

LANDSSTÆVNE 2013 – A SPORT FESTIVAL RECLAIMING POSITIVE LEGACY

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The aim of this paper is to study the non-mega event Landsstævne 2013 (Danish for sport festival) as an example of a non mega event which is trying to reclaim legacy after a history 26 sport festivals over a period of 152 years. After the financially disastrous festival in 2002, the DGI (Danish umbrella organisation of sport for all gymnasts and sport) has relaunched the festival as a youth festival combining gymnastics with sport, fitness music and partying. The study aims at shedding light on the means of the relaunching and the social effect on the involved clubs and volunteers and the social exchange following the relaunching before and during the event.

From the 4th of July and four days on the city of Esbjerg will be hosting the largest sport for all-event in Denmark Landsstævne 2013. In February 20.000 participants from all over the country had registered within a few hours after the opening of the ticket sale and the festival is expected to attract more than 25.000 participants and 5.000 spectators. In and around Esbjerg there are over a hundred wellorganized local sport clubs representing a strong civil society. To run the festival the organizer DGI depends on the cooperation and presence of more than 100 local clubs within the municipality of Esbjerg. An amount of 3000 volunteers will be working daily during the festival.

The sport-for-all festival 2013 is celebrating not only gymnastics but also 25 sporting activities and joining physically active people from all over the country. In other words the Landsstævne 2013 is not a spectator event as much as a participants event. The festival this year is organized around the theme “Put your own program together” stating that “*there will be something for everyone, no matter what you have come for – competing in the various branches of sport, seeing the shows, experiencing the sense of community or for the sake of the parties*” (DGI Landsstævne program 2013).

The study of the DGI sports festival 2013 will focus on the reclaiming of legacy of the event. The legacy was becoming negative since the badly attended and financially disastrous festival in Bornholm in 2002 and changes had to be made. The event had turned into a gymnastics event for elderly women and had problems attracting both participants and cities that would host it.

The focus on legacy will follow Wait (2004) and his concept of social and cultural exchange. Important and clearly non-mega-event features of the festival are its dependency on the cooperation with local clubs, the amount of volunteers needed, the focus on participants and the small budget. The festival is traditionally rooted in civil society and totally non profit. In order to succeed on limited means the festival is totally dependent on and cooperates with more than 100 of the local sports clubs, large and small. The question is which impact this cooperation has on the social life of the involved clubs.

Wait (2004) uses the concept of social exchange theory in understanding the impact of megaevents. Before, during and after an event a social exchange is taking place, during which (in this case) local clubs and volunteers exchange recognition/non-recognition related to the legacy of the event. The exchange has three phases: before, during and after. The effects (legacies) can be either direct (right now) or indirect (longterm) legacies.

Using the social exchange theory the study will analyse the social exchange between the DGI and three differently sized clubs and their local community. The study will focus on the social exchange internally - between the volunteers or members as well as externally - between the volunteers, members and the local community and the DGI in the perspective of the changed sport festival and its new positive legacy. The three clubs will be compared as to the social exchange in relation to their size. The study will be limited to the two first phases before and during, but will not study the after phase.

The methods used in the study will be qualitative interviews, participant observation and document analysis.

The learning outcome is expected to be in the ability and methods in an organization like the DGI to turn around the basic idea in a tradition loaded festival such as the Landsstævne and turn it into a celebration including a much broader community than before, without losing the social exchange potential with the local clubs and their volunteers.