

On the Political Economy of 'Feel-good' Effects at Sport Mega-events: Experiences from FIFA Germany 2006 and Prospects for South Africa 2010

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Abstract

In the rapidly growing body of scholarship on sport mega-events it has become commonplace to contend that the intangible (or immeasurable) elements of these events, such as the positive emotions they can evoke among spectators, are often among their most important consequences. This paper reflects on one particular aspect of sport mega-events' intangibles – the feel-good effect, or sense of communal wellbeing that can be elicited under certain circumstances - and the political and socio-cultural processes that are contingent with this. The paper focuses on the 2006 FIFA World Cup which was hosted in Germany, and the 2010 FIFA finals, staged in South Africa. For Germany, since the hopes for significant positive effects on tourism, income, and employment that were prominent before the World Cup were (as in the case of most other such events) not realised, the feel-good effect seemed to be the largest and most obvious effect of the 2006 World Cup. Similarly, in the case of South Africa, which faced some severe organisational challenges, a sense of pride or national cohesion may be the most important and durable outcome of its hosting of the FIFA finals. The paper reviews the dimensions and significance of the feel-good effect and some of its longer-term political implications for host locations.

Keywords: Sport mega-events, feel-good effect, FIFA World Cup, Germany, South Africa

Introduction

It has become convention for the scholars of sport mega-events to argue that the intangible (or immeasurable) elements of these events, such as the positive emotions they can evoke among spectators, are often among their most important consequences (e.g. Baade & Matheson 2002; Tomlinson and Young 2006). Yet, to a significant extent, little substantive development of this idea is present in available scholarship. This paper reflects on one particular aspect of sport mega-events' intangibles – the feel-good effect, or sense of communal wellbeing that appears to be provoked under certain circumstances – in relation to the FIFA World Cup hosted in 2006 by Germany and which will be held in South Africa in 2010. The paper probes and compares the dimensions and significance of the feel-good effect of the event in these two locales, posing the question of how, and through which processes feel-good has been/can be induced and what the consequences could be. The paper does this from the position that the feel-good effect was among the most significant outcomes of the 2006 FIFA World Cup (Maennig 2007), and that, in the face of some major infrastructural, budgeting and social challenges, it is likely to be the most durable and important product of the South African hosted event.

Invariably, any direct comparison of the 2006 and 2010 FIFA World Cups is impeded by the vastly different infrastructural and organisational environments of these two events, and by the rather unique socio-political context within which FIFA 2010 will take place. The technical/organisational requirements of the two events, as well as the profile of the visitors and spectators will differ. Moreover, major sporting events are subject to a strong (perceived) change in meaning. Yet strikingly, for both Germany and South Africa hosting an event such as the football World Cup has had political value beyond what is generally associated with them: for Germany the 2006 World Cup apparently helped the country overcome a difficult twentieth-century history, while the 2010 tournament is intended as much to cement post-apartheid South Africa's racial and political transformation, as it is to intensify economic development. Elsewhere, scholars have reviewed the potential impacts of the FIFA 2010 World Cup on the political and symbolic capital it is likely to generate for the South African government (e.g. Black 2007; Cornelissen 2008). This paper extends such work by considering what the major determinants of the feel-good

effect have been at Germany's World Cup, and what some of the prospects are for South Africa. Four components are addressed: the interrelationship between planning, infrastructural arrangements, security and feel-good; the role of branding, imaging and marketing; national pride, identity and patriotism; and the significance of sites of fandom, such as public viewing areas. In the second part of the paper a brief conceptualisation is given of the feel-good effect in relation to sport mega-events. The remaining parts discuss and compare each of the above components in relation to the two FIFA World Cups.

Feel-good and Sport Mega-events

As a concept, 'feel-good' has been variously defined. In the realm of economics and business administration it is mostly used interchangeably with 'happiness', 'wellbeing' and 'utility' (see e.g. Böhnke & Kohler 2008), although psychologists tend to differentiate between at least some of these items. A broad consensus exists among scholars of social sciences that the measurement of these concepts is (still) problematic (see e.g. Bertrand & Mullainathan 2001). Nevertheless, as Ng (1996: 1) puts it, happiness (or feel-good) is 'the main, if not the only objective of life'. This notwithstanding, there are at least three interrelated ways in which the feel-good impacts of sport mega-events can be conceived. The first is in relation to the economic offshoots that can be generated from a general feeling of social contentment and cheerfulness in attending or being in other ways party to a sporting spectacle. In this regard there is mounting evidence that hosting sport mega-events may significantly increase the sense of wellbeing of the people in the host country. Kavetsos and Szymanski (2008) analyse the impact of hosting the Olympic Games, the Football World Cup or the Football European Championships on happiness in European countries over a thirty-year period, and find a significant and positive effect provoked by World Cups. Heyne, Maennig and Süßmuth (2007) estimated, on the basis of an ex post contingent valuation method, a willingness to pay of around €830 million on the occasion of the 2006 FIFA World Cup. 'Greater willingness to pay for a sporting event or for other events in Germany has ... not hitherto been recorded. In this respect ... the 2006 soccer World Cup was one of the

greatest and economically most important events in Germany' (Maennig 2007:379).

The second way in which feel-good effects may be important in sport mega-events, relates to their socio-cultural contingencies, i.e. the manner in which feel-good is either expressed or coincides or conflicts with social markers and communal boundaries. Sport fandom has been shown to take on pronounced features on the occasion of mega-events (e.g. Crabbe 2008; Tomlinson & Young 2006; Weed 2007), with such events often providing the platform for the articulation of specific forms of sport fandom (such as hooliganism), or heightened brand and team loyalty. But expressions of communalism, shaped by sharpened senses of wellbeing could also relate to broader targets of identity ascription, such as the nation-state. It has by now been well documented how sport mega-events become milieus for nationalism (Bandyopadhyay 2008; Manzenreiter & Horne 2008) however benign or temporary such displays of national identity may be. One of the most distinctive features of the FIFA 2006 World Cup in Germany was how a host society, generally apprehensive and suspicious of exhibitions of national pride, in a spirit of exuberance and feel-good, wholeheartedly proceeded to display all the trappings of German statehood (national flag, etc). Indeed, for Germany the feel-good effect was so intense and long-lasting that some observers pondered the emergence of a new era of national pride (see Kersting 2007 for a review).

The third way in which feel-good is of significance for sport mega-events therefore, is in terms of the political meaning – and instrumentalisation – of the mass feelings of pride or passion which these events can evoke. Hosting a sport mega-event often has to be rationalised to a sceptical public in terms of their potential economic impacts. Increasingly, in the face of zero (or even negative) effects of the mega-event on income and employment, decisions can only be accounted for in terms of positive political, social, feel-good, and/or image effects (Baade & Matheson 2002). A widespread sense of feel-good during and in the immediate aftermath of an event lightens the burden on authorities and planners when they have to defend public (over)expenditures. But more broadly, however, because of their size and their ability to capture the popular imagination, sport mega-events also tend to carry with them political inflections which extend beyond sport itself. These could relate to how events are used by political elites to

increase their domestic legitimacy; to give momentum to nascent processes of political transition or economic development; or to gain prestige and standing in the international sphere¹. Sport - and the positive ascriptions which it is generally given, such as goodwill, sportsmanship, neighbourliness or amity - constitutes a proxy arena for wider ranging political processes, whether as a means to convey political discourses around national identity or patriotism, or to gloss over or subvert major social cleavages. In such instances, it should be noted, sport mega-events' potential feel-good effects may be more contrived than accidental, making the analysis of these kinds of effects even more pertinent.

Planning, Infrastructure, Security and Feel-good

Mega sports events suffer in part from the criticism that they raise problems in the areas of security, transport, and ecology and/or that they require (too much) public funds. Such criticisms, when echoed in the media, can have a negative influence on public perception. Even at an early stage, aside from the central task of smoothly organising the sport tournament itself, the Organising Committee for the 2006 World Cup and the German Federal Government stressed the importance of avoiding problems of this nature. In the framework of the national security strategy for the 2006 World Cup, around 250,000 German police officers, 1,700 members of the Federal armed forces, and 16,000 security personnel were deployed, and emphasis was placed on giving a deliberately subdued image to the security operations (Klauser 2008). To accompany small groups of potentially aggressive foreign fans, more than 570 operatives from thirteen European countries, as well as thirty-six operatives from other countries were deployed. This was done in the hope that for these groups of fans a confrontation with security forces of their own nationality would be less 'attractive' than a confrontation with the German forces. Stadium security was ensured through an electronic ticket and access control system (BMI 2006b). As a result, there were no large-scale threats to security in the stadia, nor at the public viewing events, which

¹ For discussions of the political uses of specific events see for example: Brownell (2008) and Xu (2006) on the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games; Black (2007) on the 2010 Commonwealth Games; and Bandyopadhyay (2008) on cricket in India-Pakistan relations.

made an important contribution to the perception of a peaceful and friendly World Cup.

To avoid traffic and ecological problems, the ecology project 'Green Goal' was launched, and extensive investments in transport infrastructure were made. 'Green Goal' set up measurable environmental protection targets as an integral part of the organisation of the World Cup and, for example, through ecological mobility measures, reduced the greenhouse gas emissions of the event by almost one-fifth (OK WM 2006). On the basis of the combined tickets² on offer, up to 70 per cent of the stadium visitors travelled by bus and train to the games in the stadia (BMI 2006b). To be able to meet the additional demand for local public transport, considerable investments were made in the relevant infrastructure. Together with the investments made in the infrastructure for private transport, the public funds invested totalled some €1.6 billion (Maennig & Büttner 2006).

Questions of infrastructural development, public investments and security are uppermost in the current discussions about South Africa's state of preparedness for the 2010 tournament. Reporting in the international media has reflected a deep-seated sense of international scepticism over the country's ability to host an event of this magnitude. South Africa's planners and authorities face the additional strain of delivering on their projections and promises that the World Cup will create employment and lead to economic development, not least to a highly expectant domestic constituency. As such, 'getting it right' as far as infrastructural developments for the tournament are concerned, was as essential for the long-term socio-economic legacies such developments could leave, as it was for a successful tournament and positive assessments of the World Cup.

In the face of this, much emphasis was placed on the timely development or preparation of three types of infrastructure: the competition venues/stadia; transportation; and tourist accommodation (see Cornelissen, 2009 for a fuller discussion). Of the ten stadiums which were used for World Cup matches, six were newly built or refurbished (these were in the host cities of Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg (Soccer City stadium), Port

² The admission tickets for the 2006 World Cup were also valid as tickets on local public transport services and permitted stadium visitors free journeys to and from the venues by public transport.

Elizabeth, Nelspruit and Polokwane), while four existing stadiums – used in the past mostly for rugby – were upgraded. The latter were located in the cities of Bloemfontein, Johannesburg (Ellis Park stadium), Pretoria and Rustenburg. In 2007 the national government allocated R9bn of the national budget for the construction of the new stadia, and a similar amount for the upgrading of the national road network and main airports, to be spent over a four-year period. In total, the government committed themselves to a four-year budget of over R400bn for the World Cup (Manuel 2007). Many of the country's larger cities, secure with the prospects of hosting higher order matches in the tournament proceeded to invest a great deal of resources on the development of flagship stadia, but the development of some of the more prominent (and expensive) ones were marked by unfettered cost escalation³.

By 2010 budget overruns for stadium construction – caused by a variety of factors, including high international prices for construction material such as cement - was estimated at R3.2bn (*Independent Online*, 10 March 2010). Some of the major transport developments which have been linked to the World Cup, such as the Gautrain rapid rail system in the Gauteng province, witnessed delays in schedule and excessive rises in cost. In a gloomy international economic environment, and given the fact that national growth prospects have been adversely affected by the country's energy supply deficit, it was generally expected that the South African government would end up spending much more on the 2010 World Cup than initially projected (*The Witness* 16 October 2008). It was against this backdrop that even some orthodox economists surmised that the World Cup could have positive stimulatory effects which could help offset the deflationary pressures which the economy was expected to experience over the next few years (e.g. Pickworth 2008).

³ For example, Johannesburg's Soccer City, refurbished to increase its seating capacity to 94 700, and to host the headquarters of FIFA and the South African Football Association before and during the tournament, had by early 2010 drawn cost overruns of more than R1bn while it is estimated that the construction of Cape Town's stadium will cost R4,5bn, substantially more than the 2.4bn initially projected for it (*Independent Online* 3 March 2010).

The implementation of an appropriate World Cup security plan presented another challenge to South African authorities. This is because in addition to the standard security measures which needed to be undertaken for a tournament of that kind – directed against hooliganism and the prevention of potential terror attacks – authorities also needed to take measures against crime. South Africa had gained international notoriety for the depth of crime and social violence in the country; indeed, this reputation has widely been regarded as a deterrent to potential foreign visitors to the tournament. To a significant extent the 2010 World Cup security plan therefore also had to consist of an effective communication strategy to counter negative international perceptions of the country. Drawing on, *inter alia*, assistance from Germany and international bodies such as Interpol, the security blueprint for the tournament had in principle been approved by FIFA (Mthethwa 2010).

During June and July 2009 South Africa hosted the Confederations Cup, which although smaller in scale than the World Cup, is regarded as the dry run for the bigger tournament. It became clear during the Confederations Cup that the country's World Cup security plans were in need of improvement. A few days before the start of the Cup, for instance, the Local Organising Committee (LOC) had failed to appoint a security company, necessitating the hasty deployment of an additional number of officers from the South African police force. A few incidents of crime occurred against Confederation Cup visitors (mainly robberies), which were widely reported in the international media. A well developed and efficiently implemented security plan was a major component of the positive atmosphere that reigned at the 2006 World Cup. To gain the same effects, South Africa had to do much to counter widespread cynicism about the ability of overstretched security and policing infrastructure to deliver an effective World Cup anti-crime strategy. For the 2010 World Cup 41 000 security staff were eventually deployed.

Branding, Imaging and Marketing

During the 2006 World Cup a number of large-scale branding and marketing activities occurred which – intentionally and accidentally – yielded some positive results. In collaboration with the Organising Committee and

subsidiary companies founded specifically for the tournament, the federal government drew up a host plan whereby Germany was to be promoted as an economic and scientific centre and as a cultural nation that was also attractive as a tourist destination. In the effort to present Germany as a prosperous and future-ready economic location and to improve the branding of the German nation, the location campaign ‘Deutschland – Land der Ideen’ (‘Germany – land of ideas’) of ‘FC Deutschland GmbH’ is regarded as one of the most successful image campaigns in the history of the Federal Republic. The art and culture programme that was integrated into the framework of the World Cup encompassed a total of 194 events in forty-five cities and enhanced the leisure and recreational activities of around 3.5 million domestic and foreign visitors (Allmers & Maennig 2009).

Worldwide, around 4.2 billion media contacts underlined the acceptance of the events on offer (BMI 2006a). The aim of presenting Germany as a worthwhile tourist destination was promoted by the German Central Tourist Board (DZT), who in line with the official World Cup slogan ‘Die Welt zu Gast bei Freunden’ (‘the world as a guest with friends’) used ‘national service and friendliness campaigns’ and ‘service ambassadors to convey a tourist image of Germany as cosmopolitan and tolerant’. In the frame of the latter project, more than 6,000 employees in the hotel and catering trade were trained to present Germany as warm and welcoming (BMI 2006b). Numerous projects were added to motivate the population (especially the young) to become involved in sporting activities and voluntary work and charity campaigns and initiatives to engender tolerance and integration. Also of significance was the World Cup volunteer programme, in which 15,000 voluntary co-workers helped to take care of fans and guests (BMI 2006b).

In all, the organisers succeeded in extending the football World Cup beyond a primary sporting concern to stage an event by which a country and its people were motivated to optimise the experiences of event visitors and international television viewers. In particular, it was possible to avoid the impression that Germany’s interest in the World Cup was primarily linked to business motives such as hopes for economic, infrastructure, and growth effects. The success of these efforts abroad was measurable: as a result of hosting the World Cup, Germany improved its international standing and in the autumn of 2006 occupied second position in the Anholt Nation Brands

Index (2006). Germany, whose erstwhile image abroad was 'hard and cold [...] not a nation much associated with warmth, hospitality, beauty, culture or fun' (Anholt Nation Brands Index 2006), improved its image through the World Cup in all seventeen criteria that constitute the 'Anholt Nation Brands Index', particularly in the areas of tourism and culture. Overseas visitors to the World Cup experienced a host nation that clearly exceeded their expectations with regard to the qualities of 'tolerance' and 'friendliness towards foreigners' (BMI 2006b). This relatively rapid improvement in the country's international image explains a part of the feel-good effect.

In addition to this, the communication and marketing activities of private businesses - albeit perhaps initially unintentionally - contributed to the feel-good effect. Aside from the activities of the official FIFA sponsors and World Cup partners, and in spite of the restrictive actions of FIFA in connection with legal rights concerning the use of names of the event, forty-three per cent of the advertising-driven business in Germany operated ambush marketing relating to the World Cup. The total investment for sport sponsoring in the country increased by 55 per cent in comparison with the value for the previous year to an unprecedented €2.7 billion (Pilot 2007), making the 2006 World Cup one of the greatest communication tools of all time in Germany.

With a current annual foreign tourism market of about 1.5m and the number of foreign visitors to the 2010 World Cup expected to be in excess of 400 000 (DEAT and South African Tourism 2005)⁴. South African authorities also regard the tournament as a major international marketing and (re)branding opportunity. Indeed, the country's early host campaigning for the FIFA tournaments (first for the 2006 World Cups, and upon failure, for the 2010 finals) was in part motivated by the prospect of dovetailing the hosting of the sport event with some international re-imaging, and to boost the tourism sector. In the post-apartheid era tourism has developed as a major economic sector, with South Africa currently ranked as the top foreign tourism destination in Africa (WTO 2010).

⁴ During the first part of 2010, faced with much lower than expected international ticket sales, official estimations of foreign tourist arrivals during the World Cup were revised downward to 373 000 (see Grant Thornton 2010).

As far as the branding preparations for the World Cup were concerned, however, developments were of a rather varied nature. The main recent thrusts of the national branding campaign have centred on the endorsement of the tournament as 'Africa's World Cup' and of the promotion of the event's 'African legacy'. The official 2010 World Cup emblem which was launched at the closure of the 2006 finals carried some African features, such as colours usually associated with pan-African political movements. Finally, South Africa's national tourism authorities have adopted a tourism logo which states simply, 'South Africa: It's Possible'. There was also some alignment between South African Tourism and the International Marketing Council to try to consolidate the international promotion campaign known as 'Brand SA'. In the case of the 2006 World Cup German authorities implemented a systematic programme to inscribe the event with a specific motif. It is not clear whether South Africa's World Cup had a similar, sustainable 'marketing message' with potential long-term tourism ramifications.

It is also not clear whether 2010 World Cup imaging which was African-centred (such as the Ke Nako! campaign) had the desired effects on a select cohort of international sport tourists. The few studies which have been conducted on the profile of mega-event visitors generally show their travel to be motivated primarily by their interest in sport and the type of sport event they visit, rather than the characteristics of the destination (Gratton *et al.* 2001; Weed & Bull 2004). Perhaps one of the major shortcomings of South Africa's World Cup tourism planning was that there was little systematic ex-ante profiling of expected foreign visitors. In the case of Germany event campaigning was combined with tourist imaging. South African tourism growth will be contingent on changes in a number of structural factors, although a positive reputation gained from hosting a successful World Cup will significantly strengthen the prospects of longer-term tourism rewards.

National Pride, Identity and Patriotism

For the success of a mega-event, an appropriate level of success by the home players plays a fundamental role in maintaining the interest of the national viewers. While in March 2006, at the height of a poor preparation phase, the

German national team was described as 'the worst German team of all time' (N.N. 2006), by reaching third place in the World Cup finals they exceeded general expectations. Through their tournament achievements, decisions by the national manager, Jürgen Klinsmann, that were initially regarded as highly controversial by the public, came to be seen as measures of a carefully considered plan, and Jürgen Klinsmann was seen as a 'reformer' of the German Football Association (DFB). The German public, who were otherwise accustomed to a tight, defensive game from the national team, based above all on 'German' virtues such as will and tenacity (in short: with a degree of stubbornness), showed their enthusiasm for the apparently offensive, dynamic, and team-oriented selection of the DFB (Brinkbäumer & Kramer 2006). In putting these reforms into practice, Klinsmann ensured the fitness of his team and modernised the German game in terms of tactics and style of play. Moreover, he provided a rejuvenation of the national team.

The successful performance of a national team leads, on the basis of individual objectives, to a heightened estimation of self-worth. This happens because the affiliation to a positively valued group, and the association with their symbols of success ('basking in reflected glory') (Schlicht & Strauß 2003) raise self-esteem. Aside from the German national team's unexpected success in the tournament, their modern and team-oriented style of play and offensive and attractive game strategy gave rise to positive identification effects within the national population (Kurbjuweit *et al.* 2006). Through such effects, the 2006 World Cup was able to counteract a general tendency towards social individualisation. With regard to derived stereotyping, sporting values can take on special meaning, since sport will often be used in simplified ways to convey qualities of the stereotype of the population such as 'imagined charisma' (Maguire 1999). The footballer, Christoph Metzelder, summed up how the new style of play of the national team established a connection between a feeling of nation and that of life in general for his generation: 'We can live uninhibited and carefree, and we can also play football in this way'⁵. After the World Cup, almost 60 per cent of Germans identified themselves with the team, in contrast to 31 per cent before the tournament) (Psychonomics 2006); 95 per cent of Germans were proud of the performances of their national team (Medien BW 2006).

⁵ In Kurbjuweit *et al.* (2006).

Accordingly, the World Cup brought to Germany a sense of patriotism that had not been known for a long time (cf. Westerhoff 2007). As a general feature the population does not like to display national devotional objects. However, during the World Cup around five million German flags were displayed on the streets and in the stadia, and adorned personal automobiles.

Immediately after the World Cup, almost 70 per cent of the German population declared a positive change in their national awareness (Köcher 2006); almost 90 per cent of those asked welcomed the distinctive black-red-gold symbolism of the summer of 2006. A year after the tournament, 62 per cent of Germans expressed a lasting increased national pride, which they associate directly with the 2006 World Cup (Luttmer 2006). The reasons for these changes in awareness lay in particular in the cosmopolitan way in which the country had presented itself during the World Cup (Köcher 2006).

The manifestation of patriotism or the use of national symbols in Germany has in the meantime reverted to the level before the World Cup. In this respect, the willingness to express identity induced by the World Cup may be interpreted in terms of a latent social force that moved public awareness in the context of a supposedly apolitical sporting event (Köcher 2006; Kurbjuweit *et al.* 2006). The World Cup attained the character of a platform for 'public confession' (Westerhoff 2007).

In the international sphere, perceptions of Germany also changed. While at the start of 2006, in anticipation of a well-organised but soulless World Cup, the international press emphasised German stereotypes such as reliability and success, the reporting during the tournament was characterised by terms such as 'party', 'pride', 'positivity', 'peace', 'atmospheric', and 'friendly' (IfA 2007). Even the media from countries with a traditionally aloof attitude towards Germany were clearly surprised by the joyful, relaxed, sporting Germany and the population's capacity for enthusiasm (Harding 2006). In all, Germany succeeded in supplementing its image, which had hitherto been dominated by economic and 'hard' attributes, with 'soft' factors such as hospitality, the warmth of the people, and cultural values, and thereby achieved a higher international reputation (Anholt Nation Brands Index 2006).

While the positive national self-appraisal brought experienced by the Germans as a result of the World Cup could be interpreted first of all as an

indicator of a distinct quality of life - therefore as a manifestation of the feel-good effect - it could also be regarded as a change of the German stereotype. The positive resonance of the international reporting in the course of the World Cup, characterised by the change of atmosphere experienced in Germany, was picked up by German people through the national press and organs of the media. The boost in the national image and in civic pride initiated a further strengthening of the feel-good effect.

This kind of dynamic might be the most important long-term outcome of hosting the 2010 World Cup for South Africa. In the post-apartheid era successful sport performance has become one of the main ingredients of the country's nascent nation-building process. The association between post-apartheid sporting success, national pride and cohesion started with South Africa's hosting and victory in the 1995 Rugby World Cup. The sight of then president Nelson Mandela appearing side by side with the captain of the predominantly white rugby team, to celebrate victory in a sport long considered emblematic of apartheid's racism and segregation, became a metaphor for the endeavours toward racial reconciliation that came to define Mandela's presidency. The widespread euphoria generated by the success in the 1995 Rugby World Cup was quickly seized upon by political figures as an opportunity to forge national unity. This has helped to engender an instrumentalist orientation to sport mega-events by South Africa's sport and political elites, for whom the idea to use such events to foster racial integration and stimulate other political dividends, has been a key motivation in what has become since 1995, an extended mega-events campaign. South Africa's bid to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup was the culmination of a lengthy series of bids – only some of them successful - for a range of mega- and medium-scale international sport tournaments, such as the 2004 Olympic Games, the 2003 Cricket World Cup and the 2007 Rugby World Cup.

Yet the experience in hosting and competing in sport mega-events has been a speckled one, with performances by national teams generally falling well below expectations, concomitantly affecting not only domestic support for teams, but in many instances, popular regard for sport events. For example, the national cricket team underperformed during the 2003 Cricket World Cup which was held in South Africa, and the team's early exit from the tournament dampened the population's enthusiasm and support for the event as a whole. The national rugby team displayed some dismal

performances in major international tournaments, inviting the scorn of domestic supporters. Improvements in the team's standing in international league tables in recent years, inter alia through victory in the 2007 Rugby World Cup, have helped them regain support from the population. Finally, the team dispatched to the 2008 Beijing Olympics was able to win only a single medal; in the media and in popular discourse the lacklustre performance of the Olympic team was attributed to factors such as poor sport administration and prolonged political interference in sport affairs (*Business Day* 5 September 2008). These are factors which have been raised as general points of criticism towards all of South Africa's major sports. Thus, while the country's elites still consider sport events as important instruments to yield political dividends, the general deterioration in South Africa's international sport performances, and the apparent frailty of South African sport administration, have prompted a widespread cynicism for almost all the major sports among the broader population.

In football this sense of cynicism has become more pronounced in recent years as the national football team, known popularly as Bafana Bafana, has been on a steady path of decline, performing poorly in virtually all major international tournaments and failing to progress beyond the first round. This presents a marked departure from the team's early successes and fervent support when, for instance it had won the 1996 Africa Cup of Nations, also hosted in South Africa. Keenly aware of the importance for the 2010 tournament of a good performance by the national team, South Africa's football authorities have chosen to invest a great deal of resources in the appointment of a national manager, securing first the high-profile Carlos Alberto Parreira, a man who had achieved marked success with the Brazilian national team, and upon his abrupt and untimely resignation in April 2008, the lesser known but equally expensive Brazilian Joel Santana. In October 2009, after a string of losses and only a few months before the start of the World Cup, Santana was dismissed by the South African Football Association and replaced by Parreira. This has not helped to allay the deep-laid cynicism in South Africa about the ability of Bafana Bafana to achieve much success during the 2010 finals. From FIFA's perspective, a poor performance by Bafana Bafana could be potentially damaging for the World Cup as a whole, and the international body made an improvement of the team

one of the principal requirements for the preparation of the event (*The Times* 19 September 2008).

The experience of the German team during the 2006 World Cup shows that home teams should try to influence the type and style of play and the demeanour of their team.

Spaces of Fandom

The approximately 3.3 million spectators in the stadia of the 2006 World Cup benefited not only from the sporting spectacle itself, but also from the 'unique' atmosphere which reigned (Schibben 2006). 'Atmosphere' can be viewed as the sum total of emotional and interactive expressions of the varied moods of the crowd, conditioned through the individual regulation of state of mind as well as the overt expression of behaviour (Schlicht & Strauß 2003).

In the case of the 2006 World Cup, initially passive spectators became an active and constructive part of the event, 'creating their own experiences' (Brinkbäumer & Kramer 2006). 'Atmosphere' is therefore a phenomenon that needs to be analysed in an interdisciplinary manner, where psychological and sociological aspects play an essential role. In any case, the goal-oriented management strategies that were put into operation at the 2006 World Cup should not be neglected.

The fact that the stadia were occupied to an average of 99.5 per cent of capacity contributed to the creation of the special atmosphere (FIFA 2006). Full-to-capacity stadia were ensured through several key elements of the ticket allocation process. First, the bulk of the tickets had to be ordered and paid for at a time well in advance of the tournament, as the teams which were due to meet were not known. In this way, it was ensured that stadia were sold out not only, for instance, for the games of the German team. Second, the price levels were chosen – in part through subsidies provided by the official sponsors – such that a clear surplus demand was to be expected. For the approximately one million admission tickets that were available for general sale in Germany before the World Cup, around 14.7 million orders were received. This indicated to the organisers that many people had realised that the likelihood for them to attend a World Cup tournament in the future was not very high, and that the uniqueness of the event drove ticket demand (Wann *et al.* 2001).

Incidentally, as a technical point, for the creation of a special atmosphere, it was significant that the majority of the venues were pure football arenas in which spectators were not separated from the pitch by an athletics track. The resulting ‘intimacy’ can increase the esteem of the spectators (Feddersen & Maennig 2008).

The disappointment that resulted from surplus demand for tickets barely played a role during the World Cup (Schulke 2007) because attractive participation alternatives were available. The comprehensive acquisition of broadcast rights through the public service television companies, as well as RTL, and the transmission of fifty-six of the sixty-four games by free television⁶ gave Germans the chance to follow the World Cup almost in its entirety (Gerhard 2006). Eighty-three per cent of Germans saw at least one World Cup game live on television and formed an audience of over 61 million. Eight matches were at any one time followed by more than 20 million television viewers, among them all of the games of the German national team. The semi-final between Germany and Italy had 29.66 million domestic television viewers, and a further 16.4 million people watched the match in places elsewhere than their homes (Gerhard 2006), making the football World Cup the biggest television event in Germany to that date. Of comparable significance were the approximately 2000 public viewing events and the FIFA fan festivals in the twelve venue cities. The official ‘Fanmeilen’ (‘fan miles’) alone attracted over 21 million visitors. Pictures of celebrating fans and seas of flags in public places epitomised the ‘Germany party’ (N.N. 2006). ‘Fanmeile’ became the German word of the year in 2006.

Public viewing, which first came to prominence at the 2002 World Cup in South Korea and Japan, constituted a new ‘culture of viewing’, a combination of the two established types of experience of visiting a stadium and watching television (Schulke 2007). The out-of-home media reception served to intensify the emotional aspects of the entertainment and the escape from everyday life, and also enhanced feelings of companionship, group affiliation, and release (Raney 2004). Within large and anonymous groups, intense feelings were experienced: individual identification with the event

⁶ The two public-service broadcasters, ARD and ZDF, each broadcast twenty-four matches, while eight matches were shown by the private channel, RTL (Gerhard 2006).

and membership of the group were enhanced through sensory stimulation, emotional activation, as well as the intense focus on what was happening ('de-individualisation') (Herkner 2004). Public viewing offered a production platform with appeal to the public and presented a multitude of possibilities for affecting the collective mood of the crowd as well as extrovert self-expression.

The positive perception and broad acceptance of the FIFA fan festivals may be traced back to a multitude of organisational concepts and production features. The starting point for the popularity with visitors was the central and in many places prominent location of the public viewing areas which, not least through the establishment of official 'fan embassies', functioned as inner-city orientation and meeting points (Schulke 2007). Throughout the duration of the World Cup, the fan festivals symbolised social centres and a kind of modern market place, at which communication, interaction, and human coexistence came to the fore and feelings of community were strengthened (Diehl 2006).

South Africa's World Cup planners were well aware of the potential benefits of public viewing, both as a way to offset spectator surplus demand for scheduled matches, and, taking the example of the 2006 World Cup, for the positive atmosphere public viewing sites could generate. In the build-up to the 2010 World Cup, the sale and distribution of match tickets was somewhat politicised, meshed with wider issues about the possible elite nature of the event and its exclusionary effects on a generally poor domestic football support public. The strong emphasis on the World Cup as an African event (and the fact that one of the principal rationales for the initial World Cup bids was that hosting the tournament by South Africa would help to consolidate a sense of pride among Africans) placed a specific obligation on the LOC to deliver on this promise. But it also related to the organisers' desire to ensure that the tournament will ensure a loyal football support base in the aftermath of the World Cup.

To enable better domestic access to match tickets, the LOC had negotiated with FIFA and MATCH AG that 'cheaper' tickets would be made available exclusively to South African supporters. For its part the LOC committed to absorb additional ticket costs brought through currency fluctuations - through the agreement with FIFA, the price of category 4 tickets had been set at a flat rate. Before the tournament, fearful that in the

general international sale of tickets, few would reach other African countries, the LOC also indicated that it would aim to ensure that tickets were obtainable for the rest of the continent.

The method of ticket distribution for the 2006 World Cup ensured that the composition of stadium spectators was of a generally heterogeneous nature, and this played a major role in the positive spirit which prevailed at matches. While not intended as such, and despite the attempt to enable social groups of diverse means to attend the 2010 matches, there was the possibility that the way in which ticket allocation for the South African hosted tournament was structured, might lead to the perceived and real exclusion of significant portions of the domestic population, which might potentially have stimulated some negative sentiments.

Given this, 2010 organisers were placing emphasis on the importance of public viewing sites modelled on the 'Fanmeilen' of the 2006 World Cup. One of the major challenges for South Africa's planners was how to ensure adequate security arrangements at public viewing areas. In addition, some concerns were raised about how to effectively deal with local fan behaviour and 'fan culture', both within and outside stadia. For example, the 2010 Organising Committee had expressed concern over 'the culture of South African ... fans to disregard the principle of reserved seating' at matches (*The Times* 12 December 2008). This latter aspect draws attention to the fact that the cultural contexts of the 2006 and 2010 World Cups were significantly different, a factor which could play a major role in not only the kinds of feel-good effects that are generated at the respective tournaments, but also how feel-good is expressed.

Conclusion

The feel-good effect was among the largest overt effects of the 2006 football World Cup. The effect was so large, that the 2006 World Cup turned into one of the most significant events in Germany. The 2006 World Cup yields some insights for South Africa. First, while feel-good is to a significant extent a spontaneous large-scale psycho-social sentiment that can arise in highly unpredictable circumstances, it is also possible to anticipate and channel its stimulation. As far as the communication and marketing activities of public stakeholders were concerned, the 2006 World Cup was stage-managed less as a sport event than as a superordinate event, by which a country and its

people realised their role as host nation. Through various activities, such as fan festivals, expanded participation opportunities could limit feelings of exclusion from those who did not receive tickets, and/or those who could not afford them. Such reorientation of communication activities would lend itself in particular to countries with more pronounced disparities in incomes, and is an aspect on which South Africa's planners should place more emphasis than had hitherto been the case. Organisational and technical features play an important positive or negative influence in tournament attendees' impressions of an event, but here the cultural and social values of a particular host population can be important. In a country such as Germany, which has among the highest per capita CO₂ emission rates in the world, an emphasis on ecology, both internally and externally, was especially meaningful. In South Africa, where criminality is of considerable significance, special attention to security aspects may prove important.

The (unexpected) success of the home team was an important part of the feel-good effect among the domestic population at the 2006 World Cup. Of comparable significance, however, were the type and style of play and the demeanour of the home team, and favourable domestic media coverage of them during the tournament, which the organisers of the South African World Cup should take into consideration. The off-field presentation of the host team can even partly compensate for a lack of sporting success. In addition, the creation of appropriate – and well secured – sites of fandom was one of the key ingredients for the German World Cup's feel-good effect. While recognised as important, progress with and planning around this aspect for the 2010 World Cup was sluggish before the tournament. Cultural factors and adequate security arrangements were major determinants of the success of public viewing areas during the 2010 finals. However, if planned appropriately, public viewing sites could not only be important means to enable wide sectors of the population to participate in the event, but could also have major social and economic benefits. This holds true, finally for the most significant aspect of feel-good that arose for Germany as a consequence of the 2006 World Cup, which was the prompting of a healthy sense of patriotism, which bore longer-term gains for that country's international tourism image. The stimulation of national pride and national cohesion has a different primary significance for South Africa, where these two factors constitute inputs into the overall political stability of the country. With the

possibility that hosting the 2010 World Cup may present hidden fiscal costs long after the event had come to an end and in this way be a potential source of instability, it will be important to off-set this by emphasising the positive socio-political consequences – such as national fortitude – of the World Cup.

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On the Political Economy of 'Feel-good' Effects at Sport Mega-events ...

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