

A Systems Approach to Improving the Spectator Experience at Collegiate
Football Games
(Technical Report)

A Slow Victory: How the Disability Community Is Fighting for an
Accessible Stadium Experience
(STS Research Paper)

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At athletics events, spectators need efficient game day procedures, comfortable arenas, and seamless integration of technology into game day. Managing thousands of fans requires well engineered systems and a robust understanding of diverse fans.

Following a recent decline in attendance at football games, the University of Virginia (UVA) has sought ways to improve the spectator experience to boost team morale and revenues. To recommend improvements to traffic efficiency before games, the research team gathered data through interviews with the University Police Department (UPD) and game day observations. The primary recommendation is new signage to prevent confusion and to guide spectators navigating the stadium. The UVA Athletics Department will have full discretion in implementing this recommendation.

Sporting events must accommodate diverse audiences, including fans who have disabilities. Legal protections set a minimum standard, but disability rights advocates promote greater accessibility to physical and digital experiences at sporting events. Advocacies lobby for legislation, litigate, and demand more inclusive venue design. Such advocacy indicates that regulations, though necessary, have been insufficient to ensure equitable access to sports events.