Standing up during track meets: a way to alienate longtime fans of the sport?

I could find and gave him my hearty thanks.

Trials. I was in a definite minority when I defended their keep-people-seated mandate. I noted I was to packed houses, so having the good manners to stay seated became quickly ingrained. Good manners, or getting tired of somebody behind you yelling “down in front!”

The pro-stand people were adamant that being forced to sit through a meet somehow compromised their ability to enjoy the proceedings. One poster made the strong argument that by curtailing standing the sport was driving away fans that it so sorely needs. The counter-argument is that there’s no guarantee that these “new fans” were ever going to come back to another meet anyway, and that allowing unrestricted standing could help drive away the entrenched fan base. Now that’s a terrible two-edged sword. How to gain new fans without alienating existing ones?

That the stand/sit debate exists at all is a terrific sign, by the way, because it means that there were enough people in the stands to create a problem. At far too many meets these days you can choose which 127 seats you want, set up your own volleyball court and enjoy the proceedings without disturbing your neighbors. It’s the presence of lots of neighbors, I surmise, that leads the older generation to be sitters. They started in the sport at a time where all major meets played without disturbing your neighbors. It’s the presence of lots of neighbors, I surmise, that leads the older generation to be sitters. They started in the sport at a time where all major meets played

The bottom line on Sacramento? From the places where I sat, my take is that the police allowed the crowd to behave as crowds do at all sporting events: you stay seated until something truly exciting is happening, then you go berserk, and it’s accepted by all. Nobody is quicker to jump to his feet than I when it gets down to the nitty-gritty.

If the crowd-control people are going to err, I’d much prefer that they err on the side of good manners and keep people seated. But as Dennis Miller would say: I could be wrong.