

Original Scientific Paper

The Attitudes of Montenegrin Billiard Players towards Necessity to Establish Billiard Association

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Abstract

In Montenegro billiards has its long history, but according to fact that it is actively and en masse played throughout Montenegro, it certainly has its present and future. Aim of this research is to examine attitudes of billiard players from Montenegro towards necessity to establish billiard association. The instrument of this research is a survey questionnaire. The respondents are active billiard players from Montenegro, 78 of them, average age of 33.35 ± 7.94 years, who expressed their attitudes by choosing one of offered answers on asked question. This study results are analysed by Google Forms platform. Based on the results of this research, the conclusion is that Montenegrin billiard players consider that Montenegro needs to establish national billiard association.

Keywords: Attitudes, Snooker, Game, Billiard Association, History of Billiards, Montenegro

Introduction

In Montenegro, billiards appears for the first time in 1836 when Petar II Petrovic Njegos back then brought first and only billiard table from Vienna to Cetinje (Montenegro Travel, n.n.). There are several types of billiards in the world, most common are snooker and pool, and within pool there are four games – eight ball, nine ball, ten ball and straight pool (Elmaged, 2017). Nowadays in Montenegro are played first three aforementioned pool games and snooker is on the rise. Period of prosperity of this sport from organizational level happened in period of existence of billiard association of Montenegro, from 1996 to 2011, but after that there was a stagnation period which still lasts (Radoicic, Milosevic, Zarkovic, & Masanovic, 2021). In personal communication with founder and president of former association of Montenegro, Mr Dragan Scepanovic, we collected data about existence and functioning of former association. In 1996, Dragan Scepanovic founded the Billiards Association of Montenegro in accordance with the then law on the establishment of a sports organization. According to his words, first competitive year under the patronage of Montenegrin billiard association (league, individual championship and masters) was held in 1999. Under the patronage of former association, there were eight clubs from Podgorica, Bijelo

Polje, Niksic, Spuz, Danilovgrad, Tivat. Mr Scepanovic says that to all billiard players from Montenegro billiard was an activity they practiced in leisure, so they didn't earn for living by playing billiards. The junior league was held in season 2001/2002 and then there was a billiard course within billiard club "Podgorica". The female league was held in the season 2004/2005. At competitions beyond Montenegrin borders, billiard players had much success at tournaments of former federal league (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and later State Union of Serbia and Montenegro), conquering first, second and third places. Montenegrin national team competed at several European championships without significant results. Mr Scepanovic highlighted that billiard club "Podgorica" during whole period of existence of Montenegrin billiard association organized well known tournament "Montenegro Open" 11 years in row in period 1999-2010, which was the most famous tournament in the region, namely, in area of former Yugoslavia. Montenegrin billiard association stopped existing in 2011, when registration expired and billiard club "Podgorica", which was base for all competitions within association, was closed.

In personal communication with Mr Danijel Garic, initiator for establishment of Montenegrin billiard association and future president of one, we gathered information about current state of

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billiards in Montenegro and future aspirations. He highlighted that in Montenegro, there are organized and well-equipped clubs in all major cities in all three regions (south, central, north), that even without patronage of national organization new, modern clubs are opening, where is spent a lot of time in order to improve game and training process, as well as to educate young players. Mr Garic points out that billiard centers have their municipal leagues, organized voluntarily, they are massive, regular and very well organized, that tournament calendar is densely filled and that participants are enthusiastic and paying their own costs for arriving and participating. Despite everything, clubs are able to organize even the most demanding regional tournaments with participants who are the best players from Balkans, who have the best impressions about tournament organization and always praise it. Collaboration between clubs in Montenegro is impeccable, tournaments beside competitive have also friendly character so even without aforementioned non-existence of patronage association, within that without referee organization, rules on tournaments are respected and matches are played in spirit of fair play and without any incidents. He further states that our country needs national billiard association which would patronage all vital aspects of billiard games (competition organization, club functioning, education of young people and representation of Montenegrin billiard). Plans for establishment of association paused for few years, are finally intensified during last year, at the beginning of 2020 those were discussed with former minister of sport and president of Montenegrin Olympic Committee, who welcomed initiative and promised their required help during registration of national association. Further activities, such as required registration of clubs needed for association establishment, were unexpectedly stopped by pandemic caused by Covid 19 virus, so they are still a current issue. At the end, Mr Garic added that Montenegrin billiard players are promising and that they deserve to have support of national association.

According to aforementioned, aim of this research is to publicly present attitudes of billiard players from Montenegro towards necessity to establish billiard association, population which based on enthusiasm achieves great results despite support absence of an umbrella organization. All of this with want to popularize this sport and to provide players, who are untiring in preserving tradition of this sport in Montenegro, to build stabile future.

Methods

The population of this retrospective cross-sectional study includes 78 active billiard players from Montenegro, average age of 33.35 ± 7.94 years. All respondents are adults with permanent residence in Montenegro who actively play billiard (most

of them for more than 5 years). During sample selection it was taken into account that distribution is divided into as many Montenegrin municipalities as possible. It is necessary to remind that all participants participated voluntarily in this study and they had ability to resign their participation in this research at any point.

The instrument of this research is a survey questionnaire which contains seven questions divided in two subsystems. First three questions from questionnaire are related to attitudes of Montenegrin billiard players towards former association (i was informed about the existence and activity of the former billiard association; the organization of internal competitions was better during the activities of the former billiards association; the participation in international competitions was more frequent during the activities of the former billiards association). Last four questions from questionnaire are related to attitudes of Montenegrin billiard players towards necessity to establish billiard association and changes that it would cause (it is necessary for Montenegro to establish a billiards association; establishing a billiards association would increase participation in major competitions; establishing a billiards association would encourage young people to play billiards; by establishing billiard association successful players will get the status of a professional player). This questionnaire was created by this research author.

Research questionnaire was conducted via Google Forms platform in period October 10th to 24th in 2020. Questions were closed with offered answers yes or no. It is important to point out that survey was anonymous and that all answers were highly confidential. Also, this study author precisely inspected and controlled, that is, rejected all survey questionnaire answers which were not neatly filled, and there were eight of them.

All data in this research, collected by filling out a questionnaire in the Google Forms survey by Montenegrin billiard players, were directly exported and summarized in the Google spreadsheet in percentages.

Results

Based on first subsystem answers (attitudes of Montenegrin billiard players towards existence and functioning of former billiard association) it is noticeable that: familiarity to existence and functioning of former billiard association on level of Montenegrin billiard players is in half (Figure 1); most of the players consider that competition organization in country was better back in time of existence of former billiard association (Figure 2); most of the players consider that participation at international competitions was more frequent in period of existence of former billiard association (Figure 3).

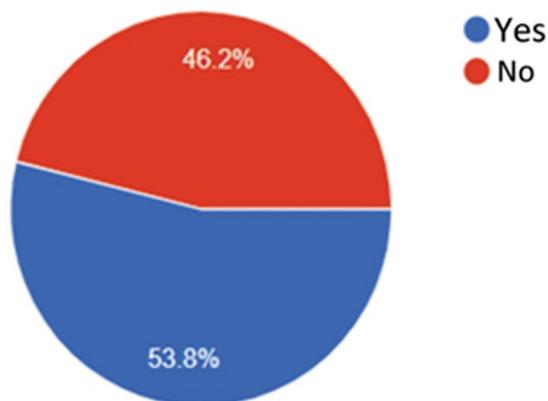


FIGURE 1. I was informed about the existence and activity of the former billiard association

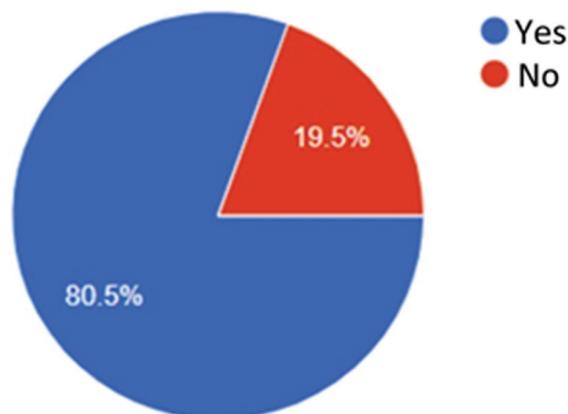


FIGURE 2. The organization of internal competitions was better during the activities of the former billiards association

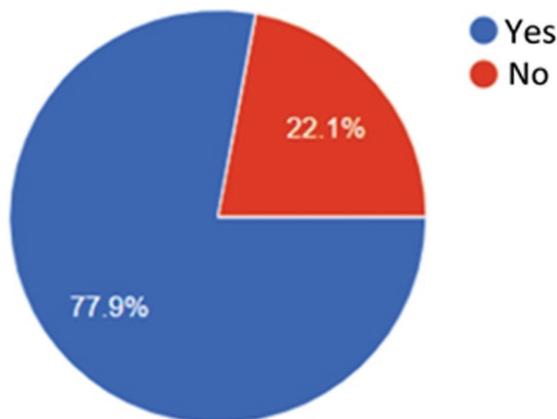


FIGURE 3. Participation in international competitions was more frequent during the activities of the former billiards association

Based on second subsystem answers (attitudes of Montenegrin billiard players towards establishment of billiard association and their perception of advantages which that change could provide) it is noticeable that: Montenegrin billiard players almost unanimously consider that Montenegro needs billiard association (Figure 4); they are unanimous with attitude that billiard association establishment

would provide them participation at bigger competitions (Figure 5); almost all players consider that billiard association establishment would attract more young people to take this sport seriously (Figure 6); absolute majority of Montenegrin billiard players is unique in attitude that by establishment of billiard association successful players would have professional sportsman status (Figure 7).

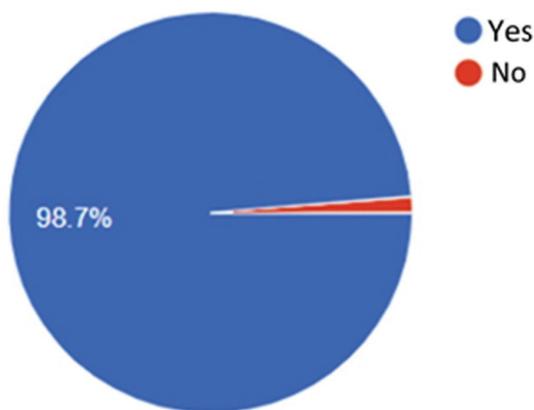


FIGURE 4. It is necessary for Montenegro to establish a billiards association

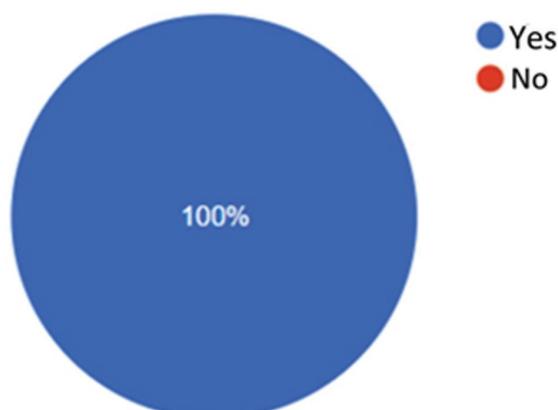


FIGURE 5. Establishing a billiards association would increase participation in major competitions

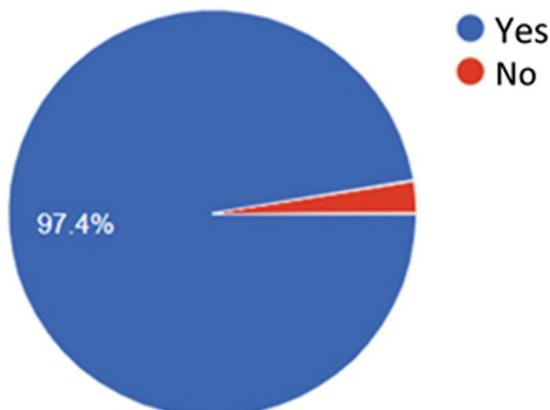


FIGURE 6. Establishing a billiards association would encourage young people to play billiards

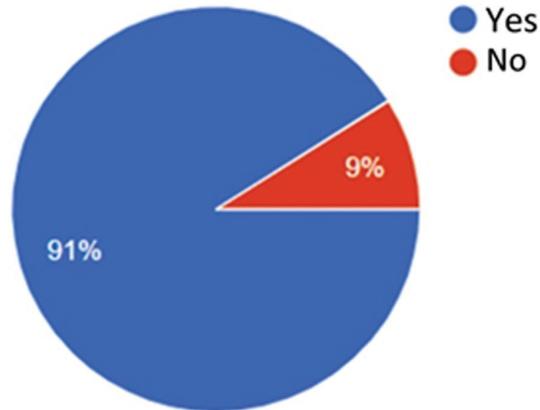


FIGURE 7. By establishing billiard association successful players will get the status of a professional player

Discussion

This study results clearly demonstrate that Montenegrin billiard players give the impression of very organized group gathered with aim to improve billiards status in Montenegro. Considering

for how long without an umbrella organization they achieve to successfully organize and behave professionally, it is concluded that huge passion about billiards gathers them in it. Fact that billiard has extremely long tradition in Montenegro, where it is

played since 1836 (Montenegro Travel, n.n.) made an impact on that for sure. However, after 2011 when Montenegrin billiard association activity stops, all the way until today, this sport evidently was in some kind of crisis, without support. The question is would future activities of billiard community be successful and provide necessary support which would enable establishment of billiard association.

Results from first questionnaire subsystem show that Montenegrin billiard players aren't informed enough about existence and functioning of former billiard association (46.2% of players doesn't have enough information). Reason for that, among others, is lack of written and published data about this topic for sure, and this research will surely help to replace lack of written materials and knowledge about one significant part of history of Montenegrin billiards. Beside ignorance in former billiard association functioning, most of the players are informed from older colleagues that competition organization was better back in that period (80.5%) and that international competition participation was more massive (77.9%), which means that they are aware that necessity of association establishment is undeniable. It is important to highlight that knowledge of facts about existence and functioning of former association may be helpful for future leaders of new billiard association if it would be established, that based on previous experience use some quality works in their future plan, to use it as an inspiration for developing plan (existence of junior and female league), and that future association sets healthy foundation which could provide its long existence. Beginning may be hard and challenging, but none of the steps should be skipped, because nobody wants to have reestablished billiard association which would last shortly. In order that this sport develops and begin to live in Montenegro, continuity of existence of billiard association or an umbrella organization is necessary as support to quality players.

Results of second questionnaire subsystem show that Montenegrin billiard players have positive and unanimous attitude towards necessity to establish billiard association in Montenegro (98.7%), that that change would provide more players' participation at tournaments (100%), that popularity of this sport would increase (97.4%), and that those players who are the best may become professionals (91%). Based on these results, it may be concluded that existence of an umbrella organization would mean a lot for improvement of this sport, especially in the segment of education and support for younger players.

This research results are important for theory and for practice. Theoretical significance is in all collected data which weren't available, now are in one place, and they may be base for improvement

monitoring in future, after potential establishment of billiard association. Practical significance of this research is in ability to use collected data for improvement of current public relation to this sport, which is proven at high level and has its' developing potential. Also, collected data may help people who are in process of establishment of billiard association to based on them, have insight in attitudes of players and plan their future activities.

At the end, Montenegrin public should know, that adjacent Bosnia and Herzegovina has world top player, Sanjin Pehlivanovic, former U17 WPA 9-Ball World Champion and former two-time junior European Pool Championships champion who winning events 8-Ball, 9-Ball, and 10-Ball (Internet Archive, 2017; European Pocket Billiard Federation, 2016; 2016; 2017), so why wouldn't Montenegro provide chance to young people to develop their potential in this sport and make future champions such as aforementioned one.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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