

Peace and Sport takes its message to East Timor - *Peace and Sport*

SPORT FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Sport has become a catalyst for urban development, for education, for health promotion and as a force for unifying divided communities and nations. But are we placing too much store on sport's role as a universal band-aid for society? **Matt Cutler** asks how the positive influence of sport can be more effectively and efficiently targeted in future.

IN THE 21ST CENTURY world of Big Brother, an intense media-savvy population is increasingly all seeing and all judgemental. There is little room for manoeuvre when it comes to doing the 'right' thing. Sport and its stars can testify to an intense level of examination, with actions both on and off the field of play heavily scrutinised.

Over a period of around ten years, the concept of sporting organisations and sponsors doing the 'right' thing by investing money and time in socially responsibility initiatives has developed from a fringe marketing idea to a mainstream strategy. No-one wants to see the high bankrolling football leagues skimming the profits without reinvesting in grassroots, nor the sizeable blue-chip companies whose branding is scattered across the sports landscape have sales go through the roof without helping out in society at the same time.

Examples of CSR initiatives in the sport are now of course widespread, with some examples of the prominent past, ongoing and future projects being outlined in case-studies that follow. That CSR is going strong, as these initiatives show, contradicts predictions by

market analysts who, looking deep into the future in the context of a faltering global economy, were quick to jump to the conclusion that CSR would be one the first casualties of the global recession.

It was thought that rather than shed jobs, freeze company wages or cut bonuses, the world's biggest brands would be all too eager to save the business by dropping CSR initiatives.

They have been proved very wrong. Not only is investment in CSR at an all-time high, quantitative and qualitative research contradicts those analysts who talked down commitment to the cause. A research project taken out in partnership between Eurosport and ZenithOptimedia, completed in October 2008, and presented at the SportBusiness 'Making the Difference' conference last month, found that 81 per cent of consumers believe "what companies do over what they say" and that 74 per cent believed CSR sports investment both helps sport to develop, and was essential as part of the marketing strategy for large brands.

So why is sport one of the fastest and most reliable CSR vehicles? And do brands and

companies within the industry continue to make the case for CSR? The answers lie in the fact that CSR is not only now a response to consumer influence, but that sport's CSR initiatives have been shown to deliver real value for those brands prepared to invest the money, time and energy into it.

Indeed CSR programmes have been seen, amongst other things, to strengthen partnerships with private investors, increase fanbases and allow brands to get out into the sports market.

In fact, so prominent is CSR now in the environment of sports marketing, it has been predicted by industry experts that in the next decade no sponsorship deal will go through without CSR as a major element to it.

Matthew Patten, chief executive of the Lords Taverners, puts CSR in the context of advertising.

"In the beginning there was an idea of advertising. At the front of 'The Times' there were 100 ads all with one line, it was just about awareness. That moved on to people with a new idea of putting pictures around advertising to make it more attractive and engaging, something that happened in the '50s and '60s.

After a while people thought if we get awareness and make it interesting, but do something alongside our consumer interest, that would be more appealing. That was the start of sponsorship et al.

"CSR is going into a fourth stage, we need to stay in reach and be creative, working alongside the interest of consumers but we also need to be a force for good.

"The idea that brands can have a positive impact in the world in which they live in, in the same way they can have a very bad impact. In a basic way I think the big marketing services groups, as they did 10 years ago with buying up sponsorship agencies, will start to move into this space and buy what is at the moment pretty much a cottage industry of all kinds of CSR agencies, and start to offer their clients a more CSR-orientated, big-brand proposition.

"The CSR proposal will become much more fundamental in their core offering."

Rather than the question being raised as to whether or not brands can stump up the cash to invest in a CSR strategy, it seems far more the case of whether brands can afford not to devote time and cash into CSR from this point forward.

CASE STUDY 1: PEACE AND SPORT

Peace and Sport, set up in Monaco under the patronage of Prince Albert II, has the specific mission of leveraging sport in as many ways as possible with the end-goal of promoting sustainable peace by raising awareness, and educating youth using the structuring values of sport.

IN ADDITION TO an annual forum, where Peace and Sport works with governments and federations to establish a platform of exchange to plan initiatives, the day-to-day work of the humanistic sport-focused project comes through investment in grassroots programmes focusing primarily in Africa, Asia, Central and South America.

With a wealth of partners including the International Rugby Board, the World Olympians Association and French football team AS Monaco, Peace and Sport also works with companies across different companies, funding both Peace and Sport itself and investing money into local initiatives. Their partners - although investing significant amounts of money - choose to

"give money without any publicity and retain a certain amount of discretion", according to Georges Vanderchmitt, president of French sports marketing agency Carat Sport and CSR advisor to Peace and Sport president Joël Bouzou.

Peace and Sport's work in East Timor has been singled out as a particular success story for an organisation which has only been going for around two years. After years of civil unrest, East Timor became a sovereign state in 2002, but with 80 per cent of its infrastructure destroyed, it has struggled to create a peaceful society. For this reason, at the request of the East Timor government, Peace and Sport intervened in February 2008 to give assistance in developing a policy for

sport directed towards youth.

Initiatives have included increasing the number of sports events to bring communities together in an effort to promote the values of peace and national unity, and building youth centres allowing daily violence in the street to be contained and facilitate long-term social integration through participation in sport.

"Peace and Sport gets in touch with local stakeholders and convinces them that there is a need to work against war and conflict," Vanderchmitt told SportBusiness International. "In East Timor Peace and Sport worked in co-ordination with local authorities in regions where many of the young population had turned aggressive and violent. By working with combat sports

federations such as taekwondo, Peace and Sport helped create step-by-step programmes to overcome violence in the region. The leaders of gangs, for example, were turned into the captains of teams so they could continue to lead groups of children but by the peaceful means of sport."

Through working in sports marketing at Carat Sport, Vanderchmitt is a stalwart believer in the value of CSR and believes more organisations should follow Peace and Sport's example.

"Ten years ago companies were not looking to invest into CSR, the job was seen as too big. But now things have changed as - despite the economy - companies are looking to invest in CSR and it needs to continue more and more."



Teaching taekwondo in East Timor - Peace and Sport

CASE STUDY 2: PREMIER RUGBY

The cogs on the Premier Rugby CSR-machine have been revolving non-stop for around a decade.

AFTER AN ORIGINAL investment into the sport of around £75 million in the first five years, the body representing the top-tier of English domestic rugby union created an infrastructure to facilitate community work. The 12 Guinness Premiership clubs currently employ around 75 full-time staff, putting in 120,000 man-hours a year in devotion focused singularly on its community programmes.

"Our model is that everything we do carries a message for social good, whether it be grass roots participation, social inclusion, education or health," explains Wayne Morris, Premier Rugby

head of community. "We attach our unique assets to that - the brand, the facilities, the players as role-models and ambassadors. Then we work on an 'intervention-based' system where we deliver the Premier Rugby message along with our brand partners and then use a professional development structure to deliver those messages into schools, businesses or clubs."

The Premier Rugby community marketing strategy consists of four main areas, according to Morris. Reputation comes first, giving the opportunity to improve brand awareness and assert Premier

Rugby brand values into local community. Building relationships comes second, creating a platform for Premier Rugby to engage with organisations and companies in both the private and public sectors. Then follows recruitment, growing the game in non-traditional rugby areas, engaging new audiences and involving people in the sport at an early age. Through such recruitment, Morris says, the Guinness Premiership has seen a 50 per cent growth in attendance in around five years.

Finally revenues, looking to drive ticket sales and merchandise into the broader fanbases attracted to the sport through the community programmes.

According to Morris, one of the things Premier Rugby has seen since the inception of its community infrastructure is a change from a system developing its own programmes into a more 'partnership-led' approach. programme, is a particular example of this. One such initiative,

the £250,000 EDF Energy National Schools Community programme, is a particular example of this. The £250,000 figure includes EDF's title sponsorship and finance received jointly by the energy-suppliers and government-funding from the National Sports Foundation through Sport England.

The programme sees community coaches working with primary school children aged 8-10, providing equipment and teaching tag rugby, a non-contact version of the sport that teaches the skills for children to go on and play at more advanced levels.

Some go on to play in half-time displays at Guinness Premiership games and youngsters take part in tag rugby demonstrations at EDF Energy Cup matches. The programme has been responsible for getting over 120,000 school children involved in rugby, 75 per cent of whom are from deprived areas, according to the Indices of Deprivation index. "It's a really good success story," says Morris.

UNITING FOR ACTION



L'Organisation pour la Paix par le Sport



- Locally-Based Projects acting at grassroots level
- 3rd International Forum promoting cooperation and decision-making in **Monaco, 25-27 November 2009**
- Awards recompensing actors working for peace through sport who make a real difference

CASE STUDY 3: GENERATIONS FOR PEACE

Generations For Peace, a global initiative founded by HRH Prince Feisal Al Hussein of Jordan, was launched in April 2007 to combine sport and education to promote tolerance, understanding and peace.



Softball as a CSR activity - Generations for Peace

IN THE TWO YEARS since its inception, 'Generations' has been involved in a total of 23 countries on the Asian and African continents, with around 200 delegates taking part in its organised camps. So far, 290 programmes have been implemented, involving 33,000 children, using the power of sport to unite children in areas where social cohesion has not been promoted in the past. By 2010 its target is to have 6,000 youth leaders trained and up to 250,000 children from all sides of their divides participating in the programmes.

Despite being relatively new to the CSR scene, Generations has

had a number of success stories. In Nigeria, project co-ordinator Michael Olufemi Sodipo has so far planned two training and two non-training programmes intending to train and reach more than 400 people in the northern part of Nigeria. The first programme, which took place this year in Kano, was attended by 150 delegates, from community and religious leaders to sport coaches, youth leaders and students. In a second programme last month, 60 youth leaders were trained how to work with, and in the future, train other adults. More initiatives in the Kano area are planned for the future.

Generations works with a number of stakeholders, including the Jordanian government and sports federations, and global sports federations from softball, volleyball, athletics and table tennis. The NBA is also a partner and commercial sponsor Samsung has been brought on board, providing funding and support. Are these partners on the right track by involving themselves in CSR? "We do not believe that the value of CSR initiatives has been overplayed," said Sarah Kabbani, Generations for Peace managing director. "CSR is a great way for multi-national companies to reach

out to communities at grassroots level. Unfortunately, we have been affected by the global recession. We appointed a world-leading marketing agency to assist us with our commercial partner acquisitions. It proved to be an expensive exercise which did not produce success. However, our own direct contact with potential partners and sponsors has been more fruitful, with Samsung and NBA Cares joining us this year.

"The fact that these huge global brands have decided to invest makes us optimistic of using sport as peace-building tool despite the economic crisis."

CASE STUDY 4: LORD'S TAVERNERS

The Taverners - founded in 1950 by a group of cricket-loving actors having a drink in the Tavern at Lord's - has grown into sport's number one charity with 5,000 members worldwide and donating £2.5 million to young people with social, environmental, physical or learning disadvantages.

UNDER THE LEAD of its chief executive, Matthew Patten, the Taverners employ 19 paid staff working nationwide alongside around 5,000 members, all of which pay an annual subscription of £80 but also help run some of the regional committees across the UK.

Funding and organising sporting competitions for children and providing equipment to disadvantaged groups are all initiatives that form the output of the £2.5 million annually raised by the Taverners through national and regional corporate dinners and auctions, restricted donations by major donors and trusts and

foundations and subscriptions.

Currently the Taverners is also a beneficiary of the 2009 Lord Mayor's Appeal - a charity that represents and receives funding from those who live and work in the City of London - which helps raise the Taverners' revenues and strengthens its relationships with City institutions.

The Taverners' CSR marketing strategy, according to its chief executive Matthew Patten, divides into two areas: maintaining the Taverners' reputation as a leading sport charity and satisfying the stakeholders who have vested interests in the Taverners' work.

"In terms of our brand reputation and our profile, we are one of the leading national youth sports charities. From a reputational point of view we believe sport really makes a very big difference to young people in terms of self-esteem, well-being and future social and economic prospects. We want to keep our brand as a charity...and be part of the modern world, making a difference to young people."

"First and foremost we are interested in the impact in young people rather than finding the next captain of the England cricket team. That means we work with other stakeholders which are specifically political, standing up for sport and making a difference. We have other stakeholders in terms of fundraising, so that is about corporate entities, our own members and events, trusts and foundations, plan-giving and legacy."

As a charity, CSR is at the core of the Taverners work. So does a charitable organisation based in sport face different challenges to those brands and federations in the sports market? Patten thinks not, and believes he has the exact same procedures to go through when

determining the strategy and value of the Taverners' CSR work. "As a charity, life has changed compared to a Nike or another brand owner. It is not good enough anymore for charities to be benign entities in an amateur, Corinthian way. Charities have to be proactive rather than reactive. It is also not enough for us to say 'we are a good organisation therefore you should support us'; we have to be much more active in evaluating our performance and proving the impact we have."

And how can a charity survive in a period of global downturn? "The downturn has definitely affected our ability to raise money. In terms of our business model, we have been very reliant on prestigious events and raising funds from them.

"Those are areas which are particularly difficult in the economic downturn so we have to widen our revenue streams as a business would have to do. We're doing this partly with commercial partners, by developing new products for them to work with. But there is an upside: we are doing a lot of new things. Funnily enough, because times are difficult we are finding new areas of opportunity."