

Capacity Crowds

One of the main targets for any organising committee must be to raise capacity crowds for the event.

Clear benefits:

- **Players' support (especially home team)**
- **Atmosphere**
- **Income for organisers**
- **Income for food and beverage suppliers**
- **Potential income for shopkeepers**
- **Potential income from tournament merchandise**
- **Positive reflection on sponsors/suppliers**
- **TV impact**
- **Positive image building for hockey in general**

Even top level hockey tournaments cannot attract anymore capacity crowds on the strength of the matches alone. In competition with other attractions, be it sports of other kinds of activities, spectators want or even expect to be entertained, preferably at the time it suits them best. Without pretending to be complete, organisers should at least give due consideration to the following aspects to attract capacity crowds:

- **Timing of the tournament**
- **Match schedule**
- **Entertainment**
- **Price structure and marketing policy of tickets**
- **Target audiences**

Timing of the tournament

Take into consideration:

- **Fair climatic conditions (for players and spectators)**
- **Public holidays (extra spectators)**
- **Competitive entertainment activities (locally, regionally, nationally)**
- **Timing of competitive high profile sports events on TV**

Once the period is set, it should be published rapidly and widely to discourage others to organise anything in the same period.

Match schedule

Within the limitations set by the FIH (for health and fairness) there is a lot of flexibility to increase spectator attendance:

- **Overall time schedule (variable per day)**
- **Sequence of matches for home team(s)**
- **Starting times of home team(s)**
- **Planning of attractive (big crowd) matches**

Entertainment

To attract more spectators there is a wide variety of possibilities to increase the entertainment value of a tournament:

In Stadium

- **Opening ceremony (player friendly)**
- **Closing ceremony**
- **Public announcements**
- **Musical support**
- **Activities between matches**
- **Big screen display**

At the venue

- **Food and beverage**
- **Shopping facilities**
- **Participating activities (youth!)**
- **Demonstrations**
- **Exhibitions**
- **Live performances**
- **Disco-dance**

Price structure and marketing policy of tickets

Much thought should be given to the price structure and marketing policy of tickets, which will be a major contributor to capacity crowds (and income for the organisers!)

Establish the price structure of **daily tickets** based on:

- Market research (telecalls) on price level of alternative events (soccer, cinema, attraction parks etc.)
- Experiences of earlier events organised
- Entertainment value of tournament/event as a whole (can be well influenced by good publicity)
- Day of the week (public holidays , weekends)
- Quality of matches (home team, semi-finals, finals)

Establish price of **season tickets** along the same lines

Establish the price of **family tickets / youth tickets** along the same lines

Establish **group rebates** (for instance for clubs)

Establish **advanced-buy benefits** (rebate system, seat allocation, parking facilities etc.)

Consider **day or half-day tickets**; establish price of **late-entry tickets**

Establish prices for **parking facilities**

Target audiences

There is a wide variety of target audiences that have to be approached to get capacity crowds:

- **National hockey fans (directly or through their clubs) ***
- **National sports fans (directly or through their Associations)**
- **Supporter groups from participating countries**
- **Hockey enthusiasts from neighbouring countries**
- **General public**
- **Package visits for sponsors/suppliers**

- **Expatriate clubs of participating countries ***
- **Embassies/Consulates of participating countries**
- **Staff of (subsidiaries of) companies home-based in participating countries**
- **Staff of municipality**
- **Social clubs (Lions, Rotary etc.)**
- **Schoolchildren (from the neighbourhood) ***
- **Neighbourhood**

The last two may serve on (special conditions) to fill the stands on “weak” days

* Adoption schemes for each of the participating teams by hockey clubs, schools (even with educative programmes) and/or expatriate clubs create special interest (and attendance)

We trust this guidance is helpful to you and we would appreciate to receive any further suggestions to the benefit of future organisers

Marketing Committee FIH, Brussels, July 2001.