded as core elements for the successful staging of global sport events.

While the lack of focus on logistics in the global event industry is somewhat surprising, its absence in event-related academic discussions is even more startling. In fact, sport and event management publications and textbooks discuss the role of logistics only briefly, usually providing nothing more than a checklist or hiding any (often limited) logistic-specific discussions under broad headings such as ‘Event Planning’, ‘Event Management’, ‘Distribution’ or ‘Product Management’. In short, the sport and event management literature has yet to see a critical engagement with specific logistics concepts and frameworks, or a systematic discussion of logistics processes or agendas (see e.g. Frawley & Adair, 2014; Pedersen & Thibault, 2019; Schulenkorf & Frawley, 2016; Schwarz, Hunter, & LaFleuer, 2013; Schwarz, Westerbeek, Liu, Emery, & Turner, 2017).

In an attempt to addressing this gap, in this chapter, we discuss the role of logistics in and for global sport events. Specifically, we explore the relationship between logistics and sport event management and discuss the conceptual intersections between sport management, event management and logistics management. Building on this discussion, we propose a new working definition for *Sport Event Logistics Management* before providing an applied overview about specific logistical activities that are critical for (sport event) organisations to operate successfully in today’s complex and competitive sport event marketplace.

2.2. SPORT EVENT MANAGEMENT AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO LOGISTICS

Sport events are not only ceremonial celebrations and highly emotional spaces, but they also mean ‘big business’ (Billings, Coombs, & Brown, 2020; Schulenkorf, Schlenker, Rammal, Welty Peachey, & Morgan, 2022). As such, the management of sport events goes beyond the significant investment in athletes and multi-dollar contracts and include significant broadcasting deals for on- and off-pitch entertainment in ever-greater and more sophisticated stadiums – in short, millions of fans are part of the show and subject to large-scale advertising and merchandising campaigns (Kendall et al., 2010; Shannon, 1999). Studies have found that the sport event market has grown worldwide and now represents an industry that is estimated to be worth more than \$80bn (Collignon & Sultan, 2014). In fact, sport events are outpacing the GDP growth in nearly every country in the world (Collignon & Sultan, 2014).