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Bad weather 'devastating' to Super Bowl's economic impact for Dallas-Fort Worth



Photo: Tom Fox/The Dallas Morning News

Snow surrounds Cowboys Stadium at sunset, site of Super Bowl XLV, after about 4 inches of snow fell since overnight, Friday, February 4, 2011.

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By **KAREN ROBINSON-JACOBS** and **BRENDAN CASE** / Staff Writers

Published 04 February 2011 11:40 PM

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North Texas' weeklong weather whipping is blunting the economic bonanza from [Super Bowl XLV](#).

The White Bluff Resort on Lake Whitney, about 70 miles south of [Cowboys Stadium](#), and a sister property, The Cliffs Resort at Possum Kingdom Lake, had banked on bringing in more than \$60,000 in sales this week from the Super Bowl and unrelated group business.

Instead, both resorts were shuttered Friday and the general manager of one was in intensive care with broken ribs and a punctured lung after taking a tumble on the ice at The Cliffs.

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SUPER BOWL PHOTOS

"We've never had a weeklong impact of snow weather," said Lauren Dunnaway, director of sales for the White Bluff Resort, adding that both properties were closed to protect guests and employees.

"That definitely is affecting the bottom line," she said.

Ditto for other hoteliers, as well as restaurateurs, golf courses and others who had been angling for a piece of the big game's multimillion-dollar pie.

"Dallas is going to miss out on a lot of additional revenue I'm sure it was taking into account," said Robert Tuchman, a sports business analyst and author of The 100 Sporting Events You Must See Live.

The temperature is expected to warm up this weekend, melting away much of the ice and snow. Some of the economic windfall might be saved as celebrities, executives and football royalty come to play.

"We're getting a mixed bag," said Bill Lively, president and chief executive of the Super Bowl XLV Host Committee, referring to the weather's economic effects. "But the people are here, and I think we're going to see that on Sunday."

It's hard enough to quantify the Super Bowl's overall economic impact on North Texas, with original estimates ranging from north of \$600 million to just a fraction of that. Guessing the losses from the cold and snow is even more dicey.

Golf and outdoor activities

The National Football Players Father's Association canceled a Friday golf tournament at the Firewheel Golf Park in Garland when the greens got the big chill.

LaTonya Story, a spokeswoman for the association, said ticket holders still had the option of attending a lunch Saturday, but they would get a partial refund for the lost golf.

Last year, the event raised about \$20,000, with 15 percent going to charity.

"We were looking to raise between \$50,000 and \$55,000" this year, Story said, adding that backers hoped to sell out both events.

"That did not happen," she said. "The organization is losing money."

Don Kennedy, director of golf at Firewheel Golf Park, said he's been closed since Monday afternoon and probably will not reopen in time to catch much Super Bowl business.

"We had intended on having a busy Thursday, Friday and Saturday, just with all the visitors," he said.

Texas Motor Speedway said the weather forced it to cancel a lucrative three days of on-track rentals, involving six visiting companies and more than 300 guests. The speedway said it had been expecting a six-figure windfall from Super Bowl-related events.

Restaurants

At Maguire's Restaurant and Catering in North Dallas and Maximo Cocina Mexicana near the Galleria Dallas, sales Tuesday through Friday were 85 percent lower than a normal week, largely due to the weather, said owner Mark Maguire.

"It's been devastating," said Maguire, who closed both restaurants Tuesday but reopened Wednesday. "In hindsight, it might have been less costly for me to just shut the restaurants down all four nights, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday."

He said he serves up to 250 guests on a normal Thursday at Maguire's.

"We had 40 last night," he said Friday.

He has not yet calculated losses. "I'm trying to wait to do that so I don't cry in front of anybody," he said.

Al Biernat, whose eponymous Oak Lawn Avenue restaurant is a magnet for celebrities and athletes, said the outlook was improving after "looking a little scary" on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

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"Thursday was extremely busy," he said, estimating that the restaurant could serve close to 600 guests Friday and more than 700 Saturday, up from the typical 400.

Retail

Direct spending had been forecast to exceed \$200 million for the first time in a Super Bowl host city, according to [PricewaterhouseCoopers](#) LLP. Some of that wallet was bound to end up with retailers.

But "shop 'til you drop" has to be replaced with "call before you go" as the new Dallas shopping mantra.

Since Tuesday, many stores and malls have opened late and closed early. Saturday shopping hours are expected to be back to normal, according to a survey of Dallas-area malls.

Dallas shopping centers are accustomed to seeing huge spikes in sales even from college football game attendees, namely Texas-OU weekend, said Steven Dennis, president of Sageberry Consulting in Dallas.

"The potential for incremental sales is a big missed opportunity, but at least it's not the profit hit that it is to hotels who can't resell rooms, and restaurants left with spoiled food," Dennis said.

Hotels

Major Dallas-area hotels, especially those under contract with the [National Football League](#), reported fewer than a dozen cancellations — which were quickly filled from waiting lists.

But in the outer reaches of the metro area, the mood was substantially less jovial.

"We've had over 70 percent of our hotel cancel in the last 48 hours," said Mindy Dennis, general manager of the [Comfort Suites](#) at Frisco Square near Pizza Hut Park, which has 109 rooms.

Since the first ice storm, Dennis said she's been fielding calls from would-be patrons who had planned to drive to the big game, but ended up seeking a refund of the first-night's room rental fee, which was prepaid.

"It's putting us in a really tough spot," she said.

In only one case, which involved a death in the family, was the fee refunded, she said.

"We're trying to recoup and sell our rooms," she said, adding that the price has dropped from more than \$170 a night to \$99.

Said Dennis of this week's weather surprise, "It's a huge detriment to our city and D-FW in general."

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Truckster

7:22 AM on February 6, 2011

Score: 0

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As long as Jerry gets screwed I'm overjoyed

Score: 0



whoopTdo

[Report Abuse](#)

1:13 AM on February 6, 2011

I don't believe this is God's revenge on Jerry or anything of that nature, but it was pretty evil of him to kick people out of their homes, demolish said homes, and erect that "abomination of desolation" otherwise affectionately known as "Jerry's World".



nudum-pactum

Score: 0

[Report Abuse](#)

12:32 AM on February 6, 2011

Packer Man is right, Fort Worth is a better place for entertainment. This isn't to say that Fort Worth has more things to do, but they do a much better job of promoting what they do have and making it visitor friendly.

Think I'm wrong? Here's a challenge then: Pick an event in downtown Dallas that you wish to attend this weekend, and then try to get there and find parking. Then attempt to navigate to your event from wherever you found said parking. Now picture that you're no longer a resident, but a tourist trying to do this with no day-to-day knowledge of the area. Both tasks will be extremely difficult due to scarce parking and lack of signage.

The above holds true for just about any other area of Dallas one wishes to visit (Uptown, Deep Bellum, Lower Greenville, etc).

Now try the same exercise above, but in Fort Worth. For one, there is a large *free* parking garage two blocks from Sundance. For two, there is signage all over the downtown streets telling you where major landmarks are. For three, during major events Fort Worth has people (guides) out there helping people navigate.

It may be true that Dallas has more "things to do". But Fort Worth does a much better job of "managing the experience". And to visitors who are unfamiliar to the area, these go a long way towards shaping their experience and how they view the area.



observant1

Score: 1

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11:59 PM on February 5, 2011

I'm just wondering if the NFL will give refunds to the 5,000 people who paid \$200 a piece to stand outside the stadium and watch the game on a video screen. If you hadn't paid attention, there's supposed to be another cold front and a good chance of a rain/snow storm come through by game time. Sounds like a good time to me??

I just hope that Indianapolis learns some good lessons from our Super Bowl. At least they probably have the good sense to invest in snow plows, unlike Dallas, who would rather spend their money on suspension bridges.

1 reply



mr.potato head

Score: 0

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8:40 PM on February 5, 2011

okno fighting or you get sent to the greyhound bus station in downtown dallas where the vagrants hang out.

1 reply



Vagrant

Score: 2

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7:30 PM on February 5, 2011

Well Uncle Pruneface can't control his team or the weather. Guess he will have to find someone to blame the weather on other than himself. If you are headed for the Freezer Bowl, hook your dogs to a sled and hire a musher. There is a chance they may run the Iditerod rather than play football. MUSH YOU HUSKIES. MUSH. TAKE UNCLE PRUNEFACE TO THE STADIUM.



pete65

Score: -2


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6:58 PM on February 5, 2011

If I remember, the reason that the stadium is not located in Dallas, is due to the fact that the city council, the mayor, and the wonderful county commissioners, could not agree on a site, or anything else that related to the stadium. Nothing. The blame can be put at the foot of one of the most

dysfunctional city/ county governments in the entire United States. If they are not fighting among each other, then it is only because they are under indictment, or incarcerated.

Do your research. Arlington and Tarrant County have no such problem. It is called leadership. For those of you in Dallas, it is spelled. l e a d e r s h i p.

 2 replies



vjs

Score: 2

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6:53 PM on February 5, 2011

packerboy, get over yourself!!! You are one of those cowards who crave the anonymity of the internet. 12 posts, all negative, in the last 24 hours really says a lot about your character.



Packer Man

Score: -4


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5:28 PM on February 5, 2011

Fort Worth run by hicks?? Well I guess Texas has some pretty smart hicks. At least they know how to clean up their central business district and attract tourists. I also enjoyed the cultural district and the stockyards. Good food too.

Dallas was dirty and boring to say the least Downtown is dirty and full of beggars and crooks. Kind of reminds me of Detroit. May I suggest the people of Dallas elect some so called "hicks" next election. Your city needs a total makeover.

GO PACKERS

 5 replies

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