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1 **1. Introduction**

2 Throughout this book, evidence of a home advantage has been discussed across a range of
3 sports, competitive levels, timeframes, and geographical regions. Indeed, the bulk of the extant
4 research on the home advantage effect suggests that, overall, there is a benefit to competing at
5 home versus away venues (e.g., Jamieson, 2010). Nonetheless, sport enthusiasts could likely
6 point to several instances where home teams tend to perform worse than away teams. Are these
7 merely examples of the adage that “the exception proves the rule” and simply part of the natural
8 ebbs and flows of competition? Or, are there truly situations in sport whereby the advantage of
9 competing at home disappears or even reverses to a home *dis*advantage?

10 In this chapter, we attempt to dissect this area of research within the home (dis)advantage
11 literature. We begin by highlighting the foundational work of Baumeister and Steinhilber (1984),
12 which proposed—and appeared to provide initial evidence of—a home disadvantage. We then
13 review the research that has been conducted since their initial work testing this phenomenon.
14 Finally, we provide a series of considerations for future research that could help advance this area
15 of study. To be clear, our goal in this chapter is not to convince readers that a home advantage in
16 sport does not exist—such a contention would ignore the decades of evidence demonstrating that
17 athletes and sport teams tend to perform better at their home venue. Instead, we aim to delve into
18 the nuance that appears to exist in this home (dis)advantage effect.

19

20 **2. Foundational research on the home disadvantage**

21 Early work on the home disadvantage effect dates back over 35 years. Baumeister and
22 Steinhilber (1984) proposed that supportive audiences (i.e., an athlete’s home crowd) could
23 undermine skilled performance under certain conditions as a result of increases in *self-*
24 *presentational concerns*. Self-presentation involves claiming desired identities through public

25 performances (Baumeister & Steinhilber, 1984). Self-presentational concerns can become salient
26 in front of supportive audiences (compared to hostile, unsupportive audiences), particularly as the
27 importance of a given performance increases. These increases in self-presentational concerns are
28 thought to amplify *self-awareness*, whereby individuals become increasingly focused on
29 themselves.

30 Why do self-presentational concerns and increased self-focus matter to sport performance?

31 There appear to be two potential explanations. First, in situations of high self-awareness, an
32 athlete may become distracted away from important cues to which they typically attend and
33 towards the prospect of gaining a new identity instead. Second, these situations may engender
34 greater conscious attention by the athlete to the step-by-step execution of well-learned skills
35 rather than carrying out those skills in their typical manner—a process that Masters et al. (1993)
36 referred to as “reinvestment”. As an example, through years of learning, an expert golfer may
37 have reached a point in their development whereby each shot they take is rather “automatic” and,
38 thus, they focus solely on the golf ball when they swing their golf club. Under conditions where
39 self-presentational concerns and self-awareness are heightened (e.g., during the final hole of a
40 championship tournament where they are performing in front of a supportive audience *and* have
41 an opportunity to win), the golfer’s focus may shift from being exclusively on the golf ball to (a)
42 their potential new identity as a “champion”, and/or (b) the individual components involved in
43 the swing (e.g., thinking about the strength of their grip on the golf club, bringing the club back
44 in a certain manner, shifting their weight across different positions and at particular times, and so
45 forth).

46 Based on the above theorizing, Baumeister and Steinhilber (1984) hypothesized that
47 athletes would perform worse during competitions that presented an imminent opportunity to win
48 a championship (thereby allowing the athletes to claim or redefine their identities as

49 “champions”) in front of supportive home crowds compared to non-imminent competitions or in
50 front of non-supportive away crowds. From their perspective, it is the combination of *imminence*
51 and *audience support* that is particularly important in predicting performance decrements during
52 high-stakes competition. To test their propositions, Baumeister and Steinhilber (1984) conducted
53 an archival study of Major League Baseball (MLB) World Series games from 1924-1982 as well
54 as National Basketball Association (NBA) semi-final and final series games from 1967-1982. In
55 support of their hypotheses, they found that home teams in both sports were more likely to win
56 the first two games of the best-of-seven series ($n = 98$) which do not imminently decide the series
57 champion but lose the final game of the series, regardless of whether that final game was
58 delimited to games 5, 6, or 7 ($n = 49$) or to game 7 only ($n = 26$; see Figure 1). In addition,
59 visiting team players were shown to make more fielding errors in the first two games of the MLB
60 series, but the home team made more in the 7th game.¹ Examined another way, the researchers
61 found that home team players showed a significant degradation in terms of the number of errors
62 made in the final game compared to their fielding performance in the first two games, whereas
63 the away team’s performance was approximately unchanged. In further support of their
64 hypotheses, the researchers found that NBA home teams performed significantly better during
65 games 1-4 of a semi-final or championship series ($n = 164$) compared to the final game of the
66 series ($n = 41$); similar findings were shown when the final game was delimited to game 7 ($n =$
67 13; see Figure 2). Moreover, home and away team players performed approximately equally in
68 terms of free-throw shooting during the first four games of the series; however, the away team
69 players had significantly better free-throw shooting percentages compared to home players during
70 the final game of the series. Finally, similar to the findings of fielding errors in MLB games,

¹ In their paper, the authors only presented data analyses on game 7 for this outcome measure; however, they noted that the “results are quite similar if we used all 5-, 6-, and 7-game series”.

71 home team players showed significant decreases in free-throw percentages in the final game of
72 the series compared to the first four games, whereas the percentages for away team players did
73 not change during this timeframe.

74 [Insert Figure 1 and Figure 2 around here]

75 In summary, Baumeister and Steinhilber (1984) concluded that NBA and MLB teams—and
76 individual athletes within those teams—performed worse when they were competing in front of a
77 home crowd and had an impending opportunity to secure the desired “champion” identity. The
78 authors acknowledged that a direct test of the mechanisms underpinning this apparent home
79 disadvantage effect was not possible due to the study’s archival design. Specifically, the
80 researchers were unable to determine whether the observed performance decrements by home
81 athletes in win-imminent situations were due to (a) increases in *distraction* away from relevant
82 cues and towards irrelevant cues (i.e., claiming a new identity as a champion) and/or (b) increases
83 in *self-attention* wherein the athletes’ execution of skill-based tasks moved away from
84 automaticity and towards a conscious, step-by-step attentional approach. Furthermore, the study
85 only included two sports, which raised questions regarding the generalizability of the findings.
86 Fortunately, research following Baumeister and Steinhilber’s (1984) foundational work has
87 helped shed further light on the proposed home disadvantage effect.

88

89 **3. What have we learned about the home disadvantage over the past 35 years?**

90 [Insert Table 1 around here]

91 Additional archival research demonstrated that the findings from Baumeister and
92 Steinhilber (1984) in the MLB and NBA were replicated in other sports (see Table 1 for
93 examples). For instance, Wright et al. (1995) showed that home teams were more likely to win
94 games 1 and 3 of best-of-seven National Hockey League (NHL) playoff series but lose the final

95 game (whether game 5, 6, or 7) of the series.² Archival data have also been examined in
96 individual sports. For example, Wright et al. (1991) found that British golfers who were in
97 contention to win the British Open Championship going into the final round of the tournament
98 had greater deteriorations in performance from the first to final round compared to contending
99 foreign/international players over this timespan. In an effort to move beyond archival findings,
100 Butler and Baumeister (1998) as well as Law et al. (2003) found that performance on various
101 mental (e.g., arithmetic) and physical (e.g., table tennis) tasks was generally poorer in front of
102 supportive audiences (simulating a crowd at one's home venue) compared to unsupportive
103 audiences (simulating a crowd at an opposing team's venue). In explaining the existing research
104 on performance decrements due to audience support, Wallace et al. (2005) contended that (a)
105 "audiences magnify both the rewards of success and the costs of failure", (b) a performer's
106 "motivation to achieve success may be eclipsed by their desire to avoid the penalties associated
107 with failure", and (c) "performers with supportive audiences simply have more to lose than other
108 performers with unsupportive audiences" (p.433).

109 In contrast to the above studies supporting Baumeister and Steinhilber's (1984) initial
110 work, a number of other studies actually pointed to a home *advantage* in high-pressure and/or
111 championship competitions. For instance, Leonard (1989) showed that athletes from a host
112 country of the Olympic Games won more medals than they did in either the immediately
113 preceding or subsequent Olympic Games. In addition, Irving and Goldstein (1990) found that
114 MLB pitchers were more likely to pitch no-hitters (which is considered to be a near-perfect
115 performance by a baseball pitcher) at home than at an away venue. Perhaps most critically though
116 were the studies by Schlenker et al. (1995) as well as Jones (2014) which updated and re-

² Note. Higher-seed NHL teams host games 1, 2, 5, and 7; lower-seeded teams host games 3, 4, and 6.

117 analysed the data from Baumeister and Steinhilber (1984). In some cases, the evidence of a home
118 disadvantage that Baumeister and Steinbilber (1984) found was corroborated in the two later
119 studies. For example, Schlenker et al. (1995) found that visiting MLB players had nearly the
120 same number of errors in game 7 as they did in games 1 and 2, whereas home team players made
121 more errors in the seventh game compared to (a) the number of errors they made in games 1 and
122 2, and (b) the number of errors that away team players made in those seventh games. In other
123 cases, though, evidence of a home disadvantage was reduced or eliminated altogether. In
124 particular, Jones (2014) found that home and away team percentages did not differ significantly
125 between Games 1 and 2 compared to the final games of MLB World Series. Furthermore, where
126 there was still evidence of a home disadvantage, this effect appeared to be largely driven by two
127 variables that we will discuss later in this chapter. The first variable was the *type of decisive game*
128 a team is facing—that is, whether the game provided an opportunity for the home team to clinch
129 the series (i.e., when that home team had three wins) or to avoid losing the series (i.e., when the
130 opposing away team had three wins). For example, Schlenker et al. (1995) found that when the
131 home team was down 3-2 in the sixth game of a seven-game MLB series and, thus, facing
132 elimination (i.e., a *loss-imminent* game), they won 70% of the time; when they were up 3-2 in the
133 sixth game and, thus, had the opportunity to clinch the series with a win (i.e., a *win-imminent*
134 game), they only won 42% of the time.

135 The second variable related to differences in *team quality*. For example, Schlenker et al.
136 (1995) pointed out that although the home team in NBA series only won the sixth game of a
137 series 41% of the time, this sixth game was typically hosted by the team with the poorer regular

138 season record.³ Indeed, of the 23 games in which the lower-quality team hosted game 6, the home
139 team only won only eight (35%); of the five games that were hosted by the team with a better
140 regular season record, that home team won three (60%). As such, the authors argued that the
141 relatively poorer win percentages of the home teams in the potentially-decisive sixth games were
142 not due to those home teams “choking” per se but, rather, due to them simply being lower-level
143 teams. Indeed, the win percentage in these sixth games by the lower-quality team was nearly the
144 exact same as their win percentage in any series (36%) irrespective of court location. The
145 findings from this study suggest that performing at home in decisive games does not necessarily
146 result in performance decrements; other variables that could influence differences in success rates
147 between home and away teams need to be taken into account (e.g., team quality, situational
148 factors).

149

150 **4. What are we still learning about the potential home disadvantage effect?**

151 Since the seminal work of Baumeister and Steinhilber (1984), researchers have
152 investigated the proposed home disadvantage in further detail in an attempt to clarify whether the
153 effect truly exists and to tease apart its various influences. Below, we discuss six factors that have
154 improved our understanding of the apparent inconsistencies in this phenomenon. For each, we
155 also provide considerations for future work that could help continue to advance this area of
156 research.

157 ***Game type.*** To help explain the contradictory evidence on the home (dis)advantage,
158 researchers need to move beyond simply comparing the overall success between home and away

³ The NBA's playoff structure has changed over the years. As a result, although the team with the better regular season record currently hosts games 1, 2, 5, and 7 of a series, there have also been years when they hosted games 1, 2, 6, and 7.

159 teams. Instead, examining performance across specific types of games—especially in ‘best-of’
160 competition formats—could provide a more complete evaluation of the propositions advanced by
161 Baumeister and Steinhilber (1984). For example, multiple studies (e.g., Baumeister &
162 Steinhilber, 1984; Jones, 2014; Schlenker et al., 1995; Wright et al., 1995) have compared home
163 and away team win percentages in early games of a best-of-seven series versus later or final
164 games. As others have pointed out (e.g., McEwan, 2019; Schlenker et al., 1995; Tauer et al.,
165 2009), the precise circumstances of the (potentially) decisive games of a series need to be
166 considered. For example, in a best-of-seven series, the “final game” of a series implies that the
167 home team, away team, or both teams have an opportunity to clinch a series. More specifically,
168 this final game could involve: the home team leading the series 3-0, 3-1, or 3-2; the visiting team
169 leading 3-0, 3-1, or 3-2; or the series being tied 3-3, with both home and away teams having a
170 chance to clinch the series with a win. Comparing team performance in various types of games
171 such as these provides a more detailed understanding of the home (dis)advantage, rather than
172 simply measuring performance in “early” versus “late” games (e.g., games 1 and 2 versus the
173 final game of the series).

174 One recent example of this type of assessment stems from McEwan (2019) who
175 compared home and away team success across several types of NHL playoff overtime games.
176 These games were first broken down into non-outcome-imminent games—wherein neither team
177 could clinch the series with a win—and outcome-imminent games—where at least one team
178 could clinch the series. In terms of win percentages, no significant differences were evident
179 between home and away teams for outcome-imminent games.⁴ However, when the outcome-
180 imminent games were further broken down into home-win-imminent or away-win-imminent (i.e.,

⁴ Note that non-imminent games was used as a baseline comparison in this study.

181 where the home or away team, respectively, was leading 3-0, 3-1, or 3-2 and, thus, had an
182 opportunity to clinch the series), some interesting findings emerged. Specifically, when the away
183 teams had an imminent opportunity to clinch the series, they won significantly more games than
184 home teams.⁵ In contrast, when home teams had an imminent opportunity to clinch the series,
185 they were no more likely than away teams to win the overtime game⁵—this latter finding aligned
186 with the results from Jones (2014), who demonstrated that home teams won approximately the
187 same number of game sevens as they did games 1 or 2 in MLB, NBA, and NHL semi-finals and
188 finals series. Tauer et al. (2009) took another approach to examining the home (dis)advantage in
189 NBA playoff games—they compared home and away team performance in outcome-imminent
190 games wherein the series was tied 3-3 or one team had a 3-2 or 3-1 series lead. Relative to their
191 performance in the first two games of a series, home team win percentages were: poorer in game
192 5 of the series when leading 3-1; poorer in game 6 when leading 3-2; no different in game 5 when
193 trailing 3-1; higher in game 6 when trailing 3-2; and higher in game 7 when the series was tied 3-
194 3. Had the outcome-imminent games in these two studies not been further broken down, some
195 valuable information on the home (dis)advantage in ice hockey and basketball would have been
196 overlooked. As such, researchers are encouraged to consider the specific type of game that
197 competitors are faced with in outcome-imminent games.

198 *Situations within games.* In addition to comparing performance in various types of
199 games, researchers could also consider home and away team performance in specific situations
200 within those games. For instance, Heaton and Sigall (1989) re-examined the MLB data from
201 Baumeister and Steinhilber's (1984) study and sought to better understand how the differences in
202 home and away team success emerged in the final game of a tied series. They found that home
203 teams were more likely to fall behind and never take a lead in game 7, relative to the likelihood
204 of this occurring during the first six games. More recently, Hoffmann et al. (2017) compared

205 home and away team win percentages in NHL regular season games (2005-06 through 2013-14)
206 based on the specific situation in which a game ended—regulation (i.e., three 20-minute periods
207 of 5-on-5 play), overtime (i.e., five minutes of extra time [4-on-4 play] when there is no winner
208 following regulation), or shootouts (i.e., one-on-one breakaways between a shooter and the
209 goaltender when there is still no winner following overtime; shootouts continue until a winner is
210 decided). They found that home teams that were superior to their visiting counterparts had 1.03
211 times greater odds of winning when the game concluded in regulation versus overtime. In
212 contrast, there was a significant decrease in the home team’s odds of success when the game
213 transitioned into the more individually-oriented shootout situation, regardless of the relative
214 quality of home versus visiting teams. Specifically, home teams’ odds of winning were 1.23
215 times greater when the game ended in overtime rather than the shootout. These findings were
216 reflected in the following average home team win percentages: games ending in regulation
217 (57%), games ending in overtime (54%), and games ending in the shootout (48%). In sum, it
218 seemed that home team performance suffered as the situation within the competition became
219 increasingly imminent and determined by individual skill.

220 In the 2015-16 NHL season, the league modified the overtime format to consist of 5-
221 minutes of 3-on-3 hockey (as opposed to the earlier 4-on-4 format), followed still by a shootout if
222 required. Hoffmann et al. (in press) sought to replicate the analysis from the 4-on-4 overtime era
223 (i.e., Hoffmann et al., 2017) using regular season game data for the four NHL seasons since the
224 implementation of 3-on-3 overtime (2015-16 through 2018-2019). One noteworthy finding was
225 that home teams that were clearly superior to their visiting opponents had a substantially better
226 home winning percentage when games ended in regulation (77%) compared to overtime (53%),
227 perhaps suggesting that the home advantage might decline during situations when there is a
228 greater emphasis on individual play (i.e., during overtime periods). This finding was also

229 demonstrated through a significant interaction, which showed that superior home teams were
230 4.24 times more likely to win than inferior home teams when games concluded in regulation
231 rather than overtime.

232 Returning to the seminal work by Baumeister and Steinhilber (1984), it is “the *imminent*
233 *opportunity* to claim a desired identity in front of a supportive audience” (p. 85; emphasis added)
234 that is proposed to result in performance decrements for home team athletes. In most sports, there
235 will be differences across situations within a competition in terms of the imminence in deciding a
236 winner (e.g., a basketball player who takes a jump-shot in the waning seconds of a 1-point game
237 versus an earlier point of a game). Moreover, in various scenarios where the outcome of the
238 competition is looming, the salience of claiming the “ultimate” identity (i.e., as a “champion”) is
239 further amplified in championship games versus non-championship games (e.g., game 7 of a
240 basketball series versus a regular season game). As such, a more thorough understanding of the
241 home (dis)advantage will be obtained as researchers continue to not only consider game type but
242 also break those games down into specific types of situations.

243 *Types of sport and type of skills.* The home advantage has been found to be moderated by
244 sport type. For example, sports that are more “continuous” in their scoring and temporal nature
245 (e.g., basketball, ice hockey) generally demonstrate stronger home advantages than sports that
246 have discrete breaks embedded over the course of the game (e.g., baseball, American football;
247 Pollard & Pollard, 2005; Tauer et al., 2009). Further, whereas a home advantage has been
248 historically reported in team sports, findings typically demonstrate that “objectively evaluated”
249 individual sports (e.g., tennis, golf) show comparatively weaker evidence of a home advantage
250 (Jones, 2013). This finding may be useful to consider when reflecting on the performance of
251 home versus away players in individually-oriented situations that occur within team sport, such
252 as penalty kicks in football or shootouts in ice hockey. Jones (2013) did, however, report that

253 individual sports that are “subjectively judged” tend to demonstrate significant home advantages
254 (e.g., figure skating, gymnastics). Thus, might sport type also impact the potential home
255 *disadvantage* effect that could arise during outcome-imminent situations?

256 In many sports, there are also certain player positions or times during competition where
257 performance is more skill-based (e.g., a quarterback or receiver in American football) compared
258 to others that a more effort-based (e.g., an offensive or defensive lineman in American football).
259 Some researchers have suggested that skill-based tasks are more prone to performance
260 decrements under pressure compared to effort-based tasks (e.g., Wallace et al., 2005). This might
261 imply that home athletes are more likely to choke when performing offensive tasks which tend to
262 be more skill-based (e.g., a field hockey player attempting to score near the end of a tied game)
263 compared to defensive tasks which tend to be more effort (e.g., a field hockey player attempting
264 to block the opposing team’s shot near the end of a tied game). Despite being proposed as
265 additional potential moderators (see Wallace et al., 2005), there is scant empirical evidence that
266 these variables (skill-/effort-based tasks, offensive/defensive skills) play a role in predicting a
267 home disadvantage. As such, future research examining these potential moderating variables is
268 clearly warranted.

269 ***Team quality.*** While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to delve deep into the
270 measurement of team quality as it pertains to the home advantage (readers are instead directed to
271 Chapter 2), we would generally encourage greater consideration of this variable as a potential
272 moderator in future home (dis)advantage work. Schwartz and Barsky’s (1977) pioneering study
273 demonstrated that some teams benefitted from a particularly strong home advantage by virtue of
274 their quality relative to their visiting opponents. That is, some home teams were able to exploit
275 the advantages of playing at home because of the inferiority of their opponents. Since that
276 discovery, home (dis)advantage researchers have adjusted for athlete and team quality in their

277 studies using different approaches. For instance, Clarke and Norman (1995) used a method that
278 estimated home advantage and team quality simultaneously based on goal margins. Hoffmann et
279 al. (2017) accounted for team quality using a formula grounded in the Pythagorean Method that
280 approximated an NHL team's winning percentage based on goals scored and goals allowed.

281 Moving forward, home (dis)advantage researchers should think critically in terms of
282 identifying situations in which confounding elements related to team/athlete quality may impact
283 study results. For example, any research examining 'best of' playoff series would benefit from
284 the inclusion of a team quality variable. In many sport leagues (e.g., NHL, NBA, MLB) better
285 teams (based on regular season play) are seeded higher in playoff rankings and ostensibly benefit
286 from having more home games in a playoff series as a result. Hence, it is possible that differences
287 in home and away team success can be explained (at least to some extent) by the winning team
288 simply being of higher quality as opposed to psychological changes related to the home
289 (dis)advantage phenomenon (e.g., increases in distraction and/or self-awareness). As such, a
290 more consistent consideration for team quality would help better identify the precise reasons why
291 differences in home and away team success emerge.

292 *Individual athlete influences.* Our understanding of the home disadvantage effect could
293 be further extended by considering individual athlete differences. In particular, examining
294 personality and/or trait-based influences could provide interesting insight into whether certain
295 athletes are more (or less) susceptible to choking at home. For example, Wallace et al. (2005)
296 argued that athletes with higher levels of narcissism would be less likely to choke under the
297 pressure of a supportive audience. Since those with narcissistic characteristics have a propensity
298 for grandiosity, self-aggrandizing behavior, and inflated self-evaluations, it is possible that
299 athletes would maintain their confidence when faced with pressure-filled, outcome-imminent
300 situations in front of supportive audiences. To our knowledge, there is little sport research linking

301 narcissism to performance under pressure (e.g., Geukes et al., 2012). Nonetheless, a series of
302 studies published in the early 2000's did find that narcissists thrived on performance tasks when
303 there were "self-enhancing" opportunities (Wallace & Baumeister, 2002). For instance, in one of
304 these studies, individuals with high narcissism scores who were told that their dart-throwing task
305 was designed to identify choking under pressure performed better than those with low narcissism
306 scores. Future researchers could attempt to replicate this finding using performance tasks more
307 relevant to high-performance sport (e.g., basketball free-throws).

308 Another future research direction is to expand beyond narcissism and examine other
309 personality traits such as the 'Big Five' (i.e., extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism,
310 conscientiousness, and openness to experience) in relation to performance under pressure.
311 Although not within a sport setting, one study found that higher levels of neuroticism (i.e.,
312 feelings of anxiety, worry, and emotional instability) predicted decreased performance on a high-
313 pressure decision-making task (Byrne et al., 2015). Gaining a better appreciation of athletes'
314 personalities and how they may relate to performance in outcome-imminent situations in front of
315 one's home crowd would not only enhance our understanding of the home disadvantage effect
316 but could also have implications for coaches and applied sport psychology practitioners.

317 *Mechanisms of the home (dis)advantage.* Perhaps the largest hole that remains within the
318 home disadvantage literature involves understanding the mechanisms of this proposed effect. As
319 discussed at the outset of this chapter, Baumeister and Steinhilber (1984) contended that the
320 effect of outcome-imminent situations in front of supportive crowds on task performance could
321 be explained by self-presentational concerns and increases in self-awareness. Although they did
322 indeed find differences in performance between home and away teams over the course of a
323 basketball or baseball series, the researchers were unable to test whether those mechanisms
324 explained the performance outcomes. Subsequent archival research that contradicted these

325 findings (e.g., Jones, 2014; Schlenker et al., 1995) also did not test these potential mechanisms.
326 In other words, when competing at one's home venue, does a change in imminence lead to a
327 change in performance via changes in self-presentational concerns and/or self-awareness? The
328 answer to this question is still not completely clear. Future studies that test this mediating effect
329 could help refine this area of research and clarify the contradictory evidence that exists. For
330 example, the findings supporting a home disadvantage effect under certain conditions might
331 indeed be explained by increases in self-awareness among home competitors. For studies that do
332 not support the home disadvantage effect, it may be that performance decrements did not occur
333 because the changes in imminence were not substantive enough to induce increases in self-
334 awareness. In either case, the point stands that there is simply not a sufficient level of evidence to
335 make an accurate conclusion on this point.

336 To test the potential mechanisms of the home (dis)advantage, future research will need to
337 make use of study designs beyond archival research. That work would not only help uncover why
338 some studies have found a home disadvantage and others have not, but could also be useful to
339 applied sport psychology practitioners. For example, if performance decrements resulting from
340 particular situations are indeed explained by changes in self-presentational concerns, practitioners
341 could identify upcoming situations when a home disadvantage could potentially take place (e.g.,
342 in a win-imminent game of a series) and encourage athletes to utilize certain psychological or
343 behavioural strategies that could help offset those concerns from occurring or reducing their
344 detrimental impact on performance if they do indeed take place.

345

346 **5. Conclusion**

347 As detailed throughout this book, generally there is an advantage to competing at one's
348 home venue. That said, there is evidence to suggest that there may be certain outcome-imminent

349 situations in which competing at home could present a disadvantage. Additional research is
350 evidently needed to better understand the mechanisms underpinning the home (dis)advantage, as
351 well as the range of variables that may moderate this effect. One conclusion that could be made at
352 this point though is that the home (dis)advantage is a nuanced phenomenon that seems to be far
353 from resolved.

354

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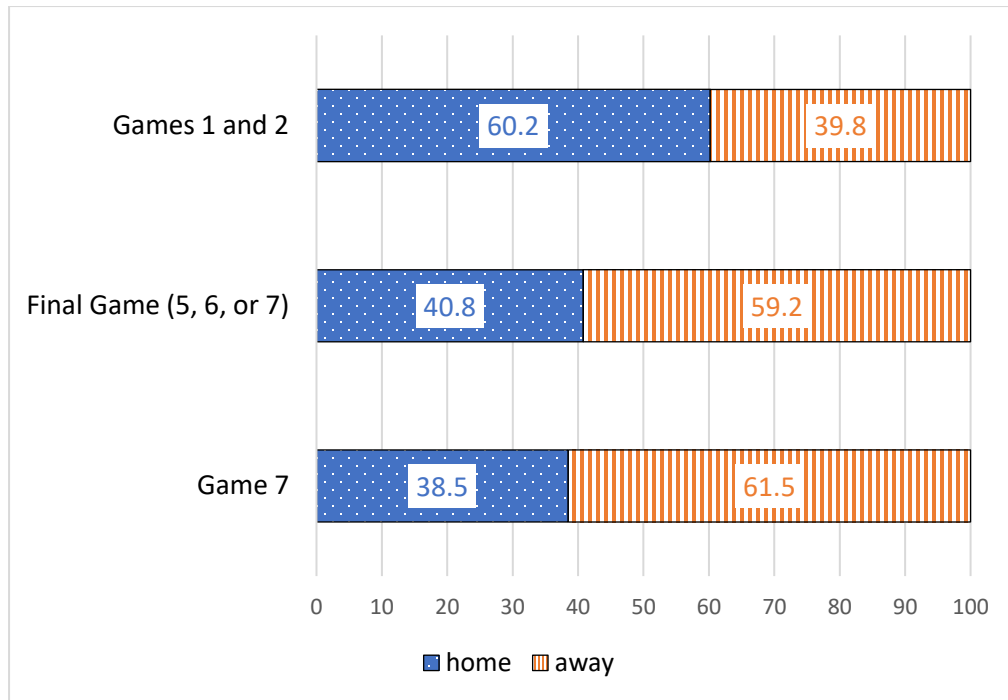


Figure 1. Win percentages in MLB World Series games from 1924-1982 (Baumeister & Steinhilber, 1984).

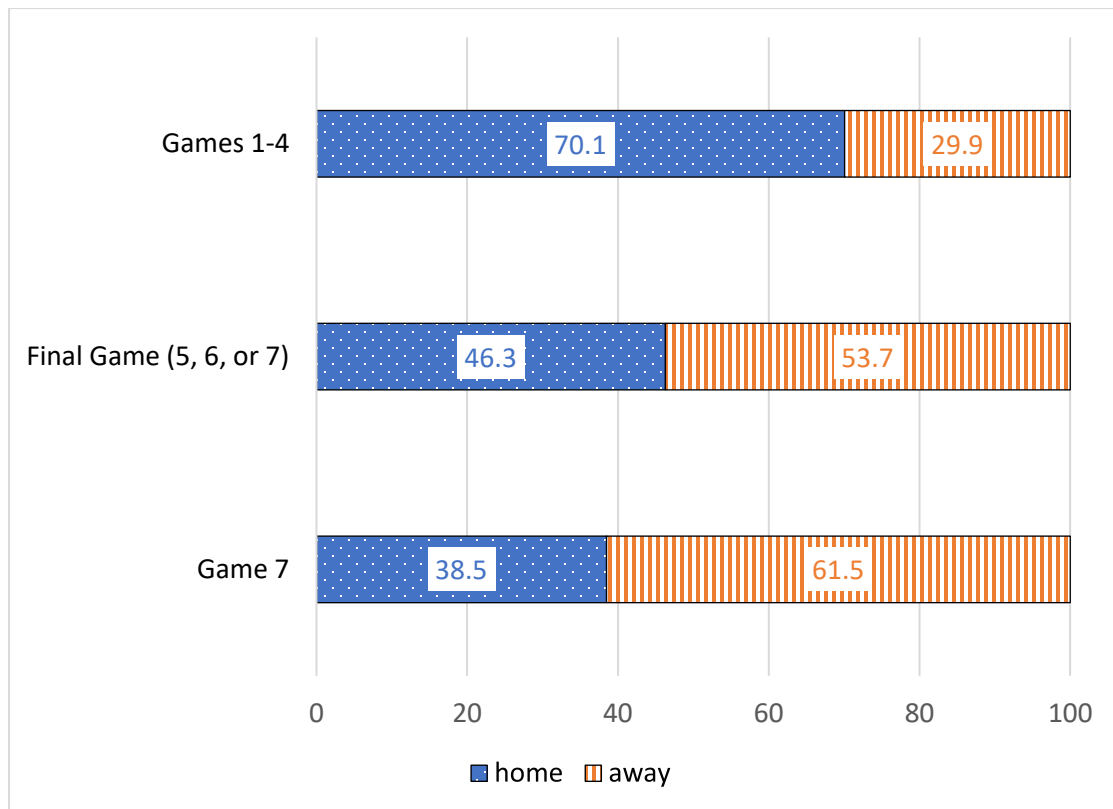


Figure 2. Win percentages in NBA semi-final and final championship games from 1967-1982 (Baumeister & Steinhilber, 1984).

Table 1

Summaries of key studies providing evidence in support of a home disadvantage effect since Baumeister and Steinhilber's (1984) seminal research.

Study	Main Findings
Butler & Baumeister (1998)	In three laboratory-based experiments, performance on difficult mental arithmetic and video game tasks was poorer for participants who completed the task in front of supportive audiences compared to unsupportive audiences.
Gayton et al. (2009)	In best-of-five Davis Cup tennis matches (1900-2007), home teams were significantly more likely to win games 1 and 2 of the series compared with game 5 (although no significant differences were found when comparing games 1 and 2 with games 4 and 5).
Gayton et al. (2013)	In best-of-five Fed Cup golf matches (1995-2010), home teams were significantly more likely to win games 1 and 2 of the series compared with game 5 (although no significant differences were found when comparing games 1 and 2 with games 4 and 5).
Law et al. (2003)	In a laboratory-based study, performance on a table tennis task was worse when participants performance in front of a simulated home (i.e., supportive) audience compared to a simulated away (i.e., adversarial) audience or observation-only condition.
Wright et al. (1991)	From 1946-1980, performances of contending British and Irish players in the British Open decreased significantly more than those of contending international golfers from round one to round four. These differences were maintained when the golfers' skill levels and experience were considered.
Wright et al. (1995)	Home teams were more likely to win games 1 and 3 of a best-of-seven NHL playoff series (1960-1993) but lose the final game of the series (whether the final game was the fourth, fifth, sixth, or seventh game of the series)