

## ПANEПIETHMIO KYПPOY

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Use your own words as much as possible and do not copy extensively from the text.

## Sport and television in the $21^{\text {st }}$ century

" I wish to subscribe for the final of the Football Championship which is being shown again this evening". Fine, give me your personal code number. "A telephone, more likely, a computer conversation which is short and direct. This will be the way of the sports consumer in the first decades of the $21^{\text {st }}$ century.

Sport is heading for an indissoluble marriage with television and the passive spectator, the voyeur of emotions and efforts by others, will enjoy a private paradise. All of this will be in the future of sport. The spectator (the television audience) will be the priority and professional clubs will have to readjust their structures to adapt to the new reality: sport as a business.

The new technologies will mean that spectators will no longer have to wait for broadcasts by the conventional channels. They will be the ones who decide what to see. And they will have to pay for it. In the United States the system of the future has already started: pay -as-you-view. Everything will be offered by television and the spectator will only have to choose. The review «Sports Illustrated» recently published a full profile of the life of the supporter at home in the middle of the next century. It explained that the consumers would be able to select their view of the match on a gigantic, flat screen occupying the whole of one wall, with images of a clarity which cannot be foreseen at present; they could watch from the trainer's bench, from the stands just behind the batter in a game of baseball or from the helmet of the star player in an American football game. And at their disposal will be the same options the producer of the recorded programme has: to select replays, to choose which camera to use and to decide on the sound - whether to hear the public, the players, the trainer and so on.

Many sports executives, largely too old and too conservative to feel at home with the new technologies, still believe that sport must control the expansion of television coverage in order to survive and ensure that spectators attend matches. They do not
even accept the evidence which contradicts their view: while there is more basketball than ever on television, for example, it is also certain that basketball is more popular than ever.

It is also the argument of these sports executives that television is harming the modest teams. This is true, but the future of those teams is also modest. They have reached their ceiling. It is the law of the market. The great events continually attract larger audiences.

The world is being constructed on new technologies so that people can make the utmost use of their time and, in their home, have access to the greatest possible range of recreational activities. Sport will have to adapt itself to the new world.

The most visionary executives go further. Their philosophy is: rather than see television take over sport, why not have sport take over television? This is already the case in the US, where there are plans for the baseball, American football, basketball and ice hockey leagues to create their own television channels or share ownership in others. The events would be offered by the 35 leagues and the benefits would accrue to those sports. A spectator could pay $\$ 1$ to see a major final. If the potential audience in the US is 30 million households, the organising league would receive $\$ 30$ million for a single match. The leagues would benefit but so would the athletes, converted into artistes capable of drawing the greatest audiences in the world.

The path will be traumatic but this will be the future. The new generation will call for sport in the best conditions and as cheap as possible.

## Questions

1. Why will professional clubs have to "readjust their structures"? (10 points)
2. Explain in your own words what many sports executives believe about the new technologies? (10 points)
3. How can sport take over television? (10 points)
4. What does the author mean by the phrase "They have reached their ceiling"?
(10 points)
5. What do the following words in the passage mean? (10 points)
a) indissoluble
b) conventional
c) contradicts
d) converted
