

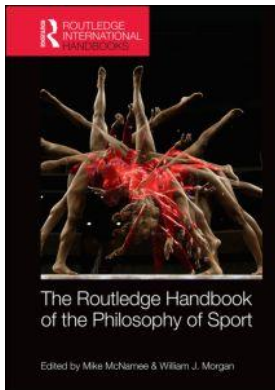
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### **Spectatorship – Watching and Following Sport**

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# SPECTATORSHIP – WATCHING AND FOLLOWING SPORT

*Carwyn Jones*

According to Santayana “Athletic sports are not children’s games; they are public spectacles ... Spectators are indispensable, since without them the victory, which should be the only reward, would lose half its power” (in McNamee 2008: 49). Goods like glory and honour in sport seem to depend on the presence of spectators. Spectators themselves might be watching sport for a variety of motives. One might think of spectatorship from a subjective and objective point of view. The first might consider the personal experience of the spectator, the psychological states of mind such as enjoyment and excitement which motivate them to watch sport. The latter might consider what role spectators play in sport more generally, what contribution they make to the practice of sport, how their behaviour affects our experience of sport. In this chapter, I discuss some token spectator types and pick out some key conceptual and ethical ideas therein. After briefly exploring the gambler, perhaps the original spectator at sports contests, who watches to see if his/her wager is successful, I discuss different conceptions and manifestations of the sports fan. The sport fan comes in various guises, but I focus on two types commonly referred to in the literature, namely the loyal and dedicated *partisan* whose allegiance is to a particular team and the *purist* who is looking to enjoy the spectacle of sport without a particular allegiance. I discuss the conceptual and ethical dimensions and interrogate the relative ethical merits of both types. Finally, I discuss the sporting patriot and the vices of excessive partisanship.

## **The gambler**

A number of people watch sports because they have bet on the result. The very existence of some sports seems to depend on the fact that spectators gamble on the result; for example, horse racing or Kirin bicycle racing in Japan. Spectators may or may not form allegiances with certain performers (horses, jockeys, cyclists) but their main reasons for attending or for taking an interest in the activity is focused on their wager. They will experience tension, anticipation and risk, but only if they have placed a bet. More recently, the deregulation of the gambling industry in the United Kingdom and the development of the internet have opened up countless new opportunities to bet on sports. It is not merely the result that counts these days because individuals can bet on discrete features of contests such as the timing of the first goal, the exact score, who scores first, and almost any other aspect of the game.

Although some gamblers have encyclopaedic knowledge about their sport, their interest in it as gamblers is whether or not events unfold in a way that maximises the return on their stake. Some gamblers do not even need to watch the sport; they are simply concerned with the result. It is important for sport, and for the gambling industry, that the outcomes of contests (or certain elements within the contest) are not predetermined. Although betting on sport might be seen as potentially corruptive and parasitic upon nobler endeavours, it played a significant part in the development of modern sport. According to Elias:

Greater emphasis on the enjoyment of the game–contest and the tension–excitement it provided as such, was to some extent connected with the enjoyment of betting which, in England, played a considerable part both in the transformation of “cruder” forms of game–contests into sports and in the development of the ethos of fairness...But the prospect of winning one’s bet could add to the excitement of watching the struggle only if the initial odds of winning were more or less evenly divided between the two sides.

*(Elias 1971: 101–2)*

Despite the partly historic positive role played by gambling in the development of sporting structures and the ethos of fair play, the presence of gambling in sport has a significant and potentially ‘venal’ (Walsh and Giulianotti 2007, 17) influence on the activity. The lure of money, the extrinsic rewards, can provide motivation for players to focus on priorities other than sporting excellence. Boxers have been paid to ‘take a dive’, horses have been ‘nobbled’ (disabling a racehorse, usually with drugs), referees have been bribed and players have thrown games. Match fixing is a serious and increasingly common corruption of sport, given the billions of dollars at stake in the gambling industry. Former Pakistan cricket captain Salman Butt was jailed for 30 months for his role in a conspiracy to manipulate events in a cricket match in England in 2010.<sup>1</sup> It could be argued that, in a game like cricket, the validity of the contest was not necessarily under threat or, at least, the risk was low in this case because the action (performing a sequence of ‘no-balls’ [illegal pitches] at a predetermined time in the match) would have little impact on the actual result. Nevertheless, he performed a certain sequence of actions at predetermined times such that a wager was won. Manipulation of events within a contest but not necessarily affecting the result of the contest is known as ‘spot fixing’. There are other issues with gambling, of course. The Columbian football player Andrés Escobar was murdered in 1994 after inadvertently putting the ball into his own net (scoring an own goal), which contributed to his team’s defeat. The motive for his shooting was allegedly related to gambling losses.<sup>2</sup>

Gambling in general, and in sport in particular, is normally a highly regulated activity and, for some, it can be a cause of great harm, financially and otherwise. It can become what Flanagan (2011) calls a ‘process addiction’. John Daly (2007: 209), the American Golfer, estimates he lost US\$55 million at casinos over a period of 15 years and many English Premier League football players are said to spend vast fortunes on gambling.<sup>3</sup> Gambling on sport can therefore provide the reason for taking an interest in certain activities (horse racing) and thus can sustain an arguably economically and culturally important social practice: it can also be an enjoyable addition to the sporting experience or can serve as ‘just something to bet on’ for gamblers largely indifferent to the nature and quality of the event. The presence of gambling in sport is, however, forever a threat to the integrity of contests but, increasingly (following the demise of tobacco and alcohol sponsorship in certain countries), betting companies provide significant sponsorship of sport; a kind of unholy alliance.

## **The fan**

The fan is perhaps the most common watcher of sport who may or may not also bet on the result of the contest. Fans come in various guises. Some fans identify with a particular sport and more specifically with a particular team. In Europe in general, and in the UK in particular, there is a deep-rooted culture of supporting football (soccer) teams such as Manchester United or Barcelona. Such fans are often initiated into the culture of fandom from an early age and identify strongly with a particular club. This type of watcher is perhaps most commonly associated with team sports. There is another type of fan who watches individual sports, such as tennis. They may form allegiances to certain players on the grounds of nationality but they may equally be formed on the basis of an individual's skill, flair or personality. What both have in common is a primary concern for the victory of their team or player. Their experience of watching and their enjoyment is tied up in the fortunes of the player or team they are supporting. They are happy when they win, miserable when they lose.

## **The partisan fan**

The concept of fan has received plenty of philosophical scrutiny in the literature (Davis 2012; Dixon 2007; Jones 2003; Mumford 2004; Russell 2012). A distinction has been drawn between two fan types, namely the partisan and the purist.

The partisan is a loyal supporter of a team to which she may have a personal connection or which she may have grown to support by dint of mere familiarity. The purist in contrast, supports the team that he thinks exemplifies the highest virtues of the game, but his allegiance is flexible (Dixon 2007: 441).

## ***Partisan allegiance***

A necessary condition of the partisan is that they have an allegiance to a particular team. There may be some partisans whose allegiance is to an individual player; for example, British tennis fans' allegiance to Andy Murray and previously to Tim Henman but, as Mumford (2012: 132) argues, this is a different type of allegiance because, in relation to an individual (as opposed to a team), one cannot be a part of 'that which I would support'. I do not focus on fans of individual sport or fans whose allegiance is to a national team in this section (the latter will be dealt with under the discussion of patriotism later in this chapter). Rather, I focus on partisan fans who identify with a particular team. A necessary condition of being a partisan is allegiance to a particular team but it is not clear whether any further necessary conditions can be identified. There may be some family resemblances but no additional essential features. At some point, every partisan's allegiance was formed (or perhaps evolved) but the genesis of the allegiance might differ from fan to fan. Local ties and or family loyalty are a common source but a good friend of mine and a passionate fan of Sunderland Football Club for over 50 years was initially attracted by the colour of the team's jerseys. Another friend decided at a young age to support the arch rivals of his brother's favourite team. According to Mumford (2012: 15), the reason for team allegiance can be random and, therefore, not rationally based: 'It seems, therefore, that the partisan often has no good reason for selecting one team to follow rather than another, other than some accident of circumstance'.

Although all fans have an allegiance, whose genesis might differ, they commonly demonstrate their allegiance or involvement in different ways. Some are official members of a club and attend every game, forsaking other commitments, some compose and sing songs and chants,

some form supporters' clubs and fanzines, others may watch from a distance on television, some choose to emblazon themselves in the colours of the team or even permanent tattoos, others may demonstrate their allegiance more discreetly, and some may even propose to their partners or get married at their team's stadium and name their children after favourite players. According to Russell (2012: 24), forming sporting allegiances has evolutionary antecedents and is an expression of a human instinct to form attachments to groups. Additionally, he argues that humans are 'meaning-seeking creatures who pursue meaning largely through narratives' (ibid: 25). This helps to explain why fans follow teams in which their own narratives are intertwined with the narrative of the team they support. Experiences and memories are shared and recounted. Sights, sounds and smells are recalled, such as our first visit to the stadium, our first replica team kit and the smell of hotdogs. The fans' chronology can be measured in terms of the team's fortunes; for example: 'I can remember my daughter was born in 1986 because that's the year we won the cup' or 'I got married on the day we beat the Yankees'. For many fans, following a team is fundamental to the good life and one's mood reflects the fortunes of the team – we are happy when they win, sad when they lose and angry if they lose unjustly!

### *The good partisan*

It is sometimes difficult to separate descriptive accounts of fans from conceptual accounts. As a matter of empirical fact, there are very different types of fans, all variously committed to their team. In the literature and in fan and media discourse, there is a sense that certain types of fans are normatively superior to others. The label given to the best type of fan depends on who is making the judgment but such labels include *loyal fans*, *real fans*, *traditional fans*, *ideal fans*, *good fans*, *true fans*, *dedicated fans*, *partisans* and *moderate partisans*. *Bad* types of fans might be referred to as *fair-weather fans*, *plastic fans*, *fickle fans*, *fanatics* and *extreme fans*. Claims and counter claims are made about club X's fans or sport Y's fans being better fans than club A's and sport B's fans. Are such criteria subjective? Does the amount of noise that a group of fans make really make them better fans? Are fans that create an intimidating atmosphere for the opposition and make the home field a 'fortress', superior in any way? Within fan cultures, the best fans should exhibit qualities like loyalty, commitment, passion and dedication evidenced in a variety of (sometimes dubious) attitudes and behaviours. Morris (2012) argues that most typical fan behaviour (shouting, cheering, chanting, and so forth) which is aimed at (or has the foreseeable consequence of) affecting the outcome of a contest in their team's favour (encouraging our team, disrupting theirs) undermine fairness and ought to be discouraged.

Yet despite what seems a *prima facie* rational objection to much of fan culture, others (beyond the confines of those cultures) argue that there are grounds, in fact normative grounds, for preferring one type of fan over others. The claim is that being a certain type of fan is better, not only subjectively in terms of self-actualisation and enjoyment as a fan but also objectively in terms of contributing to the wellbeing of clubs in particular and sports in general. One important quality (already mentioned above) that seems to be a fundamental criterion of the best type of fan is loyalty (Walsh and Giulianotti 2001; Dixon 2007). Dixon argues that fan loyalty is virtuous for at least two reasons. First, loyalty to a particular team is important because it sustains a team as a viable concern financially and otherwise. According to Morgan (1994: 236), 'the community specific to practices like sport is an internal good of its practice'. Walsh and Giulianotti (2001) argue that the internal good of community can only be generated by the presence of loyal fans. The absence of loyal fans is therefore considered to be potentially detrimental to the existence of particular teams (institutions) and ultimately to the sport itself. The second reason that Dixon gives that loyalty to sports teams is a virtue which trades on an

analogy with loyalty in romantic relations. His argument is that a fan's allegiance and loyalty to their team is similar to a romantic relationship with a beloved. Commitment over time to one's partner despite certain changes, and unwillingness to 'trade up' for someone better, are attributes shared by fans who stick by their team through difficult times (Dixon 2007: 445). For Dixon then, it is the partisan that exemplifies the important and admirable qualities of loyalty.

If we consider that a fan who embodies loyalty is preferable to one who does not, we might be claiming one of two things. We might be saying that the loyal fan has a virtuous disposition(s) and the presence of virtue is grounds for preferring this fan to others who lack such a virtue (Pincoffs 1986). Or we might be claiming that the loyal fan is fulfilling an obligation *qua* fan to be loyal. Let us take these one at a time. The virtue of loyalty in Aristotelian terms is a mean between two vices; the vice of indifference, or lack of commitment on the one hand (perhaps only supporting the team when things are good or even 'trading up' [Dixon 2007]) and the vice of blind loyalty on the other. That there is a vice of deficiency requires careful consideration because it is not so obvious why it is a vice not to form loyal attachments to a team. After all, it is a matter of choice whether we support teams and it might seem strange to accuse someone of a vice if they fail to exhibit the relevant levels of loyalty and commitment. The arbitrary nature of identification with a particular team, however, does not, according to Mumford (2012, 15), render "the allegiance, bond and attachment ... lesser". Furthermore, fans are supporting an entity of which they are an important part. Nevertheless, Mumford fails to see why a lack of allegiance and loyalty to a team should be considered a vice or a failure to fulfil an obligation to one's peers. Russell (2012) is also sceptical about loyalty as grounds for preferring Dixon's partisan. The analogy of loyalty to a team with loyalty to a partner (beloved) does not, Russell argues, in itself show that fan loyalty is admirable in the same way. Although there are some parallels between the two types of loyalty, he argues that they are not significant or deep enough to warrant Dixon's conclusion. Fan relationships, he argues, are not genuine partnerships in the same way as romantic relationships because they do not involve the relation of a *we* that is destroyed if the relationship ends. He concludes that 'Relations of romantic love are so profoundly personal, immediate and reciprocal that they are fundamentally different from a partisan fan's frequently abstract and distant connections with a particular team' (Russell 2012: 20).

If we consider loyalty as a virtue some slightly different questions might arise. Crucially, we might enquire how such an obligation could arise. Both loyalty as a virtue and an obligation must stand in some relation to the role of being a fan. In other words, loyalty is admirable/obligatory in virtue of some role/function a fan might play and its presence better enables the fulfilment of that role/function. As mentioned above, there is a real sense among fan groups and in the literature that such roles, obligations or expectations exist and that a failure to meet them means one is not a fan at all. These might include levels of expected commitment, knowledge, passion and meeting the requirements of a variety of norms and conventions which are thought to be definitive of being a fan or a good fan. 'Best type of fans' purportedly engage in certain positive club-sustaining behaviour and refrain from behaviour that might undermine the fortunes of their club and sport. Such behaviour is thought to be connected in an important way to one's role as a fan. As mentioned above, the fan plays a role in sustaining the practice in many ways. Walsh and Giulianotti (2001) argue that the best type of fan has a significant role in the flourishing of practices and such fans contribute to the internal goods of sport in an important way. Moreover they argue that the connection between the fan and the club is a deeply rooted one, and in some cases 'the most committed groups of traditional fans view their support as a kind of unbreakable social contract' (ibid: 62). Moreover Giulianotti (2002, 33) argues that for some fans showing support 'is considered to be obligatory' because individuals 'have relationships with the club that resemble those with one's family

and friends', a kind of unconditional bond stronger than the bond formed in romantic relations. It seems plausible, if fans have such an important role and/or are engaged in some form of reciprocal relationship with a club, that loyalty is indeed admirable and perhaps obligatory.

Russell sees an inherent confusion about talk of an ideal type of fan in this way, although there is no doubt that fans play a role; for example, the increasing fan base of Manchester United plays a *role* in their success. The fan's vocal and financial support has a causal role in the success of the team in particular and of the club in general. Conversely, fans unwilling to commit their time and effort to the ailing local club can have causal implications for its continued existence. Fans all have 'meaningful connections and attachments with each other and form a meaningful community through their common attachment to sport' (Russell 2012: 26). But this does not entail that they have a *role* in a more substantive sense. Unlike the role of judge or teacher, the role of fan does not require the recognition of 'certain moral obligations that are internal or intrinsic to any role they play or fulfil' (ibid: 18). In other words, there are no special role-related requirements or obligations which provide us with criteria for evaluating the moral conduct of fans. For Russell then, moral evaluation of fans character and actions 'is simply of their conduct and not of whether they are properly performing a role' (ibid: 18). Fans should adhere to principles like respect and common decency and should avoid the vices of excess, but the valorisation of loyalty, he believes, is more likely to be generative of vices than it is to insulate the fan from these excesses.<sup>4</sup> I return to the vices of excess in later in this chapter when I discuss the patriotic fan. In the next [section](#) I explore the purist fan, which is often contrasted with the partisan mainly because they lack loyalty to a particular team.

### *The purist*

The purist is often contrasted with the partisan, although, as we shall see, it is not a contrast that is universally endorsed. It is also worth noting that the difference between the two is perhaps better conceived in terms of the way they watch sport, or as Mumford (2012: 9) argues, what they see. The partisan and purist, he argues 'see a different game, even when they are present at the same event'. It is not possible to fully do justice to Mumford's claim here, but we can at least scratch the surface of such a distinction. We have already seen that the partisan is a fan of a team, whereas, according to Mumford (2012), the purist is a fan of a sport. Mumford's purist is different than Dixon's purist, the former having no preference for either team to win, but wanting both to excel, where the latter, Mumford claims, switches allegiance to the team which best exemplifies the excellences of the sport at any given point. Mumford's purist supports no team at all but wants to see the contest in all its beauty and drama. Such a fan wants to see the 'highest virtues of the sport succeed and be rewarded' (ibid: 14) but they are indifferent to which team displays those virtues. In fact, the ideal for the purist is that both display the virtues. Mumford (2012: 14) argues that 'A true supporter of the virtues of the sport could have no team allegiance because, in any game or passage of play, which team plays virtuously could alternate rapidly'. The purist is a different kind of fan; a fan of the sport, but who can 'love it as much as the partisan loves their team' (ibid: 14) with no allegiance to a team. The purist values the sport itself and 'and wants to see it played in the best way possible' (ibid: 16). When purists are unshackled from the concerns of the partisan for their own team, they are free to enjoy the full range of pleasures, especially the aesthetic pleasures, which may pass the partisan by.<sup>5</sup> According to Mumford (ibid: 17), 'A concern with the mere result looks a crude measure of the worth of a game' in comparison to the range of other qualities on display.

As we have seen above, Dixon and Walsh and Giulianotti argue that partisanship is a fundamental good of watching sport. It displays the virtue of loyalty and in so doing contributes to

the flourishing of the practice community and therefore to the sport. Moreover, such attachment is important to get the full enjoyment from the game, the excitement, the tension, the competitive struggle. As such, the detachment of the purist is purportedly inferior both morally and in terms of the pleasure available from watching. Mumford (2012) defends the purist against such criticism. He denies that the purist exhibits vice by failing to form loyal allegiances and argues that wanting all teams to flourish and exhibit excellence ‘does not seem like an especially vicious stance’ (ibid: 16). Moreover, such a stance is less likely to lead to the vices that often accompany partisan support.<sup>6</sup> Neither does the purist’s stance, according to Mumford, deny the possibility of experiencing the tension and excitement of the contest nor the psychological benefits such as esteem associated with ‘belonging’. Mumford makes a case for the superiority of a purist stance in watching sport in terms of the broader range of aesthetic value available to the spectator. Such values, particularly when manifest by rivals, might be missed by the partisan. ‘The purist is someone who has this aesthetic mode switched on most of the time, looking at the sporting contest aesthetically’ (ibid: 57). They are watching sport for its own sake, for the demonstration of skill, the ‘sweet tension of uncertainty of outcome’ (Loland 2002), the effort and endeavour of the athletes, and not for any contingent pleasure a victory against arch rivals might bring. According to Mumford, the aesthetic experiences that the purist enjoys include beautiful body movements, the physical form of the athlete, poise, balance, precision, symmetry, rhythm, power, strength, the grace, elegance and fluidity of a skilled move, swiftness of foot, inventiveness, efficiency and complex tactical patterns.<sup>7</sup> Each sport is different; thus, there is a plurality of aesthetic experiences to be had.

There is no space here to offer a full defence of the purist stance in sport (Mumford makes an excellent and persuasive job of this) but I offer some remarks about the relative merits of the purist and the partisan. First, it seems to me that without the partisan fans there would be nothing for the purist to watch. The very spectacle of sport (team sport in particular) relies on individuals making a commitment to the team or club. The purist is in some way parasitic upon the efforts, commitments and loyalties of partisan fans. Without the partisans, there would be no practice community (or a significantly impoverished one), which generates the games, players and ultimately the aesthetic spectacle enjoyed by the purist and partisans alike. Walsh and Giulianotti (2001) are particularly concerned with a breed of fan they call *arrivistes*. The *arriviste*, they argue, comes to games through ‘its mediation, such as on television, and employs that lack of personal engagement to create “distinction” (typically class-rooted) from those who are allegedly too parochial to read the game’s fineries’ (Walsh and Giulianotti: 65). The *arriviste* allegedly threatens the traditional partisan fans because of their increased capacity to fund their consumption.<sup>8</sup> Second is the question of the purists ‘eye’ for the aesthetic values. Walsh and Giulianotti argue that cultivating an appreciation of the game’s intrinsic values comes through immersion in loyal fan (partisan) culture. The partisans are the ones likely to have developed the ‘eye’ for the game and it is precisely their (loyal fans) ‘deep and socialized immersion in the sport, as expressed in part through support for the club and its players that makes possible a “purist” appreciation of the sport’s laws, spirit and aesthetic codes’ (Walsh and Giulianotti 2001: 65). Mumford’s own biography is of partisan turned purist, and one might speculate whether his love and appreciation for the game of football were cultivated during his days as a partisan.

### The patriot

While watching the 2012 Olympic Games taekwondo competition with my mother (who gets very excited and loud when watching sport), it dawned on me that she was cheering for, and verbally abusing, the wrong contestant. Given that a British competitor might be fighting in



red in one bout, and blue the next, she had failed to recognise which competitor was British. When I pointed this out to her, she continued with her vociferous support and abuse but switched the targets without much pause. It is clear that, in that context, the only motivating factor for her support was patriotism. She knew nothing of the sport, nothing (not even the names) of the contestants, yet was fully immersed in watching the unfolding contest and felt great pride when the British fighter won. According to Dixon, a key element in patriotism in sport is that fans identify with their country's success on the playing field. For Dixon,

Indeed, the sight of athletes giving their all when representing their country while being willed on by their adoring compatriots seems to be not only an exemplar of the virtues that sport makes possible but also a paradigm case of healthy, morally justifiable patriotism.

(Dixon 2001: 74)

Patriotism in sport is familiar, and most global sporting events such as the football World Cup and the Olympic and Paralympic Games are contested between representatives of countries. Much has been written about sport, patriotism and national identity but perhaps Orwell's (2003: 196) description of international sport as 'mimicking warfare' encapsulates concerns about the potential for vice in international sporting contests. The vices with which Orwell was concerned are prone to appear not only among patriots but also among partisan supporters more generally. The kind of vices that troubled Orwell are described by Davis as the 'fag end of masculinity' and include:

Spiteful aggression; petty hatreds, enmities and grudges; pleasure in the pain and misfortunes of the other; childish one-upmanship; the worship of dominative strength and power, misogyny; homophobia; and the gamut of -isms, including sexism, racism, anti-intellectualism, philistinism, hooliganism and hedonism.

(Davis 2012: 5)

In the context of international sport, we might add jingoism and xenophobia to the list. Earlier, I discussed the virtue of loyalty and the vices of excess and deficiency. Many of the behaviours and vices of concern here seem to be grounded on excessive loyalty, partisanship or patriotism. The corollary of this excess seems to be a moral disregard or a failure to respect opponents (players, coaches, fans and, by association, nations). Dixon (2001) argues that often the excesses can manifest themselves in callous disregard for one's own athletes. Fans of the Brazilian football club Palmeiras attacked their own players at the airport following their loss in a cup competition.<sup>9</sup> Although there is broad agreement in the literature that respect is an important moral principle in sport, there is debate about what constitutes disrespect and what forms it takes.<sup>10</sup> Dixon (2001, 2007) argues that partisan support (either for club or country) need not take the excessive forms discussed above often reported in the media (and written about by sport historians, sociologist and ethicists). A moderate form of partisan support is the ideal and the moderate partisan or patriot neither manifests the vice of deficiency nor excess with respect to their allegiance.

The ideal attitude for fans, then, appears to be the tenacious loyalty of the partisan, tempered by the purist's realization that teams that violate the rules or spirit of the game do not deserve our support (Dixon 2007: 445).

One might propose 'purism' as an antidote to the partisan patriot, however, as suggested above, since the presence and commitments of patriots are arguably crucial to the existence and persistence of international competitions like the football World Cup and the Olympics.

## Conclusion

Sport is watched at every level whether it be by the doting parent on the school field or the thousands crammed like sardines into the terraces at football grounds or the millions watching on satellite television. In this chapter, I have attempted to explore the conceptual and moral features of a few token types of spectators. As a matter of empirical truth, the felt experience of spectators and the strength and power of their involvement might vary greatly. It is claimed that although individuals can have radically different subjective experiences when watching sport, some forms of watching are thought to be normatively preferable to others on a number of grounds. Some claim that attachment to a team is necessary both to sustain sporting practices and to fully experience the excitement and competitive intensity of sport. Others dispute this claim, proffering an alternative detached aesthetic stance as the best way to experience the value of watching sport. Having too much of a concern with the victor, either because we have bet on their success or because we have a partisan attachment to the winner, can result in vice which can corrupt both the individual and the practice itself. What is certain is that watching sport can bring out the worst as well as the best in us, and keeping Aristotle's 'golden mean' in mind should help us avoid the vices of excess and deficiency.

## Notes

- 1 See 'Salman Butt and Pakistan bowlers jailed for no-ball plot', *BBC News*, 3 November 2011. Available online at [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-15573463](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-15573463) (accessed 23 October 2014).
- 2 See Barry Glendinning, 'World Cup: 25 stunning moments ... No. 7: Andrés Escobar's deadly own goal', *Guardian*, 25 March 2014. Available online at [www.theguardian.com/football/blog/2014/mar/25/world-cup-moments-andres-escobar-death](http://www.theguardian.com/football/blog/2014/mar/25/world-cup-moments-andres-escobar-death) (accessed 23 October 2014).
- 3 Professional Footballers' Association, 'Players "Using Loans to Fund Bets"', *TheFPA.com*, 24 October 2013. Available online at [www.thepfa.com/news/2013/10/24/players-using-loans-to-fund-bets](http://www.thepfa.com/news/2013/10/24/players-using-loans-to-fund-bets) (accessed 23 October 2014).
- 4 See Jones (2003), who problematizes a romantic and perhaps uncritical view of certain fan groups as custodians of the game.
- 5 Mumford's (2012) key claim in his book is that sport has aesthetic value and the purist is a spectator who watches sport to enjoy and experience its aesthetic value.
- 6 In the next section, I outline an argument that such vices are contingently (historically) associated with partisan support but are not necessary associations.
- 7 Tännjö (2001) argues that the very idea of admiring sporting heroes is morally dubious; in his words, it displays fascistic tendencies.
- 8 The *arriviste* and the traditional fan are sociological categories that can be mapped to a class structure, which Walsh and Giulianotti (2001) and Giulianotti (1999) argue is central to fan culture. Roy Keane infamously criticised sections of the Manchester United supporters, referring to them as the 'prawn sandwich brigade' – fans in corporate boxes. He is reported to have said, "I don't think some of the people who come to Old Trafford can spell football, never mind understand it"; see 'Angry Keane slates Man Utd fans', *BBC Sport Online*, 9 November 2000. [http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/football/champions\\_league/1014868.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/sport1/hi/football/champions_league/1014868.stm) (accessed 23 October 2014). See Jones (2003) for a critical discussion of the conceptual validity of the distinction.
- 9 See 'Palmeiras Fans Attack Own Team', *SBS*, 8 March 2013. Available online at <http://theworldgame.sbs.com.au/news/1143296/palmeiras-fans-attack-own-team> (accessed 23 October 2014).
- 10 For example, McNamee (2003), Dixon (2008), Summers (2007) and Jones and Fleming (2007).

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