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The prominent Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals 2021 defines logistics management as a part of supply chain management “that plans, implements, and controls the efficient, effective forward and reverse flow and storage of goods, services and related information between the point of origin and the point of consumption in order to meet customers’ requirements.” A particularly notable aspect of the definition is the emerging focus on reverse logistics alongside the traditional concept of forward logistic, as it deals with the reuse of products and material, for example in the context of environmental sustainability.

Generally, in economic terms, logistics management contributes to providing value to customers by adding to possession utility (allowing customers to take possession of or engaging with a product, service, or offering); form utility (providing it in a useful form, e.g. quantity, through allocation); place utility (making it available where customers desire it); and time utility (making it available when customers desire it).

Logistics may particularly be concerned with the two latter aspects, but if applying a wider conceptual lens logistics becomes an example of the systems approach to business problems: there is mutual interdependence of the major functional areas of the firm, such as marketing, production, finance, and logistics – a setup that may well be different from one organization to another (Murphy & Knemeyer, 2018).

The consideration of logistics capabilities as strategic resources for industry-specific competitive advantage has been well documented in recent decades. Yet, the global COVID-19 pandemic has provoked unprecedented disruptions and restrictions to the continuously optimized and fine-tuned flow of when which offerings are available to customers in which form. In the sporting context, the halting of live events and competitions or, respectively, the public healthdriven complexities around athlete and spectator movement offer a striking illustration.

A distinct and coherent stream of research on logistics is only starting to emerge within sport management (Herold et al., 2019). Arguably, the sport industry displays different features when compared to the more stable and continuous operating environment often observed in manufacturing or other service operations. For example, the sport industry, in particular sporting clubs, can be regarded as a product-led sector, where the competition triggers industrial activity, thus representing the opposite to market-led industries (Chadwick, 2011). In other words, not only are sports clubs restricted by a fixed short-run supply, or a highly inelastic production curve (Smith & Stewart, 2010), on-field performance cannot be increased in the same way that a manufactured good can, and sports events may be subject to external operating criteria not present in other industries such as competition duration and format, thereby limiting decision-making control and opportunities for differentiation. Also, some of the management challenges caused by the characteristics of perishable and co-created services are amplified within the sport industry, especially for operations related to one-off and league events (Herold et al., 2020).

Most of the scarcely available sport logistics-related research is into sport events and competitions as the very core of almost the entire value creation of the professional and

amateur sports sector (Herold et al., 2019). Here, sport managers implement and rely on sophisticated logistics management practices as a central element in today's increasingly competitive sport business. Prominent examples are the transport of the racecars in the Formula 1 circuit or horses for races; spectators' mobility at amateur or professional sport events; and the management of permanent and temporary infrastructure around mega events or community sport. In order to organize both periodic and recurring sport events and competitions, managers are confronted with significant logistics challenges, with operations occurring at different levels, often in parallel and time sensitive.

Major pillars of a sport logistics framework relate to, first, venue logistics (including, for example, ticketing, security, and hospitality operations); second, fan and spectator logistics (including, for example, existing and to-be-developed infrastructure and transportation systems); third, athletes' logistics (including, for example, coaching and management entourage); and, fourth, equipment logistics (e.g., classic task of logistics services like freight forwarding and the customs clearances of the required goods, but also the organization of warehouses and the associated distribution).

For a sport logistics system in general and sports logistics managers in particular, it is desirable to lean onto already established logistics or supply chain models to manage the four pillars of athletes, venue, fans, and equipment logistics. The supply chain operations reference (SCOR) model has been widely adopted by firms across both production and service industries and provides a useful foundation for sports logistics managers as it focuses on six core process within logistics: Plan, Source, Make, Deliver, Return, and Enable (APICS, 2015).

In a sports context, "Plan" involves the activities related to developing plans to align resources with demand, while the second core process "Source" involves the buying or acquiring of required materials and services. "Make" – originally thought of as the conversion of products within the supply chain – can be reinterpreted as the process of "assembling" materials and services to provide a value-added service to fans and athletes. "Deliver" involves the classical activities of logistics management including transportation, customs clearance, and final delivery as well as installation. "Return" – originally described as activity associated with the reverse flow of goods – can be redefined as sustainable efforts to return temporarily used materials as well as the respective clean-ups after the events. "Enable" involves the management of all above-mentioned processes with regard to logistics information, relationships, and performance.

Consequently, logistics in the context of sport activities with a competition and event character can be defined as "the planning, implementing, and controlling procedures for the efficient and effective forward and reverse flow of goods, capacity, services, and related information between the point of origin and event destination in order to meet the venue organisers and athletes requirements and enlighten, celebrate, entertain or challenge the experience of a group of people" (Herold et al., 2019, p. 362).

With the sports logistics research canvas remaining sparsely covered, empirical research into specific logistics processes and overall organizational systems should be advanced as well as general conceptualizations and the relevance of (environmental) sustainability in sport logistics.

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