

# HOSTING WINNERS

TRENDS IN SPORTS EVENT MANAGEMENT



**JULY 09** Focus on

## Attracting Spectators

- Interview: Frank Supovitz, NFL, on the Super Bowl's success
- World Archery shows off their new style
- Sport Event Denmark on finding the right balance for your events

# Attracting the modern spectator

Lars Lundov,  
CEO, Sport Event Denmark



**T**his year, 2009, has been marked by one thing – the financial crisis. While focus has been on the continual stream of negative news I've been thinking about how the crisis can help to improve the events industry.

The current climate pushes us to think creatively about how we can ensure that the markets we work in continue to thrive. With the budgets to host sports events continually increasing, host cities need to ensure that spectators come to the events and that the events are covered on television and in the media. In addition, never has it been so hard to attract, engage, and retain spectators, than it is now. People are faced with so many choices; new emerging sports, television, video games, movies, concerts, etc. And, the challenge becomes even more difficult as people's purses tighten and families become more concerned about what their money is spent on. So, faced with these challenges, what are the new innovative ways we can use to attract spectators to our sports events?

## Consumer Experience

As in most types of marketing at the moment, the key is to offer the consumer an experience which they can connect with, both socially and emotionally. For example anyone that has ever been into an Abercrombie and Fitch store will know that the store is much more than a display of clothes, it is a total experience with music,

**“The experience, as much as the product, is the differentiator that makes customers purchase and return to the store.”**

smells, and people that together create a total package. The experience, as much as the product, is the differentiator that makes customers purchase and return to the store. Sports events are no different.

In my experience, there are three main types of experiences that need to be the focus at a sporting event:

### 1. *The lifestyle experience*

Spectators come to an event looking for more than just the sport. They expect an experience that combines many different things; sport, music, fashion, new media, food, etc. Spectators want to feel a part of the entire lifestyle that surrounds the sport.

Examples of this can be to have a place where spectators can try the sport, wear the clothes that the athletes wear, hear the music that the athletes listen to, and are able to buy the products that the athletes use. Before the spectators even reach their seat they must feel like they are part of the sporting lifestyle.



## 2. The game experience

The game experience is what happens on the 'field of play'. But even this cannot be left to chance, meaning that it is not enough to let the sports performance provide the experience for the spectators. Game experience can include having an animated announcer, or having visual effects that can build suspense and anticipation in the crowd. Many sports are also looking at ways to make their sports easier to understand by changing the rules, for example the International Archery Federation, who share their story on page 6.

The concept of game experience really developed from the American Professional Sports Leagues, where fans came to watch the sport as much as to be entertained. These leagues are still way ahead in offering game entertainment than the more traditional international or continental sports events. Frank Supovitz from the NFL shares more insights on this on page 4.

## 3. The logistical experience

To attract fans you need to make it easy for the fan to attend the event. To create a good logistical experience special public transportation can be set up if spectators will have a hard time getting to the venue. Or, if it is too much of a hassle for fans to get to the venue, then bring the venue to them, either by bringing some of the competition out of the venue into a more local or central area, and set up fan zones where spectators can enjoy the competition in their own communities.

The EURO 2008, held in Switzerland/Austria set up zones that allowed spectators to gather in non-host cities, bringing the experience to spectators that couldn't make it to the actual venues. As well, free train transportation was given with all of the match tickets, so spectators did not have to worry about driving nor did they have to worry about the added cost of transportation.

## Changing the Game

An integrated experience is essential in convincing spectators that leaving their television sets and computers for a trip to a venue is well worth it. Flexibility, creativity and good fun all need to be packaged with top level sporting competition. This edition of Hosting Winners will highlight some of the best practices and examples of how sports events can attract more spectators by thinking creatively. An international federation, an American professional league, and a star athlete, will all share their experiences. Enjoy the reading. ■

## Smart moves

**Sport Event Denmark closely follows the new initiatives taken in the international world of sport. In this column we give credit to the cities and sports organisations that are innovative, creative and aim to set new standards.**

### A smart move to increase global audience

**Golf's Ladies European Tour, LET**, has recently launched a new internet television portal offering free tournament highlights around the globe. Previously the only event ever broadcasted on the web was the 2007 Women's World Cup of Golf and with its new initiative LET hopes to increase its audience and to give the public access to high quality golf programming.

### A smart move to keep up with popularity

The **International Cricket Council, ICC**, will debate playing day-night test matches as part of their efforts to keep the format relevant as the popularity of Twenty20 continues to grow. Day-night matches have been played since 1970, but test matches have always remained daylight events.

### A smart move to increase public involvement

The Organising Committee for the **Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympic Games, VANOC**, have launched a new platform for the games' Cultural Olympiad. A new digital home will enable people across Canada to create a contemporary portrait of the country by posting text and images. During the games the selection of the best submissions will be shown on giant screens.

### A smart move to improve athletes' professional careers

The officials of the planned new "World Series of Boxing" have begun the first talks with potential city franchises. The new project is an initiative of **AIBA, boxing world governing body**, which is trying to change an established pattern in which young boxers who make their names through Olympic Games then sign with commercial promoters and very often find the results disappointing. In the new series, to commence in September 2010, athletes will be professionals paid by the city-based franchises and will not be prevented from competing at the Olympics.

### A smart move to transfer knowledge

**European soccer's governing body, UEFA**, organised a two-day workshop for four bidding candidates to host Euro 2016 European Championships to offer best expertise and learning built up over the past years. France, Italy, Turkey and Sweden/Norway took part in plenary sessions with UEFA experts discussing areas such as the bid process, stadia, security, accommodation, transportation and promotion.

### A smart move to unite and support an event

**South Africa**, the host of the 2010 FIFA World Cup has received a pledge from its neighbouring countries to provide emergency electricity. After last year's serious power cuts followed by raising doubts about the event staging ability, the Southern Africa Power Pool made up of 11 countries have made an initiative confirming that the 2010 World Cup is "truly and indeed an African event".

# Super Bowl Success

Frank Supovitz,  
Senior Vice President  
Events, NFL,  
on his views of how  
to create a great  
spectator experience.



**T**he National Football League is an undisputed leader in hosting successful events. Their annual championship, the Super Bowl, has become the most-watched American event, with 150 million people

watching it on TV in the United States alone. Host cities enter fierce competition to host this spectacular event, and there have even been discussions as to whether it could leave America and be hosted in London, England. Hosting Winners asked Supovitz five questions about how to make sports events a successful spectator experience.

**In addition to what is happening 'on the field', how do you ensure that each NFL game is an unforgettable experience for the spectators?**

The average NFL fan spends as much as 7 hours with us on game day. The pregame hours at the stadium are frequently spent at a "Tailgate Party", usually spontaneous fan celebrations in the parking lot. Fans plan their visit days in advance, shopping for the food supplies they will prepare on-site and connecting

**"Attending a game is a cultural, tribal experience."**

with other fans they will meet at the stadium. Attending a game is a cultural, tribal experience. Our teams recognize that one team will win and one will lose, but regardless of who you root for, the entertainment value of attending an NFL game has to be second to none.

**The Super Bowl in particular has become an icon in the sports event industry. What have been the biggest contributing factors to making it such a huge success both in America and around the world?**

The Super Bowl embraces all the great things about the NFL stadium experience on any given Sunday,

and multiplies it by 100. This celebration of America's most popular sport has become an unofficial holiday in the U.S. – everybody stops on Super Bowl Sunday to share the moment. There are up to 5 hours

**"Regardless of who you root for, the entertainment value of attending an NFL game has to be second to none."**

of pregame broadcast coverage including "red carpet" arrivals of celebrities, pregame musical entertainment, and of course, analysis of the game that is about to unfold.

One of the defining moments of the Super Bowl has become the halftime show. In just over 25 minutes, hundreds of crew members set up a full concert stage, sound, lights, and effects on the field, a major musical act performs, and the entire thing disappears in readiness for the second half. Recent performers have included Sir Paul McCartney, the Rolling Stones, Tom Petty, and most recently Bruce Springsteen. The spectacle of the set-up and dismantling of the stage, neither of which are seen on television, is almost as impressive as the entertainment itself. Today's Super Bowl is more than just game day – it is a full week of celebration.

**What are the main differences you have noticed between events organised in Europe and North America?**

I've been fortunate to have been able to manage events in Sweden, Finland and Austria, and most recently in the United Kingdom. But, I notice more similarities than differences – fans everywhere are hungry for great competition and great entertainment. They want value for their ticket purchase and lifetime memories for the hours they spend at the stadium. As event organisers, it is our job to deliver on that promise.

There are subtle differences between the continents, however. For instance, the soccer audience in the U.K. and some other countries is segregated and this is unheard of in the US. Most North American sports do not permit advertising on player uniforms, and the NFL does not allow field level signage surrounding the field. And finally, the use of the Jumbotron in North America is much more robust compared to how it is used in many European venues. American events generally show game action and replays, but



INTERVIEW

also entertainment, information, advertising and more – almost an entirely independent television production just for the in-stadium crowd.

**What do you think international sports federations can learn from the Super Bowl in terms of their own World Championships?**

I think we have a lot we can learn from each other, frankly, and we study many international championship events for new ideas we can use. For our part, the NFL is blessed with fans that want to get to the stadium early and engage with other fans. Keeping them entertained and finding ways to deliver value to fans while generating revenue from an all-day interaction is important to our teams. Adding touch-points during the day or days leading up to the championship event has also served us well.

Whether it is a multi-day fan festival, or a night-before gathering for sponsors and broadcasters, or clinics for young athletes, give the media

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**“Finding ways to deliver value to fans while generating revenue from an all-day interaction is important.”**  
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opportunities to generate photos and articles in the daily newspapers. Think about what photo you would like in the paper the next day – then deliver an opportunity for them to capture it. Remember that a championship event is showing your sport at its highest level. Inspire young players, excite your fan base, and do not miss out on opportunities to engage with your best customers deeply and often leading up to the match.

**If you could give one piece of advice to event organisers around the world, what would it be?**

Remember that the game comes first. Without the match itself, nothing we do really matters. So, make sure that everything you do, whether its entertainment or pageantry, game day hospitality or week-long festivals, fan rallies or sponsor parties, the television production or the live presentation, is a celebration of your sport and those who play it. ■

**«Hosting Winners»**

**A conference on the latest trends in bidding and hosting  
Copenhagen, Denmark, 6 October, 2009**

Sport Event Denmark is hosting a conference aimed at providing participants with practical insights on how to successfully bid for and host major sports events. Two of the keynote speakers will be the latest **NFL Super Bowl organisers** speaking about how they successfully combine sport and entertainment to deliver a world class show and the newly elected host for the **2016 Olympic Games**. With the announcement of the 2016 host taking place on 2 October, at the IOC Session in Copenhagen, participants will be the very first to hear how the winning city beat some of the world's most famous cities to win the rights to host the biggest sports event in the world.

For more information and registration contact: [info@sporteventdenmark.com](mailto:info@sporteventdenmark.com)



# World Archery's **new style**

The International Archery Federation, FITA, has taken great initiative in ensuring that its international events are attractive and entertaining for spectators. FITA Events Director, Juan-Carlos, explains the steps Archery took to keep their sport alive.

**Juan-Carlos Holgado,**  
FITA Events Director

In 2005, the International Archery Federation was in a tough situation. We were under pressure from the IOC as they were performing their programme review, and at the same time we were facing problems attracting sponsors, spectators and committed and enthusiastic hosts for our events.

In response to this challenge we created the World Cup, a series of five events over the course of the year. The Archery World Cup has enhanced the identity of all the activities that FITA runs. With the recognition of the World Cup and the interest of media worldwide, there is more leverage and motivation for the expansion of Archery.

## Archery World Cup is born!

Prior to 2006, Archery held a World Championship every two years where the focus was on the performance of the athletes and on encouraging development, which was measured by how many more countries and participants took part every year. The focus was entirely on the competition itself, and it left us struggling to attract television, sponsors, and spectators. Our rules were rigid and we offered little flexibility to our host cities. In effect, our events offered limited added value to the host city.

Soon after the election of our current President, IOC Member Dr. Ugur Erdener, the World Cup was born, which offered new elements for our sport. It offered a good story that brought attention to our sport all year long. It brought us to new levels of consistency in event production as we took a hands on approach to working with our host cities, and it provided flexibility in terms of our rules and event venues allowing our host cities to build an exciting show.

In essence, we moved our events from simply being a sports event to being a spectacular show. The result is that we now have happy sponsors, host cities, spectators, and archers.

## Continual progress

We took a risk in changing the traditions of our events. But it was a risk that if we did not take we were sure to face the consequences. Archery is proud of the steps it has taken to improve our events and we will continue to focus on improving and developing in every way that we can. With such tough competition from other events which are continually going on in a city and around the world we need to keep moving forward to ensure that we offer something of value to our partners and our spectators. ■



## World Cup Final Copenhagen 2009

The Archery World Cup Final 2009 will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark on September 26. In the old harbour district of Nyhavn, the World's 16 best archers will compete for World Cup Medals. For more information visit [www.archerycopenhagen.com](http://www.archerycopenhagen.com).

**“We moved our events from simply being a sports event to being a spectacular show.”**



# Finding the right balance

Hanne Sejer,

Deputy Chief Executive, Sport Event Denmark

Every sports event organiser dreams of having world records broken, the final moments of play deciding the result, or any other imaginable and unforgettable moment in sports history taking place at their event. Since these moments, unfortunately, cannot be planned event organisers should focus on the elements of an event that they can control to ensure that spectators have unforgettable moments regardless of what happens on the field of play.

## More than a sports competition

The right balance needs to be found between the traditions of the sport, respect for the game, fairness to the athletes, creating competition, providing entertainment and exceeding the expectations of the spectators. This balance, however, is not easy as spectators have different expectations of an event. Troels Troelsen, Denmark's leading expert in sports economics points out: "Sport operates in a very crowded market and the sports consumer is not a homogenous group. Some come for the sport, some for the entertainment, some for the stars, etc. Each of these groups are looking for and expecting something different."

Many federations have caught on to the fact that they need to change the framework and presentation of their events to allow for innovative changes that will be appealing to spectators. The 2008 FINA World Swimming Championships (25m) which took place in Manchester is an excellent example of an event which combined traditional sporting competition with modern entertainment, appealing to the spectators at the poolside as well as to the international television audience. A temporary pool was built in the city's indoor arena, which was filled with black drapes and a full stage lighting rig and sound system to create a truly theatrical experience for the spectators.

Following the success of this event, FINA's Vice President, Dale Neuburger, comments: "A number of the host cities of our major

events have worked closely with us to create entertaining and interactive environments which have increased the global popularity of our sport and enhanced the athlete and spectator experience. Clearly, it is advantageous to stage events which are technically correct and respectful of tradition, but also exciting and innovative, because Olympic sport must continue to develop its product to compete successfully in the sports marketplace."

Behind the World Swimming Championships' production in Manchester was Great Big Events, a sports presentation company that works with international sporting federations and organising committees in the production and delivery of world class events. Greg Bowman, Managing and Creative Director of Great Big Events says: "It has been interesting to see how international sports federations

**"Olympic sport must continue to develop its product to compete successfully in the sports marketplace."**

and host cities have an increased understanding of the importance of sports presentation and event production. Similar to any other kind of stage performance, effects such as lighting, timing, scripting, video, music, and entertainment can create a completely new atmosphere at an event. Creating a memorable experience for spectators does not necessarily mean making huge changes, but it does mean making the right changes."

## Combining knowledge

The successful sports event organisers of the future will take more control of their events and not simply rely on the sport itself to attract the spectators. It is this combination of the knowledge of the sport from the federation's perspective, with the knowledge that comes from experts in entertainment presentation, and knowledge of the local audience from the host organiser and even inspiration from outside the sports sector that can create a truly exciting event. ■

## Athlete's Corner: Sergei Aschwanden, Swiss Judo Bronze Medalist at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games

**Do you feel that an event which creates an overall experience by having activities and entertainment in addition to the focus on the sports competition adds any value for the athletes?**

Competitive sport is where concentration and emotion are the strongest. This is why I think that it is important to consider both the event as well as the entertainment that can improve this experience for the public, to make these intense moments that are brought to us by sport even more magical.

In my opinion, the sports event that brings together this perfect alchemy between the event and the entertainment around it are the Olympic Games and in particular the Beijing games where the Chinese culture with its long tradition and rituals was integrated into the technology of our modern world.

I think that it is important to integrate entertainment and activities in sports events in a precise manner in order to accentuate their role of generators of intense emotion and even more so in these difficult times when our world is going through a global crisis. This will help to bring a positive and motivating force to everyone.



# Events calendar

In 2009 Denmark is hosting to more than 60 international sports events in 30 different sports. Below is a selection of events covering the period until the next edition of "Hosting Winners".

## July

- 4-12 Finn Gold Cup Class Championships (sailing) 2009  
*Copenhagen*
- 9-16 European Laser Championships (sailing) 2009  
*Copenhagen*
- 10-12 European BMX indoor Championships 2009, final  
*Fredericia*
- 25-26 FIM Sidecar Motocross World Championship & UEM EM QUAD women 2009  
*Slagelse*

## August

- 6-9 European Match Race Championships (sailing) 2009  
*Middelfart*
- 17-22 World Championships free dive 2009  
*Aarhus*
- 20-29 470 Class, Worlds 2009 (sailing)  
*Copenhagen*
- 29 FINA 10km Marathon Swimming World Cup 2009  
*Copenhagen*
- 29 Speedway Grand Prix, indiv. 2009  
*Vojens/Haderslev*
- 30 World MX3, European X2 and European 85cc motocross Championships 2009  
*Randers*

## September

- 9-13 Danish Open Match Race 2009 (sailing)  
*Aarhus*
- 18-20 LEN-congress (Europ. Swimming Fed.) 2009  
*Copenhagen*
- 21-27 World Wrestling Championships 2009  
*Herning*
- 26 Archery World Cup Final 2009  
*Copenhagen*
- 28-4.10 World Men's Team Squash Championship 2009  
*Odense*

## October

- 1-9 121<sup>st</sup> IOC Session and XIII Congress  
*Copenhagen*
- 11-18 Euro Floorball Cup 2009  
*Frederikshavn*
- 14-18 European Wheelchair Rugby Championships 2009  
*Hilleroed*
- 14-18 FEI World Cup dressage 2009  
*Odense*
- 14-18 World Taekwondo Championships 2009  
*Copenhagen*
- 20-25 Denmark Open, Super Series badminton 2009  
*Odense*

For the complete list of events  
[sporteventdenmark.com](http://sporteventdenmark.com)



## Feeding Winners

### Halibut with leek in capers vinaigrette

for 6 persons

- 1 halibut piece (2-2.5 kg)
- 4 leeks
- 100 g salted capers
- 1 shallot (peeled)
- ½ bunch of broadleaf parsley
- 1 clove of garlic
- ½ dl cider vinegar
- 1 dl rapeseed oil
- 1 tsp mustard
- 1 tsp honey

#### Instructions:

Clean the halibut and (if whole) check it for freshness (eyes, gills and smell). Cut into a fillet and remove the skin. Cut the fillet into 12 nice pieces.

Clean the leeks in lots of cold water to get rid of all the dirt. Divide them into 12 pieces, each about 5 cm long. Peel the onion and chop finely with the capers. Mix them together with the oil, vinegar, mustard, honey,



salt and pepper to make a nice thick vinaigrette. Boil the leeks tender in lightly salted water. Remove them from the water and place them directly into the vinaigrette with a little of the cooking water (leek bouillon), so they absorb the vinaigrette and all the flavour. Fry the halibut in a pan for about 1-2 minutes on each side, depending on the thickness. Season with salt and pepper. Serve with leeks.

Recipe provided from Claus Meyer, *Scandcook.com*

The new style in Danish cooking is to have dishes which are lighter, smaller, more nutritious and focus on the use of fresh vegetables.

Send questions, comments and article proposals to Editor, Sport Event Denmark, Idraettens Hus, Broendby Stadion 20, 2605 Broendby, Denmark or email Eline Andersen: [ea@sporteventdenmark.com](mailto:ea@sporteventdenmark.com)  
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