

## **GAME DAY SECURITY AND FOOTBALL HOOLIGANISM: A DISCUSSION OF NEW METHODS TO SOLVE THIS LONG-STANDING AND DEEP-ROOTED PROBLEM**

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As a result of the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001 and the Bali, Madrid and London bombings in addition to continuous civil and political unrest in numerous countries and the SARS outbreak in China, sport managers must continue to be proactive in protecting their facilities, athletes, officials and spectators on game day and while travelling to and from the competition (Phillips, 2004). In response, the International Association of Assembly Managers (IAAM) formed a Safety and Security Task Force which established a comprehensive guide highlighting best practices in stadium and arena security. In addition, the IAAM has established a training program for stadium and arena managers that utilises risk management software to educate managers about sport-related terrorism, riots and natural disasters. However, while stadium and arena managers in North America and the Asia-Pacific are more concerned with acts of organised-political terror (e.g., bomb threats) and spontaneous terror (e.g., crowd disorder), respectively, facility and event managers in Europe focus their game day security on prevention of organised-social terror (e.g., hooliganism). Therefore, the objectives of this discussion are 1) properly define the types of terrorism that influence game day management, 2) examine existing game day security protocols that counter organised-social terror, and 3) recommend new methods to solve this long-standing and deep-rooted problem.

Most researchers believe establishing an impartial and internationally accepted definition of terrorism is not possible; however, it is necessary to define terrorism in order to combat all forms of it (Toohey, Taylor & Lee, 2003). Goss, Jubenville, and MacBeth (2003) describe 2-types of terrorism influencing risk management in sport; however, it is recommended to divide sport-related terrorism into the following 3-categories: organised-political terror, spontaneous terror and organised-social terror. Organised-political terror is a politically motivated act involving lengthy periods of planning, organising and rehearsal in order to destroy property and/or cause psychological and/or physical harm to another person(s). For example, during the 2006 National Football League season, management received a dirty bomb threat against 7-football stadiums. While spontaneous terror is an impulsive and most often unplanned reaction to one of the following sport-related conditions: a demonstration attempting to disrupt a sport event; being denied admission into a sport event; clash between traditional rivals; and a team winning or losing the competition. For example, at the 2007 Australian Open, without warning spectators had to be protected from being harmed while Croatian and Serbian supporters clashed before a tennis match.

In contrast, organised-social terror is a socially motivated act that is somewhat planned and intended to damage an opposing team's reputation and harm its members. For example, hooliganism, often referred to as 'the English disease', "has come to be most closely identified with the football-crazed English lads and their propensity for antisocial behaviour such as lewd chants and songs, pitch invasions, and 'no-holds-barred' battles with opposing fans and security personnel" (Wann, Melnick, Russell, & Pease, 2001, p.147). The problem of hooliganism is most common among the English Premier League and FIFA World Cup with groups of fans, known as firms, who support their team before (e.g., in-the-streets), during (e.g., inside-the-stadium), and after the match (e.g., outside-the-stadium) through acts including fighting with opposing fans/spectators, disrupting play on the field, and vandalizing the opposing team's stadium or buses, respectively. For example, at both the 1996 and 2006 FIFA World Cup events, French and Germany authorities, respectively, had to contend with rabid English fans, German neo-Nazi, and French-Tunisian die-hards with riot troops to control the outbreak of fan violence (Wann et al., 2001).

To date, European facility and event managers have had 2-options for game day security protocols that counter organised-social terror. First, the British National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) established the Football

Intelligence Section (FIS) to effectively control hooliganism on the national front with the use of football intelligence officers (FIO) developing offender-profiles and risk assessments (Goss et al., 2003). The FIS has a training program for football intelligence officers and following the program, FIOs are attached to specific football clubs and continually analyse data and exchange information with other British and European police task forces to reduce and eliminate hooliganism. In addition, the British Parliament passed legislation (e.g., Football Act of 1999 and Football Disorder Act of 2000) to ban convicted hooligans from attending matches both in Britain and abroad. Second, there are the 13-security measures the IAAM Safety and Security Task Force considers necessary in order to develop a basic protection plan. In specific, the basic protection plan recommends establishing a central command to coordinate all security responses in addition to conferring with local policing agencies and developing policies that establish formal risk management and evacuation plans, pre-event training programs for all staff, prohibiting deliveries 90-minutes before the event, installation of ventilation systems to block hazardous agents, restriction of critical areas to unauthorised personnel, use of clear trash bins and refuse bags for easy visual inspection, use of periodic broadcasts to inform spectators, 1-crowd observers to 250-spectators, banning carry-in baggage, and no re-entry for spectators.

However, organised-social terror (i.e., hooliganism) is more than a law enforcement problem – it is a social problem. In the short-term, maintaining a basic protection plan and improving game day security is important but it needs a ticketing policy which requires all football supporters who wish to attend a match carry an identification card. This ID card system would be similar to the one proposed as part of the Football Supporters Bill (1989) but more advanced. The system would be linked to the central command and involve a database with a supporter profile, season ticket information and turnstile (gate) access. In the long-term, football administrators, athletes and officials must work together with supporter groups to change the culture of the football clubs and game. Although the majority of die-hard supporters attending football matches are well-behaved and act in a manner consistent with societal standards; a small but significant group of supporters are too passionate and aggressive – also known as dysfunctional fans (Wakefield & Wann, 2006). Wakefield and Wann (2006) recommend measuring the level of fan identification to determine behavioural differences in die-hard supporters and to develop managerial remedies to change behaviour. This information would be included in supporters' profiles and those who are functional die-hard supporters would be recruited to help establish a new club culture while those who are dysfunctional die-hard supporters would be limited in their match attendance. Therefore, establishing standard game day security involving a basic protection plan, implementation of an ID card system, and changing the culture of the game should reduce risk and possibly bring to end hooliganism. The recommendations for practitioners and future research will be further discussed.

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