Ambush Marketing:
Time for football to address it?

Nicholas Burton
June 10th, 2009
Re: Rights Protection in Football

“... Interestingly, FIFA's official sponsors did not have any cause for concern in this respect until the early 1990s. It is only in the last decade or so that supposedly shrewd advertising strategies have been developed with more and more ways of bypassing the main sponsors... Specialists in the field use the term "ambush marketing" to refer to these activities”

FIFA, “Fair Play in Marketing” 2009
Ambush Marketing, Today...

“Ambush marketing is a form of associative marketing, utilised by an organisation to capitalize upon the awareness, attention, goodwill, and other benefits generated by having an association with an event or property, without that organisation having an official or direct connection to that event or property”
K-Swiss
Roland-Garros
2008

CIBS
Centre for the International Business of Sport

Coventry University
Elasun
Beijing Olympic Games
2008

CIBS
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Coventry University
Lufthansa
FIFA World Cup 2006
Heineken
UEFA EURO 2008
Nike
UEFA EURO 2008
CIBS
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Implications

• The global sport industry is projected to be worth $141,000,000,000 by 2012, and growing...

• Sponsorship investment worldwide grew $19.1 billion between 2003 and 2008, and continues to rise...

• Efforts to protect sponsors, and to better manage sponsorships in response to ambush marketing, have enjoyed limited success...
So What Can Be Done To Protect Sponsors?

*Proaction vs. Reaction*
Legal Action?

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Telecom New Zealand
Atlanta Summer Olympics
1996
Ambush-Specific Legislation?
Ambushing South Africa....

“The 2003 Cricket World Cup was the first major event... where [the amended acts were] rigorously enforced. Two schoolteachers took a group of students to a match at the Maritzburg Oval. Because Pepsi was the event’s official sponsor, the children with Cokes in their lunch boxes were barred entry until they peeled off the Coca-Cola labels and scraped off the logos from all the bottle tops and lids”

Vassallo, Blemaster & Werner
2005
Strategic Sponsorship Planning?

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POLAND UKRAINE
UEFA EURO 2012

Coventry University
The Time to Act

• Time to decide what is ambush marketing, and what is legitimate marketing by non-sponsors...
• Time to find better means of combating ambushers, without restricting the rights of fans and well-meaning business...
• Time for sponsors to do more to protect their own investments, rather than simply relying on the legal and legislative efforts of organizers...
Thank You

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