

Around the World: Sports advertising opportunities outside of the Super Bowl

Audio

On today's podcast episode, we discuss the potential audiences for some of the world's biggest sporting events; how brands and marketers can better monetize these audiences; and how TV and streaming rights might shake out in the near future. Join host Bill Fisher, our analyst Paul Briggs, forecasting writer Ethan Cramer-Flood, and vice president of content Paul Verna for the discussion.

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Speaker 1:

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Bill Fisher:

Hello, everyone. Welcome to Behind the Numbers Around the World an eMarketer podcast made possible by StackAdapt. It's Monday, February the 26th. I'm your host, Bill Fisher and it's my absolute pleasure to welcome you all to around the world with sports advertising opportunities outside of the Super Bowl.

Welcome folks to a Behind The Numbers show that takes you around the world looking at what various countries are doing in the world of commerce, media, and advertising. Each month I give you a global news recap. Then I speak with a few of our regional experts to get their take on the main theme for today's show, which this month is all about advertising around major sporting events. We will be asking what's the potential audience for some of the world's biggest sporting events.

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

This sort of thing is coming and we see it in reverse. We see it here with European soccer becoming a massive television draw in a way that it would not have been 20 or 30 years ago.

Bill Fisher:

How can brands and marketers better monetize these huge audiences?

Paul Briggs:

All that buzz around cool commercials and production value of these adverts, it's really lost to a lot of international audiences where the local right holder wants to put their own ad inventory in the key time slots.

Bill Fisher:

And how might TV and streaming rights shake out in the near future?

Paul Verna:

It's just creating more of a need for leagues and media companies to reach those viewers where they are, which is on streaming via the internet.

Bill Fisher:

Right, I'm going to kick things off first with our three in three segment. I have three minutes to cover three interesting and related news stories we've seen in around the world towers this month, sports related this month, of course. The time it is set. Let's go.

We start with a record breaking sponsorship deal for the Indian Cricket League. The Indian Premier League of Cricket, AKA the IPL, kicks off next month, however, last month saw a significant milestone passed as Tata Group secured sponsorship of the league for the next five years at a cost of \$300 million. The business of cricket is huge in India. Here's Cricbuzz Live, getting excited about player options.

Cricbuzz:

... Everyone going, "What?" Take a look at that. Pat Cummins was bought at 20.5 CR, and then we thought, well, that can't be breached. But then Mitchell Starc came in a bit later and got himself a pretty good 24.75 CR. Daryl Mitchell, a bit of a shocker as well from CSK-

Bill Fisher:

That's nearly \$3 million, incidentally for a player for just 14 regular season games. Media rights, meanwhile were snapped up for over \$6 billion last year for a five year deal. No wonder, when an estimated 64 million people tuned into last year's final and half a billion watched across the league season. All seems swell in the IPL.

Let's talk about the Super Bowl for a moment next and some global viewing stats. It was a record year for the Super Bowl, of course, off the field and on it. Here's my favorite on field record.

Sports Commentators:

By the way, this would eclipse the all time longest Super Bowl field goal and Jay, 57 yards. It looks like to me for Butker.

There's a high snap. He drives it through.

Oh, you called it Jay.

Oh my goodness.

Bill Fisher:

Off the field, meanwhile, we saw record US viewing audience of 123 million, but where was the next largest audience situated? Well, Canada was close with a total audience reach of just over 17 million. But the biggest non-US audience came from Mexico with an audience reach of nearly 21 million. These numbers as tracked by the NFL. European numbers were a little, well a lot, further back. They'll begin to look a bit healthier when they decide to start the game a bit earlier.

And for our final story, February the 11th was also a big day for African football, or soccer, with more viewing records falling. The Africa Cup of Nations, or AFCON, was played from mid-January to February 11th in Ivory Coast. And according to Patrice Motsepe, president of the Confederation of African Football, nearly 2 billion people tuned in across the month to watch the games. That was up a staggering amount from the 65 million that were reported across the month during the last version in 2022. Here's sports writer, David Goldblatt, talking to the Africa Football Business Show podcast about the quality of the event broadcast.

David Goldblatt:

... It was without doubt the slickest, most professional, best presented AFCON that I have seen, and for most people the experience is seeing it on television and it looked great on television. I Thought...

Bill Fisher:

There was a huge expansion in broadcast rights this year with matches aired in 180 countries around the world by top tier broadcasters, which all helped boost viewing figures. Oh, and I was awake for this one. Okay, that's my three and three this month. Now it's time for the next three, my three guests for this week's show. First up, we're excited to have him back on the show. He's one of our vice presidents of content. He's Paul Verna. Hello Paul.

Paul Verna:

Great to be here. Bill. Thanks for having me.

Bill Fisher:

Great to have you back. And I can't have Paul Verna on the show without having another Paul, just to make things confusing. So here's our principal analyst covering all things Canada. It's Paul Briggs. Hi, Paul B.

Paul Briggs:

Hey, Bill, I'm looking forward to the chat today.

Bill Fisher:

And finally someone who isn't Paul, he's our principal forecasting writer. It's Ethan Cramer-Flood. Hello, Ethan.

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

My main attribute is not being named Paul, I think.

Paul Verna:

Lucky you.

Bill Fisher:

It's a strong attribute. Okay, before we get into the topic at hand, it's time first for our culture shock.

This is where I take you to various countries around the world and give you some cultural facts or introduce you to some culturally specific norms. And of course I'm talking about sports today and national sports. Did you know that there are only 10 countries in the world that formally recognize and designate an activity as a national sport? Everywhere else, we talk about national sports but it's unofficial. So I'm going to go to Paul V and I'm going to ask you, do you know what the national sport of Argentina is? Because it is one of the countries that does have a designated national sport.

Paul Verna:

Well, I don't know if this is a trick question. I mean without any hesitation, the national obsession is football, soccer, but I'm going to go a little counterintuitive here and say that the national sport is maybe polo.

Bill Fisher:

That is good knowledge. You are very, very close. I would've said football straightaway, soccer. It's not polo, but it is a sport called pato. Are you aware of that sport?

Paul Verna:

Oh yeah, yeah, yeah.

Bill Fisher:

Okay. So it's a mix between polo and basketball played on horseback. So in 1953, Argentina decree number 17468, if you're interested, declared pato as the national sport. This has been challenged by the Argentinian Football Association, which points to the fact that 90% of Argentinians have never even watched a game of pato, but it still stands as the national sport.

Paul Verna:

It's unheard of. And just so everybody knows, I'm from Argentina, I grew up there. By the way, Argentina did win the last men's World Cup in case anybody was not caught up on that, Bill.

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

We're aware Paul, we're aware.

Paul Verna:

But yes, so pato is completely unheard of throughout Argentine culture. So this is one of those bizarre government issued decisions that has no relevance in the real world.

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

Or a remnant of an earlier time that has passed.

Paul Verna:

Yes.

Paul Briggs:

Yeah, it's funny, in Canada there's a similar type of disconnect. I would imagine all of you would assume the national sport is...?

Paul Verna:

Ice hockey, of course.

Paul Briggs:

Right? But that's not case. It's lacrosse.

Paul Verna:

Oh, yeah.

Paul Briggs:

So that was always a perplexing thing when hockey is such a prime factor in the culture of Canada.

Bill Fisher:

Well actually Paul, just to educate you, in 1994, the National Sports of Canada Act was passed, which recognized ice hockey as the official winter sports, but you're absolutely right.

Paul Briggs:

Ah, okay.

Paul Verna:

Good knowledge, Bill. Good knowledge.

Bill Fisher:

Anyway. Okay, Pato, not much opportunity for advertising there. Obviously, given nobody watches it, but that's the nice segue into what we are here to talk about, which is advertising around sports and sporting events. Some big numbers in the three and three new segment there. What do we make of these numbers and addressable audiences and how brands and marketers are monetizing them? Who wants to go first?

Paul Briggs:

Well, I can speak to the Super Bowl specifically, and what you didn't mention Bill, was the sort of Taylor Swift effect. I've got a Swifty in the house, nine-year-old girl who was anxious and eager to watch the Super Bowl this year for the first time. So I think the audience was bolstered by the budding romance between Travis Kelsey and Taylor Swift.

Bill Fisher:

Interesting you should say that because we've got a quiz later and there might be a Taylor Swift question in there, so you're already ahead of the game. But listen, what I think is particularly interesting is some really big numbers there. I mean billions of people watching AFCON and the IPL, but when you look at the revenue opportunity, so AFCON, I think the sponsorship number was 75 million across the entire event. IPL, as I mentioned in the news there, \$300 million across five years, so 60 million per season. If you look at NFL team sponsorship, over 2 billion in a year just for the Super Bowl itself. One game, advertising revenue, 600 million. So relatively speaking, a smaller audience, still massive of course, but much more revenue involved. So what's the value of different audiences across sports?

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

I mean, some of this I can imagine that marketers and advertisers in other parts of the world look on to the American Super Bowl with wonderment and perhaps some envy, not because it is the biggest sporting event in the world. Obviously it isn't, probably isn't even close as our European colleagues never tire of reminding us, but it is unique in the value that it presents in the sort of marketing ecosystem. As far as I can tell, there's nothing else in the world anything like it, despite the fact that the audience numbers are smaller. Some of that has to do with the fact that just the US is a large wealthy country that is obsessed with this sport and that is a very sort of consumer culture.

So we have the biggest advertising economy in the world, but that's not really the story. I think the more unique element of the Super Bowl it is that is this one moment per year that is just three and a half to four hours long where everything comes together, and the types of events around the rest of the world that supersede the Super Bowl in terms of total viewership tend to be spread out. We were talking about how the Olympics itself doesn't even compete despite the fact that it has such a bigger audience all over the world, but it's a two week long event. Or other soccer football leagues tend to be drawn out, season long affairs where, sure the viewership is larger, but there isn't just this one big moment.

There is of course the World Cup, but the World Cup itself is a hundred whatever games. The final, the World Cup final has overwhelmingly larger viewership, but soccer, football doesn't lend itself to advertising because there aren't any advertising breaks. So there just isn't anything else quite like American football, which is seemingly built for ads. There are so many breaks and there is this one moment in time where everybody can get together and you know

the whole country is going to be watching, and therefore the valuations of those 30 second advertising slots are through the roof because this is the only shot you're going to get and you know everyone's going to be watching. And then the people that are watching are the kind of people that go out and spend a lot of money on consumer goods.

So it really is quite unique, but that doesn't mean that the other stuff out there that's bigger doesn't also have enormous, enormous monetization value for the people broadcasting it and the people advertising on it, but it's just not quite like the Super Bowl.

Paul Verna:

I think this question of the value of the audience comes up a lot with streaming services. So when Netflix started expanding internationally, they were capturing a much bigger audience, but each of those audiences in most of the countries they were serving were not as valuable to them as the US audience. And I think that also came up when Disney bid on the IPL originally and they had the deal with Hot Star in India.

So huge audience and a lot of subscribers in India, but the revenue per subscriber was a lot less obviously than in the US. I think another aspect, and Ethan, I think you brought this out, is that the Super Bowl is unique for a lot of reasons, and one of them is that the event is very closely associated with advertising and there have been surveys about why people watch the Super Bowl and a staggeringly high number of them watch for the ads or consider the ad experience integral to it.

You never hear that said about any other sporting event anywhere across the world anytime, including other American sporting events like the World Series or the NBA championship. So it's just ingrained into the experience. So obviously that ups the ante and it vastly increases the monetization potential because it's this sort of ecosystem where yes, it's about the game, it's about a sport, it's about appointment viewing, everybody watching at once. It's one of the few kind of water cooler type things that's left in our society, but it's also just completely wrapped up in the ads.

Bill Fisher:

That's interesting though because that doesn't necessarily translate into other markets. So I watched the Super Bowl final and I didn't see any of these exciting ads that everybody was tuning to see. Is there possibly the opportunity for the NFL to further monetize this product outside the US.

Paul Briggs:

Well, I have the same experience in Canada, Bill, watching the Super Bowl. The local rights holder puts their own advertisements on the feed so you don't get a lot of what you would see in the US. So it's all that buzz around cool commercials and production value of these adverts, it's really lost to a lot of international audiences where the local right holder wants to put their own ad inventory in the key time slots. So it's pretty common.

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

But to answer your other question about the NFL opportunity outside of the us, the league itself is working on that, right? So it has different media partners and there's the opportunity set is different of course depending on where you are. But so now, Bill, you probably know this, they're playing one or two games a year in London now, and that seems to pretty much be permanent. And now they're playing I think one game a year in Germany and next year they're going to start playing one game a year in Mexico. So those are going to be big one-off opportunity sets, and especially if you keep the supply low, then that one game or those one or two games are probably going to do really well in the local media market and give an interesting advertising opportunity for whoever the NFL's media partners are overseas.

I mean, that's still sort of small scale. They're doing baby steps. I doubt that the NFL itself would be sort of central to a marketer's plan if they were otherwise completely uninvolved in the NFL or not connected to the US market. But this sort of thing is coming and we see it in reverse. We see it here with European soccer becoming a massive television draw in a way that it would not have been 20 or 30 years ago. So I think all country sports are starting to sort of spread out and then that becomes an advertising opportunity.

Paul Verna:

Yeah, I mean I think there's a global appeal, increasingly global appeal to a lot of the events we're talking about, including the Super Bowl, albeit with some of the caveats you mentioned, Bill, about the time zone, and you guys have talked about the ad experience being different, so that's understandable, but there's still a global appeal. I think the NBA has huge followings outside the US. That's something that's been cultivated over the last 20 or so years, but it wasn't always the case. And yes, I think Ethan, to your point, European soccer has definitely reached a point where you go to any school today and you see little kids wearing uniforms from a whole bunch of European teams such as Liverpool FC, Bill.

Bill Fisher:

Good.

Paul Verna:

That was something that when I grew up here and I was soccer or football obsessed, I felt like I was alone in the world. I mean, literally there was no one who was tuned in. And I think that's why the AFCON gets that kind of viewership that you mentioned, Bill, because we're talking about a lot of players who play in the Premier League. The Premier League has huge following all over the world, and it's just become something where once you follow that player or you follow a certain team, you're going to want to know everything about them. So that just expands the audience. I don't know what the AFCON numbers have been as historically, but 2 billion struck me as a very high number and something I see potentially continuing to grow because of that global appeal.

Bill Fisher:

This is great conversation, but I just want to shift gears a little bit and look at rights because this is something that is always interesting to talk about when we're talking about global sporting events, and particularly about this sort of, not tension between, but this relationship between streaming and TV rights and how that's sort of playing out and the number of different platforms that we can get access to all these different sporting events on and how difficult that's becoming and how expensive it's becoming. And there are things happening in the US regarding the ESPN/Fox/Warner bundle deal. I've got that right. I've got the right three companies? Yeah.

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

Yes.

Bill Fisher:

Talk to me a little bit about that, is that something that might be the future of rights for sports events?

Paul Verna:

It's certainly pointing the way toward a future. I think there are still a lot of question marks about that particular joint venture. There's already a lawsuit underway by Fubo TV, who's a

smaller provider of the sports streaming content, and I think there's some tension between the joint venture partners and a couple of the leagues whose content they're going to be streaming. But I think what it says about streaming versus linear is that it's another nail in the coffin for linear television. I think, as more and more people continue to cut the cord and we have plenty of data to support that trend, it's been going on for many years and is only going to continue in the same direction it's been going. It's just creating more of a need for leagues and media companies to reach those viewers where they are, which is on streaming via the internet.

So inevitably we're going to see more of a shift and eventually all of it is going to be streamed. So I think this joint venture is a big step in that direction. But as far as how the details play out and what the pricing is going to be and whether these legal tangles get resolved, those are open questions and I think we need to see how they play out. But I think that trend is also going to be global. I think we see a lot of the same statistics in different parts of the world. Yes, there are countries where linear TV is a lot stronger currently than it is in the US, both in terms of audiences and ad spending, but the overall trend is unmistakable. So whether it takes a little bit longer in some regions to get there, I think we're all going to end up in the same place where all or at least the vast majority of sports content is going to be delivered over the internet.

Paul Briggs:

And we've seen that in Canada as well. The big news from a few years ago was English Premier League was on linear TV on Sportsnet and the rights were displaced by DAZN. The streamer who all of a sudden took the rights away and a lot of people were surprised and they couldn't figure out where their Saturday morning soccer was. They had to go look for it on the streaming app. Now that actually Fubo TV's now in the market as well in Canada with rights to some of the football from Europe. But this is going to happen, I think.

In anticipation of this podcast, I made a few calls yesterday to some of my key contacts in the industry and they say, absolutely this will happen in Canada. That's going to take a couple of years for some structural things to work themselves out, but the primary players are Rogers and Bell Media who kind of divide up the country mainly now in terms of rights holding. If a similar deal would include those two companies and possibly the CBC as well, a similar deal to what happened in the US with Fox and Warner Brothers. So it's certainly going to be the way of the future and it's probably a couple of years away in Canada.

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

Yeah, I mean, I imagine everything that's happened in the US is a harbinger of things to come in a lot of other countries and it'd be all of them, but at the moment, that's not good news because really it's chaotic over here. We're in a winter of discontent in the sports media world in the US right now, and the light at the end of the tunnel hasn't really appeared. And that's ironic. I present this as a negative story. It's ironic because of course sports themselves are doing great, whereas sports are all, and all of them collectively, are doing as well as they ever had, particularly the NFL and the NBA. So that's great. But if you think about all the constituencies that surround it, whether it's consumers who are frazzled because they don't know where to find the sports that they're trying to watch and where they used to be. They're not there anymore, and now it's being split and split again and split again, and you can't find your team and you may no longer have access to what you used to have access to.

And then you think about the media companies themselves that despite their enthusiasm for live sports, have in many ways not been able to figure out how to monetize this the way they used to in the traditional linear cable bundle, which is why they're forced into making these alliances like the one you just described between Disney and Warner Brothers and Fox. Because putting the sports onto streaming services just adds to the sort of problem where the streaming services, for the most part, are not profitable yet.

And then you think about the sports leagues themselves who have to navigate the selling of the rights to their own product. They have the product, they seem to be in good shape, but they find themselves now in partnerships with broadcasters that may have smaller audiences because whatever streaming service they're now putting their sports onto has fewer people watching it than linear cable used to.

So it's really kind of a big mess and no one's very happy right now, even though we're all enjoying sports more than ever. It's sort of a frustrating experience, and we hope that maybe this big new model that you started off this segment by talking about will be a step in the right direction. But there's already lawsuits about that and there's already questions about pricing, right? It's going to be chaos for quite a while. I mean, I agree with my colleagues that at some undetermined point in the future, all this is going to be streaming. The linear cable bundle in the US is probably doomed, and maybe therefore traditional cable type services in other countries will eventually be doomed. But I think the process of getting there is going to be

long and drawn out and difficult and complicated, and we're probably going to have to have this conversation a whole bunch more times.

Paul Verna:

Absolutely. No question about that.

Bill Fisher:

Okay, we'll talk again next year. Okay. Excellent conversation, guys. Really good. But now it's time to move on to our final segment in the show. It's time for our recap stats quiz. This is where we recap today's theme with a few related stats questions for my guests. There's no prize. It's all about bragging rights. There are only three questions, so it's nice and quick and it's multi-choice. Anyway, on to our first question. We'll start with a Super Bowl stat, and as promised, it's Taylor Swift related. According to a survey by Numerator, what percentage of Super Bowl viewers supported the Kansas City Chiefs purely because of the Taylor Swift effect? Is it 13%, 20%, or 48%? Who's going to answer first? Ethan?

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

It's not 48, I hope. Oh my God, I go with the middle one, what was it 20?

Bill Fisher:

Yeah.

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

I go with 20, which is itself too high.

Bill Fisher:

Paul Briggs, you are next on the screen.

Paul Briggs:

Yeah, I'll take the low number. I think it was 13%.

Bill Fisher:

13? Okay.

Paul Briggs:

Yeah.

Bill Fisher:

Paul V?

Paul Verna:

I was going to go with 20 before Ethan claimed that.

Bill Fisher:

You can pick the same number. That's fine.

Paul Verna:

You can? Yep.

Bill Fisher:

Yep. Okay. If you'd have said 48, you happily would've been wrong. That's how many were rooting for the Chiefs overall. 13% is the number who were neutral supporters so the correct answer is 20%. Well done Ethan and Paul V. Okay, second question. Let's see how much you know about that global phenomenon that is Pato. In 1930, a leather ball with six handles was introduced into the game. In place of what? So this is what they throw around and throw through the hoop. What did they used to throw around before it was a leather ball with handles? Was it cow dung, a pig's bladder, or a live duck? They cook it after that. So we'll go to Paul Briggs first.

Paul Briggs:

Yeah, I'm going to go with pig's bladder, because it kind of reminds me of pig skin in football.

Bill Fisher:

Okay. And Paul Verna?

Paul Verna:

Same answer, same reason.

Bill Fisher:

Okay. Ethan?

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

The live duck thing, while unbelievably cruel and terrible, does present a unique challenge where the object of the game is running away from you. I got to go with the pig's bladder, but it makes me nervous that all three of us are taking the same answer.

Bill Fisher:

Yeah, you're right to be nervous, you're all wrong. A pig's bladder was originally used in a rugby ball, which predated football, soccer. Cow dung. Do you know where that comes from, Paul Briggs?

Paul Briggs:

I don't.

Bill Fisher:

That was frozen and used as a puck in ice hockey.

Paul Briggs:

Oh, right. Yeah.

Bill Fisher:

It is actually a live duck, if you can believe it. They used to put a live duck in a basket or a leather bag and fling it around.

Paul Briggs:

Wow.

Bill Fisher:

That was obviously abandoned you to animal cruelty concerns.

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

Yes. That's a thumbs down.

Paul Verna:

And I guess I should have figured, because the word pato means duck.

Bill Fisher:

Yes, exactly.

Paul Briggs:

Oh, Paul. Come on, man.

Bill Fisher:

Oh, you were at an unfair advantage and you didn't use it.

Paul Verna:

[inaudible 00:27:06] there. Yes.

Bill Fisher:

Okay. For our final question, it's quite difficult to come up with a definitive number of players of a given sport around the world, but the charity Pledge Sports had a go. It compiled a top 10 list of the biggest participation sports around the world. It only counted people who were affiliated to play for either a club or in a league. So not just your casual players who go down the park. Soccer topped the list, perhaps unsurprisingly. But what was the total estimated number of participants? Was it 265 million, 410 million or 1.5 billion? Who do I ask first? Is it you, Ethan? Were you the first one?

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

I went first the first time. Wait, so in order to qualify, you have to be part of an official club, is that what you said?

Bill Fisher:

Yes, correct.

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

And not kids at school that are playing because the school tells them to play?

Bill Fisher:

Correct. Who hasn't been first?

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

I would have gone with the billion.

Bill Fisher:

Sorry, if it's not you.

Paul Verna:

I don't think I've been first.

Bill Fisher:

Okay, go on, Paul.

Paul Verna:

I'm going with the low number, 265 million.

Bill Fisher:

Okay.

Paul Briggs:

I'll take the 400 odd number. I can see that.

Bill Fisher:

Okay, Ethan?

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

Yeah, I guess I go... I mean, I would've taken the billion one if it counted kids in school that are just playing because the school's telling them to play. But I'll go with the 400.

Bill Fisher:

410. Okay, 1.5 billion. That's the number of people who watched the 2022 World Cup final. And I can guarantee a lot of them have never seen a football pitch. 410 million, that's actually

how many American football fans there are around the world. The actual answer is 265 million. Although as you noted, Ethan, it's much, much higher than that. But obviously not counting-

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

These are the official ones, right? There's a few there.

Paul Verna:

I think I remember seeing that stat and I was surprised, but in a weird way, it's a testament to the popularity of football in that so many people around the world just play it for pleasure. But the bar to actually join a club and be officially playing is actually pretty high in a lot of places. So yeah. So I remember when I saw that stat or something along the lines. First I was surprised and then it kind of made sense.

Bill Fisher:

Yep. I'm just totting up the scores and we have a winner, an outright winner on this one. I don't have to do my tie break. And the winner is, drum roll, Paul Verna. Well done, Paul.

Paul Verna:

Even though I totally messed up on the duck.

Bill Fisher:

You should have had a clean sweep there. Three for three.

Paul Verna:

I should have, yeah.

Bill Fisher:

Two out of three ain't bad. Do you want the tie break anyway, do you guys want to have a go?

Paul Verna:

Yes, of course.

Bill Fisher:

Okay. May as well.

Paul Verna:

How could we resist? I've gone to-

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

If you prepped it. Yeah.

Bill Fisher:

You can all have a go. So based on this Pledge Sports ranking of top 10 participation sports around the world, soccer is the top. I want you to pick a sport that you think was highest on that list that wasn't soccer. Any sport, pick a sport.

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

Basketball.

Paul Briggs:

That's a good one. I'm going to go with cricket.

Bill Fisher:

Okay.

Paul Verna:

I'm going to go with basketball.

Bill Fisher:

Basketball is good, fifth on the list. Cricket a little bit further down on seventh. Again, these are participation sports that you have to be registered to play.

Paul Verna:

Volleyball?

Bill Fisher:

Volleyball is number four. You may be surprised by number two on the list. It's badminton.

All:

Badminton?

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

Oh, just because of China and Japan and Korea.

Bill Fisher:

Exactly.

Paul Verna:

That's a lot of people though.

Bill Fisher:

Yeah. So apparently 220 million people play badminton.

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

Was running part of this, would that have counted all the people out there? Well, I guess they don't. I guess [inaudible 00:30:36] joggers don't sign out officially for anything.

Bill Fisher:

We've got badminton, field hockey, volleyball, basketball, tennis, cricket, table tennis at number eight, baseball and golf. That rounds out the top 10. Anyway, as always, we end the show with a winner. And that's you, Paul Verna. Congratulations and thanks for speaking with us today.

Paul Verna:

Thanks for the bragging rights

Bill Fisher:

And the other Paul, thanks also for being on the show again.

Paul Briggs:

Yep. Thanks everybody.

Bill Fisher:

And Ethan, thanks as ever for joining us.

Ethan Cramer-Flood:

Our pleasure, see you next time.

Bill Fisher:

And thanks to all of you for listening in today to Around the World, an eMarketer podcast made possible by Stackadapt. Tune in tomorrow for our Behind the Numbers Daily Show hosted by Marcus. If you want to ask us any questions, you can of course email us at podcast@emarketer.com. I hope to see all of you next month for another edition of Behind the Numbers Around the World. No animals were harmed in the making of this show. Bye for now.