

# The Changing Landscape of Sports Fandom: A Call to Action

Hailey Fitzgerald, Strategist

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In the world of sports, a quiet revolution is happening. What once united us is now under threat. The culprit? The rise of sports betting and the increasing emphasis on individual statistics.



For me, being a fan of the Philadelphia Eagles isn't just about the game—it's in my blood. My dad's from Philadelphia, and the Eagles have always been my bridge to his side of the family. It's a bond that runs deep, one that transcends mere fandom. I've seen my cousin incorporate the Eagles' fight song into her wedding vows, and my uncle dyed his hair green in celebration of the Super Bowl. **This team is more than just a passion—it's part of who I am.** I would never betray my beloved Eagles because of the unwavering belief I have in them and what they represent.

Now, imagine this: your favorite sports bar on game day. A place that once buzzed with camaraderie and collective excitement, is now divided. The cheers for your team's success are drowned out by the voices of individuals focused on their own personal wins. No longer do friends celebrate touchdowns together; instead, they eye each other with hesitation, wondering if the joy is rooted in team spirit or a winning bet.

**But this is just the beginning.**

Pew Research reveals that 46% of knowledgeable fans are considering betting against their own teams. Let that sink in: Nearly half of so-called "loyal fans" might actually be rooting for their team's defeat if it means a personal financial gain. **This isn't just changing the game—it's fundamentally altering what it means to be a fan.**

Some may argue that sports betting enhances engagement, but at what cost? This "enhanced engagement" sacrifices the true passion of fandom for financial gain. Fans are becoming

amateur bookies, more fixated on the numbers than the game's excitement. We aren't fostering a more informed audience—we're nurturing a generation of gamblers who care more about their betting slips than the games themselves.

What once brought us together is now driving us apart. The collective joy of victory is fading, replaced by individual pursuits of profit.

**But we mustn't forget the essence of what sports have always represented.** From backyard games to family outings, sports unite us across generations. They strengthen bonds, create memories, and teach teamwork. These moments—irreplaceable and priceless—are worth protecting.

So, I ask you: Is the short-lived thrill of a winning bet worth sacrificing the authentic, shared experiences that sports provide? Are we willing to trade genuine passion for personal payouts?

The choice is clear, but the consequences are far-reaching. For our communities, our families, and the integrity of the games we love, we must take a stand. It's time to reclaim sports as the unifying force they were meant to be—not the divisive tool they're becoming.

**The time to act is now. Our beloved sports are counting on us.**