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Rivalry in Sport

Understanding Fan Behavior and Organizations

Cody T. Havard

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*To my family, Kristin, Harrison, Lincoln, and Begley. Keep working,
dreaming, and singing. Never lose your imagination!*

PREFACE

Sport holds a special place in society, and competition and rivalry are important facets of sport. In my research on rivalry, I have been fortunate enough to observe fan behavior through interviews and quantitative investigation. Through these ventures, I have made five primary observations.

First, fan and group behavior is a fascinating area of inquiry, as Daniel Wann, Ph.D., once told me, if 100 people were asked why they consume sport, you would get 100 different answers. The study of fandom and rivalry has been an interesting and worthwhile area of investigation for me, and I hope to share my passion with others and encourage others to inquire in this area through this book.

Second, the investigation into rivalry and what it means to fans and group members is relatively new, with most of the work in the area being published over the last decade. This means that more researchers are needed to investigate and better understand the phenomenon. This book was written to try and help researchers, academics, and practitioners wanting to engage in this line of inquiry.

Third, it is important that valid and reliable measures are presented to assist those researching and investigating rivalry and its influence on sport fans and group members. This book discusses several instruments that have been used to measure fandom and rivalry.

Fourth, scientific investigation is a never-ending pursuit, and the search for information and answers is many times more enjoyable than containing

answers. In the pursuit of knowledge, researchers should build on the work of others in a constant attempt to advance understanding in an area of inquiry. This book is written in this spirit and hopes to further engage people with the subject area and encourage readers to ask questions and seek answers.

Fifth and finally, in our society, gaining a better understanding of rivalry and group behavior helps shape knowledge about the human condition. It is the hope that through more information, we as a society can better understand each other and be able to engage in more positive relationships and actions toward others.

These five observations have shaped much of my research into the rivalry phenomenon, which started with college sport and has advanced to include professional and international sport, the responsible promotion of rivalry and competition, teaching readers about rivalry and appropriate group member behavior, and rivalry in and out of the sport setting. This book is written in the spirit of sharing information and encouraging others to build on previous work so that we all can better understand how people interact with others in an attempt to improve our society. May the work presented in this book be used as either a launching point, rest area, or stepping stone by others in seeking answers to our pressing questions.

I hope you enjoy and thank you for playing along!

Memphis, USA

Cody T. Havard, Ph.D.

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Cody T. Havard, Ph.D.

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