

Are Analytics Making Sports Less Fun?

The real story isn't about data—it's about perception.

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132

Data Analysts in the NBA

In 2023, the NBA employed 132 data analysts, up from just 10 in 2009.

This explosive growth reflects a systemic shift in how professional teams operate. Analytics are no longer a niche tool—they are embedded in player development, game strategy, and roster decisions. The increase isn't just about numbers; it's about a cultural transformation in how sports are played and understood.

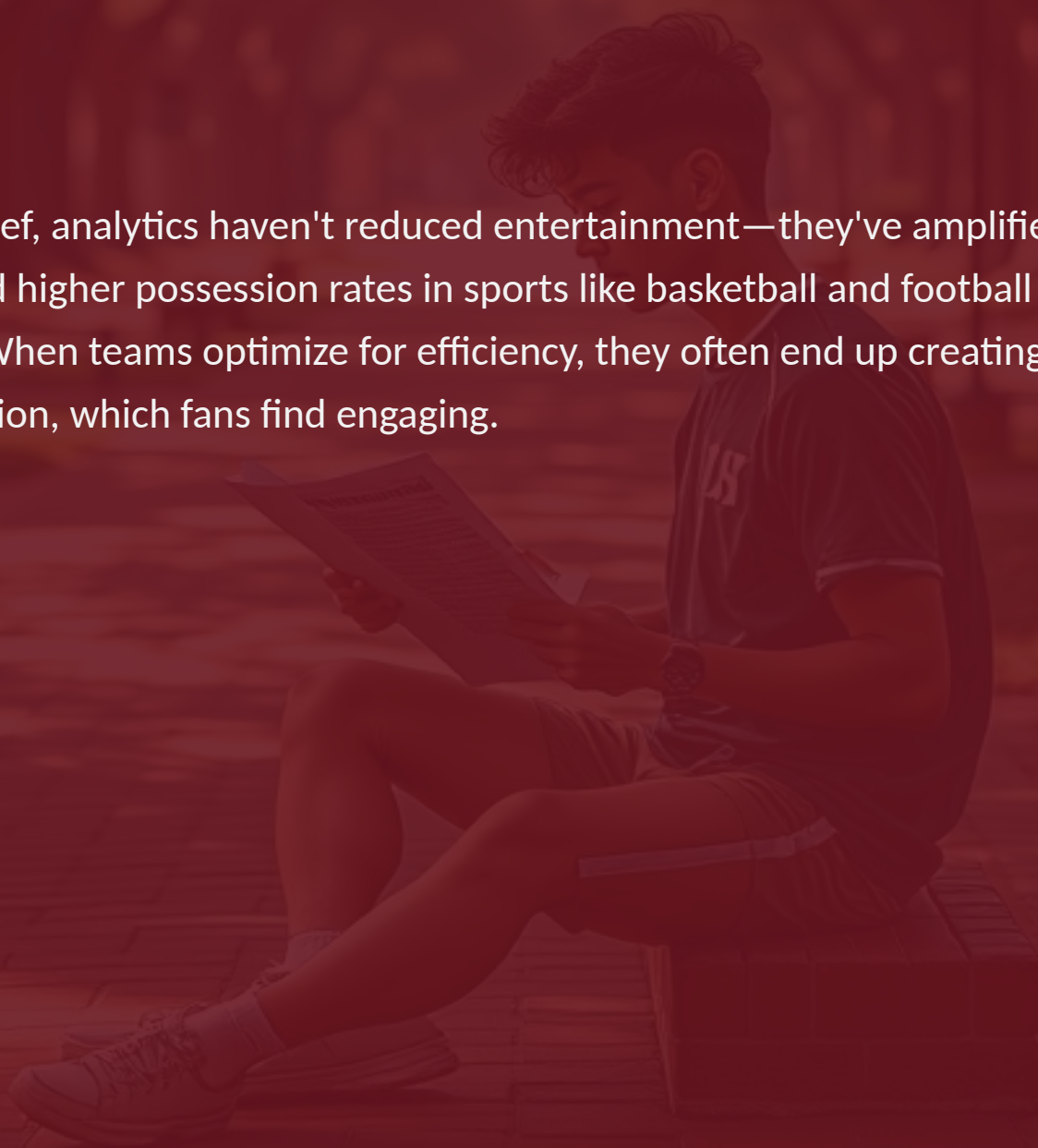
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01

Analytics Create New Excitement

Contrary to popular belief, analytics haven't reduced entertainment—they've amplified it. More scoring, faster pace, and higher possession rates in sports like basketball and football have made games more dynamic. When teams optimize for efficiency, they often end up creating more unpredictability and action, which fans find engaging.





02

The Paradox of Predictability

While analytics standardize strategy—like the three-point revolution—their dominance also opens space for counter-strategies. When most teams adopt similar models, the edge shifts to those who innovate in less quantifiable areas: team chemistry, player resilience, or unorthodox tactics. This creates a feedback loop where data-driven uniformity breeds rare, high-impact deviations.

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