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The socio-economic impact of the FIA World Rally Championship 2007

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Abstract

Central to this research paper are findings from a major international collaborative study into the social and economic impact of the World Rally Championship (WRC) during 2007. Scholarship in the field of motorsport is rare, which is remarkable against the backdrop of a discipline that has truly global appeal. The analysis contained herein unfolds within extant research into the staging of so-called 'mega' sports events but highlights important shortcomings in this literature when examining a sport, such as rallying, which takes place beyond the normal sporting boundaries. The study also engages in debates surrounding the role of sport as an agent for social and cultural regeneration but advances a number of inadequacies within this and other procedures involved in measuring the full impact major sports events exercise upon their host communities. Beyond this a study of the WRC in 2007 reminds the reader of how sport events have differing symbolic significance depending upon the national political and

cultural locales in which they take place. In this regard this essay also unpacks established discourses surrounding sporting legacy, exactly what constitutes a 'sport tourist' and the vexed issue of the use of multipliers when calculating the full economic impact of sports events both now and in the future.

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