

The psychology of spectators in live sporting events

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This study examined the psychological changes that occur during the act of watching live sporting events, with a focus on the expectancy disconfirmation theory. The study employed 105 undergraduate students and was conducted during the FIFA Confederations Cup Brazil 2013.™ The matches investigated were Japan vs. Brazil (n=40), Japan vs. Italy (n=34), and Japan vs. Mexico (n=31). The first questionnaire survey was conducted 30 minutes before the game and the second, 10 minutes after the game. The questionnaire comprised items taken from Richins (1997) and Chitturi et al. (2008). Scales were developed to analyze the spectators' emotions. First, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to verify that there was no difference between each game's pre-match conditions in terms of spectator expectations and emotions. Second, an ANOVA and

multiple comparisons were performed to analyze the conditions before and after the games and the differences among the emotions felt after watching them. The results revealed that spectators' disconfirmation of the game against Italy (3-4) were higher than for the other two games (against Brazil [0-3] and Mexico [1-2]) after being watched ($p < .01$). Further, positive emotions (e.g., pride, joy, delight) predominated during the game against Italy ($p < .01$) even though Japan lost every game. These findings indicated that applying the expectancy disconfirmation theory leads to a better understanding of spectators' psychological changes than using the other variables, such as game results (i.e., victory or defeat) that are often used in similar studies.