

Against modern football or a part of it?

A study of how Swedish football clubs work with their media channels and how it affects the professional role of sport's journalists

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Abstract

Previous studies have shown that football is getting more commercial and together with increased digital possibilities football clubs can bypass traditional media and attract audience via their own media channels. With strategic communication and agenda setting as a theoretic background I wanted to investigate how Swedish top football clubs used their own media channels, what affected the media strategy of the big clubs in Sweden and how sports journalists perceived the football club's communicative development. I choose AIK as a case and I observed them and sports journalists before, during and after the local derby against Djurgården. Furthermore, I analyzed AIK's content in their own media channels and media's coverage of AIK-Djurgården. Finally, I conducted qualitative interviews with representatives from AIK and three sport journalists at three Swedish newspapers.

My study revealed that the AIK significantly planned and applied strategic content and messaging across their media channels, consistent with the techniques used by more mature and traditional media organizations. When it comes to access to the club and players there are tendencies and signs of less accessibility, but in general Swedish sport journalists see the Swedish Allsvenskan as open and not as commercial and controlled as the major European football leagues. In the end journalists believe that the material which is produced by AIK and the other big Stockholm clubs (Djurgården and Hammarby) can be seen as a compliment, but also a competitor to the material that media produce.

Key words: Digitalization, Sport journalism, Commercialization, Strategic communication, Agenda Setting, Source Relation, AIK, Football

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1. Introduction

A movie featuring The Swedish international and Manchester United player Victor Nilsson Lindelöf playing Ice hockey with a local team has gone viral. More than 150 000 views on YouTube (Manchester United 2018) and two of Sweden's leading sports websites Aftonbladet (Wallskog 2018) and Fotbollskanalen (Forsberg 2018) reported about the story, produced by the world's richest football club (Dawson 2018), Manchester United, own media department.

The story above is one example of how sports journalism works these days in a digital and commercial environment. Sports journalists are not only competing against each other but also against the club's official websites and with social media like Facebook and Twitter, which give the clubs opportunities to communicate direct with their fans (Price, Farrington & Hall 2013).

Football clubs in Scandinavia and Sweden play at another level, but they are part of a more commercial football world and are putting more and more effort in to social media and their own media channels (Helland 2007, p. 105-119; Lundgren, p.30-31 2018). Since 2017, AIK, one of Sweden's leading clubs, is working together with Sportlib which gives paying subscribers an insight behind the scenes (AIK 2017).

Big football clubs, function as big companies which use strategic communication in their relation with media and fans. One part of strategic communication is public relations and their way of trying way to influence and shaping the message are issues that affects journalists in different fields such as political journalism (Berkowitch, 2009) but it also sports journalism (Pedersen, Miloch & Laucella , 2007, p. 35). Previous studies have shown that football and media are adapting to a more commercial environment, especially in the England and the other big countries in Europe (Boyle 2006).

I am consuming both international and Swedish football and have a background as a sports journalist. However, I am most familiar and interested in our "own league", the Swedish Allsvenskan. The common picture of Allsvenskan is that it is open and accessible for journalists (and fans) and the league slogan is "a close football experience" (Allsvenskan 2018). But could that be changing as more money is put into the sport and commercial opportunities for the football clubs grow?

2. Background

2.1 Allsvenskan

The first season of the Swedish top league took place 1924/1925 (Nylin 2004) and today it contains 16 football clubs. Football is the biggest sport in Sweden and has for a long time been the most covered sport in the press. The Swedish league is given a lot of media attention, but it competes with the national team and international football of which coverage has increased (Wallin 1998). Media focus most on five clubs that are commonly referred to “storklubbarna” or the big clubs in Swedish media – as in an article that states that the big clubs want more money from television rights (Richau 2018). The five big clubs that are mentioned are: AIK, Djurgårdens IF, IFK Göteborg, Malmö FF and Hammarby. The clubs are also amongst the most successful when it comes to league titles (except for Hammarby).

The Swedish league Allsvenskan has the highest average attendance of all leagues in Sweden; 9087 spectators 2017 (SVT 2018) and the five big clubs were in top of that list. Hammarby had the highest average with 22 127 spectators 2017 and the second and third best club, Malmö FF, respectively AIK had 18 254 and 17 807 which also is good numbers in a European context (Nyberg 2018).

The “five big” do not only have the largest crowd in the stadiums, they also have it online in social media channels such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram (Lundgren 2018). Another fact is that the five teams are from Sweden’s three biggest cities (Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö) where many media companies are present, especially Stockholm.

2.2 Television

Sport and media have a long history and researchers like Frandsen (2014) talk about mediatization of sports. With the help of mass media, sport organizations could attract athletes and spectators, and a newspaper article about an upcoming game is an example of that. But the relationship between mass media and sport is not a one-way-channel. The relationship is rather symbiotic and sport and mass media are dependent on each other (Frandsen 2014, p. 520 -521).

It was the emergence of television that had the biggest impact on sport and medias relationship and the media researcher Sut Jhallay uses the term sports/media complex to describe the relationship between sport and television. He also states the fact that “Most people do the vast majority of their sports spectating via the media (largely through

television), so that the cultural experience is hugely mediated” (Jhally 1989, cited in Frandsen 2014, p.521-522).

In a Swedish context, the football world cup 1958 was the first mediatized tournament and many households bought their first television that year (SvFF). But the first Swedish football game was aired the 5th of May 1955 when AIK played against IFK Norrköping (Lindahl, 2004).

During the 60’s and 70’s Swedish league football was not aired at all. The audience in Scandinavia watched English club football instead. The first game was aired 1969 on Swedish television and the tv-show “Tipsextra”, that showed football games from England on Saturdays became a considerable success. English football games were aired at the same time in Denmark and Norway, and Norwegian media scholar Knut Helland states that” Tippekampene (same concept as Tipsextra) on Norwegian TV laid the foundation for the commercialization of football in the country and regular club matches became attractive for sport-television” (Helland 2003 p. 75). Many Swedes have an English football team that they follow, and Tipsextra had an important role as a mediator. The audience continued to consume English football during the 80’s and only a few, single matches with Swedish clubs were aired. Football fans had to wait until the end of the 90’s for a regular coverage of Allsvenskan – when the newly established Canal Plus aired game of the week (Leifby, p.110 2018).

2.3 Digitalization and commercialization

Technical development is one thing that made football more available and during the 90’s football, especially in England, transformed into the “cash cow” of the new media sport economy. The commercial development has continued and Sky Sports and BT Sport payed 60 billion Swedish crowns for the Premier League seasons 2016-2019, which will give you an idea of footballs commercial value (Boyle & Haynes 2004 p.4; Jönsson 2015).

The Swedish league is at a much lower level than Premier League and the other big leagues in Europe. Nevertheless, the new tv-rights for the Swedish league Allsvenskan 2020 -2025 will cost approximately 540 million SEK each year, twice as much as today’s deal (Wagner 2017).

Economically the Swedish league is way behind the “big five” European leagues that stood for more than 54 percent of the market revenues 2015/2016 (Deloitte 2007). The study also

showed that an average revenue per club in English premier league were 243 million euros for the same period, whereas the average revenue for a Swedish club were 10 million euros.

2.4 New competitors: Telecommunication and tech companies

Television companies have traditionally had a monopoly when it comes to sports broadcasting. But recently, new competitors have arrived. Both Facebook (single games in Spanish football) and Amazon (ATP tour of Tennis) have bought rights to air live sports. The national ice hockey league in Finland is aired by Telia (Ekman 2018).

2.5 Cooperation between right owners and television

Another trend is that “the right owners themselves try to capitalize on their rights”, which is the case with “Föreningen Svensk Elitfotboll” (SEF) or Association of Swedish Elite Football whom hold the tv-rights for Allsvenskan. SEF started their own media channels in 2014 and have a “mutual cooperation” with the broadcaster Discovery (ibid, p.7). One example of the co-operation is that highlights from the matches are showed at allsvenskan.se, a website owned by SEF.

2.6 Sport communication

In the World of sports, public relations existed already in 1960 when the football club Coventry City hired a public relations manager—but it was not until the 1990’s that development began to accelerate in England and elsewhere (Boyle 2006). In the US, public relations have a strong role which is described thoroughly by Pedersen, Miloch & Laucella (2007). They use the concept strategic sports communication which can basically be defined as “exchange of either information by or through sport”. In their book it appears that producing a positive image of the sports organization and its stakeholders is a key point for sport public relations professionals. The role of the employee has also changed. Before they were merely seen as informers or “glorified statisticians” but these days public relation professionals are crucial when it comes to shaping the message and the image of the sports club or organization. (ibid, p. 34-35). The use of symbols is important for sport organizations, that want to create their own identity or story. The symbols could be slogans or anthems, many teams have their anthems or songs that they play when the players march into the field (ibid, p.82-83).

The sports journalists also play an important role in the communication process and they interact with managers and other sources within the club, but also with readers who often are

supporters of the club. The relationship with the public is important for the clubs and media is one way to reach the community. Apart from media coverage, public perception affects areas such as ticket sales and the policy of the organization (ibid, p. 262). A greater awareness among the sport organizations has led to a standardized information-flow, where press conferences and photo calls have become more and more regular. Events are kept within tight reins and journalists cannot always ask the most critical questions (Boyle 2006 p. 115-117).

3. Theoretical framework

My aim is to investigate how the big Swedish clubs are working with media and their own news channels relating to sports journalism and how that affects the journalistic role for sports journalists. My hypothesis is that Swedish football clubs in a big extent are using their own websites and social media to reach the audience and bypass traditional press.

3.1 Research questions

I would like to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: How are Swedish top football clubs using their own media channels in order to reach out to fans and media?

RQ2: What affects the media strategy of the big clubs in Sweden?

RQ3: How do sports journalists perceive the football club's communicative development?

3.2 Theories

I will mainly use theories regarding to strategic communication to be able to understand how the football clubs are communicating and interacting with media and their audience. Agenda setting and the relation between reporters and their sources is also relevant to have in mind when I want to look on issues of access and dependency.

Mediatization, commercialization and digitalization are terms that belong to the field and will be commonly used. I will explain those terms further down.

3.3 Strategic communication

When is communication strategic?

“Strategic communication can be defined as the study of how organizations use communication purposefully to fulfill their overall missions” (Frandsen & Johansen 2017, p. 57). Strategic communication has its background in three different fields: humanities, mass communication theory and organizational theory (Falkheimer & Heide 2018).

In the book “strategisk kommunikation” Falkheimer and Heide (2011) have looked on strategic communication with a mainly Swedish perspective. They list four criteria for strategic communication; Overall perspective on organizations communication (no difference between public relations and internal communication), communication and organizations at the center (common meaning through symbols and characters), many different perspectives (theoretic frameworks that have its origin in social- and cultural sciences) and a global and European platform.

The authors write about a professionalization of strategic communication in Sweden and states that it is a contemporary fact. However, the digital development and the occurrence of user-generated content erases the boundaries and making it harder for organizations to control the message. The audience can retrieve the material they are interested in and can produce their own stories through social media such as YouTube and Flickr (ibid p.32-33).

There is a lot of talk about the opportunities of social media, but critics like Grunig and Grunig (ibid p.39) argue that potential is not being fully exploited and that the organization usually most commonly uses social media as “a platform for spreading the organization’s message”.

The importance of a good relation between the organization and its stakeholders is commonly discussed in strategic communication, and especially in public relations. And it is through communication that the relationship is created and maintained (ibid p, 119-133).

Thelander&Rosenqvist (2011) describes how cultural institutions work with strategic communication. To be attractive for visitors is important for museums and they should strive to give the visitor a “whole experience”. A high number of visitors indicates that the museum has been successful in their communication and at the same time attendance is important for Swedish football clubs (Andersson, Nilsson 2012). A study of Danish museums shows that many of them have unclear goals and visions and only a few of them had “highly developed

communicative strategies". The organizations included in the last category were characterized by communicating to several internal and external groups and using multiple channels. Communication was considered important and prioritized. In order to improve their communication, cultural organizations can look at good examples or role models such as Museum of modern art or Centre Pompidou (ibid, p. 283-306) in the sports world the big elite clubs such as Manchester United or Juventus.

In the book *Strategic Communication An Introduction* (2018), Falkheimer & Heide mention that the consumer role has changed. Today's consumers are more well informed, active and interconnected (Falkheimer & Heide 2018, p. 33). Shared values with organizations and customers is a significant matter and customers are more important these days. According to the DART model (Prahalad & Ramaswamy 2004 referred to by Falkheimer & Heide 2018, p.33) four blocks are relevant such as: dialogue, access, transparency and risk-benefits. A contemporary trend in strategic communication is that social media has increased in importance and seen as more important than media relations, although they are still considered important by communication professionals (Zerfass et al., 2017 referred to by Falkheimer & Heide 2018, p. 122-123).

3.4 Source relations/agenda setting

The relationship between journalists and their sources has long been studied in the field of journalism and matters concerning bias, power and influence are central (Berkowitz 2009, p. 102). Journalists use of sources and how it affects what is reported is included in the theory of agenda setting. McComb and Shaw's study (1972) found that media have the ability to influence what the audience should think about. It can be explained as the more space a subject gets in the media, the more important is the subject from the audience view (Mquail 2010, p. 548).

A large part of the journalistic work is routinized, and journalists have narrow timeframes. However, the sources are not always available and chasing them is something that journalists spend time and resources on. Nevertheless, the relationship between journalists and their sources is not a one-way channel. Communication professionals try to control and watch their interests and they also try to influence and create news through press releases, press conferences and other events (Falkheimier & Heide 2018, p. 123, Berkowitz (2009, p. 104).

Scholars argue differently about who really has the most power, communication professionals or journalists. But media researcher Herbert Gans (1979, p.116, referred to by Falkheimier & Heide 2018, p. 127) stated following:

“The relationship between sources and journalists resembles a dance, for sources seek access to journalists, and journalists seek access to sources. Although it takes two to tango, either sources or journalists can lead, but more often than not, sources do the leading”.

To be noted is the fact that both sources and journalists possess a different amount of power. Sources in high positions might be more difficult for journalists to get information from whereas it is easier for journalists high up in the hierarchy to gather information from sources. (Reese 1991, referred to by Berkowitz 2009, p. 105).

I have mentioned earlier that medias work is dependent on routines and standards. Furthermore, new and changing conditions of journalism, increasingly digital and more professional strategic communication sector have made the challenges more apparent for traditional journalism. (Falkheimer & Heide 2018, p. 128)

Finally, it is worth to mention that in the world of sports, some sports dominate the news agenda, especially football. Reporting also differs in case of reports of men versus women, male athletes are getting more coverage and are covered in a different way (Carlsson & Enbom 2011, Pedersen, Miloch & Laucella , 2007).

3.5 Mediatization

Mediatization is defined as “a theory that argues that the media shapes and frames the processes and discourse (conversation) of political communication as well as the society in which that communication takes place” (Frandsen & Johansen 2017, referred to by Falkheimier & Heide 2018, p.57). Researchers in the field of cultural studies write about the connection between media culture and consumer culture and how it has become intertwined. Media focuses more on entertainment in order to answer to the masses demand (Lilleker 2006). Mediatization has its origin in the television era and tv has been the dominant medium when it comes to reach the masses (Schultz 2004, p. 94). But with new technology there are possibilities for actors, such as political ones, to “bypass the mass media and use their own channels for directly communicating to the public or to specific target groups” (ibid p.95).

When it comes to sport, mediatization has a long history and they are in many ways depending on each other which is written about in my background (Frandsen 2014, p. 523).

An important aspect is that sport and sporting events have their own cultural significance. Some sports organizations are sufficiently important to be able to set their own media agenda in relation to traditional journalistic norms and when it comes to schedule televised events. Money is important in the world of sports and money is also important for the relationship between media and sports, as the audience pays for entertainment. (ibid, p. 527-528).

3.6 Commercialization

Commercialization is seen as a “process by which media structures and contents come to reflect the profit-seeking goals of media industries and are too much governed by market considerations” Mquail 2010 p. 551).

Globalization is related to commercialization. One example of globalization of media is that similar news and entertainments products are found in many countries. This certainly applies to sports and events such as the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games are aired all over the world. Further on, since commercialization of sports is globally a growing phenomenon - researchers talk about blurred lines between the sport industry and sport journalists (Mquail 2010, p. 250; Boyle 2006, p. 3-4).

3.7 Digitalization

Digitalization is defined as “Integration of digital technologies into everyday life by the digitization of everything that can be digitized” (businessdictionary 2018). One well known example is the transmission from analogue television signals to digital signals which increases capacity and possibilities for interactivity (Mquail 2010, p.555). Many sport organizations such as football clubs, use the digital options to deliver content to the media and audiences (Boyle and Haynes 2004, p.46).

4. Research on Sports journalism

Sports journalism has not had a high status in the field of journalism research and has been called the toy department. Sports journalism’s development and the effects of digitalization and PR are addressed by Boyle (2006). He states that digitization and digitalization has influenced journalism to a great extent that there is a “battle of control of sports” when it comes to how news is presented and reported to the audience. In a study from 2004 Boyle

&Haynes looks at how football clubs use new media platforms such as the internet and mobile telephony to usurp traditional journalism and speak directly to the audience. Later studies show how clubs, and even players can use social media to communicate directly with the audience. The clubs have employees who work with media, publishing news in their own media channels and reports live from matches. There are also attempts by clubs and governing organizations to control and guide the players how to use Twitter and when they should be available for interviews with journalists. (Price, Farrington & Hall, 2013, p. 455, p. 466; Boyle, 2006, p. 103). The above is impacting the role of media and sports journalism itself has become more lucrative, editorial and speculative, especially when it comes to transfer rumors.

As I mentioned earlier, television broadcasts and digitalization have changed the conditions for sports journalism (Boyle 2017). Other phenomena such as participant journalism and citizen journalism are also found in the world of sports and nowadays there are many different fan-based sources of information that journalists should take into account (Holt 2015; Boyle 2017) and one Swedish example is the website Svenska fans.

There is a convergence between different media forms, new platforms are used to consume content (Quandt & Singer 2009), and sports journalists must adapt to a 24/7 information flow and be able to produce material for various platforms, including social media such as Twitter and Facebook (Boyle 2012, p. 88-99).

The commercial development of football has impacted sports journalists, especially those who cover football. Public relations established itself in the 1990's and journalists in England have difficulties with access to players, who are being managed by clubs and agents. The club also controls the information flow, and when players can be interviewed by media representatives (Farrington, Price & Hall, 2013, p. 446), or as Boyle (2006, p. 3-4) puts it

“For sports journalists, the issue of access to players and information has become more difficult as the commercial stakeholders in the game attempt to use the digital landscape to usurp and bypass traditional sports journalism”.

4.1 Sports journalism in Sweden

In ”sporten i spalterna” or the sport in the columns, Wallin (1998) described the development of the Swedish sports journalism during the 20th century. Sport journalism got its own section during the first part of the century, after it established itself for the readers. A major change of

the journalistic role occurred when television started to air sport events and football during the 1950's. The journalists transformed from referrers to instead function as an intermediary between the audience and the athletes. The so-called "pratminusjournalistik" (quoting journalism) had been established and there was an increasing focus on sport stars as celebrities. Football has been the most covered sport since 1915 and international football has got more and more attention and is also easier available thanks to the digital development (ibid, p. 184, p. 15).

There are also in a Swedish perspective talks about commercialization of sports and the old amateur ideals are abandoned. As more was written about football, the audience's interest increased, which Wallin (p.263) calls a "spiral effect" – and the relationship between media and sport fits in with theories of mediatization (Frandsen 2014). Another example of the spiral effect is Allsvenskan's increased attendance in the early 2000's which coincide with the fact that more matches were being broadcast, the football magazine Offside was established and the evening tabloids increased their coverage of the league (Leifby (2018, p.110-111).

The fact that the printed press and the journalistic role is under pressure cannot be ignored and there are talks about a de-professionalization of journalism (Nygren 2008). Nevertheless, sports journalism is economically significant for the media companies (Enbom & Carlsson 2015). The digital development gives media companies possibilities and football fans are willing to pay to follow their team (Boyle and Haynes 2004, p.28). It does not matter if it is a ticket at the stadium or via different platforms such as computers, television, radio or on their mobile phone. The Swedish local newspaper Östersundsposten took advantage of that and successfully aired a game, and they are only one of several newspapers that have done the same. Östersundsposten attracted 45 000 viewers to Östersunds FK's Europa League qualifier against Fola on August the 3th 2017. In addition, they received 1500 new subscribers (Söderlund 2017).

4.2 Investigative sports journalism

Investigative journalism occurs in sports journalism and doping, match fixing and corruption scandals are included in the media coverage. The latter is highlighted by Rowe (2017) in the article Sports Journalism and the FIFA Scandal: Personalization, Co-optation, and Investigation. Rowe, like other researchers, criticizes the investigative sports journalism and argues that sports journalists do not fulfil their watchdog role and that they ignore or minimize scandals that occur in the sport organizations.

From a Swedish point of view, journalists tend to focus too much on results and cheers and a famous Swedish investigate reporter, Fredrik Laurin (Andersson 2014) uses the phrase “a black hole” to describe the investigative coverage of sports journalism. However, there are some exceptions, for example, the program Fotbollssyndikatet 2017 (Nordmark), or the football syndicate which focus on match fixation.

In a study from 2016 (Westerlind & Senator) Swedish journalists in local and national newspapers were interviewed on about objectivity in sports journalism and areas that can affect objectivity. The result showed, among other things, that commercialization and public relations have an influence and that public relation actors try to influence the news agenda.

4.3 Football clubs and their media channels

In “Pressure on printed press”, Christoph G. Grimmer (2017) examined the relationship between press officers of football in the German Bundesliga and sports journalists working for the printed press. The study shows that the clubs primarily use their own digital channels in order to reach the audience with news. It also appears that the competition between media is tough and the clubs receive more and more requests from media outlets. One way to handle it is to arrange press conferences another is to produce press releases. Access to players is limited and it is not uncommon that press officers want to check quotes and facts when “their” players are interviewed. A lot of research about football, commercialization and digitalization have a British perspective. German football is on the same level in terms of football quality, but not financially. Germany has basically the same ownership structure as in Sweden, the clubs are mainly owned by their members or in other words supporters.

But as I wrote before, I will focus on Swedish football clubs and their own media production.

For football fans or “consumers”, a definition which would upset hardcore fans, the club’s official website is the most important source of news (Boyle 2006, p.132).

In Andersson and Nilsson's bachelor thesis, representatives of four ice hockey clubs and three football clubs were interviewed to find out how they work with their media and communication channels. The study shows that the clubs believe that their own website is most important for reaching the supporters. The clubs considered that the internet and social media were important and they put resources into that. The studied clubs had their own video channels, but they were not too optimistic about upcoming possibilities of the media format. Own produced video was seen as a standard, something one should have - but it takes a lot of

resources. The own website, as well as e-mail dispatches, were used to reach the core group of fans, but traditional media were used to reach the masses. An advantage with their own media channels were the ability to control the content or give their image of an event, according to AIK's then marketing director Johan Cederbrant (Andersson, Nilsson 2012 p.30).

A survey (Solberg Sjøilen, Frestad Solér & Svensson 2014) of Swedish football audience shows that it is beneficial for a club's brand to be seen a lot in traditional media such as radio and television and in social media as well. The latter is important in attracting supporters to the matches, which may be considered as one of the clubs main marketing goals. The study also shows that poor publicity does not necessarily have to be harmful, as it gives people an increased awareness of the club, although good publicity is preferable.

4.4 Pilot study – qualitative interview

To see if my research questions are formulated in the right way I did a pilot study. My aim was to interview some of the press staff at the two biggest clubs outside of Stockholm, Malmö FF and IFK Göteborg. I emailed both and performed an interview with Malmö's head of communication, Peter Åhlander the 29th of March 2018.

Apart from the chance to see if my questions worked, Åhlander gave me some background information that I could use in my observation and during my qualitative interviews. Among other things, it emerged that Malmö FF invests more in their own media channels and that they can control the information in a different way today than a decade ago. When it comes to the relationship with journalists and the media, Åhlander says there is a mutual need. "We have a strong brand and it is written daily about us. You can say that we help each other."

Since Malmö recently played in the Champions league, Åhlander could give me a good insight into what it looks like in European top clubs, including access to players.

"They have closed trainings in Bundesliga, Serie A and Premier League. Open training sessions are important for Allsvenskan as a whole. A 13-year-old supporter can come down and take a selfie with Markus Rosenberg. Journalists should be able to follow the training and take quick quotes afterwards. It is very important with a proximity to the team".

Another difference is the resources that the clubs can put on communication.

“Malmö FF has 2.75 employees working with communications, big clubs like Juventus and PSG has 30-40 communicators. They have greater opportunities for reaching out with their own channels and cooperation partners”.

5. Method

With the pilot interview as a confirmation of my hypothesis I could continue my study. I choose to do a case study and focus on one team, AIK to see if they have adapted to a more commercial and digital football environment and see if that affects the professional role of sport journalists. Qualitative interviews could give some answers to how the club works but in order for me to get a deeper understanding I also needed to observe the interaction between journalists and the club as well as conducting a content analysis to get an understanding of what kind of material the club produces and if it is different than the material that traditional media produces. To be clear I therefore performed the study in three different ways; Observation, content analysis and qualitative interviews.

I looked at the relationship between the club and the sports journalists and how the two groups work. I did my observation study doing a training session, a press meeting and during a football match, in this case AIK-Djurgården the 15th of April 2018. I chose these in order to observe AIK a “normal day” when they practice, during a press briefing before a big game and a game,

I also conducted a content analysis where I analyzed AIK’s own media channels and media’s coverage of my observed game, AIK-Djurgården. I also interviewed Gabriel Niklasson, the acting head of communication at AIK and Björn Wesström, the sports director of AIK. I interviewed three sports journalists from three different newspapers; Per Bohman, Afonbladet, Therese Strömberg, Expressen and Lars Grimlund, Dagens Nyheter.

5.1 Observation study

Observation studies are suitable when the researcher wants to “study processes that can be hard to express in words” (Esaiasson, P., Gilljam, M., Oscarsson, H., Wängerud, L. 2007 p. 343) and in my case, observe how the relationship, including “hidden messages” between press officers, players, managers at the football club and sports journalists. I mainly looked at three central themes, how the club worked with their communication, openness/accessibility and the relation between sports journalists and the club. Human interactions, body language

and the atmosphere in a room are typical things that a researcher can only answer by an observation study and things that I noticed during my research.

I followed one case, AIK, for three days when they had a game at home. This was mainly because of accessibility factors so I could observe press conferences, interviews after the game and furthermore. Regarding time-limits I could not perform a full time ethnographic observation, which usually “entails long period of times” and my method were more of a “micro-ethnography” and I focused on a few specific topics such as interaction between staff at the club and sports journalists, openness/accessibility and how the club worked with their communication (Bryman 2016 p.424).

Taking notes on the field, interacting with people, formal and informal interviews is appropriate for doing ethnographic studies in the field of sport. It is also important to have time to reflect on your study (Silk 2005, p. 78). Another important thing to bear in mind while conducting ethnographic studies is that you should be well prepared and to try to melt in with the group you are studying. I tried to have the above in mind while I performed my study. During the training, the press meeting, and after the match, I took a passive role to not interfere with fans and journalists, but when I was talking to someone (to take quotes to my observation) I would telling them about my role and purpose of my study (Stokes 2003, p. 111-112).

During my study, I mostly took notes in my notebook, but as well as on my computer. When the observation was completed, I transferred all material from my notebook to my computer as quickly as possible. I also took pictures with my cell-phone, which is a good way for me to document an event, and I uploaded all the pictures to the same folder on my computer, were I have my notes and essay.

5.2 Content analysis

To understand how the club work and the sports journalists work it is necessary to analyze some of the content. I had some questions in mind while I look at the content which is important to see if the “material could give an answer to these questions”. (Furberg, cited in Esaiasson, P., Gilljam, M., Oscarsson, H., Wängnerud, L. 2007 p. 237). I had the following themes/questions in mind.

- What kind of material was produced and when was it published?
- Differences/similarities between AIK's material and the journalistic material
- Which channel (media type) was it produced on (In AIK's case)

I looked on AIK's webpage and their social media channels: Twitter, Instagram and YouTube during my observation period and one day afterwards 12042018-16042018. I also had a look at the journalistic texts before the game and after the game to get a better understanding of how the journalists work. I looked on the websites of Aftonbladet, Expressen and Dagens Nyheter three hours before the game took place between AIK and Djurgården 15042018 and three hours after the game. I choose the newspapers since Aftonbladet and Expressen are the leading tabloid papers, with large sport sections and that Dagens Nyheter is a quality morning paper with a relative large sport section. I also interviewed one journalist from each paper. Due to practical reasons, time limits and the fact that I did not get an interview with any reporter at Fotbollskanalen I choose to neglect them.

I did the content analysis in order to get a deeper and closer understanding as an example how the club works with its media channels and their contact with media and supporters (Bryman 2016, p. 400- 401) and also to understand how the journalists covered the team. I transcribed the videoclips that AIK produced, which make it easier for me to look at details in the interview and compare it with other material. I also did a preliminary analysis where I analysed the raw material. After that I narrowed down and summarized the content and put it into tables.

5.3 Qualitative interviews

In-depth, qualitative interviews are suitable when the researcher wants deeper and more detailed answers and it gives the opportunity for follow up questions (Bryman 2016, p. 466-467).

The interviews were semi-structured and focused on the subject's experience. I, as a researcher lead the interviews and had the possibility to ask follow-up questions, which gave me as a researcher some flexibility (Brinkmann&Kvale 2015, p. 29, Amis 2005, p.108).

Apart from the pilot interview and the interview with AIK's sport director Björn Wesström which I did by phone, all interviews, Gabriel Niklasson (AIK acting head of communication) and the sports journalists, Per Bohman (Aftonbladet), Therese Strömberg (Expressen) and Lars Grimlund (Dagens Nyheter) were made face to face and they were recorded on my

mobile phone and then transcribed to my computer. They were conducted in Swedish, my and the subjects mother tongue, which they were more comfortable with, and it made it easier for me to ask follow up questions on the go. The quotes that I used in my essay were translated into English. All the interviewed persons had a chance to see the quotes which I used in my thesis.

5.4 Sampling

I did a purposive sampling, so that “those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are posed” and will choose strategically (Bryman p. 408).

The football club’s with the biggest media departments and that drove most media attention in Sweden are those from the major cities. Hammarby, Djurgården and AIK, from Stockholm and IFK Göteborg, from Gothenburg and Malmö FF from Malmö. The mentioned clubs are as I wrote in my background referred to “storklubbarna” and will be a good example of how the big clubs work with their own media channels.

For practical reasons I choose the clubs in the Stockholm area. I also did that since I have most knowledge about the football teams in Stockholm. I mainly focused on AIK, since they are the club that are leading in their work with social media (Lundgren, p. 30-31 2018), they have an interesting collaboration with the media company Sportlib (AIK 2017) and has been in the top spots when it comes to attendance and position in the table the last years. However, the journalists answered some questions about the big Stockholm clubs in general, since I was not totally sure that I would get access to AIK before I interviewed the first sports journalists, although I said that AIK was my primary target. Because of that the sports journalists sometimes talked about AIK as a specific example but mainly about the big Stockholm clubs in general (AIK, Djurgården and Hammarby). The fact that the sports journalists talked about the teams in general had a positive thing, since I then get a more general answer of how it looks in the three big clubs, but I still have AIK as a case and a clear example.

When it comes to the interviews I thought it was important that the subjects could give good answers to my research questions, what Bryman calls purposive sampling (Bryman 2016 p. 420). I selected sports journalists from the biggest evening newspapers and their special editions for Allsvenskan. I emailed all the listed reporters, who are out in the field and have a base in Stockholm (I knew that some of the journalists were based in Gothenburg or Malmö). I also emailed three reporters at the leading football site Fotbollskanalen. I got two positive

answers straight away, Per Bohman, from Aftonbladet and Therese Strömberg from Expressen. I did not receive any more positive messages although one could perhaps be interviewed by phone. Since I had one male and one female, in the mid-twenties and one around thirty years old I wanted a more experienced reporter, and I thought about Lars Grimlund at Dagens Nyheter, the morning paper. He answered fast and I booked an interview with him as well.

I contacted AIK's acting head of communication, Gabriel Niklasson to get information about the press meeting and accreditation to the game AIK-Djurgården. After the game we decided to meet later for an interview. I talked with him since he is the most suitable to answer questions about AIK's communication policy and their own media channels, what researchers call a "central source" (Esaiasson et al. 2007 p. 343). Another central and vital source was Björn Wesström, AIK's sports director and I did a phone interview with him after my interview with Niklasson.

5.5 Reliability and validity issues

I was open with my questions and I tried to not affect the subjects, whether in my interviews or doing my observation.

Objectivity is always tricky and as a football supporter I have relations to different teams. To be fair I have mostly followed Hammarby and I am supporting them so I decided together with my supervisor that I will not follow them since it can make me bias. I am used to be objective as a sports journalist and researcher and I let third parties' such as colleagues and friends to read my text to see that there are no hidden judgmental sentences that I am not aware of.

The interview subjects were clearly informed about my purpose, both written (I first contacted them by email) and oral before the interview. It was also important that they could use their name and organization and that they are aware of that the thesis will be published. I transcribed the interviews and performed them at neutral places cafés or at the subject's home ground, which is recommended by several researchers (Silk, p. 79). I also informed the subjects that they had the right to read the quotes I used in my final text.

I used handbooks in interview technique such as *InterViews* (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015) to ensure that I had a good methodological background. I also consulted methodological literature such as, *Metodpraktikan. Konsten att studera samhälle, individ och marknad* (Esaiasson,

Gilljam, Oscarsson, Wängerud, (2007), Bryman Social research methods (2016) and Qualitative methods in Sports studies (Andrews, Mason, & Silk 2005) and How to do media and cultural studies (Stokes 2013).

In research, validity is about measuring what you mean to measure (Bryman 2016, p. 158). I believe that the validity is good when it comes to my qualitative interviews and other scholars can find my research questions in the appendix which makes it easier for them to conduct similar interviews. As I wrote before I tried to be objective and I am convinced that I stayed as non-bias as possible. Nevertheless, the observation study and qualitative study is of course affected by how I as a researcher interpreted the material.

5.6 Limitation

Since the amount of time was limited I decided to not investigate how AIK worked with Facebook and I focused on the other social media channels where they are more active. With observation and qualitative interviews, I could not allow myself to have a too advanced content analysis of the articles. Instead, I wanted to give the reader an insight of how much AIK and they journalists produced as well as to show the difference between the content AIK produced and the sports journalists.

5.7 Generalizability

This study reveals how AIK work with their own media channels. Given that I examined AIK in three different ways; observation, content analysis and qualitative interview, I was able to get a more complete overall picture and I could achieve the same result by using different methods.

As a club, AIK are equal to the other big Stockholm clubs; Djurgården and Hammarby, indicating that the results could be the same if they were investigated. The same applies to the other Swedish top clubs; IFK Göteborg and Malmö FF, as well as larger clubs in the Nordic countries such as FC Copenhagen, Brøndby IF, Vålerenga Fotball and Rosenborg BK.

The number of interviewed sports journalists is not enough to give an absolute idea of how the group as a whole perceive the communicative development of the clubs. However, with three interviewed sports journalists, with different backgrounds and at different newspapers, the study can give a good indication.

6. Results

6.1 Observation

6.2 AIK Open training

Prior to the training, I thought a lot about openness and the club's interaction with journalists, and how would it be at this training, which was one of the few open exercises for AIK in April (AIK 2018). In general, AIK train at Karlberg where they have their training facility. But since the season has just started, they practiced today at Skytteholm's artificial grass, close to their home ground Friends Arena. The information was visible at AIK's website where they have a calendar (see appendix) where a fan or a journalist can see where and if there is a training and if it is open or closed for journalist's and fans. Which of Skytteholm's four different fields was not stated by AIK. Since I have visited Skytteholm before it was not so hard to guess that AIK would use the A-field, which is in best shape and have the biggest stand. Around twenty supporters had gathered, and I would describe the atmosphere as familiar. A group of men with strollers, probably on paternity leave stood close to the pitch. Some other supporters in different ages, was seen sitting further up and watching the practice and enjoying the sun. I did see one woman, but otherwise there were only men and their toddlers.

I did not see any high fence or security guards. The head coach, Rickard Norling sat at the stand and followed the training for a while. He talked with some supporters and entered the field (where his assistant was instructing the players). The sports director, Björn Wesström walked along the sidelines and towards Rickard Norling and the started to discuss something. I felt that the atmosphere was calm, but open. There was not a bunch of screaming fans with cell phones and cameras. Another suitable description would be "respectful consideration".

I took a seat besides two middle-aged men and start to chat with those who would turn out to be regular visitors. "If it is open, it is open. But there have been more closed exercises with Rickard (Norling)". It is unnecessary to have closed exercises two days before a game, one of them said. His counterpart fills in: "We are not spies, we are supporters". They tell me that it is quite calm today, but sometimes there are fans who want to take pictures with the players and take autographs. There is no media presence as far as I can see, but the two regulars tell me that journalists are usually in place if something has happened, for example, a new signing has arrived. They like to watch the practice, talk about AIK and moan a bit. They are pleased

with the fact that they can go on open training sessions and that the situation is not like in the big football leagues in Europe, where the teams have more closed practices.

I would describe this training session as calm far from scenes with hysterical fans, fences and security personnel, which can be seen in the European top leagues. The club's presence was not particularly apparent, although the sports director, Björn Wesström, was there and observed the training. The audience had the possibility to get close to the players and the coach, Rickard Norling, who sat amongst the spectators during the first part of the training.

The lack of journalist presence could probably be explained by the fact that AIK would have a press briefing the upcoming day and that nothing spectacular, or newsworthy had occurred like a new signing of a star player or no scandal. Furthermore, AIK had started the season quite well so there was not a conflict to build a case around. Why AIK media were not in place could be explained the players usually returns to the training facility (Karlberg) after the training session and that they can conduct interviews then instead.

6.3 AIK Press briefing

Before the press meeting, I wondered how it will take place practically and how controlled it would be. The journalistic role and their relation to AIK was also a thing that I had in mind. A third thing to look on is the image that AIK express to media, which connects to theories of strategic communication. The event took place at AIK's training center in Karlberg, which is an area of military buildings, football fields and other training grounds. AIK have their own area, which is surrounded by facility gates and barbed wire. However, I entered by the backdoor which is open and the same way the players use. When you enter the building, you see a sofa group situated in a living room and an office next to it. To the right there is a hallway, where the players and visitors put their outdoor shoes. Straight ahead is the canteen and just in front of it there is a digital picture whit the teams weekly schedule. While inside this feels more like being on a school then a military camp, and the canteen is quite bright and open.

The press gathering is held in a room which is separated from the canteen by a folding wall. Some players and staff are in the canteen while I arrive. The chairs in the room matches the yellow and black colors of AIK and large photographs of AIK's old stadium, Råsunda, covers the walls. I can count to three journalists five minutes prior to the starting time. AIK's acting head of communication, Gabriel Niklasson, announces that one of the players, Tarik Elyounoussi is late. A few minutes after the set time, Elyounoussi and his teammate Nabil

Bahoui and the assistant coach Bartosz Grzelak enters the room. They all greet quite casually. Five reporters are now in the room, one of which is a photographer. The journalists grab some coffee and fruit that is served. A journalist is mixing with his camera. It is a “low-key atmosphere” and a curious AIK player sticks in his head to have a look.

Niklasson welcomes everyone and announces that AIK has sold almost 27 000 tickets to the upcoming game and this will most likely be the second match in a row with over 30 000 spectators. Assistant coach Bartosz speaks for approximately one and a half minute. He does not talk long and says that AIK have started the series in a good way and that they will try to take the good performances with them to the game against Djurgården, “where we will play in a fully seated Friends Arena, in front of our fans”. When Bartosz is done, Gabriel Niklasson, acting head of communication announces that journalists no can conduct interviews: “We disregard the “panel debate”. So, Tarek, Nabbe, Bartosz all are available as long as you need, you can start right away”. The journalists are fast to approach the players. Questions about the meaning of a local derby and the fact that Djurgården won the previous meeting in the cup month ago is filling the room.

Journalists use their mobile phones to record and one journalist writes down the answers in a notebook. As there are more journalists than players, one journalist has to sit and wait a few minutes until a player becomes vacant. Dagens Nyheter Lars Grimlund have talked with Nabil Bahoui in the “living room” and I asked if he got what he wanted? “Yes, I talked to him for 10-15 minutes. If more journalists had talked as long as I did, the time would not be enough”.

No TV-channel is visible nor AIK's own media employees apart from Gabriel Niklasson who is in the canteen next door. The players in the pressroom get more questions about the significance of derby's and about their own roles and similar. Niklasson begins to pull back the folding wall to the dining room. On journalist is finished. “See you on Sunday, Niklasson calls at him”.

Grimlund mentioned that the group of journalists was a little bit smaller than usual and I asked Niklasson about that. “Not particular. How many is not so important, it is important that the big ones are here. They whom count were there, we get our exposure”. The biggest ones in this case are the evening tabloids Aftonbladet, Expressen, the morning paper Dagens Nyheter and the football webpage Fotbollskanalen. After just 45 minutes the press gathering is over. The journalists leave the venue and another AIK player, that appears quite frequently

in the media, Henok Goitom has finished his training and greets friendly before he and the last journalist's leave the training facility. My impression afterwards was that access was free, although there could have been some time pressure if more journalists had been in there. AIK's communication staff were in the background and kept an eye on the situation but without interrupting or interfering. The journalists had time to talk to the three different members of AIK, but many of them asked similar questions and got similar answers, so they probably had to be creative to get that unique story. A message from AIK's part was the fact that they had sold many tickets and that the game would take place in front of a large audience, which is important to AIK, since a high number of visitors could be seen as a success (Thelander & Rosenqvist, p. 119-133). Images and symbols of AIK are present and the pictures of AIK's old stadium Råsunda is a part of their identity or story which is important for sport organizations to convey (Pedersen, Miloch & Laucella 2007, p.82-83).

6.4 The game: AIK-Djurgården

Openness, accessibility and the relation between the sports journalists and AIK representatives was still interesting but I also looked on AIK's communication which connects to theories of strategic communication and mediatization and how the journalists practically covered the game.

To enter the pressroom, you first enter through an indoor parking area and two security checks, albeit friendly and accommodating. The main press room is quite large and sparsely decorated. There is many chairs and tables, suitable for working and AIK emblems is visible around the room. Coffee, mineral water and buns are available. I recognize four of the reporters from the previous day's press conference at AIK's facility. An hour before kicking off, 20 journalists are in place. Aftonbladet and Expressen are sitting in different groups and have four journalists each in place. I also recognize representatives from Dagens Nyheter, Fotbollskanalen and Fotboll Direkt (another football website). Personal working for Djurgården's media department are visible and dressed in clothes with the club logo. Apart from the main room there is another room which is mostly used by photographers and the TV-crew. I leave the large room and continue through a narrow and dark corridor leading towards the mixed zone, a large room which is just outside the players entry. I continue up two stairs and suddenly I am at the press box, where I end up next to two AIK supporters, whom sometimes work for the club. In front of me and in the middle of the modern arena there is a jumbotron and a broadcast from FollowUS AIK is seen where a former AIK player is

interviewed. The interviews before the match is part of a new concept called Follow us live, and is made in collaboration with the media company Sportlib.

Advertisements and commercials are also seen on the hub before the recently passed away AIK-fan and musical artist Lill Babs Svensson is honored. AIK wrestling is presented because they won some award. Gabriel Niklasson, the acting head of communication is talking with another staff member of AIK close to the pitch. The media tribune is not full, but there are not many empty seats. The journalists start to work when fans on the two stands behind the goals sides start to wave flags and light torches which is a part of their respective choreography or “tifo”. The “battle between the stands” (“läktarkampen”) is a natural part in the big matches in the Swedish league and the evening papers are reviewing the fans in a similar way that they do with the players. The journalist’s around me are taking videos and photographs of the spectacular choreographics and more torches are lit in the fanatic stands at the North (AIK) and South stands (Djurgården) of the National Stadium. The AIK anthem “Å vi e AIK” is heard all over the stadium and the players eventually enter the field and the match begins.

I turn my head around and see that several journalists are writing already, and after I quick look at Aftonbladet and Expressen’s web pages I can see that the live coverage has begun.

After fifteen minutes, two newsworthy events have occurred. One of Djurgården’s star players Kerim Mrbati has left the field injured and the minute later AIK take the lead. News articles including the injury and the goal results in articles in Expressen, Aftonbladet and Fotbollskanalen respective webpages. AIK’s official Twitter channel states that AIK is leading by 1-0 and that Henok Goitom scored. The goal is also shown as a replay at the giant square jumbotron in the middle of the stadium where fans can follow the game as well and get live information from a betting company.

Not much of importance happens before halftime and the reporters leave the press box for a coffee break. One of Expressen’s reporters is analyzing the game for their web-tv. I encounter Lars Grimlund once again, who tell me that DN have three persons at the game. Himself, another reporter and an editor. I recognize some supporter profiles such as David Fjäll who works at SVT and is known to be an AIK-fan.

Most of the reporters have barely took a seat when AIK score in the beginning of the second half. Tarik Elyounossi scores which is tweeted out by many of the people around me,

including AIK-staff. There is a bit of turmoil on the pitch when Henok Goitom shoots the ball in the face of an opposing player and a few minutes later Expressen have an article published “Bråk i derbyt efter lagkaptenens tilltag” (Larsson, Avdic 2018) or “Turmoil in the derby after the team captain’s trick”.

Allsvenskan's slogan is visible in the arena. "A close football experience" and today's audience of 30 552 spectators is presented at the jumbotron. The final whistle begins to approach and the journalists is focusing more on their computer screens, and a journalist behind me is smattering on his keyboard. One last big event occurs in the 93rd minute when a Djurgården player, Yura Movsisyan, is sent off, after what looks like a head-butt on an opposing player, Daniel Sundgren, who seemed to fall quite easily.

This will definitely become a story for the journalists who took the computers and other belongings with them and move down to the traditional press conference with the coaches. In the room where the post-game press conferences are held, a room with white walls and dark chairs, one of AIK's employees announces that the press conference can begin and according to tradition, the away coach starts, in this case Özcan Melkemichel and then the home teams Rickard Norling.

All journalists are not inside, but some wait outside, in the mixed zone to finish their story's and prepare themselves for the interviews with the players. But a bunch of people are in the room, amongst others, Aftonbladet's “star editor” Simon Bank, and Expressens big name Daniel “Disco” Kristoffersson. Several employees for the various clubs are also in the room and one of Djurgården's media staff is filming the press conference with a camera.

Both coaches analyze the match for a few minutes each and they get a chance to say what they think and submit their analysis or message. After that, it is the journalists' turn to ask questions. I note that most of the questions are asked by journalists who are at the top of the hierarchy, namely Expressen and Aftonbladet's reporters who are experienced and often write chronicles.

When Rickard Norling talked earlier he resonated about AIK's style of defense and compared that to how they played some years ago when their defense was really successful (and he coached them as well). A journalist then asked Norling to develop that and talk more about AIK's defensive tactics. The coach, sighed and gave in my opinion a quite unclear answer.

” Yes it is this thing with space against. Yes, it is so. Should you choose space or and it was always space before. Football is exciting, it is very amazing” (sounds tired).

An AIK staff member who function as a moderator intervene. Do we have any more questions? After a few more questions the coaches and reporters leave the press conference. The latter join their colleagues in the mixed zone.

The player that was sent off, Djurgården´s Yura Movsisyan appears first of all and stops at the end of the mixed zone, which is a passage between a wall and some ropes connected to poles and a group of six reporters start to question him. Some DIF players stare into the ground as they head by the mixed zone and on to the awaiting bus. Jonas Olsson, one of Djurgården´s profiles and often seen in media (he also appears sometimes on ViaSat the company that airs the English Premier League) stops by. He patiently answers the questions, even when one reporter asks him about his own performance (which could be seen as not the best) and he says that it was not so good. Another player appears and starts to talk to a reporter. A few other reporters join the conversation with their mobile phones recording.

There is a few minutes break. Small bags of candy with AIK´s logo are available for the waiting journalists in the mixed zone. Some of the journalists are chatting with their colleagues and most of them seems to know each other. But the media outlets are divided - the Aftonbladet staff stands for itself and Expressen have their own table. Different angles are discussed.

After a couple of minutes, AIK's players show up. Daniel Sundgren who was involved in the sending of appears first. He walks quick by Expressen and their web tv, he does not seem to be interested in talking to that reporter but he stops and talk with the group of reporters at the end of the mixed zone.

Dagens Nyheter´s Grimlund tells me that he is done 30 minutes after the final whistle, which means one text for the web and one for the paper plus the player reviews. He has already received quotes from the press conference and the mixed zone. With more than one hour after the match, reporters remain and wait for more players to arrive. I think I spot one of AIK´s media staff going by with a camera. More AIK players eventually show up and I move towards the press room to write down my observations. A striking point is that AIK have many people working in their media department but they are barely visible after the game. Probably it is because that they have easier access to the players so they do not have to

interfere and compete with the journalists in the mixed zone. Many of the journalists stands in “a pack” and interviews the players which leads to the same questions and the same answers. They seem to be afraid of missing anything. I ask myself if this leads to a more standardized and homogenized journalism? The pace is high and with several staff members quotes could fast be put into web articles. I also spot some more signs of hierarchies amongst the journalists while the senior editorials do not hunt for quotes in the same way.

Most players pass the mixed zone, and some stop to talk while others do not. Those who do not stop show in some cases with the body language that they do not want to talk and in other cases there is no reporter who stops them. The press conference with the coaches feels routinized, even though the amount of questions were more than I thought. Rickard Norling gave a little uninterested impression and his answer about AIK’s defensive style of play was probably hard to use for the journalists. All the players pass by the mixed zone, so they are accessible for the journalists, although if a player does not show any interest to talk, they can demonstrate that with their body language. Apart from players and the coach, AIK media staff are in the background. They have staff members that function as moderator at the press conference but they do not ask their own questions. The audience can follow the match itself in many ways, not only by looking at the pitch but also through AIK’s social media channels, traditional media and at the same time see interviews and highlights at the jumbotron as well as listen to music and sing along with AIK’s anthem. Entertainment can be seen as part of the game and that correlates with mediatization where the masses or consumers demands to be satisfied (Lilleker 2006, p. 117-121) and from AIK’s part they want to give the fans an “whole experience” as Thelander and Rosenqvist (2011, p. 290) writes about in the book “strategisk kommunikation” (Falkheimer & Heide 2011).

6.5 Content analysis

6.6 AIK’s media channels

The same day as AIK-Djurgården took place, April the 15th, I watched what had been produced on AIK's website the days before the derby, more specifically from April 12th and onwards. I found four videos on the AIK website and on YouTube before the game. One day after the game, April the 16th, I found four Youtube videos with interviews with players and an assistant coach.

Table 1 AIK’s Youtube videos				
Date	Title (Swedish)	Title (English)	Kind of material	Views

12042018	"Det handlar om vem som är bäst i stan". Nabil om derbyn	"It is all about who's best in town" Nabil about derbies	Interview with player Nabil Bahoui	2 812 (150418)
12042018	"Vi har en matchplan redo för att slå Djurgården" Alex ser fram mot derbyt.	"We have a game plan to beat Djurgården" Alex looking forward to the derby.	Interview with player Alexander Milosevic	2 298 (150418)
12042018	"Jag har alltid trott att det var enkelt..." Sundgren om sin nya roll	"I have always believed that it was easy..." Sundgren about his new role	Interview with player Daniel Sundgren	2868 (150418)
12042018	FollowUS AIK: Återblick till när Stam blev derbyhjälte	Flashback when Stam become a derby hero.	Video from the locker room Djurgården - AIK 2017	1389 (150418)
16042018	"Vi fick energi av publiken" Tarik om derbyt mot Djurgården	"We got energy from the audience" Tarik about the derby against Djurgården	Interview with player Tarik Elyounoussi	4 325 (030518)
16042018	"Kan inte beskriva det med ord" Rasmus gjorde första målet mot Djurgården.	"Cannot describe it with words" Rasmus scored the first goal against Djurgården	Interview with player Rasmus Lindkvist	4612 (030518)
16042018	"Fantastiskt skönt!" Lundström direkt efter matchen	"Fantastic nice!" Lundström direct after the game	Interview with player Robert Lundström	2 713 (030518)
16042018	"Vi har bara släppt in ett mål på tre matcher". Jildefalk om säsongsinledningen.	"We have only conducted one goal in three games". Jildefalk about the start of the season.	Interview with assistant coach Patric Jildefalk	2 784 (030518)

Many of the interviews are made in similar way. A player is interviewed in six out of eight videos. They talk about their feelings towards the game and they are typical "question and answer" interviews. The background consists of a locker room/stadium hall and the AIK logo - their symbol is clearly visible, which is common in strategic sport communication according to Pedersen, Miloch & Laucella, (2007 p. 82-83). The opponent, their own shape and the feeling to play in front of the fans are central themes in the interviews. There is one video (Sportlib 2018), see print screen below which is different from the others, the video made in co-operation with Sportlib, which will describe more in detail.



The video is named: FollowUS AIK: Återblick till när Stam blev derbyhjälte (FollowUS AIK:Flashback when Stam become a derby hero).

It is a part of Sportlibs FollowUS AIK: where you get an insight behind the scenes and is about AIK's victory against Djurgården 2017. The clip starts with dramatic music and the players are inside a locker room. The coach Rickard Norling talks to the players (in English), whom form a circle and embrace each other. "We know that we need to fight hard and that we need to win as many duels as we can. If you are not doing it on your own you need to have help from your friend".

The team captain at that time, Nils-Eric Johansson also talks and finish it off with should we take them? Yes, we should everybody screams. It is followed by an intro to Follow Us AIK, with music and a mix of different sequences in a fast pace. Text appears on the screen: DIF – AIK 0-1 and happy players return to the locker room. Sounds from the stand are heard in the background and the music is turned on again. Celebrating players are in focus, they laugh and joke with each other. The goalkeeper Kenny Stamatopoulos, the man of the match, is in focus. Not only for his clean sheet but he was also a victim for a betting scam that where in focus before the derby (Bohman 2017). "It is like 150 kilos of my back. I will tell my son for sure to never be a goalkeeper. Never ever, ever" he says and many teammates is with him and are taking videos/selfies. You can tell that Kenny is touched and he is praised by many players who want to take selfie photos and everyone is applauding him. One of the players, Stefan Ishizaki continue to talk about the match hero. After that follows a victory anthem and you think the video is over. But it has a humorous twist in the end when Simon Thern is taking a picture of Kenny and a teammate but takes a selfie instead.

As you can read above the video is built up in a more dramatic way. You have a hero, the goalkeeper, Kenny Stamatopoulos, music in the background and a humoristic twist in the end. It is more build up like a short documentary. It could be a journalistic product, if a media outlet had the access for a long time, but that is quite rare these days. Apart from access, the time limit and resources could be tough to provide. There are two other videos which are not connected to the game and that is two more commercial movies when AIK-players exercise in the gym and it is in a co-production with one of their partners. Furthermore, there is informative articles on the homepage with information about the selected squad and on article with information to the supporters. A countdown to the game is visible in the top of the webpage menu as well as information about the Women teams opening game, special club

seats (VIP) tickets and that the new home jersey is released. You also notice sponsors on the site. There is another article about the women's game and another with information from the board.

When it comes to social media and Instagram, AIK have a picture inside the locker room where the outfit is on its place for the game and the text: "The locker room is ready for the derby. Kick off 15:00. Tickets via aikbiljett.se #AIK" (aik 2018).



On Instagram there is also commercials about the match program which is accessible at AIK's Live app, where you also find most of the material that is on the webpage. More pictures on Instagram is advertising merchandise, the Women's game, the squad and a video from a former derby where the player Flavio scores against Djurgården.

AIK are tweeting before the game:" Do not forget to download today's great match program with a lot of reading" (aikfotboll 2018) and some information about where you find it. Commercials about the new Follow us live is also on Twitter and Flavio's goal with a reminder to buy tickets. A post from one of the club's partners with information to season ticket holders is also on Twitter.

The game was covered through Twitter (aikfotboll2018) and AIK tweeted during the game and afterwards I could count to nine tweets from their official account. The tweets contained the most important information such as goals, substitutions, half-time, stoppage time and the final result. Tweets regarding the total attendance and the final whistle also included a call for the supporters to buy a ticket to the next home game (against Gothenburg). The account also retweeted seven entries, one from their player Alexander Milosevic, as well as two tweets with a picture of an injured AIK player Jesper Nyholm, who followed the game from the

stands. Two tweets tell the followers that supporter organizations from Europe visited the game, one retweet was from Mats Enquist, CEO, Swedish Elite Football organization (SEF) and SD Europe, a non-profit organization working for supporter's rights. The other tweets were from a celebrity, the daughter of Lill Babs, Kristin Kaspersen who liked the tribute to before the game, as well as a Tweet from a supporter who has taken photos during the match.

The Instagram entries during the game show pictures of AIK's "tifo" or the fans choreography, information about their goals (2), the total attendance and a repost from Kaspersen (the same as the retweet), a picture of when they celebrated AIK winning. Furthermore, there was also another picture of the audience – with information about the next home game. And they congratulated Rasmus Lindqvist for his first ever goal for the season and added information about the next home game. Finally, there was a picture of a young supporter who had received Henok Goitom's jersey.

They are quite active on Instagram, but the content is similar to the material on Twitter and you can notice that they take their chance to marketize their next home game. The last Instagram posts focus on the next games, apart from a highlight video on Instagram where fans can watch the goals of the game.

It is also worth to add that AIK have a campaign called "Gnaget (nickname for AIK) on tour" (gnagetontour 2018) for each home and away game and they are flirting with the music industry. They have their own campaign site for the matches and fans can share posts with #gnagetontour as well as #aikontour and the guest artists are their league opponents.

Most of the interviews on Youtube (AIK Play) reminiscent of each other, whereas the player is in focus and speaks of the match in surroundings connected to AIK. The Sportlib material is different and gives a deeper insight. In terms of social media, the match is covered through AIK's Twitter account, but it is not a matter of any minute-by-minute live coverage.

However, the most important occasions such as goals, substitutions, and similar is tweeted. To attract audience and to promote the next game is a common thing in AIK's social media posts. Although some material, especially the Youtube videos reminds of journalism, it is apparent that AIK's videos focus more on audience, as an example the number of sold tickets. A reason could be that AIK want to show that they are successful in that job, just like museums in Thelander & Rosenqvist's (2011, p. 119-133). Media at their hand should, according to objective ideals, have a more neutral point of view.

6.7 Content analysis media – before and after the game

Title (Swedish)	Title (English)	Newspaper, Kind of material	Published
Bahoui tillbaka med taktisk disciplin: "De fick en annan Nabil"	Bahoui back with tactical discipline: "They got another Nabil"	Aftonbladet, article with quotes from Bahoui	150418
AIK:s stjärnvärning hyllar derbymatcherna: I toppen av Europa	AIK's super signing praises the derby games : In top of Europé	Aftonbladet, article with quotes from Elyounossi and Grzelak (assistant coach) and Bahoui	150418
Bahoui: "Jag har saknat derbyna"	Bahoui: I have missed the derbies	Expressen, article with quotes from Bahoui	150418
Bahoui: Aldrig förlorat mot djurgården i allsvenskan	Bahoui: Never lost against djurgården in allsvenskan	Dagens Nyheter, article with quotes from Bahoui	150418

I looked upon the different newspapers websites three hours before kickoff, to see what they wrote about AIK or with an AIK point of view (see table 2 above). Aftonbladet had an interview with Nabil Bahoui and one with Tarik Elyounossi, the players that took part at the press briefing and the articles are written by the reporter that were at the press briefing. Expressen had one article about AIK where they talked to Bahoui which Dagens Nyheter had as well.

Notable is that the newspapers have talked to the same source, Nabil Bahoui. However, there are some differences. Aftonbladet also had quotes from the two other sources that took part at the press briefing, Tarik Elyounossi and Bartosz Grzelak (assistant coach). Nabil Bahoui is talking about how he learned the importance of tactical discipline in Germany and the quotes are very similar in Aftonbladets and Dagens Nyheter's interview with him. The journalists have more possibilities to be creative in style when they write. Two examples are the beginning of the articles with Tarik Elyounossi:

“Tarik Elyounossi has played Greek dramas in Athens and experienced German disorder below a yellow wall in Dortmund. But if it is something that the AIK's star signing does not need to miss from his time on the continent, it's the act of the stands” (Dickson 2018).

And Nabil Bahoui, Dagens Nyheter:

“As a 20-year old Nabil Bahoui had big dreams, among other things, he talked about taking Zlatan's place in Barcelona. “You can aim at the moon but end up at Bur Khalifa, the tallest building in the World, then you have come a bit on the way, Bahoui says with a smile”. For now he is satisfied with a win in the derby against Djurgården (Grimlund 2018).

The questions are quite neutral and here are some examples: What determines the game? What do you think of Djurgården? And how important is it to be best in Stockholm? Nevertheless, there are some exceptions like “Which player in Djurgården would take a shirt in AIK” (Dickson 2018). The question above could give an interesting answer but Bahoui simply answers nobody, which could be interesting as well.

Three hours after the game I counted to 16 articles in total at Aftonbladet, Expressen and Dagens Nyheter's websites, see below.

Title (Swedish)	Title (English)	Newspaper, kind of material	Published
AIK upp i topp efter derbysegern:” Vinner kriget”	AIK up in top after the derby victory “wins the war”	Aftonbladet, article with quotes from the players Tarik Elyounossi and Henok Goitom	150418,19:09
AIK tog revansch på Djurgården – nyförvärvet utvisad för skullning	AIK took revenge on Djurgården – the new signing sent off for head butting	Aftonbladet, article with quotes from the players Yura Movsisyan, Daniel Sundgren and Jonas Olsson	150418,16:55
Fick motta dödshot – när han drabbades av lungemboli	Received a death threat - when he suffered from pulmonary embolism	Aftonbladet , article with quotes from the players Daniel Sundgren and Rasmus Lindkvist	150418, 18:22
Goitom slår tillbaka: ”Jag bad om ursäkt”	Goitom hits back: "I apologized"	Aftonbladet, article with quotes from the players Henok Goitom, Felix Beijmo and Jesper Karlström	150418, 19:08
Dif kände sig bortdömda: ”Killarna pratar om straffsituationer”	Dif felt disallowed: “the guys talk about penalty situations”	Aftonbladet, article with quotes from the referee, Jonas Eriksson, the coach Özcan Melkemichel and Cmore epert Alexander Axén (Cmore)	150418: 17:30
Plusbetyg så bra var spelarna och fansen	Ratings so good were the players and the fans	Aftonbladet, article, the players and fans are rated	150418: 17:23
Bank: Dif tappade inte allt – men AIK kan ha hittat väldigt mycket	Bank: Dif did not lose it all – but AIK may have found a lot	Aftonbladet, editorial	150418, 17:08
Sanningen om bilden – och gesten mot fansen	The truth about the picture and the gesture towards the fans	Expressen, article, with quotes from the players Daniel Sundgren and Rasmus Lindkvist	150418, 18:25
Raseri efter derbyt: "Det är sorgligt för fotbollen"	Outrage after the derby: “It is sad for football”	Expressen article, Many reporters worked together on the story and eight different sources is quoted, six players, Djurgårdens	150418, 16:55

		head coach and one television expert.	
Förklarar: Därför fick inte Djurgården straff	Explains why Djurgården did not get a penalty	Expressen, quotes from the referee Jonas Eriksson (quotes from Cmore)	150418, 17:20
Höjdpunkter: AIK besegrade Djurgården i heta derbyt	AIK defeated Djurgården in the hot derby	Expressen, highlights from the game (television)	150418
Domen: Deras fans var bäst i 08-derbyt	The judge: Their fans were the best in the derby	Expressen, article, the fans are rated	150418, 16:56
AIK, överlägsna i derbyt, blogg Daniel Kristoffersson	AIK, superior in the derby, blog Daniel Kristoffersson.	Expressen, blog post	150418
Goitom segerdirigent när AIK vann derbyt över Djurgården	Goitom victory conductor when AIK won the derby against Djurgården	Dagens Nyheter, article, quotes from two Daniel Sundgren and Henok Gotiom and coach Rickard Norling	150418
Djurgårdens tunga derbysvit obruten	Djurgårdens tough derby trend remains	Dagens nyheter, article, quotes from Jonas Olsson and coach Özcan Melkemichel	150418
Johan Esk: Klasskillnad när Djurgårdens derbyspöke gjorde comeback	Johan Esk: class distinction when the derby ghost of Djurgården returned	Dagens nyheter, editorial	150418

As seen in the table, Aftonbladet and Expressen published a lot of material about the game. Both tabloids had several reporters who collaborate to get quotes to articles quickly. The most typical example is the article “outrage after the derby: “It is sad for football” (Larsson, Kristoffersson & Avdic 2018) where eight different sources is quoted. The conflict theme is central in the articles that covered Yura Movsisyans red card and both sides of the “conflict”, Movsisyan and Daniel Sundgren get their chance to talk about the situation. Speaking of Sundgren he posted a picture on his Instagram (danielsundgren) after the game. He is sitting on a banana boat together with five other AIK players, which can be seen as a mockery against Djurgården (they are called the apes). Sundgren has been sick and had pulmonary embolism and he received hateful comments from Djurgårdens fans. "The picture is to them, to all the haters", Sundgren says (Jönsson, Fagerlund 2018). The fact that the players own social media is a valuable news source is a part of the modern media climate and journalists need to be aware of that to not miss potential stories.

When it comes to news value it is clear that Aftonbladet and Expressen made similar decisions of what was newsworthy: the sending off, Sundgrens Instagram picture and why the referee did not give Djurgården a penalty (Norberg & Dickson2018; Larsson,2018).

Two recent journalistic phenomena also appear. Firstly, journalists should be a link between the reader and the player. Most of the readers watch the game itself in front of the television and some from the stands. But the ability to develop what occurred at the field, is something that the press can do. In a journalistic way they could aim to cover everything of interest, which can explain why so many voices are heard. This is nothing new, research by Ulf Wallin shows that journalists have functioned as intermediators between the audience and the athletes since television began to air football and other sports in the 1950's (Wallin, 1998, p. 15).

Secondly, journalists become experts and should comment and analyze material to a greater extent. All the newspapers above have chronicles from the game and fans and players are rated. This has occurred for a while and the analysis and reviews, what Boyle (2006, p. 92-93) states as "editorialization of sports journalism" and "pundit journalism" is a natural part of journalism in this digital and commercial environment.

While I performed my content analysis, by going through articles on Aftonbladet, Expressen and Dagens Nyheter's websites the 15th of April, I realized that the Stockholm derbies are highly valued. Not only how the content was placed (at the top) but also the number of articles. After the game Aftonbladet had produced seven articles, Expressen six and Dagens Nyheter three. I also noted that articles about the Stockholm derby were amongst the most read articles at the Aftonbladet website.

For AIK's part 2 975 persons saw their YouTube videos (before and after the match) in average. Gabriel Niklasson, AIK's acting head of communication told me (via email 15052018) that the amount of Sportlib subscribers are a few thousands, in other words similar to their YouTube viewers. It is not comparable to the newspapers that all reach millions of readers¹.

Social media is one way for sports organizations to reach audience outside the traditional media channels. AIK have more than 95 000 persons followers AIK on Instagram (aik 2018) and more than 10 000 persons liked AIK's most popular Instagram post, that appeared just before kick-off:

¹ According to a report by Orvesto (referred to by Rågsjö Thorell 2017), Dagens Nyheter reached 1 028 000 readers, Aftonbladet 3 319 000 and Expressen 2 979 000 through their websites on a weekly basis the last months of 2016.



Finally, it is clear that media invests large resources in monitoring the match and work hard to publish something immediately afterwards. The clubs can, and maybe have to convey their resources evenly and one central thing for them is to shift focus toward the next game and attracting audience.

7. Interviews

7.1 AIK

Interviewees: Gabriel Niklasson, acting head of communication AIK. Gabriel Niklasson has worked for AIK for three years and has a background as project manager in various industries, and has previously worked to attract people and create interest (Niklasson 2018).

Björn Wesström, sports director of AIK. Wesström has worked for AIK since 1999 and has been both head of scouting, coach, assistant coach and sports director, which he currently works as.

Gabriel Niklasson is referred to as GN and Björn Wesström as BW.

7.2 How AIK work with their own media channels

AIK do not have a written communication strategy, but they have a strategy and tactic when they are “talking about football” (GN).

In total, four people work with media for AIK and the primary communication channel is the website and social media it covers a wide range. Matches, tickets, companies, men and women's football, as well as youth teams to name a lot.

"I think it is important that we are very correct in our way of communicating via our website, the things that are there is true and correct that is what we relate to", says Björn Wesström.

Niklasson also states that the information obviously should be correct on the homepage, but it is also a sales window, and in this case they sell AIK, it can be about highlighting different matches, merchandise or attracting sponsors.

Regarding social media, Facebook is used carefully, as it is not meant to "post too much" but sales is central when it comes to AIK's use of Facebook.

"We are doing something that will get our fans to feel how fun it is to be an AIK fan. If we can offer something which can attract laughter became viral. However, a viral post is not worth anything if you cannot benefit on it, which is the meaning" (GN).

AIK, just like the other main clubs have many supporters. The club of AIK, with all sections, has 20 000 members and the football club has around 400 000 fans, which by the way is in line with the two other big clubs in Stockholm, Djurgården and Hammarby. Twitter is the social media where AIK have the most dialog with their fans. "Questions can be lost easily in Instagram or Facebook's flow so it's hard to see everything, therefore Twitter is the best way to communicate if you do not e-mail or call us of course" (GN). Worth to mention is the AIK-player who like many other football players use they have their own social media channels.

"It is a question of definition about what is an own channel when you are employed. The players want to be independent in their own channels, but at the same time they are dependent on being employed to get the status they want" (BW).

AIK has a media policy that applies to the players, but BW acknowledges that it is a big task to handle the flow of information, because it is so huge.

YouTube functions like AIK's own tv-channel which they also call AIK Play. There will the supporter find material from training and matches for both the men and women's team.

“Directly after the game you can see to Rickard Norling for the men’s team or Christer Lundin for the women’s team when they are talking about the outcome of the game. Why did we win, why did we lose, you can hear that from the players after both match and training. These interviews around training have the purpose to attend people and gain interest for the upcoming game” (GN).

7.3 Social media

As I mentioned earlier AIK distance itself when it comes to social media and according to Aftonbladet’s head of social media, Erik Carlsson, they are in the top spot in Sweden. “Totally superior when it comes to the amount of video views and daring to test new things”. That is also visible in the statistics, especially for Instagram where AIK had 3, 77 million interactions and 3, 87 million views at their videos (Lundgren, p. 31 2018). Niklasson estimates that AIK publish approximately 40-60 pictures a week, which is “a little bit more than you should do, but it worked out quite well”. There AIK tries to offer the “inside life from training and matches”. The inside life is also offered through AIK’s cooperation with Sportlib, which started 2017. Through them fans can pay a monthly fee to get access to all the inside material. Niklasson calls it “high end productions and behind the scenes” and it give the viewer a deeper look into the reality. Although, everything is not published straight away, since they need to be careful not to release things in advance.

“It could be tactics or something similar. You do not want the starting lineup to be official tree days before a game or reveal a free kick variety. It is not some hush-hush, it is about controlling when information is released” (GN).

Apart from hindering tactical preparations to leak out, the coverage could also take energy from the core business, in this case the results on the pitch. But Wesström does not believe that so has been the case.

“For us in the sport organization it is important that it is just a part of the job, to maybe stop for a while and maybe immerse yourself in front of a camera. I think it work out fine” (BW).

When it comes to digital media, Niklasson want the fans to have a greater access to AIK and that you can have your “AIK dosage” in a better way, it should be easier to see highlights, interviews or to buy tickets. Another opportunity is tv-rights and he thinks that it could continue to rise because sport is still one of few things which are interesting to watch live now

when the consuming habit of television is changing with more streaming services and abilities to watch movies and series digitally.

“Now you can watch Game of Thrones whenever you want, but you do not watch AIK-Djurgården one week afterwards. It should be seen live and the sport remains a very good grip”. The fact that the market for televised sport has opened up with other actors’ entry such as Facebook and Amazon are not so strange and it is a sight which could be more common in the future. “It would not surprise me the least if that kind of companies in one way or another have the rights to big sport events or leagues in a few years’ time” (GN).

How do you look on AIK’s possibility to air their own games?

“It is not impossible that it will happen, but not the upcoming years. But it could surely happen sometime in the future” (GN).

Digitalization and commercialization have affected the sport and sports journalism since the 90’s which, Boyle (2006) amongst other scholars have stated or as Niklasson says, “it has been digital for a while now”. But with more digital channels it will be a competition of information and at the club wants to give their perspective of things.

“After a game today there is 200 000 articles an hour after the game. Twenty years ago, everyone waited to read about the game in Dagens Nyheter the day after. Of course, there is a big difference, “truth” is spread very fast. It is more to deal with handle since you need to answer in a way that constantly adheres to our truth” (BW).

Both GN and BW state that AIK seek to correct errors that are spreading, but sometimes it is more related to newsworthiness or how it is presented by the sports journalists. Niklasson understands why some headlines are exaggerated to attract readers. “You can feel then, was this article or rather this headline really justified for this”. “We correct it if people spread false things, but it depends a bit on the extent of the error”. If we can communicate the right information, we will do that” (BW).

Another aspect in this digital media climate, is to be first with a story but that is not of utter importance to AIK. Injuries, player transfers and else is often speculated about and “a lot sippers out anyway”, but at the same time, GN believes that it is important the club should be able to control their own news/information.

“If there is anything that regards the sports department it is good if they are informed of the news, before it ends up in an external medium” (GN).

7.4 Relation to media

In mediatization theory researchers argue that media and sport is linked together and is helping each other. This seems to be the way for AIK as well. “I think that the relationship to the media has always existed as a natural part of the business” (BW). Further on he states that media is necessary for creating an interest. “Of course, there is a dependency. We have a common interest. Newspapers or web pages need good material and both need an interest. We are in the same boat as all the other sports in the world so of course it is grateful that it is written a lot about AIK” (GN).

Creating interest in a club is important to attract audience. But at the same time, many clubs reach many supporters through their own channels, especially the core of supporters, which I have mentioned in my background. The latter is also confirmed by Peter Åhlander, Malmö’s head of communication, in my pilot interview. Nevertheless, media could play a part when it comes to reach the wide mass. “The easiest to reach are the already faithful and if you move more to the outskirts you would need to find other ways” (GN). In his role as head of communications he is a kind of a “connection center” between the club and the sports journalists. He often has contact with journalists when it comes to matches, accreditations, press briefings, press releases and interview requests. He describes the contact as colleagues in the same field. “Of course, you know most of the journalists around us, but the contact is still at a pretty formal level” (GN).

During my observations and with my background as a journalist and as a regular consumer of Swedish sports journalism, I perceive that it is in many ways the same group of journalists who follow the matches, which Boyle (2006, p.82-83) calls “the pack”.

“I really agree. Aftonbladet and Expressen probably have three-four each. Of course, it can change a little bit from season to season. But it is good in a way, since it is hard to just show up and write about a game if you do not know anything of how it looked like the previous games. It is good that it is the same people that follow the team all the time, it is a clear advantage” (GN).

7. 5 training sessions

Except for press briefings, games and other events, journalists are able to visit training sessions and cover them. That will say if they are open for the public, which means journalists and supporters. “We have quite a few open training sessions and then we have closed ones when a game is close. If it is closed or open it is not like it is open for fans but not for journalists or the other way around”. GN tells me about that a lot of dads on paternity leaves are visiting AIK’s practices, which I also observed.

“It is great that a club can be so open, it is not like that in many other countries. You cannot simply go and watch Manchester United, Juventus or Bayern Munich whenever you want. At the same time people need to understand, and they do as well, that we need to work in peace and secretly if we are going to work with details that can decide a game. It is nothing strange with that” (GN).

“It is not that closed sessions are aimed towards journalists. But sometimes I feel that there is a sore feeling when you do things like this. Are you locking us out? We are not, you can wait in the clubhouse and talk with us after the training” (BW).

AIK’s training sessions are available at their website and for April they had around five (AIK 2018) open sessions. And when I talked to journalists and fans I could sense that AIK have closed more training sessions. But Niklasson and Wesström reply different to that statement. “We have a little bit more closed training. But we also have more games, we play in Europe, the Swedish Cup and we have a break for the World Cup so the schedule is more compressed” (GN). “We have closed sessions two days before a game and we have had it since the start and we still have it” (BW).

Have AIK become less accessible for journalists?

“It is clear that we more closed training sessions then it becomes less accessible. However, I do not think that journalists feel it is hard to get in contact with AIK Football” (GN)

Björn Wesström says that the access is very good and the fact that it is open is given some positive things:

“The fact that it is open can give a picture of where we are and where we are heading and hopefully it can create an interest which is part of a thing that is unique in Sweden – I experience that the supporter culture which is existing in Sweden is very genuine.

Hopefully it is a part of the marketing of the clubs and that the sport is a part of it” (BW).

Both staff members of AIK tell me that they have a dialogue with each other and discuss different requests from those who work at AIK's media department. It can be about which player that should be at a press briefing. The dialogue is described as "good" according to Niklasson and Wesström adds:

"If Gabriel says that we should have a press briefing we have it with the players that he values would contribute the most in that context". To not have exactly the same players in their own channels and in media, is something that AIK try to do sometimes, but it could also have randomly reasons.

"Sometimes it could be something that have happened at the practice or elsewhere. Maybe there is a player that scored a beautiful goal or did a beautiful tackle and it is of course interesting to do an interview with that player after the training session and the player is perhaps already signed up for the press briefing" (GN).

When it comes to media pressure, Malmö FF's head of communication, Peter Åhlander told me about that it could be a media hype when it comes to European fixtures or big games in Allsvenskan. "It occurs that the media pressure is to big, not often, but it happens. Then we say no, it is fine for a while. It is much more common abroad" (GN).

Does it happen that journalists contact you if they have any stand regarding access?

"It is very rare, but as I said previously, journalists that wish to talk with anyone in AIK could do that very easily. Although, you can't always do that at the exact time and exact date that you wish for. But I do not think anyone can do that anywhere" (GN).

8. Interview with sports journalists

Therese Strömberg (TS), Expressen, 24 years old

Strömberg has a background as an editor and writer at the fans website milansverige.se. After some time, there she studied journalism at Bona folk high school in Motala, and afterwards she practiced at Nerike Allehanda (Örebro) and got a summer job and a temporary job there. She has worked for Expressen as a football reporter since 2016 and she writes about Swedish and international football.

Per Bohman (PB), Aftonbladet, 30 years old

Per Bohman has studied journalism at Södertörn University and the journalist school in Gothenburg. He has been working at Sydöstran (Blekinge) and then practiced at Aftonbladet (Sportbladet) where he has worked since 2012. Per Bohman has mainly covered Swedish football and for now he mostly works with Aftonbladets different magazines.

Lars Grimlund (LG), Dagens Nyheter, 63 years old

Lars Grimlund graduated from the Journalist highschool in Stockholm and högskolan and has been working on Svenska Dagbladet for a short period of time and then at Dagens Nyheter (DN) where he got a full-time contract in 1983. He has worked primarily as a sports journalist and covered several football tournaments. He has followed the three big Stockholm teams since he started at DN.

8.1 The club's own media channels and competition

“The Stockholm clubs produce texts and video material to an increasing extent, more professionally and with more employees in every club. The material is getting better and in the long it becomes a competitor to us. They are definitely another competitor then they were five years ago” (PB).

Strömberg has also noticed that the clubs have their own channels where they “produce material that traditionally has been produced by news media” and she thinks that the big Stockholm clubs “communicate very much through social media”.

Grimlund has noticed that it is more difficult to get a hint or similar from a sports director, as an example. “The clubs are pushing out whatever they want, when a player is signed or if they have done an organization change”.

Strömberg does not see the club channels as a real problem, although, material sometimes collides. “So far, I do not think it has affected the role of journalists. One thing does not need to take out the other”.

The sports journalists believe that the club's coverage is different from traditional media, it is more “uncritical” (PB) and the material often “benefits the club” (TS). But the club webpages are also a useful information source.

“If I am going to meet Nabil Bahoui, I watch what they have written about him on the homepage. I use it for facts, you can look up players or games, the AIK website is very good when it comes to that” (LG).

I can use it very much as a source of information, I mean if AIK sign a new player there is an interview with the sports director Björn Wesström and the player on their different channels which you can watch to get good information. So, I use it as an information source. (PB)

Do you believe that the clubs try to govern the content?

“The players sometimes want to read the things you wrote, but no not govern directly”, says Grimlund who calls for more out speaking players “they rarely give anything extra, they think of what they say”.

“I do not feel that the clubs try to control what we are going to publish” (TS). But she reveals that they sometimes have comments regarding some publications as an example if something is irrelevant or wrong. “I do not experience that it is in the same way abroad that you need to hand in a paper with your questions in advance and the clubs can wipe out questions and decide that you cannot ask about this” (TS).

“The clubs do not have any ambitions to control the coverage, but like everyone else they can be irritated over things that you write, but not so angry that they want to limit you more” (PB).

8. 2 Access

According to the three sports journalists the access is good when it comes to players and coaches, but there are certain exceptions or things that make accessibility tougher. Usually you can talk with the player you want, but it could be hard sometimes, Grimlund says and mention one of Djurgården’s profiles. “My colleague called and called but the player never answered. Then you give up after a while” (LG).

Before every season it is common that media gets a media guide with phone numbers to the players and other staff members. Strömberg witnesses that fever and fever players have their number in the catalogue.

LG:” If the players themselves want to have the number in the guide you will get the number. If not, many clubs refer to the press manager and I suppose it is okay, but not really easy”.

“The clubs in the league are differentially good to response and making things happen, sometimes you need to be really pushy. But with the Stockholm clubs I have never experienced that I needed to wait more than an hour. It is very open and the access is great, players, coaches and sports directors always put up.” (TS).

Per Bohman also believes that access is good, “generally speaking”.

“But it has become worse. Because of that the clubs want to control the information in a greater extent than they did before. It is not like in Arsenal or Manchester United, but it is slowly heading towards that. They close much more training sessions than before and it is less access to players. It is not that you don’t get access, but you can’t just talk to any player you want”, he says and continues

“There are more control functions between the club and journalists. You need to ask if you can interview a player and you need to make an appointment and so on. I cannot just go down and watch practices anytime, the close in I bigger extent than three years ago which of course makes my job harder. It is more standardized (“strömlinjeformat”) and the club can govern a little bit more, by making access harder they can control what we do more” (PB).

A central person when it comes to access is communication staff at the clubs. In general, the relation between the journalists are good.

“I think it works really well with the three Stockholm clubs. It is very professional, and they answer fast, and they almost never say no. And if there is a no they try to solve it as quick as possible even it is not fixed right away” (TS).

Bohman prefers to talk directly with the player, but he says it is getting harder these days:

“Often, this press officer wants you to schedule a time and go through them when you book an interview. And it can be good sometimes, because in the past you could show up at practice and ask “do you want to be interviewed”, but the players may not have the time if you have not booked something. These days it is more governed, and you often solve things with the media manager who fixes it”. Bohman think it is a good relationship but that the interests sometimes collide. “They guard their interests and I guard mine and occasionally it can lead to conflicts when they limit access and possibilities” (PB).

Grimlund says It has worked out well with AIK and he has been in contact with different persons at the club, sometimes he has been in touch with one person that assists the coaching staff to get some extra or quick information. “It’s just as good in all three clubs (AIK, Djurgården and Hammarby) but it also depends on how it goes. “2004, when AIK relegated it was not so nice to come to the training field. Nobody wanted to talk and it the doors were closed. But it is quite open now, absolutely” (LG).

Speaking of open, the so called open training sessions is something can be seen as unique in Swedish football. Strömberg tells me that many footballers are positive to the media appearance and the fact that “media can be so present and actual as we still are in Sweden”. She tells about a more speculative football journalism in other countries where the clubs are more closed. “If we see somebody limping off the practice we can write it because it is fact” (TS).

“I think that open training sessions are completely necessary to do a good journalistic coverage of the clubs. It is completely necessary that we can stand there and watch. It does not always lead to an article but you get to know the players and can see how the act outside an interview situation”, Bohman says and adds that it is a generally good environment and he think that the clubs gain on openness in the long run and get more publicity though it could lead to bad publicity in some occasions.

“I can understand that the club’s closes sometime but not two days before a game”, Grimlund says, who do not see that it has been much worse the last years.

8.3 Development in digital and social media

Per Bohman means that the development in digital media and with social media has affected his work to “a high degree”. Some part of the journalism is about following what people are writing on Twitter and tips that are coming from there. It is not so funny always, but it is a quick way to find out what people are talking about and where the interest is.

The way of working has not changed very much, since she only has been in the business for four years. Anyhow, she notices a difference to work with local sports like she did for Nerikes Allehanda and with a more national focus as she does now.

“You do not work as much to get things out fast and get the same spin on a local sports story as you do on a nationwide newspaper like Expressen” (TS).

“The development has affected me quite a lot. Both the information I get and the information I need to give”, says Lars Grimlund who tells that there is not the same time, as an example when he interviews a player. Everything should go much faster, “you should push on send as fast as possible” (LG).

All of them use social media in their work, but in a various way. Strömberg uses it “a lot” and especially Twitter to spread material and find news. Bohman and Grimlund are not very active on Twitter but they use it to find information.

8.4 Future prospect and commercialization

With an all-time high tv-deal, new digital opportunities, there are concerns amongst journalists and fans that Allsvenskan is on its way to be a more closed football league.

“I do not think Allsvenskan has been affected so much that it has been over commercialized. I still believe that it is a little gem (gärsgård) in the positive way that you have the proximity which you don´t have in other places” (PB).

Nevertheless, he believes that the big clubs will continue to produce more and better material and in a greater extent limit the journalist from doing their job.

“It is not because they are evil, but they may think they will benefit from governing the information themselves. I think it will become more like that, but I hope not. I think it will be more press conferences and that you go to games and similar. I don´t think it will happen really fast, but I still believe that we are heading there. It has already begun and it will be more like that in the future, that they (clubs) have the ambition to control the information themselves.” (PB).

The fact the clubs are owned by the members is important for Strömberg in order for Allsvenskan to not be too commercial.

“I believe that the 51 % rule² still is the key to the genuine thing which is Allsvenskan and the fact that we can be on exercises and that the players is accessible after games and you can publish a lot of material both in print and video. So, I think it is a key. But then of course you see somewhere that clubs sell the stadium names to companies and so on, but I do not think we are heading towards a closed league. It is possible that I am wrong

² The 51 % rule states that the majority of the club must be owned by the members.

but if it happens I do not think it will be closed in five years, I think it is a much more long-term development in that case” (TS).

When it comes to the Stockholm clubs Lars Grimlund think that they have” done a good job with their own channels, but they do not know what the next step is. For me it is more important with access to players or that you can meet players in an easier way. Those things are more important than they have new platforms” (LG).

9. Analysis

In my analysis, I will answer my research questions based on what my observation, content analysis, and interviews showed.

RQ1: How are Swedish top football clubs using their own media channels in order to reach out to fans and media?

In the case of AIK they use several channels to reach out to their fans. The website is used as the main medium as well as social media which they use frequently, especially Twitter and Instagram (Interview with Niklasson 2018). The sports journalists use AIK’s homepage as an information source, but social media as well. When it comes to reaching fans, AIK are active in social media and their main focus is to attract spectators to their games, which can be compared to museums who also need visitors which Thelander & Rosenqvist describes (2011, p. 283-306).

Many interview questions in AIK’s YouTube videos are about attendance and they try to attract visitors through Instagram campaigns – they even have an own campaign site called gnagetontour. According to strategic communication theory, AIK communicate and try to attract audience. Their communication is not one-sided since they interact with the audience and spread material from the audience such as pictures taken by fans during games (see content analysis and AIK’s tweets). Except for using their own website and social media they send out press releases and invitations to events such as press briefings.

Content wise AIK communicate in different ways. The player interviews on YouTube are similar to interviews that traditional media does and the questions can be classed as journalistic. AIK’s players talk about previous games, the opponent, their shape and how it feels to play in front of a large audience. The productions in Sportlib, the partner which AIK co-operates with have a more documentary feeling and could be done by a media company

who shows what happens inside AIK, although it is not so common to be so close to the team as Sportlib are. One hinder is journalists narrow timeframes and the fact that their work is in a big degree routinized (Berkowitz 2009, p.104).

RQ2: What affects the media strategy of the big clubs in Sweden?

Social media seems to play a key role and AIK are active in their different channels and their aim is to reach fans easier in the future. Digitalization allows them to reach fans through different media types and Instagram is used to post pictures and movies. To attract spectators to the games seems to be AIK's primary goal, both through content in their own channels but also through publicity in media. The theory of mediatization is confirmed, the club needs media to gain interest and media put a lot of resources to cover big football games, the big newspapers had four journalists each on the game AIK-Djurgården. Media are willing to spend money on what the consumers want – football entertainment (Frandsen 2014, p. 527-528). This is also confirmed by interviews with AIK personnel:

“I think that the relationship to the media has always existed as a natural part of the business” (Interview with Wesström 2018, p. 43).

“Of course there is a dependency. We have a common interest. Newspapers or web pages need good material and both need an interest. We are in the same boat as all the other sports in the world so of course it is grateful that it is written a lot about AIK” (Interview with Niklasson, p.43).

AIK's cooperation with Sportlib is another phenomenon, and I would compare it with how American organizations work, with many inside stories from the locker room. AIK believe that openness or transparency is important and they want to show who they are. To share values with their fans, or customers, is important according to strategic communication theory and transparency is a good way to do that. Or as AIK's sports director puts it:

“The fact that it is open can give a picture of where we are and where we are heading and hopefully it can create an interest which is part of a thing that is unique in Sweden – I experience that the supporter culture that exists in Sweden is very genuine. Hopefully it is a part of the marketing of the clubs and that the sport is a part of it” (Wesström 2018, p. 44).

At the same time, they need to close around them to be able to focus on the sporting performance. To them, it is important that media does not take too much energy, as with the cooperation with Sportlib and they in rare occasions need to say no to media.

AIK have several arranged events such as press briefings where they choose the players that can be of interest. Since the clubs can pick players for events, they can affect which source is most likely to be interviewed. Of course, a journalist could walk the extra mile to talk with another player. But since the timeframes are usually narrow for journalists, it is often most practical to talk with the source that is available (Falkheimier & Heide 2018, p. 123, Berkowitz (2009, p. 104).

Much of the contact with media goes through the clubs' media staff which makes them a key figure in the source relation between the club and the journalist. Worth to notice is that the communication department in AIK, according to conducted interviews, can work freely without interference from the sports department.

RQ3: How do sports journalists perceive the football club's communicative development?

The Swedish sports journalists have noticed that the clubs put more efforts into their own media channels, which is in line with what scholars (Boyle & Haynes 2004; Boyle 2006) discovered in the UK. The big clubs in Stockholm such as AIK have become better to produce material and is seen as a competitor. (Interview with Bohman 2018, p.46) However, the type of content is not all the same, the clubs content is more uncritical and focus more on how many tickets have been sold and to attract audience (Interviews with Bohman & Strömberg 2018, p. 46). A critical voice, investigative journalism and analysis exists today and it is perhaps even more important in the future so sports journalism can be a compliment not only a competitor to the club's own material.

AIK does not try to govern the journalistic texts, but nevertheless, they can respond to material that they do not appreciate or that is false.

“We correct it if people spread false things, but it depends a bit on the extent of the error”. If we can communicate the right information, we will do that” (Wesström 2018, p.42)

The journalistic work is routinized and when it takes time to get in touch with a player a potential story risks to get canceled. Open training sessions are seen as something unique with

Swedish football and it still seems to be able for journalists and fans to stand and watch the practices and have access. However, there are some dark clouds appearing in the sky.

Aftonbladet's journalist Per Bohman believes that access is good, "generally speaking".

"But it has become worse. Because of that the clubs wanting to control the information in a greater extent than they did before. It is not like in Arsenal or Manchester United, but it is slowly heading towards that. They close much more training sessions than before and there is less access to players. It is not that you don't get access, but you can't just talk to any player you want" (Interview with Bohman, p. 48).

The role of sports journalists has changed, which is not a new phenomenon. My observations, interviews and content analysis confirm that digitalization has affected the role of sports journalists who need to be "always on" (Boyle 2012, p.92). The Swedish professionals work towards an even tighter deadline and they are collaborating on articles that need to be published as fast as possible. During matches they function as a pack of wolves that chases the interview subject in fear of missing out on something. Conflicts are highlighted when the Swedish league games are covered, and many voices and quotes are allowed to take place. The analysis of the match is narrowed down to a few sentences, which Swedish media scholar Wallin (1998) wrote about already in the 90's. The journalists that write editorial pieces are seen as "star reporters" and have a high hierarchical status, which is in line with what Boyle (2006, p. 92-93) amongst other researchers has pointed out. The fact that the football is commercial in Sweden cannot be ignored with a new record high tv deal, and the big clubs like AIK seem to put a lot of resources in their media department.

10. Conclusion

In my introduction I wrote about the common picture of Allsvenskan is that it is open and accessible and asked if that has changed because of the increased money flow and commercial opportunities for the football clubs.

Allsvenskan still seems to be open and far from as closed as its big European counterparts when it comes to access of players. Although, there are indications of more closed training sessions and a more controlled relation between the journalist and the club. Interviews are commonly booked through a press officer, who functions as a "connection center" (Niklasson 2018, p.43) and fewer players in the Swedish league Allsvenskan (Strömberg p. 45) want to hand out their phone number to journalists. The signs of less access described above could be

a tendency of what Boyle (2006, p.115-117) calls a more formalized and routinized information flow which is found in England and the other big leagues, although the Swedish league are not there yet. One reason could be the commercial difference, where the Swedish league is far behind the “big five” (Deloitte 2017). Another point to have in mind is that the Swedish media sector is quite small and it is not often that the media interest is so huge that the clubs does not cope with it. But with more Swedish clubs in the European competitions could change that, but that seems to be distant since the Swedish league is ranked as number 22 in Europe (UEFA 2018).

As far as the clubs´ own media channels are concerned they have come a good way and I agree with the Swedish journalist Per Bohman (2018), that it could continue to grow. With new technology the club can continue to develop their own channels and usurp traditional media (Boyle & Haynes 2004, p.3-4) and possibly air their own games in the future (Niklasson 2018).

The fact that the club produce qualitative material is not totally bad for journalists, since they can use the material as a source of information. Through my study of AIK, it appears that they reach out to their fans through many different channels, including social media where they can interact with fans. The core group of supporters are reached through the club´s channel, in line with previous research (Boyle 2006, p.132; Andersson, Nilsson 2012 p.30) but media is still needed for exposure and to reach the broad masses. I still believe that media will be needed to create interest, as well as football and sports is important for media to attract consumers, especially through live events, where sport have a strong position.

Technical development has changed the role of sports journalists and what other studies has showed, that the pace is high and social media is important (Hutchins & Boyle 2016) is apparent for Swedish sports journalist as well. Furthermore, Swedish sports journalists that covers the same game often chase the same story and the content in the evening papers, Aftonbladet and Expressen is in many ways similar to each other.

To sum it up I do not think that the club channels are putting traditional media out of business, they are mostly a compliment. But in this digital world we live in, there is a competition of information and the audience´s time. In the long term I believe that journalism need to step up and offer something extra in the increasing contest of attracting the masses, since the clubs will probably continue to put effort into their media department. This applies for the top leagues in Europe as well in Sweden. With bigger television deals (Wagner 2017)

and governance tendencies from the top clubs (interview with Bohman, p.48) I hope that Allsvenskan could continue to be “a close football experience” and not be as commercial and closed as its big brothers in Europe.

11. Future research

This study provides a picture of how a big Stockholm club such as AIK work, as well as how the interviewed journalists are affected and how their role has changed. It would be interesting to interview more clubs and journalists to get a deeper picture and not only the Stockholm perspective. A deeper content analysis would be interesting to investigate if sports journalism has become increasingly similar.

Fan journalism, is interesting and it is definitely a common thing in Swedish football and many clubs co-operate with their fans. I got that feeling with AIK as well, but I had to leave that out because of practical reasons.

I mentioned investigative journalism in my chapter Research on sports journalism. A critical voice to balance the club and organizations uncritical reporting is important these days. This summer’s World Cup in Russia would be a good opportunity for critical and quality sports journalism.

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<https://www.instagram.com/p/BhmGOGHH8IX/?hl=sv&taken-by=aik>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BhmWJxyHsJt/?hl=sv&taken-by=aik>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/Bhmb0zEn-Zf/?hl=sv&taken-by=aik>

<https://www.instagram.com/p/BhmdPq2Hs2d/?hl=sv&taken-by=aik>

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<https://www.instagram.com/p/BhoF1DQn7ag/?hl=sv&taken-by=aik>

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<https://twitter.com/chrlun10/status/985415266464161793>

<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985420138240532482>

<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985408567573467136>

<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985405921332473857>

<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985401219068973056>

<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985503519028498432>

<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985507376034996230>

<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985515490461306880>

<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985519646853001217>

<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985526168995672064>

<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985527916292386821>

<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985529511428218880>

<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985530669827874816>

<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985532076546981888>

Retweets

<https://twitter.com/ericljunggren/status/985505428426625024>

<https://twitter.com/ericljunggren/status/985551962971299841>

<https://twitter.com/matsenquist/status/985541298437357568>

<https://twitter.com/SDEurope07/status/985556262103461888>

<https://twitter.com/kaspermom/status/985578494502555654>

<https://twitter.com/MilosevicAlex/status/985590540732428289>

<https://twitter.com/JesperZerman/status/985606746348703744>

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<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985785602045042690>

<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985813201710473216>

<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985912438892744704>

<https://twitter.com/aikfotboll/status/985819725782507521>

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Retweets

<https://twitter.com/AntonKasurinen/status/985823028473946112>

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Appendix

Interview guide sport journalists

Bakgrund som sportjournalist (var har du jobbat, bevakar främst)

Background as a sportjournalist (where have you worked, what do you mainly cover)

Har utvecklingen i digitala medier och särskilt sociala medier ändrat erat arbetsätt? (Have the development in digital media and especially social media changed your way of work)

Hur ser ni på material som klubbarna själva producerar? (What do you think of material that the clubs produce by themselves).

Hur ser tillgången till spelare och tränare ut? (How's the access to player's and coach).

Upplever ni att klubben försöker styra vad ni ska bevaka? (Do you experience that club try to govern what you are covering).

Hur ser relationen ut till Stockholmsklubbarnas medieavdelningar/pressansvariga? (How is the relation to the Stockholm club's media managers)

Kan du själv tänka dig att arbeta för en fotbollsklubb eller liknande? (Can you imagine yourself to work for a football club or similar?)

Hur ser ni på presskonferenser och andra arrangerade event? (What's your take on press conferences and other arranged events?)

Hur gör jobbar ni för att hitta vinklar (fara samma vinklar) How do you do to find stories (danger with the same stories).

Påverkas erat arbete av kommersialisering (inom media, samt fotboll). Is your work been affected by commercialisation (in media and football).

Hur påverkar rättigheter (till exempel tv-avtal) ditt arbete som sportjournalist? (How does rights, tv-rights as an example) affect your work as a sports journalist).

Hur viktigt är det med öppna träningar för journalister (och fans)? (How important is it with open training sessions for journalist's (and fans)?

Har du jobbat utomlands med fotboll? (Have you covered football abroad?)

Frågor till Gabriel Niklasson intervju 180423 (Questions to Gabriel Niklasson, interview 180423)

1. Kan du berätta lite kort om din bakgrund och roll i AIK (Can you tell me about your background and role in AIK)
2. Har ni en övergripande kommunikationsstrategi och hur ser den ut? (Do you have an overall communication strategy and what does it look like?)
3. Kan du berätta lite kort om hur ni använder era egna kanaler? (Can you tell me something about how you use your own channels?)
4. Hur gick bevakningen till under AIK Djurgården? (How did you cover AIK- Djurgården?)
5. Efter matchen så hålls det alltid en presskonferens med båda tränarna, hur ser det ut för spelarna, väljer ni ut några? (After the game there is always a press conference with both coaches, how is it with the players, do you select any?)
6. Hur väljer ni ut spelare till pressträffar, som den inför derbyt? (How do you select players for press briefings, as that one before the derby?)
7. Har din klubb satsat mer på digitala medier de senaste åren (egna hemsidan, webb-tv osv.)? Hur har rollen(behov/strategi/samspel) mellan din klubb och traditionell media ändrats när det gäller att nå ut till er publik? (Have your club put more effort in digital media the recent years (own website, web – tv?) How has the role (need/strategy/interaction) between your club and traditional media changed when it comes to reach out to your audience?)
8. Hur ser relationen ut mellan dig och sportjournalister? (How is the relation between you and the sports journalists?)
9. Med tanke på hur mediemarknaden ser ut idag, hur gör ni för att kunna hantera alla medieförfrågningar (presskonferenser, pressmeddelanden, intervjuer)? 9. Considering how the media market looks today, how do you manage to handle all media requests (press conferences, press releases, interviews)?
10. Hur viktigt är det för er att ha öppna träningar för medier och fans? (How important is it with open training sessions for media and fans?)
11. Hur tror du att ni kommer att arbeta med digitala medier i framtiden? (How do you think you will work with digital media in the future?)
12. Tittar ni mycket på hur andra lag arbetar? (Do you get inspiration from how other teams work?)
13. Finns det någon nackdel med dagens digitala medieklimat (24/7 publicering, sociala medier)? Is there any disadvantage with today's digital media climate (24/7 publication, social media)?
14. Hur hanterar ni sociala medier (interaktion med fans, har spelarna något särskilt kontrakt)? How do you manage social media (interaction with fans, do the players have any special contract?)
15. Hur ser ni på relationen med fans, hur tar man nytta av den? Nackdelar (hot, liknande)? How do you see on the relation with fans, how do you take advantage of it? Disadvantages (threats)?

Intervju med Björn Wesström (interview with Björn Wesström) 180503

Hur ser ni på relationen mellan den sportsliga verksamheten och media? (locka intresse)
How do you look at the relationship between the sports department and the media? (attract interest)

Hur fungerar det när ni gör material för era egna kanaler? How does it work when you produce material for your own channels?

Berätta gärna om samarbetet med Sportlib? Please tell us about the cooperation with Sportlib?

Hur ser det med tillgängligheten när det gäller spelare, tränare och dig som sportchef. Är ni oftast tillgängliga?

How does it look when it comes to accessibility to players, coaches and you as sports director. Are you mostly available?

Stängda träningar, vad är anledningen till att de är stängda (har det ökat?) Closed sessions, what's the reason to that they are closed (has it increased?)

De uppstår ofta rykten kring övergångar och liknande hur bemöter du sådana saker? It's often arouse rumors about transfers and such, how do you deal with such things?

Spelarnas egna sociala kanaler? The players own media channels?

Open training session (12042018). Photo: Emil Annetorp.



Open training sessions listed AIK website (print screen 180430). "Stängd träning" means closed session. Print screen.

AIK Östersunds FK 14 maj kl. 19:00 Köp biljett här **notar**  **ABRO%** **Fabege** **SPAR** **SVEA** **STADIUM**  

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April 2018
01 (stängd träning)
02, 15:00 AIK – Dalkurd FF (Friends Arena)
03
04 11:00 Skytteholms IP
05 11:00 Skytteholms IP
06
07 (stängd träning)
08 (stängd träning)
09 19:00 Malmö FF – AIK (Swedbank Stadion)
10 13:30 Skytteholms IP
11
12 11:00 Skytteholms IP
13 (stängd träning)
14 (stängd träning)
15, 15:00 AIK – Djurgården (Friends Arena)
16 12:00 Skytteholms IP
17 (stängd träning)
18, 19:00 Örebro SK – AIK (Behrn Arena)
19
20 (stängd träning)
21 (stängd träning)
22, 17:30 AIK – IFK Göteborg (Friends Arena)
23 (stängd träning)
24
25 (stängd träning)
26 (stängd träning)
27, 19:00 AIK – IK Sirius FK (Friends Arena)
28
29
30