

# Motivational Profiles of Sport Fans of Different Sports

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## Abstract

The current investigation examined sport type differences in eight fan motives: escape, economic (i.e., gambling), eustress (i.e., positive arousal), self-esteem, group affiliation, entertainment, family, and aesthetics. Participants (final sample  $N = 886$ ) completed a questionnaire packet assessing their level of fandom and motivation for consuming one of 13 target sports: professional baseball, college football, professional football, figure skating, gymnastics, professional hockey, boxing, auto racing, tennis, professional basketball, college basketball, professional wrestling, and golf. Sports were classified into three different dichotomies: individual (e.g., figure skating, golf) versus team (e.g., professional baseball, college basketball); aggressive (e.g., professional wrestling, professional football) versus nonaggressive (e.g., professional baseball, figure skating); and stylistic (e.g., figure skating, gymnastics) versus nonstylistic (e.g., professional hockey, tennis). In addition to differences in target sports (e.g., golf versus professional football), statistical analyses indicated a number of sport type differences. Aesthetic motivation was found to be particularly prominent in

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*“Artistic sports such as figure skating and gymnastics can be attractive to fans because of their inherent beauty and the artistic expressions of the athletes.”*

individual sports, while scores were greater for team sports in eustress, self-esteem, group affiliation, entertainment, and family. Aesthetic motivation scores were also high in nonaggressive sports, while economic, eustress, group affiliation, and entertainment were higher for team sports. Finally, aesthetic motivation was quite high for stylistic sports, while economic, eustress, self-esteem, group affiliation, entertainment, and family motivation scores were higher for nonstylistic sports. Only one motive, escape, was not found to differ in at least one sport type comparison. The discussion centers on potential explanations for the sport type differences as well as on marketing implications and suggestions for future research.

## Motivational Profiles of Sport Fans of Different Sports

Over the past 20 years, sport scientists (e.g., sport psychologists, sport sociologists, and sport marketing professionals) have shown an increased interest in the psychological factors that motivate individuals to consume sport. Although the list of potential motives is naturally quite extensive, eight motives appear to be particularly common among fans (see Wann, Melnick, Russell, & Pease, 2001, for an in-depth discussion of various motivational typologies): escape, economic, eustress, self-esteem, group affiliation, entertainment, family, and aesthetics.

The escape motive involves the use of sport fandom and spectating as a diversion from the rest of one's life (Sloan, 1989; Smith, 1988). That is, individuals who are dissatisfied by their home life, work, college experience, and so forth may be able to temporarily forget their troubles while consuming sport. Consequently, the use of sport as an escape may be particularly prevalent during personally difficult and/or stressful times (e.g., during times of war; see Wann, 1997).

The economic motive is found among individuals who are attracted to the potential economic gains to be accrued through sport wagering (Eastman & Land, 1997; Gantz & Wenner, 1995; Guttman, 1986). Some researchers (e.g., Wann, 1995) have failed to find a relationship between level of economic motivation and self-proclaimed fandom. This suggests that these individuals may not be "fans" in the normal sense of the word (e.g., rooting for a favored team, identifying with players, etc.).

A third motive is eustress (i.e., euphoric stress), which involves a desire to gain excitement and stimulation through sport (Gantz, 1981; Sloan, 1989). Fans with high levels of eustress motivation become involved with the pastime because they enjoy the excitement and arousal they experience watching sport. A fourth motive, group affiliation, concerns the social nature of sport spectating. In general, fans report a clear preference for consuming sport as a part of a group (Aveni, 1977; Mann, 1969). For some fans, the opportunity to spend time with friends is a driving motivational force behind their decisions to consume sport (Melnick, 1993; Pan, Gabert, McGaugh, & Branvold, 1997).

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***"To date, a handful of studies have examined the possibilities that fans of different sports report distinctly divergent motivational patterns."***

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Another important fan motive is entertainment. Many individuals become involved in sport fandom simply because it is perceived as an enjoyable pastime (Gantz, 1981; Gantz & Wenner, 1995; Sloan, 1989). In these instances, sport fans are motivated in much the same way as fans of other recreational pursuits, such as going to the theater, watching television, or reading books. A number of researchers have examined the characteristics of sporting events that are perceived as entertaining. This literature indicates that watching one's favorite teams succeed (Su-Lin, Tuggle, Mitrook, Coussement, & Zillmann, 1997), watching a rival lose (Bryant, 1989; Sapolsky, 1980), and watching violent sports (Bryant, Comisky, & Zillmann, 1981) are viewed by many fans as entertaining.

The family motive is similar to the group affiliation motive. However, rather than involving a desire to be with others, the family motive involves the consumption of sport because it provides an opportunity to spend time with family members (Evaggelinou & Grekinis, 1998; Guttman, 1986; Weiller & Higgs, 1997). As one would expect, this motive is particularly common among sport fans that have children and/or are married (Wann, Lane, Duncan, & Goodson, 1998). Wann, Schrader, and Wilson (1999) suggested that sport fans with high levels of family motivation may

prefer to consume nonaggressive sports rather than aggressive sports because they did not want to expose their children to the violent actions found in aggressive sports. However, subsequent work failed to find a relationship between level of family motivation and preferences for aggressive or nonaggressive sports (Wann & Ensor, 2001; Wann et al., 1998).

A final factor underlying fan consumption of sport is the aesthetic motive (Hemphill, 1995; Guttman, 1986; Rinehart, 1996; Wertz, 1985). This motive involves an individual's desire to participate in sport as a fan because he or she enjoys the artistic beauty and grace of sport movements. Artistic sports such as figure skating and gymnastics can be attractive to fans because of their inherent beauty and the artistic expressions of the athletes. However, it is important to note that the aesthetic motive is not limited to fans of "stylistic" sports (Sargent, Zillmann, & Weaver, 1998); rather, those interested in other sports may also express a high level of aesthetic motivation (e.g., golf fans often discuss the beauty of a well-executed golf swing).

Research examining the aforementioned eight sport fan motives has indicated several interesting patterns that differentiate the various motives. For instance, investigators have examined gender differences in sport fan motivation (Dietz-Uhler, Harrick, End, & Jacquemotte, 2000; James & Ridinger, 2002; MacLardie, 2002; Wann, 1995; Wann, Schrader, et al., 1999). This research consistently replicated several gender differences in fan motivation, including higher scores for male fans on eustress, economic, self-esteem, and aesthetic motivation, and higher scores for female fans on family motivation. Similarly, other researchers have noted that members of different ethnic and racial groups report different fan motivational patterns (e.g., Armstrong, 2002; Bilyeu & Wann, 2002; Wann, Bilyeu, Breenan, Osborn, & Gambouras, 1999) as do fans seated in different areas of the sports arena (Wigley, Sagas, & Ashley, 2002).

Understanding different spectator motivations can be of significant benefit to the sport marketer looking to boost team revenues and gate receipts. Of particular interest are both the marketing manager understanding the specific motivations that drive a spectator or fan to consume a sport (Bernthal & Graham, 2003) and the subsequent development of marketing communications based on these motivations (McDonald, Milne, & Hong, 2002). These effective marketing communication plans can often help build groups of "die-hard" fans, thus expanding the customer base for a team (Pease & Zhang, 2001). Spectator and fan motivation can also be used as an effective psychographic segmentation method that can result in more effective marketing campaigns. A comprehensive marketing

model that includes motivation and other important spectator and fan variables, such as identification or loyalty, can be very useful in marketing a team or sport (Trail, Fink, & Anderson, 2003; Trail & James, 2001).

### *Motivational Differences for Fans of Different Sports*

The literature described above indicates that there are numerous motives that underlie fans' decisions to consume sport, and that patterns of these motives differ across spectator groups (e.g., males and females). Another important area of research concerns potential differences in motivational patterns for fans of different sports. To date, a handful of studies have examined the possibilities that fans of different sports report distinctly divergent motivational patterns. Perhaps the first study to investigate this possibility was conducted by Wenner and Gantz (1989). As part of a larger telephone interview project, these authors examined potential motives for indirect sport consumption via television. Participants were segmented based on the sport they must frequently watched on television. They were then asked a series of questions assessing, among other things, their motives for watching their favored sport. The results indicated that professional basketball fans were particularly likely to report motives related to eustress (i.e., consuming to "get psyched up"). Differences among the target sports were not found for motives related to escape (e.g., "to relax/unwind").

A second study, conducted by Wann, Schrader, and Wilson (1999), asked participants to list the sport they most enjoyed watching and then complete a measure assessing their motivational pattern as a fan. The participants were classified as having a preference for an aggressive sport (e.g., boxing) or a nonaggressive sport (e.g., baseball), and as having a preference for an individual sport (e.g., figure skating) or a team sport (e.g., volleyball). The results revealed at least one significant difference for each motive. Relative to team sports, participants with a preference for an individual sport reported lower levels of eustress, self-esteem, escape, entertainment, group affiliation, and family motivation, and higher levels of aesthetic motivation (no differences were found for economic motivation). Relative to nonaggressive sports, participants with a preference for an aggressive sport reported lower levels of aesthetic motivation and higher levels of eustress, self-esteem, economic, and group affiliation motivation (no differences were found for escape, entertainment, and family motivation).

A third assessment of sport type differences in fan motivation was conducted by McDonald, Milne, and Hong (2002). These researchers mailed 5,000 surveys to a sample of sport enthusiasts; over 1,600 useable surveys were returned. Subjects were asked to list their

favorite sport and then to answer the motivational items specifically for that sport. Unlike the Wann, Schrader, and Wilson (1999) research, this methodology allows for direct comparison of motivational patterns across different sports. Nine target sports were examined: auto racing, college baseball, professional baseball, college basketball, professional basketball, college football, professional football, golf, and ice hockey. A number of motives were assessed, including several that were directly or peripherally related to the eight common motives described previously. The results revealed a large number of motivational differences across sport. Of specific interest were the particularly high levels of group affiliation motivation for fans of auto racing, the particularly high levels of aesthetic motivation for fans of golf, and the low aesthetic motivation for fans of football. No target sport differences were found for escape motivation (referred to by these authors as "stress release"). McDonald et al., (2002) also noted that understanding these motivations is "fundamental to the marketing concept" (p. 110) and this improved understanding can assist sport marketers with the development of effective psychographic evaluation methods.

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*"If one attends a sporting event to spend time with others and/or his or her family, the fan is likely to choose a sport where such interactions are the norm."*

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A final study was recently completed by James and Ross (2004). These authors examined the motivational patterns of fans consuming three non-revenue college sports: baseball, softball, and wrestling. Their results failed to detect sport differences in entertainment or group affiliation (referred to as social interaction). Wrestling had particularly high scores on eustress (termed drama by James & Ross), self-esteem (called the achievement motive), and family motivation. Baseball had lower scores for these motives, while motivational levels for softball were between wrestling and baseball. As noted by the authors, an enhanced understanding of these motives can help with revenue generation, which is a very important concern common to most intercollegiate athletic programs. However, it should be noted that additional revenue generation for a sport team at any level is a concern, as consumers are being presented with an increasing number of entertainment options. Thus, the lessons learned from this study, as well as other studies examining sport fan motivation, can be very useful to the sport manager/marketer.

### *The Current Investigation*

The current investigation was designed to expand the aforementioned work on the differential motivational patterns for different target sports (e.g., James & Ross, 2004; McDonald et al., 2002; Wann, Schrader, and Wilson, 1999; Wenner & Gantz, 1989). Specifically, the current work expanded on previous efforts in several important ways. First, and perhaps foremost, previous efforts (referred to here as target sport analyses) employed specific sports such as basketball and football as the unit of analysis. Although such an approach is certainly worthwhile and yields vital information, we attempted to move beyond such a level of analysis by additionally focusing on various types of sports (referred to in the current work as sport type analyses). Only one previous effort, Wann, Schrader, and Wilson (1999), employed such an approach and was limited to comparisons of individual versus team and aggressive versus nonaggressive sports. The current investigation extended this line of investigation by also comparing the motivational patterns underlying the consumption of stylistic and nonstylistic sports. Second, at the target sport level, the current study examined motivational patterns for consuming sports not previously examined in past research. Previous efforts focused on popular sports such as baseball and basketball. In addition to examining these sports, we were also interested in establishing motivational patterns for previously unexamined sports. Third, the current work extended past efforts by investigating motives that were neglected in some of the earlier investigations and by using a well-tested protocol to assess motivation. For instance, McDonald et al. (2002) and Wenner and Gantz (1989) did not examine economic or family motivation, and neither study used a previously established and psychometrically sound measure of fan motivation. Fourth, in some of the past work it is unclear as to whether or not the participants were truly fans of a specific sport. For instance, in the Wann, Schrader, and Wilson (1999) research, although the fans were asked to list the sport they most enjoyed following, there was no guarantee that they were actually involved as a fan of the sport listed. That is, someone could say they most enjoyed watching football while not truly being a fan of the sport. And finally, some of the previously cited works (Wann, Schrader, & Wilson, 1999) had methodological shortcomings, such as small sample sizes and confusion over whether the subjects were completing a general measure of fandom or a motivational pattern specific to the consumption of a target sport.

Because of the exploratory nature of this research, the development of direct hypotheses was often not plausible. That is, given the lack of applicable theory and/or research, it was not appropriate to develop an expecta-

tion for each motivational pattern for each sport. Rather, the current work simply attempted to answer the research question, "How and to what degree do motivational patterns differ with respect to the consumption of different sports as well as among different types of sports?" The discussion section presents a comparison of the current data with previous data (James & Ross, 2004; McDonald et al., 2002; Wann, Schrader, & Wilson, 1999; Wenner & Gantz, 1989).

### **Method**

#### *Participants*

The original sample consisted of 1,372 college students attending universities located in the Mid-south and South. However, 96 of the participants returned incomplete questionnaire packets. In addition, subsequent analyses (see descriptions below) indicated that 390 of the participants were not fans (at least in a moderate sense) of any of the 13 target sports. Consequently, these respondents were also dropped from the sample. The result was a final sample consisting of 886 sport fans (285 male, 263 female, 338 not reporting) with a mean age of 21.41 years ( $SD = 3.42$ ).

#### *Procedure*

All respondents (i.e., the 1,372 participants in the original sample) were tested in small groups ranging from 5 to 50 in university classrooms. Upon providing their consent to participate, the subjects were asked to complete a questionnaire packet containing four sections. This first section simply contained demographic items designed to assess age and gender.<sup>1</sup> The next section of the questionnaire asked subjects to report their level of interest in 13 different sports. For example, the first item read, "I follow professional baseball (for example, watch it on TV, read about it in newspapers, etc.)." Participants were to report their level of following by circling one of three response options: never, sometimes, or often. In addition to professional baseball, the participants reported their level of interest in college football, professional football, figure skating, gymnastics, professional hockey, boxing, auto racing, tennis, professional basketball, college basketball, professional wrestling, and golf.

Upon completion of this section of the packet, subjects returned the questionnaire to the researcher, who then examined participants' responses to the interest items. Specifically, the researcher was looking for the most instances of the response "often", and for which sport. Based on this finding, and if there was only one such sport, the participant was asked to target this sport for the remainder of the items in the questionnaire. If there were more than one such sport, the

researcher randomly chose one of the target sports. If participants had no sports they followed “often,” they were asked to target a sport they followed “sometimes,” with the method of choosing the particular sport similar to that for sport viewed “often.” If subjects did not follow any sport at least “sometimes,” they were simply asked to return the questionnaire and they were excused from the study. The aforementioned procedure was designed to result in a sample consisting of fans who are at least moderately interested in the target sport (i.e., it made little sense to assess the fan motives of persons who were not actually fans of a given sport).

The next section of the questionnaire contained one page printed front and back. Subjects were instructed to write the name of their target sport at the top of each side of the page and to focus on this sport when answering the items. On the front side, subjects completed the Sport Fandom Questionnaire (SFQ), a reliable and valid five-item instrument (Likert scale format) assessing level of sport fandom (Wann, 2002), of the target sport. Response options to the questionnaire range from 1 (*low fandom*) to 8 (*high fandom*).

The final section of the questionnaire packet, located on the back side of the final page, contained the 23-item Sport Fan Motivation Scale (SFMS; Wann, 1995; Wann, Schrader, & Wilson, 1999). This valid and reliable instrument assesses motivation for eight different fan motives described earlier in the introduction: escape, economic, eustress, self-esteem, group affiliation, entertainment, family, and aesthetics. Each subscale contained three items, with the exception of the family subscale, which contained two. Response options to the motivation questionnaire ranged from 1 (*low motivation*) to 8 (*high motivation*). Thus, higher numbers indicate greater levels of motivation for following the target sport. Items on each subscale were summed and this total was divided by the number of items in the subscale (i.e., 2 or 3), resulting in all subscales being standardized to the range of the original items (i.e., 1 to 8).

After the participants had completed both sides of the final page, the questionnaire packet was stapled and returned to the researcher. The participants were then debriefed, provided information on obtaining a final report of the project, and excused from the testing session. Each session lasted approximately 15 minutes.

## Results

### *Preliminary Analyses*

Prior to examining the impact of target sport on motivational patterns, several preliminary analyses and calculations were required. First, the five items comprising the SFQ were summed to create a single index of level

of fandom for the participant’s target sport. Next, Cronbach’s analyses were used to examine the reliability of the SFQ and the eight subscales of the SFMS. These analyses supported the reliability of each scale or subscale (alphas ranged from .69 to .91). Finally, SFQ scores were used to eliminate participants who were not at least moderately interested in their target team. Specifically, subjects with an SFQ score of less than 16 (scale ranges from 5 to 40, i.e., participants must have a mean item score of at least 3 on the 1-8 Likert scale) were deleted from the sample, resulting in the final sample of 886 participants. (This procedure was employed to ensure that the participants were truly fans of their target team, at least at a moderate level.)

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*“Because of the ongoing storylines, some of which play out like violent soap operas (e.g., wrestlers not only battle over championships, but also over relationships, power, and prestige), it seems logical that the consumption of this activity would be attractive to those individuals in need of an escape.”*

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### *Motivational Patterns*

*Comparisons across target sport.* The first set of examinations involved a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) in which the target sport served as the grouping variable and motivation subscale scores were employed as the multiple dependent measures. Means and standard deviations for the SFMS subscales by target sport appear in Table 1. The MANOVA yielded a highly significant multivariate effect, Wilks’ Lambda (8, 866) = 3292.99,  $p < .001$ .

Because of the significant multivariate effect, a series of eight separate univariate tests were conducted, one test for each of the eight motivation subscales (target sport again served as the grouping variable). The results of these analyses are found in Table 1 (see subscripts to means in Table 1). The univariate analysis on the escape subscale resulted in a significant between-subjects effect,  $F(12, 873) = 2.21, p < .02$ . Post hoc analyses (all such analyses were Student-Newman-Keuls) indicated that escape motivation subscale scores were higher for professional wrestling than the 12 other sports, none of which were significantly different. The univariate analysis on the economic subscale also resulted in a significant between-subjects effect,  $F(12, 873) = 3.90, p < .001$ . Post hoc analyses indicated that economic motivation subscale scores were higher for boxing than the 12 other sports, none of which were significantly different. The univariate analysis on the eustress subscale also resulted in a significant between-subjects effect,  $F(12, 873) = 4.75, p < .001$ .

Post hoc analyses indicated that eustress subscale scores were lower for figure skating and higher for professional football, hockey, and boxing. However, this is an oversimplification as a rather complex pattern of effects was found (see Table 1). The univariate analysis on the self-esteem subscale also resulted in a significant between-subjects effect,  $F(12, 873) = 4.42, p < .001$ . Post hoc analyses revealed several different effects,

including the finding of lower self-esteem subscale scores for figure skating and higher scores for college football, college basketball, professional basketball, and professional baseball.

The univariate analysis on the group affiliation subscale also indicated a significant between-subjects effect,  $F(12, 873) = 14.14, p < .001$ . Post hoc analyses indicated that group affiliation motivation subscale

**Table 1.**  
**Means and Standard Deviations for the Motivation Subscales by Target Sport.**

Target Sport	ESC	ECO	EUS	S-E	G A	ENT	FAM	AES	n
Professional Baseball	3.37 <sub>a</sub> (2.08)	1.45 <sub>a</sub> (0.98)	5.50 <sub>cd</sub> (1.49)	4.51 <sub>c</sub> (1.43)	4.77 <sub>b</sub> (1.64)	6.60 <sub>bc</sub> (1.18)	3.57 <sub>ab</sub> (2.07)	3.87 <sub>abcd</sub> (2.04)	106 —
College Football	3.23 <sub>a</sub> (1.83)	1.72 <sub>a</sub> (1.25)	5.56 <sub>cd</sub> (1.65)	4.27 <sub>c</sub> (1.48)	5.16 <sub>b</sub> (1.71)	6.56 <sub>bc</sub> (1.18)	3.71 <sub>b</sub> (1.94)	2.95 <sub>a</sub> (1.72)	84 —
Professional Football	3.64 <sub>a</sub> (2.02)	1.55 <sub>a</sub> (1.01)	5.63 <sub>d</sub> (1.55)	4.15 <sub>bc</sub> (1.48)	5.13 <sub>b</sub> (1.69)	6.76 <sub>bc</sub> (1.06)	3.36 <sub>ab</sub> (2.11)	3.33 <sub>abc</sub> (1.71)	87 —
Figure Skating	3.53 <sub>a</sub> (2.07)	1.18 <sub>a</sub> (0.49)	4.38 <sub>a</sub> (1.87)	3.11 <sub>a</sub> (1.55)	3.04 <sub>a</sub> (1.46)	6.17 <sub>ab</sub> (1.38)	2.68 <sub>ab</sub> (1.80)	6.97 <sub>f</sub> (1.22)	34 —
Gymnastics	3.09 <sub>a</sub> (1.64)	1.18 <sub>a</sub> (0.46)	4.68 <sub>abc</sub> (1.64)	3.33 <sub>ab</sub> (1.430)	3.36 <sub>a</sub> (1.44)	6.22 <sub>abc</sub> (1.16)	2.47 <sub>a</sub> (1.55)	6.50 <sub>f</sub> (1.30)	51 —
Professional Hockey	3.73 <sub>a</sub> (2.09)	1.28 <sub>a</sub> (0.60)	5.73 <sub>d</sub> (1.71)	3.79 <sub>abc</sub> (1.41)	4.59 <sub>b</sub> (1.34)	6.89 <sub>c</sub> (1.18)	3.13 <sub>ab</sub> (2.37)	3.26 <sub>ab</sub> (1.98)	40 —
Boxing	3.27 <sub>a</sub> (2.10)	2.28 <sub>b</sub> (1.50)	6.02 <sub>d</sub> (1.56)	3.75 <sub>abc</sub> (1.59)	4.46 <sub>b</sub> (1.47)	6.61 <sub>bc</sub> (1.14)	2.83 <sub>ab</sub> (2.05)	4.90 <sub>e</sub> (1.96)	43 —
Auto Racing	3.79 <sub>a</sub> (1.84)	1.61 <sub>a</sub> (1.06)	5.37 <sub>bcd</sub> (1.69)	4.04 <sub>bc</sub> (1.32)	4.86 <sub>b</sub> (1.45)	6.62 <sub>bc</sub> (1.10)	3.74 <sub>b</sub> (2.21)	3.06 <sub>a</sub> (1.83)	52 —
Tennis	3.58 <sub>a</sub> (2.01)	1.28 <sub>a</sub> (0.64)	5.11 <sub>abcd</sub> (1.80)	3.90 <sub>abc</sub> (1.78)	3.62 <sub>a</sub> (1.62)	6.08 <sub>ab</sub> (1.38)	2.48 <sub>a</sub> (1.81)	4.83 <sub>e</sub> (1.67)	67 —
Professional Basketball	3.27 <sub>a</sub> (1.86)	1.65 <sub>a</sub> (1.20)	5.58 <sub>cd</sub> (1.39)	4.29 <sub>c</sub> (1.33)	4.96 <sub>b</sub> (1.50)	6.48 <sub>bc</sub> (1.08)	3.42 <sub>ab</sub> (2.03)	4.10 <sub>bcd</sub> (1.74)	79 —
College Basketball	3.35 <sub>a</sub> (1.93)	1.52 <sub>a</sub> (1.14)	5.59 <sub>cd</sub> (1.59)	4.27 <sub>c</sub> (1.44)	5.23 <sub>b</sub> (1.61)	6.58 <sub>bc</sub> (1.13)	3.88 <sub>b</sub> (2.08)	3.37 <sub>abc</sub> (1.82)	138 —
Professional Wrestling	4.84 <sub>b</sub> (1.80)	1.27 <sub>a</sub> (0.64)	5.19 <sub>abcd</sub> (1.82)	3.74 <sub>abc</sub> (1.56)	5.06 <sub>b</sub> (1.81)	6.67 <sub>bc</sub> (1.19)	3.11 <sub>ab</sub> (2.12)	4.21 <sub>cde</sub> (2.24)	36 —
Golf	3.72 <sub>a</sub> (2.23)	1.69 <sub>a</sub> (1.29)	4.55 <sub>ab</sub> (1.89)	3.63 <sub>abc</sub> (1.69)	3.60 <sub>a</sub> (1.52)	5.69 <sub>a</sub> (1.55)	3.08 <sub>ab</sub> (2.02)	4.70 <sub>de</sub> (1.71)	69 —
All Sports Combined	3.50 (1.99)	1.53 (1.06)	5.36 (1.68)	4.03 (1.53)	4.60 (1.72)	6.47 (1.23)	3.31 (2.07)	4.07 (2.07)	886 —

*Notes:* Standard deviations appear in parentheses below each mean. SFMS subscale scores range from 1 (*low motivation*) to 8 (*high motivation*). ESC = escape subscale, ECO = economic subscale, EUS = eustress subscale, S-E = self-esteem subscale, G A = group affiliation subscale, ENT = entertainment subscale, FAM = family subscale, AES = aesthetic subscale, *n* = number of subjects for whom that was the target sport. For each motivation scale (i.e., column), means sharing a common subscript are not significantly different (Student-Newman-Keuls tests).

**Table 2.****Means and Standard Deviations for the Motivation Subscales by Sport Type.**

Sport Type Comparison	ESC	ECO	EUS	S-E	G A	ENT	FAM	AES	n
<b>Individual versus Team</b>									
Individual	3.65 (2.02)	1.51 (1.02)	5.03 (1.81)	3.67 (1.59)	3.96 (1.67)	6.24 (1.34)	2.91 (1.97)	4.94 (2.06)	352 —
Team	3.40 (1.96)	1.54 (1.09)	5.58 (1.55)	4.27 (1.44)	5.02 (1.62)	6.62 (1.13)	3.58 (2.09)	3.50 (1.86)	534 —
<b>Aggressive versus Nonaggressive</b>									
Aggressive	3.63 (2.01)	1.64 (1.13)	5.63 (1.64)	4.02 (1.51)	4.96 (1.65)	6.68 (1.14)	3.32 (2.11)	3.55 (1.96)	290 —
Nonaggressive	3.44 (1.96)	1.48 (1.09)	5.23 (1.55)	4.03 (1.44)	4.43 (1.62)	6.36 (1.13)	3.31 (2.09)	4.32 (1.86)	596 —
<b>Stylistic versus Nonstylistic</b>									
Stylistic	3.26 (1.83)	1.18 (0.47)	4.56 (1.73)	3.24 (1.47)	3.23 (1.45)	6.20 (1.24)	2.55 (1.65)	6.69 (1.28)	85 —
Nonstylistic	3.53 (2.00)	1.57 (1.10)	5.45 (1.65)	4.11 (1.51)	4.75 (1.68)	6.49 (1.23)	3.40 (2.09)	3.79 (1.94)	801 —

Notes: Standard deviations appear in parentheses below each mean. SFMS subscale scores range from 1 (*low motivation*) to 8 (*high motivation*). ESC = escape subscale, ECO = economic subscale, EUS = eustress subscale, S-E = self-esteem subscale, G A = group affiliation subscale, ENT = entertainment subscale, FAM = family subscale, AES = aesthetic subscale, *n* = number of subjects in that sport type.

scores were lower for figure skating, gymnastics, golf, and tennis, and higher for the other subscales. No other comparisons were significant. The univariate analysis on the entertainment subscale also resulted in a significant between-subjects effect,  $F(12, 873) = 4.65$ ,  $p < .001$ . Post hoc analyses revealed many different effects, including the finding of lower entertainment subscale scores for golf and higher scores for professional hockey. The univariate analysis on the family subscale also revealed a significant between-subjects effect,  $F(12, 873) = 3.81$ ,  $p < .001$ . Post hoc analyses revealed lower family subscale scores for gymnastics and tennis than for college football, auto racing, and college basketball. No other comparisons were significant. And finally, the univariate analysis on the aesthetic subscale also revealed in a significant between-subjects effect,  $F(12, 873) = 25.66$ ,  $p < .001$ . Post hoc analyses revealed a highly complex pattern of effects, which included particularly high aesthetic subscales scores for gymnastics and figure skating.

*Comparisons of individual and team sports.* The next set of analyses involved comparisons of motivational patterns for team sports versus individual sports. Of

the 13 target sports, seven were classified as individual sports: figure skating, gymnastics, boxing, auto racing, tennis, professional wrestling, and golf. The remaining six target sports were categorized as team sports: professional baseball, college football, professional football, professional hockey, professional basketball, and college basketball. The MANOVA for this analysis employed sport type (i.e., individual or team) as the grouping variable and motivation subscale scores served as the multiple dependent measures. Means and standard deviations for the SFMS subscales by target sport type are presented in Table 2. The MANOVA yielded a highly significant multivariate effect, Wilks' Lambda  $(8, 877) = 3645.19$ ,  $p < .001$ . Post hoc analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests were then computed for each motivation subscale. Two of these comparisons failed to find a significance difference in level of motivation between individual and team sports: escape motivation,  $F(1, 844) = 3.44$ ,  $p > .05$ , and economic motivation,  $F(1, 844) = 0.27$ ,  $p > .60$ . The remaining six comparisons found significant differences. In one comparison focusing on aesthetic motivation, individual sport scores were higher than those for team sports,

$F(1, 844) = 116.19, p < .001$ . In the five remaining comparisons, scores were greater for team sports than for individual sports: eustress,  $F(1, 844) = 24.01, p < .001$ ; self-esteem,  $F(1, 844) = 32.92, p < .001$ ; group affiliation,  $F(1, 844) = 90.36, p < .001$ ; entertainment,  $F(1, 844) = 20.92, p < .001$ ; and family,  $F(1, 844) = 23.11, p < .001$ .

*Comparisons of aggressive and nonaggressive sports.* The next set of analyses involved comparisons of motivational patterns for aggressive sports versus nonaggressive sports. Of the 13 target sports, five were classified as aggressive: college football, professional football, hockey, boxing, and professional wrestling. The remaining eight sports were categorized as nonaggressive: professional baseball, figure skating, gymnastics, auto racing, tennis, professional basketball, college basketball, and golf. The MANOVA for this analysis employed sport type (i.e., aggressive or nonaggressive) as the grouping variable and motivation subscale scores served as the multiple dependent measures. Means and standard deviations for the SFMS subscales by target sport type are found in Table 2. As in other instances, the MANOVA yielded a highly significant multivariate effect, Wilks' Lambda (8, 877) = 3406.16,  $p < .001$ . Post hoc analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests were then computed for each motivation subscale. Three of these comparisons failed to find a significant difference in level of motivation between aggressive and nonaggressive sports: escape motivation,  $F(1, 844) = 1.77, p > .15$ ; self-esteem motivation,  $F(1, 844) = 0.01, p > .85$ ; and family motivation,  $F(1, 844) = 0.00, p > .95$ . The remaining five comparisons were statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ). In one comparison, aesthetic motivation, nonaggressive sport scores were higher than those for aggressive sports,  $F(1, 844) = 27.58, p < .001$ . In the four remaining comparisons, scores were greater for aggressive sports than for nonaggressive sports: economic,  $F(1, 844) = 4.41, p < .05$ ; eustress,  $F(1, 844) = 10.75, p < .001$ ; group affiliation,  $F(1, 844) = 19.07, p < .001$ ; and entertainment,  $F(1, 844) = 13.86, p < .001$ .

*Comparisons of stylistic and nonstylistic sports.* The final set of analyses involved comparisons of motivational patterns for stylistic sports versus nonstylistic sports. Two of the 13 target sports were classified as stylistic: figure skating and gymnastics. The remaining 11 sports were labeled nonstylistic: professional baseball, college football, professional football, professional hockey, boxing, auto racing, tennis, professional basketball, college basketball, professional wrestling, and golf. The MANOVA for this analysis employed sport type (i.e., stylistic or nonstylistic) as the grouping variable and motivation subscale scores served as the multiple dependent measures. Means and standard

deviations for the SFMS subscales by target sport type are presented in Table 2. The MANOVA yielded a highly significant multivariate effect, Wilks' Lambda (8, 877) = 1323.99,  $p < .001$ . Post hoc analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests were then computed for each motivation subscale. Only one comparison, escape motivation, failed to reach statistical significance,  $F(1, 844) = 1.35, p > .20$ . The remaining seven comparisons were significantly different. In one comparison, aesthetic motivation, stylistic sport scores were higher than those for nonstylistic sports,  $F(1, 844) = 182.06, p < .001$ . In the six remaining comparisons, scores were greater for nonstylistic sports than for stylistic sports: economic,  $F(1, 844) = 10.24, p < .001$ ; eustress,  $F(1, 844) = 21.80, p < .001$ ; self-esteem,  $F(1, 844) = 25.68, p < .001$ ; group affiliation,  $F(1, 844) = 63.84, p < .001$ ; entertainment,  $F(1, 844) = 4.38, p < .05$ ; and family,  $F(1, 844) = 12.91, p < .001$ .

## Discussion

The current investigation was intended to replicate and extend previous research on the motivational patterns of sport fans by examining potential differences in patterns for different sport types and different target sports. As revealed in Table 1, there were many significant motivational differences among the sports. Further, Table 2 reveals that the consumption of different sport types (e.g., aggressive versus nonaggressive) was characterized by different motivational patterns. In the paragraphs to follow, we will focus our discussion on the sport type differences and highlight the specific sport comparisons when applicable. However, prior to discussing the results, the age of the current sample warrants mention. Clearly, with a mean of 21.41 years and a standard deviation of 3.42 years, the sample was quite homogeneous with respect to age. This was simply a consequence of the convenience sample (i.e., college students) used in this research. It will be important for future researchers to replicate the work conducted here with a sample that is more heterogeneous with respect to age. However, the homogeneous nature of the current sample does not invalidate the results. This is particularly true in light of the fact that previous research using heterogeneous samples (Wann, 1995; Wann, Schrader, & Wilson, 1999) has failed to find significant relationships between age and sport fan motives.

### *Individual versus Team Sports*

The analysis of individual sports versus team sports revealed a number of motivational differences as all motives except escape and economic differed by sport type. Individual sports were more likely to be a function of aesthetic motivation than were team sports. An



investigation of Table 1 reveals that this finding was primarily a function of the exceptionally high levels of aesthetic motivation as a driver for figure skating and gymnastics. However, one could likely argue that it is the stylistic nature of these sports that lead to high levels of aesthetic motivation (see below), rather than their categorization as an individual sport. That is, if one were to specifically assess motives for consuming doubles figure skating, one would likely get high levels of aesthetic motivation. There might also be a connection with the method that the sport uses to evaluate performance (i.e., gymnastics and figure skating both use subjective scoring methods that rely on judges to evaluate performance rather than "points" or "goals," which are more objective in nature).

Eustress, self-esteem, group affiliation, entertainment, and family motivations were all more prevalent as factors for consuming team sports, findings that replicate work by Wann, Schrader, and Wilson (1999) and, to a limited degree, Wenner and Gantz (1989), who found low levels of eustress motivation for tennis. As for eustress, it is interesting to note that for most of the individual sports examined here (i.e., figure skating, gymnastics, tennis, and golf), spectators are discouraged from conversing and moving around during play (for instance, officials at professional golf tournaments hold signs reading "QUIET" while the players execute shots). Thus, it shouldn't be surprising to find that fans of these sports are less likely to be motivated by a desire to get excited by the action. Quite to the contrary, the norms surrounding many of these sports discourage such reactions. Such an argument also may partially explain why fans of team sports were more likely to endorse group affiliation and family needs as motives underlying their consumption habits. Again, participants reported low levels of these two motives for figure skating, gymnastics, tennis, and golf—sports with lower levels of contact among fans. If one attends a sporting event to spend time with others and/or his or her family, the fan is likely to choose a sport where such interactions are the norm. Interpersonal communications are less common at the individual sports listed above, likely resulting in group affiliation and family being less powerful drivers in the consumption of these sports.

With respect to the individual/team sport differences in self-esteem, this motive was found to be particularly prominent among fans of four sports: professional baseball, college football, professional basketball, and college basketball. Figure skating and gymnastics were less likely to be consumed due to a desire to enhance one's self-image. Such a finding makes logical sense, given that sport fans often attach to and follow baseball, basketball, and football teams for many years, resulting in particularly high levels of identification

with those teams. Conversely, supporting an elite figure skater or gymnast may be less likely to lead to high levels of identification because these individuals only compete for a few years, rather than for decades, as is the case with sport teams.

A close inspection of Table 1 reveals that the individual/team sport difference for entertainment motivation was primarily driven by the levels of entertainment motivation for golf. Why golf fans would report a lower level of entertainment motivation is not clear at this point, given that fans of other individual sports (e.g., professional wrestling and tennis) reported such high levels of this motive. One possibility is that the slower pace of this sport, relative to the other sports, led to the lower entertainment motivation scores. Further, it warrants mention that although entertainment motivation was lower for golf than the other target sports, this motive was still the most powerfully endorsed motive for golf, with a mean Likert-score of 5.69, which is a full point (on the 1-8 scale) higher than any other motive for the consumption of golf. Thus, concluding that golf fans are not motivated by the entertainment value of their sport would be premature.

*"The development of promotional campaigns and marketing strategies around these sport-specific motives can aid in the marketing of a particular sport, thus driving attendance and consumption."*

#### *Aggressive versus Nonaggressive Sports*

Comparisons of aggressive and nonaggressive sports revealed significant sport type differences for five of the eight motives: aesthetic, economic, eustress, group affiliation, and entertainment. Differences were not found for escape, self-esteem, or family motivation. Aesthetic motivation was found to be more prominent among fans of nonaggressive sports. This finding precisely replicates work by Wann, Schrader, and Wilson (1999) and also mirrors research by McDonald et al. (2002), who found particularly high levels of aesthetic motivation for the consumption of golf. Based on this pattern of effects, Wann and his associates hypothesized that fans with a high level of aesthetic motivation probably prefer nonaggressive sports because the actions found in aggressive sports may "inhibit the graceful execution of sport movements" (p. 122). Such an argument is consistent with the data presented above. Wann and Wilson (1999) examined this possibility in a pair of studies. In Study 1, participants completed questionnaires assessing their level of aesthetic motivation and their enjoyment of watching several aggressive sports. Wann and Wilson expected a negative correlation between level of aesthetic motivation and enjoyment of violent sports, yet, con-

trary to expectations, the correlational analyses failed to reveal such a relationship. A second study had subjects complete an inventory assessing their level of aesthetic motivation and then watch a series of violent football plays, rating their enjoyment of each. Once again, there was no significant relationship between aesthetic motivation and enjoyment of violent plays. Wann and Wilson concluded that the suggestions offered by Wann, Schrader, and Wilson (1999) concerning the relationship between aesthetic motivation and enjoyment of aggressive sports were premature because their research indicated that fans who are motivated by the beauty and grace of sport movements are equally likely to enjoy violent and nonviolent sports.

Thus, we are left with a contradiction between the Wann, Schrader, and Wilson (1999) work and the current study on one hand and the research by Wann and Wilson (1999) on the other. Apparently, the key to understanding this paradox is to contrast reasons for consumption with preference for sport. It appears that individuals are less likely to consume aggressive sports for aesthetic reasons (i.e., the current work and research by Wann, Schrader, & Wilson, 1999). However, this does not suggest that these individuals do not like aggressive sports or aggressive sport actions (e.g., Wann & Wilson, 1999). Rather, it means that when they do consume aggressive sports, they are motivated by reasons other than aesthetics (e.g., fans follow hockey for reasons other than aesthetics but these same persons may still enjoy this sport).

The remaining motives, economic, eustress, group affiliation, and entertainment, were all more prominent in the consumption of aggressive sports. With respect to economic motivation, an examination of Table 1 reveals that the significant effect for sport type (i.e., aggressive versus nonaggressive) was driven by the sport of boxing. In fact, in respect to economic motivation for following boxing, only one significant finding was noted, relative to the other sports: Fans were more likely to consume boxing out of a desire to wager on the event. This finding seems reasonable given the reputation of boxing as a gambling sport. Conversely, college and professional football did not involve significantly high levels of economic motivation, which was surprising, as these sports are also targets of sport wagering.

However, eustress was also more likely to be endorsed as a motive underlying the consumption of aggressive sports, a finding that replicates earlier work (Wann, Schrader, & Wilson, 1999; Wenner & Gantz, 1989). This suggests that the violent nature of these activities is arousing and exciting to many fans, and can serve as an attractive component of these sports. People are less likely to consume nonaggressive sports out of a desire to gain excitement and stimulation (however, note that the

mean eustress score for the nonaggressive sports was still above the midpoint on the scale, indicating that this is a motive for some fans of these sports). The added excitement of the aggressive content may partially account for the sport type differences in entertainment motivation. Several researchers have noted that violent sport content is often viewed as entertaining, particularly for male fans, fans with violent tendencies, and especially when the announcers highlight its aggressive nature (Bryant, Brown, Comisky, & Zillmann, 1982; Bryant, Comisky, & Zillmann, 1981; Kaelin, 1968). Thus, by combining these effects, it may be that the highest excitement and arousal of aggressive sports impacts the entertainment value of these activities.

Finally, group affiliation scores were also higher for aggressive sports than nonaggressive sports. Such a finding could reflect the types of activities that are commonly associated with these sports. For example, tailgating is a valued and frequent activity associated with football at both at the collegiate and professional levels, where sport fans gather hours before the start of the contest to eat and socialize with friends. In a similar vein, it is not uncommon for people to host parties in their homes to watch important boxing matches, Monday Night Football, and World Wrestling Entertainment events. Or, perhaps the high group affiliation scores for aggressive sports is due to a complex interaction of factors such as social class, ethnic and cultural beliefs, political agendas, and so forth. For instance, for sports such as football and hockey, which often pit community against community, and sports such as boxing and professional wrestling, in which race and ethnicity are often associated with the competition, there are multiple social (i.e., community) and personal identity issues involved. The aggressive sports have a common link of extreme physical contact, which may result in collective action, referred to as *emotional contagion* by Coakley (2004). Under such conditions, group norms may be established and even cherished, leading these fans of these sports to view the group-nature of the event as an important motivational factor.

#### *Stylistic versus Nonstylistic Sports*

Comparisons of stylistic and nonstylistic sports revealed significant sport type differences for all motives, with the exception of escape. As one might expect, scores for aesthetic motivation were much higher for the stylistic sports, relative to the nonstylistic sports. In fact, aesthetic motivation scores for the stylistic sports were higher than any other motive for those sports, the mean score aesthetic motivation score for stylistic sports was the highest mean score for *any motive for any sport type*, and the difference in aesthetic motivation for stylistic and nonstylistic sports (*M* dif-

ference score = 2.90) was the largest sport type difference for any motive across any sport type comparison (in fact, the second largest sport type difference, group affiliation motivation for stylistic versus nonstylistic sports, was barely half as great;  $M$  difference = 1.52). With the strength of this effect, it should not come as a surprise that this finding replicates past work (Wann, Schrader, & Wilson, 1999). Thus, it appears that the beauty and grace inherent in stylistic sports is the key motivational factor underlying consumption.

In the six remaining comparisons, motivation subscale scores were greater for nonstylistic sports than for stylistic sports. The difference in group affiliation was rather large (as noted above, the second largest sport type difference detected), a finding that likely reflects the aforementioned fact that spectators are discouraged from conversing during individual sports such as those mentioned above. Likewise, persons were less likely to consume these sports in order to spend time with their family because person-to-person interactions at these events are less feasible. Further, the finding that consumption of stylistic sports is less likely to be a function of eustress motivation may also be a function of the norms for fan behavior surrounding these events. That is, if fans are discouraged from conversing during play, yelling at the players, etc., it shouldn't be surprising that followers of these sports are less inclined to do so in an attempt to gain stimulation. Comparisons of crowds at stylistic sport events and those at nonstylistic events will generally reveal higher levels of arousal among those persons attending the nonstylistic events. Consequently, fans of stylistic sports participate in the pastime for reasons other than to increase arousal and gain excitement.

The significant sport type difference involving entertainment motivation may lead one to conclude that fans of stylistic sports are less inclined to consume their sport because of its entertainment value. However, two factors suggest that this conclusion is generally unfounded. First, while it is true that significant differences in entertainment motivation between stylistic and nonstylistic sports were found, the mean difference was quite small ( $M$  difference = 0.29). Second, scores for entertainment motivation for stylistic sports were quite high. An examination of Table 2 reveals that aesthetic motivation and entertainment motivation are clearly the most powerful forces for the consumption of stylistic sports.

The significant stylistic/nonstylistic sport difference for economic motivation is a function of the higher levels of this motive for boxing. As noted previously, all other sports were similar in their level of economic motivation. Similarly, the difference in self-esteem motivation (i.e., higher scores for the consumption of

nonstylistic sports) was discussed previously in the individual versus team sport section (e.g., fans may tend to identify more strongly with teams participating in team sports, see discussion above).

### Additional Findings

A few additional sport differences warrant mention. First, as noted in the previous paragraphs, there were no sport type differences for escape motivation in any of the three comparisons (i.e., individual versus team, aggressive versus nonaggressive, or stylistic versus nonstylistic). However, concluding that the consumption of various sports is not differentially impacted by desires for a diversion is premature. Specifically, an examination of Table 1 revealed that escape motivation was involved in a significant relationship, as the consumption of professional wrestling was more likely to be motivated by escape needs than all other sports. That consumption of professional wrestling is highly motivated by needs for a diversion is quite interesting. Professional wrestling is a highly ritualized form of entertainment in which there are obvious scripts, storylines, protagonists, and antagonists. In fact, in recent years professional wrestling has openly admitted that the outcomes are predetermined (these organizations now tend to refer to themselves as "sports entertainment"). Because of the ongoing storylines, some of which play out like violent soap operas (e.g., wrestlers not only battle over championships, but also over relationships, power, and prestige), it seems logical that the consumption of this activity would be attractive to those individuals in need of an escape. That is, the consumption of professional wrestling appears to be quite similar (with the exception of the level of violence) to other entertainment endeavors such as the theater or the opera (indeed, entertainment motivation was quite high for this sport, see below). Like these other entertainment options, if one does not like the ending (i.e., outcome), he or she can simply rationalize by noting that it was predetermined, a coping strategy that is not available to fans of other sports.

Second, the motivational patterns reported for football and basketball warrant additional discussion. For these two sports, fans of both the professional and college level completed questionnaire packets, allowing for a comparison by competition level. Interestingly, there were no statistically significant differences between college football and professional football or between college basketball and professional basketball on any of the eight motives assessed. Although some competition level differences in motivation have been noted elsewhere (Bernthal & Graham, 2003), the current data suggests that, for the most part, the key factor in predicting differential patterns of fan motivation lies

in the target (e.g., baseball versus golf) or type (e.g., stylistic versus nonstylistic) of sport, rather than in the level of competition.

Third, it is interesting to note the grand mean values for the eight motives listed in Table 1 (i.e., across target sport). Entertainment was the most prominent motive, while economic motivation was the lowest rating subscale. Scores for eustress motivation were also quite high, while responses to the family scale were rather low. These findings replicate several previous examinations of sport fan motivation using the SFMS (Wann, 1995; Wann, Schrader, & Wilson, 1999), suggesting that this pattern of effects is quite robust.

### **Implications for Sport Marketers and Suggestions for Future Research**

An enhanced understanding of spectator and fan motivation can be of considerable benefit to the sport marketer (James & Ross, 2004; Trail, Fink, & Anderson, 2003; Trail & James, 2001). Empirical studies of sport spectator and fan motivation should attempt to understand whether the motives to consume a particular sport are different when compared with motivational patterns for consuming other sports (Trail & James, 2001). Thus, the results gleaned from the current study could be of great benefit to the marketing professional that is attempting to develop new strategies to reach sport consumers. Marketers must attempt to understand sport consumer motives that are sport-specific in order to effectively reach their constituents. The development of promotional campaigns and marketing strategies around these sport-specific motives can aid in the marketing of a particular sport, thus driving attendance and consumption. This is an especially critical factor when looking at sports that may have to utilize "blanket" marketing techniques (James & Ross, 2004).

As a result, the utility of the current investigation becomes very clear, as it examines sport spectator and fan motivational patterns across a wide array of sports, which are grouped in categories that are applicable to similar sports or sporting activities not included in the study. Trail et al. (2003) note that these sport-specific motives can then be employed by the sport marketer as a method of segmentation. Thus, the results of the current investigation will allow sport marketers to tailor their promotional methods and marketing strategies to motivations that are prevalent in a particular sport included in the study (i.e., boxing or figure skating), or to those motivations common to a group of sports (i.e., aggressive or nonaggressive sports).

An example of the marketing emphasis placed upon a specific spectator motivation to consume a sport can be found in many of the advertising campaigns conducted by Major League Baseball (MLB). MLB often

utilizes many promotional and marketing methods that focus on children and the opportunity for family interaction (Petrecca et al., 2000), which is indicative of family motivation (Wann, 1995). As with other team sports included in this study, baseball has one of the higher family motivation scores (see Table 1). If marketing campaigns focus on spectator motivation for a particular sport, or category of sport, then the results of the current study can assist with the development of other effective marketing campaigns.

For example, responses from the current sample that suggest team sports elicit higher group affiliation scores could assist sport marketers in the development of a campaign communicating to consumers that they will get the spectator experience they desire. By using this study as a guide, sport marketers can look at promoting activities and/or events that facilitate enhanced opportunities to interact and bond with other fans, such as the previously mentioned "tailgating" activities, team rallies, or other interaction opportunities. This is merely one example of ways in which the findings from the current study can have practical application.

Interestingly, the current study also corroborates many of the sport-specific results from McDonald, Milne, and Hong's (2002) study examining a wide range of spectator and fan motivational profiles for different sports. The findings from the current study may provide further evidence that the motivational profiles for a particular sport may be somewhat stable across studies, which could be very useful to the sport marketer looking for consistent consumer motivational trends. However, additional confirmation is needed to verify whether these profiles are in fact stable or if they vary across research studies. Future confirmatory studies investigating the same sports utilized in the current study could be useful in this respect.

Although the data presented here furthers our understanding of the motivational patterns found among fans of various sports, there is still much we do not know about sport fan motivation. For instance, subsequent work should focus on the impact of consumption site on fan motivation. In the current investigation (and previous work as well, e.g., Wann, 1995), fans were asked to report the motives for their consumption in general, regardless of the locale of the consumption. However, we know from past research that the avenue of consumption can impact fan preferences. Wann, Friedman, McHale, and Jaffe (2003) found that fans are far more likely to consume sport alone when listening to the radio than in other environments (e.g., watching sport on television). Consequently, one may find that the motives fans report are also impacted by consumption site. Fans may report greater levels of eustress motivation for the

direct consumption of sport (i.e., attending an event in person) than for indirect consumption (e.g., watching a game on television) because of the excitement associated with the crowd.

Future studies should also attempt to replicate the study in different locations, both within the United States and abroad. The motives that drive a spectator or fan of a particular sport to follow or consume that sport may be very different among countries, cultures, and contexts (Kwon & Trail, 2001). Further empirical analyses can assist in understanding whether motivational patterns for a particular sport are universal in nature or whether there may be other factors that help define the motivational profile for a spectator or fan of a particular sport. This could augment international marketing efforts by a sport team. In addition, future studies may want to examine the relationship between spectator and fan identification and motivation for a variety of sports. While this relationship has been examined in other studies (e.g., Trail et al., 2003; Wann, 1995), few, if any, have examined the sheer number of sports included in the current investigation. As a result, motivational patterns of similar sports can be examined, as well as their relationship to identification. It may be possible to identify common motives that feed into an individual's identification with a particular sport or type of sport.

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## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>The demographic items were inadvertently left off some of the questionnaires, hence the rather large number of subjects failing to report gender.

<sup>2</sup>For some of these sports, participants do, on occasion, participate as a "team." For instance, tennis players may play in a doubles match or on a larger team (e.g., high school or college). Similarly, auto racing participants have a pit crew, which could be considered a team. However, in general, athletes participating in the previous list of sports do so as an individual. That is, in most cases their performance is a function of their individual level of effort and ability. Hence, these sports were classified as individual sports.

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