

The 2011 CrossFit Games: New Era of American Spectator Sport An Action Sports Investment Opportunity

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Nov. 17, 2010 - [PRLog](#) -- Shortly after the 2010 Games, Forbes Magazine featured a piece called, "The CrossFit Games: An Action Sports Investment Opportunity in the Making." Sports marketing savants raced to see what the author of the piece, Mr. Patrick Rishe, meant by the bold proclamation. For one, the sport is only four years old. There are no major cross-over stars from more established sports, no professionally sponsored athletes, and the "Fittest on Earth" won \$25,000. But is that really all that the "fittest" male and female won? Looking beyond the superficial, CrossFit's appeal is simple. For the athletes, it's not about the money. It's about accomplishing, inspiring, and leading by example. Because of this, the sport's growth will be explosive. In addition to amazing human feats of performance, this is what sports fans are looking for in their athletes.

Rishe went on to say, "...CrossFit pitches the quad." A remarkable compliment for a fledgling sport, but I'd go one step further. Yes, CrossFit does appeal to both men and women, young and old. But it was Malcolm Gladwell's latest article - "Talent Grab" - in the New Yorker that aided my thoughts along. In his piece, on an unrelated (yet, relatable) topic he seemed to yearn for the days when athletes were more...well, relatable. CrossFit is an incredibly appealing sport with licensed gyms scattered, in the thousands, around the globe. The average gym's client is closer to affluence than not (great for a sport's foundation) but the athlete/coach generally goes above and beyond to support their family and their passion - training for elite fitness.

Some top athletes are mothers, fathers, civil servants, business owners, and even full-time college students. You know, the type of "normal" people that you're more apt to root passionately for after witnessing their spectacular athleticism. Typically, the audience watches intently, questioning how they have the time to refine their olympic lifts, endurance runs, gymnastics ring handstand pushups, 12 foot wall vaults or 20 foot rope climbs. How do they make it look so easy?

Top athlete Chris Spealler is a full-time gym owner/practitioner, a devoted husband, and father. So how does he find the time to develop such a unique set of skills? This particular athlete may seem slight of build on paper but proportionately, he is stronger than about anyone that you know. And that is but one of the story lines. He finished 4th in 2007, 10th in 2008, 26th in 2009. Instead of hanging it up after a pattern of degrading performance, he prepared harder and more efficiently - finishing 3rd in 2010. This sport has the potential to develop the same devoted fan following that MMA has. Take UFC star Rich "Ace" Franklin for example., Aa lot of his appeal was generated simply by the fact that before he made a lavish living as a sponsored professional athlete, he was a school teacher.

Other top athletes, like Matt Chan, are firefighters. Several of the top 16 women were mothers. CrossFit does more than "Pitch the quad." As far as the state of the American consumer is concerned, it seems as though this dawning spectator sport may be a timely remedy for those who need just a little push to get up and running. I mean this literally and figuratively. This sport is stocked with athletes, with every-day demands, that embody the will to succeed against formidable odds. These elite athletes have demanding day jobs and personal responsibilities. All of which are set aside, but not forgotten, when they step into the arena. This is the sport's greatest draw.

What's more is that the community is loyal. They support what they love and represent the same. They tend to jettison brands, trends, and pitches that seem insincere or serve no beneficial function. Conventional sport is flooded with businesses seeking to inject themselves into any given sport's culture. Not in CrossFit. Support is earned in this community - a stern message for any potential outsiders seeking to cash in on this potentially lucrative sport without paying their dues. A community where gyms serve as: farm leagues, support systems, and cheering sections at regional and international competitions. The system is unintentionally perfect.

Brands have to be sincere in their support of the community. CrossFit-predicated businesses like SICFIT serve as a way to help CrossFit athletes brand themselves while also helping to grow the sport past its existing walls, a business strategy borrowed from the UFC/TAPOUT playbook. CrossFitter's have their preferred shoes, diets, apparel, and even supplements. Progenex USA is, the 2010 Games' title sponsor and the first supplement company to be welcomed into the community after others failed in previous years' attempts. Sponsored athlete, Chris Spealler, would probably attribute some of his remarkable success to his newfound means of recovery, an effect billed as "typical" by PROGENEX, the growing manufacturer of high end recovery supplements.

Don't be surprised when you grow to endear these extremely talented athletes, not simply because of what they can do inside of the arena but because of their every day obligations in their real worlds. The CrossFit Games will grow because sports fans, brand consumers, and the fitness-inspired, alike, seek connectivity and familiarity. The sport will show that there are still people who can perform like "larger-than-life" athletes while actively and sincerely supporting the communities around them. It's just what we need in American sports right now.

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Because it delivers unprecedented gains in recovery and strength, PROGENEX products are used by an exhaustive array of professional and amateur athletes. PROGENEX can be found in NFL locker rooms, NBA All-Stars, UFC Champions, CROSSFIT champions.

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