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Leveraging fans' global football allegiances to build domestic league support

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Abstract

Purpose – It is not uncommon for sports fans to follow multiple sports teams across different sports and even several teams across different leagues of the same sport. Whereas this might be considered a competitive situation, the purpose of this paper is to examine how interest in overseas football (soccer) leagues played a symbiotic role in the successful development of an Australian national soccer league.

Design/methodology/approach – Results of survey data are presented from two clubs in Australia's newly formed A-League. Three surveys were conducted over a two year period with over 3,700 season ticket holders. Specific attention is paid to fans' previous interest and exposure to football, which is then related to attitudes and behaviour associated with the new clubs.

Findings – Interest in overseas clubs and leagues is found to be a major antecedent of interest in the Australian league. Those who follow teams in overseas leagues are more likely to be heavy consumers of the new local league than those who follow local leagues or had no prior experience. They also exhibit stronger attitudinal and behavioural loyalty, such as higher attendance and renewal rates of season tickets.

Practical implications – Recognising fan interest in multiple teams/leagues as positive involves a shift in management thinking away from a competitive to a collaborative stance. In this case, rapid adoption of new teams is encouraged by capitalising on strong interest in overseas leagues. This requires careful structuring and branding of the competition that mimicks familiar foreign leagues, while minimising unfavourable comparisons in areas like quality of play.

Originality/value – This study capitalises on the rare opportunity to examine foundation teams in a new national league. The findings highlight the importance and value of taking a "global" perspective to the marketing of sports, and of carefully leveraging the interest in other elite competitions to build interest in new leagues.

Article Type:

Research paper

1. Introduction

When starting a new professional sports league, one of the many managerial decisions faced is the extent to which pre-existing interest in the sport will be leveraged when building brand awareness and associations for the new league. It may seem like standard practice to always build upon existing fan involvement with either overseas professional leagues of the same sport or involvement with past professional or strong amateur leagues in the home country. However there are some reasons why this may not be the best practice. Leveraging overseas interest, for example, may be problematic if fans of the overseas leagues are used to a much higher standard of play and entertainment than the new league is likely to offer. Building on past allegiances to previous incarnations of the league may bring with it unfavourable brand associations, not least of which would be the fact that previous leagues were not successful.

This issue was faced by the Football Federation of Australia (FFA) when it sought to re-launch a professional football (soccer) league, combining teams from around Australia and New Zealand. While football has a long history and high junior participation rate in this region, that history has not always been positive. Ethnic violence at past games, a lack of continuity of participating teams, several prior collapsed attempts at professional leagues, limited success for the national team and a clear quality difference between the likely playing standard of the local league compared to major football leagues worldwide all meant that the FFA had to be careful in trying to leverage existing fan involvement.

To be successful, the new A-League needed to appeal to three groups: those who had previously supported Australian professional competitions, those who had an interest in overseas football but no prior local interest and those who had little previous experience at all. Of particular interest is those first two groups, given that their already established interest makes them the most likely adopters. This paper examines the actions of the FFA in developing Australia's new "A-League" by analysing the background and behaviours of inaugural season ticket holders of two clubs. It looks at the extent to which the FFA was successful in leveraging the existing fan involvement with the sport in a positive way. Further we investigate how pre-existing support for other teams (past domestic or international) may influence various attitudes, expectations and behaviours related to a new team, so as to guide future efforts when launching new leagues or teams.

2. Literature review

2.1 *Leveraging fan support from other leagues*

Although not widely acknowledged in the sports management research literature, anecdotally it seems many fans follow multiple sports teams. Typically this involves following teams in different sports (e.g. MLB, NBA and NHL), but it is also common to follow teams in different leagues of the same sport, such as NCAA and NBA or EPL and Serie-A. The

latter situation is comparable in some ways to typical consumer behaviour where consumers often buy from a repertoire of competing consumable goods (Ehrenberg et al., 1990). Sports fans, however, only need to choose between consumption of favourite teams in the rare circumstances when those teams play each other (such as inter domestic club competitions such as FIFA or UEFA club competitions) or have clashing broadcast schedules. Usually, following teams in different leagues avoid issues of loyalty and thus multiple team favouritism can be developed as a complementary, rather than a competitive process. As consumer leisure time is limited, however, following multiple teams from one sport is likely to increase consumption of that code of sport over other codes.

Of course, before we can understand why consumers may have multiple team allegiances, we need to understand the process by which they become involved with any team at all. Recent theory on consumer involvement with sport posits a progression through various psychological stages of commitment explained within frameworks of inputs, cognitive processes and outputs (Funk and James, 2006). Sport consumers are known to have an array of motivations, values, attitudes and experiences which influence loyalty, behaviour and consumption (Westerbeek and Smith, 2003). Stewart et al. (2003) note various primary forms of connection, also called "points of attachment" (Robinson and Trail, 2005; Trail et al., 2003) that consumers can have with sporting products. These points of attachment can be in the form of a single sporting team, an individual player, the league overall or with the sport more broadly.

As would be expected, much of this measurement has described attitudes or identification for a single team or object. While this previous research has aided the assessment and mapping of consumer's various attitudinal interactions with a single sport product, little research has considered how support for different objects (in this case overseas teams and leagues) can impact the developing attachment, attitudes and outcomes for local teams and leagues of the same sport.

Acknowledging that single or multiple connective foci of individual consumers can vary suggests managers can leverage support from one connective focus to another, which can affect loyalty or consumption of the overall sport. In the example most relevant to the current study, existing interest in the sport of football internationally needs to be leveraged to generate interest in a new domestic league and its teams. Doing so means fans must be encouraged to support or follow multiple teams and leagues and that the new league must attract fans by leveraging various existing points of attachment. However it is inevitable that, as part of that process, brand associations will also be transferred (positive and negative) from the consumer's prior experience with football to the new league.

2.2 Developing interest in multiple teams

Interest in multiple leagues seems to develop in a number ways. For example, fans often follow local players into overseas leagues. Hong et al. (2005) noted that that many Japanese fans of MLB had developed their interest through watching Japanese players who had successfully transitioned to the US League. Similarly, Yao Ming has been credited with stimulating Chinese interest in NBA almost single handedly (Associated Press, 2007). Another entry point to multiple team fandom is through "grass-roots" development or

market development strategies (Ansoff, 1957), where overseas leagues build interest in foreign territories through encouraging participation in the sport locally, combined with promotional activities such as one-off elite games and expanded broadcasting of matches. The NFL excursions into Europe typify this approach to attracting overseas fans, with a number of attempts to build local leagues and increase interest through TV viewership. Such efforts can lead fans to follow both local and international teams.

Major events such as the Olympics and World Cup are also said to bolster global interest in particular sports (Rowe, 2003). High levels of fan migration interstate and overseas, league reconfigurations (such as the merger between the NBA and ABA in the USA), team relocations (most typically interstate) (Lewis, 2001), and open league structures with promotion and relegation between leagues can also lead to fans following multiple teams. More recently, the impact of fantasy sports leagues has been speculated to generate a greater interest in individual players (Drayer et al., 2007). Such a situation encourages a wider following of sport teams which potentially leads to multiple team support.

Understanding the relationship between international and national leagues, and fan interest in teams at different levels of competition is pivotal to the successful "globalisation" of sporting codes. Perhaps because of the haphazard manner in which most codes approach internationalisation (e.g. the NFL incursions into Europe), research on this topic that provides guidance to managers is limited. Systematic research examining how new leagues can leverage interest in international leagues is notably absent, leading to confusion over whether such interest enhances or detracts from interest in local (often less skilled) leagues.

The research presented here investigates whether global interest in football and past interest in previous domestic teams can be successfully leveraged by a new competition. We examine how the A-League and its teams approached the vexed question of how best to leverage support for the code generally, and interest in international teams, specifically. The design features of the new competition that attempted to address this issue are examined along with an analysis of how successful teams were in attracting both "global" and previous domestic football fans. Analysis of the attitudes and behaviour of global fans compared to those with solely domestic interest is then conducted to examine the effectiveness of the design tactics undertaken, and to test the proposition that attracting global fans is a positive scenario. Further, we examine why the current competition has been successful when previous attempts to run a professional league in Australia have failed, as a guide to those who follow.

3. Research problem

3.1 Research questions

This research looks in general at how support, attitudes and behaviours for a newly developed domestic league of an international sport is influenced by pre-existing interest in other teams and leagues. The overall aim is to gain a better understanding of whether fans interest in multiple teams playing the same sport is a hindrance or help to new local teams, and the league overall, and how it might best be managed. Throughout this paper, the term fan is used to refer to people with a felt connection with a specific sport team, instead of a

passing interest based on initial awareness, which can be transient and unstable (Funk and James, 2001; Wann et al., 2001). As such it is a self-reported measure – anyone who sees themselves as having a connection is a fan. Our particular focus is on those who made a strong commitment to the club, season-ticket holders (STH), as this ensured us a dealing with those who are committed and encouraging season-ticket sales was a major focus of the new A-League.

At present, managers of global sports have little to guide them when forming new leagues, especially on the complicated issue of whether to leverage the interest in other teams. Hypotheses are difficult to formulate, given the lack of prior research and discussion in this area. However, we sought to progress the field by examining some specific research questions. First, we wanted to examine the origins of support and past experiences of fans of the new A-League to quantify the impact of interest in international teams on fostering local support. Second, we sought to assess if there were differences in behaviours and attitudes of fans with different prior experiences. Would fans of international leagues be more or less satisfied with the A-league product compared to those who followed past Australian Leagues or compared to new, "unaligned" fans? Does their satisfaction level impact upon interest, strength of motivation to attend, game attendance and renewal behaviour? Answering these questions allows examination of how interest in other teams can be utilised to contribute to local league success. Therefore we asked:

RQ1. How many of the new fans were really new to the sport, and did those with allegiances to teams past or present bring different expectations?

RQ2. What differences exist in reasons to join new clubs, attitudes, satisfaction levels and consumption (attendance and STH renewal) between fans with prior support of football (international and past domestic) and new football fans of the A-League?

RQ3. What aspects of A-League design and marketing were most influential in attracting fans, and how best should new leagues leverage international interest?

Overall, we seek to demonstrate how global interest in other teams can best be utilised to contribute to local league success. In doing so we needed to consider aspects of A-League design and marketing which were influential in attracting fans, to explore how new leagues could best leverage international interest. Prior to this, we looked at existing research into global sport leagues and measures by which differences in groups of fans (global and local support) might be investigated.

3.2   Assessing differences – measure of attitudes and behaviours of fans

Given that the A-League needed to appeal to fans with a variety of football experiences, it seems logical that there will be groups within the ranks of STH that will have very different attitudes and behaviours towards the new A-League. Specifically, past research led us to believe that consumer or STH aspects such as satisfaction with the product, attitudinal and behavioural loyalty, strength of motivation to engage with teams, attendance levels and perceptions of the sport's governing body may all be impacted by fans' previous experiences with football.

3.2.1   Satisfaction and expectations

Satisfaction is a post-purchase evaluation of a product or service, an "overall evaluation based on the total purchase and consumption experience with a good or service over time" (Anderson et al., 1994, p. 54). In keeping with past research (Garbino and Johnson, 1999), the STH package for a football club is treated as a multi-faceted product where satisfaction is best measured in a cumulative, or overall, manner. Satisfaction is strongly associated with renewal and ongoing customer relationships (Oliver, 1997). Therefore, it is important that perceptions and levels of satisfaction are understood and measured. The previous experiences of fans may lead to different perceptions of the product, as revealed in satisfaction ratings, creating complications for the marketing and positioning of league and club products.

3.2.2 Strength of motivation to attend

Given the teams and league are new, with no direct connection to overseas leagues or previous incarnations of the sport, we would expect attitudinal loyalty and involvement measures to be low initially. Again, it is difficult to hypothesis whether fans of previous domestic competitions or global football fans will respond to the new league most positively, due to lack of prior research. By looking for differences in attitudinal loyalty and involvement measures, we hope to gain insights into which groups have been the most successfully targeted by the A-League.

Strength of motivation is an attitudinal construct that has previously been used to measure the intensity of an individual's motivation for participation in recreational activities (Carroll and Alexandris, 1997; Funk and Brunn, 2007). Given STH had already engaged with the club by purchasing a ticket for the season, the study aimed to compare the strengths of motivation of STH to attend games, and explore differences based on prior football experiences. While strength of motivation has mainly been used to study recreational fitness activities, it was seen as suitable for exploration in this professional sport study given its application as a "personal moderator that gauges the intensity of a person's attitude towards engaging in a specific activity" (Funk and Brunn, 2007, p. 808) (in this case attending club games).

3.2.3 Renewal

Renewal has been shown to be positively related to satisfaction in a number of industries, including sport attendance and the purchase of season tickets (Matsouka et al., 2003; McDonald and Stavros, 2007) and should correlate strongly with attitudinal loyalty. Renewal measures are included here to examine the full chain of relationships between past football consumption, satisfaction, attitudinal loyalty and renewal. It is of interest to consider renewal as a behavioural measure of loyalty, and to investigate whether previous experience with football has a bearing on behavioural loyalty.

3.2.4 Attendance

Attendance or consumption of live matches forms a key component in the behavioural component of sport consumption (Wann et al., 2001). Importantly for clubs, match attendance operates as one of the major forms of generating resources both through direct

(tickets) and indirect or secondary (merchandise and concessions) expenditure. As a measure, attendance at matches has been developed as a single complete measure of behavioural loyalty (via frequency of attendance by Backman and Crompton, 1991; Mahony et al., 2000), or as one item of a composite measure to form behavioural loyalty (Bauer et al., 2008) in prior research. In this case, it was expected that those whose experiences were primarily with global football viewed on television and the internet, would attend fewer games as they took time to adapt to the challenges of attending live football (transport to games, timing, etc.). Fans of the previous domestic league would have previously consumed the sport almost entirely through live attendance, as media coverage was poor, and thus should attend frequently.

Having discussed the consumer side factors likely to impact on consumption of the A-League and its teams, we now examine the influential supply-side elements. In order to understand some of the pre-existing brand associations that the Australian public may have held towards this football code, we need to understand something of the history of football in Australia and the manner in which the A-League was presented to the public.

4.   Football in the Australian sporting landscape

4.1   Background

The A-League is a relatively new elite level of football in Australia, having started in 2005/06. It comprises eight clubs (including one from New Zealand) and has recorded rising attendances over its three seasons of existence. The formation of the A-League has not been without considerable difficulties including a highly competitive market and a long history of sub-optimal public interest and negative media coverage. The potted history of football in Australia made the question of whether the A-League should attempt to leverage interest in overseas teams more complicated.

Association football (soccer) in the Australian landscape has experienced limited success, despite over 40 years of history. The nation has only twice qualified for the World Cup in that time (1974 and 2006), and has been plagued by administrative issues at its national level (Kemeny, 2003). While the last decade has seen an increase in the migration of Australian players to major overseas leagues, the sport lags behind other football codes in terms of attendances, media coverage and professionalism.

This was particularly apparent during the 1990s when other major football codes (Rugby League, Rugby Union and Australian Rules Football) began concentrated marketing activities to increase the popularity of their sports and increase their commercial share of media, sponsorship and consumer dollars. The Australian sport marketplace, despite a population of just over 20 million is complex and supports a wide array of sports, with the four different professional football codes among them. There are certain geographic areas where one football code dominates, although Australia is currently undergoing a critical competitive period where league expansion has either been undertaken or is planned by all four codes for coming years. While football has undergone substantial gains in terms of attendance numbers since the new league began, it remains the lowest supported of the four football

codes (Table I). This is despite a tactical move to operate in the summer period when the other three codes are not active.

4.2 Football in Australia – history to the A-League

The football market in Australia has been fragmented by ethnicity and cultural issues since the late 1940s. While football has played an important role in helping settle new European migrants into Australian society (Dabscheck, 2007), its acceptance in mainstream culture has been hampered through the sports' consequent links with expressive ethnicity (Lock et al., 2008). This ethnic framework of support permeated all levels of football with many National Soccer League (NSL) clubs displaying clear alignment with European nationalities. This created the image that football was ethnic and not Australian (Bradley, 1990). As a result, this fragmented the broader market appeal of the NSL even though attempts were made to de-ethicise the competition in 1977, 1992 and 1997 (Mosely, 1997). Mosely (1995) argued that the ongoing ethnic ties did more to "antagonise than allure", providing a distinct problem in attracting fans and media-rights partners.

Paradoxically, while the NSL failed to engage the broader Australian market at an elite level, the sport attracted more participants than the other three football codes (Standing Committee on Recreation and Sports 2002-2006). Hallinan et al. (2007) noted football is the "most popular participation team sport [in Australia], … [but] by no means the most mediated or supported" (p. 283). Additionally, television broadcasting contributes a further contradiction. The NSL experienced a media blackout from 1997 which contrasted with the increasing popularity and accessibility of televised European football leagues in Australia. This also served to highlight the gulf in standard between the local and overseas products (Dabscheck, 2007) and stood in stark contrast to the other football codes, which were either indigenous to Australia or boasted highly successful international teams.

In addition to the issues mentioned, the Australian Soccer Association faced severe governance, financial, structural and political issues, leading to a government commissioned review in 2002 (Crawford, 2003). A new national body (FFA) was formed and a taskforce was commissioned to assess the NSL. Following this report, the sport formally adopted the title "football" as opposed to "soccer", which reflected a repositioning strategy for the sport in Australia. Key aims of the new league included the engagement of the participant base and capitalisation on the interest in European football leagues (Kemeny, 2003).

The newly branded A-League debuted in 2005 containing eight teams (one team from New Zealand) with two existing teams (displaying no ethnic ties) and five new teams emerging from distinct geographic regions in Australia. Each club was required to maintain an "Australian" market focus and relate to the broader geographical region in which they were based (Kemeny, 2003). Table II shows the attendance levels for each of the clubs in Seasons 1-3 of the competition. The numbers demonstrate substantial growth from the levels of support afforded to the old NSL and shows average season growth across the league of over 15 per cent. It should be noted the strong performance of the national team in the 2006 World Cup was been a further factor aiding the consolidation of the A-League.

4.3 Thinking globally, acting locally

While support for the national league had never been strong, participation rates and interest in the sport were high. The sport faced a unique situation in that it relied in part on global versions of the game to maintain and generate interest in the sport domestically. Technological advancements have seen the accessibility of global sport increase through television, internet, broadband and mobile content. This made the European leagues particularly more prominent for Australian sport consumers. While the A-League runs during a summer season (European winter), the European time zones mean there are no direct clashes in terms of game scheduling.

The challenge for the new A-League competition was clear. They sought to capitalise on the global strength of football and on Australian consumer interest in international leagues and in the national team. In doing so, however, football's governance sought to avoid the perpetuation of ethnic divisions and position the A-league for broad cross-sections of the Australian sport market. The A-League sought to attract old fans of the sport (both global and NSL followers) but at the same time, attract new fans who were previously disengaged from the NSL due to its ethnic connections, club instability or frequent crowd misbehaviour (Huxley, 2006; Lock, 2008). Effectively, the A-League attempted to remove the barriers to supporting top-level football in Australia and allow the sport to capitalise on the popularity of televised overseas football competitions among Australian sport consumers. Although this strategy relied strongly on attracting fans of professional football with existing attachments to overseas leagues and clubs, the small size of the market meant fans of previous domestic leagues such as the NSL could not be ignored.

4.4   League design and marketing: the case of the A-League

While the formation of the A-League provided a rare opportunity to study a sports market in transition, the situation of a new league struggling to establish itself is not unique. Manzenrieter's (2004) and Horne and Bleakley's (2002) analysis of the advent and design of the Japanese Football J-League showed that it mirrors the Australian context as a sport played for decades without clear success against established competitors.

Research into overseas leagues in related markets such as the USA, Korea and Japan (where football also operates as the non dominant sporting code), was part of the process of consideration by the task force in league design and structure (Kemeny, 2003). However, decisions related to league structure were made to align the A-League with the hugely popular European leagues and further separate the fledgling competition from its predecessor. This shift aimed to leverage existing positive brand associations that the public held towards football, regardless of whether they played as a child or watched overseas teams competing, while downplaying any negative associations that had developed from the sports troubled history in Australia. In re-inventing the A-League, a number of design and marketing decisions and policies were undertaken in developing the new football product. These are noted as league design and league marketing issues and in many cases closely match characteristics of overseas or global sport leagues.

4.4.1   League design

To achieve their objectives of gathering support from both old and new fans of football, FFA implemented stringent guidelines for each A-League club, which centred on the engagement of city-wide markets. This was a "clear departure from the ethnic supporter bases" (Hallinan et al., 2007, p. 286) of NSL clubs, and provided scope for more culturally diverse followings (Lock, 2008). Support for football has been developed within supporters previously isolated or excluded from the NSL by following global teams and leagues. This presented the opportunity for the league to capitalise on the support of the sport (overseas leagues) as the primary connective focus, and leverages it towards teams and players within the Australian market.

The A-League club structure was intentionally based on characteristics of modern overseas leagues. Team support was encouraged by building upon geographical positioning rather than ethnic connections, in line with European and US football leagues, and similar to the way all other Australian professional sports leagues are structured. A small number of teams were established for the start of the league, to concentrate the available playing talent (Hay and McDonald, 2007). Colours of teams, in many cases, were aligned with state or regional colours to encourage these associations. Given that 41 different teams had competed in the 26-year history of the NSL (Kemeny, 2003), continuity of teams was sought by having only single teams in each region and by guaranteeing the teams a minimum term (five years) in their given markets or regions before extension teams would be considered.

The league was based on the centralised MLS structure, as opposed to the more capitalist approaches of European leagues. The J-League, K-League and MLS provided the key role model competitions (Kemeny, 2003). League centralisation created a structure by which the governing body maintained power over team structure and with controlled, marketing promotions, sponsorships and licensing.

A rigorous salary cap (as used in other Australian football codes) was introduced to develop a financially level playing field and competitive balance. Outside of the salary cap each club had scope to pay an undefined sum to a single player under a marquee player policy (marquee players included successful former EPL players Dwight Yorke and later Juninho Paulista). The unequivocal aim of the marquee player was to improve the playing standard from the NSL, add credibility and marketability to the new domestic league and broaden its appeal to mainstream Australian society. In all, 18 overseas imports joined the league in its inaugural season (A-League, 2008), joining numerous former and current Australian players in an attempt to develop individual players as a further form of connective focus. The profile of members of the Australian national team (the "Socceroos") in the league provides a relevant link to the most elite level of the sport, while recruitment of high profile coaches, including former European internationals, guest stints and promotional tours and appearances (e.g. David Beckham and LA Galaxy, Juventus) have also assisted this process.

4.4.2   League marketing

Distinct marketing pitches were made to attract those who had played the game while young, while the inclusion of ethnic communities in integrated fan bases was noted as vital for the success of the new league (Cockerill, 2005). Advertising and branding of the league was modern and slick in an attempt to appeal to fans of football. In addition to the use of

marquee players, marketing campaigns were developed from a centralised league budget and displayed common and consistent messages and styles in advertising and promotional campaigns within both television and print media. The central theme of the campaign for the league was "90 minutes, 90 emotions", and promoted the game on skill, speed and entertainment. All promotional materials featured highly stylised images of the sport, evoking youth culture through music, computer game imagery and fashions.

A range of season ticket packages, common across all clubs, was developed to encourage annual or season long support opposed to single game or casual attendance. Packages were similar to those offered to consumers of other Australian football codes, and included a broad range of price and seating options, designed to engage fans from various demographic groups. Additionally, Sydney FC included a specific area for fanatical STH (The Cove), which attempted to leverage an area for vociferous fans to replicate European ground atmospheres. In line with European leagues, official and unofficial supporter groups quickly developed, with various levels of support or association with the clubs. Songs, banners and chants (often developed and styled from those seen and heard on European football terraces) quickly developed and were adopted by supporters and supporter groups. Codes of conduct sought to remove the antisocial behaviour around the use of flairs, violence and language which had helped create negative fan associations with football both in Australia and globally.

Both branding and community relation strategies were part of the Task Force recommendations in the establishment of new clubs (Kemeny, 2003). Branding guidelines included strategies to establish emotional links with local communities. Community relations goals sought to establish and enhance links and relationships with the respective A-League localities (Kemeny, 2003). Overall, the broader success of this period of change is under research, with only indicative findings forwarded on the impact the A-League has had on the engagement of new and old fans of football (Hallinan et al., 2007; Hay, 2006; Lock, 2008; Lock et al., 2009).

Accepting that the A-League administrators made a series of tactical decisions to increase the appeal of the sport to Australians, we now move to examine how effective those tactics were, and whether fans with different football experiences reacted differently to the A-League product.

5. Method

5.1 Sample and data collection

The results presented here are from survey research conducted with STH of two of the eight A-League clubs over the first two seasons of the A-League competition. Survey instruments were developed and distributed to club STH of two clubs, with data collected through the administration of online surveys. STH who provided an email address were sent a request to participate in a survey relating to their background and experiences with the sport and the club. The two clubs chosen are two of five Australian foundation teams in the new league and are from Australia's two most populated cities. As such they were critical to the leagues success.

Study one looked at supporters of Sydney F.C., and was undertaken during the first season in order to quantify the extent to which STH had interests in overseas leagues and clubs. A total of 788 responses were received, which represented a response rate of approximately 30 per cent. Respondents were mainly male (91.8 per cent) and a majority were in the FFA's target demographic group of 21-35 years (51.4 per cent).

Given the indication of strong global support of fans highlighted in Study 1, further investigation was undertaken with STH of a second club, the "Melbourne Victory". Data were collected at the conclusion of the regular season in the first two years of competition (2006 and 2007), again through the use of an embedded online survey and generated 1,148 and 2,222 responses in seasons 1 and 2, respectively. This represents an average of 19 per cent of total STH of the club and a 37 per cent response rate across the two years. While 3,370 responses were collected in total, 430 common respondents completed the surveys in both years, meaning 2,940 unique STH participated in the surveys. The sample for Study 2 was comparable to Study 1, with respondents being 89.2 per cent male and with 58.7 per cent of people aged between 21 and 35 years.

5.2   Measurement and analysis

As part of the survey, respondents were asked a series of questions relating to previous football experiences and involvement with the sport, motivations for joining the respective clubs, attendance levels, the strength of motivation to attend the clubs matches and renewal intentions related to membership. These items were developed based on the studies outlined in the earlier literature review.

Both attitudinal and behavioural measures of loyalty were collected. First, at the end of the season, respondents were asked to respond how likely they were to renew their STH on an 11-point Juster Scale (Juster, 1969). Following this, actual renewal data were provided from club records the year following survey completion. Season ticket sales close approximately six weeks into the season, and data were collected at that point. A final item adapted from Fink et al.'s (2002) continued loyalty measures sought to capture the level of loyalty and repurchase intention STH might have towards their club given an uncertain future. Strength of motivation was measured using three items adapted from Funk and Brunn's (2007) construct with items based on Carroll and Alexandris (1997) original items to convey guilt sensitivity, defensive fluency and preferences towards a sport object. Finally, the level of attendance was measured simply by asking respondents to report the number of home games (from a maximum of ten) attended in each season as it concluded.

In this study, perceptions of satisfaction were collected using a 0-10, "highly unsatisfied" to "highly satisfied" response scale, as previously employed in sports satisfaction research (e.g. McDonald and Shaw, 2005). These data were supplemented with a "disconfirmation of expectations" measure following Oliver (1997), whereby respondents were asked to rate the extent to which what they received as a season ticket holder matched their expectations. The response scale was labelled 0 "well below expectations", 5 "as expected" and 10 "well above expectations".

An 11-point scale was used throughout in preference to the more commonly used five or seven point scales for two reasons. First, satisfaction data are often skewed in a consistent way as a result of most customers having similar experiences (Oliver, 1997) and therefore shorter scales capture little variation in responses. Secondly, there are a number of advantages in keeping response scale length consistent in a questionnaire, including ease of response and analysis. Since satisfaction was best measured on an 11-point scale, the longer scale was adopted here throughout. Longer scales (within reason) have no real disadvantages compared to shorter scales (Hussey and Hussey, 1997), and giving ratings out of ten is something most people are familiar with (Juster, 1969).

In order to understand and segment consumers based on past experiences with the sport, respondents were asked to nominate which from a list of prior football experiences applied to them. This included whether or not they or their children played the game, if they had attended NSL or other forms of professional football before and whether they watched the sport on television. Included in this process, in order to segment those with and without previous support for global forms of football, a question was asked where respondents were asked to nominate whether or not they closely followed overseas leagues (Study 1) or teams (Study 2). Surveyed STH were then segmented based on their responses resulting in two groups; one with global support for football, and one which did not indicate having any form of prior global support for the sport. Analysis and comparisons across groups were then undertaken via *t*-tests using SPSS (v16.0) software. A further round of segmentation produced four groups based on global support combined with a variable concerning whether or not respondents had attended prior variations of the domestic football league, the NSL. These four groups were subject to ANOVA testing to assess differences between groups.

6. Results

6.1 Study 1: background of A-League fans

Initial data gathered from Sydney FC members in Study 1 developed insight into A-League fans previous involvement in Australian football. Survey data showed 80 per cent of respondents claimed to follow professional soccer previously, with most following an overseas league (Table III). In total, 64 per cent of Sydney FC members did not previously support an NSL club, and thus were new to Australian professional football.

Follow-up questions sought to understand whether overseas or local teams provided their primary source of allegiance (i.e. Sydney FC or their overseas team). Some 59 per cent of fans identified Sydney FC as their primary allegiance. Those aligned primarily with a different team were asked to indicate what factors led them to hold a greater allegiance with a different team. Two-thirds of these noted their allegiance was with an overseas team because they had supported the team for a longer period of time. Study 1 was designed to assist in understanding the origins and main motivations of new fans for joining Sydney FC. Supporting Australian Football in general and having a team with which they could (now) identify were the two major motives. Experiencing the atmosphere of match day and supporting a team representing the city or region were also prominent.

6.2 Study 2: analysis of impact of global and prior NSL support on attitudes and behaviour

6.2.1 Previous football experiences

In Study 2, STH of the Melbourne Victory were first asked to nominate the areas of previous involvement with the sport applicable to their situation. An initial question asked whether STH supported a team based on an overseas league (as opposed to league support investigated in Study 1). This allowed for the development of two groups of supporters; with and without prior global support for the game of football. Table IV indicates 71 per cent of STH "closely supported an overseas team". Segment were developed based on these groups, which were termed "global support" and "non-global support" and used in further analysis.

Table V shows other characteristics of these two groups of respondents indicating if they were both new to the sport (indicated no prior interest or had not previously attended games) or were existing fans of the sport (had attended NSL games, either played themselves or had children that did, or followed the sport overseas). As expected, a greater amount of non-global supporters had not attended a professional match prior to joining the new club while global supporters were much more likely to subscribe and follow football on television. Measures around participation in the sport and attendance at NSL matches were similar across groups. Overall, 77 per cent of respondents indicated they had not regularly supported the NSL, indicating that the second club had also been successful in attracting new fans who had not previously supported a domestic team or the competition.

6.2.2 Motivations for joining the club

As part of the Study 2 survey conducted in the inaugural year of the club, respondents were asked their primary motivation for first being attracted to support the club, and secondly their motivation for joining the club as an STH. Similarly to Study 1, wanting to support the sport or to support the hometown or local team were the two major motives for supporting the club. Table VI outlines the main reasons that global and non-global fans gave for purchasing the season ticket in the clubs initial year in the A-League. Results suggest that global supporters are motivated by institutional or club-orientated reasons of financial support or increased involvement, while non-global supporters were higher on individually motivated reasons around gaining discounts or better seating access or joining for social reasons based around attending with friends and family.

6.2.3 Effect of global support on attitudes and behaviour

In addition to identifying a range of previous football backgrounds and motivations for A-League fans, *T*-tests and ANOVA were then used to consider consumer differences between groups of A-League consumers with different football backgrounds. Respondents were segmented initially into two groups in order to assess differences between those people indicating they followed an overseas clubs or teams, and those who did not. The survey instrument in Study 2 collected data on attendance rates, satisfaction and expectations of club membership, strength of motivation, renewal measures and finally, attitudes towards

the national governing body of the sport, the FFA. Results of the initial *T*-tests comparing the simple division of the sample into groups of STH with and without global football support are shown in Table VII.

They show global football fans have significantly higher measures of attendance, renewal and strength of motivations, which are all deemed highly positive attributes of a clubs STH. Renewal intentions and rates are higher in year one for global fans, with little distinction seen in year 2 results. This invariance is explained in part by the fact that the subject club performed very well in this season, winning the title comprehensively; hence an elevated renewal level would naturally be expected under the principles of affiliation with winning teams. Attitudes towards club satisfaction and the governing body are invariant across global and non-global supporter suggesting little change in the perceived delivery of the club or league products and services across tested groups.

6.2.4   *Effect of global interest and NSL following on attitudes and behaviour*

Following the investigation of global support as an antecedent to local team support, the prior support of the NSL was also incorporated as a segmentation variable to devise four groups of consumers. To achieve this, the previously developed global and non-global support segments were further segmented to incorporate whether STH were regular attendees of the NSL to allow comparison of fans with varying levels of domestic as well as international support. ANOVA was undertaken to assess if there were significant differences between the groups of consumers. The resultant output is shown in Table VIII and demonstrates that global fans that supported the NSL have further elevated levels of attendance, loyalty and renewal than prior global supporters. Where STH are only one of either global or NSL supporters, there are significant differences. NSL support leads to higher attendance while global support has a higher correlation with strength of motivation and renewal measures.

7.   Discussion

In setting out to examine the relationship between previous interest and experience with football and the adoption of new teams in a new domestic competition, we were uncertain of the extent to which this issue would be widespread and its relevance to overall fan behaviour. The paucity of past research in the area made it difficult to be clear on whether support of multiple teams in various leagues of the same sport was a positive or negative factor for the domestic league. Increasing global marketing initiatives within sport, however, make this topic one of critical importance. The results show that, in general, the A-League was successful in attracting a large number of supporters with previous football experience. It is important to note, however, that the type of experience (e.g. domestic or international) was related to clear differences in the motivations for purchase, as well as both attitudinal and behaviour loyalty.

7.1   *Background of A-League fans*

The findings of both studies highlighted that the A-League had attracted large numbers of fans that had not engaged with the previous domestic competition, the NSL. In

consideration of the initial research question, the new league has gathered support well beyond the original NSL support base, with many new domestic fans sharing an overseas interest in the game. Overall, 64 and 77 per cent of current STH in Studies 1 and 2, respectively, indicated they had not followed the NSL or regularly attended games

In regards to football origins of these new fans, 80 and 71 per cent of fans from the surveyed new clubs also supported overseas leagues (Study 1) or teams in overseas leagues (Study 2), respectively. Many of these new fans had strong allegiances to overseas clubs, in part suggesting the A-League had been successful in its design, marketing and positioning of the league to appeal to the already established support base of football fans. Additionally, this suggests the connective focus of consumers at sport, or league level, can be transferred or leveraged to support of new or existing teams or leagues given appropriate levels of appeal. This is in line with the theoretical perspectives of Funk and James (2006), Robinson and Trail (2005) and Trail et al. (2003), but extends their frameworks somewhat to include multiple points of attachment within the same sporting code.

In profiling antecedents to joining the new A-League clubs, global supporters were motivated by institutional or club-orientated reasons while new or non-global supporters were primarily motivated by benefits which would produce individual rewards or outcomes.

7.2 Impact of global support on STH attitudes and behaviours

Having identified that A-League support had diversified and that global support was a dominant characteristic of A-League STH, the focus shifted to examining whether the additional allegiances to overseas clubs are a positive facet or whether fans with multiple allegiances have higher expectations of the new league and may therefore be less loyal if not satisfied. In this study, we found that those STH with a background in supporting overseas teams, exhibited very positive attitudes towards the new teams, and were highly satisfied. This, combined with the higher incidence of attendance and renewal among global supporters, suggests that in this case they were a desirable form of fan for the club to attract.

It was a realistic fear that fans of overseas (particularly European) football may make ongoing comparisons with the playing standards, atmosphere and profile of higher quality European Leagues. These fears were not realised here, with all fans showing similarly high levels of satisfaction, and reporting that their expectations were exceeded on average. Similarly, their attitudes to the national governing body, the FFA were consistent and positive across all of the fan segments we studied. This suggests the marketing efforts in positioning the league and the communicating realistic expectation for STH of the clubs has been successful. Overall, the invariance in satisfaction appears to be a reflection on the positioning and communication of the league as a developing platform for football in Australia, which kept expectations reasonable.

Looking at the comparison of four groups with various levels of NSL and global support (Tables VII-VIII), there are two points of interest. First, those who were both global and NSL supporters had further elevated levels of attendance, loyalty and renewal than supporters who only were one or the other. Previous NSL followers with no global support demonstrate

loyalty and involvement measures below that of the average fan, perhaps jaded by past league collapses. Interestingly, those with no previous football allegiances were often well below average on measures of motivation, attitudinal loyalty, attendance and renewal in the first year of the clubs operation, but these measures improved strongly in the second year.

7.3   What has the league done well – implications for new leagues

Given that consumers with prior global support had higher levels of attendance, loyalty and renewal, fans with a global foundation of support for football appear to have stronger ties to new teams, and exhibit higher levels of renewal and attendance. Overall, they present as highly desirable consumers for clubs to attract, enhancing the potential value of a collaborative approach to managing cross league support of a single sport. Questions therefore need to consider what components of the A-League have enabled this situation to emerge, and consider further if it realistic and achievable to further develop A-League support based on an ongoing collaborative approach. Given the complexity and development of the Australian sporting market place, the evidence suggests leveraging not only support for overseas teams and leagues, but also international tournaments provides a huge competitive advantage for the sport in comparison to some of its domestically focussed rivals.

The new A-League has been highly successful in two ways. First, the design and structure attempted to remove the barriers to support, discussed (Bradley, 1990) and distance itself from the NSL, ethnic divisions and failures to attract sponsorship, fans and media (Hallinan et al., 2007; Lock, 2009). Secondly, the modelling of the league on overseas leagues with geographically orientated support, along with coordinated marketing and communication initiatives have enabled the engagement of the "silent majority" of fans that played and supported overseas leagues, but did not attach to the NSL (Kemeny, 2003). This is reflected by enhanced levels of attendance, loyalty and renewal by global football supporters. The fact that the A-League has still managed to attract substantial numbers of NSL supporters suggests it has made this transition without losing touch with Australian footballs' long-standing supporters. NSL supporters may feel more positively towards the A-League teams over time, as the teams build trust through solid management and the supporters abandon hopes that their old NSL teams will be resurrected (as is commonly seen with fan of failed or relocated teams; Lewis, 2001).

The running of the A-League in tandem with major European leagues is as much a product of a saturated Australian sporting market as good design. However, these findings suggest the concurrent leagues may serve as a co-operative tool by which further interest can be garnered for the league through linking overseas teams with cross promotions, visiting teams and tours, and continued use of marquee player policies, particularly given the standards of perceived differences in football are not effecting satisfaction with the product. These initiatives are not new to the sport in Australia, but should be further encouraged given the results of a collaborative approach appear fruitful for domestic clubs. Innovative academy or sister club relationships may be a option to extend more visible relationships with overseas clubs, while established supporter groups of European club teams in Australia present a further direct opportunity to target existing football consumers who are

potentially more attitudinally and behaviourally loyal consumers. Given the distance and lack over competition between teams in different leagues, these options appear much more of an opportunity than a threat in the short to medium future.

8. Conclusion

The development of a new professional football league in a crowded market was made more difficult in Australia where the sport in question had experienced a number of failed leagues in the past and developed many other negative associations. In many ways though, the situation of the A-League is similar to that of other Asian and Northern American football markets, where football is not the dominant code. For example, despite positive initial years only through a careful balance of community engagement, American-style business models and European league systems, as well as the benefits of successfully co-hosting of the 2002 World Cup, has the Japanese J-League been able to survive (Horne and Bleakley, 2002; Manzenreiter, 2004).

The A-League administrators made a conscious decision to break many of the ties with the past, and develop a new league that would attract fans of overseas football leagues. This was a seemingly risky strategy, given that many of these fans had rejected previous Australian leagues and that comparisons between leading overseas leagues and the A-League were unlikely to be favourable on many aspects. It was also unknown whether fans would embrace more than one team in a particular sport.

The results of this study document, for the first time, that fans can, and do, follow multiple teams playing the same sport. This key finding provides an extension to literature around the development and connection of supporters with teams and leagues, and provides a feasible situation given the lack of direct competition between these teams removes many of the potential conflicts of fan loyalty. Further, the results suggest that interest in overseas teams can be successfully leveraged by new teams and leagues, provided they approach the formation of the league in a manner sympathetic with fan expectations. Given the scarce time of sport consumers, a collaborative approach can contribute to greater support and loyalty for one sport over others.

The results of our study show that not only is the conversion of global fans into domestic club STH possible, but that if managed well, these fans can be highly satisfied and loyal. Pleasingly, this did not come at the expense of fans who were previously aligned to the NSL or fans who were very new to the professional ranks of the sport. That is it is clear that the new fans and those previously NSL-aligned fans, are still developing their allegiance to the new team, and require continued support.

Given indications multiple connective foci can influence development of fans of a new league, an adaptation of the point of attachment index to incorporate both local and global team presents an area for future research in better quantifying and understanding the impact of fans following multiple teams. It should be noted that a limitation of this study is its focus on converted STH of new teams. As such, an opportunity exists to explore perceptions of more casual football fans or alternatively, those with global or NSL engagement who do not support the A-League. A further limitation is the coverage of only

two clubs in this study with further opportunities existing to look at experiences of global support by consumers on other clubs in the league, including new expansion teams in football and other sports. However, in the cases presented, findings suggested that fans with interest and knowledge of overseas leagues embraced the new domestic league vigorously. They were as satisfied as those who had no prior affiliations within the sport, and were far more likely to exhibit attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. In this case, taking a global perspective to the marketing of a domestic league has been a key contributor to success.

While this may sound intuitive, it is worth noting another contrasting example from the same region. The sport of basketball experienced large participation and a strong following in Australia on the back of the NBA coverage during the 1990s. It has, however, been unable to leverage and continue this support through a viable national league, with both it and its governing body in Australia facing uncertain futures. At least two teams are handing back their licences in 2008 and a major overhaul is planned for the governance and organisation of the national governing body and domestic league. Leveraging the support of those with a global interest in the sport is clearly possible, but the recognition of multiple allegiances being a complementary, not competitive, force is critical to being successful.

Year	Australian rules (AFL)	Rugby league (NRL)	Rugby union (Super 12/14)	Football (NSL/A-league)
1996	29,637	11,452	15,741	4,342
1997	33,197	10,901	18,333	5,417
1998	34,768	10,935	16,634	4,931
1999	32,793	13,937	16,134	5,608
2000	32,618	14,366	18,147	5,049
2001	33,643	13,256	21,161	5,104
2002	32,066	13,084	23,580	5,167
2003	33,371	14,469	24,275	3,853
2004	33,579	14,671	24,713	4,121
2005	35,703	16,468	25,314	10,955[a]
2006	35,250	15,601	24,975	12,940
2007	36,813	15,820	21,292	14,610

Note: [a]A-League Commences (2005/06)
Source: A-League (2008), AFL Tables (2008), MacDonald and Booth (2007) and Rugby League Tables (2008)

Table I Attendance averages of Australian football codes (1996-2007)

Team	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Melbourne victory	14,158	27,728	26,064
Queensland roar	14,785	16,465	16,951
Sydney FC	16,669	14,999	16,373
Newcastle jets	8,912	11,442	13,209
Central coast mariners	7,899	9,828	12,741
Adelaide united	10,947	12,162	12,697
Wellington phoenix[a]	–	–	11,683
Perth glory	9,734	7,671	7,596
New Zealand knights[a]	3,909	3,014	–
Season average	10,955	12,927	14,610
Season total attendance	9,20,219	10,85,829	12,27,273

Note: [a]The New Zealand Knights operated in the first two seasons before being replaced by the Wellington Phoenix
Source: A-League

Table II *A-League average attendance and totals (all seasons)*

Previous league followed	n	Percentage[a]
NSL (Australia)	283	35.9
English premier league	462	58.6
La Liga	67	8.5
Serie A	98	12.4
Scottish premier league	46	5.8
No other league followed	156	19.8

Note: [a]Multiple answers were possible, therefore percentages do not equal 100; $n = 788$

Table III *STH previous support of football – Sydney F.C.*

	n	Percentage
Yes	2,097	71.3
No	840	28.7

Note: $n = 2,940$

Table IV *Global supporter of overseas team(s)*

	Global support (%)	Non-global support (%)
n	2,097	840
Had not attended a professional football match before	8.1	20.3
Children or themselves play football	45.0	44.7
Were regular attendees at NSL matches	23.7	20.0
Subscribe to Pay TV to follow overseas football	48.2	16.7

Note: $n = 2,940$

Table V *Previous experiences of global and non-global supporters*

Motivation	Global support (%) ($n = 843$)	Non-global support (%) ($n = 305$)
To financially support the club	22.0	14.6
To gain discounted entry to games	6.4	9.1
To gain a reserved seat	4.0	5.8
To feel more involved with, or part of, the club	20.0	17.9
Given to me as a gift	0.7	2.6
A friend or family member wanted me to go to games with them	1.0	4.4
I wanted to support the A-League in general	45.8	45.6

Notes: $n = 1,148$ – Study 2, Year 1 only

Table VI *Motivations for joining club*

	Global interest	Non-global interest	t	df	Sig.
n					
Year 1 ($n = 1{,}148$)	871	277			
Year 2 ($n = 2{,}222$)	1,600	622			
Attendance					
Home games attended (season 1)	8.2	7.3	4.400	1,141	0.000
Home games attended (season 2)	9.1	8.8	3.378	2,201	0.001
Strength of motivation					
I regret when I am unable to attend Victory home games	8.9	8.4	−4.458	2,178	0.000
I feel that attending Victory home games is vitally important to me	8.5	8.0	−4.685	2,182	0.000
I am really interested in attending Victory home games	9.5	9.2	−4.176	2,182	0.000
Renewal/continued loyalty					
How likely are you to rejoin next year as a member? (year 1)	8.6	7.8	−4.763	1,144	0.000
Actual STH Renewal rate (season 1)	81%	69%	−4.057	1,146	0.000
Actual STH renewal rate (season 2)	88%	84%	−1.769	2,119	0.077
Regardless of what the Melbourne Victory does, I will always be a member?	7.3	6.6	−3.263	1,141	0.001
Satisfaction/expectations					
Satisfaction with STH package (season 1)	6.6	6.5	−0.587	1,143	0.557
Satisfaction with STH package (season 2)	7.9	7.9	0.891	2,207	0.373
Expectations with STH package (season 1)	5.9	6.1	0.953	1,144	0.341
Expectations with STH package (season 2)	7.1	7.3	2.157	2,210	0.031
Attitudes towards governing body					
How would you rate the FFA's running of the A-League?	7.7	7.5	−1.203	807	0.229
How would you rate the FFA's running of national teams?	7.6	7.5	−0.839	798	0.402
How would you rate the FFA's junior programs, development and coaching?	6.1	5.9	−0.802	563	0.423
How would you rate the FFA's active promotion of the game in Australia?	6.9	6.5	−2.590	798	0.010
Overall, how satisfied are you with the FFA?	7.1	6.8	−2.212	812	0.027

Table VII *Global football support and attitudes and behaviour*

	Global interest and NSL follower	Global Interest only	NSL follower only	No prior global interest or NSL following	Total	df	F-value	Sig.
n								
Year 1 (n = 1,148)	259	612	63	214				
Year 2 (n = 2,222)	377	1,223	123	499				
Attendance								
Home games attended (season 1)	8.5	8.0	8.7	6.9	8.0	3	15.56	0.000
Home games attended (season 2)	9.5	9.0	9.2	8.7	9.0	3	11.00	0.000
Strength Of motivation								
I regret when I am unable to attend Victory home games	8.9	8.9	8.4	8.4	8.8	3	6.65	0.000
I feel that attending Victory home games is vitally important to me	8.7	8.4	8.5	7.9	8.4	3	11.64	0.000
I am really interested in attending Victory home games	9.5	9.5	9.2	9.2	9.4	3	5.85	0.001
Renewal/continued loyalty								
How likely are you to rejoin next year as a member? (year 1)	8.5	8.6	8.0	7.7	8.4	3	7.89	0.000
Actual renewal rate (season 1)	84%	79%	67%	70%	78%	3	6.42	0.000
Actual renewal rate (season 2)	87%	88%	84%	85%	87%	3	1.09	0.352
Regardless of what the Melbourne Victory does, I will always be a member?	7.1	7.3	6.4	6.7	7.1	3	4.06	0.007
Satisfaction/expectations								
Satisfaction (season 1)	6.6	6.6	6.3	6.6	6.6	3	0.80	0.495
Satisfaction (season 2)	7.6	8.0	7.7	8.0	7.9	3	7.32	0.000
Expectations (season 1)	5.9	6.0	6.0	6.1	6.0	3	0.50	0.684
Expectations (season 2)	6.8	7.1	7.3	7.2	7.1	3	4.55	0.003
Attitudes towards governing body								
How would you rate the FFA's running of the A-League	7.7	7.7	7.4	7.5	7.6	3	0.61	0.607
How would you rate the FFA's running of national teams	7.7	7.6	7.7	7.5	7.6	3	0.63	0.596
How would you rate the FFA's junior programmes, development and coaching	5.9	6.1	6.0	5.8	6.0	3	0.49	0.692
How would you rate the FFA's active promotion of the game in Australia	6.8	6.9	6.4	6.5	6.8	3	2.35	0.071
Overall, how satisfied are you with the FFA?	7.2	7.1	6.8	6.8	7.1	3	1.70	0.166

Table VIII *Effect of global football support and NSL support on attitudes and behaviour*

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