

Popularity Of Twenty20 overtakes County Championship

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Latest data from BMRB Sport shows that 23% of English adults (9.6 million) claim to have followed Twenty20 in the last year, compared to 20% following traditional County Cricket.

What is even better news is that the profile of fans is socially broader, and younger, offering sponsors a fanbase beyond what is traditionally offered by Cricket.

The Twenty20 format reached out to new fans who previously have not been engaged with cricket. Indeed, 9% of adults who say they are not otherwise interested in cricket follow Twenty20.

The prospect of England's stars appearing in the 2009 IPL is also proving a big draw, with 9% of adults intending to follow next year's competition, comparing relatively favourably against the 21% who intend to follow The Ashes.

Followers of Twenty20 are demographically different to traditional fans. They are less likely to be male, more likely to be in the younger age groups (20% are aged under 30 compared to 16% of cricket fans) and less concentrated in the highest social grades (28% are in the AB grades, compared to 35% of cricket fans generally). In short, they are more representative of the population as a whole and represent new targets for sponsors, potentially broadening cricket's commercial appeal.

Twenty20 offers great sponsorship fit

Some of the current sponsors behind Britain's strongest Twenty20 teams represent a strong match with fans of the cup, creating an excellent base from which they could activate their sponsorship. This year's Twenty20 Cup winners, Middlesex, are sponsored by Northern Rock, who Twenty20 fans are more likely than the average adult to bank with.

Twenty20 fans are over a third more likely than the average adult to drink the tournament's official beer Marston's. They are also a quarter more likely to agree that it is worth paying extra for good quality beer.

Twenty20 fans are far more likely than both the average adult and cricket fans as a whole to be influenced by sponsorship activity, making them all the more commercially valuable.

BMRB Sport data shows that they are three-quarters more likely than the average adult to buy products from companies who sponsor TV programmes and two-thirds more likely to buy products from companies who sponsor sports events and teams.

These data are taken from the latest wave of BMRB's TGI Sport+ survey, conducted between October 2007 and September 2008.

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