

DOCTORAL EXECUTIVE RESEARCH SUMMARY

Integrity of the Game vs. Economic Impact

The Oklahoma Business Plan

A longitudinal systems analysis of youth-sports economics, public infrastructure, governance, transparency, and institutional accountability.

KENNETH CRAWFORD | 2026

Research Frame	Systems analysis
Primary Geography	Oklahoma
Sports	Youth baseball & softball
Research Horizon	2001-2026
Core Question	How can communities govern what they cannot see?

Publication-quality synthesis of the 2026 manuscript. The document summarizes the book's research architecture and arguments and should be read with the full manuscript and underlying research record.

SECTION 01

Executive Orientation

Purpose, thesis, scope, and contribution

Integrity of the Game vs. Economic Impact: The Oklahoma Business Plan reframes organized youth baseball and softball as a complex economic and governance ecosystem rather than merely a collection of recreational activities. It examines tournament operations, private organizers, sanctioning structures, independent contractors, nonprofit entities, municipalities, counties, schools, tribal governments, and public or quasi-public athletic facilities.

The manuscript expressly positions itself as a systems analysis rather than an expose. Its principal concern is not to assign individual intent, but to examine structural conditions under which informal practices can become normalized as participation, event volume, financial activity, and facility dependence increase.

“How can communities govern what they cannot see?”

The central thesis is that economic scale without corresponding visibility creates an accountability deficit. The problem is not necessarily the absence of responsible individuals; it is the absence of a system in which responsibility, information, authority, and accountability reliably converge.

SECTION 02

Research Development

From lived operations to longitudinal institutional inquiry

Origins of the inquiry

The research develops from operational experience rather than an abstract hypothesis. The manuscript traces a progression through parent participation, volunteer coaching, tournament organization, facility operations, nonprofit work, and eventually structured research.

The Long Preparation

Early fundraising tournaments exposed recurring questions about scheduling, entry fees, officials, documentation, responsibility, transparency, and trust. The manuscript establishes that the project did not arise from a single dispute but from repeated exposure to how informal systems operate and scale.

Research transition

The decisive methodological shift occurs when repeated observations are converted into records capable of comparison across events, facilities, operators, ownership types, and time. The project moves from anecdotal experience toward longitudinal systems analysis.

Participation → Observation → Documentation → Systems Analysis

SECTION 03

Economic Architecture of Tournament Sports

Revenue, labor, facilities, and community impact

The manuscript identifies team entry fees as an initial financial input and then examines gate admissions, officiating compensation, concessions, and related event activity. These streams may be controlled by different actors using different reporting and payment systems.

Source / Actor	Economic Pathway	Destination / Function
Teams	Entry fees	Tournament operations
Spectators	Gate admissions	Event operations
Event operations	Official / contractor payments	Labor compensation
Spectators	Concessions & local spending	Ancillary economic activity
Facility owners	Land, fields, utilities, maintenance	Public or institutional support

Critical distinction: gross economic activity is not synonymous with organizational revenue, net income, profit, or taxable income. The book's economic modeling is best understood as a method for estimating scale and structure rather than as a substitute for audited financial statements.

The research therefore treats financial visibility as a governance problem. Short-lived events can generate and distribute funds rapidly, while post-event reconciliation may be fragmented, voluntary, or inaccessible to the facility owner.

SECTION 04

Public Infrastructure & Ownership Contexts

The information asymmetry problem

Municipalities, counties, schools, nonprofits, and tribal entities may provide the physical infrastructure that makes tournament activity possible: land, fields, lighting, utilities, parking, maintenance, public improvements, staffing, and institutional liability.

Ownership Context	Principal Governance Concern
Municipal	Public investment, field access, cost recovery, event-level reporting
County	Broad public responsibilities; sports may be one small operational portfolio
School	Public education assets, utilities, maintenance, external tournament economics
Tribal	Distinct sovereign authority interacting with common tournament models
Nonprofit	Mission-driven governance combined with delegated or external event operations

Across ownership types, legal authority changes, but the operational challenge can remain similar: the entity carrying infrastructure, maintenance, liability, or public-stewardship responsibilities may not possess complete event-level financial data.

Governance gaps may be systemic rather than jurisdiction-specific.

SECTION 05

The Governance Gap

When authority is distributed but accountability is not centralized

The manuscript's conceptual center is the observation that multiple organizations can possess legitimate authority while no organization possesses complete end-to-end responsibility for the event lifecycle.

Actor	Typical Control	Potential Visibility Limit
Facility owner	Infrastructure & access	May not control registration or receipts
Tournament operator	Scheduling & administration	May not control public-asset policy
Sanctioning body	Rules, affiliation, branding	May have limited authority over local financial practice
Officials / contractors	Labor services	Limited visibility into broader event economics
Government / board	Public stewardship	May receive fragmented information

This produces diffused accountability: authority is distributed so broadly that determining who possesses both sufficient information and sufficient jurisdiction to intervene becomes difficult. The book advocates clarity of roles, reporting expectations, and responsibility rather than blanket centralization.

SECTION 06

Transparency, Cash & Labor

Turning visibility into operational infrastructure

The manuscript advances a significant conceptual shift: transparency is not merely disclosure after controversy; transparency is operational infrastructure. Effective transparency requires minimum information sufficient for oversight, standardized reporting, clear responsibility, record retention, accessibility, and reconciliation.

Technology can assist through digital registration, electronic payments, and standardized reporting templates, but technology alone does not create accountability. Records become meaningful governance instruments only when the appropriate oversight entity can access and interpret them.

The chapter 'Salary vs. Cash' addresses per-game compensation of officials and event personnel. The manuscript does not claim cash payment is inherently improper. Its concern is traceability at scale. The reform principle is to document transactions without unnecessarily destroying operational flexibility.

SECTION 07

Oversight Pathways & Reform

From reactive escalation to preventive governance

When ordinary reporting systems fail to answer questions, stakeholders may seek increasingly formal review through facility administration, municipal councils, county commissions, school boards, state authorities, federal agencies, auditors, or courts. The manuscript distinguishes a request for oversight from a finding of wrongdoing.

Reform Principle	Operational Application
Recognize economic scale	Treat tournament activity as measurable economic activity
Baseline reporting	Schedules, team counts, entry fees, aggregate admissions
Modernize payments	Documented channels and retained records
Clarify roles	Written permits, leases, and use agreements
Centralize accountability	Identifiable institutional point of review
Use data	Evaluate cost recovery, infrastructure demand, public value
Phase implementation	Allow operators and officials time to adapt

Public-resource access → reasonable transparency obligations → standardized reporting → measurable accountability

SECTION 08

Scholarly Contribution & Significance

Why the framework matters beyond a single event or facility

The broader importance of the book lies less in any individual financial number than in the institutional framework it develops. Youth sports operate at the intersection of children, families, private enterprise, nonprofit activity, public infrastructure, independent labor, tourism, community identity, and governmental stewardship.

Its principal scholarly contribution is a systems-level framework for examining youth tournament sports as simultaneously recreational, economic, institutional, and public-resource activity.

Its governance contribution is the identification of a recurring disconnect between economic activity, operational authority, information access, and accountability. Its policy contribution is the proposition that baseline transparency can be incorporated into facility governance without eliminating private enterprise or imposing unnecessarily burdensome regulation.

Trust is strongest when supported by documentation.

SECTION 09

Human Dimension

Faith, endurance, loss, and the boundaries of evidence

The final reflective sections - including 'Picking Up the Pieces,' the accompanying Author's Note, Brian's songs, and 'With You Again' - are intentionally separated from the empirical argument. The manuscript explicitly treats them as reflection rather than evidence.

That separation is methodologically important. The analytical sections ask what the evidence demonstrates; the reflective sections ask what carrying the work means to the person conducting it. The book thereby acknowledges the human consequences of long-term research without using personal meaning as proof of institutional claims.

The dedication and closing material return to faith, endurance, loss, responsibility, and purpose. The result is a manuscript with two distinct but deliberately separated dimensions: empirical accountability and personal meaning.

SECTION 10

Publication Integrity & Version Control

A material issue to resolve in the definitive 2026 edition

The manuscript states that the edition corresponds to HVIIOG Dataset v1.1, locked February 5, 2026, and describes the quantitative dataset as covering 2001-2025. Yet the final pages contain graphics labeled through 2026 and identify a later July 2026 data update.

This creates an internal version-control inconsistency. A publication presented as a definitive 2026 research edition should synchronize the version statement, methodology appendix, chart dates, quantitative references, and underlying dataset.

Recommended publication standard

Either preserve a clearly labeled book-specific baseline tied to Dataset v1.1, or formally issue a revised 2026 research edition in which the manuscript and current HVIIOG database are synchronized. The latter is academically stronger if the publication is intended to represent the current statewide research program.

This issue does not negate the manuscript's systems framework. It is a documentation and reproducibility issue that should be corrected precisely because the book's central argument emphasizes transparency, traceability, and accountable records.

CONCLUSION

The book's central proposition is not that economic impact and integrity are competing objectives. It is that sustainable economic impact depends on credible governance. By replacing assumptions with documentation, clarifying responsibility, and linking public-resource access to proportionate transparency, communities can preserve the social value of youth sports while improving stewardship of the economic systems that support them.

Source basis: Kenneth Crawford, Integrity of the Game vs. Economic Impact: The Oklahoma Business Plan, 2026 manuscript supplied for this executive synthesis.