



You  
Gov **SportsIndex**  
2015 ANNUAL REPORT

## INTRODUCTION BY FRANK SAEZ

**Welcome to SportsIndex 2015, the second annual summary of the performance by leading domestic and international sports events in the UK.**

SportsIndex is the first and only syndicated product which, every day, measures perceptions amongst the UK general public across 50 leading UK and international sports events.

Sports events have been ranked using SportsIndex buzz score – the level of public awareness of good and bad news about the sports event during the year.

In addition to buzz, SportsIndex analyses the overall brand health and awareness of sports properties, as measured by comprehensive range of 15 metrics.

SportsIndex 2015 Annual Report is the latest in a series of reports. If you would like to receive automatic updates and analysis register at **[www.smg-insight.com/register](http://www.smg-insight.com/register)**.

The previous version of the report can be found at the website **[www.sportsbusinessinsight.com/sportsindex/](http://www.sportsbusinessinsight.com/sportsindex/)**.

We hope you find the report informative.

Regards



**Frank Saez**  
**Managing Director**  
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# YouGov SportsIndex

## 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

## ABOUT SPORTSINDEX

SportsIndex analyses the overall brand health and awareness of sports properties, as measured by a comprehensive range of 15 metrics including:

- » Index
- » Buzz
- » Quality
- » Value
- » Customer satisfaction
- » Event / organisation reputation
- » General impression
- » Recommendation
- » Attention
- » Aided brand awareness
- » Advertising awareness
- » Word of mouth exposure
- » Purchase intent
- » Consideration
- » Customer status

For more information on SportsIndex please contact us or read more at [www.smg-insight.com/services/consumer-insight/sportsindex/](http://www.smg-insight.com/services/consumer-insight/sportsindex/)



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## METHODOLOGY

The SportsIndex Report 2015 analyses the performance of overall recent public awareness and sentiment of news of leading UK and international sports competitions events by buzz. Respondents are asked “**Over the PAST TWO WEEKS, which of the following sporting events have you heard something positive/negative about?**”

Buzz is the net difference between the amount of respondents hearing positive news and those hearing negative news in the previous two weeks. Buzz may also be negative if the event has been subject to a high level of negative publicity.

The Buzz score ranges from 100 to -100 with a zero score equaling a neutral position. Example: A score of 35 means that 35% more people said they were positive than negative about the brand.

Buzz uses a four-week moving average of daily scores in 2014 and 2013. The buzz score listed is the peak achieved by the sports competition in the year.



## 1 | TOP 10 SPORTS EVENTS

2013 rank is in brackets

### 1. 2014 COMMONWEALTH GAMES (9 in 2013)

The 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow generated the most interest in the UK in 2014 with a peak buzz score of 52.9, 13.3 more than the second most popular event, the Wimbledon Championships. The peak score was only 3.9 less than the 56.8 reached by the London 2012 Olympic Games.

### 2. WIMBLEDON CHAMPIONSHIPS (1)

The Wimbledon Championships is the top ranked annual event for the third consecutive year, however the buzz score is lower than in previous years. This is a reflection of the worst performance by Andy Murray in six years, losing in the quarter finals, having been champion and runner up in the previous two years and semi finalist in 2009, 2010 and 2011.

Wimbledon dropped by 16.2 from 55.8 in 2013, a level which reflected Murray's victory in the Men's singles, but this is in line with the 38.2 and 40.5 peak buzz scores reached in 2012 and 2011 respectively.

### 3. 2014 WINTER OLYMPICS GAMES (n/a)

The Winter Olympic Games held in Sochi, Russia in February achieved the third highest level of buzz assisted by the relative success of British athletes. Britain collected four medals including a second successive gold in the women's skeleton, the best performance by a British team since the first winter games in 1924.

### 4. THE RYDER CUP (19)

The biennial Ryder Cup achieved a peak buzz score of 30.8 on the back of a third successive victory by the European team, a sixth victory over the past seven competitions. This is in line with the previous edition in 2012 which generated a peak buzz score of 30.1. The 2014 Ryder Cup was held at Gleneagles in Scotland while the Medinah Country Club in the US hosted the 2012 tournament, indicating that the event's rotation between European and US venues has little impact on buzz.

### 5. SIX NATIONS RUGBY CHAMPIONSHIP (4)

Rugby union's Six Nations Championship is the second ranked annual event, overtaking the London Marathon, though the buzz differential remains small at 0.8. The Six Nations is one of the most consistent events with the 2014 buzz score of 27.4 almost identical to the 27.6 of the previous year, but marginally higher than the 25.1 of 2012.

## 1 | TOP 10 SPORTS EVENTS

*Continued*

### 6. LONDON MARATHON (3)

The London Marathon slipped a place among annual events on the back of -4.7 fall from its record buzz high of 29.3 in 2013 but only marginally less than the 26 achieved in 2012.

### 7. FORMULA 1 BRITISH GRAND PRIX (17)

As with the Wimbledon Championships the Formula 1 British Grand Prix highlights the impact of a strong performance by domestic stars or teams in generating buzz. The event was won by UK driver Lewis Hamilton, with British former world champion Jenson Button in fourth, at a point where Hamilton was established as a strong contender for the world title, which he subsequently won.

As a result the grand prix peak buzz increased by eight points to 18.7, the largest rise among the annual events, to rank fourth, up from 16th place in 2013.

### 8. THE FA CUP (10)

Despite the increase in the number of periodic events in the top ten the FA Cup increased by two places overall and is the fifth ranked annual competition. The FA Cup remains the leading football event with a record peak buzz of 17.7, the second successive annual increase.

### 9. GRAND NATIONAL (14)

The Grand National increased by five places and ranked sixth among annual events. As in 2013, no horses were injured in the race where 18 of the 40 runners completed the course. The race was won by relative outsider Pineau De Re at 25-1.

### 10. TOUR OF BRITAIN, CYCLING (8)

The Tour of Britain recorded a 3.6 fall in peak buzz to 14.4, reflecting that Sir Bradley Wiggins was unable to replicate his 2013 title and finished third. British riders recorded only one stage victory compared to five out of eight in 2013.

## 1 | TOP 10 SPORTS EVENTS

*Continued*

| <b>Rank</b> | <b>Competition</b>             | <b>Sport</b> | <b>Score</b> |
|-------------|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1           | 2014 Commonwealth Games        | Multi-sport  | <b>52.9</b>  |
| 2           | Wimbledon Championships        | Tennis       | <b>39.6</b>  |
| 3           | 2014 Winter Olympic Games      | Multi-sport  | <b>37.7</b>  |
| 4           | The Ryder Cup                  | Golf         | <b>30.8</b>  |
| 5           | Six Nations Rugby Championship | Rugby union  | <b>27.4</b>  |
| 6           | London Marathon                | Athletics    | <b>24.6</b>  |
| 7           | Formula 1 British Grand Prix   | Motorsport   | <b>18.7</b>  |
| 8           | The FA Cup                     | Football     | <b>17.7</b>  |
| 9           | Grand National                 | Horse racing | <b>14.8</b>  |
| 10          | Tour of Britain Cycling        | Cycling      | <b>14.4</b>  |

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# THE TOP 10 IMPROVERS ANNUAL EVENTS ONLY

Non-annual events such as the Commonwealth Games, by their nature, produce the greatest year-on-year increases as peak buzz scores in non-event years are far lower than competition years. To focus only on like for like performances the top ten table below excludes periodic events and includes only the top ten increases by annual properties.

With the very notable exception of the FIFA World Cup, football competitions have been the leading performers in 2014. While the FA Cup was the only football competition to make the top ten by peak buzz, football properties have been the largest improvers providing six of the top ten increases.



## 2 | THE TOP 10 IMPROVERS ANNUAL EVENTS ONLY

### 1. FORMULA 1 BRITISH GRAND PRIX

The Formula 1 British Grand Prix generated by far the largest increase among annual sports events, more than double the level of the second largest riser, the Grand National, on the back of the victory by UK driver Lewis Hamilton, who subsequently produced the most successful season ever by a British driver with 11 grand prix victories on the way to winning his second world championship.

### 2. GRAND NATIONAL

The Grand National posted the second largest increase in peak buzz in 2014 to achieve its record score of 14.8, the second successive annual increase. The success of the event in buzz terms is significantly influenced by injuries and fatalities. In 2011 and 2012 the buzz score around the event fell to -20.1 and -30.7 respectively following the deaths of two horses in each race. The structures of course fences were reviewed and revised for the 2013 edition to make the race safer.

### 3. THE SCOTTISH FA CUP

The Scottish FA Cup posted the largest rise among the annual football events with a 3.0 buzz score increase although in absolute buzz terms it remains relatively low with a peak of 4.0. The score was the second straight year of improvement following a 0.6 rise in 2013 and the competition now generates higher peak buzz than the recently formed Scottish Premiership, which also made the top ten improvers.

### 4. ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

The English Premier League (EPL) recorded the fourth largest buzz increase of the year to reach its highest peak buzz rating since SportsIndex was launched in 2011. Unlike single tournaments which occur over a short time frame the peak score can occur over the ten month season. The 2014 peak buzz rating was achieved at the end of the 2013/14 season but was subsequently nearly matched at the beginning of the 2014/15 season (10.1 buzz), both of which surpassed the previous 8.7 record high buzz score achieved by the EPL in 2012.

### 5. THE OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP

As with the Formula 1 British Grand Prix, the Open Championship demonstrates the impact of UK stars' success to generate high buzz scores as the event recorded its second successive annual increase. The Open registered a 2.0 buzz score increase on the back of Britain's world number one Rory McIlroy winning his first major on home soil. McIlroy went on to win his second PGA Championship and fourth major in August before competing in the successful European Ryder Cup team in October.

## 2 | THE TOP 10 IMPROVERS ANNUAL EVENTS ONLY

*Continued*

### 6= UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

The UEFA Champions League increased by 1.8 to a new high of 10.8. The competition has produced a consistent level of performance over recent years with peak buzz levels of 9.0 and 9.7 in 2013 and 2012 respectively.

### 6= THE FOOTBALL LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP

As with the EPL, the Football League Championship, the second tier of the English game, registered its record SportsIndex buzz of 8.2 in 2014 following a 1.8 rise on 2013 and surpassing the previous 7.6 high in 2012.

### 8. THE FA CUP

The FA Cup also set a record high of 17.7 with the second successive year of growth with a 1.6 increase in 2014 to maintain its position as the largest football peak buzz generator. However the increase was only half the 3.0 buzz score rise recorded in 2013.

### 9= ITF DAVIS CUP

ITF Davis Cup buzz increased for the second year with the British team, led by Andy Murray, consolidating on its promotion to the top level World Group in 2013 by beating the US to make the World Group quarter-finals in 2014.

### 9= THE SCOTTISH PREMIERSHIP

The joint ninth largest increase was provided by the Scottish Premiership, reflecting that many of the controversial issues over the structure and format of the game in Scotland were resolved with the merger of the Scottish Premier League and Scottish Football League in 2013. However, as with the Scottish FA Cup, the Scottish Premiership score remains relatively low in absolute terms.

## 2 | THE TOP 10 IMPROVERS ANNUAL EVENTS ONLY

*Continued*

| Rank | Competition                      | Sport        | 2014 | 2013 | Increase   |
|------|----------------------------------|--------------|------|------|------------|
| 1    | Formula 1 British Grand Prix     | Motorsport   | 18.7 | 10.7 | <b>8.0</b> |
| 2    | Grand National                   | Horse racing | 14.8 | 11.6 | <b>3.2</b> |
| 3    | Scottish FA Cup                  | Football     | 4.0  | 1.0  | <b>3.0</b> |
| 4    | English Premier League           | Football     | 10.9 | 8.2  | <b>2.7</b> |
| 5    | The Open Championship            | Golf         | 12.2 | 10.2 | <b>2.0</b> |
| 6 =  | UEFA Champions League            | Football     | 10.8 | 9.0  | <b>1.8</b> |
| 6 =  | The Football League Championship | Football     | 8.2  | 6.4  | <b>1.8</b> |
| 8    | The FA Cup                       | Football     | 17.7 | 16.1 | <b>1.6</b> |
| 9 =  | ITF Davis Cup                    | Tennis       | 6.7  | 5.3  | <b>1.4</b> |
| 9 =  | Scottish Premiership             | Football     | 2.5  | 1.1  | <b>1.4</b> |

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# BUZZ BY SPORT



## 3 | BUZZ BY SPORT | FOOTBALL

The FA Cup is the leading football event for the third straight year and posted its second successive annual increase, up 1.6, but the world's oldest domestic football cup competition was far from alone.

Overall seven football competitions generated higher levels of buzz; only the UEFA Europa League saw a decline. The English Premier League leapfrogged the UEFA Champions League to become the second ranked annual football event, following a 2.7 increase in peak buzz.

The Scottish Premiership and the Scottish FA Cup both registered significant increases in peak buzz, up by 1.4 and 3.0 respectively, with the latter posting the third largest rise of the year and overtaking the Scottish Premiership.

Despite its status as one of the world's two leading sports events the FIFA World Cup 2014 only ranked second with a score of 13.1, 4.6 less than the FA Cup. This relatively low level reflects some negative stories around the event such as the Luis Suarez biting incident and the English national team's failure to qualify the group stage.

The English national football team was added to SportsIndex in November which coincided with an away friendly with Scotland and a Euro 2018 qualification match with Slovenia. Despite winning both matches the national team achieved a peak buzz score of only 3.2 and ranked eighth out of the ten football competitions.

SportsIndex introduced the FIFA World Cup 2018 to its coverage in November 2014. Controversy around the findings and publication of the Garcia report into the awarding of the 2018 and 2022 competitions mean that the event is yet to register a positive buzz score and has fallen as low as -28.5.

## 3 | BUZZ BY SPORT | FOOTBALL

*Continued*

| Rank | Competition                      | 2014 | 2013 | Change |
|------|----------------------------------|------|------|--------|
| 1    | The FA Cup                       | 17.7 | 16.1 | 1.6    |
| 2    | FIFA World Cup 2014              | 13.1 | 1.9  | 11.2   |
| 3    | English Premier League           | 10.9 | 8.2  | 2.7    |
| 4    | UEFA Champions League            | 10.8 | 9.0  | 1.8    |
| 5    | The Football League Championship | 8.2  | 6.4  | 1.8    |
| 6    | UEFA Europa League               | 4.3  | 5.7  | -1.4   |
| 7    | Scottish FA Cup                  | 4.0  | 1.0  | 3.0    |
| 8    | England National Football Team*  | 3.1  | -    | -      |
| 9    | Scottish Premiership             | 2.5  | 1.1  | 1.4    |
| 10   | FIFA World Cup 2018*             | -3.4 | -    | -      |

*\*Partial year data only*

## 3 | BUZZ BY SPORT | GOLF

2014 was a strong year for golf with all four leading events tracked by SportsIndex increasing their annual peak buzz scores.

The biennial Ryder Cup recorded a three-fold increase in its peak buzz level to 30.8, the fourth highest during the year. The appeal of the tournament is underlined by that fact that, despite 2013 being a non-event year, the Ryder Cup still had a peak buzz of 9.9, just 0.9 less than the top ranked golf event that year, the US Masters, which had a 2013 peak buzz of 10.8.

The Open Championship, won by Rory McIlroy, overtook the US Masters to become the second ranked golf tournament.

| Rank | Competition           | 2014        | 2013 | Change |
|------|-----------------------|-------------|------|--------|
| 1    | The Ryder Cup         | <b>30.8</b> | 9.9  | 20.9   |
| 2    | The Open Championship | <b>12.2</b> | 10.2 | 2.0    |
| 3    | US Masters Golf       | <b>11.3</b> | 10.8 | 0.5    |
| 4    | Scottish Open Golf    | <b>7.0</b>  | 6.5  | 0.5    |

## 3 | BUZZ BY SPORT | HORSE RACING

The Grand National generated the highest peak buzz score by a horse racing event in 2014 for the second year in succession.

The Cheltenham Gold Cup is the second ranked horse racing event with a peak buzz score of 9.0, lower than in 2013 but higher than the 8.3 of 2012, when the event was the highest ranking horse racing event. This reflected the negativity surrounding the Grand National following the fatalities that year.

Ascot was added to the SportsIndex in 2014 and will be included in the 2015 results.

| Rank | Competition                    | 2014        | 2013 | Change |
|------|--------------------------------|-------------|------|--------|
| 1    | Grand National                 | <b>14.8</b> | 11.6 | 3.2    |
| 2    | Cheltenham Gold Cup            | <b>9.0</b>  | 11.2 | -2.2   |
| 3    | Epsom Derby                    | <b>5.2</b>  | 8.2  | -3.0   |
| 4    | Glorious Goodwood Horse Racing | <b>4.8</b>  | 4.9  | -0.1   |

### 3 | BUZZ BY SPORT | MOTORSPORT

As highlighted in sections 1 and 2 the Formula 1 British Grand Prix transcends motorsport with the fourth highest buzz score overall following the largest increase of the annual events.

The Goodwood Festival of Speed is the second ranked motorsport event and, while registering a decline, is similar to the 7.7 level of 2012 and the 8.0 score of 2011.

The new FIA Formula E Championship for electric cars was added to SportsIndex in 2014 and was the third ranked with a peak buzz score of 4.9. The inaugural series began in September 2014 and runs until June 2015.

| Rank | Competition                  | 2014        | 2013 | Change |
|------|------------------------------|-------------|------|--------|
| 1    | Formula 1 British Grand Prix | <b>18.7</b> | 10.7 | 8      |
| 2    | Goodwood Festival of Speed   | <b>6.8</b>  | 8.6  | -1.8   |
| 3    | FIA Formula E Championship   | <b>4.9</b>  | -    | -      |
| 4    | Goodwood Revival             | <b>4.3</b>  | 4.5  | -0.2   |
| 5    | MotoGP                       | <b>4.2</b>  | 4.8  | -0.6   |

### 3 | BUZZ BY SPORT | RUGBY

The Six Nations championship generates by far the highest score among rugby events at 27.4, five times the level of the leading domestic club competition, Premiership Rugby.

Despite not being held until 2015, the Rugby World Cup generated the second highest buzz score at 6.7, a 1.2 increase on the previous year and the only rugby event to post an increase. The World Cup received widespread publicity with the sale of 950,000 tickets in September 2014 with applications for five million tickets.

The high buzz scores of the Rugby World Cup 2015 and the performance of the British and Irish Lions Rugby Tour in 2013 highlights the ability of national team rugby union events to reach a far larger audience than the traditional followers of club competitions.

| Rank | Competition                      | 2014 | 2013 | Change |
|------|----------------------------------|------|------|--------|
| 1    | Six Nations Rugby Championship   | 27.4 | 27.6 | -0.2   |
| 2    | Rugby World Cup 2015             | 6.7  | 5.5  | 1.2    |
| 3    | Premiership Rugby                | 5.5  | 6.3  | -0.8   |
| 4    | British & Irish Lions Rugby Tour | 4.5  | 30.3 | -25.8  |
| 5    | European Cup Rugby               | 4.5  | 4.9  | -0.4   |
| 6    | Super League Rugby               | 3.9  | 4.0  | -0.1   |
| 7    | iRB Rugby Sevens                 | 3.5  | 3.8  | -0.3   |

### 3 | BUZZ BY SPORT | TENNIS

As with the Wimbledon Championships the buzz score of most other leading tennis events fell in 2014 as Andy Murray was unable to repeat his record-breaking results of 2013.

The Queen's Club Tennis Championships fell to 11th from sixth among annual events with a fall of 8.7 to 11.7. However this reflects that the 2013 Championships event was won by the Briton and the 2014 level remains nearly double the 6.5 peak buzz level for the tournament in 2012.

Similarly Australian Open Tennis dropped from seventh to 15th (excluding periodic events) while the US Open recorded a modest 2.8 fall in buzz.

The one grand slam to buck the trend was the French Open which saw a 1.3 increase in buzz to become the second ranked tennis event. Driving the increase was Andy Murray matching his best ever performance at Roland Garros, making the semi-finals, before losing to eventual champion and nine-times winner Rafael Nadal. Murray missed the 2013 event due to injury.

Similarly ITF Davis Cup buzz increased for the second year with the British team consolidating on its promotion to the top level World Group in 2013 by beating the US to make the World Group quarter-finals in 2014.

| Rank | Competition                | 2014        | 2013 | Change       |
|------|----------------------------|-------------|------|--------------|
| 1    | Wimbledon Championships    | <b>39.6</b> | 55.8 | <b>-16.2</b> |
| 2    | French Open                | <b>13.2</b> | 11.9 | 1.3          |
| 3    | Queens Tennis Championship | <b>11.7</b> | 20.4 | <b>-8.7</b>  |
| 4    | Australian Open Tennis     | <b>10.0</b> | 18.4 | <b>-8.4</b>  |
| 5    | US Open tennis             | <b>9.3</b>  | 12.1 | <b>-2.8</b>  |
| 6    | ATP World Tour Finals      | <b>6.8</b>  | 6.1  | 0.7          |
| 7    | ITF Davis Cup              | <b>6.7</b>  | 5.3  | 1.4          |



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We have a long track record of working with major international, regional and national stakeholders from all areas of the sports industry. By understanding the requirements and expectations of these organisations we provide advanced research solutions, indepth advice and bespoke consultancy.

SMG Insight combines extensive expertise and experience of the specialised industry that surrounds sport with the world’s premium market research company, YouGov, to create an unparalleled new generation of sports research.

Through this partnership, SMG Insight offers a unique synthesis of thought leadership, strategic insight, comprehensive data analysis and global reach that enables our clients to achieve their key objectives in sports investment, sponsorship and marketing.

SMG Insight / YouGov operates from an international network of offices in London, Edinburgh, North America, Scandinavia, Germany, France, and Middle East.

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-  SPONSOR INSIGHT
-  CONSUMER INSIGHT
-  REVENUE OPTIMISATION
-  ECONOMIC IMPACT
-  MEDIA MONITORING & EVALUATION
-  CONSULTANCY



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