Research on Influencing Factors and Coping Strategies of NBA All-Star Game Ratings

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Abstract. The theme of this research is the reasons and trends for declining the ratings of the NBA all-star game. This paper included research on the NBA All-Star Game. This paper also put forward some methods to solve the reasons for the decline in ratings. We hope to find the reasons through the data of the past and this year. At the same time, we also mentioned the major factor and strategies of the epidemic in the discussion. The league can regard the NBA All-star game as an important component trend for the future development of the league. Adding a 4-point line is a win-win choice for the league. This can increase the audience rating and improve the enthusiasm of the audience. The league also needs to improve players’ attention to the all-star game. Let several top players from all leagues in the world join the NBA all-star game not only can enhance the game’s brilliance, improve the audience rating. In addition, it facilitates all players to know each other better, which is conducive to the development of world basketball.

Keywords: Influencing factors; Coping strategies; NBA All-Star Game Ratings.

1. Introduction

The NBA All-Star game was first held on March 2, 1951, at Boston Garden. All-Star Weekend is a three-day event that goes from Friday to Sunday. This weekend, the Rising Star Challenge and NBA Celebrity Game will be played on Friday. On Friday, Slam Dunk Contest and 3-point contest, Skill Challenge, will be held on Saturday. The most popular game of the weekend--NBA All-Star Game, will be held on Sunday [1]. Since the NBA is a popular league worldwide, the rating of the All-Star Game is the most important thing to the league because the league is also a commercial league. Nowadays, the viewing rating is gradually had been decreasing. That will have a negative effect on the players and the commercial aspect. The NBA is a long-term season. Although the All-Star’s viewing is low compared with the regular game and games in Festivals like the Christmas game and playoff game, even The Final, The All-star Weekend, still has the highest view rating [2]. As a result, finding methods to improve The Star view’s rating in the league is necessary. There are 3 main ways to watch All-Star Games: first, watch on-site, second on TV, and third on the mobile phone. The league can earn money by selling tickets. Since the NBA is a business, it is important to find some solution to help the league sell more tickets. Moreover, peripheral products like jersey t-shirt sneakers with All-star special edition will be a very important part of the All-Star Weekend revenue. As a result, how to generate more products that can be popular and how to improve the sales volume will be two problems to fix. The more people watch the All-Star Game. The more people will be interested in the All-Star Game products, extending the league’s influence. However, the other important income to the league is the money from advertisements played during the game interval, including Half-time and Timeout. The advertisement will be in the court and the virtual platform. Those multiple platforms will provide much more income to the league. But if the viewing rate of the All-Star game drops, the sponsors will be decreased to the league. So the best way for the NBA to increase
its business value is to find an effective way to improve the viewing rating of the All-Star viewing rate. That will attract the audience and extend their business value to the league.

However, the viewing rating of NBA All-Star Weekend has dropped in recent years [3]. The method of NBA All-Star selection has changed in recent years. Fans and media voting selected the starting lineup, and the coach chose the reserves. Nowadays, the way of selection has changed a lot. Since 2018, each conference’s leading vote-getters are designated team captains and can choose from the pool of All-Star reserves to form their teams regardless of conference. In 2020 Kobe passed away by accident, and the league also changed the game rules in memory of Kobe. However, many people have different opinions on changing the selection rules. Moreover, some people think the All-Star Game nowadays is less passionate than before, and they also think the entertaining than the game before. However, solving those problems is necessary if the league wants to save their All-Star Game. Besides, may the players’ attitude to the game not take seriously. They played casually and made the game less entertaining than before. The game before was always more entertaining because there were always players with stories; their competition was always topical, and the media and the audience were willing to watch those games.

2. Method

This paper looks for information sources, collects secondary data, screens secondary data, and collates secondary data. Using secondary data has three main advantages: (1) It is generally easier to obtain. (2) It is much cheaper than collecting raw data. (3) It can be quickly obtained, and the collection of records and collation of accumulated data and information.

3. Result

3.1 Problem identified

According to the three questions raised in the result, the first is why the ratings of All-Star games have dropped significantly. The second is what causes the stars’ performance in All-Star games to worsen. And the third is what methods should be proposed to improve the current All-Star games. In view of the first question, this paper thinks it is closely related to the second question. The player’s participation in the NBA All-star game has become a “walk-through show”. Many players only want to work but do not contribute, significantly reducing the quality of the all-star game [4]. In 2020, the league changed the name of the MVP to the Kobe Bryant Award for the sake of the deceased star Kobe Bryant. At that time, the players who participated in the game also showed the perfect competitive state in memory of the star. However, the repeated epidemic outbreak later led to declining ratings from session to session.

Epidemic prevention and control have also become an important factor hindering the ratings of the NBA All-star game [5]. In the Indiana All-star game last season, in addition to Kevin Durant, who was absent due to injury, a total of eight players were absent from the All-star game because of positive results, which also set a new record in the NBA. It is easy to imagine the result when fans learn that the star they voted for could not participate in the game. Some fans may watch the game for two minutes, while some may not watch it at all. The players who have been replaced cannot satisfy the fans. What they want to see is the players voting by themselves.

Of course, the All-Star competition is the most attractive. Every year, the All-Star competition is decided by two teams composed of the best players from the eastern and western regions. There are slam dunks, skills challenges, 3-point, and other projects. These activities are also very exciting. All kinds of records are constantly broken, which is the charm of competitive sports. Although the arrangement of All-Star events has been very mature, it is still improving. As the highest level basketball competition, the NBA will refer to basketball talents from all over the world during the draft. The league can consider bringing together MVP-level players from NCAA, NBL, G League, European Championship, and Asian Championship. Other leagues participate in the competition and
compete for the championship so that they can also feel the atmosphere of the NBA and participate in high-level competitions. For example, the change of the rookie challenge in 2022 is very good. The league invited the Rookies of the G League, which also increased the All-Stars’ attention this time. In this way, fans around the world can pay more attention to NBA All-stars, and they can see their players compete with NBA players, which is also in line with the spirit of basketball. In addition, the city hosting the All-Star game should hold various basketball activities outside the court. Those with good rankings can also win All-Star souvenirs, which increases the interaction of fans and allows more people to participate in the game and feel the charm of basketball.

3.2 Reasons analysis

The NBA All-star game began in 1951 and was set up by Haskell Cohen, the then public relations director, in imitation of the National Baseball League [6]. At that time, the ratings of the professional basketball league were far from the current high, so Cohen’s purpose was to promote the NBA further. The NBA All-Star game was finalized and planned to be held yearly. After being hosted by Boston Garden Court in 1951, the model of the All-Star game has been loved by everyone and has continued to this day. The activities of the NBA All-star games have also increased [7]. Later, the NBA All-star 3-point contest was developed in 1986, the NBA All-star game slam dunk contest was founded in 1984, the rising stars challenge was founded in 1994, and the NBA All-star weekend skills challenge was launched in 2003. All these projects have increased the attraction of the NBA All-star game to fans. 1984 was a turning point for the NBA All-star game. In the slam dunk competition this year, the players brought good performances to the fans, making the All-star game no longer a confrontation between the East and the west but a famous All-star weekend. In 1999, because of Jordan’s retirement and the contract problems of the players, the NBA was once at a standstill. At that time, the rate and attention were also reduced to the lowest. Carter’s classic dunk in the dunk competition in 2000 saved the NBA’s ratings. Therefore, there is a close relationship between the brilliance of NBA All-stars and the ratings. However, in the past five years, the attention of NBA All-stars has gradually decreased, which is also caused by various reasons. Next, this paper will analyze the reasons for these problems. This paper raised three questions: why the ratings of the all-star game are gradually declining, what causes NBA players not to play seriously in the all-star game, and what improvement methods can make the all-star game more attractive.

Since 2019, the world has been affected by the epidemic, and the operation of the NBA has also been greatly affected [8]. According to Fox Sports News, on January 24, 2021, the NBA’s ratings dropped significantly this season. In terms of gym attendance, the attendance rate of many games is less than 50%. The popularity of the NBA in the United States has declined! Among the young audiences aged 16-36 in the United States, the NBA only ranks 13th [9]. Compared with the previous year, the ratings of the NBA in 2020 have dropped by 22%, and they continue to decline. The ratings and attention of the NBA All-star game have also been discussed. This paper will analyze the reasons for this situation. First, the pace is too slow, and individualism is also very serious. The game is often suspended. The long-term game needs to be divided into multiple segments, reducing the overall coherence. The overall brilliance of the NBA has dropped a lot because most of the main scoring methods are three-point shots. This leads to the decline of the quality of defense and the reduction of confrontation in the court. Fans tend to get tired after watching for a long time. The whole league now advocates attacking, and star players will pay special attention to their data. The game’s pace becomes faster, and the game’s score can often exceed 130 points, which greatly increases the possibility of players being injured. Many players have been injured in the All-star game for several consecutive years [10]. For example, players such as Murray, Harden, Irving, Mitchell, Conley, Jaylen Brown, Enbid, and Leonard have been plagued by injuries and epidemics before and after the 2021 All-star game. Captain Durant of the East missed the All-Star Game because of injuries for two consecutive years. The absence of many famous players greatly reduced fans’ expectations for the All-star game. Therefore, considering the injury and other reasons, many star players are now concerned about whether they can be selected as All-stars instead of bringing good performance to
everyone on All-stars. Originally, there were few confrontations in the NBA. If the players are careful on the court, the brilliance will be further reduced.

Another reason is that the activities of the All-star game are similar every year, and the audience will find it meaningless to watch similar games every year. In the history of the NBA All-star game, the most attention has been paid to new games and activities. Therefore, if the NBA All-star game can receive more attention, the league should design more entertainment games so that fans can feel that this year’s All-star game is designed. This is the most important thing. What the audience should see are some more creative activities and games. For example, in 2021, the NBA All-star game added the NBA rookie challenge. The league invited young players from League and the Australian Basketball League to complete many team projects. This year, the audience’s expectations of the NBA All-star game have been significantly improved. It is a good start. The league can also make more changes to make the All-star game more attractive to fans.

4. Discussion

To save the declining All-Star ratings, the league needs to solve some problems and try to attract more sponsors.

4.1 The league needs to change the selection of All-Star Game players

Many people are willing to see some players against. That will attract more people’s attention. If they use the way the captain selects players, that will be a little bit unfair, and of course, the game’s entertainment will be less and less. So, the NBA needs to change the selection way to vote by fans and media so that the audience can see the game they like. Moreover, the media is also willing to cover the games like that. These increased exposures are very helpful in increasing business value. These players will add their passion and can increase the game’s entertainment. This method can solve players too casually on the court.

4.2 Extending the half-time can also be another useful way to extend exposure for the league, and extending half-time can hold more shows

Such as inviting some celebrities to act like singers or music bands so the audience will have more interest in the game. Celebrities also can bring popularity. The sponsor is willing to take more money to the event like that. The extent half-time will have enough time for the advertisement. Audiences who watch celebrities’ ads will be more interested in the game and this league. Moreover, the league can manage players and celebrities doing some events during the weekend. That will attract not only basketball fans but also fans of celebrities. That will bring much more popularity to the league. Also, the league can bring some products with celebrities and the NBA.

4.3 NBA can pay more attention to oversea markets

There are many basketball fans all over the world. As a result, NBA can invite more players to other leagues like European and Asia. Or they can invite celebrities from different countries. NBA can cooperate with local TV stations and relay the game to the local station. Moreover, many international players play in the NBA. So they can influence their country. That will contribute many foreign fans to the league. They also can cooperate with local schools. Let players interact with children. That can help the NBA have more fans so they can have more viewings.

4.4 Make full use of media to expand its influence

Media broadcasting rights not only spread the NBA All-Star game around the world but also obtain a huge amount of broadcasting fees for the NBA All-Star game. With the maturity and use of Internet technology, NBA All-Star Game ushered in a new development opportunity. The power of the Internet lies in combining pictures, text, sound, and video, changing the traditional way of receiving information. At the same time, the convenience of the network media enables the audience to know
all kinds of news about the NBA All-Star Game when they open the web page again. Based on the above advantages, let the network media become the fast track of the rapid development of the NBA All-Star Game. Today, the NBA All-Star Game League has its own news media company, mainly responsible for developing television and Internet new technologies. Every year, high-quality programs will be produced and distributed in the global cooperative media to increase the intangible assets of the NBA through high-tech means. From newspapers and magazines to television broadcasts and the latest network media, NBA’s media technology has always been at the forefront of professional sports.

In addition to the “star”, highlighting the features of the competition is also one of the means of the league’s commercial publicity. On March 2, 1951, the NBA began to hold the first All-Star game. Every year, the All-Star game brings a lot of money to the NBA league. In the course of the game, the real purpose is to promote the business, earn the television rights fee and the purchase of derivative goods by the fans. The NBA’s brands and teams are the direct beneficiaries of the game’s popularity and the increase in stars, which is how the NBA snowballs its business.

In sum, those methods can help NBA All-Star have more view ratings. They can help NBA have more business value.

5. Conclusion

The league can regard the NBA All-star game as an important component trend for the future development of the league. Adding a 4-point line is a win-win choice for the league. This can increase the audience rating and improve the enthusiasm of the audience. The league also needs to improve players’ attention to the All-star game. Let several top players from all leagues in the world join the NBA All-star game not only can enhance the game’s brilliance, improve the audience rating, and facilitate all players to know each other better, which is conducive to the development of world basketball.

The development of the NBA All-Star Game, a highly developed international professional sports event, cannot be separated from commercial operation. Of course, this is all based on market saturation, the development of media technology, and Stern’s management and promotion. When sports meet business, NBA explains this problem for us with its mature business concept and scientific marketization operation and also provides a benchmark for the development of professional sports in other countries.

References


