

Crowd psychology from the perspective of "fan" violence

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In the introduction the article deals with some forms of violence at sporting events as seen by a handball referee. It then focuses on "fan" deviance connected with football matches. The author briefly overviews a number of scientific theories concerning socio-psychological aspects of this problem and their connection with findings of "general" crowd psychology. It is not possible to eliminate the considered "social problem" by the mechanism of situational prevention, because it is necessary to take into account its more global causal dimensions which far exceed the frame of psychology (of masses). By being aware of this fact and by taking broad knowledge from this discipline into consideration, it is nevertheless necessary to improve preventive measures, which should not disproportionately infringe on fundamental rights and freedoms of people. As an example of such a questionable form¹ regulation of this subject, the author presents the English institution of »international football banning order«, which has been the target of much criticism based on (constitutional) law and psychological arguments.

Key words: crowd psychology, sporting events, football, fan violence, crowd disorders

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