Introduction

PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS

The intention of this textbook is to provide you as a student with relevant information to assist your understanding of the sport facility and event management industry. The information in this textbook is organized and presented in a clear, concise, and easy to comprehend manner. Finally, much of the material presented is practical and very easy to apply to real-world experiences.

Many of you may not be considering a career in sport facility or event management. Hopefully, once you have read this textbook you will see the benefits and opportunities in this growing and exciting industry. Even if you never work in facility operations, it is imperative that you understand the issues and concerns event and facility managers face on a daily basis.

Some basic information must be briefly discussed before any specifics are explored. Sport and entertainment events occur in many shapes and sizes. The Super Bowl, a Tough Mudder competition, the NCAA Women’s Golf Tournament, a local 5K color run, and a high school field hockey game are just a few examples of the thousands of sports events that take place every year. The facilities where these events occur also come in a variety of shapes and sizes: stadiums, arenas, ice rinks, ski areas, golf courses, tennis courts, football fields, and high school gymnasiums. Finally, each event and facility has specific risks associated with it: slips and falls, inadequate insurance, defective equipment, poor planning, foul balls and broken bats, poor supervision, lack of adequately trained staff, and intoxicated spectators exhibiting inappropriate behavior. And certainly one of the most amazing aspects of facility management has been the truly massive construction costs for some of the monolithic structures. It has been estimated that $1.3 billion USD will be spent in 2015 on collegiate athletic facilities alone (Muret, 2014a). Sport facilities are not new concepts; in fact, they have been in existence since the ancient Roman era (i.e., Circus Maximus and the Roman Coliseum). While sport facilities and managing the events held in them have been around for centuries, the components of sport management curriculums, including event, facility, and risk management, have only been around for about 50 years. The first university sport management program wasn’t established until 1966 at Ohio University (Parks, Quaterman, & Thibault, 2007).
Anyone with an interest in pursuing a career in the event or facility management industry must understand the connection and synergy between the events themselves, the facilities they occur in, and the events’ accompanying risks. Some earlier authors maintain that if sport managers understand the various aspects of event and risk management pertaining to a large facility, they will have minimal difficulty transitioning to events in smaller venues (Ammon, Southall, & Blair, 2004; Farmer, Mulrooney, & Ammon, 1996). Therefore, understanding the management techniques for dealing with smaller sport facilities and events, such as community golf courses and high school volleyball tournaments, as well as sports facilities and large events such as Levi’s Stadium and the NHL Winter Classic, is imperative for anyone interested in pursuing a career in facility management. Even though the sport and entertainment facility industry has experienced substantial growth in recent years, the amount of information and published materials available is far from extensive. This textbook attempts to provide sport management students with the answers to a variety of questions surrounding sport and entertainment events, their risks, and the facilities in which they take place.

TOPICS FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION
The chapters in this text discuss a variety of specific topics that impact facilities and events, such as facility financing, the Americans with Disabilities Act, crowd management, and emergency action plans. The authors would be remiss, however, not to mention a variety of trends in the facility and event management industry that merit continued analysis. Many facility management experts agree that regardless of what else takes place in facility design and other related new concepts, the largest trends facing facility managers are sustainability, risk management and technology (Balmer & Clarke, 2012; Miny, 2014; Muret, 2014b). These topics will continue to grow in importance,
provide opportunities for creative implementation of fresh ideas, generate innovative and improved industry standards, as well as produce challenges to provide increasingly safe and secure experiences for all associated stakeholders. These stakeholders—or individuals most impacted by these topic areas—include players, artists, employees, and spectators.

Sustainability

*Sustainability* can be defined as a dynamic philosophy where an organization recognizes its social responsibility pertaining to environmental matters. Even though conservation, litter removal, and recycling have been extensively discussed and practiced in many areas of the United States since the first Earth Day in 1972, the tremendous increase in the Earth’s population over the past 20 years and a better understanding of the Earth’s finite resources have caused the sport industry to alter facility design and operating practices.

Within the past decade individuals in the sport and entertainment industry have begun to focus on sustainability. Whenever thousands of individuals gather in a confined space, such as a stadium or arena, vast quantities of garbage are produced. Aluminum beer cans, plastic beverage cups, popcorn containers, food wrappers, peanut shells, partially eaten food, and discarded game programs all contribute to the tons of waste produced at sporting events (Ammon & Suruijla, 2011).

According to the U.S. Green Building Council, buildings in the United States are responsible for 38% of CO2 emissions, 73% of electricity consumption, 13.6% of water consumption, 40% raw materials use, and have a 30% waste output (USGBC, 2014).

One recent trend in facility construction involves net-zero buildings. These venues produce as much or more energy than they consume. Thanks to 1,162 solar panels, Levi’s Stadium, home to the NFL’s San Francisco 49ers, generates as much energy during
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games as it consumes. It was the first net-zero energy sports venue in California (Wharton, 2014). Standards have been established by the U.S. Green Building Council that measure and certify buildings that have met some or all of the council’s criteria. This certification is termed Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). Buildings earn points in five categories: sustainable sites, water efficiency, energy, materials and resources, and indoor quality. In effect, the higher the score, the more sustainable the building (USGBC, 2014).

Nationals Park, home of Major League Baseball’s Washington Nationals, was the first LEED certified professional sport stadium. Chicago’s Soldier Field earned LEED certification as a retrofit, and Levi’s Stadium is the first U.S. pro football stadium to achieve LEED Gold status (Wharton, 2014).

Initially, the concern voiced by most facility owners and developers focused on the expense involved with implementing “green” facilities. In the past few years this concern has transformed into a more balanced approach that includes concepts such as corporate responsibility. Due to the pervasiveness of concerns relating to the environment, the move towards sustainable facilities has become a global enterprise. Sport facilities around the world have begun utilizing alternative energy sources and environmentally friendly operational standards. The Olympic Village at the 2008 Summer Olympics employed a solar power system. The athletics stadium in Kaohsiung, Taiwan (site of the 2009 World Games), utilized such features as recycled construction materials, solar panels, rainwater retention technology, and an underground trash-sorting treatment facility (Carlson, 2008).

Moreover, a multitude of campus recreation centers, including those at the University of Maine, San Diego State University, Washington State University, the University of California-Berkley, the University of Nebraska, and Southern Illinois University, have embraced environmentally beneficial practices. These include using environmentally friendly cleaning supplies, scheduling custodial work during regular business hours to reduce lighting needs at night, communicating via text and email messages instead of paper, providing paper and magazine recycling receptacles, composting organic waste, and selling beverages in refillable bottles.

Violence in Sport and Entertainment

Neither event and facility management nor risk management will ever be the same after that tragic September morning in 2001. After 9/11 the most immediate challenge facing event and facility managers was the safety concern expressed by fans. Many individuals who planned to attend sport and entertainment events had second thoughts about their personal safety, since large crowds were viewed as potential terrorist targets. Such apprehension, coupled with a slowing economy, produced a residual drop in ticket sales. Industry representatives were concerned about the difficult juggling acts that event and facility managers were forced to undertake. Faced with decreasing operating budgets, sport facility and event managers still had to implement new (and costly) strategies to ensure spectator safety. These new strategies involved the introduction of metal detectors (magnetometers), constructing permanent barricades (bolsters), insti-
tuting no-fly zones over stadiums, and training security and crowd management personnel in biological agent and explosive device detection techniques.

The ongoing threat of future terrorist attacks has had long-term effects on the event management industry. Sporting events such as the Olympics, FIFA’s World Cup, and the Super Bowl are examples of mega global sporting events. Unfortunately, these events also present attractive targets for any terrorist group wishing to make a statement. Event managers recognize the threat posed by terrorists. However, for a variety of reasons (many of which are beyond an event or facility manager’s control) implementing totally fail-safe solutions to such threats is not possible.

While the events of September 11, 2001, had nothing to do with sport events or facilities, violence has often occurred during sport events. A Palestinian terrorist attack on Israeli Olympians during the 1972 Munich Summer Olympics left 12 dead. Two individuals died and more than 100 people were injured after a bomb went off during the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta. During the past several years, Major League Baseball fans have witnessed two separate incidents in which fans came onto the playing surface and assaulted a first base coach and a home plate umpire. During the summer of 2003, 20 people were killed and dozens wounded when two bombs detonated at a music festival outside Moscow, Russia. Another tragic incident occurred outside the Gaylord Family Oklahoma Memorial Stadium in Norman, Oklahoma, while more than 84,000 spectators were watching a University of Oklahoma versus Kansas State University football game. Shortly before halftime on October 1, 2005, a University of Oklahoma student, Joel Hinrichs, detonated an explosive-filled backpack 175 yards from the stadium. While the event was officially listed as a suicide, rumors persisted that Hinrichs had attempted to enter the stadium, but because he was carrying a backpack he
was denied entry. Whether or not he attempted to enter the stadium, this incident highlights the numerous threats faced by facility and event managers. Concerned that National Football League (NFL) stadiums were attractive terrorist targets, NFL officials implemented pat-down searches during the 2005 football season. However, as a result of a lawsuit, the searches were stopped at Raymond James Stadium (home to the Tampa Bay Buccaneers) in November 2005. Tampa was the only NFL city where the pat-downs were successfully challenged in court, though suits were also filed in Chicago, Seattle, and San Francisco. In an effort “to enhance public safety and improve stadium access for fans,” in 2013 the NFL banned all bags and purses that are not see-through at all of its 32 stadiums across the U.S.

Additional incidents and new potential security threats, such as the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing or the use of drones, accentuate the ongoing threat of future events. However, other threats, including natural disasters, chemical spills and active shooters, cannot be ignored. The strategies necessary to mitigate these risks aren’t necessarily easy to employ. For example research conducted by the National Center for Spectator Sports Safety and Security (NCS4) in 2010 indicated that 65% of major universities required assistance in determining their vulnerability to security threat, and 41% needed help implementing emergency response plans (Keating, 2013).

In today’s threat-conscious environment, facility and event managers throughout the world attempt to provide effective security measures to prevent violence and terrorism. Pat-downs, limits on bag size, and vehicle barriers are all important, but facility managers have to adopt the pragmatic attitude that incidents will occur. While discussing security needs at sport facilities after the 2005 London transit bombings, a United Kingdom stadium manager commented that his American counterparts may be too focused on the “preventative” element of crisis management at the expense of developing “reactive” procedures. While prevention is critical, facility managers have to accept that incidents will occur. As part of this worldview, managing a crisis should involve every facility staff member: full-time, part-time, and volunteer. It is crucial to remember staff decisions (especially those made within the first two minutes following an incident) will save lives and mitigate facility damage. The frequency and severity of these risks cannot be overstated. Venues have a brand identity that translates into a huge financial responsibility; mitigating as many risks as possible therefore becomes of paramount concern.

Technology
The ability to increase revenue streams and attract more attendees requires venue owners and managers to constantly upgrade and renovate their sport facilities. One of the newest trends used to enhance the customer experience has involved technology. These
advances fall into several different categories, including scoreboards, LED lighting, digital menu boards, Wi-Fi capability and the use of social media platforms. However, not everyone agrees that having the ability to connect to a mobile website is the first concern of the majority of fans. A 2014 survey of Southeastern Conference football fans indicated that long lines at the concession stand and dirty restrooms were larger concerns (Smith, 2014a).

Regardless of the findings, stadium managers are spending millions of dollars to augment internet connectivity. For example, 400 new Wi-Fi antennas were embedded in the dasher boards at TD Garden, the Dallas Cowboys now has the equivalent of 17 full-sized cell towers on-site for cell calls and texting, and MetLife Stadium added 500 more access points only six years after opening to meet their fans’ demands (Cohen, 2012, Klepal & Tucker, 2015; Muret, 2014c). But technology isn’t only limited to connectivity. High definition television broadcasts require more power and brighter lights. As a result LED lights are being used by more stadiums and arenas because they’re brighter, most cost effective, and turn on and off more quickly than the old metal halide lights. The Staples Center estimates that within 10 years of installing the LED lighting they will have saved $2.6 million (Muret, 2014d). Other technological tools include several Major League Baseball stadiums using the Apple Pay system for their fans to purchase tickets and merchandise, and to watch video. Finally, some colleges are using social media platforms so their fans can post to the stadium’s large video boards (Smith, 2014b).

Innovative Stadia Designs and Events

Now that we have discussed some broad concepts that affect many sport/entertainment facilities and events, let’s spend a few moments discussing the facilities themselves. As previously noted, the growth of new facilities and the need for managers to staff such venues are continuing on an exponential level. What will these new complexes look like? Will they employ radical new designs, like that of Allianz Arena in Munich, Germany, home to both FC Bayern Munchen and TSV 1860 Munchen? The material on the outside of Allianz Arena is transparent and allows the building’s exterior to change color to match the home team’s colors (from blue and white for Bayern, to red and
white when TSV 1860 plays). New stadia might have a retractable roof similar to the University of Phoenix Stadium, home to the Arizona Cardinals, or Lucas Oil Stadium, home to the Indianapolis Colts. The Atlanta Falcons stadium (opens 2017) has a “camera shutter” roof. It will close in as little as 4.5 minutes. However, NFL data shows that, as of 2014, only four NFL teams played in a stadium with the roof open (Cardinals, Colts, Cowboys, and Texans). It is estimated that they keep the roof open (on average) less than three times a season (Muret, 2014e).

Perhaps existing stadiums will promote unique events similar to those of the Stade de France, an 80,000-seat stadium outside of Paris, France. The Stade has played host to a variety of sport/entertainment events, such as FIFA’s World Cup Final in 1998, a Rolling Stones concert, and international rugby championships. The Stade’s highest-attended event, however, was called “Ben Hur,” and consisted of a variety of acts, including chariot races that drew more 300,000 spectators over a 5-night engagement (Dejardin, 2007).

Another unique use of sport facilities that may occur more often includes hockey games being played in football stadiums. The National Hockey League instituted a new event in 2008 called the Winter Classic, and has been held on or near New Year’s Day. The first event pitted the Pittsburgh Penguins against the Buffalo Sabres in Ralph Wilson Stadium, home to the NFL’s Buffalo Bills. The game attracted more than 71,000 fans—an NHL record at the time.
CONCLUSION

The multitude of new sport facilities around the world will undoubtedly generate impressive television and sponsorship fees. In addition to increased revenue streams, the increased public and media exposure accompanying events held at these facilities has emphasized the need for sport and recreation managers to have a clear understanding of what it takes to manage sport facilities and events, while attempting to diminish accompanying risks and liabilities.

In order for event and facility management to continue to grow, visionaries within the field must understand both the history and current practices in the industry and apply such knowledge to address future challenges. Even in tough economic times, the need for sport facility and event managers remains strong and there are tremendous opportunities for students to actively pursue (Li, Ammon, & Kanter, 2002). As a potential sport facility manager, this textbook will provide you with the basic fundamentals to comprehend the field of facility and event management. Ideally, you will complement your reading of this textbook with practical experiences, including a good internship. From there you will be able to enter this exciting industry as a full-time professional. Good luck!

References


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