

Long-term Recall of Sponsorship Sources

An Empirical Investigation of Stadium and Sport Cafe Audiences

*T. Bettina Cornwell, Isabelle Maignan
and Richard Irwin*

Department of Marketing
Fogelman College of Business and Economics
The University of Memphis

Department of Marketing
Fogelman College of Business and Economics
The University of Memphis

Bureau of Sport and Leisure Commerce
The University of Memphis
Memphis, Tennessee

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the long-term unaided recall and aided recognition of a collegiate basketball team's sponsors. Based on a sample of 222 individuals, it was found that respondents had trouble recalling sponsorship sources, and confounded sponsors and advertisers. Individuals who were involved in basketball were the most likely to recognise sponsors.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past several years, the sponsorship of sports, events and causes has increasingly attracted the attention of marketers as both a promotion and a communication tool. Despite the growth and popularity of sponsorship-linked marketing programs, little research has been conducted regarding the effectiveness of sponsorship. In fact, scholars have shown that corporate sponsors are unlikely to evaluate the impact of their investments in events or celebrities (Hulks, 1980; McDonald, 1991). The few empirical evaluations of sponsorship have yielded ambiguous results regarding the effectiveness of sponsorship: some authors record positive image effects, comparable to that of advertising (Rajaretnam, 1994; Turco, 1995), while other researchers report that sponsorship has little or no effect in terms of recall and company image (Javalgi et al., 1994; Otker and Hayes, 1987).

In light of the conflicting findings to date, the present study examines some of the factors which may explain the differences observed in the recall of sponsorship sources. We first assess the ability of individuals to differentiate sponsors from advertisers. Then we analyse the effects of viewership experience, enthusiasm, involvement and knowledge on recall and recognition of sponsorship sources. Unlike previous analyses, this research focuses on the long-term recall of sponsors over the basketball season. Also unique to this study is the inclusion of two types of audiences: those typically attending games in stadiums and those typically viewing the games at a televised location. A review of past research findings regarding the nature and effects of sponsorship follows.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The Nature of Sponsorship

Sponsorship has been defined as 'the provision of assistance either financial or in kind to an activity by a commercial organisation for the purpose of achieving communications objectives' (Meenaghan, 1991, p. 9). The activity sponsored may be an event (for example, a special art exhibition or the Soccer World Cup), a team (for example, a basketball team), or a person (for example, a tennis player). Many different reasons may lead a company to become a sponsor. Some of the goals most commonly mentioned in past research include community involvement, image improvement and increasing brand awareness (compare, Hoek, Gendall and West, 1990; Polonsky et al., 1995).

Sponsorship is often confused with advertising. However, in contrast with an advertiser, a sponsor does not tightly control the medium and the content of

the message it diffuses (Javalgi et al., 1994). The message of a sponsor is embedded in the nature and characteristics of the sponsored activity or individual (Pham, 1992). Further, the nature of the audiences involved in sponsorship and advertising is significantly different. Hastings (1984) explains that the advertising audience consists essentially of viewers, whereas the audience of importance in sponsorship may be classified in terms of active participants, spectators and media followers.

Sponsorship is often compared to philanthropy, even though it significantly differs from it; unlike a sponsor, a patron holds little expectation of concrete benefits, and his/her investment is motivated by altruism alone (compare, Cunningham, Taylor and Reeder, 1993). Sponsorships are conducted primarily for commercial purposes, and thus belong to the domain of marketing activities. With the progressive recognition of sponsorship as a marketing technique on its own has emerged the necessity to evaluate its effectiveness relative to other promotional techniques.

Past Assessments of Sponsorship Effectiveness

Most of the empirical studies evaluating the impact of sponsorship involvement have used tracking measures. Thus they have recorded the awareness, familiarity and preferences engendered by sponsorship on the basis of consumer surveys (McDonald, 1991). Overall, the results of these investigations are inconclusive. For example, Javalgi et al. (1994) found that the effect of sponsorship in terms of corporate image varied greatly from business to business. In some cases, sponsorship seemed to have small positive effects, but in other cases its impact appeared to be essentially negative. Ambiguous results were also reported by Nicholls, Roslow and Laskey (1994) when they monitored the effects of sponsorship in terms of brand preferences. It should be noted that these studies were concerned solely with the overall measurement of brand awareness and company image. They did not identify whether some characteristics of consumers have an effect on the tracking measures obtained.

Pham (1992) examined the effect of three constructs (involvement, pleasure and arousal) on the aided recognition of sponsorship stimuli under controlled conditions. Pham surveyed university students after the projection of an unaired soccer game with embedded billboards. Involvement with the game just watched was found to have a significant impact on the recognition of sponsorship stimuli. Specifically, Pham identified an inverted-U relationship between involvement and recall. Pleasure and arousal were not found to be significantly related to recall. However,

the gender of the respondents impacted on their recall: males outperformed females on the sponsorship recognition task. Overall, Pham improved our understanding of the effectiveness of sponsorship by demonstrating the impact of involvement and gender on the aided recall of sponsors. The work of Walliser (1994) extended the work of Pham and found that intense emotions may have a negative influence on the ability to recall sponsorship sources.

Other research contributing to our understanding of the recognition and recall of sponsorship sources comes from the work of Quester (1997a, 1997b, 1997c). Quester (1997b) found that unaided and aided awareness levels of sponsorship sources is greater for respondents having attended a Grand Prix event as measured by pre- and post-event survey. Quester has also reported evidence of 'incidental' or 'unpremeditated' ambush effects where misattributions of sponsorship sources are made by respondents.

The empirical investigation reported in this paper builds on the work of Pham (1992) and Walliser (1994) but does not replicate it, and was conducted concurrent to the work of Quester (1997a, 1997b, 1997c). In contrast to prior research, this study examines whether similar levels of aided recognition can be found in the long term (for a sports season) and in a natural environment. Also, the present research investigates whether audience characteristics influence the long-term recall of sponsorship sources in these natural settings.

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The Effect of Leveraging Sponsorship with Advertising

Most business writers commenting on the value of sponsorship will agree that the sponsorship fee paid must be leveraged by an investment in advertising and promotion in order to be effective (Johnson, 1995). Past research also provides preliminary support for this observation. For example, Otker and Hayes (1987) observed that the highest levels of improvements in brand recall and corporate image associated with the 1986 World Cup sponsors were obtained by those companies that advertised the most during the event. Pope and Voges (1995) also reported that the recognition of a rugby game's sponsors was greater for companies that supplemented their sponsorship with broadcasted advertisements. Based on these observations, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H₁ The recall of a sponsorship source will be greater when the sponsorship of an event is supported by additional promotional efforts.

Assessing the Confusion of Sponsors and Advertisers

Past research has shown some indication of the inability of most consumers to distinguish between sponsors and advertisers (Otker and Hayes, 1987; Javalgi et al., 1994). This is especially true when advertisers seek to 'ambush' official sponsors by associating themselves with a sponsored event without paying a sponsorship fee (Sandler and Shani, 1993), and may be equally true when unintentional ambushings are made possible by low promotional spending on the part of official sponsors (Cornwell, 1997). These findings are used as a basis for hypothesis *H₂*:

H₂ Individuals will not differentiate between the sponsors and advertisers of an event.

The influence of location (in this study, a stadium or cafe) has not been systematically addressed in previous empirical research, however, as mentioned previously, there is a great deal of discussion regarding the various types of audiences for sponsorship. Examination of the influence of location on the unaided recall and aided recognition of sponsorship sources is exploratory and is examined in conjunction with 'viewership variables' and 'interest-in-event variables' as proposed below.

The Effect of Viewership Experience

Past research has considered the recall of sponsors only by consumers who watched the event in the same context (for example, either they all attended the event, or they all watched it on television). However, it would be interesting to determine how the perception of sponsors for a given activity varies according to viewership experiences. Theoretically, one could argue from the work of Pham (1992) and Walliser (1994) that those typically attending the event might have lower levels of recall, based on their findings of the potential negative influence of emotion on memory for sponsorship sources. However, the present study allows the respondents to recall from their entire set of experiences during the basketball season, rather than from a single episode. Therefore, since we have no previous research comparing long-term viewership-experience patterns with regard to location, we pose the following hypotheses:

H₃ Past game attending, television viewing and radio listening will each have a positive relationship with long-term *unaided* recall of sponsorship sources, regardless of audience location.

H₄ Past game attending, television viewing and radio listening will each have a positive relationship with long-term *aided* recognition of sponsorship sources, regardless of audience location.

The Effect of Enthusiasm, Involvement and Knowledge

Pham (1992) evaluated how the recall of sponsors was affected by involvement, arousal and pleasure. He assessed the enthusiasm of respondents with the specific event they had just watched. Respondents had to evaluate statements such as: 'While I was watching the game, I felt happy/unhappy', and 'During the game, I was jittery/dull'. Given the long-term orientation of the present analysis, the concepts of arousal and pleasure as utilised by Pham are not appropriate. Instead, the notion of enthusiasm with sports in general was preferred. It represents the interest and enjoyment of consumers for a class of activities. A consumer who is enthusiastic about a certain type of activity may pay attention to the identity of the companies which facilitate its organisation.

Pham (1992) also hypothesised and observed that involvement had an inverted-U effect on the short-term recognition of embedded sponsorship stimuli. Pham explained that 'at low levels of involvement, little attentional capacity (effort) will be allocated to the event as a whole' (p. 86). Since sponsorship stimuli are an integral part of the event, they are likely to attract low levels of attention also. However, 'as involvement increases, more overall attention is devoted to the event, and also, as a result of their embeddedness, to the sponsorship stimuli' (p.86). When the level of involvement becomes high, the individual is so absorbed in the event itself, that he/she is unlikely to pay any attention to the surrounding activities. Consequently, after a certain level of involvement, the recall of sponsorship stimuli starts declining.

Whereas Pham (1992) evaluated the involvement of respondents with the specific game they had just watched, the present study is concerned with the overall involvement of consumers with an activity. This assessment of involvement does not reflect the felt intensity of the event. It is likely to remain quite stable over time, and thus to affect the consumer's interest in sponsors in a consistent manner. Accordingly, one could expect a continuous positive relationship between the level of overall involvement and sponsorship recall.

Finally, the level of interest in the event may be measurable not only in terms of enthusiasm and involvement, but also in terms of the viewers' knowledge of the event. For example, if a person is knowledgeable about the rules of a basketball game, he/she is likely to be involved in the event, to enjoy it and thus to potentially be more aware of the event's

sponsors. Consequently, the following hypotheses are suggested:

- H₅* Individuals' general enthusiasm for sport, felt level of involvement with a game of basketball and knowledge of the game will each be positively related to their long-term *unaided* recall of sponsorship sources, regardless of audience location.
- H₆* Individuals' general enthusiasm for sport, felt level of involvement with a game of basketball and knowledge of the game will each be positively related to their long-term *aided* recognition of sponsorship sources, regardless of audience location.

METHOD

Data Collection

Consumers were surveyed concerning their awareness of sponsorship sources before a collegiate basketball game played in the south-eastern United States in the Spring of 1995. Questionnaires were distributed in two types of locations: in the stadium where the game was about to take place, and in sport cafes airing the game (three different cafes were included because of their small size). The distribution of the questionnaires started one hour before the beginning of the game. At the stadium, people were asked to complete a questionnaire as they entered the arena. In the cafes, the televisions were not set on the channel of the game until game time, and informants were asked to complete the questionnaire before the game started. These precautions were taken to ensure that respondents were not influenced in their responses by the activities and billboards presented in the arena of the stadium, or by the advertisements released on television prior to the game.

The Survey Instrument

A three-page questionnaire was developed which required between five and seven minutes of the respondents' time to complete. Teams of trained interviewers worked simultaneously, which enabled the collection of 222 useable questionnaires: 99 at the cafes and 123 at the stadium.

Viewership Experience

Respondents were asked to provide the number of games involving the local basketball team they had attended, watched on television or listened to on the radio during the current season.

Long-term Aided Recall and Unaided Recognition

Respondents were asked to list the names of sponsors of the basketball team. Six spaces were left open for answers. The number of correct answers provided by each respondent yielded an estimation of unaided recall. Later in the questionnaire, 12 company names were proposed to assess aided recognition. Respondents were asked to identify whether each company was a 'sponsor', 'advertiser' or 'neither'. Each of these terms was defined for the respondent in the survey instrument. A 'don't know' alternative was available and respondents were also allowed to indicate both 'advertiser' and 'sponsor'. Two of the corporations mentioned were solely sponsors of the event. One was a drugstore, the other an insurance company. They will be referred to in the rest of the paper respectively as Drugstore and Insurance. Three companies were advertisers only; they were coded as Bank, Beer1 and Beer2. Four businesses were both sponsors and advertisers; they were designated by Grocery1, Grocery2, Fast Food1 and Auto Parts.

In a similar fashion, the last three company names provided to respondents in this study were employed as decoy names, and were coded as Tire, Grocery3 and Fast Food2. They were included in the list offered to the respondents to assess their propensity to guess the correct answers. The number of sponsors correctly identified provided an estimation of aided recognition. In a contemporaneous and independent study, the use of false or decoy names has been utilised by Quester (1997b) for the explicit purpose of examining mistaken attributions to non-sponsors.

Interest in the Event

The last part of the questionnaire consisted of a series of 16 statements associated with six-point Likert scales ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. The sports-enthusiasm scale developed by Dickerson and Gentry (1983) was also included in the survey. This four-item instrument assesses a person's interest in watching, talking about, reading about and attending sporting events, but not necessarily in participating in sports. It includes such items as: 'I usually read the sports page in the newspaper', and 'I thoroughly enjoy conversations about sports'. A Cronbach α of .825 was obtained for this scale.

The degree of involvement in basketball games was measured using a scale developed by Unger (1981). This five-item scale measures the degree to which a person would willingly engage in an action, without coercion or obligation. It includes statements such as 'Watching a game totally absorbs me', and 'Watching

a game helps me forget about the day's problems'. We favoured Unger's (1981) scale to the 20-item scale adopted by Pham (1992) in order to keep the questionnaire short (three pages). The involvement scale was reliable, since the Cronbach's α obtained was .895.

The individual's knowledge of basketball was assessed earlier in the instrument with five open-ended questions. The questions related to technical aspects of basketball and were ranked by level of difficulty. For each respondent, the number of correct answers was reported, which provided a 'basketball knowledge' score.

FINDINGS

Descriptive Statistics

Comparison of Demographic Characteristics

Table 1 reports the demographic features of the respondents both at the stadium and in the sport cafes. Overall, males were slightly more represented than females (55.8% and 44.3% respectively). The largest group of respondents (45.5%) were between 18 and 35. Chi-square analyses were conducted to examine whether the samples of respondents at the stadium and in the cafes varied according to demographic features. Even though the gender distribution was similar at the two locations, respondents at the stadium were significantly older than those at the cafes (see Table 1; significance here and elsewhere in the study is considered at the .05 level). Indeed, respectively 52.03% and 2.02% of the respondents were older than 55 at the stadium and in the sport cafes.

Given these important age differences and the gender results of Pham (1992), who found that European males were more likely to recall the sponsorship stimuli embedded in a soccer game than females, it was deemed essential to determine whether age and gender had a significant impact on the dependent measures utilised in this study. Accordingly, analysis of variance was used to examine differences in recall and recognition with respect to age and gender. Age and gender were not found to be significant covariates and were therefore not included in further analysis. This observation on gender is in agreement with the findings of Stotlar (1993), who did not record any difference in the number of Olympic sponsors recognised by males and females, and Quester (1997b), who found no significant impact for age and gender on respondent recognition and recall of Adelaide Formula One sponsors.

Variable	Overall	Stadium	Cafes	Chi-square	Sig.
Gender	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)		
Male	123 (55.76)	62 (50.82)	61 (61.62)		
Female	98 (44.30)	60 (49.18)	38 (38.36)		
Total	221 (100)	122 (100)	99 (100)	2.58	.11
Age	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)		
18–35	101 (45.50)	18 (14.63)	83 (83.83)		
36–55	55 (24.80)	41 (33.33)	14 (14.14)		
> 55	66 (29.71)	64 (52.03)	2 (2.02)		
Total	222 (100)	123 (100)	99 (100)	112.04	.00

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of respondents by location.¹

Comparison of Viewership Experience

On average, respondents had attended eight games in person, had watched ten of them on television, and had listened to three of them on the radio (see Table 2). The past viewership experience differed for respondents at the stadium and in the cafes. Indeed, in a series of t-tests, significant differences were found between the two groups. Respondents present at the stadium had attended, watched on television and listened to a greater number of games than respondents at the cafes (see Table 2).

Comparison of Interest in Event

On average, respondents were quite enthusiastic about sports in general, they were involved in basketball games and were knowledgeable of basketball (see Table 2). However, according to the t-tests conducted (see Table 2), respondents at the stadium were significantly more enthusiastic and involved than their counterparts in the cafes. The two groups did not differ in terms of knowledge of basketball.

Variables	Overall mean	Mean at stadium	Mean at cafes	t-value	Sig.
Viewership					
Attended	8.49	14.35	1.39	16.45	.00
Watched on television	10.53	13.24	7.47	4.77	.00
Listened on radio	2.64	3.90	1.06	4.66	.00
Interest for event					
Enthusiasm	4.72	5.12	4.23	5.41	.00
Involvement	3.99	4.51	3.35	7.00	.00
Knowledge	3.42	3.51	3.30	1.12	.26
Recall and recognition					
Unaided recall	.89	1.09	.63	3.74	.00
Aided recognition	2.31	2.54	2.01	2.90	.00

Table 2. Differences in viewership experience, interest for event, and long-term recall and recognition, by location.

Comparison of Long-term Recall and Recognition

Considering that respondents at the stadium had followed more games, were more enthusiastic about sports and were also more involved in basketball games, it comes as no surprise that they also displayed a significantly greater level of unaided recall and aided recognition. On average, respondents at the stadium could recall 1.09 sponsorship sources spontaneously; this number was only .63 for respondents in the cafes. The average recall of respondents at the stadium compares favourably to the average unaided recall of 1.03 found by Quester (1997b) before an Adelaide Grand Prix event. The sponsorship-source awareness for the cafes appears to be low, but comparison data for venues of this type are not known to the authors.

The aided-recognition level was 2.54 for respondents at the stadium and 2.01 for respondents at the cafes (see Table 2). These aided-recognition levels for sponsorship sources are similar to the research summarised by Walliser (1994), where average aided-recall levels ranged from 2.28 to 7.78. Overall, the two locations differed in terms of demographics, viewership experience, interest for the event (except for knowledge of basketball), and levels of sponsorship awareness, however, the average unaided-recall and aided-recognition levels seem to be in keeping with other investigations of sponsorship sources.

Hypothesis Testing

As could be expected, the average number of sponsorship sources correctly identified was greater for the aided recognition than the unaided recall (over two on average versus less than one respectively; see Table 2). A detailed analysis of both unaided recall and aided recognition provides information to test for Hypotheses 1 and 2.

Unaided Recall

A great number of respondents (42%) failed to recall any sponsorship source spontaneously. However, 33.5% could remember one sponsor of the college basketball team, and 23.2% could recall two or three sponsorship sources (see Table 3). Grocery1 was the most recalled company name: 44.2% of the respondents listed it as a sponsor (see Table 4). In fact, Grocery1 was both a sponsor and an advertiser of the basketball team. Three other companies that were both sponsors and advertisers were among the six most recalled names: Auto-parts (8%), Fast food1 (7.1%), and Bank (6.7%). None of the firms that were sponsors of the basketball team, but which did not advertise during the games, were among the most recalled names. These results provide support for Hypothesis 1. Consequently, for this data it seems that an integrated communication strategy based on both sponsorship and advertising is superior to using either advertising or sponsorship in isolation.

Number of sponsors recalled	Frequency	Percentage
0	94	42.0
1	75	33.5
2-3	53	23.2
4-5	11	1.3
> 5	0	0

Table 3. Number of long-term unaided recalls of sponsors (both locations pooled).

Brand or company	Frequency	Percentage	Sponsor or advertiser
Grocery1	99.00	44.20	Sponsor and advertiser
Meat Product	37.00	16.50	Advertiser
Radio Station	26.00	11.60	Advertiser
Auto Parts	18.00	8.00	Sponsor and advertiser
Fast Food1	16.00	7.10	Sponsor and advertiser
Bank	15.00	6.70	Sponsor and advertiser

Table 4. Most recalled brands and companies in long-term unaided recall (both locations pooled).

Two advertisers (Meat Product and Radio Station) were the second and third most remembered names. Thus, consumers did not appear to distinguish between sponsors and advertisers, which supports Hypothesis 2. In addition, four of the six company names most commonly recalled (Grocery1, Radio Station, Auto Parts, and Bank) designated companies that were either local or that were highly visible (in terms of advertising expenditures) in the city where the study took place. Since many national corporations also sponsored the basketball team and advertised during the games, our results suggest that sponsorships have a greater likelihood of being recalled if they involve companies which are well known in the community hosting the sponsored event.

Aided Recognition

Four different scores were computed to analyse the answers given to the aided-recall portion of our questionnaire: (1) the number of sponsors correctly classified as such (the maximum number of correct answers was six), (2) the number of advertisers correctly classified (the maximum number was seven), (3) the number of decoy company and brand names incorrectly classified as sponsors or advertisers (three decoy names were included in the list provided), and (4) the total number of names correctly classified as sponsors, advertisers or decoy names (see Table 5). The number of names classified by respondents as sponsors was greater than the number of names classified as advertisers, when in fact the list proposed contained more advertisers than sponsors.

The answers obtained for both unaided recall and aided recognition converge to signal the lack of consumers' differentiation of sponsors and advertisers. Hypothesis 2 is further supported. This finding indicates that the respondents confused advertisers with sponsors. These results extend to the long-term effects of sponsorship in terms of short-term recall acknowledged by past research (Javalgi et al., 1994; Otker and Hayes, 1987; Sandler and Shani, 1993). The observed confusion gives some support to the opportunity for 'ambush marketing', whereby businesses associate themselves indirectly with an event 'in an effort to reap the same benefits as an official sponsor' (Sandler and Shani, 1989, p. 9). However, the advertisers in this study did not appear to be intentional ambushers. It appears that advertising during games and sponsorship of media (this was the case with the radio station that sponsored the broadcast) can confuse individuals with regard to sponsorship. These associations are more appropriately termed unintentional ambushings (Cornwell, 1997) and are the same as the 'incidental ambushing' effects described by Quester (1997b).

Most of the respondents (65.7%) classified between one and three of the decoy company or brand names as sponsors or advertisers. In fact, of all the names proposed, those that identified companies which were not present at the basketball games were the most recalled. Two of these decoy companies were large national corporations (Tire and Fast Food2), while the third one was a regional retailer highly visible (due to

No.	Sponsors correctly classified	Advertisers correctly classified	Decoy names incorrectly classified	Correct answers
0	29 (12.9%)	67 (19.9%)	77 (34.4%)	19 (8.5%)
1	31 (13.8%)	36 (16.1%)	66 (24.5%)	10 (4.5%)
2	58 (25.9%)	53 (23.7%)	58 (25.9%)	18 (8.0%)
3	68 (30.4%)	34 (15.2%)	23 (10.3%)	32 (14.3%)
4	24 (10.7%)	23 (10.3%)	N/A	62 (27.7%)
5	11 (4.9%)	10 (4.5%)	N/A	43 (19.2%)
6	3 (1.4%)	1 (.4%)	N/A	25 (11.2%)
>6	N/A	N/A	N/A	15 (10.3%)

Table 5. Analysis of long-term aided recognition² (both locations pooled).

heavy advertising levels) in the study area. Accordingly, consumers appeared to associate highly visible company and brand names with the sponsorship role. This appears to be another example of unintentional ambushing.

A series of multiple regressions was conducted to test for Hypotheses 3 through 6, outlined earlier. Results are presented in Tables 6 through 9. In each of the

multiple regressions, location was treated as a dummy variable when examining the influence of viewership-experience variables (attending, watching on television and listening on radio) on unaided recall (Table 6) and aided recognition (Table 7) of sponsors; and when examining the influence of interest-in-event variables (enthusiasm, involvement and knowledge) on unaided recall (Table 8) and aided recognition (Table 9) of sponsorship sources.

Variable	B	Beta	T	Sig.
LOCA	-.487	-.257	-2.364	.019
ATTEND	.003	.024	.229	.820
DATTEND	.033	.093	1.238	.217
(Constant)	1.080		5.972	.000
Variable	B	Beta	T	Sig.
LOCA	-.510	-.282	-2.725	.007
TV	.001	.001	.126	.900
DTV	.010	.078	.757	.450
(Constant)	1.046		7.425	.000
Variable	B	Beta	T	Sig.
LOCA	-.392	-.207	-2.799	.006
RADIO	.002	.117	1.628	.105
DRADIO	-.010	.018	-.250	.803
(Constant)	1.012		10.359	.000

Table 6. Multiple regression of viewership-experience variables, by location, on unaided recall of sponsors.

Variable	B	Beta	T	Sig.
LOCA	-.673	-.242	-2.180	.030
ATTEND	-.008	-.052	-.485	.628
DATTEND	.042	.081	1.060	.290
(Constant)	2.625		9.687	.000
Variable	B	Beta	T	Sig.
LOCA	-.732	-.263	-2.515	.013
TV	-.004	-.026	-.293	.770
DTV	.024	.113	1.083	.280
(Constant)	2.583		11.776	.000
Variable	B	Beta	T	Sig.
LOCA	-.523	-.187	-2.482	.014
RADIO	.006	.020	.273	.785
DRADIO	-.006	-.007	-.093	.926
(Constant)	2.523		17.165	.000

Table 7. Multiple regression of viewership-experience variables, by location, on aided recognition of sponsors.

Variable	B	Beta	T	Sig.
LOCA	-1.393	-.743	-2.615	.010
ENTHU	-.067	-.091	-.780	.437
DENTHU	.206	.512	1.921	.056
(Constant)	1.435		3.199	.002
Variable	B	Beta	T	Sig.
LOCA	-1.284	-.696	-2.862	.005
INVOLVE	-.073	-.103	-.931	.353
DINVOLVE	.238	.486	2.214	.028
(Constant)	1.380		3.821	.000
Variable	B	Beta	T	Sig.
LOCA	-.447	-.237	-1.351	.178
KNOW	.080	.118	1.199	.232
DKNOW	7.799	.002	.009	.993
(Constant)	.815		3.269	.001

Table 8. Multiple regression of interest-in-event variables, by location, on unaided recall of sponsors.

Variable	B	Beta	T	Sig.
LOCA	-.136	-.049	-.167	.868
ENTHU	.080	.073	.605	.546
DENTHU	-.065	.109	-.397	.692
(Constant)	2.141		3.121	.002
Variable	B	Beta	T	Sig.
LOCA	.591	.210	.849	.397
INVOLVE	.264	.244	2.179	.031
DINVOLVE	-.208	-2.78	-1.247	.214
(Constant)	1.347		2.404	.017
Variable	B	Beta	T	Sig.
LOCA	-.503	-.180	-1.008	.315
KNOW	.020	.020	.197	.844
DKNOW	-.008	.012	-.062	.951
(Constant)	2.475		6.582	.000

Table 9. Multiple regression of interest-in-event variables, by location, on aided recognition of sponsors.

Legend for variables found in Tables 6 to 9.			
LOCA	Location (Stadium, Cafe).	ENTHU	Enthusiasm with sports in general.
ATTEND	Games attended this season.	DENTHU	Interaction (between LOCA and ENTHU).
DATTEND	Interaction (between LOCA and ATTEND).	INVOLVE	Involvement with the activity (basketball).
TV	Games watched on TV this season.	DINVOLVE	Interaction (between LOCA and INVOLVE).
DTV	Interaction (between LOCA and TV).	KNOW	Knowledge of the sport basketball.
RADIO	Games listened to on radio this season.	DKNOW	Interaction (between LOCA and KNOW).
DRADIO	Interaction (between LOCA and RADIO).		

Hypotheses 3 and 4 were not supported by the findings in Tables 6 and 7 respectively. Location has a significant influence on both unaided recall and aided recognition of sponsors. Although past viewership experience of attending games, watching on television and listening on the radio naturally has a positive relationship with recall and recognition when examined in isolation, it did not show a significant relationship with the dependent variables when location is also considered. When examining recall and recognition of sponsors, location of the individual is more important than any of the past viewing experiences and consistently, being in a cafe 'condition' detracts from one's ability to recall and recognise sponsors. Clearly, there are a great number of unexplored variables potentially associated with being in the cafe condition (attention patterns, other demographic differences, psychographics, lifestyle, etc.) that may have influenced this finding.

Hypothesis 5 is also not supported by the findings in Table 8. As with the findings for viewership variables above, location has a significant influence on unaided recall when considered in conjunction with enthusiasm and involvement, however, enthusiasm and involvement do not have a significant impact on the dependent variables. Interestingly, when location is examined in conjunction with knowledge, neither location nor knowledge shows a significant relationship with the dependent variables.

Partial support for Hypothesis 6 is found in the multiple regression results shown in Table 9. Location does not have a significant influence on aided recognition when examined in conjunction with interest-in-event variables. In addition, individuals' involvement in basketball has a significant positive correlation with aided recognition of sponsors. Enthusiasm and knowledge of the sport do not show a significant relationship with the dependent variable. In summary, important differences in sponsorship-source awareness exist between those attending a game in the stadium and those watching the game in a sport cafe, except when considering the influence of involvement on aided recognition of sponsorship sources. Although sponsors may not be top of mind (as measured by unaided recall), involved audience members in either location can distinguish sport sponsors.

In light of the findings of Pham (1992), where involvement had an inverted-U effect on the short-term recognition of embedded sponsorship stimuli, the nature of the relationship between involvement and the dependent variables in this study was also examined for non-linearity. Using second-order

regression, when a squared term was entered into the model, there was no evidence of a non-linear relationship of involvement to aided recognition and only a suggestion of a non-linear relationship of involvement to unaided recall of sponsorship sources. However, several issues call the presence of a non-linear relationship into question. Firstly, there was a low r-square associated with this model (6%), and secondly, the dependent variable distribution was somewhat skewed (toward lower levels of sponsorship-source recall). As expected, the long-term involvement measured in the present study has a more constant positive relationship to unaided recall and aided recognition than the immediate involvement measures used by Pham (1992) and Walliser (1994).

CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND DISCUSSION

In conclusion, the findings of this research support previous reports that sports audiences do not draw a strong distinction between advertisers and sponsors. However, this is not necessarily a negative aspect of sport sponsorship. If a marketer is simply interested in increasing awareness of a company or brand name, then sponsorship may create that awareness in an affordable manner and with some benefits of community participation also accruing. This study did not investigate positive feelings associated with sponsoring (for example, community support), however, if the aim of the marketer is to differentiate their company or product via sponsorship (and not advertising *per se*) the marketer must make a special effort to communicate the sponsorship by leveraging it with a sponsorship-linked marketing program that touts the sponsorship.

One weakness of the current study is its cross-sectional measure of recall without including a before and after measure of short-term sponsorship-source recall. Future research could include assessment of short- and long-term recall and recognition throughout a sports season in order to capture shifts in awareness created by promotional activities. Future researchers may consider using experimental design which may enable the measurement of sponsorship recall in the absence of advertisements.

Another limitation of the current study is its focus on recognition and recall of sponsorship sources from an event prompt. Many firms are concerned about the individual's ability to form an association between the sponsored event and the brand or company. In fact, Quester (1997c) argues that:

Unless the association is made between the sponsor and the event or activity sponsored, none of the objectives reported in the literature can be expected to be achieved. In other words, there must be *at least* recognition that a company is involved as a sponsor by its target market if any commercial return is to be generated from the sponsor's investment. (Pages pending, emphasis in original.)

However, some managers may find brand awareness from a product-category prompt more relevant. This would certainly apply to the fast-moving consumer-goods sector, where the central objective of sponsorship programs is often media exposure for the brand name. Researchers may want to incorporate measures of brand awareness from a product-category prompt in future studies and examine the relationship, if any, between sponsorship-source awareness and brand awareness.

From the manager's perspective, because individuals do not differentiate between advertisers and sponsors, it is up to the sponsor to decide whether it is important to draw attention to the act of sponsoring in the mind of the consumer. If the corporate objectives of the sponsorship are to build community relationships and goodwill then awareness regarding the act of sponsoring is important. On the other hand, if brand awareness in a particular product category is the overriding objective and sponsorship is valued for its ability to connect with a particular demographic or psychographic segment then awareness of the act of sponsoring is secondary in importance or perhaps even irrelevant.

Three important generalisations for sport sponsorships can be drawn from this study. The first concerns the role of involvement in memory for sponsorship sources, the second regards important differences in audiences, and the third involves the importance of unintended ambush effects. Given that individuals tend not to make a strong distinction between sponsors and advertisers, it is important that involvement with basketball improves sponsorship recognition and, moreover, that this relationship holds for both those in the stadium location and in the sport cafes. This research finding indicates that if marketers are interested in increasing the sport sponsorship awareness of audiences, one approach might be to build involvement in the sport. This might be accomplished through a number of promotional tactics such as ways for audience members to win sports memorabilia or benefit from their game knowledge. This additional interest might be generated by what Quester (1997c) calls 'naming right' events. Her research has found that recognition of sponsors often increases after a

'naming right' event (typically a smaller event held in conjunction with a larger event).

The findings of this study also suggest that location and related past experiences of audiences for sponsored events should be of greater interest to researchers and practitioners. Corporate sport sponsors often report media exposure as a main objective of sponsorship (Cornwell and Roy, 1997), but less frequently mention the attending or participating audience. The significant differences between the attending audience and the audience viewing the game at a remote location question the need of different sponsorship program elements for on-site and remote locations. In fact, because frequent attendance is correlated with more frequent television viewing and radio listening, and that all types of viewership are positively related to sponsorship-source recall and recognition, it may be worthwhile for the sponsors to encourage or even facilitate game attendance.

The power of thematic advertising is underscored in the findings of this research. One of the most often listed product names in the unaided-recall section as a sponsor was not a sponsor, but had advertised heavily during the games with a basketball theme that featured a popular player. No mention of sponsorship was made in the advertisements but the company was very successful in creating the image of sponsorship in the mind of the audience. We have no evidence that this was its intention. This unintentional ambushing is consistent with the 'incidental ambush' effects found by Quester (1997a, 1997b). While a great deal of research and popular press coverage has been devoted to the investigation and reporting of intentional sponsorship ambushing, this research and that of Quester suggests that unintentional ambushings are perhaps of more concern to official sponsors than attack by any intentional ambusher from which many countries now offer legal recourse.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Totals for Gender and Age differ because one respondent did not indicate gender.
- 2 12 names were proposed in the questionnaire: 3 were advertisers only, 2 were sponsors only, 4 were both sponsors and advertisers, and 3 were neither sponsors nor advertisers (decoy names).

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