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SPORTS EVENT CREATION IN THE NEW NORMAL

THREE RULES TO HELP YOU TRANSITION QUICKER INTO RECOVERY MODE

Over the past month we have talked to over 100 sports tourism industry leaders. Sports Commission presidents, CVB directors, event rights holders, CEOs of our Olympic governing bodies, and the like. When we ask them what the future of our industry looks like post COVID, here are a few universal opinions we have heard across the board.

- **Timing** – Sports will come back quickly. Host destinations and event organizers need to transact business, which means events need to take place sooner rather than later for the benefit of all. This means displaced events being rescheduled for 2020 if possible, and new events being contracted in windows earlier on the calendar than normal. The more creative you can be, the more quickly the rebound will likely come.
- **Drive Markets** – When the door opens for us all to get back to putting on events, there is great uncertainty around what air travel may look like. Further, nobody knows how parents and families may react to allowing young people to compete right away. Some will jump right back in, however others may sit on the sideline for a bit and wait until they are comfortable that things are safe. In either case, the universal message we are hearing from the marketplace is that early on, drive market tournaments will be the first ones to rebound. Managing the events you operate or those your destination hosts should focus on clubs and teams/athletes within a day's drive of the proposed tournament site.
- **Created Events** – We have heard from several industry leaders that believe creating events is going to become increasingly more important to sustain a destination's sports tourism impact. We agree

wholeheartedly. In most of the strategic planning projects we lead, we offer our clients strategies on how to achieve a better mix of traditional bid-in events and working with local promoters to create locally owned assets. Creating events is a challenge, however if successful, a destination is less dependent on the competitive bid process from one year to the next.

These are three things we feel the “winners” of this journey towards the “new normal” will tackle along the way. To give some case study context, the most widely read and shared Monday Morning Huddle Up we have ever penned was on the topic of created events. You can find the story of the Richmond Sports Backers at the below link.

[Richmond Sports Backers – Created Events Strategy](#)

Keep re-evaluating, keep re-thinking, keep pivoting.

Jon Schmieder is the Founder of the Huddle Up Group LLC, a consortium of three sports related companies led by award winning executives. Schmieder has over 20 years of experience in leading sports tourism and events organizations through strategic growth and increased community collaboration. Huddle Up Group clients and partners include USA BMX, Detroit Sports Commission, Fort Worth Sports Marketing, Eugene Cascades & Coast Sports, Connect Sports, Veteran Tickets Foundation, Arizona Football Coaches Association, Evansville Sports Corp, Travel Medford, Des Moines CVB, Las Cruces CVB, Morgantown CVB, Monroe-West Monroe CVB, Visit Mississippi Gulf Coast, Hershey Harrisburg Sports & Events Authority, Hamilton County Sports Authority, Bryan College Station CVB, USA Volleyball, USA Badminton, the Association of Chief Executives of Sport (ACES), Visit Duluth, Delaware Sports Commission, Arlington CVB, and Visit Norman. The Huddle Up Group can be reached at Jon@HuddleUpGroup.com or 602.369.6955. To receive the weekly “Monday Huddle Up” sign up at <https://tinyletter.com/JonSchmieder>.