

The Local and the Global in English Soccer and the Rise of Satellite Television

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This article is concerned with unpacking some of the important dimensions of the developing relationship in Britain between satellite television and sport. The article discusses (a) the rise of Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB network and the central role of Sky's exclusive deal with the new Football Association Premier League for soccer in cementing the future for satellite broadcasting in Europe, and (b) the role of sport and television in constructing national identities and in promoting some of the conditions for the enactment of effective forms of citizenship. The discussion concludes with some comments on recent trends in the commercialization of sport and on the possibilities for the mediation of new forms of spectator attachments to sport.

Dans cet article sont développées certaines dimensions importantes de la relation entre la télévision satellite et le sport en Grande-Bretagne. Plus spécifiquement, l'article porte sur (a) les succès du réseau BSkyB de Rupert Murdoch et le rôle central de l'entente exclusive entre ce réseau et la nouvelle ligue FA de soccer dans la garantie d'un futur pour la télédiffusion via satellite en Europe; et (b) le rôle du sport et de la télévision dans la construction des identités nationales et la promotion de certaines conditions nécessaires à l'accomplissement de formes efficaces de citoyenneté. En conclusion, des commentaires sont offerts sur les tendances récentes vers la commercialisation du sport et sur les possibilités de médiation de nouvelles formes d'attachement au sport de la part des spectateurs et spectatrices.

Something of a sea change has been taking place over the past decade in the TV broadcasting of sport in Europe, perhaps especially in Britain. This change has been taking place against a backdrop of the global reconstitution of international markets and communication systems. At the heart of this change is the apparently relentless expansion of the global cultural-media industries as they are increasingly driven to cover their escalating costs over the maximum market base. Moreover, in the deterritorialized global flows of capital, labor, commodities, information, and images that characterize late 20th century societies, it is the "meaninglessness," the symbolic violence of postnational media systems, that signals an increasing autonomy and power for them with respect to the social (Lash & Urry, 1994, pp. 12, 16).

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In this sense, the new global mass media focus less, for example, on simply reproducing class bias, but more on promoting a self-referential "media bias" by their showing of spectacular (sporting) events and cultural flamboyance and difference in attempts, simply, to attract the largest audience (Champagne, 1989). In cultural terms such developments have been argued to create, in the lexicon of the postmodernists, "a new electronic cultural space; a placeless geography of image and simulation . . . a global hyperspace . . . a world of instantaneous and depthless communication; a world in which space and time horizons have become compressed and collapsed" (Robins, 1990, pp. 28-33). This "global space" is a space of flows, a decentered space, a space in which "frontiers and boundaries have become permeable" (Robins, 1990, p. 33). It is a global pervasiveness and a form of niche marketing that claims to produce in the words of Theodore Leavitt (1983, pp. 30-31) "the cosmopolitanism of speciality."

Robins has pointed out that

The new merchants of universal culture aspire towards a borderless world. BSkyB [satellite TV] beams out its product to a "world without frontiers". Satellite footprints spill over the former integrity of national boundaries. Within the globalization of culture the link between culture and territory becomes significantly broken. (1990, p. 29)

In rather more prosaic economic terms, recent academic debates about the localized implications of globalization center, quite properly, not on the effects of the so-called deregulated market but rather on the wider effects of the restructuring of sociospatial relations by new patterns of investment and production in industry and services, labor migration, and telecommunications (Zukin, 1988), and more especially still on the mediation of the supposed global free-flow of subjects and objects by the international institutions of economic governance. In effect, the globalized localization of successful economies and the co-relative economic and social hollowing out of ghetto and inner-city neighborhoods in Britain and the U.S., trends both of which are characteristic of what Lash and Urry (1987) have called disorganized capitalism, are each produced by the irregular spatial distribution of markets as institutions. Put simply, goods, labor, money, and information will not flow to where there are no markets (Lash & Urry, 1994).

Moreover, the paradigmatic, highly mobile media that are characteristic of disorganized capitalism, particularly those of fiber-optic cable and satellite communications, have recently led to time-space and time-cost convergence on a global scale. This means that increasingly in the transformed stratification of the global system into core and periphery—the "world as a map of 'bridges' of communication and transport, comprising dense networks, sparse networks and blanks"—relative location, or how one is connected, becomes ever more important than absolute location (Brunn & Leinbach, 1991, p. xvii).

Finally, in these new networks of global cities, a "wired village of non-contiguous communities" (Lash & Urry, 1994, p. 28), globalized popular culture (including the sports that are routinely taken from their localized cultural contexts and are flashed and carelessly and incongruously consumed across international global communication systems) functions as a form of pervasive poetic discourse (Habermas, 1987). This sinister discourse—a popular cultural or sporting "muzak"—creates the very least mediated universals through which peoples from the global core—and increasingly those from its periphery—communicate.² The

flattening out of cultural difference in postorganized capitalism seems to be a key product of the new global telecommunications economic order.

In these new conditions, far from protecting valued ideals and forms of life within the constraints of localized social and economic circumstance, the political rhetoric of globalization also serves to restrict public perceptions of the policy options that are actually available to national governments. The danger of such rhetoric is that it reduces the scope of democratic political life to marginal adjustments in the management of market institutions (Gray, 1994). In a recent book, a senior British government minister proclaimed, in a telling aside, that "cultural difference is just one more market variation in the advance of global style and the global marketplace" (Redwood, 1994, p. 27). It is difficult, then, to find comfort in the sanguine conclusions of those who argue, in relation to the globalization of popular culture and sport, that "while the contrasts between cultures may have diminished, there has also occurred an increase in the varieties of cultural identities available" (Maguire, 1994, p. 311). Rather, according to Ben Badgikian, former dean of the journalism school at Berkeley, "The lords of the global village . . . exert a homogenizing power over ideas, culture and commerce that affects populations larger than any in history" (*The Nation*, June 12, 1989). According to Shawcross, Rupert Murdoch, head of the transglobal News Corporation media empire (and committed exponent of his favorite dictum: "As the world is modernizing, so it is Americanizing"), rhetorically asked himself recently,

Are we going to homogenize the whole world with satellite and cable, with no room for local culture? I think there is a danger. One benefit may be that it is more peaceful. And more prosperous. But there will be fewer differences. (1993, p. 557)

The role for "pick and mix" televised sport in the information-soaked, service-rich, communications-laden core of postorganized capitalism, and in the increasingly colonized media markets of sections of the world's periphery, similarly promises to impart form to an immediate, unreflective, internationalized habitus (Lash & Urry, 1994, p. 25). Surely, this is the key issue in the globalization of TV sports forms rather than a focus on the "marketing of difference" or the "cultural exchanges" of sports highlighted elsewhere (cf. Maguire, 1994, p. 331).

The Media Revolution and the Struggle Over the BBC

Against the background of this fundamental reordering of the global media/cultural complex and the reinterpretation of the meaning of televised sport and other popular cultural forms, in Britain the fundamental telecommunications policy focus has been placed upon how terrestrial public-service TV and the burgeoning new market-regulated satellite delivery systems should be controlled and financed and about the varying sorts of access British citizens are likely to have to the different sectors of the broadcasting network. Discussion is already going on, for example, between British government ministers and senior administrators of the publicly funded and state-regulated BBC TV network about the precise form of the future funding of the BBC under its broadcasting charter, which is due for renewal in 1996. At the moment, program making for the two

national BBC channels (BBC 1 and BBC 2) is funded entirely out of a license fee paid by all TV owners and collected by the state. This approach to funding has historically been taken to underpin the public service philosophy and the ambitions of public sector broadcasting in Britain, ambitions that were established under the corporation's founder, William Reith, and expressed, rather idealistically, by Charles Curran, a distinguished director general of the BBC in the 1970s. For Curran,

The underlying assumption of the BBC is that of liberal democracy. . . . Broadcasters have a responsibility, therefore, to provide a rationally based and balanced service of news, which will enable adult people to make basic judgements about public policy in their capacity as voting citizens of a democracy. . . . The only practical guideline is to try and ensure that every view which is likely to have a lasting effect on public thinking is at some time reflected in the public debate on the air about any particular subject. (Curran, 1979, pp. 106, 115)

As Golding (1990, pp. 84-85) points out, despite the integrity of figures like Curran and the sometimes immature claims of media theorists, there can be no serious doubt that public-service media sources consistently provide a partial and coherently biased account of many areas of political and social life. But what of the alternatives? This debate about funding for the BBC comes 10 years after the official "Peacock Report" on financing the BBC (1986), which recommended a move toward "a sophisticated market system based on consumer sovereignty," with broadcasting services "available from as many alternative sources as possible" (Peacock Report, 1986, paragraph 592). Peacock also stressed, however, the need for "finance for programmes of a public service kind supported by people in their capacity as citizens and voters" (Peacock Report, 1986, paragraph 133). An important question remains: Will public service broadcasting in Britain continue to be funded solely out of viewer license subscriptions? Or, will the BBC also be required to raise funds from private sources, including advertisers?

In Britain, a number of regional, commercial companies (ITV) make up the third national TV channel, funding program making mainly out of advertising revenue.³ In November 1982, a fourth national TV channel, Channel 4, was established under a government remit; it was required by law to be different and experimental, a provision sustained by guaranteed funding for the new channel from the Independent TV (ITV) companies. However, under the 1990 Broadcasting Act, Channel 4 is required, from 1994, to start selling its own advertising to raise funds for program making in an open market. The recent public auction of commercial ITV franchises is, in turn, forcing British commercial TV companies to adopt a much more cost-conscious attitude, in which programming diversity will no longer be protected by a concern with public-service principles. The kinds of programs made and shown will come to depend much more directly on the size and composition of the audience they are able to attract for advertisers.

Add to these shifts in terrestrial broadcasting in Britain the rapid growth in the number and audience-reach of international satellite TV channels in Europe, backed by transnational capital and in hungry search of advertising revenue, and the picture emerges of a transformation in some of the fundamental tenets of

broadcasting of a kind that may be familiar to researchers and TV viewers in North America but is unparalleled in the short history of the medium in Britain.

Popular opinion is still divided in Britain on the likely long-term effects of these changes. On the one hand, neoliberal "free market" supporters point to the importance of producing what they describe as a leaner, market-primed communications network and of making consumer choice paramount in the shaping of television output. They claim that the diversity in distribution, and the opportunities for niche marketing provided especially by the new satellite channels, will produce diversity in output, thus satisfying all consumer preferences. Such claims find their echo in recent accounts in cultural studies that seem to see the "semiotic power" of consumers as operating independently from, or in parallel with, the power of the fiscal economy, so that "people can consume as much as they wish and what they wish, without the restriction of what they are able to afford" (Fiske, 1987, p. 313). Supporters of simple market regulation for the new delivery systems also oppose the Reithian traditions of the BBC on the basis of their alleged defense of "quality" TV as a front for the promotion of the narrow, elitist prejudices of the class-bound British establishment. According to Rupert Murdoch, public service TV produces programs that

are often obsessed with class, dominated by anti-commercial attitudes, and with a tendency to hark back to the past. . . . The socially mobile are portrayed as uncaring; businessmen as crooks; moneymaking is to be despised. [British TV] is an integral part of the British disease, hostile to the sort of culture needed to cure that disease. (*The Times*, August 26, 1989)

Critics, on the other hand, point out that this overriding focus on the primacy of consumer choice, and on the "operational structures of codes" in broadcasting (Kuan-Hsing Chen, 1987, p. 72, cited by Golding, 1990), ignores "the massive inequalities of access to cultural goods created by . . . the financial economy" (Golding, 1990, p. 86). In this sense, the "cosmopolitanism" of consumer choice offered by the new media and consumer cultures coexists with a "ghoulish separateness"—a form of material and spatial segregation that exists even in "connected" global cities and that is often mediated by poverty and ethnic division (Harris, 1993, p. 38). In effect the new global media, operating through representations of spectacle, privatize poverty and contribute to the fragmentation and the marginalization of the social (Balaczs, 1991).

Opponents also claim that the provision of more market-regulated TV channels—channels competing for advertising revenues in the open market—promises reduced funds per hour for program making and the consequent repackaging of tried and tested products that are guaranteed to attract the largest audiences for the lowest cost. Thus, in 1985 the UK had a £24 million¹ trade surplus in the export of television programs. By 1991, this had become a deficit of £100 million, a fact overwhelmingly due to the purchase of cheap, foreign (mainly U.S.) imports bought for satellite. By the year 2000, this deficit is forecast to be £640 million, allegedly threatening the long-term future of program production in the U.K. (*The Guardian*, May 31, 1993). This trend seems likely to continue, not least because Britain is the "natural" home of satellite TV in Europe. More than 50 nondomestic satellite channels are based in Britain. This is not simply because of the widespread use around Europe of English as a

common cross-national language. It is also because the present British government's favoring of unfettered market forces leads it to ignore its own national directives on domestic productions and to refuse to enforce European Community (EC) directives which require that 51% of any TV channel program output is of EC origin.

Citizenship, Sport, and the Rise of Satellite TV

The preceding description should make more clear some of the links to be drawn between developments in media technologies, questions about public access, and the notions of citizenship and social democracy through broadcasting alluded to previously. For one thing, if effective citizenship requires free access to a range of information and explanations about the world around, then clearly television, because of its cultural centrality, has become a key site in the struggle to secure and promote resources for citizenship (Thompson, 1990). However, changes in network broadcasting and the division of television in Britain in the 1980s effectively into two camps—the established, public-service channels of the BBC and the traditionally regulated commercial channels, ITV and Channel 4, on the one hand, and the largely unregulated new TV industries (cable and satellite TV) on the other—have heightened debates about the role this new constellation of TV interests might play in fragmenting (customerizing) its audience.

Rupert Murdoch, head of the transglobal publishing and telecommunications empire, News Corporation, controls the BSkyB satellite channel which, by January 1994, was received by approximately 3.3 million homes in the United Kingdom (18% of the available domestic market). It is predicted that by 1997 as many as 12 million U.K. homes will have satellite dishes and that BSkyB will have annual subscription income of over £1,700 million (Shawcross, 1993, pp. 543, 561). The international scope of Murdoch's business empire has been well documented (cf. Shawcross, 1993). His multiple ownership of British newspapers (about 35% of the British market for the national daily press) and the new TV delivery systems serving Britain have led to urgent claims, from those in Britain opposed to the free run of the market in the information industries, that Murdoch has achieved an unhealthily monopolistic hold over domestic media output. It is the case, however, that satellite channels have been exempt from British government restrictions on cross-media ownership. Murdoch's cultural and economic power, wielded largely through his media interests, suggests that his recent comments that in his role of global media entrepreneur he is merely a "pathfinder for a media pluralism" are both politically strategic and, according to the liberal newspaper *The Guardian* (September 3, 1993), "a comically insulting piece of bathos." Nevertheless, the new global supercommunication highways promised by technological and commercial developments in the telecommunications and media industries seem likely to further relax British government controls on cross-media ownership in order to allow effective British and European competition against the six or eight media/telecommunication giants that are predicted to emerge out of the fiber-optic and digital revolution (Keegan, 1994).

In the light of recent developments such as these, it is not difficult to be sceptical about the potential of the new pay-to-view broadcasting sectors like satellite for promoting greater public access to knowledge and more active civic involvement in an integrated, but pluralist, democratic society. According to

Anthony Smith, broadcasting expert and president of Magdalen College, Oxford, the new forms of market regulation in broadcasting will mean that increasingly the British TV viewer will no longer be "the Reithian citizen patiently waiting to be informed and entertained, but the Hayekian consumer, whose attention must be grabbed and held, minute by minute" (cited by Shawcross, 1993, p. 458). As Murdock further comments,

Alongside diversity of production, a broadcasting system oriented towards citizenship must be able to guarantee universal access, both geographically and socially. That is to say, the entire output should be equally available to everyone, regardless of their income or where they live. There should be no additional charges for access to the more expensive programmes or those aimed at minorities. This principle of universal access must be defended . . . particularly since it has been comprehensively jettisoned by the new television industries. (1990, p. 85)

"I've Started, So I'll Finish?"⁵

Satellite and cable TV are at the heart of the new market segmentation in TV broadcasting, especially perhaps through their work on sports programming. In its earlier days, however, the future for satellite TV as a pan-European delivery system looked decidedly grim. The European Super Channel and the Murdoch-controlled Sky channels of the early 1980s found language and taste key cultural barriers that hindered the creation of a homogeneous European viewing public (Blain, Boyle, & O'Donnell, 1993, p. 20). Murdoch's Sky Channel closed its continental offices in January 1989 with Murdoch turning his attention, instead, more directly toward the British broadcasting market. The launch, in February 1989, of the new Astra Satellite carrying Murdoch's Direct to Home (DTH) Sky channels followed by BSB's Direct Broadcast Satellite (DBS) British franchise launch in the spring of 1990, supposedly heralded a new era in television consumer choice.

Resistance to a European-wide sports TV market continues, however. Barnett (1992, p. 11) argues that Pan-European sports channels have two major problems: first, the existence of different national cultural attitudes toward different sports, and, second, the fact that the centrality of public sector broadcasting in Europe has resulted in a very national-centered view and presentation of sport, with the possible exceptions of football and tennis (later, two major target sports for satellite channels). Perhaps indicative of some of these problems is the fact that in 1993 two sports channels, Screensport and Eurosport, merged, with the latter writing off debts totalling £100 million.

Sky and BSB also struggled to make early financial headway against start-up costs estimated to be as high as £1.25 billion (Chippendale & Franks, 1991). Sky's determination to dominate satellite broadcasting in Britain was backed by loss-leader marketing, by extensive and supportive coverage of the new channels by Murdoch-owned British newspapers, and by Sky's mass-market "tabloid" opposition to the "quality programming" demanded of BSB's four channels, under terms established by the British Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA). As BSB's costs escalated with the channel losing an estimated £8 million a week in 1989, Murdoch (painfully) absorbed Sky's own weekly £2 million losses in other parts of the News Corporation empire. The 1990 merger between Sky and

BSB gave Murdoch ownership of 35% of the national press and 48% of the DBS satellite franchise, an illegal monopoly according to British government regulations. Murdoch himself described the coup as "busting the British broadcasting cartel" (Shawcross, 1993, pp. 511-512).

In 1990, falling share prices, rising debts (mainly from the drain of Sky), and pressure from nervous international banks about the rescheduling of News Corporation's exponential loan debts all but bankrupted the Murdoch empire. The Sky/BSB deal, in effect, bailed out the ailing giant, and in February 1991 a \$7.6 billion refinancing deal was finalized with 146 banks. Just 2 years later, in 1993, the future of satellite TV in Britain and Europe looked assured. Media consultants, Zenith, predict that satellite will take on one fifth of all TV advertising by 1998, while media analysts and brokers, James Capel, estimate the value of BSkyB had doubled to £2 billion by November 1992 (*The Observer*, November 1, 1992). BSkyB was reported to be making profits of £2 million a week by late 1993 and to be aiming for a £4 million public flotation toward the end of 1994. The major reason for this apparent upturn in the fortunes of BSkyB is clear. BSkyB has emphasized coverage of international sport. More especially, exclusive "live" coverage of Premier League soccer from England has been the key cultural product in establishing BSkyB as a major European-wide pay-to-view satellite channel.

Sport and Television in Britain: A Short History

The media have, for most of this century, of course, played a central role in the growth and spread of modern sport. Sports news first began to emerge as a distinct cultural category in the late 19th century. The establishment of a mass-circulation national popular press in the early 20th century brought news of sport to a larger audience than ever before. The rapid growth of cinema in Britain in the 1920s and 1930s meant that moving images of sport performance in newsreels gave many people their first glimpse of major events. The formation of the BBC and the setting up of an outside broadcasting department in the 1920s brought live radio coverage of sport into British homes for the first time (Whannel, 1992).

The BBC launched the world's first regular television service in Britain in 1936, but it never reached more than 20,000 homes within range of the broadcasting center at Alexandra Palace, in London, and the service was suspended when war broke out in 1939. British television was relaunched in 1946, but only by the mid-1950s did TV set sales begin to rise dramatically, boosted by the establishment of commercial television in 1955 and the increasing relative affluence in Britain that followed the austerity of the war years.

By the 1960s, television was reaching most of the British population, but the black-and-white image quality was still fairly primitive. Rapid technological advances meant that by the end of the decade the introduction of studio video recording, video editing, communication satellites, action replay, slow motion, color, and new lightweight cameras had totally transformed television viewing and especially TV sport. As technological advances brought qualities of the "hyperreal" to top TV sports in the nation's living rooms, so the symbolic importance of major sporting events for the postwar national project in Britain was already becoming clear. From 1954, for example, top-listed sporting events were deemed, by British government statute, to be the property of the nation,

something to be made available to all citizens. Their universal availability, especially on BBC TV, was regarded, naturally, as part of the public-service brief of the corporation.

The range of events covered by the protected list of the nation's sacred sporting events reveals much about the singular class and amateur traditions of sport in Britain. They included the Epsom Derby horserace, the Grand National steeplechase, the All England Tennis Championships at Wimbledon, the Oxford and Cambridge University boat race, the FA (soccer) Cup Final, and the international cricket Test Matches staged in England. In fact, not until 1984 did independent, commercial television prise coverage of a major British sport—domestic track and field—from the BBC's grasp. This was a crucial landmark. In 1988, the BBC/ITV cartel for TV soccer coverage was broken when top English soccer clubs threatened to accept a more lucrative deal with the new satellite channels. By 1989 the emerging satellite networks were able, for the first time, to purchase exclusive rights to a major British sports event, Frank Bruno's attempt to win the World Heavyweight Boxing title from Mike Tyson. The TV era of pay-to-view global sport had arrived in Britain.

Taking the Ball Home? Satellite TV and English Soccer

Despite the range of content on satellite television, the two elements of programming that are most strongly promoted by the new networks as the key factors in British consumers' decisions to buy receiver dishes are major films and sport. However, in Britain during the 1980s, ownership of video recorders grew rapidly. A wide network of video rental outlets subsequently emerged, providing a cheap alternative access to films. Sport, then, became of special importance in the fight to promote satellite television to a British audience (Barnett, 1990).

Professional football in England has traditionally had an uneasy relationship with television. Routine overtures from British television for coverage of league soccer matches were firmly resisted by the soccer authorities until the mid 1960s.⁶ Even as late as the mid-1980s, the English FA was routinely refusing permission for terrestrial TV stations in Britain to carry live TV coverage of major foreign (continental) matches. Five years on, live television coverage of soccer from around the world on networked and satellite channels was dominating entire TV viewing weekends in some British households. The amount of general coverage of football on television now exceeds that of all other sports (see Table 1).

In 1992, the English FA and Murdoch's BSkyB satellite sports channel, Sky Sports, announced a groundbreaking TV deal that gave the Murdoch channel exclusive rights to live coverage of English football's newly established FA Premier League, a breakaway league made up of 22 of England's strongest and most wealthy soccer clubs. The establishment of the new league, overturning at a stroke 104 years of fraternal Football League soccer, which had linked big and small clubs in a relationship of cross-subsidization (Arnold, 1991), seems very much a triumph, in postmodernist terms, of "the now over history." It was also predicated on the agreement of a major new television deal for the breakaway clubs, almost inevitably forged out of the venture capital provided by the market-regulated satellite systems. This new arrangement, which costs BSkyB £304 million over 5 years (about six times more than the previous arrangement with terrestrial TV), seemed to be an all-or-nothing gamble for BSkyB. Failure here

Table 1 Sports Covered From Midnight October 2 to Midnight October 8, 1993, on BBC1, BBC2, ITV Regions, Channel 4, BSkyB Network, Eurosport, and the Discovery Channel

Sport	Hours:minutes
American football	6:55
Angling	1:50
Athletics	3:50
Australian rules football	3:00
Baseball	7:00
Bowls	1:00
Boxing	16:55
Cycling	2:30
Equestrian	3:00
Football	49:05
Gaelic football	1:30
Golf	11:30
Horse racing	3:20
Ice hockey	3:00
Judo	9:00
Motor sport	37:20
Motor cycling	8:50
Powerboating	3:00
Rugby league	15:30
Sailing	5:30
Snooker	25:15
Tennis	32:45
Triathlon	1:00
Volleyball	4:00

Note. Adapted from *London Evening Standard*, October 6, 1993.

would mean being stuck at the margins of broadcasting, caught inexorably in a ghetto of cheap and unattractive programming. However, if the new relationship with soccer succeeds, as predicted, in eventually selling more than three million sports channel subscriptions in Britain it is likely to secure the long-term future of the entire BSkyB network.

The recent takeover by Murdoch (through Fox TV) of U.S. coverage of NFL football illustrates the international importance of sport in the wider struggles for global ascendancy among the media/telecommunications giants. Deng Hsiao Ping's expressed liking for sport on the Asian Star satellite channels had also been noted by News Corporation: in July 1993, it announced that it was paying \$525 million for 64% of Star TV. The footprint of Star's satellite covers three billion people, or two thirds of the world's population. In 1993 it already had an audience of 45 million in 13 million homes across Asia. In the same year, Fox's international arm launched a new Latin American cable TV network covering 80% of the continent, from Mexico to Argentina (Shawcross, 1993, pp. 565-566).

The size and terms of the new soccer deal in Britain provide a ready indication of the key role to be played by the sport in the European future of BSKyB, but it also maps out the increasing influence of television in shaping the consumption of soccer in Britain. The first live-football TV deal in Britain was struck in 1983 and covered five live matches each year for 2 years at a cost of £5.2 million. Ten years later the new arrangements involve coverage of 60 live Premier League matches on satellite at an annual fee to the game which is 12 times greater than that paid in 1983. Ticket receipts at league soccer matches have increased only threefold over the same period. At some major English soccer clubs today, income raised from sponsorship, advertising, television, and other sources exceeds ticket receipts. Although in overall terms the annual £120 million paid in ticket receipts by spectators still makes the ticket buyer English soccer's single largest major funder, it is money from sponsorship and television that allows the top soccer clubs to compete more effectively for players with their larger continental rivals. The total revenue even at the top English clubs in 1993 (£25 million, recently announced at publicly floated Manchester United) is still dwarfed, however, by that at major American sports franchises and at major continental soccer clubs such as Barcelona (£120 million).

In other major European soccer countries, the financial role of television in the game seems to be as important, though some variation is also evident (Achtner, *Independent on Sunday*, May 24, 1992). France now seems most like the English case these days. Canal Plus, a subscription-only commercial channel, has monopolized live coverage of French soccer since 1984, showing 22 matches a season costing an estimated £20 million per year. In Germany, the private SAT I cable channel agreed to a new 5-year deal in 1992/93 costing DM 700 million (about £245 million); 75% of German households expect soon to be cabled. In Spain, a joint deal worth about £300 million between local region channels and Canal Plus produces two live matches a week for 8 years (from 1989), while in Italy the state-funded RAI and Silvio Berlusconi's Fininvest network shared extensive highlights-only coverage of Serie A soccer matches up until 1993/94, when weekly coverage of one live match was introduced. In addition to owning the leading soccer club, AC Milan, Berlusconi owns Italy's three leading TV networks and Mondadori, that country's leading publishing house. Berlusconi is an avid proponent of a TV-funded European soccer "Super League" to further promote his nexus of business, soccer, and media interests, though recent Fininvest losses have pushed him directly into national politics in an attempt to rescue his ailing corporation (cf. Glover, 1994).⁷

As in Britain, in continental Europe the involvement of new commercial bidders for the TV rights for football coverage produced an explosion in costs to secure exclusive rights. In Italy, for example, fees paid by TV for soccer coverage rose from just £6 million in 1981/82 to £50 million in 1991/92. But there are other potential costs of these new developments. The new arrangements for English soccer have provoked fears that, as in France, football's community of fans will gather around TV sets more often than in soccer stadia as the game's new paymasters from television instruct on the timing and staging of major matches. Interestingly, satellite coverage of soccer in Britain seems already to be fostering new forms of friendship networks at home and elsewhere that mirror those established at live matches. Friends and their families now gather in bars or at homes with satellite dishes to watch televised matches together (Langford & Hunt, 1993). This is a significant development worthy of more research, especially

given claims that spectators who attend events constitute part of the sports product that is of cultural significance and that is currently so attractive to television executives. As Fiske points out, "Fan productivity is not limited to the production of new texts: it also participates in the construction of the original text and thus turns the commercial narrative or performance into popular culture" (1992, p. 40).

English soccer was the key sport in BSkyB's relaunch in Britain because it was the only sport that was clearly capable of attracting a significant number of new customers to satellite TV. English soccer's fast-flowing and committed style is also popular with TV viewers in continental Europe, a fact evidenced by the sale around the world of rights for the coverage of the annual soccer FA Cup Final. However, overcoming consumer resistance among British soccer fans and others to satellite TV may be no small task. In a recent survey, for example, over one half the U.K. population vowed they would never purchase a satellite dish because of the "downmarket" associations of the structures. For some attractive potential customers, "the image of a typical dish owner is an unemployed bloke slumped in front of an ever flickering tube" (*The Guardian*, December 14, 1992). The exclusive screening on Sky of Test Match cricket between the West Indies and England in the early months of 1994 is part of a conscious attempt by satellite to rid itself of its "public housing project" image. Nevertheless, with evidence that there are more than 1.7 million subscription homes now paying up to £144 per year for the Sky Sports Channel, BSkyB is already easily recouping its annual outlay for soccer coverage. However, TV audiences for live matches on BSkyB for the 1992/93 season averaged just 525,000, according to official industry figures (reported in *The Guardian*, May 11, 1993). No match attracted a seven-figure TV audience, and a number even dropped below six figures. On national terrestrial TV channels, live coverage of soccer attracted average audiences of something over seven million (see Table 2).

BSkyB devotes some 10–15 hours of air space a week to English soccer, plus the inevitable late-night repeats of earlier matches. This is supplemented by recorded and live coverage of soccer from France and Germany, and live coverage of junior (under 18 years, under 21, and even under 15) international soccer. The influence of soccer (and other sports) is likely to spread still further: By 1992, market regulation of satellite TV in Europe was expected, eventually, to expand EC television airtime from 125,000 to 300,000 hours a year. The only viable way to fill this air time was through cheap sports coverage and low-grade made-for-TV American films and "sitcoms" (Shawcross, 1993, p. 541).

"Give Us Back Our Soccer": Satellite TV and Access

A central issue in the debate about satellite TV and sport is that of universal access. The new football deal means Premier League soccer is only seen live on satellite. The BBC and BSkyB have a joint deal with the English FA for coverage of FA Cup matches and England's international matches, which is worth £70 million over 5 years. The commercial ITV network channels have access to less important matches in the Football League and to Coca-Cola Cup matches in a deal worth £24 million over 4 years. Individual deals are made for live coverage of English and Scottish clubs in European competitions. The national network, Channel 4, is also showing live Italian League football at a bargain price to the channel of just £2.5 million per season. More than two million viewers regularly watch Italian soccer live on Channel 4.

Table 2 Summary of Viewing Figures for Football League, Littlewoods Cup (1989/90), and Rumbelows Cup (1990/91 and 1991/92) Matches Televised Live

	No. of matches 1989/90	TV audience (millions) average 1989/90	No. of matches 1990/91	TV audience (millions) average 1990/91	No. of matches 1991/92	TV audience (millions) average 1991/92
Football League	18	7.0	18	7.0	18	7.5
Littlewoods Cup/ Rumbelows Cup	3	6.1	3	7.2	3	8.0
All matches	21	6.9	21	7.0	21	7.5
<i>By club (at least 3 appearances home or away)</i>						
Arsenal	4	7.0	5	7.0	4	7.5
Aston Villa	4	5.0	—	—	—	—
Coventry	3	6.7	—	—	—	—
Everton	3	7.0	3	6.6	3	7.1
Leeds United	—	—	5	6.7	6	7.3
Liverpool	7	8.0	8	7.4	5	8.0
Manchester United	4	7.0	7	7.3	6	7.5
Nottingham Forest	6	6.6	—	—	5	7.7
Tottenham Hotspur	3	7.8	4	7.6	4	8.2

Note. Figures from The Football Trust Digest of Football Statistics, 1992.

The vast cost of obtaining TV rights for top sporting events in Europe means that many of them are likely to be shown on premium channels for which an extra annual rental fee will be charged. Michael Grade, chief executive of Channel 4, argued recently that BSkyB's TV soccer deal

will put all major sporting events out of the reach of terrestrial television for good. Because the marginal value of these deals, particularly when coupled with pay to view technology, will always be considerably greater to satellite TV, terrestrial companies will always be outbid. Corraling things that already exist and then charging for them is scarcely expanding choice. (*The Independent*, May 30, 1992)

This argument is supported by Chris Akers, a media specialist at Swiss Bank Corporation and an adviser to the Premier League in its TV negotiations. Akers sees satellite as moving toward a TV "shut-out" of major events because for raising revenue, "paying by subscription beats the license fee [BBC] and advertising [ITV] hands down" (*The Observer*, December 10, 1992). Also, representatives of English soccer's new Premier League made it clear that their new deal with BSkyB was struck on the basis of the later availability of pay-to-view

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arrangements for particular matches.⁸ For Rick Parry, the new chief executive of the FA Premier League, pay-to-view arrangements are, simply, "the ultimate in market philosophy. What it means to us is that football is directly in touch with its audience. It gives you marketing and commercial opportunities" (reported in the *Daily Telegraph*, July 6, 1992). It also gives the sport saturation TV coverage but only to a small, fee-paying audience. Whether new subscribers are as enthusiastic about plans for additional charges for up to 30 "perishable events" remains to be seen. Early indications are that regular soccer attenders and viewers disapprove of the BSkyB project, so far (Langford & Hunt, 1993). The commercial viability of pay-to-view may also be open to doubt. Although such accounts are subject to considerable hyperbole, one recent estimate put the likely overall annual TV costs for the pay-to-view British sports fan of 1994/95 at something close to £1,500 (*London Evening Standard*, October 6, 1993).

A final issue in this matter is raised by the role of the British public-service channel, the BBC, in this affair. The BSkyB bid for live soccer was, in fact, a joint bid with the BBC. The latter produced £22.5 million for this partnership in order to secure exclusive highlights coverage only and, presumably, to block a substantial and competitive bid by national commercial channels for exclusive live coverage of soccer on terrestrial TV. The FA Premier League made clear its preference for a deal that allowed some recorded highlights coverage on terrestrial TV. Whether the BBC was properly pursuing its public-service remit in this instance—by effectively securing for a likely long-term satellite competitor live coverage of the national sport—seems at least open to some doubt. Worthy of discussion, too, are the new financial, media, and cultural networks that underpin this unusual alliance struck between a publicly subscribed, state-regulated national television channel and the harbinger of the growing threat from the unregulated private interests of satellite broadcasting (Williams, 1992).

In summary, we seem to be well advanced in Britain toward a two-tier system of television sport. Terrestrial television will continue to feature a wide range of sports, but major events may be increasingly available only on satellite television to those able to afford the dish, the spiraling costs of channel rental, and the soon to arrive pay-to-view fee.

The Fragmentation of Sporting Rituals

As I have argued, televised sport in Britain from the 1950s to the 1980s could be seen as a form of social cohesion, a cultural narrative that had the effect of developing a series of major national and international events and building an audience for them. These events—the FA Cup Final, the Grand National, Wimbledon, the Olympic Games, and the soccer World Cup—became major national shared rituals, events that large numbers of people watched simultaneously and symbolically shared (Whannel, 1992). Undoubtedly, such cohesion was largely imaginary and was underpinned by a broadcasting conservatism that rendered "sport as national event" as a form of negotiation and mediation in the politics of national culture, reflecting the interests *inter alia* of the royal family, the public schools, gendered accounts of power, idealist attributions of historical continuity, and so forth (Blain et al., 1993, p. 28). Such sporting output on terrestrial TV is still understood and reproduced, nevertheless, within an "overarching ideological framework which suggests stability and some degree of unity in shared national values" (Blain et al., 1993, p. 30).

Soccer's traditional appeal in Britain has been largely to male viewers, so it is no surprise that satellite television is now preparing to bid much more vigorously for exclusive rights to other top-line sports events, especially given plans for the launch soon of a second BSkyB sports channel. Exclusive rights to the immensely popular Ryder Cup golf tournament, next played between Europe and the U.S. in 1995, have recently been secured by BSkyB. Wimbledon tennis, a sport that has much greater appeal to women than to men, is another key target for satellite, as is the Five Nations rugby union championship, the winter sports mainstay of *Grandstand* (BBC TV's Saturday sports flagship program).

The capture of major golf events and perhaps of rugby union, international cricket, and, in 1995, the Wimbledon Championships would also, according to BSkyB, rid dish ownership of its downmarket image. The 1990 Broadcasting Act does little to defend network TV coverage of sport in Britain. For example, major events are protected, but only from pay-to-view arrangements, not from exclusive coverage on satellite. Wimbledon tennis, like the Olympic Games, is currently committed to the principle of universal access, although in Germany a cable operator was able to gain exclusive rights to Wimbledon. This meant that in the year that German stars Steffi Graf and Boris Becker won Wimbledon titles (1990), only a small proportion of German households were able to view the matches live. The BBC will cover the Atlanta Olympics via the auspices of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), an international grouping that bids for major events as a representative of public-service broadcasters. This successful £200 million bid may be challenged for Sydney in 2000, as European satellite and cable companies look to establish their own competitive umbrella bidding organization ("Will Sydney be served on a dish?" *Independent on Sunday*, October 17, 1993).

In effect, rather than being expressive of social cohesion, the more recent developments in satellite sports coverage are characterized by fragmentation—a rapid growth in the number of top-level competitions (e.g., the Grand Prix circuits in tennis and track and field, and the federation divisions in boxing); the establishment of entirely new TV-oriented leagues like the new FA Premier League; and the proliferation of outlets (four terrestrial channels in Britain, joined by more than a dozen satellite channels, at least two of them devoted entirely to sport). This self-conscious eclecticism produces an ideological coherence only in terms of the principles of the marketplace rather than in terms of any constructed notion of the stability of the British nation. In these senses, discourses on national and regional characteristics—on "who we are"—enter the hyperreal, reproduced in ever more rigorous and bizarre forms largely in order to sell particular products (Blain et al., 1993, p. 31).

Traditional notions of connections between sport, community and place seem peculiarly vulnerable in the age of satellite's "global flows" and its determinant financial role in presenting the sports product. A recent example is provided by satellite TV coverage in Britain of men's field hockey recently agreed upon by BSkyB. Because of the need to keep production costs low, and because of the relatively new commercial capacity of TV to dictate such matters, all televised league hockey matches on BSkyB will be played at the same central venue, in Birmingham, thus negating the traditional "home" and "away" advantages and attractions of league sporting rivalries. As a result of changes like these, audiences, too, will certainly fragment, and sport may no longer provide as many locally and nationally shared rituals.

Satellite TV, Commercialism, and the "New Fandom"

Clearly, the pressures toward audience fragmentation provided by these new patterns of consumption of soccer, both for spectators at events and for television fans, promise qualitatively different forms of attachment to, and identification with, the game in Britain and elsewhere. As Taylor (1993) points out, pricing policies at top soccer clubs and the restricted live TV coverage of soccer in Britain brought about by the new satellite deal may further rupture the strength of local attachments to clubs as part of the wider process of the globalization of the cultural industries (Featherstone, 1990). In this new relationship, Taylor argues, fans may identify with the soccer market "at the level of imagination." He calls for a move beyond the conventional conceptions of soccer fandom and warns of the dangers of missing the significance of these "new ways" of becoming a fan and of expressing one's own local origins and identity through sport.

This account provides a challenging way of looking at new forms of spectator support that neither denigrates the "armchair fan" nor lapses into the sort of inert and reactionary opposition which in some quarters has greeted necessary aspects of the post-Hillsborough modernization and development of soccer in Britain.⁹ However, the activities and content of the hundreds of soccer supporter fanzines that have grown up since 1985 (Horne, Jary, & Bucke, 1991), the recent proliferation of soccer club and soccer oral histories in Britain (Ward, Taylor, & Williams, 1993), and the miniresurgence of interest there in nonleague football also suggest a countermovement to these globalizing trends, a move toward "relocalizing" supporter ties, at least at the lower end of the soccer spectator market. Indeed, one further consequence of the BSkyB deal has been to revitalize regional commercial TV interest in live local club soccer, at least in England. In this sense, perhaps, in relation to soccer in Britain, the effect of globalization is like putting together a jigsaw puzzle: it is a matter of inserting a multiplicity of localities into the overall picture of a new global system" (Robins, 1990, p. 35).

In his remarks on the new football identities, Taylor (1993) also mentions the "style wars" that have grown up in England around the production and the aggressive and successful marketing of replica uniforms. A number of soccer clubs now successfully produce and sell their own uniforms. For those in search of a more authentic association with their club—usually older, more traditional fans—a number of mail order and shop outlets have grown up by successfully marketing earlier, cotton uniforms in more limited editions. Unfettered, as yet, by the merchandise franchise and licensing arrangements more common in the U.S., these are, clearly, lucrative markets for clubs and the major manufacturers but also for the nexus of smaller entrepreneurial interests that have grown up as part of the new alternative soccer cultures in Britain.

The growth of the sports clothing business and the interpenetration of the worlds of fashion and sport have made images of sport part of the currency of everyday life, more central than ever before. Casual fashion and streetwear are largely dominated by sport-derived styles. Surface appearances and the secondary circulation of images have become central to the image of sport. These effects are complex and far-reaching. For example, although few people play American sports in Europe (gridiron football, baseball, etc.), and TV audiences for these sports are small and declining, the merchandising of their products is booming. The American company NFL Properties, which licenses the manufacture and

sale of gridiron products in Europe, now has a turnover there of £220 million (*The Observer*, October 17, 1993).

By the same token, the recently retired NBA basketball player Michael Jordan is a near-mythical sports figure in the U.S., but also in Britain. He is especially popular among inner-city black youth. Arguably, his only British rival, in a stylistic sense, is the black Arsenal soccer player Ian Wright. Wright has cultivated something of a *ragga* persona. He fronts a popular and "global" advertising campaign for Nike, has made a successful pop record, and, of course, is frequently seen scoring goals on soccer highlights coverage on British TV. By contrast, NBA basketball is virtually absent from sports programming on network British TV. Jordan is seldom if ever seen playing his sport on national television in Britain. And yet Jordan has become a star name and face in Britain, even to people who do not follow U.S. basketball. According to *The Guardian* (October 7, 1993) he was first choice of students in Brighton when they were asked in a recent poll which of 16 celebrities most influenced their values, and schoolchildren in China agreed that the two greatest men in history were Chou En-Lai and Jordan. Jordan was also, tiresomely, declared in *Playboy* magazine to be "more popular than Jesus" (cited in *The Guardian*, October 7, 1993).

Jordan is celebrated in Britain largely because he appears in ads and because his name and image are heavily promoted and stylized via the expensive and massively popular "Air Jordan" range of sports goods and clothing. In Britain at least, he is famous for *being* famous. His global fame is also closely tied to a wide range of endorsements reputed to earn the ex-basketball player around £23 million a year—or eight times the salary he earned as a player for the Chicago Bulls. Among other things, this apparently means Jordan must have no political position, for example on the role of blacks in sport, which might alienate segments of the white market for his sports goods. Interestingly, too, when Jordan took the "Stars and Stripes" into the arena in Barcelona for the presentation of his Olympic gold medal for basketball, it was less to display his patriotism than it was to cover the name on his national tracksuit of a rival sponsor, Reebok (*Will to Win*, BBC2, October 25, 1993). Here, quite clearly, it is increasingly the sponsors in sport who demand the kind of brand allegiance that has traditionally been the preserve of the nation-state.

Although Jordan is already being repackaged by Nike as a retired sports star, Shaquille O'Neal of the Orlando Magics is increasingly becoming familiar to British audiences, primarily through the manipulation of his ironic "blackness" as Nike's new streetwise commercial sporting icon. This fragmentation and the increasing emphasis on style and surface appearances in sport are not merely symptoms of a new condition of postmodernity (Redhead, 1991). They are, instead, products, no less, of the commercial and global restructuring of sport and popular culture.

Since the start of the century, sport has been subject to complex processes of modernization; it has become internationalized, professionalized, commercialized, spectacularized, and, most recently, globalized (Cricher, 1979). In the process, tensions between sports' traditional governing bodies and new independent entrepreneurial sports agents have forced upon sport a process of adaptation to new social and economic circumstances (Whannel, 1986).

Part of the impact of television, the rise of sponsorship, and the growth of the sports business has been to produce conflicting notions of the client. Who in these days of globalization is the customer for sport? Traditionally, it was the

"live" spectator, now greatly outnumbered by the television viewer. Today, sponsorship has become central; if the sponsors are paying for the event, they must implicitly be a customer. It has been argued that, increasingly, television produces audiences, which it sells to advertisers, so the advertisers are a customer and the television audience is merely the product. This seems to be especially the case in the new era of satellite delivery systems and deregulation, in which the flow of sports coverage, and its format, are increasingly dictated by the demands of advertisers. Indeed, recently in Britain for the first time a televised sporting event, an international basketball match at Crystal Palace, was interrupted by a break for a Sky TV commercial. This artificial delay was reported to have altered the flow and the outcome of the match (Bright, 1994).

Frank Dell'Apa (1992), an American sports journalist, recently underlined for a British audience the corroding and transformative effects TV and advertising have had on American sports, as they fracture and dice live action. He warned of television's increasing dominance over the sport product, predicting the same fate for soccer and other sports in Britain. Advertisers already regularly appear now in Britain as the sponsors of TV coverage of sporting events, claiming that major sporting occasions are brought to the viewing public by the sponsor. The FA Premier League has itself recently been renamed the "Carling Premiership," despite earlier resistance at the FA to a "figurehead" sponsorship of this kind, especially if it involved a brewing company.

These conflicts, as to who sport is provided by and, especially, *for*, can readily be observed in the treatment of different classes of spectators at major events, where corporate hospitality is ever more visible and important, and sports venues are increasingly advertised as places that are suitable for the conducting of business transactions. The promotional literature on the rebuilding of football stadia and stands in England is replete with references to new executive areas and to the business opportunities that will be provided by these improved facilities.¹⁰ Unsurprisingly, working-class fans wonder what their own future might be in a revamped popular sport that has aspirations toward becoming what English FA marketing advisers describe as an "integrated leisure experience" for affluent consumers (Football Association, 1991, p. 11).

It is too simplistic, of course, to propose here the sort of model in which pre-television traditions in sport (or anything else) reflect all that is good and of cultural worth and (post) modernity signals an inexorable slide into a rootless and corrosive entrepreneurial swamp (Rader, 1984). Greater commercialism in many sports has brought new funds, better performances, improved stadia, professionalism in performance and staging, and some new sources of support and opportunities for grassroots development (Wilson, 1988). However, there can be no question that television, advertisers, sponsors, and corporate clients have come to exercise a significant—some may argue a near-determining—influence over top-level sport (Aris, 1990). The rise of satellite television promises to push European sport a stage further.

Go, Go, USA

The colonization of sport by the broadcasting, marketing, and advertising networks means, clearly, that there is no longer a neat distinction between the sports event and the promotion. Does the clothing promote Jordan, or does Jordan promote the clothing? Does the soccer World Cup promote Coke, or does Coke

promote the World Cup? In 1994 the U.S. hosted soccer's World Cup finals. At the professional level the sport was virtually unknown in the U.S. Commercial interests secured the finals of the world's most popular sport for a country that seems to have little interest in it as a professional spectator sport (Williams & Giulianotti, 1994). The role of multinational sports equipment manufacturers in shaping world sport, including soccer, is well established (Simson & Jennings, 1992). Adidas, the European-based sports goods manufacturer, targeted the U.S., via the World Cup finals, for a major commercial breakthrough in sports equipment and clothing sales in an attempt to threaten the domestic stranglehold of Reebok and Nike. China is widely reputed to be the next major target market for the top sports goods producers, a project only temporarily interrupted by the failure of the Chinese bid to host the millennium Olympic Games. In the new processes of globalization, sport seems to operate, increasingly, as a world language that helps to dissolve the traditional commercial, financial, geographical, and political barriers to multinationals selling world products in a global market (Wagg & Goldberg, 1991).

Sport's one, but important, saving grace is that the joys of performance and the excitement of unpredictable drama still have the ability to transcend the commodification of sport. To watch great soccer players at their inspired best—Giggs, Baggio, Romario, Cantona—is to be reminded, even if only temporarily, that sport is not simply a product but a performance, a process that carries with it the image of the human ability to transcend limitations. The long-term effects of BSKyB's TV domination of soccer in Britain remain to be determined. This relationship offers opportunities as well as dangers to the national game at local and other levels, but a number of important questions about the relationship between sport, commercial interests, and the "live" and TV audiences for sport remain to be answered. This paper has been centrally concerned with the place of sport in the rise and growth of transglobal satellite networks, the cultural uses and significance of televised soccer in Britain, and the ways these uses may be reordered or reshaped by the advent and spread of satellite coverage.

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Notes

¹BSkyB is the result of a merger, in 1990, of the Rupert Murdoch-controlled Sky Direct to Home (DTH) satellite channels and the British-owned BSB Direct Broadcast Satellite (DBS). This was effectively a "mergeover," giving Murdoch control of five British newspapers and a 48% stake in BSkyB's then five TV channels (Chippendale & Franks, 1991).

²The story may or may not be apocryphal that the North African tribesmen, the Tuareg, delayed their annual camel caravan across the Sahara to watch an episode of *Dallas* (Shawcross, 1993, p. 557).

³There is no advertising as such on either BBC 1 or BBC 2.

⁴Around U.S. \$38.4 million at the current exchange rate (August 1994) of £1 to U.S. \$1.6.

⁵This is a catch phrase taken from a popular, but cerebral, quiz show on British TV, *Mastermind*. It signals the questionmaster's determination to complete a question even though he is interrupted by the end buzzer. It is used here to signal satellite's determination to overcome considerable early financial and other problems.

⁶As with blackouts of TV sport in North America, this resistance resulted from a fear that televising games would reduce the ticket-buying audience. Because of the much smaller size of the potential audience, struggles over coverage of Scottish soccer have been much less apparent. After brief coverage by Sky Sports of Scottish League soccer, Scottish sports channel subscribers now watch English soccer. Major Welsh clubs play, confusingly, in the English Football League.

⁷In 1994 Berlusconi, astonishingly, led his new right-wing Forza Italia party to a stunning victory in the Italian elections. Berlusconi is presently (August 1994) prime minister in a right-wing coalition government and the leader of a party whose name derives, directly, from a soccer chant (Go, Italy!).

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⁸Near-uncritical support for Premier League soccer promised by News International's British press was obviously also an important factor here.

⁹Because of the crowd tragedy at the Hillsborough Stadium in Sheffield in 1989 in which 96 soccer fans were crushed to death in a fenced pen allocated to standing spectators, from August 1994 all major soccer stadia in Britain must be all-seated, and few major soccer stadia in Britain now have perimeter fencing (cf. Taylor, 1991).

¹⁰The impressive new stand at my own local soccer club, Leicester City, is promoted as "The Business Stadium."

Acknowledgments

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