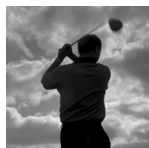
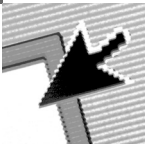
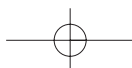
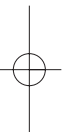


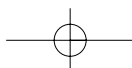
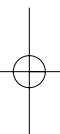
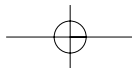


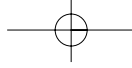
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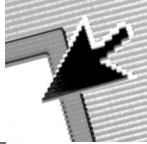
# Sport Media Foundations







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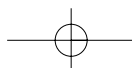
# Sport and the media: a defining relationship

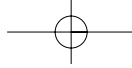
## Overview

This chapter provides an overview of the nexus between the sport and media industries, and outlines why sport and the media is an important field of study. It also defines sport, the media and the sport media nexus. The study of sport and the media is placed within a management context in order to explain its relevance to students of sport management, as well as sport managers and administrators in professional settings. This chapter also discusses the core drivers and major features of the sport media nexus in order to contextualize the material in subsequent chapters. Finally, this chapter provides an outline of the structure of the book.

After completing this chapter the reader should be able to:

- Identify the core features of the sport media nexus.
- Explain the core features of the sport media nexus and what underpins the relationship between the sport and media industries.
- Understand the environment in which sport media is produced and consumed.
- Identify and explain the impact of each core driver of the sport media nexus.





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*Sport and the Media: managing the nexus*

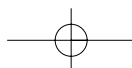
## Defining sport and the media

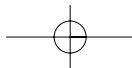
Prior to discussing the sport media nexus in detail, it is important to clarify what is meant by the terms sport and media. Although sport seems a superficially simple concept, it can be difficult for players, policy makers, managers, marketers and media alike to define. Depending on the context, sport might be interpreted in different ways, which will in turn influence whether and how it is mediated. Sport is best understood as having three core dimensions (Guttman, 1978). First, it has a physical dimension. Second, it is competitive. Third and finally, it must be structured and rule bound. These dimensions might appear self-evident, but are worth noting because mediated sport is almost exclusively highly structured, highly competitive and very physical. In fact, sports such as football, which emphasize, if not exaggerate sport's tripartite definition, tend to dominate media coverage generally and television coverage in particular. On the other hand, sport that has low or non-existent levels of competition, structure and physicality are typically not attractive media products.

Figure 1.1 graphically represents a sport typology, which illustrates different types of sport (Stewart, Nicholson, Smith & Westerbeek, 2004). Spontaneous sport includes 'pick-up' sport that occurs by chance, which is often formalized as recreational sport. Recreational sport also includes extreme sport activities, as well as informal exercise. Exercise sport typically occurs in formalized settings, such as an aerobics class or a gym workout. These first three categories, represented at the bottom and sides of Figure 1.1 are minor components of the sport media nexus. By contrast, competitive sport, which includes competitions below the elite level, receives media coverage and uses it to increase participation and financial capacity. This category includes sport played by amateurs at the community level through to high level school and University (college) sport. The final category, elite sport, is a major player in the sport media nexus. It comprises professional and semi-professional competitions and major events, from state and national championships through to the Olympic Games and FIFA (Federation Internationale de Football Association) World Cup.

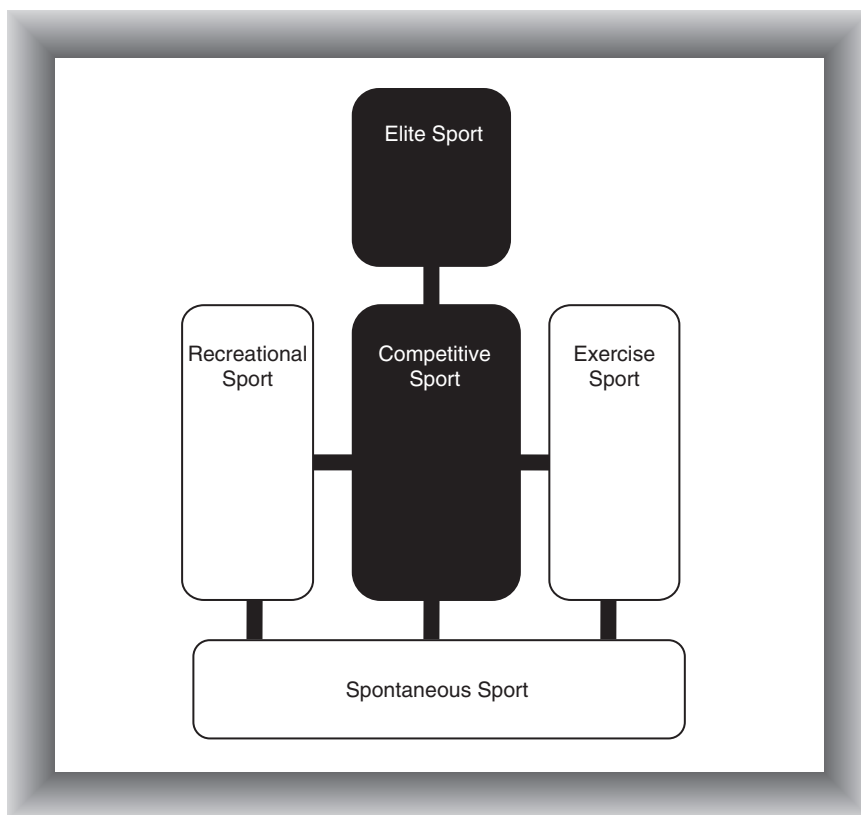
The final two categories of competitive and elite sport can be segmented further to demonstrate various tiers of activity, which are graphically represented in Figure 1.2. Figure 1.2 illustrates that competitive and elite sport cover the spectrum from local community level sport through to major global events. However, the diagram should not be interpreted as a hierarchical model of media interest or influence, as national leagues are often the most valuable sport media properties in the world.

Definitions of media are likely to make people think of vastly different and distinct occupations, people, organizations, texts and artefacts. The word media has come to mean a variety of things, in a similar fashion to sport, but in far greater complexity and breadth. According to Briggs and Burke (2005) ancient Greeks and Romans considered the study of oral and written





### *Sport and the media: a defining relationship*

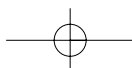


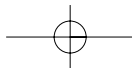
**Figure 1.1** Sport Typology (Adapted from Stewart, Nicholson, Smith & Westerbeek, 2004)

communication important, as did scholars during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. It was not until the 1920s, however, that people referred to the concept of 'the media'.

In contemporary usage the term media typically applies to two separate yet related elements. First, media refers to the means of mass communication, such as television, radio, newspapers or the Internet. The various forms of communication and its types are illustrated in Figure 1.3. Importantly, within one form, such as television, there are many different types, such as commercial, public, independent and community. Furthermore, these types also have various levels. For example, a commercial media organization might own national television networks through to local stations that service a city or town. Second, media refers to those people employed within an organization such as a television station or newspaper, such as journalists and editors.

It is important to note that these two definitions span a variety of meanings that are context specific. In reference to broadcasting regulation the media might be interpreted as the entire industry, which in turn might be national or global. In a discussion focusing on mergers and acquisitions, media might refer to a transnational corporation such as the Walt Disney Company. If the





## Sport and the Media: managing the nexus



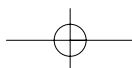
**Figure 1.2** Elite and Competitive Sport Levels

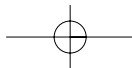
issue relates to the sale of broadcast rights, media might refer to different forms such as pay television, free-to-air television or the Internet. Referring to the way in which a telecast of a game uses metaphors of war, the media might refer to the commentators. Finally, if the issue relates to the reporting of a scandal or crisis, media might refer to the specific article or broadcast in which it was first announced.

## The nexus

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The word *nexus* has its etymological roots in Latin and is a derivation of the word *nectere*, which means to bind. In essence a *nexus* is a connection, bond





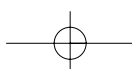
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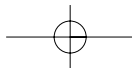
## *Sport and the media: a defining relationship*



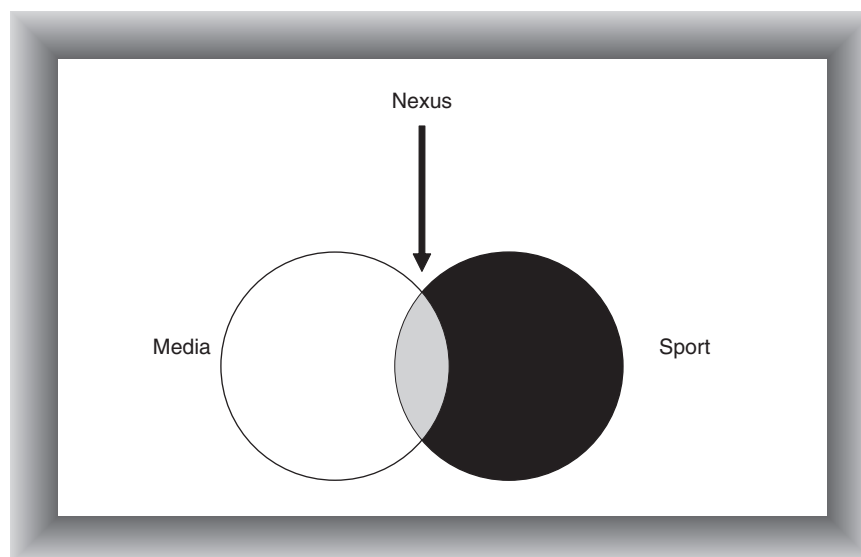
**Figure 1.3** Media Forms and Types

or tie between two or more things. The use of the word *nexus* in the subtitle of this book is deliberate. It is meant to signal that sport and the media are not two separate industries that have been juxtaposed coincidentally. Rather, their evolution, particularly throughout the twentieth century, has resulted in them being inextricably bound together. Furthermore, the word *nexus* can refer to the core or centre. In this respect the use of the word *nexus* is meant to illustrate that the relationship between sport and the media is at the core of contemporary sport. Whether in reference to the way in which children are socialized through sport, the power of player associations and unions, or the use of talent identification programmes to foster elite development, the relationship between sport and the media is likely to reside at the very centre of the issue or problem. Thus, the *sport media nexus* refers to the relationship between sport and the media industry generally, the relationship between





## *Sport and the Media: managing the nexus*



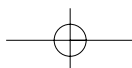
**Figure 1.4** Sport Media Nexus

sport and specific media institutions such as television, the relationship between sport and media employees such as journalists and finally, the ways in which sport is presented in specific media texts, such as a radio broadcast or newspaper article.

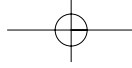
Figure 1.4 represents the sport media nexus in its most basic form. In this diagram, the sport and media industries are represented as two equal partners and the nexus is the point at which they intersect. Although simple, Figure 1.4 also illustrates that not all of sport is part of the nexus. Rather, a proportion of sport is mediated. Similarly, not all media is sport related. However, this diagram does not represent the reality of much elite, professional and competitive sport, nor does it represent the importance of the media in daily sport consumption. In this respect the nexus is more accurately represented in Figure 1.5. Elite and professional sport is enveloped by the media. In this case sport might accurately be described as media sport, because without the nexus or bond between the two, the product would not exist. Consumers of sport must necessarily consume a mediated product. As the sport media nexus develops, the amount of sport consumed by the media increases (the circles in Figure 1.4 move closer together), as does the commercial importance of sport to the media (the black circle in Figure 1.5 grows larger).

## Sport media saturation

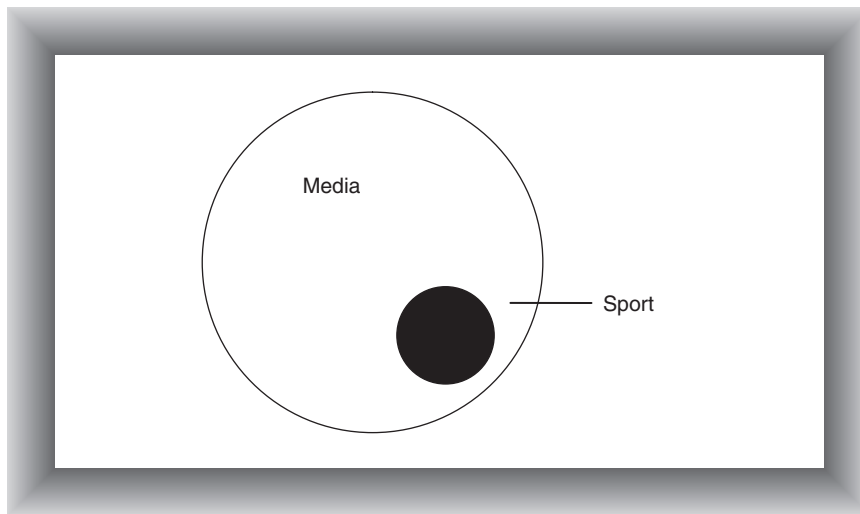
Every 4 years the world stops to watch football teams compete for a trophy called the World Cup. A cumulative total of 28,800 million people throughout 213 countries watched the 2002 tournament in Korea and Japan. The







## *Sport and the media: a defining relationship*

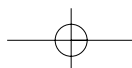


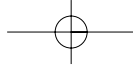
**Figure 1.5** Sport Media Nexus II

world also tunes in on a 4-year cycle to watch athletes strive to go higher, faster and stronger at the summer and winter Olympic Games, with approximately 36 and 20 million respective cumulative viewing hours of television coverage available internationally. These mega-events compete for the attention of media consumers with yearlong sport circuits, such as Formula One Racing, the Professional Golfers' Association (PGA) European Tour and the Sony Ericsson Women's Tennis Association (WTA) Tour. The Formula One Racing circuit alone was watched in 2005 by a global audience in excess of 800 million people. These events and circuits, in turn, compete with national sport competitions that take place over the course of a season, with games played between one and four times per week. In the United States of America the nation stops every year for the Super Bowl, the championship game of the National Football League, when families and friends gather around television sets for what equates to a secular holiday. In 2006, the television audience was large enough for the television broadcaster to command US \$2.5 million for each 30-second block of advertising time.

It is clear from the examples above that there are large numbers of people watching sport on television, that there is a significant amount of sport broadcast on television and that televised sport is a primary vehicle for advertising. However, it is not only the major sport events and leagues that are broadcast by television, and television is not the only media form that is saturated by sport. In fact, from even a cursory examination of the media available in a single city or nation, it is readily apparent that sport has a significant presence across all media forms. Moreover, the media coverage of sport saturates daily life (Rowe, 1999), a phenomenon clearly illustrated by the way in which News Corporation sees itself in the following annual report excerpt:

Virtually every minute of the day, in every time zone on the planet, people are watching, reading and interacting with our products. We're reaching





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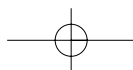
### *Sport and the Media: managing the nexus*

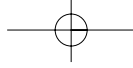
people from the moment they wake up until they fall asleep. We give them their morning weather and traffic reports through our television outlets around the world. We enlighten and entertain them with such newspapers as *The New York Post* and *The Times* as they have breakfast, or take the train to work. We update their stock prices and give them the world's biggest news stories every day through such news channels as FOX or Sky News. When they shop for groceries after work, they use our SmartSource coupons to cut their family's food bill. And when they get home in the evening, we're there to entertain them with compelling first-run entertainment on FOX or the day's biggest game on our broadcast, satellite and cable networks. Or the best movies from Twentieth Century Fox Film if they want to see a first run movie. Before going to bed, we give them the latest news, and then they can crawl into bed with one of our best-selling novels from HarperCollins (News Corporation, 1999; cited in Law, Harvey & Kemp, 2002).

The relationship between sport and the media has become the defining commercial and cultural connection for both industries at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The media has transformed sport from an amateur pursuit into a hyper-commercialized industry, while sport has delivered massive audiences and advertising revenues to the media. The coverage of sport on television in particular has created a product to be consumed by audiences, sold by clubs and leagues, bought and sold by media organizations and manipulated by advertisers.

Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, the relationship between the media and sport industries intensified, to the point that they have become so entwined it is difficult to determine where one ends and the other begins. In an attempt to identify this process, as well as inform public and academic discourse, authors have combined the words sport and media in a variety of permutations. The common theme has been the creation of a new word or phrase that is representative of the nexus between these two commercial industries. In 1980s and 1990s, the sport/media complex and the media/sport production complex were both used to frame academic analyses of sport and the media (Jhally, 1984, 1989; Maguire, 1993; Maguire, 1999). At the end of the twentieth century an edited collection was published with the title *MediaSport* (Wenner, 1998). Whether the words are juxtaposed, jammed together to create a new word or separated by 'and the', it is clear that there is an imperative to characterize the process by which 'sports, and the discourses that surround them' became, as Boyd (1997:ix) suggested, 'one of the master narratives of twentieth-century culture'.

The importance of this master narrative has been enhanced by the growing globalization of media corporations and the use of sport to consolidate established markets and exploit new ones, as well as the ways in which mediated sport is used to construct individual and collective identities. The extent to which this master narrative has become an assumed part of global, cultural, commercial and personal discourses is illustrated by Rowe's (1999:8) assertion that 'a trained capacity to decode sports texts and to detect the forms of ideological deployment of sport in the media is, irrespective of cultural taste,





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### *Sport and the media: a defining relationship*

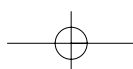
a crucial skill', and 'an important aspect of a fully realized cultural citizenship'. In other words, the mediation of sport has become so pervasive that in order to live within the cultural and social world you must necessarily be able to understand the sport media nexus.

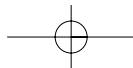
## Managing the nexus

Over the course of the twentieth-century sport was transformed from a typically ad hoc unregulated amateur activity to one driven by professional standards and accountability at all levels. This transformation has resulted in the proliferation of and demand for sport management training in related areas such as human resource management, financial management, event management and organizational behaviour. The broad transformation from amateur to professional and the need for professional sport management, particularly at the elite or major league level, is directly related to the extent and breadth of the sport media nexus. Whereas sport organizations were once guarded and cautious about the role of the media and the impact that broadcasting might have on live attendance, they are now engaged in a media partnership that delivers a majority of revenue through broadcast rights and associated sponsorships. The corollary of the importance and significance of the nexus is that it requires management. This notion is compounded by the competitiveness of the media industry generally and the sport media industry more specifically. An examination of a major daily newspaper will reveal that national, state and local governments, entertainers from television, film and music, business corporations, tourism destinations, not to mention sport stars, teams and leagues are some of the people and institutions vying for media coverage. Media space, despite the proliferation of types and forms, is limited. As such it is a valuable commodity because it can generate awareness and revenue, as well as confer status, prestige and credibility.

Without athletes sport cannot exist. Hence, player management has expanded exponentially in professional and elite sport since the 1960s in particular. Player welfare programmes have been developed, as have talent identification schemes, elite pathways, player associations and unions. In other words, the importance of players and athletes to the sport enterprise has been matched by administrative and management systems designed to protect and enhance sport as a product. It is too much to say that without the media sport cannot exist. In this respect, those who play the game are more important than those who watch or report on it. However, it is clear that professional sport in particular would cease to exist in its current form without the media. Thus, like the development of player management, the management of the media also requires systems and strategies to ensure the success of sport organizations.

Sport teams are not only competing against other teams for coverage, but against other sports, against other leisure options and against a myriad of other newsworthy events and announcements. This competitive environment





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### *Sport and the Media: managing the nexus*

cannot be left to chance, whereby a sport team or league conducts its business in the hope that it will receive media coverage. Rather, like other aspects of the sport business, where individuals, teams and leagues seek to obtain a competitive advantage, media coverage is enhanced by effective planning and management.

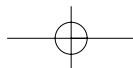
The media coverage that a sport receives is directly proportional to the amount of revenue that individuals and organizations are able to generate from its broadcast or reporting. A large organization, such as the National Football League in the United States of America is able to generate massive revenues through broadcast rights fees because of the audiences it is able to deliver to media organizations. It is also able to generate revenue through commercial sponsorship, which is proportional to the amount of media coverage. Throughout the last quarter of the twentieth century and the early part of the twenty-first professional sport in particular has become dependent on the media. It is clear that in order to be successful in the competitive arena of professional sport, a team, league or event must not only have official media partners, but must also be able to attract general media coverage that illustrates a broad interest or awareness among the population. In order to remain successful, teams, leagues and events must manage their ongoing relationship with the media, while teams, leagues and events that are not as successful as they would like to be must develop systems and apply strategies to either begin the relationship or enhance it. This book is designed to provide prospective and practising sport managers with the knowledge and skills to engage in effective sport media management and successfully navigate the sport media nexus.

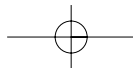
## What is driving the sport media nexus?

The relationship between sport and the media is defined by change. Neither sport nor the media are static industries and their relationship has enhanced both the rate of change and the fluidity of each at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The following discussion identifies a series of drivers that influence sport, the media and the relationship between the two: technology, commercialization, convergence and globalization. These drivers provide the context for much that follows in subsequent chapters.

### Technology

Technological change has been a key driver in the relationships between the media and all aspects of society, not to mention the nexus between sport and the media. In simple terms, the transition from newspapers to radio, to television and then to the Internet illustrates a rapid development in communication





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## *Sport and the media: a defining relationship*

technology. In turn this development has had an impact on access for consumers, as well as power and influence for owners and operators.

As a result of technological change, in a relatively short period of human history, a transformation has occurred. People who were previously limited to information that related to their local surrounds now have access to information on a global scale. The currency of this information was previously bound or constrained by the lack of technological development. Whereas information might have taken days or weeks to reach its audience, through advances in mobile technology in particular, this information is now effectively immediate. These developments within the context of the evolution of the sport media nexus will be addressed in more detail in the following chapter.

### **Commercialization**

The relationship between sport and the media is not predicated on benevolence or generosity. The media does not report on sport as a function of public service, nor does sport provide the media with access merely to increase public awareness. Rather, the sport media nexus is driven by commercial forces.

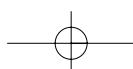
Since the late 1960s sport has become a commercial vehicle for media organizations, sponsors and advertisers. As a result, professional sports in particular have become increasingly wealthy, as well as dominant. Professional athletes and teams are often referred to as products, properties, commodities or businesses. Professional football teams in Europe such as Manchester United in England, Real Madrid in Spain and AC Milan in Italy are estimated to have annual revenues of between US \$250 million and US \$1,250 million. By any measure these are significant businesses. Importantly, their wealth has been driven by the media. Where their revenue was once derived primarily from match or gate receipts, they are now dependent on broadcast rights or commercial sponsorship that is directly proportional to the amount of media coverage they generate. Professional sport is now a commodity that can be bought and sold by the media, as well as a vehicle through which other businesses can promote and sell their products. This 'hyper-commercialism' is discussed throughout the chapters in Part II.

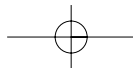
### **Convergence**

Convergence has become a buzzword in media studies and to a lesser extent within sport media studies (Turner & Cunningham, 2002). Convergence refers to a multitude of drivers in the sport media landscape.

First, convergence refers to technological change, whereby the means of delivery are becoming integrated. For example, where a household might previously have had an antenna to receive a television signal, a telephone to place and receive calls, and a radio to receive transmissions, these might now be available through a single cable, which also delivers pay television and Internet access.

Second, convergence refers to the phenomenon of increasing cross-media ownership. For example, a newspaper or television station might previously





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### *Sport and the Media: managing the nexus*

have been owned independently of any other media interests. In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century it was usual for a newspaper to be a family business. At the start of the twenty-first century this is the exception rather than the norm. It is now far more likely that a single media organization will have commercial interests in television, print media, film and Internet. In short, this means that media organizations are able to promote a single product, such as a sport team or league, across multiple media forms for commercial advantage.

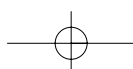
Third, convergence refers to the increasing national and global domination of large media organizations, otherwise known as media conglomerates or transnational media corporations. The rise of media organizations such as News Corporation, Walt Disney Company and Bertelsmann has resulted in an increasing lack of diversity. Rather than a variety of small media organizations, the global media landscape is dominated by massive media organizations that continue to acquire smaller organizations, increasing both their reach and economies of scale. Furthermore, it is increasingly likely that these conglomerates will have mutual commercial interests, which further increases the industry's complexity and lack of diversity.

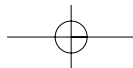
Fourth and finally, convergence refers to the ownership of content and the means of distribution. For example, in the United States of America, many sport teams are owned by media organizations. In these cases the commercial interests of previously independent entities have converged.

## **Globalization**

It could be argued that globalization is the most important driver of the sport media nexus, however, it is more useful to view technological change, commercialization and convergence as drivers that have all led to the increasing globalization of media and sport media. Without advances in technology and increases in access to information, globalization would not have occurred to the extent that it has. The commercial imperative behind the sport media relationship has driven sports and media organizations to find and then reach new markets, often on the other side of the world, while the rise of media conglomerates has facilitated, not hindered globalization. It should be noted that there are other important factors that have had an impact on globalization, such as economic trade, labour migration and the ease of international travel. However, the media remains the most important driver of globalization in the world today. The media is both an essential feature of daily life and the most tangible indicator of globalization.

At one level globalization has driven and accelerated changes in the relationship between sport and the media, while at another level sport and its media partners have played an important role in the globalizing process. Sports like cricket and rugby union created World Cups to determine a world champion in the sport every 4 years, despite the fact that only a handful of nations are proficient at an international level. World championships such as these are the direct result of the global appeal of sport, as well as the increasing amounts of revenue available to sports through broadcast rights





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### *Sport and the media: a defining relationship*

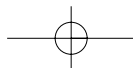
agreements. On the other hand, sport has been used as a conduit of globalization. The popularity and appeal of the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games are examples of the impact of sport and sport media in the globalizing process.

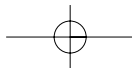
## The structure of the book

This book is divided into four parts. The first part, of which the current chapter forms the first half, consists of two chapters that are designed to introduce the reader to the concepts that underpin the sport media nexus and examine its evolution. The premise of the book's second chapter is that an understanding of the history and development of the sport media nexus is essential to participating in the contemporary sport media management landscape. In other words, without a clear sense of the ways in which the relationship between sport and the media evolved, it is difficult to understand its current status and contexts.

The second part of the book, sport media landscapes, is a detailed examination of the sport media nexus. The chapters in this part are intended to provide a comprehensive examination of the way in which the sport and media industries interact. More specifically, the chapters provide: an overview of the sport and media industries; an examination of the way in which broadcast rights are bought and sold and how sport and media organizations leverage sponsorship and advertising revenue from the media coverage of sport; an analysis of sport media regulation and government intervention in both industries; a thematic examination of sport media texts and finally an investigation of the production of sport media texts from an institutional perspective that will provide the basis for some of the information contained in Part III of the book.

The third part of the book, sport media strategies, is a detailed examination of the key strategies used to manage media communications and interactions within the sporting context. The chapters in this part are not designed for those people who produce media, as there are numerous textbooks that examine the role, functions and skills of journalists, editors and associated media professionals. Rather, the chapters in this part are designed to develop the knowledge and skills of those people who will be engaged in managing the media, communication and public relations activities of sport organizations, which include clubs, leagues, associations and event organizers. The sport media strategies part contains five chapters that examine specific components of sport media management. First, the process by which sport media managers plan for media coverage and what strategies they use to promote their organization. Second, media communications such as media releases, fact sheets and media guides. Third, media interactions such as media conferences and interviews. Fourth, the management of elite athletes in a celebrity culture. Fifth and finally, managing crises and scandals to ensure the reputation of the organization is maintained. Upon completing this part of the book





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## *Sport and the Media: managing the nexus*

the reader should be able to apply skills, strategies and techniques to the planning, acquisition and management of media coverage within a variety of sport organizations.

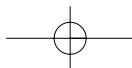
The fourth and final part of the book contains a solitary chapter that examines the future of sport media. This chapter is intended to introduce the reader to a variety of trends and scenarios that might influence the sport media nexus throughout the next one to two decades. It is expected that the reader will be able to relate these trends and scenarios back to the knowledge and skills gained during the preceding chapters and be able to contextualize the role of sport media management professionals in the future.

## Summary

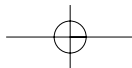
This chapter has introduced the concepts of sport and the media, as well as the nexus between them. Importantly, it has highlighted that we live in a world that is saturated by sport media, the result of a defining cultural and commercial relationship between these two massive industries. The extent of these commercial and cultural connections is such that the sport media nexus demands management, a theme that will be reinforced throughout the following chapters. The chapter also contained discussion of a series of key sport media drivers – technological change, commercialism, convergence and globalization – each of these drivers or contexts inform both the evolution of the sport media nexus, as well as its continued development. Finally, the chapter concluded with an outline of the structure of the book and the chapters that follow. Review questions and exercises are listed below to assist with confirming your knowledge of the core concepts and principles introduced in this chapter.

## Review questions and exercises

1. What are the key features of sport?
2. Should card games and similar activities be considered sport, and does media coverage of the World Poker Tour indicate that only two of the three sport dimensions are required for media coverage?
3. What is media?
4. List the media that you interact with on a daily basis. To what extent is your day saturated by media in general and sport media more specifically?
5. What sustains the sport media nexus?
6. Why does the sport media nexus require management?







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*Sport and the media: a defining relationship*

7. What is the most important driver of the sport media nexus? Why?
8. Compare a major daily newspaper from today with one from the 1950s. Is the sport being reported local, global or international? Are there any differences?
9. Identify the most popular newspapers, television stations and magazines where you live and find out who owns them. Is there any convergence?
10. Choose a professional sport or league and find out what percentage of the revenue is directly or indirectly related to media coverage.

