



Report on sport sponsorship by alcohol producers

Alcohol related sport sponsorship

Results of monitoring alcohol marketing in BULGARIA in 2010

AMMIE Project

Alcohol Marketing Monitoring in Europe Report on sport sponsorship in Bulgaria

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Alcohol Marketing Monitoring in Europe



European Centre for Monitoring Alcohol Marketing



Index

Introduction	4
1. Alcohol and sport sponsorship	6
1.1 The influence of alcohol related sponsoring on alcohol use, an analysis of recent literature.....	6
1.2 Regulations on sport sponsorship	7
2. Sponsoring of top clubs by alcohol brands	8
2.1 Sponsoring of football	8
2.2 Sponsoring of basketball	12
2.3 Sponsoring of volleyball	14
2.4 Sponsoring of hockey	14
2.5 Sponsoring of handball.....	15
3. Conclusions.....	16
4. References	17
List of 50 professional sport clubs in Bulgaria	19

Introduction

Sport-related alcohol advertising and promotion expenditures for European countries are not publicly available. In 1999 European sport sponsorship by the alcohol industry was approximated to be 168 million US dollars. This made it the industry with the second largest amount of European sports sponsorship expenses, second only to both manufacturers of cars and sports clothing (Boere 2005). In the US roughly 60 percent of the alcohol industry's marketing expenditure is spent on sport related advertising and sponsorship (Centre on Alcohol Marketing & Youth 2004). This means that the American alcohol industry uses sports as its primary vehicle for promoting alcohol sales.

This is concerning when considering that recent studies provide evidence that alcohol industry sponsorship is associated with more hazardous drinking in sportspeople compared to non-alcohol sponsorship (O'Brien, Miller, Kolt, Martens, & Webber, 2011) (O'Brien en Kypri, 2008). Despite this knowledge the relation between sport clubs and alcohol producers remains strong in many countries.

The sponsoring of big sports events by alcohol producers leads to many minors getting exposed to alcohol marketing (Wildenberg 2009). Because of a lack of research it is not clear yet, what the influence is of alcohol industry sponsorship of both professional and amateur sports clubs. Therefore we conducted a survey of the websites of the biggest sports clubs of the five most frequently performed team sports in Bulgaria. The goal was to discover if these clubs are sponsored by alcohol producers and how visible the alcohol brands are on their websites. While this research is not scientific, this small systematic monitoring exercise underlines the importance of this subject.

“Alcohol Marketing Monitoring Project”

The AMMIE project (Alcohol Marketing in Europe) was started in 2009 as alcohol marketing was not yet monitored systematically and independent from commercial interest in most of the European Member States although the topic is an important one in the EU Alcohol Strategy. Within the AMMIE project, NGOs from five EU countries (Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands) have monitored alcohol marketing following a method developed by STAP, the Dutch institute for alcohol policy. The results of this project will give insight in the overall presence of alcohol marketing in the five countries and describe the content and the amount of alcohol advertising, with special attention to the opinion and exposure of young people. Furthermore, the project will describe the functioning of the alcohol marketing regulation systems; this will lead to recommendations to improve the regulatory system in order to protect young people against the harmful influence of alcohol advertising.

As sport sponsoring has become an important marketing tool within the past years, one part of the AMMIE project concentrates on observing the content and the quantity of sport sponsorship by the alcohol industry. The first step of this monitoring part is to select the five team sports which are important to youngsters in the respective countries. For each of the five sports, a selection of ten clubs playing at the national top will be made. Finally the websites of these sports clubs have to be checked in terms of sponsor information by alcohol producers.

The aim of this monitoring part is to assess the dimensions and the patterns of sport sponsoring by the alcohol industry.

In this report the monitoring results concerning the sport sponsorship in Bulgaria are presented. In chapter one the theoretical background constituting the basis of the further sections is described. Therefore the effects of sport sponsorship on the drinking behaviour of youngsters as well as the regulations on sport sponsoring in Bulgaria are disclosed. Chapter two displays the outcome of the monitoring process for each team sport and moreover compares the sponsorship of the different sports and sports clubs.

The conclusion of the report is a summary of the findings including a description of recommendations with regard to the regulation of sport sponsorship in Bulgaria.

Methods

To give an accurate idea of sport sponsorship in top Bulgarian sport clubs we have chosen the 5 most practiced team sports (football, basketball, volleyball, hockey and handball). Consequently we have gathered a list of 50 clubs (10 for each sport). The criterion for the sport clubs to be included is a top position in their respective leagues.

The results of this study will be published as a report within the AMMIE project and used to give insight in the sponsorship of sports by alcohol producers. All AMMIE reports can be found on:

www.eucam.info/eucam/home/ammie.html.

1. Alcohol and sport sponsorship

1.1 The influence of alcohol related sponsoring on alcohol use, an analysis of recent literature

The recent years have seen the publication of several systematic literature studies researching the links between alcohol marketing and the drinking behavior of the young people that are exposed to it.

Anderson and colleagues analyzed thirteen longitudinal studies and concluded that exposure to alcohol advertising is associated with the probability that adolescents start drinking alcohol. They also found that those who already drink, consume even more after exposure to alcohol marketing (Anderson, de Bruijn, et al. 2009). These findings are supported by two other systematic reviews. Meier and colleagues in 2008 and Smith and Foxcroft in 2009 both concluded that a relation exists between the use of alcohol by adolescents and exposure to alcohol marketing or promotional activities (Meier, et al. 2008) (Smith en Foxcroft 2009).

When it comes to exposure to alcohol industry marketing through televised sports events and its effects, the number of studies is markedly lower. The impact study by Collins et al finds evidence that watching sports programs with many alcohol advertisements, raises the chances of the viewer drinking alcohol (Collins, et al. 2007). Another study found that the frequency of drinking amongst drinkers during the previous 12 months can be extrapolated by exposure to beer concession stands at sports and music events (Ellickson, et al. 2005).

It's not only as spectators that young people get exposed to alcohol advertising but also as sportspeople themselves. It has been well established by many studies in Australia, New Zealand and the USA that sportspeople drink more alcohol in a more hazardous manner than non-sportspeople (Leichliter, et al. 1998) (Martens, et al. 2006) (Wechsler and Nelson 2001) (O'Brien, Blackie and Hunter 2005) (O'Brien, Ajmol, et al. 2007) (O'Brien and Kypri 2008) (O'Brien, Kolt, et al. 2010). Furthermore it has been shown that levels of heavy episodic drinking have increased among young people, especially amongst sororities, fraternities and athletes in the USA and the UK (Wechsler, Dowdall and Davenport 1995). Recently O'Brien and colleagues added to this that sportspeople who are sponsored by the alcohol industry drink in more hazardous ways than those who have non-alcoholic sponsors (O'Brien, Miller, et al. 2011).

Concluding we can state that it has been proven that exposure to alcohol advertising affects the drinking behavior. It lowers the initial age of drinking and can increase the amount of consumption. Sports programs on television with alcohol advertising around it raises probability of the viewer drinking alcohol and a clear relationship is established between visiting beer concession stands at sports events and the frequency of drinking in the year before. It is especially concerning that research shows that sports people tend to drink more and more dangerously, especially when they are sponsored by the alcohol industry.

1.2 Regulations on sport sponsorship

The Bulgarian Association of manufacturers, importers and retailers of alcoholic beverages has approved Common standards for responsible commercial communications of alcoholic beverages. According to them, the alcohol commercial communication should not use objects, images, styles, symbols, colors, music and characters (real or fictitious, including cartoon characters or celebrities such as *sports celebrities*) who are especially attractive to children and minors.

The promotional activities of alcohol products can be made by the advertiser in *organized sporting events*. Advertisers shall require the parties participating in their sponsored sporting events, not to expose brands of drinks on *replicas of sport articles* in sizes for children, and instead they should offer such items without the brands. Advertisers are not allowed to sponsor *youth sports teams or youth sports leagues*. However, if a cultural or sporting event is intended for adults who meet the limit requirement of 70% over 18 years of age (e.g. municipal orchestra or opera), it can be sponsored even if it appears that a number of performers are under 18 years of age.

In respect to *sponsored sports or activities* that are considered dangerous, the communication should not contain the assumption that the players/performers consume alcohol before or during execution, or that alcohol somehow improves their performance.

The drinking of alcohol before *participation in a sporting activity* should not be encouraged.

2. Sponsoring of top clubs by alcohol brands

Around 10 million Euro from the State Sport Lottery and 5 million from the private sector in the form of sponsorship and advertising enter each year in the Bulgarian sport federation. Clearly, these sums are not sufficient to cover the sporting activity of the national teams and their players, especially against the backdrop of the rising financial situation in world sport. Bulgarian sport managers do not have good enough knowledge and experience to improve this financial situation, or they are simply used to the previous state of affairs when sport was completely financed by the government.

In regards to professional clubs the situation is a bit different. In recent years, banks and mobile operators have been the leading sponsors in the sport section, while the alcohol industry is also enlarging its investments but its common targets are usually umbrella organizations or tournaments, and not so much clubs.

2.1 Sponsoring of football

Club	Alcohol sponsor
Levski Sofia	No
CSKA	No
Litex Lovech	No
Lokomotiv Sofia	No
Pirin Blagoevgrad	beer Pirinsko (Carlsberg)
Chernomorets Burgas	No
Slavia Sofia	No
Lokomotiv Plovdiv	No
Beroe Stara Zagora	No
Cherno More Varna	No

The first organized Bulgarian football championship was founded in 1924. Since then there is an important professional tradition that has turned football into the most popular and massively practiced sport in Bulgaria. However, problems associated with alcohol consumption have become quite common. Because of various serious incidents before the latest edition of the so called 'Eternal derby' (Levski Sofia Vs. CSKA Sofia) the police plans from now on to carry massive checks for alcohol before every future game. Also, some of the most popular professional players in Bulgaria have been subjected to court because of drinking before driving. The latest example is Levski Sofia's star striker Garra Dembele who received a sentence on probation for 8 years because of driving while drunk and carrying a false license. This gives a good general picture of how alcohol and football are intertwined in the minds of the Bulgarian fans.

On a marketing level the important trend is the organization of football tournaments for amateurs. The tournament "Amateurs meet professionals", for example, meets the best amateur club with the football champions of Bulgaria. It is organized by beer Ariana (managed by Heineken). There is a big sponsor section on the website of the alcohol brand, devoted to the tournament, with photos, news, videos, etc. Ariana's tournament is advertised on the Internet and TV, through shirts, billboard, brochures, etc.



<http://football.ariana.bg/>: Official website of the football tournament



Billboard of the Ariana tournament in front of the national football stadium

Kamentiza Fan Cup is another tournament for amateurs, which has been held for 8 years. The sponsor section on the website is devoted to the tournament, and shows football news, photos, videos, results, etc. Kamenitza is the main sponsor of the event.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Kamenitza Fan Cup website. The header features a green background with a soccer ball and silhouettes of players. It includes links for 'Футболен фен' (Football Fan), 'Музикален фен' (Music Fan), 'Фен клуб' (Fan Club), 'Save the Man', 'Форум' (Forum), 'Блогове' (Blogs), and a Facebook link. A large banner on the right says 'Tonkama е Във Вашия отбор!' (Tonkama is in your team!). Below the banner is a search bar and a login area with fields for 'Регистрация' (Registration), 'Забравена парола' (Forgot password), 'Потребител' (User), and a password field. The main menu includes 'Начало' (Home), 'ФЕНкупа' (FENcupa), 'Новини' (News), 'Класиране' (Ranking), and 'Резултати' (Results). A search bar and a 'Търсене...' (Search...) button are also present. The news section on the left lists several articles with dates like '15 септември 2010' and descriptions. On the right, there's a large 'Kamenitza' logo with a soccer ball and the text 'ФЕНкупа' (FENcupa) '10'. At the bottom, there are links for 'График за регистрације' (Registration schedule) and 'Информация' (Information).

http://www.kamenitzafanclub.com/bg/football_fan/fan_cup/regulation: Official Kamenitza Fan Cup Website

On a team level, however, the situation is surprisingly different. We checked 10 professional clubs, and the results of the survey show that only one club is sponsored by an alcohol brand. This is Pirin Blagoevgrad – a relatively important club in Bulgaria, with long traditions and long list of well formed players, but not very highly ranked in the Championship table. The club is sponsored by beer Pirinsko (managed by Carlsberg). There is a section on the home page of Pirin FC with a logo and a link to the Pirinsko website (<http://www.pirinskopivo.bg/>). Pirinsko is a main sponsor, advertised with logos on the shirts of the players, the stadium, billboards, etc.



Новини

• Изковано 2:1 над Локомотив София

Изключително ценна победа взеха футболистите на Пирин днес, след като преди броени минути успяха да победят Локо София в Благоевград. Орлетата играха вдъхновено през целия мач и дори лекия реверанс към гостите с подарената им дузпа не ги сломи, и стигнаха до заслужените три точки. Пирин започна срещата в състав Макенджиев, Башиев, Молдованов, Георгиев, Полев, Сандански, Иванов, Костов, Златковски, Кондев и Якимов. След почивката в игра се появиха още Николов, Митревски и Кацимерски. Още в седмата минута стана ясно, че орлетата ще търсят максимума от двубоя, след като една центрирана топка попадна в Костов, който прекрасно я свали на Кондев, а нападателят нямаше как...

11-09-2010

» Виж пълния текст

• Изкована победа над Локомотив София

Изключително ценна победа взеха футболистите на Пирин днес, след като преди броени минути успяха да победят Локо София в Благоевград. Орлетата играха вдъхновено през целия мач и дори лекия реверанс към гостите с подарената им дузпа



Последна среща



2 : 1

Пирин Благоевград



Локомотив София

класиране - "А" група

Отбор	М	П	Р	З	Точки
1. Левски	6	5	0	1	15
2. Черноморец Бс	6	4	2	0	14
3. Берое	6	4	1	1	13
4. Локомотив Сф	6	4	0	2	12
5. Славия	6	4	0	2	12
6. Литекс	6	3	3	0	12
7. Локомотив Пд	6	3	2	1	11
8. Черно море	6	3	0	3	9
9. ЦСКА	6	2	2	2	8
10. Монтана	6	2	1	3	7
11. Калиакра	6	2	1	3	7
12. Пирин	6	2	0	4	6
13. Варима Раковски	6	1	2	3	5

www.pirinfc.com/index.php: A beer ad in the upper right side of the Pirin FC's home page



2.2 Sponsoring of basketball

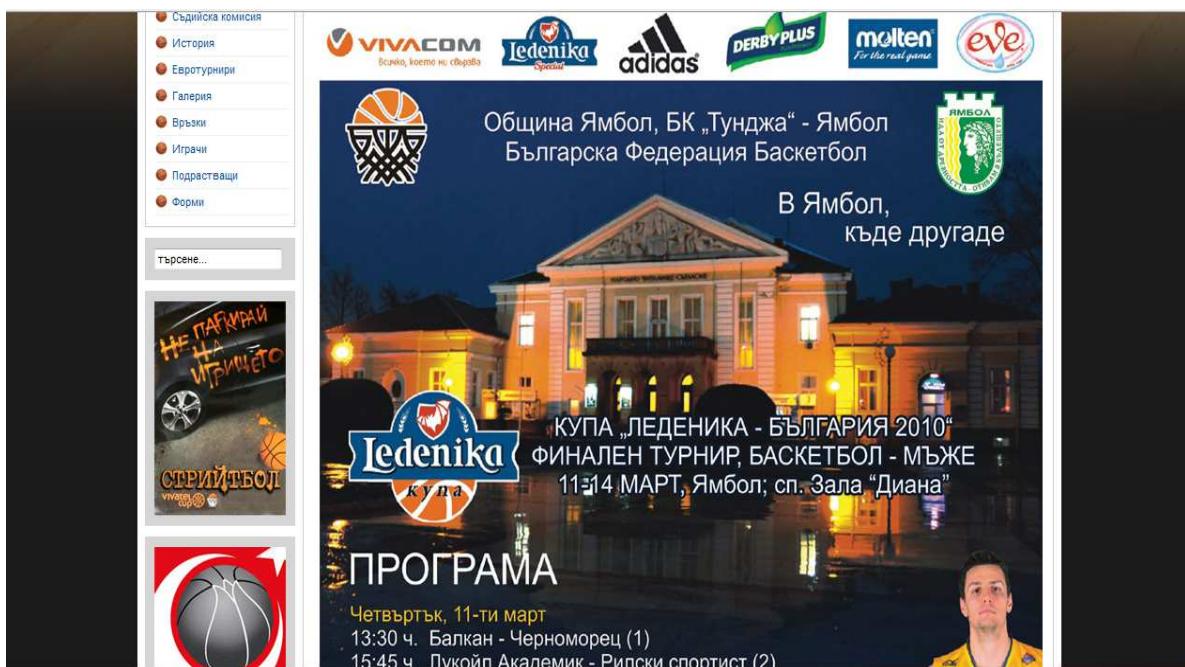
Club	Alcohol sponsor
Levski Sofia	No
Rilski Sportist Samokov	No
Lukoil Academic Sofia	No
Cherno More Varna	No
Balkan Botevgrad	No
Overgas Sofia	No
Vidabasket Vidin	No
Yambol	No
Spartak Pleven	No
Dunav 2007	No

The Bulgarian Basketball Federation is sponsored by beer Ledenika MM (<http://www.ledenika.com/>). There is a multimedia sponsor section on the home page of the beer, devoted to basketball. On the page of the Federation there is a logo and a link to the Ledenika website. Ledenika MM also organizes a Ledenika Cup Tournament. The web site of the tournament provides news and information.

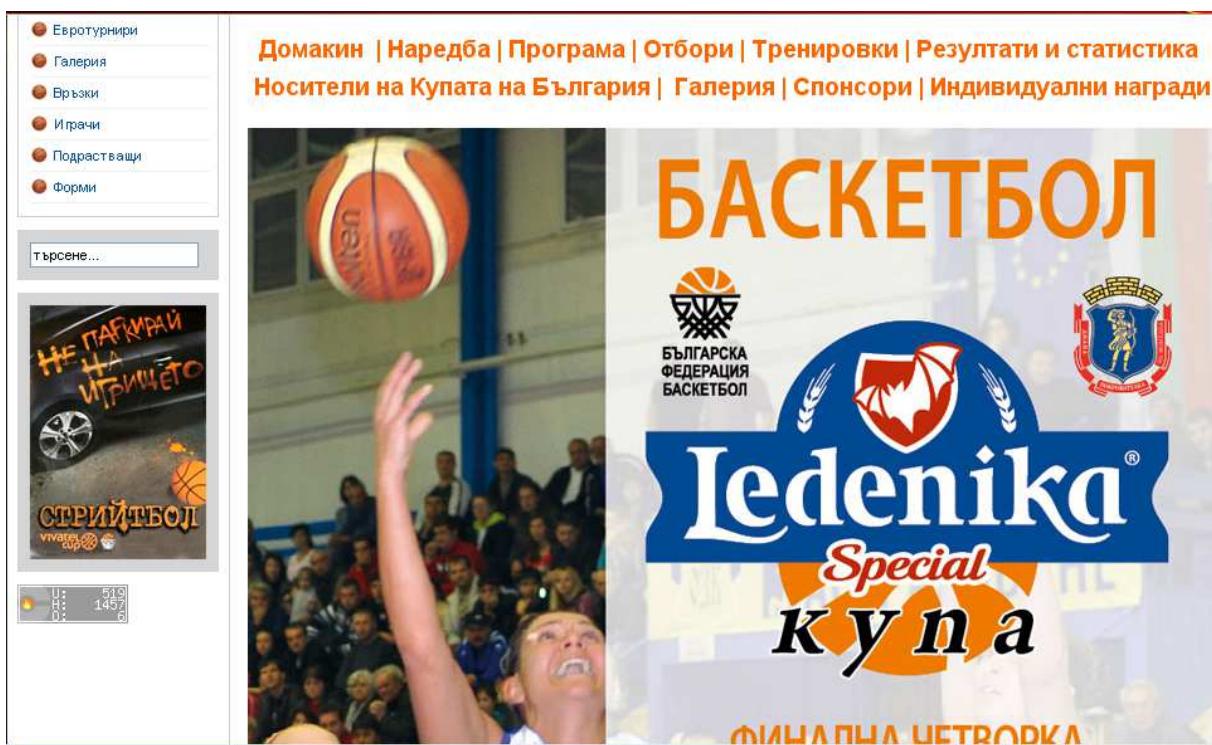
<http://www.basketball.bg/>: An advertisement banner of Ledenika Beer in the middle part of the front page of the Bulgarian basketball federation:

Дата	Събитие	Час	Място
15.09.	Общо събрание на клубовете от НБЛ	11:00	офис БФБ
02.10.	Ежегоден семинар по статистика	11:00	МФВС, 5-ти етаж

<http://www.basketball.bg/federation/1822>: Front page of the Ledenika basketball tournament:



Ledenika Special Cup:



We checked the websites of 10 professional clubs. The results show that none of the basketball clubs is sponsored by an alcohol brand.

2.3 Sponsoring of volleyball

Club	Alcohol sponsor
CSKA Sofia	No
Levski Sofia	No
Slavia Sofia	No
Victoria Volley Plovdiv	No
Dobrudja	No
Teteven Volley	No
Dunav Ruse	No
Lucoil Neftohimik	No
Montana	No
Marek Union-Ivkoni	No

Volleyball is a very popular sport in Bulgaria with huge international success on an international level. The Bulgarian national team has been 5 times among the medalists of the European Cup, and four times has won bronze medals. It has been vice-champion in Paris, 1951. However, none of the 10 clubs that we checked is sponsored by an alcohol brand.

2.4 Sponsoring of hockey

Club	Alcohol sponsor
Slavia Sofia	No
CSKA Sofia	No
Levski	No
Spartak	No
Ice Devils	No
NSA Hockey	No
Red Star Sofia	No
Academica	No
Iceberg	No
Sv. Kliment Varna	No

The beginning of the national hockey championship was in 1949. It is mostly practiced by youngsters. However, none of the 10 checked professionals clubs is sponsored by an alcohol brand.

2.5 Sponsoring of handball

Club	Alcohol sponsor
Dobrudja	No
Shumen	No
Spartak	No
Inter Academik	No
NSA	No
Lokomotiv Varna	No
Aves	No
Lokomotiv Go	No
Levski	No
CSKA	No

The organized practicing of handball began in 1958 and it was almost immediately included in the school programs. None of the 10 checked handball clubs is sponsored by an alcohol brand.

Summary of the monitoring results

The results surprisingly show that only one professional club of the 50 is sponsored by an alcohol brand. However, some national sport organizations and tournaments in football and basketball are recognized as important targets for alcohol marketing. Sports like volleyball, hockey and handball are completely neglected by the alcohol industry.

3. Conclusions

The report reveals that alcohol sponsorship has a relatively minor position in some massively practiced sports (e.g. football, basketball, etc.), and is totally absent in the majority of the others (e.g. volleyball, hockey, handball, etc.). The general trend is alcohol brands to organize and sponsor sport events for amateurs or to support professional tournaments and organizations, so they can reach a broader audience. Consequently, they create and maintain their own branded web sites.

The reluctance of the alcohol industry to enter more massively professional sport in Bulgaria is a question that still has to be answered. One possible explanation comes from the dropping results that Bulgarian clubs show on various levels. We could also mention a clear and steady trend of people withdrawing their interest from local sports. For example, the biggest derby in Bulgarian football – Levski Sofia Vs. CSKA Sofia used to attract an audience of 40-50 000 people, while today even 15 000 spectators is considered a success.

We do not expect important differences in the near future development of alcohol sponsorship in Bulgarian sport. It will probably remain concentrated on football as the most massively practiced and watched collective sport. Only few professional sport clubs will be sponsored by alcohol brands, which are going to focus instead on supporting tournaments, organizations or national teams. This obviously brings far more exposure to the general public.

There are, however, a few important recommendations to be made: a) alcohol sponsorship in sport should restrict children and youth exposure to the respective alcohol brands; b) the national regulators should restrict alcohol to be advertised as a prize for winning amateur football tournaments, as this has become a common practice; c) sport success and enjoying watching or practicing sport should be clearly differentiated from alcohol consumption: this has become an increasingly difficult problem to tackle, since it is quite often to read in newspapers about popular professional sport players involved in late night binge drinking before or after important games.

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List of 50 professional sport clubs in Bulgaria

Sport	Club	Website
Football	Levski Sofia	http://www.levski.bg/
Football	CSKA	http://www.cska.bg/
Football	Litex Lovech	http://www.pfclitex.com/site/bg/
Football	Lokomotiv Sofia	http://lokomotivsofia.bg/
Football	Pirin Blagoevgrad	www.pirinfc.com/index.php
Football	Chernomorets Burgas	http://chernomoretz.sportal.bg/
Football	Slavia Sofia	http://www.pfcslavia.com/
Football	Lokomotiv Plovdiv	http://lokomotivpd.com/
Football	Beroe Stara Zagora	http://beroe.eu/
Football	Cherno More Varna	http://chernomorepfc.bg/bg/
Basketball	Levski Sofia	http://www.levskibasket.com/bg/index.php
Basketball	Rilski Sportist Samokov	http://www.rilskibasket.com/bg/news2.php?id=77
Basketball	Lukoil Academic Sofia	http://www.lukoilacademic.net/
Basketball	Cherno More Varna	http://www.chernomore.eu/
Basketball	Balkan Botevgrad	http://botevgrad.com/news/? typeId=2
Basketball	Overgas Sofia	http://www.overgasbasket.com/bg/index.php
Basketball	Vidabasket Vidin	http://www.vidabasket.com/bg/index.php
Basketball	Yambol	http://www.yambolbasketball.com/
Basketball	Spartak Pleven	http://www.spartak-basket.com/site.php
Basketball	Dunav 2007	http://dunavbasket.hit.bg/team.html
Volleyball	CSKA Sofia	http://www.cska volley.org/
Volleyball	Levski Sofia	http://www.levski-siconco.hit.bg/
Volleyball	Slavia Sofia	http://slavia-bg.com/?p=5
Volleyball	Victoria Volley Plovdiv	http://victoriavolley.eu/new/
Volleyball	Dobrudja	http://dobrudja1919.com/index.php?p=9
Volleyball	Teteven Volley	http://www.tetevenvolley.com/
Volleyball	Dunav Ruse	http://vkvdunav.dir.bg/_wm/diary/?df=46&dfid=3
Volleyball	Lucoil Neftohimik	N/A
Volleyball	Montana	N/A
Volleyball	Marek Union-Ivkoni	N/A
Hockey	Slavia Sofia	N/A

Hockey	CSKA Sofia	http://www.hockeycska.com/
Hockey	Levski	http://hc-levski.dir.bg/_wm/library/?df=8/
Hockey	Spartak	http://clubspartak.com/
Hockey	Ice Devils	http://www.icedevils.net/
Hockey	NSA Hockey	http://nsahockey.com/
Hockey	Red Star Sofia	http://www.redstarsofia.com/?%C7%E0%ED%E0%F1
Hockey	Academica	http://chc-akademika.hit.bg/
Hockey	Iceberg	http://www.iceberg.dir.bg/_wm/diary/?df=46&dfid=3
Hockey	Sv. Kliment Varna	http://vnhockey.dir.bg/_wm/diary/?df=46&dfid=3
Handball	Dobrudja	http://dobrudja.devilix.net/index.php?node=home
Handball	Shumen	N/A
Handball	Spartak	http://www.hcspartak.com/
Handball	Inter Academik	N/A
Handball	NSA	N/A
Handball	Lokomotiv Varna	http://www.lokomotiv-mb.com/history.html
Handball	Aves	http://hkavesbs.dir.bg/_wm/diary/?df=46&dfid=3
Handball	Lokomotiv Go	N/A
Handball	Levski	N/A
Handball	CSKA	http://www.cska-handball.com/