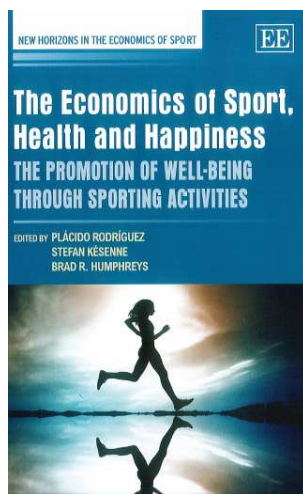


***The Economics of Sport, Health and Happiness: The Promotion of Well-Being Through Sporting Activities* by Plácido Rodríguez, Stefan Kesenne and Brad R. (eds). Cheltenham, UK and Northampton MA, USA: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2011, ISBN 978 0 85793 013 2**

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The volume of economic literature devoted to the study of sport, health and happiness has expanded dramatically in recent years and so has the number of approaches towards the study of both established and newly emerging sporting activities. In *The Economics of Sport, Health and Happiness*, however, a wide array of professors of econometrics and applied economics assembled by the editors address a recurring lack of deeper economic research and analysis of the relationship existing between sports participation, health and well-being, affirming not only the important role that economics plays in the individual's decision to participate in sport and physical activity but also offering ways for government sport support in an environment of reduced public resources. What "Sports Economics" does as a field of study is professional research into the sports business, health and well-being communities, as well as economic analysis of outputs and quantitative marketing research, delivering comprehensive and specialized solutions for sports and well-being industries.

The collection of essays in this volume covers a wide array of issues, from an empirical investigation, proposed by Jane Ruseski and Brad Humphreys in Chapter 1, informed by the data provided by the Canadian Community Health Survey (which demonstrates that increased physical activity reduces the reported incidence of diseases such as

diabetes, asthma, arthritis, etc.), which is followed up by similar data analyses from the UK (in Chapter 2 by Paul Downward and Simona Rasciute) dealing with the positive significant results of the co-payment willingness of sports participants, to a relationship between physical activity and obesity in Spain (provided in Chapter 3 by Jaume Garcia Villar, Sonia Orefice and Climent Quintana-Domeque). Study of this motivating factor is then extended by Michale Lechner in Chapter 5, with the study of the impact of sports participation on labour market outcomes in Switzerland, based on parametric economic discrete-choice models. The relationship between team sport success and income in the local communities in the USA (investigated by Michael Davis and Christian End in Chapter 7) is then further amply correlated with the participation in physical activity and the levels of self-reported happiness and subjective well-being measures (Chapters 8, 9) against a baseline background of sedentary lifestyles and teen pregnancy (Chapters 10,11). Finally, Chapter 12 (provided by Tim Pawlowski, Christoph Breuer and Jorge Leyva) comes full circle, showing across the international spectrum the positive influence of public sports facilities on subjective well-being in Germany, as well as the huge potential they have on maximizing the national happiness indicator.

The reading of the book is stimulating and equally informative; engaging in sport activities appear to really matter for overall labour productivity market outcomes and the readers are told, individual life satisfaction is reportedly three times higher when participating in physical activity than happiness associated with employment. What we don't know, however, is how levels of well-being have been affected by the depleting financial resources across the same international scene in recent years, and for that matter, how well can we all cope with that by simply playing sports and staying physically active. We are yet to be told more in the future about the rich variety of covariates controlling for factors such as demography, income, antitrust, employment and state of health, given the above. Despite these shortcomings, the collection nonetheless remains highly innovative and insightful, having the merit of filling a gap in the literature of the, yet under-researched, field of sports economics.

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