

Bullpen Media

FOX Sports University x MLB Green Research Report

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Background and Secondary Research	
Opportunity Statement.....	4
SWOT Analysis.....	4
Literature Review.....	5
Ideas to be Pretested.....	6
Research Questions.....	7
Target Group.....	7
Primary Research Methods	
Interviews.....	8
Focus Groups.....	8
Survey.....	9
Primary Research Results	
Interviews.....	9
Focus Groups.....	11
Survey.....	13
Discussion	
Research Goals.....	15
Implications and Recommendations.....	16
Limitations.....	17
Key Insights.....	18
Appendix.....	19

Executive Summary

FOX Sports University and MLB Green are bringing baseball to Bristol Motor Speedway for the “Speedway Classic.” They tasked our agency, Bullpen Media, with creating an overarching messaging strategy that enhances FOX Sports’ and MLB’s existing partnership and raises awareness for sustainability efforts at the Speedway Classic. The research questions we used to address this ask were:

- To what degree does the sustainability of brands affect consumer behavior?
- What role do fans play in the environmental impact of sporting events?
- How can MLB communicate its sustainability efforts and encourage fans to take part in them?

To conduct our research, Bullpen Media sent out a survey across social media platforms over a two-week period that received 133 respondents, held two in-person focus groups, one containing five participants and the other containing nine participants, and held ten interviews over Zoom or in-person. The key findings of our research were:

- Participants claimed sustainability was important to them but often did not consider it when purchasing goods/services or attending sporting events.
- Social media campaigns would be most effective for raising awareness.
- Merchandise discounts were the top incentive cited to encourage respondents to participate more actively in sustainability initiatives.

This research will shape Bullpen Media’s campaign. We will use the social media habits of our respondents and their preferred incentives for engagement to produce a comprehensive messaging campaign digitally and at the event. We want to be the reason people remember the Speedway Classic and we are excited to share our findings and recommendations with you.

Background and Secondary Research

Opportunity Statement

FOX Sports University began in 2007 and is a partnership program developed by FOX Sports with distinct academic institutions from around the U.S. MLB started its official MLB Green program in 2023 to promote its environmental efforts and encourage the league's teams to get involved. On August 2, 2025, MLB Green and FOX Sports are hosting the Speedway Classic in Bristol, Tennessee, where the Atlanta Braves will play the Cincinnati Reds inside the “infield” of the famed Bristol Motor Speedway track.

MLB Green and FOX Sports University tasked Bullpen Media with creating an overarching creative messaging strategy FOX Sports and MLB can utilize to enhance their partnership and raise awareness for sustainability efforts at the Speedway Classic. Both organizations should be able to utilize these findings across their suite of assets to amplify awareness and showcase their commitment to sustainability.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

MLB is one of the most historically recognized professional sports leagues in the U.S. MLB’s partnership with FOX Sports provides a robust platform for fan engagement at the event and while live streaming. Lastly, MLB Green is a prime example of the league's efforts to become more environmentally responsible.

Weaknesses

The Speedway Classic venue is notoriously less environmentally friendly than most MLB ballparks since it is typically used for NASCAR races using cars with non-EPA-regulated gas

engines, which create pollution, making the goal of keeping the event sustainable difficult. A weakness for FOX Sports and MLB is a lack of awareness of their sustainability efforts.

Opportunities

There is a strong generational value of sustainability and sustainable practices within professional sports and other significant events nationwide. With social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram, MLB Green and FOX Sports can reach larger audiences when promoting sustainability (Lee et al., 2024). Developing partnerships with high-profile athletes would be mutually beneficial to the organization and the players themselves. Additionally, researching sustainable alternatives available for MLB to use is a lasting opportunity.

Threats

When promoting sustainability efforts, there is always the potential of being perceived as inauthentic or “greenwashing” by some consumers. Additionally, clear and realistic sustainability goals must be set for this event to avoid promoting unrealistic or insufficient objectives.

Literature Review/Relevant Research

To fully understand MLB Green and FOX Sports's goals, it is crucial to understand their past and current sustainability efforts. A *Targeted News Service* article from 2018 details some MLB initiatives that are still in place today. For example, “Each year, MLB awards the eco-friendliest Club with its 'Green Glove Award' (MLB Celebrates 'Earth Day'). Initiatives like the annual Green Glove Award are a great way to get fans and teams engaged in MLB sustainability efforts and spread awareness.

A study on promoting sustainability by reducing single-use plastic among professional sporting events proved the size of MLB’s fanbase. Among all professional sports leagues, the study shared that MLB ranked second after the NFL in terms of consumer interest. Of 500

participants, 121 selected MLB as the primary professional sport they attended (Hwang et al., 2024). Because of the size and popularity of MLB, sustainability within the league is essential.

Less research has been done to show how methods of communication influence fans' attitudes and behaviors. A 2022 study concluded that the geographic proximity to the initiative and the perceived impact shape fan perceptions of sustainability efforts (Harrison et al., 2022). In a self-report survey, participants reported higher "trust, organizational authenticity, and fandom" due to the perceived impact of the league's efforts (Harrison et al., 2022).

Another key sustainability component is sports event venues becoming LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Certified. LEED "is the most widely used green building rating system in the world...and is a globally recognized symbol of sustainability achievement and leadership" (*What Is LEED Certification?*). Only six MLB ballparks are LEED Certified. Every stadium obtaining LEED certifications would not only strengthen MLB Green but also give FOX Sports a sustainability fact to share in-game.

Ideas to be Pretested

FOX Sports University has asked us to create a messaging strategy surrounding the efforts of MLB Green to build fan awareness and increase engagement, specifically at the Speedway Classic, and strengthen the association with MLB and sustainability as a whole. To gain insights into the sustainable actions of fans who are the direct recipients of such messaging, we needed to learn what motivates participation in sustainability efforts. This includes studying how social norms, accessibility factors and visible impacts of such efforts influence engagement in eco-friendly gameday decisions. We hypothesize that people's perception of their care for sustainability will be inconsistent with their involvement in sustainability efforts, especially within sporting events. To test this assumption, we conducted one-on-one interviews, asking

participants about their level of care toward sustainability and current sustainable choices made at games and in daily life.

We also hypothesize that fans' involvement in sustainable practices will largely be motivated by convenience and their perception of whether or not their actions directly impact the environment. We tested the validity of this assumption by conducting focus groups where participants were asked why they were more likely to partake in some sustainability efforts over others, if at all. Our final hypothesis was that MLB fans' awareness of MLB Green efforts is relatively low and that increasing fan engagement in these initiatives will require clear, impactful communication. To test this, we included questions in our interviews and focus groups that assessed fans' awareness of MLB Green and other sustainability efforts in professional leagues. By understanding consumer awareness of MLB Green, we learn how best to communicate about the initiative.

Research Questions

- People often say they care about sustainability, but their buying habits show otherwise.

To what degree does the sustainability of brands affect consumer behavior?

- What role do fans play in the environmental impact of sporting events?
- How can MLB communicate its sustainability efforts and encourage fans to take part in them?

Target Groups

The Speedway Classic is a specialized event located at the Bristol Motor Speedway. For this event, we want to target sports fans interested in viewing specialty games, fans who regularly interact with MLB games and Tennessee residents. It is important to keep active MLB

fans engaged in the league's specialty events while also finding ways to engage Tennessee residents with a professional sports league their state does not have a team for.

Primary Research Methods

Interviews

Each team member conducted at least one personal interview on sustainability, live sports and their overlap. We completed ten interviews with participants ranging from college students to middle-aged adults, with varied expertise in sustainability and sports. We recruited interviewees via text, email and phone, and the interviews, lasting 30 to 45 minutes, were held by phone, Zoom or in person. Questions covered participants' backgrounds in sustainability (if they had one), their feelings toward sustainability in live sports, incentives that would encourage individuals to participate in sustainability efforts and how the participants feel and interact with live sports. Our interview questions can be found in the appendix below.

Focus Groups

We held two focus groups to explore college students' views on sustainability and live sports, focusing on how these areas intersect. Each session had two moderators and two note-takers, and participants were recruited from team members personal networks. The first group, moderated by Kylie Parker and Navin Deol, was made up of nine UNC-Chapel Hill students (three female, six male), met on Oct. 9 from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. at Carolina Square Apartments. The second group, moderated by Christina Mangelsdorf and Alex Johnson with one male and four female participants, met on Oct. 11 at He's Not Here from 3:00 to 3:45 p.m. Discussions covered favorite brands, personal sustainability practices, sustainability's role in sports and purchasing decisions and their experiences attending and watching live sporting

events. The groups also discussed how sports organizations could engage fans more effectively in sustainability efforts. Our focus group moderator guide can be found in the appendix below.

Survey

Our Google Forms survey addressed the research questions: "How does brand sustainability affect consumer behavior?" and "How can MLB communicate its sustainability efforts and engage fans?" The survey, open from Sept. 20 to Oct. 4, 2024, targeted all demographics but mainly reached respondents who were members of Gen Z aged 19-22, with 85% of respondents identifying as white and 78% female. We promoted it via social media with Instagram and Snapchat stories, direct messages to UNC-CH students and family members and messages to UNC-CH clubs, classes and organizations. The first section asked about preferred information sources, sports leagues followed and views on sustainability. The second section focused on MLB traditions, game-day experiences and integrating sustainability. The full survey is in the appendix below.

Primary Research Results

Interviews

Our team conducted ten interviews. The interview pool consisted of four women and six men, and the individuals ranged from 19 to 61 years old. All interviewees had interacted with live sporting events, either in person or through streaming. Still, there were varied levels of awareness and engagement with sustainability, personally and at sporting events. The central themes from the interviews were sustainability awareness and engagement, perception of sustainability in sports, incentivizing fan participation and concern of greenwashing with a desire for authenticity.

When asked if they cared about sustainability, 100% of interviewees said “Yes.” When asked if it mattered if the brands they purchased from were practicing sustainability efforts, only 30% said “Yes.” All interviewees who answered yes to the latter were over 50 years old. When participants were asked how they practiced sustainability, 60% said “recycle,” 40% mentioned a practice related to energy conservation and 30% considered their purchases. This 30% was the same as the 30% who said they cared about brands practicing sustainability.

When asked if they associated FOX Sports or MLB with sustainability, 100% said they did not associate FOX Sports with sustainability, and 80% did not associate MLB with sustainability. Of the 20% that did associate MLB with sustainability, one respondent distinguished that they felt particular MLB teams, such as the Yankees and Mariners, were being sustainable rather than the league as a whole. Some respondents acknowledged the large environmental footprint of sporting events, particularly in terms of waste, energy usage and transportation, with one stating, “Some places don’t even have recycling in the stadium... you can’t even just have a second bin there for people to throw [their bottle] in? It’s ridiculous.” Despite the work of professional sports leagues and some of their teams toward sustainability initiatives, there is a lack of recognition of and participation in these efforts among fans.

A recurring theme from the interviews was that fans would be more engaged in sustainability efforts if there were tangible incentives. When asked how they would prefer their favorite sports team to engage them in sustainability, 60% mentioned discounts when purchasing eco-friendly merch, 50% mentioned a digital or in-stadium challenge with a prize, 30% mentioned discounts when choosing to use eco-friendly or reusable concessions cups/containers and 20% mentioned a meet and greet with players. Fans want their sustainability impacts to be

integrated into their gameday experience rather than going out of their way or changing their routine to be sustainable.

Older respondents with more professional or environmental expertise expressed skepticism about shallow marketing efforts. One respondent said he only thought of one word when asked about sustainability in sports: “greenwashing.” Other respondents expressed their concern when asked if they would be willing to pay more money for a ticket if that extra money went to sustainability efforts, saying “I’d need to know what the programs were,” and “How would I know if some of the money is just lining the pockets of the billionaire owners or not?” Detailed reports of where money is going and the quantitative impacts a team has had on the environment through their efforts may make fans more willing to donate to the cause.

Focus Groups

To begin our two focus groups, we sought to understand our participants' feelings toward sustainability. Most participants claimed to care about sustainability, citing personal efforts, including recycling, composting and being mindful of consumerism by thrifting, among others. Participants shared that they were against shopping from brands like Shein which have horrible environmental reputations. However, while it was preferred that the brands they supported were sustainable, these consumers were not putting in time and effort to seek the most sustainable options.

When asked if a positive, promotional sustainability campaign would stick with them more than a negative attack ad targeting an unsustainable company, the results were close, but the majority shared that the attack ad would be more impactful for them in the long term. An example of these advertisements given was videos following oil spills, showing animals covered in oil and trash. Sustainability content on social media that had caught participants' attention in

the past included thrifting TikToks, Adidas' collaboration with an ocean conservation company and Nike's sustainability practices.

Next, we wanted to understand our participant's relationship with live sports. All participants in both focus groups had attended a live sporting event before. Further, all nine participants in the first focus group had participated in a live sporting event in the past month. Most participants indicated they interacted with live sports almost daily, with ~90% being online or on streaming and ~10% being in person. The most popular live sports among this group were the NFL and NCAA football and basketball. When asked about specialty events, with the provided examples of the Monaco Grand Prix and international NFL games, participants shared they are more likely to turn into specialty events that intrinsically change something, like the course, to make the game more interesting to watch as opposed to the same game being played in new locations. This is good news for the Speedway Classic, which is in a new location and on a different and exciting field.

Further, we sought to understand our participant's thoughts surrounding sustainability in live sports. Overall, participants in both groups did not associate MLB or FOX Sports with sustainability. When thinking about sustainability in sports, participants thought about transportation and recycling efforts. The participants had mixed opinions on whether they would spend more money on tickets knowing their money was going toward sustainability efforts. Generally, respondents shared they would want to see their money directly impact a local community, rather than donating to general sustainability efforts or an organization like MLB Green. One participant shared, "If I can directly see what and who my money is helping, I'd be happy to donate. But I don't like it when the donations go to these big corporations and I can't

track where my money is going.” Additionally, we found that platforms of sustainability from individuals in teams resonate more with audiences than platforms by teams or leagues.

In terms of incentives, respondents were receptive to a tier-based reward system. A respondent shared, “I probably wouldn’t enter a competition with only one winner, because I know I’m not going to win. But if I only have to do a few small things, like post on social media, and I get a hat from my team I would definitely do that.” Overall, by talking to individuals with mixed interests in live sports, sustainability and the combination of the two, we will go into our final report with an evidence-based understanding of key consumers of live sports.

Survey

Our survey was conducted over two weeks, resulting in 133 respondents. The survey had three sections: Information Sources and Sustainability, Game Day Experience and Demographics.

The key themes from our survey results are as follows:

- Instagram and TikTok were the top platforms where respondents got their news from.
- While 86.5% of respondents either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed with the statement, “Sustainability is important to me,” only 58.6% strongly agreed or somewhat agreed with the statement, “Sustainability in sports is important to me.”
- A social media campaign was the tactic respondents found most effective for raising awareness for sustainability in sports.
- Merchandise discounts were the top incentive cited to encourage respondents to participate more actively in sustainability initiatives.

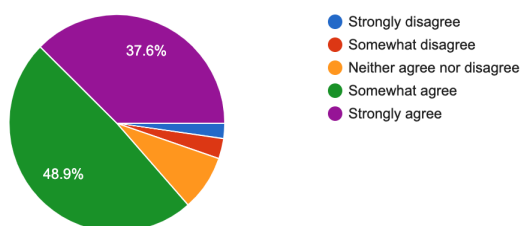
The survey began by gathering information on respondents' preferred information sources and their feelings towards sustainability. The first question asked respondents to indicate the

platforms from which they consume information. The top responses were Instagram (78.2%), TikTok (75.2%), Internet browsers (67.7%) and news stations (58.5%). Further, when respondents were asked to select from the same group which information platform they used the most, TikTok received 31.6% of the vote, with news stations in second place at 20.3% and Instagram in third place at 19.5%.

A compelling insight from our survey was the difference in consumers' feelings towards sustainability in general versus sustainability in sports. When asked about their agreement levels with the phrase "Sustainability is important to me," 48.9% selected they "somewhat agree," and 37.6% selected "strongly agree." However, when asked about their agreement with the phrase "Sustainability in sports is important to me," only 16.5% selected "strongly agree," 42.1% selected "somewhat agree" and 30.8% selected "neither agree nor disagree." Understanding that consumers care more about overall sustainability than sustainability in sports is crucial for sports organizations planning sustainability campaigns.

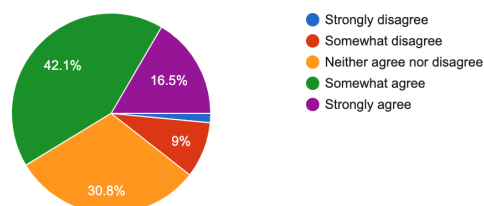
Please select which option most aligns with your answer to this statement: Sustainability is important to me.
133 responses

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Please select which option most aligns with your answer to this statement: Sustainability in sports is important to me.
133 responses

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We also sought to understand how to effectively raise awareness for environmental sustainability in sports. Seventy-three point seven percent of respondents indicated that social media campaigns would be effective in reaching this goal. In second place were partnerships with environmental organizations at 59.4% and tied for third place at 55.6% were in-stadium

promotions and partnerships with famous sports personalities. Beyond awareness, we asked participants what would encourage them to participate more actively in professional athletics' sustainability initiatives. By far, the favorite option was discounts on merchandise, which 84.2% of participants selected as an incentive that would encourage them. Lastly, participants shared that the factors most motivating them to support sustainability initiatives included environmental concern, positive community impact and desire to reduce personal carbon footprint. Overall, our survey provided critical insights into the minds of 133 consumers of media and live sports, with many falling in the crucial Gen Z audience.

Discussion

Research Goals

The research goals for this project center around creating an effective marketing campaign for MLB Green and FOX Sports to promote sustainability initiatives for the upcoming Speedway Classic. Specifically, the project sought to understand how much the sustainability of brands affects consumer behavior, what role fans play in the environmental impact of sporting events and how MLB can communicate their sustainability efforts while simultaneously encouraging fans to participate in them. This involves analyzing consumer behavior related to sustainability, identifying effective communication methods and determining the best incentives to encourage fan participation in sustainable practices.

Our research explores how sustainability can be integrated into live sports events in a way that resonates with fans, making environmentally conscious decisions a central part of their game day experience. Throughout our research, we identified aspects of sustainability that matter most to fans, including reducing single-use plastics, promoting recycling and encouraging donations to local sustainability efforts.

Additionally, the project seeks to determine how MLB Green can build long-term fan loyalty by aligning sustainability efforts with MLB's overall brand identity and creating memorable experiences that fans will associate with both the league and its commitment to environmental responsibility. By understanding the motivations of different fan segments, like the tier-based rewards system that resonated with members of Gen Z, the project aims to shape a campaign that raises awareness and drives action, turning MLB fans into active participants in sustainability efforts both on and off the mound.

Implications and Recommendations

Throughout our research, we developed different recommendations on how to improve the awareness and marketing of MLB Green and FOX Sports' collaborative sustainability campaign. Our first recommendation revolves around the perception of MLB Green. Our research proved that most, if not all, of our demographic had never encountered MLB Green campaigns and initiatives, or any similar programs across other professional sports leagues, like NBA Green. MLB Green must combat this lack of awareness and attempt to generate much higher fan engagement in their sustainability initiatives, which will in turn drive higher fan attendance and new fan engagement, especially at specialty events like the Speedway Classic.

To grow this awareness, we recommend utilizing Instagram and TikTok as the primary advertising and promotion methods to reach all demographics. According to our survey, Instagram and TikTok are the two media platforms from which the majority of the respondents got their news and information. Additionally, from our focus groups and interviews, we see that Instagram is also the most popular social media platform for consuming sports content. As one of our pretested concepts claimed, fans' involvement in sustainability efforts is often motivated by convenience. With posts naturally showing up on one's feed or Instagram Explore page, there is

not a more convenient way for fans to learn about MLB Green. Combining posts, advertisements and promotions on these social media platforms will increase fans' exposure, engagement and active participation, as well as their overall awareness of MLB Green.

Our next recommendation is to use incentives or a rewards-based system to boost fan engagement in MLB Green programs, especially during games. In-game activations, giveaways and prizes can motivate fans to adopt sustainable practices. Focus groups and interviews highlighted the importance of incentives for increasing fan participation, with many stating they'd join sustainability programs if rewarded with merchandise or other incentives. As we hypothesized, we found that consumers generally claim to care more about sustainability than their personal sustainability efforts show. By giving consumers a reward, we encourage them to take the extra step towards sustainability efforts, even if their main motivation is self-serving.

Limitations

While interviews, focus groups and surveys are useful for data collection, our research faced limitations in time, resources and sample diversity. With only a few weeks to gather data in this semester-long project, we could not conduct a higher number of in-depth interviews or focus groups beyond UNC-CH college students, limiting the representation of MLB fans. Securing diverse interview participants willing to commit 45 minutes also proved challenging. Additionally, resource constraints limited our ability to reach a more geographically and demographically diverse fan audience outside the university community.

The nature of focus groups and interviews can introduce bias, as participants may adjust their responses to fit or follow group dynamics or please the moderator. To combat this, we fostered an open environment where participants felt free to share their opinions without judgment. Similarly, the survey, while efficient for gathering mass data, has the risk of response

bias, as participants might provide inaccurate or incomplete answers about their past experiences or beliefs. We addressed this by making the questions as clear, concise and direct as possible.

Another key challenge was presenting the intersection of sustainability and sports to participants, as the sports industry is not known for its environmental efforts. This was evident during focus groups and interviews when discussing sustainability at events like the Speedway Classic, as venues like Bristol Motor Speedway are notorious for pollution, making it difficult to reconcile the event's environmental impact with MLB Green's sustainability initiatives. Many participants did not see or care about the connection between sustainability and sports, focusing mainly on entertainment and personal enjoyment, which made it difficult to gauge how important this issue was to them.

Key Insights

This report's findings are crucial for shaping the future strategy of MLB Green and FOX Sports' campaign. We're pleased with the insights and eager to apply them to enhance our final campaign. Our key takeaway is the importance of mass awareness and media presence of an organization, as most participants were unaware of MLB Green. To boost fan participation, fan awareness must be raised. We also learned which marketing strategies work best for these programs and will incorporate this into our final campaign.

Another insight we learned is the necessity and importance of incentives. Sports fans go to live events to watch their team and enjoy the event itself, so to encourage fans to participate in sustainability programs, rewards or prizes are needed, as found in our research. To promote and grow attention for MLB Green's sustainability initiatives, new incentive programs like a rewards-based tier system should be incorporated to encourage fan participation. We look forward to sharing these ideas in our final MLB Green and FOX Sports U campaign.

Appendix

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Survey Questions

Disclaimer:

Hi! We are a group of students conducting a survey for a Sports Communication Course (MEJO 377) at UNC-Chapel Hill's Hussman School of Journalism and Media. We are gathering information for a research study on Major League Baseball's (MLB) sustainability program, MLB Green, and FOX Sports' collaboration on the Speedway Classic game between the Atlanta Braves and Cincinnati Reds. We do NOT work for FOX Sports or MLB. It should take approximately 3-5 minutes. This survey will end on October 4, 2024, at 11:59 PM. We appreciate your time and effort to help us.

Survey Questions:

Information Sources and Sustainability Section: This section aims to understand participants' thoughts and feelings about sustainability and where they get their information.

1. Which of the following platforms do you get your news from? This includes news about world events, pop culture, sports, etc. (Select all that apply: TikTok, Instagram, X, Snapchat, YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn, Internet Browsers, News Stations, Other)
2. Which of the following platforms do you get **most** of your news from? This includes news about world events, pop culture, sports, etc. (TikTok, Instagram, X, Snapchat, YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn, Internet Browsers, News Stations, Other)
3. Do you follow any professional sports leagues on social media? (Select all that apply: NFL, NBA, NHL, MLB, Soccer [Premier League, MLS, UCL, etc.], NASCAR/Pro Racing [F1, IndyCar, etc.], None of the above, Other)

4. Please select which option most aligns with your answer to this statement: Sustainability is important to me. (Strongly disagree, Somewhat disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Somewhat agree, Strongly agree)
5. Please select which option most aligns with your answer to this statement: Sustainability in sports is important to me. (Strongly disagree, Somewhat disagree, Neither agree nor disagree, Somewhat agree, Strongly agree)
6. What do you find most effective for raising awareness for environmental sustainability in sports? (Select all that apply - if “Other,” please specify: Social media campaigns, Email newsletters, Television commercials, In-stadium promotions, Community events, Partnerships with environmental organizations, Partnerships with popular sports personalities, None of the above, Other)
7. What incentive would encourage you to participate more actively in professional athletics’ sustainability initiatives? (Select all that apply - if “Other,” please specify: Discounts on merchandise, Recognition or rewards for participation, Exclusive content or events, Information on how personal actions make a difference, Other)
8. What motivates you most to support sustainability initiatives? (Select all that apply - if “Other,” please specify: Concern for the environment, Desire to reduce personal carbon footprint, Influence of friends and family, Positive impact on community, Corporate responsibility and ethics, Incentives or rewards, Other)

Game Day Experience Section: This section aims to understand what effects participants' game day experience at live sporting events.

1. What elements are most important to you for a satisfying game day experience? (Please select your **top three choices** - if “Other,” please specify: Enjoyable game atmosphere,

Comfortable seating and amenities, Quality food and beverage options, Engaging entertainment and activities, Efficient parking and transportation, Clean and well-maintained facilities, Other)

2. When at a baseball game, what activities do you most enjoy during the seventh-inning stretch? (Select all that apply - if “Other,” please specify: Singing the traditional song [e.g., “Take Me Out to the Ball Game”], Participating in fan contests or games, Watching entertainment or mascot performances, Visiting food and beverage stands, Socializing with friends and family, Relaxing or stretching, Other)
3. What are the biggest barriers to practicing sustainability during games? (Please select your **top three choices** - if “Other,” please specify: Lack of clear recycling options, Inconvenience or difficulty in accessing sustainable options, Lack of awareness or information about sustainability practices, Limited availability of reusable or eco-friendly products, Personal lack of interest in sustainability efforts, Other)
4. Which types of on-site sustainability brand activations do you find most engaging during professional sports games? (Select all that apply - if “Other,” please specify: Interactive booths and displays, Eco-friendly merchandise, Educational workshops or demonstrations, Sustainability-themed contests or giveaways, Recycling and waste reduction programs, Other)

Demographic Questions:

1. What group do you most identify with? (Select all that apply: Black or African American, Latino or Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, White or Caucasian, Middle Eastern or North African, Prefer not to answer, Other)
2. How old are you?

3. What gender do you most identify with? (Female, Male, Non-Binary, Prefer not to say, Other).

Thank You and Participant Referral Section: Thank you so much for taking the time to be a part of this survey. We truly appreciate it. Before you close out, please make sure to note which group member directed you to participate.

1. How did you find out about this survey? Please be specific as to who sent it to you or who posted it on social media and which platform.

Interview Questions

Disclaimer:

Hi! My name is [name] and I am a student in a Sports Communication Course (MEJO 377) at UNC-Chapel Hill's Hussman School of Journalism and Media. We are gathering information for a research study on Major League Baseball's (MLB) sustainability program, MLB Green, and FOX Sports' collaboration on the Speedway Classic game between the Atlanta Braves and Cincinnati Reds. We do NOT work for FOX Sports or MLB. This interview should take about 30-45 minutes. The information you share will not be tied to your name, but we will use it to gain insights and inform our direction of improving our assigned brand's perception. I will be taking notes, but would it be okay if I record our conversation for future reference to ensure that I am accurately capturing your viewpoints?... Thank you so much, let's get started!

Section 1: Sustainability

1. Name your five favorite brands that provide goods or services.
2. Do you care about sustainability?
3. What, if any, sustainability practices do you practice?
4. Does it matter to you if the brands you buy from are practicing sustainability efforts?

5. What, if any, type of content related to sustainability has caught your attention in the past?

Section 2: Live Sports

1. Have you ever been to a live sporting event? (professional or college)
2. Monthly, how often do you interact with live sporting events? What percentage of it is digital vs in-person viewership?
3. What are the top three live sports you watch?
4. I want to understand your live sports habits. Do you watch live sports regardless of team? Do you rarely or never watch live sports? Do you only consume events your team participates in? If the last option, would a specialty event not involving your team be of interest to you? (ex: International NFL games, Monaco Grand Prix, etc).

Section 3: Combination

1. What are the first things that come to mind when you hear about sustainability in sports?
2. What role should professional sports leagues play in raising awareness of environmental issues?
3. Is sustainability something that you regularly think about when attending professional sporting events? Why or why not?
4. How do you think sports organizations have failed regarding sustainability, & what kind of steps would make it easier for them to succeed?
5. As both a consumer and a fan, is sustainability in sports important to you and does it matter in the game-day experience? If so, to what degree?
6. What kind of call to action would be most compelling to you in terms of supporting or engaging with sustainability efforts at a sporting event?

7. What would be an ideal way for your favorite sports team to involve you in their sustainability mission? (ex: recycling drives, game day challenges, eco-friendly merch, community challenges, in-stadium educational booth, transportation initiatives, etc)
8. How do you think sports organizations can better involve their fans in their sustainability efforts?
9. Would you be willing to pay more for tickets from a team that actively works toward sustainability goals/with sustainability partners? If so, how much? If not, why?
10. Have you been to/heard of any professional sporting events that take extra steps to be sustainable? (ex. Reusable cups, solar lighting, etc)
11. Do you associate FOX Sports or MLB with sustainability? Why or why not?
12. Can you recall any specific initiatives or campaigns related to environmental sustainability that you've seen from either FOX Sports or MLB? If so, what stood out to you?
13. Do you have any other thoughts regarding what we've talked about today?

Closing Statement:

Thank you so much for your help today! I hope it was fun and impactful not only to our project but also to you! I would love to get your contact information just in case my group and I have any follow-up questions for you if that is okay. Do you have any questions for me or final comments?

Moderator Guide for Focus Groups

Hi everyone! I hope you are all doing well and thank you for joining us for our focus group. Today we're going to ask you a series of questions regarding sustainability, live sports, and a

combination between the two. Please answer these questions honestly and feel free to collaborate and bounce ideas off of each other. If everyone is ready, we can get started.

Section 1: Sustainability

1. Name your five favorite brands that provide goods or services.
2. Do you care about sustainability?
3. What, if any, sustainability practices do you practice?
4. Does it matter to you if the brands you buy from are practicing sustainability efforts?
5. What type of content related to sustainability has caught your attention in the past?

Section 2: Live Sports

1. Have you ever been to a live sporting event? (professional or college)
2. Monthly, how often do you interact with live sporting events? What percentage of it is digital vs in-person viewership?
3. What are the top three live sports you watch?
4. Do you just watch live sports regardless of team? Do you only consume events your team participates in? If the second one, would a specialty event not involving your team be of interest to you? (ex: International NFL games, Monaco Grand Prix, etc)

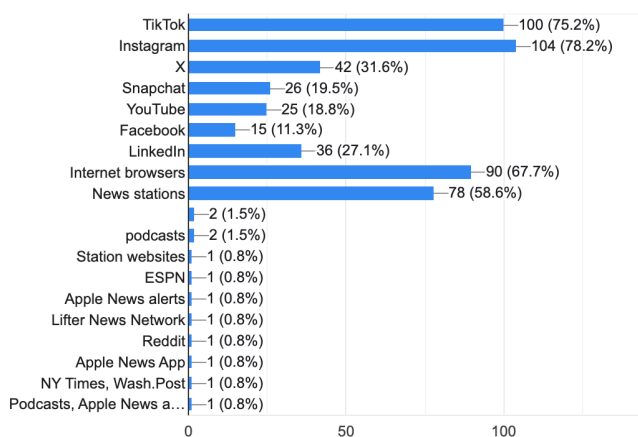
Section 3: Combo

1. What are the first things that come to mind when you hear about sustainability in sports?
2. What kind of call to action would be most compelling to you in terms of supporting or engaging with sustainability efforts at a sporting event?
3. How do you think sports organizations can better involve their fans in their sustainability efforts?

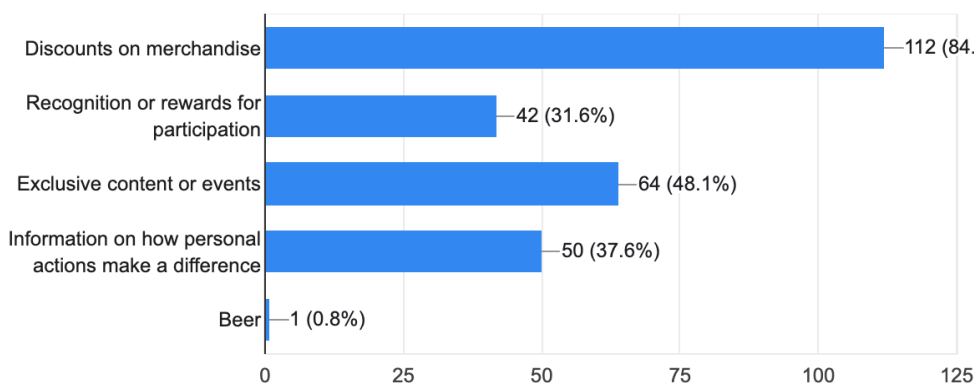
4. Would you be willing to pay more for tickets from a team that actively works toward sustainability goals/with sustainability partners? If so, how much? If not, why?
5. Have you been to/heard of any professional sporting events that take extra steps to be sustainable? (ex. Reusable cups, solar lighting, etc)
6. Do you associate FOX Sports or MLB with sustainability? Why or why not?

Relevant Survey Results

Question 1: Which of the following platforms do you get your news from? This includes news about world events, pop culture, sports, etc. Select all that apply.



Question 7: What incentives would encourage you to participate more actively in professional athletics' sustainability initiatives? (Select all that apply - if "Other," please specify)



Question 11: What are the biggest barriers to practicing sustainability during games? (Please select your top three choices - if "Other," please specify)

