

## **Stefan Késenne: A good and intelligent person**

We met Stefan for the first time in Málaga, back in 2000, at a small conference organized by IASE. This was our first contact with the sports economics profession. Stefan was very helpful in providing comments on the paper we presented and he took great care on how the paper was evolved. He encouraged us to complete it and insisted on its submission for publication. It is obvious to us that without Stefan's help and advice probably we would not have been working in sports economics since then.

But his help and advice has always been there. The well-established Gijon conference in sports economics very much owes to Stefan's contribution. He enthusiastically joined us in the organization and he was decisive in convincing top sports economics researchers to attend the first conference back in 2006 when celebrating fifty years of the publication of the seminal paper by Simon Rottenberg. The success of that edition was very important for attracting the sports economics profession to attend the conference and we could say that today's prestige of the conference is due to the invaluable contribution, help and dedication by Stefan.

He was an expert on analysing the behaviour of teams, leagues and, in particular, the type of objective functions they have: profit maximizers, utility maximizers, win maximizers. But his contribution to the field can be summarized in terms of his research. He was a profit maximizer because of the quality of his research. He was a utility maximizer in terms of how relevant his contributions have been to the field. He was a win maximizer because of the recognition in the profession for his contributions and, more importantly, for him as a person.

Stefan was a (very) intelligent person according to the classification of the individuals provided by Carlo Cipolla, a recognized economic historian. In his essay *The basic laws of human stupidity*, Cipolla defined individuals in terms of whether their actions are beneficial or not for them and beneficial or not for others. Stefan's actions were beneficial for him, for his reputation, but his actions were beneficial for us all, not only because of what we learnt from his contributions but also because he was always there for you too. No doubt Stefan fitted perfectly into this category of intelligent people. We would say the category of good people.

Paraphrasing the words from the poem *Self-portrait* by a modernist Spanish poet, Antonio Machado, is a simple way of expressing what Stefan was for most of us:

"... and rather than someone well versed in his science (sports economics), Stefan was, to the word's better meaning, a good man".

We will always remember him as a good and intelligent person and ... as a very good friend.

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