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### **Understanding Fans' Responses to the Sponsor of a Rival Team**

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# Understanding Fans' Responses to the Sponsor of a Rival Team

## Abstract

### Research Question

What factors determine fans' responses to the sponsor of a rival team? To what extent does higher *in-group* fan identification, more positive prior attitudes to the sponsor, and a more congruent fit between the sponsor and club, cause denigration or mitigate negative outcomes for the sponsor?

### Research Methods

300 questionnaires were collected from fans of English Premier League (EPL) football teams Newcastle United and Sunderland allowed us to test our model of sponsorship responses. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to evaluate each hypothesis.

### Results and Findings

Brands will gain greater benefits from sponsorships deemed to be congruent with the rival team and where a higher pre-sponsorship attitude exists. More highly identified fans tend to pay greater attention to the sponsor of their rival team. We find that *schadenfreude* is a better predictor of affective and behavioural responses than *fan identification*, despite its popularity in recent research involving rival fans.

### Implications

Brand managers concerned about the size and scope of out-groups can employ our findings to more effectively configure sponsorship activities.

### Keywords

sponsorship, rival fans, perceived fit, *schadenfreude*, structural equation modelling

## Understanding Fans' Responses to the Sponsor of a Rival Team

Would Manchester United supporters ever happily fly with Etihad Airways? Likewise, would Italian AC Milan fans knowingly drive an automobile fitted with Pirelli tyres, or Real Madrid fans make donations to the children's charity Unicef? If they did, their actions might be construed as disloyalty, these brands being the sponsors of respective arch-rivals Manchester City, Inter Milan and, until recently, Barcelona. Also, consider the example of Sugar Puffs breakfast cereal. In 1996, then Newcastle United football manager Kevin Keegan appeared in an advertisement to promote the brand. The Honey Monster, Sugar Puff's anthropomorphic spokesperson, also appeared wearing Newcastle's famous black and white kit. Unfortunately for the brand, this decision had unexpected repercussions. Sales of the cereal in arch-rival city and team, Sunderland, declined dramatically, reflecting a show of discontent for the brand's relationship with its rival (Chronicle Live, 2009). In the current study, we explore this type of phenomenon in depth, by examining fans' responses to the sponsors of rival teams, and the extent to which traditional determinants of sponsorship success mitigate or enhance denigration in this potentially 'hostile' environment.

Sponsorships are estimated to be worth \$57.5 billion in 2015 (IEG, 2015) with sports sponsorships seen as particularly lucrative for clubs, players and brands. Such endorsements are often seen as distinct from other types of sponsorship given their ability to build fan-brand connections, and create goodwill, feelings of indebtedness and reciprocity (Madrigal, 2000; Pracejus, 2004). In exchange for team support, fans may reward sponsors with increased 'patronage' in the form of more favourable brand attitudes or purchase intentions.

From a social identity perspective (Turner, 1982), fandom engenders an 'in group' mentality with all its inherent biases (Lings & Owen, 2007), and by which companies through their sponsorship gain admittance. But greater fan identification is not the only determinant of sponsorship success. Olson's (2010) meta-analytic informed model found selecting 'objects' (teams, players or events) for which the target market had positive pre-existing (prior) attitudes, and for which the fit or congruency with the sponsor was naturally high or easily explained, also consistently enhanced sponsorship outcomes. Armed with this knowledge, successful sponsorship appears easily realisable – select a team or event with fans that have favourable attitudes to the brand, and with a natural (or easily engineered) fit with the sponsor.

However, there is another side to sports sponsorship, often overlooked in the marketing literature (Davies, Veloutsou & Costa, 2006; Dalakas & Melancon, 2012; Bee & Dalakas, 2015; Grohs, Reisinger & Woisetschlager, 2015). That is the role of rivalry – or more precisely arch-rivalry (Havard, 2014), as this extract from a Brighton and Hove Albion football fan's diary illustrates.

Not to hate any other team, not to loathe that club's fans, their colours, their songs, their mascot; not to cheer with genuine delight at their every misfortune and setback, on and off the pitch, well it singles you out as a wuss... a sorry excuse for a football fan; as if you're missing some vital gene. (Ward, 2005, pp. 54-55).

Sports sponsorship is a domain in which 'objects' (teams) can highly polarise opinions. While fans might experience image transfer for their own team to its sponsor, they might also transfer hostility for an arch-rival's team to its sponsor in the same way, consistent with an 'us' versus 'them' group mentality (Smith, Powell,

Combs, & Schurtz, 2009). Providing support for this argument, Dalakas and Levin (2005) found that NASCAR fans exhibited less favourable attitudes to sponsors of drivers who they disliked. Similarly, Bergkvist (2012) found that Swedish football fans' brand perceptions and purchase intentions for the (beer brand) sponsor of a rival team were more negative in comparison to a control group comprising non-fans. Likewise, (i) Bee and Dalakas (2015) and (ii) Grohs et al (2015) found that attitudes towards advertising (i) and the brand (ii) were lower for more identified fans than those who were casual or non-supporters. Nonetheless, a question remains about the contribution that other traditional sponsorship variables beyond fan identification and affect transfer, such as prior attitude to the sponsor and fit play in this context? We also propose that a relatively new variable in the marketing literature, *schadenfreude* (Dalakas and Melancon, 2012), can provide insights into fans' differential consumer responses to the sponsor of a rival team. Schadenfreude, refers to the pleasure individual's take in the misfortune of others (Ouwerkerk & Van Dijk, 2014) – particularly those comprising a rival group (where tradition, envy, or some other antecedent, dominates). In an intergroup arena, Leach, Spears, Branscombe, and Doosje (2003) found that schadenfreude was readily apparent among competitive team sports fans. For instance, Dutch football fans appear to revel in any loss suffered by arch-rivals Germany, even when they weren't playing against the Netherlands. In psychology, sociology and political science, research seeks to understand the antecedents of this emotional response, including the role of in-group inferiority, hostility, and deservingness (Ouwerkerk & Van Dijk, 2014; Smith et al., 2009). In marketing, research focuses more on the consequences of schadenfreude, which have included increased negative word-of-mouth (Hickman & Ward, 2007), and greater intragroup customer hostility (Sundie, Ward, Beal, Chin, & Geiger-Oneto, 2009). However, this focus on the consequences of schadenfreude has not translated into research within the sponsorship domain.

So, in the tradition of contemporary studies such as Bergkvist (2012), Bee & Dalakas (2015) and Grohs et al (2015), this study explores how fans respond to the sponsor of a rival team. Building on this existing work, we examine how traditional sponsorship variables (prior attitude, perceived fit, fan identification) influence sponsorship responses. Further, we investigate if variables have the same impact on different aspects of the consumer buying process as reflected in Speed and Thompson's (2000) interest, favourability and use framework? The former, *interest*, provides a particularly useful contribution to marketing theory, since past research has focused primarily on *attitudes* and *purchase intentions* only. In addition, we also explore the moderating role of schadenfreude, thus acknowledging the heterogeneity of fans and identifying more precisely how and for whom potentially detrimental effects associated with sponsoring a rival team are likely to occur.

We investigate these issues via a study conducted with fans of two arch-rival English Premier League teams, Sunderland and Newcastle United. The results show that prior attitude and perceived fit work to improve responses to the sponsor. Fan identification increases interest in the sponsor but, is not found to predict favourability and use when also included in a model with other sponsorship variables including schadenfreude, thus implying a confounding influence. Introducing schadenfreude as a moderator identifies heterogeneity in consumers' responses to the rival sponsor. We conclude by exploring how brand managers might use these results to mitigate and prosper from fan-groups prone to exercising schadenfreude.

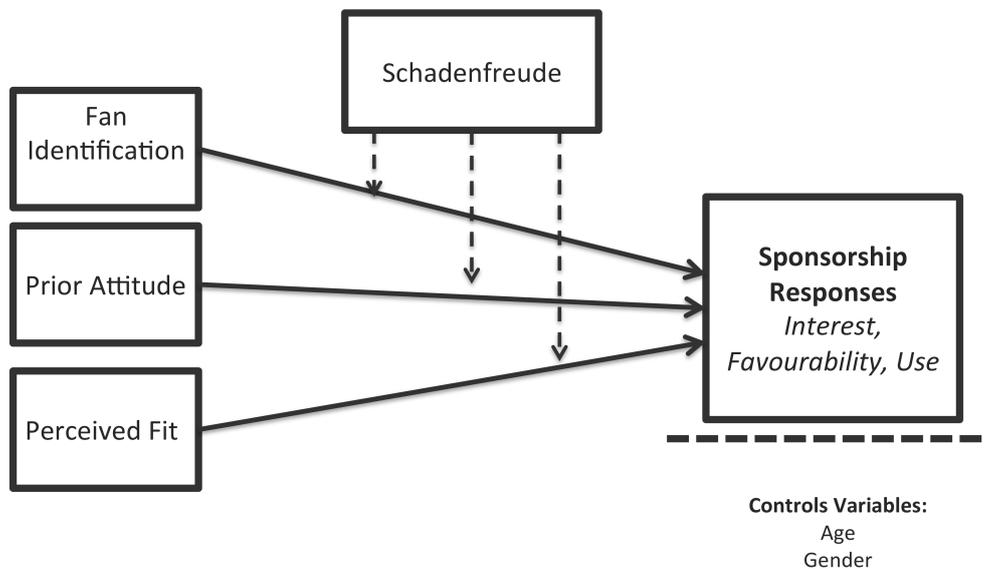
## Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

Figure 1 summarises the relationships tested in this study. In line with Speed and Thompson's (2000) framework, we differentiate between three levels of consumer response to sponsorship arrangements, namely *interest*, *favourability* and *use*. Researchers have used a plethora of measures to assess consumer sponsorship responses (Olson, 2010). Early studies focused predominantly on cognitive sponsorship outcomes, such as enhanced awareness (Meenaghan, 2001). However, more recently affective and behavioural outcomes have received greater attention (Cornwell, Weeks, & Roy, 2005). Speed and Thompson's (2000) framework is particularly insightful since it establishes a natural "hierarchy of effects", akin to other sequential models of brand activation found in the communications literature (Meenaghan, 2001). Like, Speed and Thompson (2000), we do not assume that sponsorship outcomes (interest, favourability, use) influence each other.

*Interest* relates to the perceptual change in attention that consumers allocate to the brand as a consequence of sponsorship. *Favourability* is an affective measure. It addresses the attitudinal change exhibited towards the sponsor, considered by many researchers to be the most important response and, perhaps unsurprisingly, it is the most popular sponsorship outcome studied in the literature (Olson, 2010). *Use* reflects people's perceptions that their intention to purchase the sponsor's goods has changed following sponsorship. As a behavioural variable, *use*, and its derivative, purchase intentions, has also been extensively studied (e.g. Madrigal, 2001; Martensen, Gronholdt, Bendtsen, & Jensen, 2007).

To ascertain the role of traditional sponsorship variables in this *outgroup* context, we consider three independent variables which have figured prominently in previous research (e.g. Dean, 2002; Madrigal, 2001; Martensen et al., 2007; Petrovici, Shan, Gorton, & Ford, 2015; Speed & Thompson, 2000). These are *prior attitude*, *perceived fit* and *fan identification*. In Olson's (2010) systematic review of the literature, these three were also consistently found to be the most important determinants of in-group sponsorship outcomes. Whilst, previous research (e.g. Bergkvist, 2012; Bee and Dalakas, 2015; Grohs et al. 2015) has considered fan identification (i.e. object involvement) to be the main determinant of denigrated responses to a rival team's sponsor, we also introduce *schadenfreude* given its success in explaining attitudes and behaviours in contexts characterised by high degrees of between-group rivalry - including competitive sports (Leach et al., 2003; Ouwerkerk & Van Dijk, 2014). Before discussing under what circumstances and how *schadenfreude* may modify (moderate) the role of these traditional sponsorship variables in explaining consumer responses to a rival team sponsor, we begin by reviewing the literature and explaining their unconditional, direct (main) effects.

**Figure 1**  
**Conceptual Model of Fans Reactions to the Sponsor of a Rival Team**



*Insert Table 1 here*

### **The Role of Traditional Sponsorship Variables in Determining Consumer Responses**

**Fan Identification.** This represents an individual's perceived attachment or belongingness to a particular sports team / event (Wann & Branscombe, 1993). It is analogous to 'object involvement' often discussed in sponsorship and cause-related marketing literatures (Olson, 2010). *Fan identification* is typically conceptualised within the framework of social identity theory (Turner, 1982). Mael and Ashforth (1992) assert that an individual's 'self-concept' comprises both a personal identity (idiosyncratic characteristics - interests, skills, abilities) and a social identity (relevant group classifications). People classify themselves and others into multiple social groups (such as by gender or age), thereby enabling them to impose a structure on their social environment and locate their position within it. Social identification is the perceived belongingness to a particular group and individuals may regard themselves as 'psychologically intertwined with the fate of the group' (Mael & Ashforth, 1992, p.104). Groups to which an individual perceives themselves as belonging (in-group) are typically meaningful when others are excluded (out-group), and competitive rivalry serves to heighten awareness and salience of these distinctions (Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961).

In the context of sports, individuals vary in their degree of fan identification. For example, Harris and Ogbonna (2008) classified sports fans into six groups with

increasing levels of involvement and attachment: armchair supporters, social fans, old timers, leisure switchers, club-connected supporters, and die-hard fanatics. In these latter categories, group affiliation and belonging is often seen as being fundamental to the 'social-self', with individuals experiencing their team's successes and failures as if they were their own (Lings & Owen, 2007).

Fan identification can affect consumer responses towards in-group sponsors. Highly identified fans are more likely to recognize and take an interest in the sponsor of their supported team, develop favorable attitudes toward the brand and heightened patronage (Gwinner & Swanson, 2003). But will these relationships continue to hold when the brand is the sponsor of a rival team? In one of the few studies on rival team sponsorship, Bergkvist contends, "there is no obvious reason . . . , why the negative associations to a sponsored object would not transfer to the sponsor in the same way as positive associations" (2012, p.66). Consistent with this, Bergkvist (2012) found that AIK Stockholm fans had less favourable attitudes and purchase intentions toward the (beer brand) sponsor of arch-rival Hammarby, compared to a control group comprising non-fans - a finding confirmed by Bee and Dalakas (2015) and Grohs et al. (2015).

It is noteworthy that none of the aforementioned studies included *interest* or an alternative cognitive sponsorship outcome. Yet, from a social identity perspective, fan membership is often linked with knowledge and expertise (Gwinner & Swanson, 2003). Indeed, high levels of fan identification typically entail detailed scrutiny of the activities and performance of rivals (Jones, 2000). In the context of football, fans may pay particular attention to the results of arch-rivals, and news about their team (e.g., transfer signings and injuries), club (financial predicament) and city (Hognestad, 2012). This should work to legitimise and justify in-group superiority (apparent or real), and provide a source of 'ammunition' for denigrating out-groups (Hognestad, 1997). So, in contrast to less favourable attitudinal and behavioural responses, highly identified fans may actually pay more, rather than less, attention to a rival team's sponsor. Thus, we posit:

*H1a: Higher fan identification positively influences, (a) interest in the sponsor of a rival team.*

*H1b-c: Higher fan identification negatively influences, (b) favourability, and (c) use (purchase intentions), in the sponsor of a rival team.*

**Prior Attitude.** Prior to sponsoring a particular team / event, sponsors vary in terms of brand equity, with some held in higher regard than others. Generally, a higher prior attitude to the potential sponsor should impact positively on consumer responses to the announcement (Olson, 2010; Speed & Thompson, 2000). Classical conditioning theory is frequently used to explain how pre-exposure to a stimulus (i.e., the brand prior to the sponsorship) translates into post-exposure attitudes (Stuart, Shimp, & Engle, 1987). More positive associations at the pre-exposure stage should transfer into more conditioned, and more favourable brand outcomes following sponsorship (Speed & Thompson, 2000).

Empirical evidence is consistent with this. For instance, Dean (2002) studying Food Lion's sponsorship of the Paralympics, discovered that post-exposure attitude was highly correlated with prior attitude to the company. Similarly, Speed and Thompson (2000) found that consumers' prior attitude to various 'real' brands was positively associated with their interest, favourability and usage intentions for a variety of hypothetical sports event sponsorship opportunities. Consequently, we expect that a positive attitude to the brand should translate into more favourable consumer responses, even when sponsoring a rival team. Thus;

*H2a-c: A more positive prior attitude to the sponsor positively influences: (a) interest in, (b) favourability towards, and (c) use of (purchase intentions), the sponsor of a rival team.*

**Perceived fit.** Perceived fit refers to the degree of congruence between the sponsor and object (McDaniel, 1999). Congruency theory conceives that the ability to retrieve information and transfer meaning depends on the degree of natural, or engineered, similarity between the sponsor and object (Cornwell et al., 2005). It assumes that individuals appreciate harmony between their thoughts, attitudes and behaviours, so that they seek to maintain uniformity among these elements (Jagre, Watson, & Watson, 2001). Applying this to sponsorship, implies that where there is a high degree of perceived fit, individuals regard the relationship as more consistent and appropriate, with associations of the team / event more readily transferred to the sponsor (Gwinner & Eaton, 1999; Jagre et al., 2001). Incongruent relationships are more likely to be ‘filtered out’ since they are less easily encoded, and require substantially more effort to process than congruent associations (Misra & Beatty, 1990). However, this may not always be so – incongruent stimuli *might* also increase cognitive elaboration, which in turn *can* result in higher recall and recognition (Stangor & McMillan, 1992), as well as more favourable attitudes and behaviours (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). But, if perceived fit is too high, it *might* be construed as a cynical or calculative act (Olson & Thjørmøe, 2011), with the sponsorship failing to engender fans’ gratitude. Nonetheless, despite these divergent perspectives, we adopt the conventional, dominant viewpoint that suggests higher perceived fit is a good thing, impacting positively on each of the three sponsorship outcomes (Cornwell, Humphreys, Maguire, Weeks, & Tellegen, 2006; Gwinner & Eaton, 1999; McDaniel, 1999; Roy & Cornwell, 2003; Speed & Thompson, 2000). Therefore:

*H3a-c: Higher perceived fit between sponsor and object positively influences: (a) interest in, (b) favourability toward, and (c) use of (purchase intention), the sponsor of a rival team.*

### **Moderating Role of Schadenfreude in Determining Post-Sponsorship Consumer Responses to the Brand**

Next, we turn our attention to *schadenfreude* to better understand the conditions under which the three traditional sponsorship determinants will be most effective. In particular, the moderating role of *schadenfreude* is suggested as a means of understanding why these relations are stronger for some consumers or fans than others.

*Schadenfreude* is an emotional response to other’s misfortune, characterised by feelings of joy and happiness (Ouwkerk & Van Dijk, 2014). Biologically, it is stimulated in the ventral striatum, a reward centre of the brain which becomes particularly active when envied persons or rival teams (Cikara & Fiske, 2012) suffer a setback or bad luck. As Borrow (2014) lamented “schadenfreude might not be the most noble of emotions, but it is undeniably human. What’s more, it is at the very heart of supporting a football club, any club” (p.1). Nevertheless, there is likely to be considerable heterogeneity in the extent to which people believe it is acceptable to derive satisfaction from another’s plight, given that it violates social norms of fairness and reciprocity (Ouwkerk & Van Dijk, 2014). It is this variability that explains how and why the relationships outlined in hypotheses 1a to 3c may be contingent upon *schadenfreude*.

**Schadenfreude - fan identification interaction.** Dalakas and Melancon (2012) found that fan identification and *schadenfreude* are positively related, but

distinct constructs. A person's in-group identification is frequently manifested not just in support for their own team but also in the negative feelings held for (outgroup) rivals (Hoogland et al., 2015). It is *schadenfreude* that lies behind fans more intense emotional responses, such as jeering at an opposing team, chanting in a derogatory fashion, and cheering at the (even serious) injury of an opposing player (Hoogland et al., 2015; Leach et al., 2003).

One of the central features of social identity theory is that groups adopt and exhibit their own informal norms and values (Turner, 1982). In the context of football, *schadenfreude* can be considered a salient norm. While some fans may wholeheartedly endorse this norm, bolstered by other in-group members shared enjoyment and mutual support, Madrigal (2000) contends others may comply less willingly, "out of a need for social approval and acceptance, or to avoid being chastised by other group members" (p.15). Some in-group members might even disagree with particular norms, yet still strongly identify with the group and its other customs. Taken together, *fan identification* with its in-group focus and favourability bias, coupled with *schadenfreude* with its out-group focus and denigration bias, should complement each other, thereby magnifying the strength of the relationships posited in H1a-c (whether positive or negative) with the sponsorship outcomes. Therefore, we predict:

**H4a:** *There is a positive interaction effect of fan identification and schadenfreude on interest towards the sponsor of a rival team, such that the higher the level of schadenfreude the stronger is the positive relationship between fan identification and interest.*

**H4b-c:** *There is a negative interaction effect of fan identification and schadenfreude on (b) favourability towards, and (c) use of (purchase intention), the sponsor of a rival team, such that the higher the level of schadenfreude the stronger is the negative relationship between fan identification and favourability (use) respectively.*

**Schadenfreude - prior attitude / perceived fit interactions.** In contrast to *fan identification* and *schadenfreude* which have a complementary relationship, the link between both *schadenfreude* and *prior attitude* and *schadenfreude* and *perceived fit* is negatively related. In the case of higher *schadenfreude*, when coupled with a more favourable prior attitude and perception of fit, the result is expected to amplify levels of 'interest' in the sponsor brand. This logic corresponds with the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) whereby people displaying higher levels of involvement tend to process advertising to a greater extent. A higher prior attitude and perception of sponsor-object fit stimulates involvement and interest (as we stipulate in H2-3a). However this is also true when *schadenfreude* is equally high. After all, individuals pre-disposed to *schadenfreude* aim to take pleasure in the fall of the out-group, and for this to be the case, must also follow and take an interest in its progress (good or bad). It is this double-dose of vested (rather than ambivalent) involvement that we expect explains these relationships.

**H5a:** *There is a positive interaction effect of prior attitude and schadenfreude on interest towards the sponsor of a rival team; such that the higher the schadenfreude the stronger is the positive relationship between prior attitude and interest.*

**H6a:** *There is a positive interaction effect of perceived fit and schadenfreude on interest towards the sponsor of a rival team; such that the higher the schadenfreude the stronger is the positive relationship between perceived fit and interest.*

Turning to the affective/behavioural responses, a higher level of *schadenfreude* should *directly* have a denigrating effect on the rival team and associated sponsor (Hoogland et al., 2015). However, when coupled with a favourable prior attitude to the sponsor or higher perceived fit, the individual is left in an evaluative quandary (“I love this brand, but I hate that team”). To reconcile the unease associated with this *cognitive dissonance*, people make adjustments to their evaluative processing of component stimuli in a bid to narrow the incongruence. In this context, such a reconciliation should result in a downward revision, diluting (i.e. weakening) the strength of the positive relationships with both *favourability* and *use* (Heider, 1958). Therefore, we predict:

*H5b-c: There is a negative interaction effect of prior attitude and schadenfreude on (b) favourability and (c) use of (purchase intentions), the sponsor of a rival team; such that the higher the schadenfreude the stronger is the negative relationship between prior attitude and (b) favourability and (c) use.*

*H6b-c: There is a negative interaction effect of perceived fit and schadenfreude on (b) favourability and (c) use of (purchase intentions), the sponsor of a rival team; such that the higher the schadenfreude the stronger is the negative relationship between perceived fit and (b) favourability and (c) use.*

## Methodology

### Study Context

In the UK, football is the national game, generating high levels of fan identification, and is the most important sport for sponsorship when measured by the value of deals (Chadwick & Thwaites, 2005). Newcastle United and Sunderland are two English Premier League (EPL) teams. The cities of Newcastle and Sunderland are located only 13 miles (21 km) apart, with each city possessing only one professional team apiece. This close geographical proximity means that fan arch-rivalry fulfils all the criteria normally associated with footballing derbies.

For English football teams, their primary relationship is with the shirt sponsor. This usually entails the sponsors' name, logo or symbol being applied to team shirts, with accompanying stadium perimeter board advertising (Chadwick & Thwaites, 2005). Under EPL rules, teams may only have a single shirt sponsor with restrictions on the size of the logo. At the time of data collection the shirt sponsors of Newcastle United and Sunderland were Virgin Money (financial services) and Tombola (online gambling).

### Data Collection

A survey was employed to collect data using street-level intercepts in city centre locations within Newcastle and Sunderland. A research assistant collected all data. A non-probability convenience sampling approach was implemented with 150 responses from each supporter base. Given the proposed model complexity, the associated sample size-to-parameter ratio comfortably exceeded five which has been recommended as sufficient to obtain reliable parameter estimates (Bentler, 1995). All responses were anonymous and collected in accordance with the Market Research Society's Code of Conduct (Market Research Society, 2014).

An initial conversation with those approached ascertained if the potential respondent supported Newcastle or Sunderland, as opposed to other clubs, such as Manchester United or Chelsea. Approximately one third of those approached were either not interested in football or identified more strongly with a different team, and

so were debriefed and thanked. The sample was not restricted to season ticket-holders or regular stadium attenders (Dalakas & Melancon, 2012; Bergkvist, 2012), but endeavoured to encompass a broad spectrum of supporters (see descriptive statistics). Nevertheless, the final dataset comprised 65.3% men (Table 2) with a median age between 21 and 30 which conforms with other studies of football fandom (Bauer, Stokburger-Sauer, & Exler, 2008).

*Insert Table 2 here*

Newcastle United fans were surveyed about Sunderland's sponsor Tombola, while Sunderland fans answered questions about Newcastle United's sponsorship by Virgin Money using the same set of questions but with a different referent sponsor.

### **Measures**

All survey items were taken from established scales used in prior sports sponsorship studies and measured on 7-point scales (Table 3). In particular, scales for *perceived fit* between the sponsor and team were taken from Speed and Thompson (2000), while Dalakas and Melancon (2012) developed those for *schadenfreude* and *fan identification*.

*Insert Table 3 here*

Regarding the three endogenous constructs, respondents indicated the extent to which sponsoring the rival team heightened their interest in the brand and its promotions (*interest*), affected their favourability toward the sponsor (*favourability*), and influenced their purchase intention toward the sponsor (*use*). These measures were taken from Speed and Thompson (2000). *Prior attitudes* to the sponsor (i.e. prior to sponsorship) were captured using the four-item semantic differential scale developed by Mitchell and Olson (1981). This was worded so that respondents first identified whether they were aware of the sponsor before the relationship commenced. Those who were unaware were debriefed and took no further part (as discussed above).

To facilitate recall of pre-sponsorship attitude, items were introduced with the statement, "thinking back to before Virgin Money (Tombola) sponsored Newcastle United (Sunderland), your attitude to the company was ...". Speed and Thompson (2000), Olson (2010) and Petrovici et al. (2015) all adopted a similar approach for capturing pre-sponsorship attitudes. These items were positioned at the beginning of the questionnaire, separating them from the *interest*, *favourability* and *use* scales, which were positioned towards the end, to help minimize any self-generated validity (Feldman & Lynch, 1988). While it would have been preferable to measure *prior attitude* before the sponsorship deals were announced, practically this was impossible and reflects inevitable logistical trade-offs associated with using 'real-life' stimuli in sponsorship research (Olson, 2010).

### **Analytical Strategy**

Data analysis was based on structural equation modelling, following the two-step approach of Anderson and Gerbing (1988) which involved evaluating the psychometric properties of the reflective scales before estimating the proposed structural relations. Missing data, which were negligible (0.005% of responses), were substituted via the Expectation-Maximization imputation process in SPSS 17.0 (Allison, 2001). Preliminary, item-by-item analyses revealed no notable departures from normality with all skewness coefficients less than 1 and all kurtosis coefficients less than 1.2, in absolute terms (Kline, 2011). Nevertheless, to minimise parameter bias and standard error shrinkage, models were estimated using robust maximum likelihood (MLR) in MPlus Version 6.2 (Muthén & Muthén, 2012). To enhance confidence in our results, analyses were re-estimated removing seven respondents

who held highly favourable attitudes and/or usage intentions towards the outgroup sponsor (3 standard deviations above the mean)<sup>1</sup>. Results were almost identical, so models based on the complete sample are reported here.

## Results

### Descriptive Statistics

Item mean scores (Table 3) revealed that key variables in the study, such as *interest*, *favourability* and *use*, reflect outcomes that *might* be expected when evaluating a rival team's sponsor ( $\bar{x} < 4.0$ ). We also observe that *schadenfreude* differs from *one* (1.0) in all items, indicating that this 'pleasure through other's pain' emotional response is captured in our data. Of equal importance the mean scores of *fan identification* items for each group are located at the mid-point (approximately 3 to 5), signifying that respondents are not overly represented at either end of the fandom continuum.

### Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The initial measurement model indicated a less than satisfactory fit to the data ( $\chi^2 = 1190.76$ ;  $d.f. = 278$ ;  $p < .01$ ; CFI = .85; TLI = .83; RMSEA = .11; SRMR = .08). Following the advice of Bagozzi and Yi (2012), the modification indices were explored to see whether any cause of misfit was apparent. Care was taken that any modification followed both statistical *and* substantive logic. The results indicated that PF2 ('The image of Sunderland AFC and the image of Tombola are similar') had a lower factor loading than other items in the scale. The research team speculated that this might be due to ambiguity in the word "image" which could be construed as the club's logo and not the commonly applied marketing definition of the word. This item was consequently removed. We found a similar issue with SH1 ('I will feel great joy if the sponsor of Sunderland goes out of business'). Closer inspection of SH1 revealed that the content of this item differed from other scale items as it referred specifically to the club sponsor rather than the club itself. Item I2 ('This sponsorship makes me more likely to pay attention to Tombola's advertising') cross-loaded onto several unspecified constructs violating the assumption of uni-dimensionality. Both SH1 and I2 were deleted.

A second measurement model (Table 4) revealed an improved fit ( $\chi^2 = 383.56$ ;  $d.f. = 124$ ;  $p < .01$ ; CFI = .91; TLI = .90; RMSEA = .08; SRMR = .06). Although still slightly below the thresholds of fit advocated by Hu and Bentler (1999), given more recent research on evaluating the validity of such models, and that all factor loadings were significant with coefficients above .70 (Bagozzi & Yi, 2012), the measurement properties of the model were considered acceptable to continue. Insert Table 4 here

**Measurement invariance.** Next a multiple-group confirmatory factor analysis assessed whether the data collected for Newcastle United and Sunderland fans were suitable for aggregation (Williams, Vandenberg, & Edwards, 2009). In essence, did the two team's measurement models have the same number of factors, factor loadings of comparable magnitude, and similar strength of associations between the latent variables? In the first instance, a baseline model was specified with no cross-group equality constraints ( $\chi^2 = 817.72$ ;  $d.f. = 376$ ) and compared to a constrained model in which factor loadings, variances and covariances were held equal ( $\chi^2 =$

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<sup>1</sup> It is conceivable that these highly rating respondents are current users of the rival team's brand sponsor. Whilst we did not control for this, the results are stable with and without these seven cases included.

836.79;  $d. f. = 391$ ). A Chi-squared difference test revealed that constraining the parameters resulted in no marked deterioration in model fit ( $\Delta \chi^2 = 19.07$ ;  $\Delta d. f. = 15$ ;  $p > .10$ ). This confirmed that the measures had consistent meaning and inter-relations across supporter groups, and thus were pooled for subsequent analysis (Williams et al., 2009).

**Construct validity and common method variance.** Next we assessed the convergent and discriminant validity of the measurement scales. Table 5 presents the correlation matrix.

*Insert Table 5 here*

Regarding convergent validity, we followed the approach of Fornell and Larcker (1981) based on Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Convergent validity is demonstrated when 50% (.50) or more of factor variance is extracted. This was the case for all constructs with values ranging from .69 to .87. Similarly, all composite scale reliabilities exceeded commonly accepted thresholds (Bagozzi & Yi, 2012), with scores ranging from .83 to .94. Discriminant validity assumptions were satisfied in all cases since the AVE for each factor was greater than its squared correlation with all other pairs of constructs.

Since the data were cross-sectional in nature, it was necessary to test whether Common Method Variance (CMV) was problematic (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). CMV refers to shared statistical variance caused by the survey measurement method rather than the constructs the items represent. Although reasonable precautions in the design of the research instrument were taken, such as separating exogenous and endogenous variables in the questionnaire, Harman's single factor test whereby each item is specified to load on one single factor was used as a post-test assessment. This resulted in a notably reduced model fit (CFI = .39; TLI = .32; RMSEA = .25) indicating that questionnaire design strategies for reducing CMV were successful (MacKenzie & Podsakoff, 2012).

### **Structural Model**

Direct paths were assessed using latent regression analysis, with separate models for each dependent variable (*interest, favourability, use*). We adopted a three-stage hierarchical approach, starting with a baseline *direct effects* model (Model A) that included only *fan identification*, since this is the most widely cited cause of rival sponsor denigration (Bergkvist, 2012; Bee & Dalakas, 2015; Grohs et al. 2015). In Model B, we added the remaining traditional sponsorship variables, *prior attitude, perceived fit* and our new out-group variable *schadenfreude*. Finally, in Model C, we introduced the corresponding *interaction effects of schadenfreude*. Interactions were tested via the latent moderated procedure (LMS) developed by Klein and Moosbrugger (2000), which has performed well in simulation studies (unbiased estimates and acceptable power) compared against alternative approaches.

Table 6 presents the results, along with control variables for *Age* and *Gender* (0=male, 1=female) and corresponding fit indices<sup>2</sup>. Each dependent variable is discussed in turn.

*Insert Table 6 here*

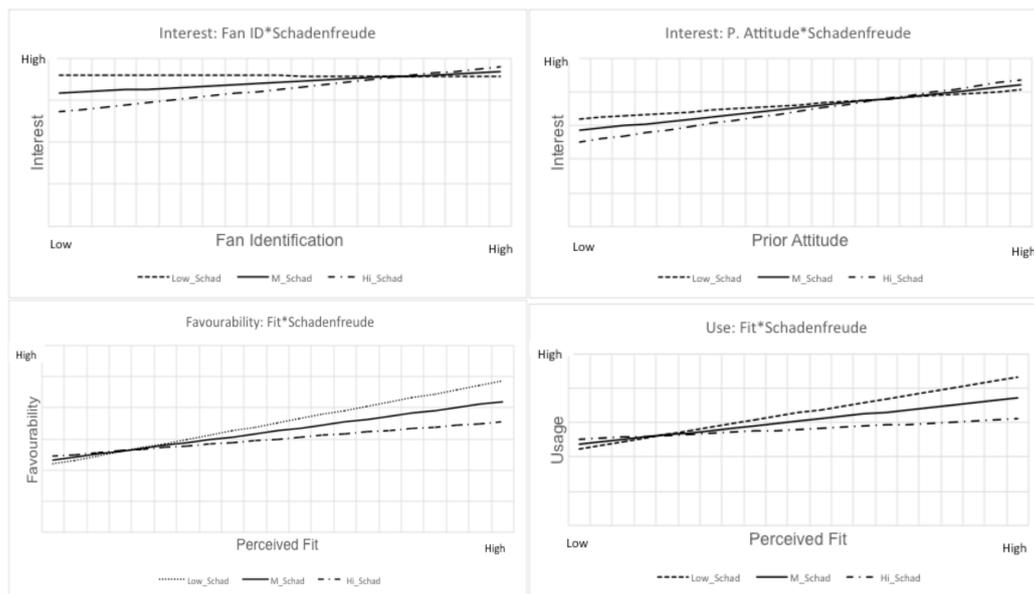
**Interest.** *Fan identification* has a significant and positive influence on *interest* ( $\beta = .11, p < .05$ ), when included in the model with *prior attitude* ( $\beta = .34, p < .01$ ) and *perceived fit* ( $\beta = .44, p < .01$ ) (model 1B), which also stimulate greater *interest* and attention towards the rival team's sponsor. These results support H1a, 2a, and 3a.

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<sup>2</sup> Mplus reports the Log-likelihood value associated with latent interaction effects as a substitute to traditional fit indices (such as CFI or TLI). We choose to report this for all nine models.

Next, in model 1C, three latent interactions between the above variables and *schadenfreude* were introduced. The interactions between *schadenfreude* and *prior attitude* ( $\beta = .11, p < .10$ ) and *fan identification* ( $\beta = .06, p < .10$ ) were both positive and marginally significant at conventional levels. This is consistent with H4a and H5a, but H6a (i.e. perceived fit) is rejected. As a graphical illustration of H4a-H5a, we followed the spotlight procedure of Aiken and West (1991). Separate plots were drawn for ‘fans’ low (1 standard deviation below), medium (mean level), and high (1 standard deviation above) on *schadenfreude*; see Figure 2, upper left and upper right quadrants.

**Figure 2**  
**Visual Representation of Interaction Effects**



For the relationship between prior attitude and interest, the slope is shallower for fans lower in *schadenfreude*, and steeper for fans higher in *schadenfreude*. Similarly, the effect of fan identification on interest is stronger when *schadenfreude* is higher than when it is lower. The charts also show that when both *schadenfreude* and *prior attitude* / *fan identification* are high, *interest* in the rival team’s sponsor and its marketing activities is greatest.

**Favourability.** In the baseline model (2A), with just *fan identification*, a negative but significant relationship is observed ( $\beta = -.11, p < .05$ ). This is consistent with the findings of Bergkvist (2012), Bee & Dalakas (2015) and Grohs et al. (2015), who all found that higher levels of in-group fan identification negatively affects attitudes toward a rival’s sponsor. However, when the additional traditional sponsorship variables are included in model (2B), *fan identification* is no longer a significant determinant of sponsor favourability ( $\beta = -.00, p > .10$ ), suggesting that identification is confounded. H1b is therefore rejected. Both *prior attitude* ( $\beta = .32, p < .01$ ) and *perceived fit* ( $\beta = .31, p < .01$ ) were positively associated with rival sponsor favourability, therefore providing support for H2b and H3b. It is also worth noting that *schadenfreude* has a modest but negative direct effect on sponsor attitude ( $\beta = -$

.15,  $p < .05$ ), signifying that when hostility towards the out-group is higher, then favourability towards the sponsor of the rival team is lower.

When the interaction terms were added, only a negative relationship between *schadenfreude* and *perceived fit* ( $\beta = -.10, p < .10$ ) was found in support for H6b. Spot-light analysis (Figure 2, lower left quadrant) reveals that the effect of *perceived fit* on *favourability* is stronger for fans lower, rather than higher, in *schadenfreude*. Thus, a more congruent team-sponsor *fit* is less effective in generating favourable attitudes to the rival sponsor for fans higher in *schadenfreude* who appear to more heavily discount this information. This is not the case for the interactions involving fan identification (H4b), or prior attitude (H5b), which are both rejected.

**Use.** We find similar results for purchase intention (*use*) as for *favourability*; *fan identification* again does not have the expected negative association when other traditional sponsorship variables are added to the model (3B), despite being significant when considered alone (Model 3A:  $\beta = -.11, p < .05$ ). *Prior attitude* ( $\beta = .38, p < .01$ ) and *perceived fit* ( $\beta = .17, p < .01$ ) were both positively related to *use*. H2c and H3c (but not H1c) are therefore supported. Again, it is worth noting that *schadenfreude* also had a significant and negative relationship with *use* ( $\beta = -.11, p < .05$ ). When interaction terms were introduced (Model 3b), only the relationship between *schadenfreude* and *perceived fit* was statistically significant ( $\beta = -.14, p < .05$ ), thereby confirming H6c. Spot-light analysis (Figure 2, lower right quadrant) illustrates this relationship in clearer detail. As can be seen, at higher levels of *schadenfreude* the influence of *fit* on *use* is weaker than when *schadenfreude* is lower. Neither interaction with *prior attitude* or *fan identification* influences purchase intentions (*use*). Thus, H4c and H5c are not supported.

## Discussion

This study presents a model for understanding how and why football fans react to the sponsor of their arch-rival. Based on three levels of consumer response (interest, favourability, use), we investigate whether “traditional” sponsorship variables or strategies denigrate or mitigate fans reactions to rival team sponsors. In addition, we introduce a new variable *schadenfreude* which has provided insights into understanding the magnitude of people’s reactions to out-groups, in general (c.f. Sundie et al., 2009; Ouwerkerk & Van Dijk, 2014).

From a managerial perspective, our findings indicate that not all traditional sponsorship variables work in similar ways for both *in-group* and *out-group* settings (Olsen, 2010). Specifically, sponsorship success depends on consumers’ prior attitudes to the sponsor and the degree of perceived fit between sponsor and rival team. Our models demonstrate that if these two variables are utilised effectively, *interest*, *favourability* and *use* will increase, even amongst an out-group comprising rival fans. This, to the best of our knowledge, is the first study to investigate how so-called traditional sponsorship strategies work together in this potentially hostile setting, with prior studies examining individual predictors separately. Our results compliment contemporary research that has examined how communication strategies may help mitigate the unfavourable consequences of out-group sponsor evaluations (Bee & Dalakas, 2015; Grohs et al., 2015).

Moving beyond the traditional sponsorship outcomes of attitude and purchase intention (Olsen, 2010), we find that higher fandom translates into greater *interest* towards the rival team’s sponsor. This suggests that highly identified fans are akin to ‘knowledgeable experts’ who want to keep up-to-date about current events. Such identified fans strive to learn about developments and changes in their area of

expertise, of which the rival team and its sponsor are firmly situated. The lack of studies considering *interest* as an out-group measure is surprising since the extant sponsorship literature frequently advocates the benefits of such arrangements for drawing attention to brands (Speed & Thompson, 2000). If one goal of sponsorship is increased brand interest and awareness, then sponsoring a rival team with a large following of loyal, dedicated fans might actually be advantageous.

Our results also provide a more nuanced understanding of the role of fan identification in the denigration process of a rival team sponsor (Bergkvist, 2012; Bee & Dalakas, 2015, Grohs et al. 2015). Based on the notion of image transfer (Gwinner, 1997), fans' positive attitude toward their home team is assumed to transfer to their brand sponsor simply as a consequence of their arbitrary pairing. Conversely, the negative image associated with the rival team is purported to transfer to its sponsor. Interestingly, when *fan identification* is the sole predictor (Models 2A and 3A), consistent with previous studies (Bergkvist, 2012; Bee & Dalakas, 2015; Grohs et al., 2015), we find empirical support for this assertion for both *favourability* and *use*. However, when the other traditional sponsorship variables are included (Models 2B and 2C), *fan identification* is no longer significant.

While this result is contrary to our original hypothesis, and the findings of recent studies, one explanation for this difference, from an empirical perspective might be confounding and so issues of omitted variable bias warrant further investigation. From a theoretical perspective, social identity theory contends that by conforming to group norms, in-group members are bestowed with social approval and acceptance. Such norms might take the form of cheering the home team, jeering the away team, or celebrating the signing of a marquee player. But not all norms are adopted and endorsed by all fans (Madrigal, 2000) and denigration of a rival's sponsor might be a case in point. Here fans who consider themselves 'rival' brand loyal, which could be a sizeable number if the sponsorship announcement concerns a high-equity brand which is widely held in high esteem, could be reluctant to adopt and endorse such behaviours, feeling torn between brand and club.

Next, the inclusion of *schadenfreude* into the models with *favourability* and *use* enables the sources of sponsor denigration to be more clearly illuminated. While *schadenfreude* and fan identification were positively related to both these sponsorship outcomes, the strength of the correlation was stronger for *schadenfreude*, thereby leaving 'little' residual variance for fan identification to explain and accounting for its lack of statistical significance. Grohs *et al.* (2015: Study 2) reported similar results. In a study of German Bundesliga football, fans identification with BVB Dortmund was less strongly correlated with attitude to arch rival Schalke 04 than their corresponding prejudicial attitudes (*Schadenfreude*) scale ( $r = -.40$  and  $-.73$  respectively). So, *schadenfreude* and prejudicial attitudes with their explicit out-group focus might be more important and diagnostic for explaining attitudes and behaviours toward rival team sponsors than more in-group focused constructs, such as fan identification that popularise and dominate the extant literature. It is worth bearing in mind that *schadenfreude*, as measured in this study, represents a prediction of out-group animosity. Respondents were asked to estimate how they *might* or *would* feel should the rival team experience misfortune. Affective forecasting research has shown that people are often less accurate when making predictions about the intensity and duration of future emotional states – although are able to accurately estimate their valence (Wilson and Gilbert, 2003). Whilst this is a point that needs to be considered when interpreting our results, it would also be interesting to examine how *expected*

and *actual* schadenfreude differ using methodologies employed in the area of *affective forecasting*.

Interestingly, fan identification and schadenfreude were only moderately correlated (0.41) here and in Grohs et al.'s (2015) study, suggesting that fans with strong in-group attachment may not necessarily feel the need to denigrate a rival team and its sponsor. Similarly, not all fans may endorse the importance of winning (Iwin) - the need for their team to succeed at any cost - as a laudable characteristic of being a fan, although Dalakas and Melancon (2012) suggest Iwin might be a mediator of the fan identification - schadenfreude relationship. To place these issues on a firmer statistical footing, we undertook a follow-up post-test with 31 Tottenham Hotspur fans recruited via social media site Twitter.

Respondents were asked about the importance of winning (Iwin) and level of schadenfreude felt towards North London rival Arsenal, as well as their *favourability* and *use* of its sponsor, Emirates Airlines. Again, the out-group focused measure (schadenfreude) rather than in-group (Iwin) focused measure, was more strongly associated with both favourability ( $r$ 's -.47 and .08) and use ( $r$ 's -.39 and .08). Interestingly, Iwin and schadenfreude were basically orthogonal to each other ( $r = .01$ ). Thus in-group favouritism and out-group denigration may not be the antithesis of each other - bipolar opposites - and the extant literature's focus on fan identification may provide only a limited understanding of sponsorship outcomes. Indeed, exploring the subtle ways fans differ from one another and their implications for brand sponsorship clearly warrants further investigation (c.f. Harris & Ogbonna, 2008).

Finally, to refine our understanding of the impact of sponsorship, we included interaction terms in our models, between *schadenfreude* and *fan identification*, *prior attitude*, and *perceived fit*. Since higher prior attitudes to the sponsor and *perceived fit* were linked to more positive attitudes towards the out-group brand and greater likelihood of purchase and *use*, we expected that schadenfreude would diminish these beneficial outcomes. While the impact of *perceived fit* was indeed reduced, no evidence of moderation was found for *prior attitude*. A potential explanation for this is *balance theory* (Heider, 1958). When faced with conflicting affective information, people seek cognitive consistency to restore total psychological balance. One approach to counter such imbalance is simply to adjust the negative attitude (in this case schadenfreude) to align with the existing positive attitude (in this case a higher *prior attitude* to the sponsor brand) and is ultimately reflected in consumers attitudes and behaviours towards the rival team's sponsor.

These interaction effects present important opportunities for practice. For instance, when confronted with consumers exhibiting high levels of schadenfreude, a strategic priority might be given to finding a partnership (team, event, sports person) that operates in a rivalry where the out-group is likely to have a higher (rather than lowly) prior attitude toward the sponsor. Nonetheless, as in previous studies of this nature, we conclude that there is a continual need for brand sponsors to tread carefully when confronted with the issue of rivalry - even when it might appear as if no reason to act cautiously exists. Emirates Airlines might testify to this advice after deciding to sponsor the 170metre high Spinnaker Tower in Portsmouth. After opting to paint the tower in its brand colours of red and white, the company were quickly inundated by local pressure groups demanding to know why Emirates had emblazoned the iconic building in the same colours that arch-rival team Southampton FC played in. Despite the company's attempts to point out the tradition of the colours, angry local residents instead declared a boycott on the brand and its tower (BBC, 2015). Whether or not

this is considered as worse than sponsoring a rival team remains unknown. However, one thing is certain, out-group brand denigration is alive and well.

### **Limitations and Further Research**

We advocate the need for further research that looks at situations in which sponsors overcome the obstacle of denigrating audiences. For instance, what happens when brands decide to sponsor events, sports personalities and/or teams in foreign countries? Do international consumers respond differently to these sponsors? It would also be useful to test the generalizability of the results found here to other areas of marketing and sponsorship research. For example, *schadenfreude* has been shown to drive less desirable human behaviour in a variety of contexts (Ouwerkerk & Van Dijk, 2014). It would be interesting to see whether celebrity endorsements are effected in the same way as sports sponsorships, or whether cause related marketing activities result in denigrated responses when a particular group dislikes one faction of the partnership.

We acknowledge, as one of the limitations of this study, the fact that *prior attitude* was measured retrospectively – by asking respondents to think back to their pre-sponsorship attitude to the brand. This approach followed Olson (2010), who, like us, justifies this decision on the need for realistic, rather than fictional, stimuli in sponsorship research. Given the secretive and fast moving nature of high profile sponsorship deals it is unlikely that measuring attitude to specific brands, at least by independent researchers, prior to any sponsorship arrangement being publically announced would be possible; however, future research with appropriate access would undoubtedly be of value. Likewise, here, the variable *interest* captures how rival fans rate their own awareness, rather than testing it via more common measures of recall and recognition. More recent research has shown that even when recall and recognition is low, sponsor brands may still be part of consumers' consideration set (Herrmann et al. 2011), but it isn't known how this manifests when the sponsor is associated with the out-group. If recall and recognition of the rival's sponsor is lower it would be interesting to see if any differential effect on consideration set exists between this context and when the sponsor is being evaluated by an in-group.

Respondents in this study were recruited using convenience sampling, which can work to reduce the external validity of the research. This was a necessary decision given the fact that football fans of specific clubs can live in a variety of locations across the world, including in different cities within the same country. We were also careful not to choose a sampling procedure that would inherently cause skewness across the *fan identification* and *schadenfreude* measures. This objective was achieved since the distribution of scores across each of the study's variables was approximately normally, suggesting a varied profile of respondents took part in the study.

We are unable to account for the effect of past usage of either brand. Whilst we deduce seven cases of prior brand use, we cannot formally control for its influence in each of the models. Finally, it is worth highlighting that one of the control variables in the model, *age*, was found to have a negative *direct effect* on favourability. This would suggest certain forms of denigration increase as a consequence of age. Whilst we do not explore this issue further here, exploring the issue of heterogeneity in sponsorship responses (in-group and out-group) would be a welcome addition to sports marketing theory, but to date remains poorly understood.



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**TABLE 1**  
**HYPOTHESES**

<b>Paths</b>	<b>Dependent Variable</b>		
	<b>Interest</b>	<b>Favourability</b>	<b>Use</b>
Fan Identification	H1a (+ve)	H1b (-ve)	H1c (-ve)
Prior Attitude	H2a (+ve)	H2b (+ve)	H2c (+ve)
Perceived Fit	H3a (+ve)	H3b (+ve)	H3c (+ve)
Fan Identification * Schadenfreude	H4a (+ve)	H4b (-ve)	H4c (-ve)
Prior Attitude * Schadenfreude	H5a (+ve)	H5b (-ve)	H5c (-ve)
Perceived Fit * Schadenfreude	H6a (+ve)	H6b (-ve)	H6c (-ve)

**TABLE 2**  
**SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Newcastle Supporter (n=150)</b>	<b>Sunderland Supporter (n=150)</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	95 (63.3%)	101 (67.3%)
Female	55 (36.7%)	49 (32.7%)
<b>Age</b>		
<20 years	9 (6%)	12 (8%)
21-30	120 (80%)	116 (77.3%)
31-40	8 (5.3%)	10 (6.7%)
41-50	10 (6.7%)	8 (5.3%)
51+	3 (2%)	4 (2.7%)

**TABLE 3**  
**SCALE ITEMS AND MEAN SCORES**

<b>Scale, Author and Wording for Newcastle United Fans</b>	<b>Sample Mean</b>	<b>Newcastle Mean</b>	<b>Sunderland Mean</b>
<b><i>Prior Attitude</i></b> (Mitchell and Olson, 1981)			
• Attitude towards Tombola - Bad/Good	3.93	3.70	4.16
• Attitude towards Tombola - Dislike/Like	3.78	3.69	3.80
• Attitude towards Tombola - Unpleasant/Pleasant	3.79	3.67	3.90
• Attitude towards Tombola- Unfavourable/Favourable	3.71	3.63	3.79
<b><i>Perceived fit</i></b> (Speed and Thompson, 2000)			
• There is a logical connection between Sunderland AFC and Tombola	3.36	3.39	3.33
• The image of Sunderland AFC and the image of Tombola are similar <sup>+</sup>	3.09	3.16	3.02
• Sunderland AFC and Tombola fit together well	3.33	3.28	3.40
• Tombola and Sunderland AFC stand for similar things	2.99	3.01	2.97
• It makes sense to me that Tombola sponsors Sunderland AFC	3.43	3.44	3.42
<b><i>Fan Identification</i></b> (Dalakas and Melancon, 2012)			
• I see myself as a big fan of Newcastle United	4.67	4.85	4.49
• Others see me as a fan of Newcastle United	4.13	4.30	3.92
• I often wear clothes displaying the colors/logos of Newcastle United	2.93	2.99	2.87
<b><i>Schadenfreude</i></b> (Dalakas and Melancon, 2012)			
• I will feel great joy if the sponsor of Sunderland goes out of business <sup>+</sup>	2.93	3.00	2.83
• I will feel great joy if the owner of Sunderland AFC faces legal troubles	3.82	3.76	3.89
• I will feel great joy if a player of Sunderland AFC gets suspended for a year, even if the suspension was not completely deserved	3.46	3.43	3.49
• I will feel great joy if the facility of Sunderland AFC suffers damage	3.00	3.06	2.95
<b><i>Interest</i></b> (Speed and Thompson, 2000)			
• This sponsorship makes me more likely to notice Tombola on other occasions	3.55	3.42	3.67
• This sponsorship makes me more likely to pay attention to Tombola's advertising <sup>+</sup>	3.10	3.06	3.14
• This sponsorship makes me more likely to remember Tombola	3.79	3.67	3.91
<b><i>Favourability</i></b> (Speed and Thompson, 2000)			
• This sponsorship makes me feel more favourable toward Tombola	3.05	3.09	3.01
• This sponsorship improves my perception of	3.11	3.11	3.11

Tombola			
• This sponsorship makes me like Tombola more	2.88	2.93	2.83
<i>Use</i> (Speed and Thompson, 2000)			
• This sponsorship makes me more likely to be a customer of Tombola	2.85	2.81	2.89
• This sponsorship makes me more likely to consider Tombola's products the next time I buy	2.92	2.92	2.92
• I would be more likely to buy from Tombola as a result of this sponsorship	2.80	2.82	2.79

+ items were later deleted following the measurement model testing

**TABLE 4**  
**STANDARDISED MEASUREMENT MODEL ESTIMATES**

<b>Factors / Items</b>	<b>Standardised Coefficients</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>
<b><i>Prior Attitude</i></b>		
AT1	.77	.04
AT2	.93	.01
AT3	.94	.01
AT4	.93	.01
<b><i>Perceived fit</i></b>		
PF1	.74	.74
PF2	ELIMINATED	ELIMINATED
PF3	.87	.87
PF4	.86	.86
PF5	.85	.85
<b><i>Fan Identification</i></b>		
FI1	.89	.02
FI2	.98	.01
FI3	.73	.04
<b><i>Schadenfreude</i></b>		
SH1	ELIMINATED	ELIMINATED
SH2	.91	.03
SH3	.86	.04
SH4	.81	.04
<b><i>Interest</i></b>		
INT1	.72	.03
INT2	ELIMINATED	ELIMINATED
INT3	.93	.03
<b><i>Favourability</i></b>		
FAV1	.89	.02
FAV2	.91	.01
FAV3	.94	.01
<b><i>Use</i></b>		
USE1	.92	.02
USE2	.94	.01
USE3	.93	.01

NOTE: Model Fit ( $\chi^2 = 599.70$ ; d. f. = 188;  $p < .01$ ; CFI = .91; TLI = .90; RMSEA = .08; SRMR = .06);

**TABLE 5**  
**CORRELATION MATRIX**

	AT	PF	FI	SH	INT	FAV	USE
Prior Attitude (AT)	1						
Perceived Fit (PF)	.26**	1					
Fan Identification (FI)	-.14*	-.02	1				
Schadenfreude (SH)	-.09	-.05	.41**	1			
Interest (INT)	.36**	.45**	.05	-.10	1		
Favourability (FAV)	.35**	.35**	-.15*	-.26**	.59**	1	
Use (USE)	.37**	.24**	-.14*	-.21**	.54**	.65**	1
AVE	.80	.69	.76	.74	.73	.86	.87
CR	.89	.83	.87	.86	.86	.91	.94

AVE = Average Variance Extracted; CR = Composite Reliability; \*\* = Significant at  $p < .01$ ; \* = Significant at  $p < .05$



Female	-.04	-.04	-.07	-.05	-.10	.00	-.18	-.06	-.17
Age	-.01	-.02	-.05	-.17	-.24**	-.22**	-.02	-.05	-.05
<b>Log-Likelihood</b>	-2414.24	-7142.82	-7137.19	-2581.24	-7309.65	-7305.48	-2558.96	-7298.20	-7292.46
<b>Akaike Information Criterion</b>	4864.48	14405.64	14400.37	5204.49	14745.30	14742.96	5159.92	14722.40	14716.91
<b>Bayesian Information Criterion (Adjusted)</b>	4874.06	14437.58	14433.91	5215.66	14778.84	14778.10	5171.10	14755.94	14752.05

Note: Model A = Fan Identification is the only independent variable; Model B = All independent variables and schadenfreude is included in the model; Model C = Interaction effects are included; Unstandardised coefficients; \*\*\* Significant at the  $p < .01$  level \*\*  $p < .05$  level; \*  $p < .10$  level

