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## Handbook on fairness and ethical behavior: best practice in sport in Europe .

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# HANDBOOK ON FAIRNESS & ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR BEST PRACTICE IN SPORT IN EUROPE 2017



**ETHICS  
4 SPORTS**



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# Wellcome to Handbook on Fairness & Ethical Behaviour Best Practice in Sport in Europe

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# 1. Introduction

**1.1.** This Handbook has been produced by the Ethics4Sports (E4S) project as a guide to some of the core issues involved in relation to questions of ethics in both recreational and professional sport in Europe in the twenty-first century.

Its aims are to outline, very briefly, aspects of European guidance and policy in relation to such matters, while also dealing with some complex definitional issues around our understanding of what 'fair play' means in sport. We will not deal directly with questions of drug abuse or corruption in sport: those matters have been dealt with extensively elsewhere. Instead, here we focus on important moral and ethical questions faced by athletes on the sporting playing field or in the arena. But we also argue that 'fairness' in sport should extend to cover certain sorts of institutional exclusions and blockages – around class, gender, disability and 'race' - in relation to opportunities to participate in sport as players, fans, coaches and administrators.

# 1. Introduction

**1.2.** Ideas about the importance of ‘fairness’ in sport probably first emerged in mid-Victorian Britain and spread internationally in the late-nineteenth century with the rapid export of British sport and growing ideals around promoting ethical behaviour in sport.

Even those parts of the world which lay beyond Empire soon adopted the British sporting ethos and the notion of ‘fair play’ featured centrally in the modern Olympic movement. As the sports historian Wray Vamplew argues, fair play can thus, arguably, be classed as an early ideological dimension of social change associated with global cultural flows.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, in the twenty-first century there remain international disagreements about ‘fairness’ in sport, important cultural and institutional differences which inevitably inform and shape cross-national projects such as this one.

<sup>1</sup> W. Vamplew (2007) ‘Playing with the rules: Influences on the development of regulation in sport’ *International Journal of the History of Sport* 24 (7) 843-871

# 1. Introduction

**1.3.** We want to raise some key questions in what follows about athletes in elite level or professional sport as potential role models for young people, at a moment when bending or breaking the rules, deception and cheating in some elite levels of sport seems to have become an institutionalised part of the competitive sporting ethic, something which is widely accepted by players, coaches and even by partisan fans.

In this important sense, we want to avoid the mistake of so-called 'sports evangelists' who believe that involvement in sport inevitably contributes to the positive development of young people because sport's assumed essential goodness and purity is passed on to those who watch or play it.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, when the stakes and rewards are so high in elite sport, and the pressures on those involved are so extreme, it might be time to ask if we should routinely continue to expect professional athletes to act as role models - as paragons of fairness - especially given our knowledge of these professional exigencies and also the heightened media focus on the problem of cheating in sport. We might also ask how parents should deal with their own children in terms of asking who is, or who is not, an appropriate sporting role model today.

# 1. Introduction

**1.4.** There is some evidence, at least, that young people in Europe may ‘look up to’ sports stars for inspiration or guidance on behavioural standards.<sup>3</sup>

But we want to argue that the most important aspect of any role-modelling in sport is likely to involve questions about which part of the role is being focused upon by the observer. A range of ‘role constructs’ will shape how sporting role models might impact on young people’s behaviour. Moreover, while assumptions are widespread about the impact professional sport has on the values and behaviour of young people, there is much less hard evidence that many young people are, in fact, directly influenced by the actions of sports stars, either positively or negatively. Here is an area where much more reliable research is probably required.

<sup>3</sup> See P. Gaya Wicks, A. Nairn & C. Griffin (2007) ‘The role of commodified celebrities in children’s moral development.’ *Consumption, Markets and Culture* 10 (4): 401-424



# 1. Introduction

**1.5.** In fact, what seems much clearer from the little reliable empirical research which has been conducted on public perceptions of sport and fairness, is that fans of different sports may have very different approaches and different responses to ethical questions, including on respect for officials and strategic forms of cheating, in their sport.

Here, representative team sports may differ from more ritualistic, individual sports in important ways.<sup>4</sup> It may also be the case that national sensibilities in Europe are likely to differ in relation to what is, and is not, regarded as acceptable or 'fair' in domestic professional sporting contexts. Nevertheless, we can also find some general common ground: it is not difficult to find inspiring examples, drawn from the highest levels of European and global sport, of public demonstrations of 'fairness' and sportsmanship which challenge over-conformity to win-at-all-costs mentalities, routine deception and manipulative self-interest. Despite its many problems, elite level sport does still generate outstanding examples of what we might call the surviving 'amateur ethos' of fair play.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> C. Critcher (1995) 'Running the rule over sport: A sociologist's view of ethics' in A. Tomlinson & S. Fleming (eds.) *Ethics, Sport and Leisure*. Aachen: Meyer & Meyer Verlag

<sup>5</sup> D. Holt (2006) 'The amateur body and the middle-class man: Work, health and style in Victorian Britain.' *Sport in History* 26 (3): 352-369

# 1. Introduction

**1.6.** More usually, however, elite level athletes today are systematically encouraged to over-conform to norms embodied in a highly specific ‘sport ethic.’ In this sense, those high level team athletes who bend the rules or cheat are not rejecting social values but are, instead, committing themselves to what have become the normative guidelines for serious competitive sport.<sup>6</sup>

A public sporting panel event held by E4S in Leicester in 2017 and involving sporting professionals from rugby union, basketball and cricket, largely confirmed this view.<sup>7</sup> Given this fact, it is perhaps not surprising that many of the most notable examples of the promotion of fairness and inclusion involving people in elite sport actually occur away from the playing arena. Here we can explore the involvement of sports stars in a wide range of inclusive activities and initiatives, many of which are laudably concerned with issues of social justice. Wider social projects, often using sport as a vehicle for public causes, range from the promotion of better health in European sports stadia, to support for development projects in poorer European nations, anti-racism and pro-inclusion sporting activities, anti-domestic violence campaigns, and activities in European sports clubs based around anti-terrorism agendas. We should be clear that sport and its sporting stars do much important work beyond the stadium to offer marginalised people a chance of having better lives, to promote integration and greater tolerance across Europe, and to improve public health.

<sup>6</sup> J. Coakley (1995) ‘Ethics, deviance and sports: A critical look at crucial issues.’ In A. Tomlinson and S. Fleming (eds.) *Ethics, Sport and Leisure*. Aachen: Mayer and Meyer, pp. 13-20

<sup>7</sup> *Is Sport Fair? An International Seminar*, University of Leicester, 20 April 2017

# 1. Introduction

**1.7.** We end this review by, briefly, considering two national perspectives on sport and fairness, looking particularly at the situations in the United Kingdom and France. This is followed by some conclusions and recommendations about the prospects of pursuing a practical and realistic agenda, via E4S, in relation to promoting fairness in European sport, especially at local recreational levels.

In an era in which the pressures towards rule bending, cheating and deception in some high-profile professional sports are increasingly intense, how can we make it clear to young people in Europe today that at the heart of any meaningful sporting practice must continue to be a commitment to respecting the rules, one's opponents and team-mates, the officials, and perhaps most importantly the spirit of sport?

## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

**2.1.** At the recent second *World Summit on Ethics and Leadership in Sport* held on the 16 September 2016 at the FIFA headquarters in Zurich, participants and speakers broadly agreed that the processes of commercialization in late-modern sport now threaten to overshadow the values that sports have more traditionally uphold.

‘Sport at the elite level is no longer amateur, but professional’, said WADA Special Investigator Professor Richard McLaren in Zurich. ‘It’s a business first, and sport second. Win-at-all-cost attitude in sports is like the business model to maximise profits.’<sup>8</sup> It is difficult indeed to escape the corrosive influence of money in much professional sport, but there is also a real risk in exaggerating the extent to which earlier versions of sport were ‘pure’ and really that fair.<sup>9</sup> But the conference proceedings also highlighted the conferment of the *Ethics in Sports Awards*, annual prizes that recognize an outstanding individual, a team and an organization that have demonstrated the importance of human values and ethics in life and in the sports arena. The 2016 Award for ‘Outstanding Teamwork’ went to the leadership team of the Swiss football club FC Basel for what was described as its ‘value-based leadership’ style in its management and board of administration and its impact on the sustainable success of the club. The message which the global sports business wants to convey here seems clear: that despite its many problems and uncertainties, integrity and good practice can still be found in top level world sport.

<sup>8</sup> World Forum for Ethics in Business and Sport (2016) *World Summit on Ethics and Leadership in Sport*. Retrieved at [www.ethicsinsports.ch](http://www.ethicsinsports.ch)

<sup>9</sup> J. Coakley (1995) ‘Ethics, deviance and sports: A critical look at crucial issues’

## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

**2.2.** According to the European Parliamentary Research Service's Overview of EU Sports Policy (2015), the concept of the integrity of sport may be understood in two different ways. It can refer to the values that sport conveys and embodies, such as fair play, solidarity or team spirit – the main subject of this report.

But it is also associated, secondly, with the integrity of sporting competitions, in the sense that these should be 'impervious to outside influences or external elements that could cast doubts about the way sporting results have been achieved.'<sup>10</sup> The issue of drug abuse is central here. The Overview further points out that the values and integrity of sports competitions are often deeply intertwined. For example, doping in sport breaches the principle of fair play, but it also clearly jeopardises the integrity of sporting competitions.

<sup>10</sup> EPRS (2015) *EU Sport Policy: An Overview*, European Union, p. 14

## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

**2.3.** Article 165 TFEU assigns the EU a clear mission regarding the integrity of sport, stating that the Union must promote, ‘fairness and openness in sporting competitions’ and ‘protect the physical and moral integrity of sportsmen and sportswomen’. On the face of it, this ensures that both aspects of the integrity concept are effectively covered by EU policy.

But the focal point for the EU today in relation to sporting integrity has been clearly focused on three key issues: dealing with doping in its various forms; managing, and ideally eradicating, the growing problem of match-fixing; and applying insight and remedy into the crucial issue of ensuring good governance in sport as a barrier to potential corruption. All of these matters currently seem to dwarf concern about fair play and ethical behaviour within the confines of the sporting arena, or fairness questions in relation to lack of access to sport for marginalised communities and individuals. These will be our main focus points in this report.

## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

**2.4.** However, the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) from the Council of Europe in 2008 helpfully identified the two dimensions of fairness on which most theories of sports ethics can broadly agree:

- An institutional dimension (an absence of discrimination based on criteria other than performance, uniform application of the rules, exclusion of arbitrary decisions)
- A personal dimension (in the form of a moral obligation to abide faithfully by the rules, in accordance with the principles of fair play)

We try to address each of these dimensions in what follows and build on this distinction in our later discussion of more academic approaches to the concept of fair play. The Council of Europe's own Code of Sports Ethics (adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 24 September 1992 at the 480th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies and revised at their 752nd meeting on 16 May 2001), has been argued to have fostered new campaigns in specific sports around fairness. A large number of sports organisations in Europe have set up ethics committees and groups and have drawn up codes of ethics since the Council's own code was first published, though some work in this area also pre-dates the initiative of the Council of Europe: for example, FIFA has had a 'fair play' award since 1987 in recognition of, 'exemplary behaviour that promotes the spirit of fair play and compassion in association football around the world.'<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The Best FIFA Fair Play Award (2016) Retrieved at [www.fifa.com/the-best-fifa-football-awards/fair-play-award](http://www.fifa.com/the-best-fifa-football-awards/fair-play-award)

## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

### 2.5. The Council of Europe's Code of Ethics states that:

*'Involvement and participation in sport among children and young people takes place within a wider social environment. The potential benefits to society and to the individual from sport will only be maximised where **fair play is moved from the peripheral position it currently occupies to centre stage**. Fair play must be given the highest priority by all those who, directly or indirectly, influence and promote sporting experiences for children and young people.'*<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Council of Europe (1992) *Code of Sports Ethics*. Retrieved at [www.coe.int/t/dg4/epas/resources/texts/Rec\(92\)14rev\\_en.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/epas/resources/texts/Rec(92)14rev_en.pdf)



## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

**2.6.** We completely agree with this statement, although we can see relatively few signs of its effective wider enactment around Europe, certainly in terms of moving fairness ‘centre-stage’.

As professional team sport is increasingly commodified it is more difficult to find good practice that connects recreational sport with the wider sports business. Moreover, the Council of Europe’s Code is essentially a proclamation: it has not yet given rise to the development of indicators on fairness in sport or to the close monitoring of ethical and unethical behaviour, for example in elite or recreational sport or in school settings. A new dialogue involving governments, sports bodies, and volunteers and administrators in local sport is urgently needed here, as well as new mechanisms to aid research for both data collection and analysis.

## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

### Sport, fairness and schools

**2.7.** We are aware, of course, that the provision of sport in schools and in other educational establishments in Europe adds an important dimension to the discussion of ethics and fairness in club sport – though we have little time and space to discuss it in detail here.

However, as part of a study conducted by French academics for the Council of Europe in 2011, it was made clear that the offer of sport in schools might even be considered an ‘anti-ethical’ practice by some students and by their parents. Many child non-participants or resisters in school sport do not especially enjoy its competitive ethos, do not participate in sport because of the negative initial sporting experiences they may have had, or may not get involved because of the perceived insults or bullying they experience from their peers in sporting contexts.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> E. Billet and E. Debarbieux (2011) ‘Sport: a model of anti-ethical practice.’ In D. Bodin and G. Sempe (eds.) *Ethics and Sport in Europe*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe publishing, pp. 45-56

## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

### Sport, fairness and schools

**2.8.** All of these are huge challenges for sport in educational settings and they constitute in themselves important ethical issues for sport, especially when, in the UK and elsewhere in Europe, for example, debates continue over reduced curriculum time in state-funded schools devoted to organised physical education.

This is despite recent WHO recommendations for the daily participation of children and adolescents in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity for at least 60 minutes per day.<sup>14</sup> Additionally, this is all on the back, of course, of what is widely perceived to be a global ‘crisis’ around inactivity among young people, and a concomitant rise in youth obesity around the globe, but especially in the affluent North.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> World Health Organization (2010) *Global Recommendations for Physical Activity and Health*. Geneva: WHO

<sup>15</sup> A Hills et al (2011) ‘Physical activity and obesity in children.’ *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, 45: 866–870

## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

### Sport, fairness and schools

**2.9.** The possibility that all young people in Europe might be encouraged consciously to choose to be involved in physical activity or sport in state schools - but on their own terms - is an ethical, as well as an important health, integration and equality question.

After all, it has been argued that one of the key ethical values of modern sport is that it can help keep human beings from different backgrounds and nations broadly healthy and peaceful, even if it occasionally also dramatizes national, political, ethnic and other differences.<sup>16</sup> Despite welcome recent advancements in girls and women's sport, it must be conceded that much club and elite-level competitive sport remains strongly bound up today with ideas about the importance of winning over enjoyment and participation, the celebration of hetero-orthodox hegemonic masculinities, and a focus on excessive expressions of body capital and physical power.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>16</sup> B. Andrieu (2011) 'Which agencies promote sport ethics?' in D. Bodin and G. Sempe (eds.) *Ethics and Sport in Europe*, pp. 67-84, p. 76

<sup>17</sup> I. Wellard (2006) 'Able bodies and sport participation: social constructions of physical ability for gendered and sexually identified bodies.' *Sport, Education and Society* 11, (2): 105 -119

## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

### Sport, fairness and schools

**2.10.** All these elements can act as a major deterrent for some young people to participate in sport, perhaps especially some girls and also students who do not consider themselves particularly physically adept.

Research across Europe suggests that, despite recent advances, too many females still feel there is no place for them in sport – that they are broadly excluded from it by its established conventions and its macho ethos.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, to manage their identities in the typically ‘male’ territory of sport, girls often have to find ways to combat assumptions about their sexuality and the challenge their involvement in sport poses to conventional and often conservative ideas about gender identities.<sup>19</sup> Such issues may be made yet more complex by the ways in which the female body remains a highly-contested domain, especially perhaps in some faith communities.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> I. Reichel (2010) 'Reasons why girls refuse to take part in sport' in W. Gaspirini and C. Talleu (eds.) *Sport and Discrimination in Europe*. EPAS, Strasbourg: Council of Europe: 65-72

<sup>19</sup> K Gilenstam et al (2010) 'Gender in ice hockey: women in male territory' in W. Gaspirini and C. Talleu (eds.) *Sport and Discrimination in Europe*. EPAS, Strasbourg: Council of Europe: 51-56

<sup>20</sup> S. Dagkas et al (2011) 'Multiple voices: improving participation of Muslim girls in physical education and school sport.' *Sport, Education and Society* 16 (2): 223-239

## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

### Sport, fairness and schools

**2.11.** What is clear from all this is that we need a much greater general commitment to school and youth sport in Europe and an increased emphasis on the promotion of fair access to sport and physical activity, including for girls and the least physically active.

This means that we must commit to a version of sport and physical activities of a range and type that satisfies the needs of *all* young people in Europe, and which has a much stronger core emphasis on matters of fairness and ethics. As EPAS itself points out, ‘Physical and sports education should include learning how to make ethical choices.’<sup>21</sup> We should address accusations that sport is overly-competitive, even at this junior level, by doing more to challenge those who hold a zero-sum view of the nature of sport: the idea that winning is all and losing is somehow shameful. We must accept that winning is clearly important in sport, but we can also argue strongly that honourable defeat after a tough contest, fairly played, can be more satisfying sometimes than an easy victory against a poorly matched opponent. Indeed, research consistently shows that winning is not top of most, younger children’s list of early incentives for playing sport.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> EPAS (2011) ‘Defence and promotion of ethics in sport’ in D. Bodin and G. Sempe (eds.) *Ethics and Sport in Europe*, pp. 97-103

<sup>22</sup> R. Simon (2016) *The Ethics of Sport: What Everyone Needs to Know*. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 39

## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

### Sport, fairness and schools

**2.12.** We also need to reinforce in schools and other sites a necessarily integrative and *co-operative* view of opponents and officials in sport. Opponents are not to be treated lightly or with hostility, but as partners: they help facilitate our goal of being properly tested in sporting competition.

Without both opponents and officials it is difficult to co-produce a sporting contest – though young people learning how to police and referee themselves in sport, and how to negotiate outcomes and decisions together can be an important and instructive practice in sporting ethics. Indeed, there are a few recreational adult sports in which males and females play together on an equal footing and self-refereeing is built into the ethos of the sport.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> G. Griggs (2011) 'This must be the only sport in the world where most of the players don't know the rules': Operationalizing self-refereeing and the spirit of the game in UK Ultimate Frisbee.' *Sport in Society*, 14 (1): 97-110

## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

### Sport, fairness and schools

**2.13.** Finally, we also need more detailed research on young people's views about late-modern sporting values and role models: the reasons they give for their non-participation in sport; their perceptions of sporting heroes; and their accounts of the sporting 'drop-off' which occurs among many young people in schools and in other contexts.

It is possible, of course, that part of the answer to this final question might also be connected to issues around role-modelling in sport. In short, do athletes involved in professional sport offer attractive and ethical role models for young people? And should we insist they try to do better?



## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

### Defining 'fair play'

**2.14.** The term 'fair play' is widely used by policy makers and practitioners in sport, but it is not always easy to define. Although in a recent study at least seven different conceptualizations have been found for fair play in sport, only two are typically used in most empirical studies: fair play as respect for the rules or laws (the formalistic approach); and fair play as respect for the ethos/spirit of the game.<sup>24</sup>

The former approach is adopted by the International Council for Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSPE). It argues that fair play is best understood simply as respecting rules or laws. We would argue that, important though this is, this focus is too narrow, crucially ignoring how rules and laws are interpreted and applied and how they can often be 'stretched' or manipulated in an unsportsmanlike way against the spirit of sport. This may be especially the case as competition becomes more intense and stakes grow higher.<sup>25</sup> There is also no discussion here about the importance of having a wider respect for sport, or for valuing and respecting one's opponent.

<sup>24</sup> E. De Waegeneer and A. Willem (2016) 'Conceptualizations of Fair Play: A factorial survey study of moral judgments by badminton players.' *Ethics and Behaviour* 26 (4): 312-329

<sup>25</sup> E. De Waegeneer and A. Willem (2016) 'Conceptualizations of Fair Play'

## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

### Defining 'fair play'

**2.15.** In response, Sheridan<sup>26</sup> has attempted to explain fair play differently: as the preferred ethos of sport – a shared understanding among athletes, officials, coaches, spectators and others that shape, what are seen as, acceptable norms for sporting competition.

This 'lived' ethos or spirit is created by the shared experiences of the community of specific sports and cultures. This approach has the advantage of going beyond a simple adherence to the rules, but it may also suggest that interpretations of the ethos of sport might be shaped differently by different national cultures for different sports. For example, simulation (or diving) in male professional football and time-wasting or feigning injury may be more acceptable in some countries than in others – and it is not always typically understood as breaking the laws of football.

<sup>26</sup> H. Sheridan (2003). 'Conceptualizing 'Fair Play': a review of the literature.' *European Physical Education Journal* 9 (2): 163-184

## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

### Defining 'fair play'

**2.16.** In some locations this sort of deception may be regarded as simply a skilled and strategic part of the 'professional' code of sport. It is probably coached inside some clubs. In some countries, there may be more objections that the integrity of male sport, especially, is damaged by such behaviour, which is widely interpreted as both 'unmanly' and unfair.

As a consequence, some academics and practitioners argue that 'fair play' should be more broadly defined by the application of certain laudable, and possibly universal values, such as justice, honesty, responsibility and friendship in sport. This approach is the one followed, for example, by the International Fair Play Committee in 2012, which describes the concept of fair play as:

*'[...] A complex notion.... of values that are fundamental not only to sport but also to everyday life. Respect, friendship, team spirit, fair competition, sport without doping, respect for written and unwritten rules such as equality, integrity, solidarity, tolerance, care, excellence and joy, are the building blocks of Fair Play that can be experienced and learnt both on and off the field.'*<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> International Fair Play Committee (2012). Retrieved from [www.fairplayinternational.org](http://www.fairplayinternational.org)

## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

### Defining 'fair play'

**2.17.** We have some sympathy for this view, but it is also a slightly unhelpful, rather abstract notion of fairness that is evoked here. This statement does usefully deal – albeit a little sketchily – with important wider issues beyond the sports arena which might impact on fairness.

However, in this E4S project, we tend to favour UNESCO's 2013 definition of fair play because it is both broader and offers a little more clarity. Critically, it incorporates the notion of shared core values and beliefs about sport, but it also recognises that adopting a more holistic definition of fairness means including some references to access to sporting opportunities and the importance of establishing guiding principles against exploitation, discrimination or exclusion from sport. Thus:

*'Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just a way of behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the elimination of cheating, gamesmanship, doping, violence (both physical and verbal), the sexual harassment and abuse of children, young people and women, exploitation, unequal opportunities, excessive commercialization and corruption.'*<sup>28</sup>

## 2. European Guidance & Policy on Sport, Fairness and Sporting Integrity

### Defining 'fair play'

**2.18.** To some people this may seem to be an overly idealistic and far too broad-ranging a definition to be useful. After all, it makes no clear distinction regarding what constitutes sporting behaviour and fair play in very different recreational and professional contexts.

Nevertheless, it seems to us to capture a notion of fairness which connects unethical behaviour in the sporting arena to a different kind of unfairness: barriers to equal participation. This definition also raises a crucial question for anyone involved in this field: can we expect those involved in the business of sport for a living to adhere to an ethical sporting code shared by others whose very futures do not depend on the outcome of their friendly sporting competition? It is to this question we now briefly turn.

## 3. Should We Expect Professional Sports Stars to Act as Role Models?

**3.1.** Asking sports stars across the European Union and elsewhere to act as acceptable and responsible role models for young people as part of a wider campaign for promoting ethical behaviour and fairness in global sport is no easy matter.

It is perhaps made more complicated today, as we have pointed out, by an ethos in elite sport which normatively refuses to accept limits and by the increased pressures and intrusions routinely faced by people in elite sport in the era of social media. We might add here the combined impact of the enormous public expectations of such sporting celebrities and the pressures that come down on them from their advisors, team-mates and coaches, and from consumer culture, social media and marketing. In short, the routine intensification of demands for sporting success - from agents, clubs, sponsors and athletes themselves - by fair means and sometimes foul.

## 3. Should We Expect Professional Sports Stars to Act as Role Models?

**3.2.** At a most basic, and perhaps least damaging, level this determination to win may involve behaviour such as ‘trash talking’ or ‘sledging’ an opponent, as it is known in cricket: using verbal insults or gestures to disrespect and try to gain advantage over opponents in a way which is both boorish and gratuitous.<sup>29</sup>

It may also involve forms of deception and cheating, justified on the increasing insistence by sporting athletes that officials, not competitors, have the prime responsibility for ensuring and delivering fairness in sport. Finally, at the most extreme level it may involve corruption, match fixing and illegal drug use.

<sup>29</sup> N. Dixon (2007) ‘Trash talking, respect for opponents and good competition.’ *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy* 1 (1): 96-106

## 3. Should We Expect Professional Sports Stars to Act as Role Models?

### **‘I am not a role model’**

**3.3.** When writing in the 1960s about its educational significance, the French philosopher and novelist Albert Camus famously claimed that the context in which he learned and understood most about morality and fairness was that of sport.<sup>30</sup>

This message about Camus and sport now adorns t-shirts and other memorabilia. But things have changed since Camus’s day, not least in the extent to which elite late-modern sport today has become aggressively commodified: it increasingly responds to the tune of TV executives and global sponsors. In this sense, corporate interests may have progressively contributed to ‘emptying out’ professional sport of some of its core ethical qualities - qualities which may no longer be retrievable at that elite level.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> A. Camus (1960) ‘The wager of our generation.’ *In Resistance, Rebellion, and Death* Vintage: New York, p. 242

<sup>31</sup> W. J. Morgan (2006) *Why Sports Morally Matter* Abingdon & New York: Routledge, p.50



### 3. Should We Expect Professional Sports Stars to Act as Role Models?

#### **‘I am not a role model’**

**3.4.** More than 30 years after Camus, in 1993, while preparing an advertisement for the sports equipment company Nike, the US basketball player Charles Barkley was probably speaking for many people in professional sport of his generation when he famously made it clear that he saw himself as having no wider responsibilities in his sporting life beyond winning basketball games for his club’s fans:

*‘I am not a role model’, he ventured. ‘Parents should be role models. Just because I can dunk a basketball, doesn’t mean I should raise your kids.’*

## 3. Should We Expect Professional Sports Stars to Act as Role Models?

### ‘I am not a role model’

**3.5.** This was provocatively put, but Barkley may have had a point. Excellence at sport does not predetermine other qualities or necessarily require those involved to assume other responsibilities, beyond sport. Why should we, the public, have wider expectations of young people locked in the dog-eat-dog world of professional sport?

There are also obvious similarities here with notions of the supposed ‘representational politics’ involved in black sports stars who succeed in largely white domains and successful females who do so in conventionally ‘masculine’ sports. Often such athletes, not unreasonably, just want to play their sport; they do not want to be held up as ‘representatives’ of their sex or ethnic group, or as model equality pioneers. They want to succeed on their own career terms and to the best of their ability. But that is often all they want. This matter also came up in the E4S Sports Panel event held in Leicester on 20 April 2017. There, the view of sporting professionals on the panel was that it was probably unfair to expect or require athletes in professional sport to act as role models, but that they should be aware, nevertheless, that many young people will inevitably see professionals in sport in that way. The argument here was that for elite athletes the choice is not whether to be a role model or not; it is whether to be a positive role model or not.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> C. Giannoulakis and J. Drayer (2009) ‘Thugs’ versus ‘Good Guys’: The impact of NBA Cares on player image.’ *European Sports Management Quarterly* 9 (4): 453-468

## 3. Should We Expect Professional Sports Stars to Act as Role Models?

### A 'professional' ethos of cheating?

**3.6.** Cheating and bending the rules is also part of elite sport for many serious amateurs these days. But conclusions (about the problems and risks of demanding that professionals act as sporting role models) might be drawn from some recent, high profile, professional sporting examples of cheating.

The first concerns a much-cited incident in the World Cup soccer play-off match between France and Ireland, played in Paris on 18 November 2009. With Ireland leading France 1-0 in extra-time, the generally admired and urbane French forward, Thierry Henry, deliberately and clearly handled the ball in order that a colleague could score what turned out to be a decisive equalising goal. Amazingly, although what had happened was obvious to the players and a global TV audience, none of the match officials saw the offence and the eventual outcome was that France, not Ireland, qualified for the prestigious finals. Henry's response after the match was both transparent and unequivocal: 'To be honest, I did use my hand', he said. 'But the most important thing now is that we have qualified for the World Cup.' Henry went on: 'I have played with my hand, but I am not a referee.'<sup>33</sup>

## 3. Should We Expect Professional Sports Stars to Act as Role Models?

### A 'professional' ethos of cheating?

**3.7.** The generally virtuous Henry makes the point here that at the business end of top level sport in this case, the ends (in his view) completely justified the means.

Although there was a media storm about the outcome in Britain and Ireland, it was notable that very few professional players who were not directly involved in the controversy later openly criticised Henry for his illicit intervention. His action was assumed to be part of the 'professional' ethic in sport. Henry also pointed out that in this case - and others like it - cheating is not to be regarded as the responsibility of the perpetrator as moral agent, but rather was the unfortunate but routine outcome of negligent or incompetent officiating: 'I am not the referee'. According to this kind of radically utilitarian view of sporting ethics, everything that is not noticed (by the officials) is allowed.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>34</sup> B. Andrieu (2011) 'Which agencies promote sport ethics?'

## 3. Should We Expect Professional Sports Stars to Act as Role Models?

### A 'professional' ethos of cheating?

**3.8.** In this example, a widely-respected athlete such as Thierry Henry seemed to accede to the view that competitors in elite professional team sport must be prepared to be ruthless and strategically deceptive, rather than choose to be fair or ethical.

Late-modern sport, after all, is a serious, life-forming, entertainment business. The only consensus here, if any, seems to be that the very idea of condemning intentional ethical violations make little sense at the elite level. Violations and deceit in this sporting universe are seemingly sometimes considered to be necessary and efficient, as long as one is not caught and penalized. Successful attempts to violate the rules are therefore acceptable. Tactical fouls should be seen as simply adding value; as rational ways of pursuing victory and part of the skilful performance of sport in the post-modern 'society of the spectacle.'<sup>35</sup> A cognitivist approach to ethics in sport offers a rather different approach to this sort of relativism. It builds on the premise that, 'it is possible to weigh critically and systematically moral arguments with the use of reason, and that it is possible to rank moral standpoints on the basis of their moral acceptability.'<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> G. Gebauer (2002) *Sport in der Gesellschaft des Spektakels*, Sankt Augustin: Academia

<sup>36</sup> S. Loland (2005) 'The varieties of cheating: Comments on ethical analyses in sport' *Sport in Society*, 8 (1): 11-26

## 3. Should We Expect Professional Sports Stars to Act as Role Models?

### A 'professional' ethos of cheating?

**3.9.** By this measure of Henry's culpability, we might consider that elite level sport is palpably not a suitable terrain for selecting role models because for many professional athletes, rules or laws are not inherent to sport; they can be relativized, given that winning has the highest status of all for sporting professionals.

As one observer recently put it: 'Sport is not entirely fair and it never will be. Indeed, sport without the presence of cheating is not sport at all.'<sup>37</sup> Nevertheless, in Henry's attitude to this quite blatant act of cheating by infringing the laws, surely sport risks being reduced to a utilitarian version of business logic, with opponents and officials as mere obstacles to overcome to ensure achieving one's main goal – to win. Or, perhaps, as one academic recently, rather tellingly and provocatively, put it: 'If we are to grow as moral agents, we need to cultivate a distaste for our present interest in and admiration for sports.'<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> J Humphreys (2008) *Foul Play: What's Wrong with Sport?* Cambridge: Icon Books, p. 88

<sup>38</sup> T. Tannsjo (2007) 'Is our admiration for sport Fascistoid?' in W. J. Morgan et al (eds.) *Ethics in Sport* Urbana, IL: Human Kinetics, pp 429-440, p. 407

## 3. Should We Expect Professional Sports Stars to Act as Role Models?

### A 'professional' ethos of cheating?

**3.10.** This example also reminds us of how easily sportspersons, coaches and, occasionally TV commentators can learn to talk approvingly about gamesmanship from 'streetwise' players or athletes, those who are masters of strategic rule violations, or of delivering 'good fouls': this is also something that is increasingly delivered as part of the 'professional' ethos of sport.

Coaches in basketball, football and rugby who try to influence referees before matches in their press briefings, for example, are often praised by journalists and others for their cleverly manipulative 'mind games.' Indeed, such behaviour may be expected - or even demanded - by partisan spectators.

## 3. Should We Expect Professional Sports Stars to Act as Role Models?

### A 'professional' ethos of cheating?

**3.11.** Rugby union players and spectators - certainly more than those in football - are often lauded for their discipline, fairness and especially their respect for officials.

Nevertheless, the French rugby union scrum-half, Morgan Para, recently remarked on the centrality of 'clever' or strategic cheating to the ethos of his own, recently professionalised, sport. He said, admiringly, of his Irish international rugby opponents, for example: 'They have a great defence. [They're] cheating, but intelligently cheating. It's very well done. If we did the same thing we would be punished each time. But, instead, they're the least penalised team in the tournament, which is very impressive.'<sup>39</sup> Successful cheating here is clearly something to be respected and admired for its subtleties and sophistication and it demands to be replicated, particularly because of its value in deceiving the match officials and producing results. Such strategies draw widespread, professional approval - but only, of course, if one gets away with it.

<sup>39</sup> H. Upton (2011) 'Can there be a moral duty to cheat in sport?' *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy* 5 (2): 161-174, p. 169



## 3. Should We Expect Professional Sports Stars to Act as Role Models?

### The impact of spectator partisanship

**3.12.** Cheating has always existed in sport, but today it is arguably more refined, and more studiously deployed. This ethos around cheating in some elite sports is rooted in a relatively new (unwritten but widely understood) code, which is allied to and reinforced by the intense partisanship of many team sports spectators.

The relative virtue of so-called ‘spectator purists’ – those who favour no particular club or individual – is that they can adopt an aesthetic, more than a competitive, perception of the game and so are more likely to perceive the game in a way relatively unclouded by partisan bias. Because purist supporters do not focus narrowly on the fortunes of a particular club, it is claimed that they have a superior tactical grasp of sport compared to the partisan fan, whose chief concern is with the result.<sup>40</sup> It is morally commendable, too, to want to see the best team win, as the purist might, or to choose to support a typically losing team, an underdog, against an apparently unduly privileged opponent.<sup>41</sup> If the existence of such a sporting universe was possible – one in which spectators supported the sport rather than a specific club or individual – then promoting and sustaining ethical behaviour on the sports field and beyond might be a little easier to achieve.

<sup>40</sup> S. Mumford (2011). *Watching Sport: Aesthetics, Ethics and Emotion*. London: Routledge

<sup>41</sup> J. Russell (2012) ‘The ideal fans or good fans?’ *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy* 6 (1): 233-249

## 3. Should We Expect Professional Sports Stars to Act as Role Models?

### The impact of spectator partisanship

**3.13.** However, there is also a strong case for arguing that the devotion and loyalty demonstrated by partisan fans for their sports clubs over time, is also morally defensible.

In an era when ‘money talks’ and fan customers are encouraged to ‘shop around’ for meaningful sporting identities rooted in consumption and success, staying loyal and steadfast to one’s local sports club (and community) and remaining calm and balanced in the face of inevitable defeat and disappointment - as well as in victory - shows real moral virtue and requires considerable character and patience. Sport, after all, is more than mere entertainment. The term ‘authenticity’ is often approvingly applied to those partisan supporters or fans who remain deeply committed and partisan followers of their underachieving local sports clubs over time, through thick and thin. Others have described partisan fans as mere hypocrites who condone cheating for their own side but who are outraged when they are cheated against.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>42</sup> C. Critcher (1995) ‘Running the rule over sport’

## 3. Should We Expect Professional Sports Stars to Act as Role Models?

### The impact of spectator partisanship

**3.14.** European team sport (especially football) has its problems of fan hooliganism and spectator abuse, of course; fairness often seems a long way from the frame in this context.

However, the globalisation of elite team sport in Europe and the rapid movement today across borders of elite athletes between rival sports clubs - coupled with the fact that fans can retain affection for former favourites, now opponents - may also help today to promote more cosmopolitanism, reduce racism, and short-circuit some of the intense hostility and tribalism that can typically result from overly-partisan support for sports clubs.<sup>43</sup> Regular sporting fixtures in European team competitions can also generate feelings of European-ness, at a time when politics and other agencies seem to be relatively failing on these fronts.

<sup>43</sup> N. Dixon (2016) 'In praise of partisanship' *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*, 43 (2): 233-249, p.240

## 3. Should We Expect Professional Sports Stars to Act as Role Models?

### The International Fair Play Committee

**3.15.** Predictably, perhaps, Thierry Henry was not punished for his offence against fair play in sport back in 2009 – and few partisan French fans complained.

Despite Irish FA protests, the result stood. Henry (and the French FA and, arguably, FIFA, too) effectively ignored one of the basic principles stated in the Declaration of the International Fair Play Committee (CIFP): that fair play includes, but is much more than, simply playing to the laws; it is about the attitude of the sportspersons concerned, respecting your opponent, and preserving their physical and psychological integrity.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Ž. Kaluđerović (2011) 'Sport rules, sport moral values and fair play'

## 3. Should We Expect Professional Sports Stars to Act as Role Models?

### The International Fair Play Committee

**3.16.** So, are these esteemed international figures drawn from different sports - Charles Barkley, Thierry Henry and Morgan Para (and many others) - reliable narrators in their actions and diagnoses?

Perhaps we should not expect our professional sports stars (who may, themselves, come from 'difficult' childhoods and have limited educational backgrounds) to deny what they may feel to be their ultimate ethical responsibility - which is towards their coaches, team mates and their own livelihood. There is evidence that professionals in sport see themselves as having a superior moral duty towards their team-mates, rather than to sport, to ensure the best possible outcome for their team.<sup>45</sup> In this climate, can we really expect elite sportspersons not only to demonstrate great skill, a fierce will to win, and athletic pre-eminence, but also always to play ethically and fairly on the field or court, and to offer the sort of responsible lifestyles and attitudes off it that we would want our own children to admire and replicate? This seems an idealistic notion at best.

<sup>45</sup> H. Upton (2011) 'Can there be a moral duty to cheat in sport?'

## 4. Young People, Role Models and Examples of Fairness & Sport

**4.1.** Despite these obvious difficulties, as we have pointed out there is some evidence (unsurprisingly) to suggest that some young people do indeed hold to sporting role models and that they identify with them.<sup>46</sup> It is also clear from research that when young people are questioned about ethical issues in sport they are able to identify some of the contingencies and complexities involved.<sup>47</sup>

They also judge that moral dilemmas can occur in practice settings, before a game, after the game, and even at home. So, most moral development investigations with young people in sport may have revolved too narrowly around the game context.<sup>48</sup> For example, Bredemeier and Shields (2001), using Haan's model of moral development, have highlighted the view that there seems to exist a 'bracketed morality' in sporting contexts.<sup>49</sup> Sport is often seen as 'a world set apart' from everyday life. But differences can be observed, for example regarding gender, with females presenting rather more mature moral reasoning than male competitors in sporting contexts (with no difference in general life). And in different sports there is more mature moral reasoning observed for competitive swimmers, for example, when compared to basketball players.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>46</sup> S. Fleming et al (2005) 'Role models amongst elite young male rugby league players in Britain. *European Physical Education Review* 11 (1): 51-70

<sup>47</sup> P. Gaya Wicks et al (2007) 'The role of commodified celebrities in children's moral development'

<sup>48</sup> M Stuart (2003) 'Moral issues in sport: the child's perspective.' *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport* 74 (4): 445-454

<sup>49</sup> B. J. Bredemeier & D. L. Shields (1986) 'Game reasoning and interactional morality.' *Journal of Genetic Psychology* 147(2): 257-275

<sup>50</sup> B. J. Bredemeier & D.L. Shields (1986) 'Moral growth among athletes and non-athletes: a comparative analysis.' *Journal of Genetic Psychology* 147 (1) : 7-18

## 4. Young People, Role Models and Examples of Fairness & Sport

**4.2.** Following on from these issues, Kavussanu and colleagues (2013) speculate about behaviour, as well as moral reasoning.

Focusing on the social cognitive theory of thought and action, and the concept of 'moral disengagement' borrowed from Bandura (1991), they observe that exhibiting moral behaviour in sport (that is either pro-social or anti-social behaviour) depends on the targets (opponents or university students), something which is mediated by moral disengagement and goal motivational orientation.<sup>51</sup> In this case, diffusion of responsibility can occur when athletes seek to justify their behaviour by arguing that they were instructed to foul by coaches, or that 'everybody' cheats in their chosen sport.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>51</sup> M. Kavussanu, I. Boardley, S. Sagar, and C. Ring (2013) 'Bracketed morality revisited: How do athletes behave in two contexts?' *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology* 35: 449-463

<sup>52</sup> T. Long., N. Pantaleon., G. Bruant, and F. d'Arripe-Longueville, (2006) 'A qualitative study of moral reasoning of young elite athletes.' *The Sport Psychologist*, 20, 330-347

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**4.3.** We might suggest that the very existence of the CIFP in Europe since 1963, and also its annual awards for fair play since that date, implies that fairness in sport is something to be both identified and *rewarded*, rather than to be normatively expected in elite contexts today.

Indeed, some have argued that it might reasonably be assumed that the fact that some sportspersons act morally and project positive characteristics in sports settings is not because such features are fostered in sport; rather, these figures may be virtuous despite the fact that they are elite sportspersons.<sup>53</sup> It might be argued that few top sportsmen today seem morally grounded enough to offer the sort of perspective provided by the England test cricketer, Moen Ali, when he told a reporter in 2016 that winning was not everything and that cricket was, after all, ‘only a game.’ ‘Real pressure’, argued Ali, ‘is seeing people who can’t afford food or are struggling to live.’<sup>54</sup>

<sup>53</sup> R. Melin (2014) ‘Are sportspersons good moral role models?’ *Physical Culture, Sports Studies and Research* LXIV: 5-17

<sup>54</sup> *The Guardian*, 7 December 2016



## 4. Young People, Role Models and Examples of Fairness & Sport

### Examples of positive behaviour in elite sport

**4.4.** This conclusion – that involvement in elite level and professional sport may *actually demoralise* its athletes – may be slightly unfair. After all, there are exemplars of fairness in professional sports settings that we can usefully highlight for young people taken from the late-modern sporting arena.

These involve world class athletes who may take a view opposite to that of Charles Barkley; or who respond to sport in ways which are full-square against the actions and rationalisations in Paris of Thierry Henry; or who do not share the views of Morgan Para and others on the enviable skills involved in ‘intelligent’ cheating in elite sport. These selected examples listed below demonstrate that, even in the intense atmosphere of professionalised sport today, we can find instances in which athletes produce the sort of ethical actions that could be inspirational to young people and others. We offer just four recent examples below, all of which are from the current century.

## 4. Young People, Role Models and Examples of Fairness & Sport

### Examples of positive behaviour in elite sport

**4.5.** We should also say here that it is important to listen to the athlete's voice in this context, because they know best what tacit agreements exist in the field and on the court, conventions which contribute to the often unremarked upon 'spirit' of sports contests. In professional cycling, for example, the peloton has an unspoken agreement not to attack while a leading competitor is taking an unscheduled toilet break.

In rugby union one could enthusiastically rake out an opponent who is lying on the wrong side of the ruck, but the head cannot be a legitimate target.<sup>55</sup> What is also interesting here is that the examples which follow are drawn from a range of different sports and from different sporting cultures. Some involve male athletes, some female. All were highlighted in media coverage at the time, suggesting that such instances might be quite unusual at elite levels, but also that these accounts have their own value and newsworthiness. Generally speaking, the competitors involved were publicly applauded for their sporting behaviour, which was often contrasted with what were taken to be the sort of prevailing values and attitudes routinely expressed in hyper-competitive, elite level sport.

## 4. Young People, Role Models and Examples of Fairness & Sport

### Examples of positive behaviour in elite sport

#### 4.5. Example #1: Test Cricket England v Australia, 2005

An intensely close five-day test cricket match, fought out between historical rivals England and Australia at Edgbaston in Birmingham in August 2005, was finally resolved in the last gasp in favour of England. But rather than celebrate with his exultant team-mates, England's star player, Andrew Flintoff, stooped down to commiserate on the field with the defeated Australian batsman, Brett Lee. The Australian had performed especially heroically in his own team's ultimately lost cause. This image of Flintoff's concern for a distraught but honourable opponent at the very moment of victory has since come to epitomise good sportsmanship in UK sport. It is very similar to the moment at the end of the 2001 Champions League final in football when Bayern Munich goalkeeper Oliver Kahn took time to console defeated rival keeper, Santi Canizares, of Valencia CF.



**Figure 1:** England cricketer Andrew Flintoff (front) consoled a defeated opponent as his team-mates celebrated.

## 4. Young People, Role Models and Examples of Fairness & Sport

### Examples of positive behaviour in elite sport

#### 4.5. Example #2: Tennis Masters series, Rome, 2005

This example shows that helping the officials to get it right does not always reward valuing fairness in sport. In May 2005, in the Round of 16 of the Masters Tennis tournament in Rome, the American player Andy Roddick held three match points against Fernando Verdasco of Spain. The Spaniard made what appeared to be a double fault, and the chair umpire began to announce Roddick's victory. But as the two competitors headed toward the net to shake hands, Roddick saw a ball-mark on the clay and realized that Verdasco's second serve had been in, not out. He corrected the call himself and returned to the baseline. The American ended up losing the match in three sets. 'Maybe I should have stood on the mark', he joked later.



**Figure 2:** Andy Roddick left the court in Rome, a good sport but a defeated one.

## 4. Young People, Role Models and Examples of Fairness & Sport

### Examples of positive behaviour in elite sport

#### 4.5. Example #3: Serie A Football, 2012

In a Serie A soccer match in Italy between Lazio and Napoli in 2012, Lazio's German international forward Miroslav Klose initially began celebrating his scoring of a 'headed' goal in a crowded penalty area, but then (unlike the Thierry Henry case mentioned earlier) he informed the referee he had handled the ball in the act of scoring. The officials had not seen the offence. But once Klose reported the fact, the referee reversed his decision. By his admission in the competitive moment, Klose strove for justice, rather than advantage – and he was widely praised for favouring good sportsmanship. In March 2017 in a Premier League football match in England referee, Anthony Taylor, wrongly awarded a penalty to Burnley FC for handball when in fact a Burnley player had clearly offended. A UK journalist later asked, jokingly, why the referee had not asked the players who had handled the ball. The reply might be obvious.



**Figure 3:** Miroslav Klose (centre) became an icon for sportsmanship by ruling out a goal scored with his hand.

## 4. Young People, Role Models and Examples of Fairness & Sport

### Examples of positive behaviour in elite sport

#### 4.5. Example #4: Women's Athletics: 5000m heat, Olympic Games, Rio, 2016

In a 5,000 metres women's heat in the Rio Olympics in 2016, New Zealand's Nikki Hamblin fell and accidentally tripped Abbey D'Agostino of the USA. D'Agostino got up, but sacrificed her race by helping the stricken New Zealander to her feet. The pair ran together to the finish and hugged at the line, finishing in a poor time and well behind the rest of the field. Hamblin later thanked the American for her sporting action, saying: 'That girl is the Olympic spirit right there. Such an amazing woman. I know that she's young and she's going to have so many more opportunities. She's going to go so far.' The pair were eventually given places in the 5,000m final after joint team protests.<sup>56</sup>



**Figure 4:** Olympics 2016, women's 5000 metres heat. D'Agostino and Hamblin settle into the field before the latter stumbled and the former lent a sporting hand.

<sup>56</sup> The Telegraph online 17 August 2016 [www.telegraph.co.uk/olympics/2016/08/16/american-runner-abbey-dagostino-stops-to-help-fallen-athlete-in](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/olympics/2016/08/16/american-runner-abbey-dagostino-stops-to-help-fallen-athlete-in)

## 4. Young People, Role Models and Examples of Fairness & Sport

**4.6.** To our knowledge, in none of these instances were those involved publicly criticised for their adherence to a positive sporting ethic rather than one which might have maximised their chances of winning – though, of course, what was said later, in the background, by coaches, advisors, team-mates and fans is another matter.

It is also clear that the context in which such examples occur – the level and importance of the event - is likely to shape the possibility of such ethical and sporting responses.<sup>57</sup> These four examples span different sports in different countries and are drawn from individual as well as team sports.

<sup>57</sup> O. Rasclé, A. Traclet, N. Souchon, G. Coulomb-Cabagno and C. Petrucci, (2010) 'Aggressor victim dissent in perceived legitimacy of aggression in soccer: the moderating role of situational background.' *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport* 81(3): 340-348.

## 4. Young People, Role Models and Examples of Fairness & Sport

**4.7.** In the face of so much calculated gamesmanship, rule bending and ‘evolved cheating’ in top level sport, critics may ask what do these examples really show?

Although they may be unusual instances, they demonstrate that even in the heat of battle, and with so many personal, commercial and cultural pressures in play, sports stars today can still re-discover the ‘play’ aspect of sport and act within the spirit of the game rather than do that which gives them, their team or its followers the optimum chance of winning. The gestures and co-operation involved here, we could argue, extends beyond one’s own colleagues toward exploring a set of mutual interests around competing fairly and ‘having a good game’ via a defence of the core, moral tenets of sport.<sup>58</sup>



## 4. Young People, Role Models and Examples of Fairness & Sport

### Who might we expect to set good example in professional sport?

**4.8.** Some sports stars who come from educated backgrounds, with stable family situations, a strong moral base, a low media profile in individual sports which have mainly 'purist' fans, and who have the kind of personal security which may sometimes be required to challenge conventions in their sports, these are most likely to offer the best prospects of laudable sporting role models for young people.

But even here the intense pressures to win may obstruct concerns about ethics and fairness. However, in the gilded, late-modern 'goldfish bowl' that faces, for example, many top-level professional footballers, such social certainties do not always pertain. These young men compete in a sport in which a professional ethos of deception is now pretty much embedded and fans are mainly of the partisan variety who quickly identify cheating among their rivals but above all want to win. Expecting simple moral certainties here may not be quite so straightforward.

## 4. Young People, Role Models and Examples of Fairness & Sport

### Who might we expect to set good example in professional sport?

**4.9.** Some Premier League football clubs in England recently announced that they would be capping the salaries of 17-year-old professionals at £40,000 per year to try to ‘ground’ these young men, for whom excessive wages too early in their football careers can prove destabilising. Some moral philosophers who examine sport seem to have few doubts that elite athletes like these effectively collude in their own profligacy – and that they should be brought to account accordingly. For example:

‘They [sports stars] may indeed inhabit a type of social and cultural order whose structures, to some large degree, inhibit the exercise of the powers of moral agency. But they share in responsibility for having made themselves into the kind of diminished agent that they are. Their responsibility is that of co-conspirators, engaged together in a conspiracy that functions so that they can lead blamelessly compliant lives, able plausibly to plead lack of knowledge of as well as lack of control over outcomes for which they might otherwise be held jointly responsible.’<sup>59</sup>

## 4. Young People, Role Models and Examples of Fairness & Sport

### Who might we expect to set good example in professional sport?

**4.10.** This sort of hyper-critical declaration may seem rather glib and self-serving; after all, many athletes are catapulted, when very young, and often from very modest educational and social backgrounds into a cossetted, but highly precarious, world of excessive consumption and persistent greed and rather loose ideals around ethics and fair play.

But it is also clear that professional sportsmen and women of all types should be encouraged to exhibit some basic moral heroism, for example by standing up against corruption, and extreme forms of cheating, deception, violence and other problems in professional sport. There are plenty of good examples to draw upon here, as we have just seen. Despite the rather negative professional ethos which may be in place in some sports, refusing to engage in premeditated acts of cheating, including deceiving officials, as well as developing the strength of character to resist reacting in generally unsportsmanlike ways, is also to be both applauded and publicised.<sup>60</sup>

## 4. Young People, Role Models and Examples of Fairness & Sport

### Young people and sporting role models

**4.11.** The interest of the public in sport and sporting heroes and celebrities is undeniable. In many countries, the focus of the popular press and social media on sports stars – especially perhaps, at the moment, young footballers as national and international celebrities – is particularly intense, and often prurient and intrusive.

But the influence that the behaviour of sports stars on and off the pitch, court and track—can have is both strong and pervasive. Identifying more positive and sporting role model stories is important for boys because the dominant hetero-normative masculine identity often depends on demonstrating sporting capacity. But it is also important to inspire and motivate young girls, who are likely to be less able to dream about sporting success because there are still relatively fewer possibilities for women to make careers in sport. However, hard evidence for the impact on young people of sporting role models, in terms of promoting positive values and increasing sports participation, remains surprisingly slight. Proving causality in this regard is an especially complex task. Such studies which have been undertaken (in the UK at least) have shown severe methodological limitations. The quality of the data is often challenged, there are difficulties with longer-term outcomes and with identifying control or comparison groups.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>61</sup> J. Lyle (2009) *Sporting Success, Role Models and Participation: A Policy Related Review*. A research study for Sportscotland, Edinburgh

## 4. Young People, Role Models and Examples of Fairness & Sport

### Young people and sporting role models

**4.12.** The intense media focus on sports stars and their various failings may only highlight the relative fall in the public belief in, and focus on, so-called ‘experts’ – politicians, journalists, academics and others – as alternative (but perhaps more suitable) role models for young people to emulate.

Moreover, it is probably axiomatic that, given a free rein, many young people today are likely to seek out risky, and even slightly subversive, role models in the fields of popular culture and sport, rather than the more rule-following and conformist ones that their parents and teachers might better prefer. However, when asked about role model attributes they favour, research suggests that both boys and girls tend to rank ‘honesty’ high on the list.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, young people exhibit a sophisticated, often context-dependent understanding of moral questions around sports stars, rather than employing a universal set of moral values that easily identify ‘good’ from ‘bad’ behaviour.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>62</sup> P. Bricheno and M. Thornton (2007) ‘Role model, hero or champion? Children’s views concerning role models.’ *Educational Research* 49 (4): 383-369

<sup>63</sup> P. Gaya Wicks et al (2007) ‘The role of commodified celebrities in children’s moral development’, p.417

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**4.13.** To the extent that reliable evidence exists on this matter for young men, especially, male sport stars are seen to embody highly valued masculine characteristics, such as strength, courage, toughness and power.

He can also demonstrate integrity, competitiveness and success, all elements traditionally perceived to be developed through sporting excellence. Female sport stars are becoming more available as possible role models for girls, and when they are identified, young girls tend to focus on the 'good personality' of ideal models, their lack of arrogance, and their playing fair and caring for others.<sup>64</sup> But we still know relatively little about how most girls read the contradictions of gendered sporting images and to what extent they may reject sport because of issues concerning sexuality, femininity and vulnerability.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>64</sup> J. Vescio, K. Wilde and J. Crosswhite (2005) 'Profiling sports role models to enhance initiatives for adolescent girls in physical education and sport.' *European Physical Education Review* 11 (2): 153-170

<sup>65</sup> G. Lines (2001) 'Villains, fools or heroes? Sports stars as role models for young people.'

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**4.14.** A focus on developing positive role models in sport can help counter public perceptions in the face of inevitable negative moments; for example, the recent research in France which has uncovered the sexual abuse of young athletes in sport.<sup>66</sup>

And the current and immediate crisis in the UK about the historic mistreatment and abuse of a large number of young male players in football in England and, possibly, in other sports, too.<sup>67</sup> As experienced academics and practitioners in this area of work point out, child welfare and protection in any given country is closely related to the overall welfare regime and political and policy context of that country. Sport administrators must increasingly work closely with specialists in ethics, human rights, public health and child welfare, if safety for young athletes is ever to be fully achieved and maintained.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>66</sup> C. Bloch (2011) 'Human rights, discrimination and extremism: new challenges to ethics in sport' in D. Bodin & G. Sempe (eds.) *Ethics and Sport in Europe*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe publishing, pp. 135-144, p.138

<sup>67</sup> In the UK in 2016 allegations began to emerge that, mainly in the 1970s and 1980s, some young boys who were coached at local and professional football clubs had been sexually abused by male coaches and had been too afraid to speak out. Over 400 cases involving possibly more than 150 suspects have been initially reported. Soon after these reports emerged others followed alleging a smaller number of abuse cases in UK athletics.

<sup>68</sup> C. Brackenridge & D. Rhind (2014) 'Child protection in sport: Reflections on thirty years of science and activism' *Social Science* 3(3): 326-340

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**4.15.** Back in 2004, the British Psychological Society (BPS) told a UK Government Select Committee of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport which was exploring the question of role models in sport that, ‘due to their success and prominence in the public domain, sports heroes are likely to act as role models to a wide range of individuals, from those who have only a casual interest in sports activities to those with aspirations to achieve greatness.’<sup>69</sup>

There also seems to be some potentially persuasive indications (theoretical, empirical and anecdotal) that sporting role models can actually influence a child’s behaviour.<sup>70</sup> The attitude of elite and professional players to the rules and laws, and to referees, linesmen and umpires, is likely to have an influence on the values and behaviour of some younger spectators. The Minister for Sport in the UK told the Select Committee in 2004, for example (and here is the anecdotal ‘evidence’), that ‘a lot’ of teachers had told him that, ‘what happens on the football field on a Saturday afternoon is replicated in the playground on Monday morning, and some of it is not very desirable, as far as sport is concerned.’<sup>71</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Culture Media and Sport: Seventh Report (2004) [www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200304/cmselect/cmcmums/499/49908.htm#n178](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200304/cmselect/cmcmums/499/49908.htm#n178)

<sup>70</sup> G. Lines (2001) ‘Villains, fools or heroes’

<sup>71</sup> C. Brackenridge & D. Rhind (2014) ‘Child protection in sport: Reflections on thirty years of science and activism’ *Social Science* 3(3): 326-340



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**4.16.** In the same way that thousands of young people focus on actors, celebrities or singers as role models, it has been argued that thousands of young players and competitors in grassroots sport replicate the actions and behaviour of athletes.

For example, young footballers who once adopted the haircut of Chris Waddle in the 1990s in France, now reproduce the current ways of celebrating a goal (like Antoine Griezmann) or a race victory (like Usain Bolt's lightning stance). The development of sports programming on TV and its ubiquity on social networks can accelerate and accentuate the effect of these role models and their visibility among young athletes and others – including, of course, via their less ethical sporting behaviour.

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**4.17.** In 2013 a survey of more than 1,000 children aged eight to 16, and their parents, conducted by the UK cricket charity *Chance to Shine* found that three-quarters of young people believed other team players would cheat if they had the chance to 'get away with it'.

The children involved revealed a lack of remorse among their peers, with 37 per cent believing that their teammates did not care if they won by cheating and only 16% admitting to feelings of guilt if they cheated. Five per cent were said to be 'happy or proud' if they'd succeeded at all costs. Most parents believed that their children are influenced to cheat after seeing celebrity sportsmen and women 'bend the rules' on television - especially professional footballers.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>72</sup> S. Harris (2013) 'Children cheat in school sport because they are copying the footballers they see on TV' 15 April Retrieved from [www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2309251/Children-cheat-school-sports-copying-footballers-TV.html](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2309251/Children-cheat-school-sports-copying-footballers-TV.html)

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**4.18.** In the same way, a survey conducted in 2014 with sports university athletes and young athletes (12–25 years in athletics, cycling and basketball) in France and Spain revealed that 10.8 per cent of the respondents are reportedly ready to use doping in a regular way if this allows them to win or improve their performance. Moreover, 40 per cent think that their teammates or partners in sports clubs might already have been doping, and 45.3 per cent think their opponents are doping or have already offended.

Moreover, 18.7 per cent would authorize the use of currently illegal products if the risks to health were low.<sup>73</sup> What is also significant about what emerges from this study is the profound ignorance of the dangers of doping on health and the fact that many young people continue to regard athletes convicted of doping as sporting heroes. An example here is the comment made by a 16 year old French cyclist about the doping offender, Richard Virenque: ‘It is a pity for him because he was caught’, he said. ‘But he remains a model for me.’

<sup>73</sup> AMA Report (2014) ‘Prevent doping in young athletes in Spain and France: a multidimensional approach of doping processes’. [www.wada-ama.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/bodin-final-2010-fr.pdf](http://www.wada-ama.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/bodin-final-2010-fr.pdf)

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**4.19.** Researchers at the Kaiser Family Foundation in the USA in 2000, claimed to find that children do learn lessons about sports and life from watching famous athletes. In a survey covering 1,500 10-to-17-year-olds and 1,950 parents, 9 out of 10 children reported that famous athletes teach them mostly ‘good things.’

Children said that famous athletes rank second only to parents (92%) and on par with their teachers (72%) as the people they admire most. Both boys and girls named professional or Olympic athletes as among the people they say they ‘look up to or want to be like’ (73%). Ten to 17-year-olds named famous athletes much more frequently than other celebrity figures, such as TV/movie stars (56%) or rock/rap musicians (32%). Children who play sport ‘a lot’ named famous athletes (91%) as often as their parents when asked who they ‘look up to or want to be like.’ Three-quarters of the children and parents surveyed said that athletes teach children that being a good sport and playing fair are as important attributes as winning. Nearly all said that they understand that excelling in sports takes hard work and dedication, and 93 percent said famous athletes are motivational.<sup>74</sup> What we don’t know from this research, of course, is whether looking up to good role models actually changes behaviour.

<sup>74</sup> Kaiser Family Foundation (2000) ‘National Survey of kids (and their parents) about famous athletes as role models’ [www.kff.org/hivaid/poll-finding/kaiser-family-foundation-national-survey-of-kids](http://www.kff.org/hivaid/poll-finding/kaiser-family-foundation-national-survey-of-kids)

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**4.20.** In a later study, in 2008 in the UK, based on a survey of 549 child sports competitors aged between the ages of 12-15 years<sup>75</sup>, researchers concluded that the qualities developed via sport depend on the value systems that are encouraged and transmitted in the teaching/coaching process. Sports activities constantly provide situations where competitors are faced with moral dilemmas.

Significant others – parents, teachers and friends - can have some success in using discussions of such situations to encourage competitors to understand and confront the moral dimensions of the decisions they take, thus ensuring that young people can strive for personal excellence and competitive success while, at the same time, be supported in upholding fairness and respect for both the rules and their opponents. But in a recent study in Switzerland, Traclet et al (2014) argue that the legitimization of aggressive behaviour in sports such as soccer and ice hockey is related to ‘moral disengagement’, and the ‘collective context’ (more than the individual context) and is mediated by ego attitudes among young athletes and the perceived attitudes of coaches toward such transgressions.<sup>76</sup>

<sup>75</sup> M. Lee, J. Whitehead, N. Ntoumanis and A. Hatzigeorgiadis (2008) ‘Relationships among values, achievement orientations and attitudes in youth sport.’ *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology* 30: 588-610

<sup>76</sup> A. Traclet, O. Moret, F. Ohl, and A. Clémence (2014) ‘Moral disengagement in the legitimization and realization of aggressive behaviour in soccer and ice hockey’ *Aggressive Behaviour* 41: 1 – 11

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**4.21.** The most important aspect of role modelling, of course, is which part of the role is being focused on by the observer. A range of ‘role constructs’ will shape how role models might impact on the observer’s behaviour. According to Lyle (2009), the behaviour and values exhibited by a role model can be one or more of the following:<sup>77</sup>

- **An exemplary manifestation of the role.**  
The model is acknowledged for carrying out the role in accordance with all measures of good practice. This reinforces good practice (including good values) for those who are already engaged.
- **A representation of sanctioned behaviour.**  
The behaviour of the model (good or bad) may be held to be ‘okay to copy’. So, this aspect of modelling by sports stars can be problematical.
- **An inspirational example of personal achievement.**  
The model demonstrates a ‘road to the top’, despite challenging personal circumstances. This message may allow others to realise that ‘it can be done’.

<sup>77</sup> These role constructs are taken from J. Lyle (2009) *Sporting Success, Role Models and Participation: A Policy Related Review*

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#### 4.21. • **An illustration of the reward environment.**

The achievements of the model as a reminder that high status, satisfaction and material benefits can follow success in (that) sport.

#### • **A demonstration of achievement for special populations.**

The model is an illustration that gender, ethnicity or disability (or other special status) is not a barrier to achievement.

#### • **An exemplar of 'what to do' in a role.**

This model provides an account of what being in that role entails. This may be helpful for those who have already had some experience.

#### • **A figure with whom to identify.**

This is closest to the hero/celebrity experience. The model has an attraction and personal meaning for the observer. Although there may be some superficial copying, the desire to emulate is likely to be a 'distant' one.

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**4.22.** These facets of role modelling may act independently or in concert. Crucially, role model programmes – around fair play, for example – will need to take account of the observer’s perspective.

This will have implications for selection of the model, and delivery and structure of the programme. In any evaluation methodology, the questions asked will likely be reflective of one or more of these elements.



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**4.23.** Given that, generally speaking, the observance of rules and laws is integral to positive sporting conduct, special efforts might be made to ensure that such conduct on the field of play is not seen as an external burden on sport or the responsibility of role models, but rather as an objective of every governing body and sporting participant, at both the elite and professional levels.

But the DMCS Select Committee in the UK in 2004 reasoned that the public profile of sportsmen and women creates wider expectations than simply fair and responsible conduct on the field of play: 'It is impossible to over-estimate the impact and influence of sportspeople on young people who admire, follow and emulate their heroes' activities on and off the pitch, court and track', it argued. 'We urge sporting authorities, managers and coaches to bear this in mind in all the advice, training and wider guidance provided to their athletes and players.'<sup>78</sup>

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**4.24.** This may seem rather hopeful, given what we have already argued about the nature of elite level and professional sport today and the relative lack of hard evidence of the direct impact of sporting models on the behaviour of the young.

But the UK Committee concluded, nevertheless, that the overwhelming majority of sporting heroes - and indeed the signals emanating from sport more generally - promote highly laudable examples and values, in terms of elite sporting achievement, the general benefits of sporting participation, and other personal development goals. Professional football clubs in England and Wales, for example, reported to the Committee that it was part of the contractual duty for professional football players in those countries to contribute at least six hours a week to working 'in the community' as part of each Premier League and Football League club's community programme of activities. However, it is often rather opaque if, and how, all top-level football players in England actually deliver on this progressive contractual requirement.

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**4.25.** In many professional sports, in addition to the fixed remuneration which sports stars receive under their contract of employment, conditions may be added. These may relate to the obligation of their attendance at training, competition, community and performance events, and compliance with established codes of ethical behaviour.

While it is interesting that the respect of certain ethical codes may be mentioned in a sports contract, these contractual elements are rarely made in explicit terms and any possible punishments are often unclear. Elite level sports performers are valuable commodities who are paid to win. Therefore little, in terms of sanctions, tends to follow when top level athletes deviate from these stated obligations.

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**4.26.** The DCMS report of 2004 in the UK recommended a cross-departmental review of the existing array of sport-related initiatives designed to promote public policy benefits of sport, including a ‘thorough assessment’ of the potential for further investments of public expenditure to achieve cost-effective contributions to wider UK Government objectives around education, self-discipline, anti-crime measures and healthy and active lifestyles.

Special mention was made here of recently retired sportsmen and women - with good track records and high public profiles – who represented, in the Committee’s view, an under-utilised pool of talent, one which has the potential for meeting the demands of new ‘role-modelling’ initiatives. Useful though this review might have been, we are unsure that it ever took place.

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**4.27.** This discussion of different sporting role models for children also raises the important question of how parents might be more involved in the selection of appropriate role models. In this respect, an earlier small scale research study from the University of Leicester in the UK in 2001 showed how parents attempt to use footballers selectively as role models for their children in order to offer significant 'life lessons.'<sup>79</sup>

Here it was shown that girls, as well as boys, are taken to watch football matches by parents who use spectating with their children as a useful and pleasurable 'time out' from routine family issues, and a 'neutral' zone; a place where the established authority relations between parents and children, and the control exercised by the former over the latter, can be relaxed a little. After all, children sometimes know rather more about sport and their local clubs than do their parents. Attending sport with children can also work well for 'divided' families: it offers a shared passion for parents and children who may see each other only infrequently, and a relaxed context for discussing relationships and connected strains.

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**4.28.** Attending sports events in parent/carer and child groupings is important because it can be a site for the discussion of ethical and moral questions beyond sport: around the value of hard work and co-operation, for example, and notions of belonging, loyalty and fairness.

Here, concerns around the importance of team-work versus individualism and problems of racism and exclusion, can vie with discussions about the wages of players, and which players constitute the best model for young people to follow. All can be explored and negotiated. Hard-working, loyal and 'ethical' players – honest performers who think of the team first – are often proffered by parents as good role models, above perhaps more cynical and more self-indulgent examples. Learning to cope with set-backs – and to come back again with determination and belief – is also a central feature of sport, one which has messages about how best to cope with life's disappointments and challenges outside the sporting context. Attending sport in this way can provide cherished, shared memories, but it can also be instructive and strengthen generational bonds when so much else today seems to draw younger and older people into separate leisure realms.

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**4.29.** In short, elite sport matters to families, and time spent attending sport, by parents and carers with their children, is valued time.

For all the talk about negative role models and ‘over-paid’ players and sports stars, parents (and children) can still find qualities to admire in sport by choosing to venerate athletes who are loyal and good team players, who show moral courage, play fairly, and do their work in the community as a ‘pay-back’ for their lavish lifestyle and the enthusiastic support they receive from local fans. Moreover, this Leicester study confirms that children’s participation in sport – as fans or athletes – can be seen in wider terms, as a preparation for life.

## 4. Young People, Role Models and Examples of Fairness & Sport

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**4.30.** Interestingly, polls of participants in children's sport tend to suggest that, unlike for professionals, winning is relatively low down on their own list of priorities for being involved – that they would rather play regularly in a losing team than sit on the bench awaiting a chance in a winning one.<sup>80</sup>

This means that a careful balance needs best be struck between encouraging children to be keenly competitive in sport, while at the same time emphasising the importance of co-operation, skills development and having fun as part of a mutual search for betterment, in concert with always obeying the rules of sport and respecting officials and opponents. We need to promote athletic contests at younger levels, in short, as a means of seeing participants as essentially co-operative partners – pushing each other to mutually better performances – as well as directly competitive ones. All this may seem fairly obvious, but it is made more complex by the differences between sports in relation to attitudes towards cheating. Let us look at this issue below.



## 5. Do Different Sports Have Different Values & Expectations Around Fairness?

**5.1.** Important research in the UK has also shown that we perhaps need to move away from the universalism of the DCMS Committee work in 2004 and think rather more flexibly about different sports, with respect to questions of role models, fairness, cheating and respect for officials.

Cheating and unfairness in mainly individual sports, ones that attract 'purist' fans, such as tennis, golf, track & field athletics and cycling, for example, may take on a rather different form and emphasis to that in most elite level team sports which are usually followed by 'partisan' fans. An unusual empirical study<sup>81</sup>, conducted after the DCMS review, involves interviews with a sample of just over 800 UK sports fans drawn from crowds at four, top level, professional sporting events staged in England, covering cricket, football, golf and tennis. These fans were asked about their perceptions of fairness in their own sports. The results are very revealing, but we can only deal with a few of the key findings here.

<sup>81</sup> M. McNamee, C. Jones, S-M. Cooper, J. Bingham, J. North and V. Finley (2007) 'British spectators' perceptions of the values and norms in selected professional sports: a comparative ethical survey.' *Leisure Studies* 26 (1): 23-45

## 5. Do Different Sports Have Different Values & Expectations Around Fairness?

**5.2.** Firstly, as Table 1 shows, the majority of all fans interviewed for the study believe that athletes in their favoured sports do generally play in a fair and sporting way – though professional football still falls a long way behind tennis and golf in this respect.

**Table 1:** Do professional sportspersons play in a fair and sporting way?

Sport	N	Agree (%)	Neither (%)	Disagree (%)	Don't know (%)	$\eta$	$\bar{R}^*$
Football	216	59	13	28	0	2.0000	548.7
Tennis	213	92	4	4	0	2.0000	389.1
Cricket	212	72	14	14	0	2.0000	483.5
Golf	207	100	0	0	0	2.0000	270.9

$H = 217.6, \chi^2_3(0.01) = 11.34$ ; \*significant difference between  $\bar{R}$  ( $p \leq 0.01$ )

Both tennis and golf are individualistic sports that do not tend to attract 'partisan' fans and they have broadly more ritualistic and 'middle class' traditions (in the UK), as well as rather deep amateur roots. Professional golf is largely self-policed, even at the higher levels of competition. Golfers usually play against the course, rather than directly against an opponent, a fact which also distinguishes it from these three other sports. This may help account for the unanimously positive view on sporting behaviour expressed by golf fans here.

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**5.3.** When asked if the conduct of players in this respect had changed over the last decade, the findings are rather different (see Table 2).

Football still has its problems – only one-in-five soccer fans think footballers have improved their behaviour - but cricket is especially highlighted as problematic here. The authors of the study point out that publicity about recent match-fixing and sport fixing scandals in international cricket were likely to have had a negative impact on the cricket fan responses.

**Table 2:** Has the conduct of professional sportspersons changed over the last decade?

Sport	N	Improved (%)	Declined (%)	Stayed the same (%)	Don't know (%)	$\eta$	$\bar{R}^*$
Football	216	20	50	56	3	2.0000	401.7
Tennis	213	45	14	38	3	2.0000	374.8
Cricket	212	10	59	29	1	2.0000	425.4
Golf	207	15	29	52	4	3.0000	498.6

$H = 33.4, \chi^2_3(0.01) = 11.34$ ; \*significant difference between  $\bar{R}$  ( $p < 0.01$ )

## 5. Do Different Sports Have Different Values & Expectations Around Fairness?

**5.4.** Interestingly, many more tennis fans, than not, thought that professional tennis player conduct had *improved* in the past decade.

Perhaps they were thinking of earlier instances of more unruly behaviour by tennis stars, such as Ilie Nastase, John McEnroe and others? Critics and commentators, of course, sometimes rue the lack of ‘characters’ in their sports today – which usually means a lack of contemporary figures who are willing to challenge the rules or the sporting establishment in some way.

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**5.5.** A very similar picture to that outlined above emerges with regards to perceptions of the respect shown to referees/umpires and rules officials (Table 3).

Again, golf fans are overwhelmingly positive in this respect (officials are largely 'invisible' in self-policing golf), and those fans of tennis and cricket are generally reasonably sanguine, too. Football is the only one of the four sports to show a clear majority of fans who believe that their athletes do not show respect for officials. We should reiterate here that both tennis and golf are likely to attract more of what we have called elsewhere 'purist' fans, rather than 'partisan' supporters. This is likely to impact findings for those sports in this respect, as well as in other matters. On-field authority relations in football are certainly handled very differently to those in individual and other team sports.

**Table 3:** Do professional sportspersons show respect for the referees/umpires/rules officials?

Sport	N	Agree (%)	Neither (%)	Disagree (%)	Don't know (%)	$\eta$	$\bar{R}^*$
Football	216	24	17	58	1	4.0000	562.2
Tennis	213	64	20	16	0	3.0000	480.9
Cricket	212	63	19	17	0	2.0000	334.9
Golf	207	90	7	3	0	2.0000	304.8

$H = 177.9$ ,  $\chi^2_3(0.01) = 11.34$ ; \*significant difference between  $\bar{R}$  ( $p \leq 0.01$ )

## 5. Do Different Sports Have Different Values & Expectations Around Fairness?

**5.6.** Data collected in this survey on the direction of travel in relation to respect for officials *over the past ten years* showed that a striking 73% of football fans believe that such respect has indeed declined over that period – roughly between 1996 and 2006.

Majorities of fans in both cricket (60%) and football (69%) in England also believed that the increase in the *money* involved in those sports had increased the amount of cheating involved. Finally, football and golf again stand out – but at opposite ends of the scale – in terms of fan perceptions of the extent to which athletes today openly dispute officials' decisions (Table 4). Football fans seem, overwhelmingly, to identify disputing referees' decisions to be part of the fabric of the contemporary game.

**Table 4:** Is disputing the officials' decision common in professional sports?

Sport	N	Agree (%)	Neither (%)	Disagree (%)	Don't know (%)	$\eta$	$\bar{R}^*$
Football	216	95	3	1	1	1.0000	185.3
Tennis	213	46	18	36	0	3.0000	459.1
Cricket	212	45	17	37	0	3.0000	458.6
Golf	207	17	11	68	4	4.0000	603.6

$H = 353.2, \chi^2_3(0.01) = 11.34$ ; \*significant difference between  $\bar{R}$  ( $p \leq 0.01$ )

## 5. Do Different Sports Have Different Values & Expectations Around Fairness?

**5.7.** The trends in professional cricket reported here seem to divide respondents, but a survey conducted in 2016 by the University of Portsmouth in the UK on grassroots umpiring in cricket was much less equivocal.

It reported that 56% of a sample of 763 recreational cricket umpires in England had experienced abuse and swearing from local players, and 40% had considered giving up their role as umpires because of the increasing abuse directed at them. The MCC – cricket’s ruling body in England – was reported to be considering giving umpires unprecedented ‘red card’ power to send local cricketers from the field of play to punish this unsporting or abusive behaviour in grassroots cricket.<sup>82</sup>

<sup>82</sup> BBC News online (2016) ‘Half of cricket umpires face verbal abuse – research.’ 6 November. [www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-37865718](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-37865718)

## 5. Do Different Sports Have Different Values & Expectations Around Fairness?

**5.8.** The authors of this fascinating multi-sport fan study point out that by comparing different sports in the UK we can see that there is a broadly positive message here: that most fans of all sports believe that top level athletes do play fairly.

But they also argue that disputing referees' decisions and condoning certain type of cheating may be culturally more acceptable in some sports, such as football, than others. This may mean that these survey returns from partisan football fans may simply be describing and possibly accepting what they know to be the case, more than reflecting fan complaints about player behaviour in their chosen sport. The authors also regret – and we concur with this point – how little comparative, empirical research is undertaken around the issue of perceptions of fairness and cheating in top level sports in Europe.



## 5. Do Different Sports Have Different Values & Expectations Around Fairness?

**5.9.** So, given these complications, how might we promote fair play in sport? At the professional level offering fairness awards have been one symbolic route, but they seem to attract little public or media attention or status.

An example, appropriately enough, comes from international football. To give fair play more visibility, FIFA has created a programme around fairness via an easy-to-understand code of conduct that should be respected by players and fans alike. While FIFA makes clear that fair play should apply in football throughout the year, since 1997 it has dedicated one week of its international match calendar every year specifically to praising and promoting the spirit of fair play. During these 'FIFA Fair Play Days', FIFA calls on all its member associations to organise activities that are dedicated to fair play and to highlight its importance, both on and off the pitch.

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**5.10.** Fair play is also acknowledged and rewarded at every FIFA tournament. The FIFA Technical Study Group evaluates and rates the behaviour on and off the pitch of all participating teams in FIFA competitions and a Fair Play Award is given to the team with the best fair play score during the tournament.

The Annual FIFA Fair Play Award is presented at the FIFA Ballon d'Or gala. It recognises special acts of fair play and often goes to individuals or groups who otherwise enjoy little share of the media spotlight. But how much public interest is focused on such awards? And do they counteract the acts of high-profile cheating that all major football championships tend to produce and which are seized upon by the media? This seems unlikely to say the least. More attention however is focused on what we might call 'fairness' work involving sports stars away from the sports arena, and we turn briefly to this issue now.

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

**6.1.** Despite the existence of less promising role models in professional sport, we have also shown it is both possible and desirable to foster positive attitudes and actions among elite sport stars on the field or court of play.

In the best possible cases, good role models can be useful in helping to cultivate the virtues required to withstand the considerable pressures to cheat, deceive and challenge officials in top level sport - and even to make a start on reforming that kind of sporting culture by offering and promoting positive examples of sportsmanship. We might also highlight some illuminating cases in which sports stars address wider examples of 'unfairness' that may be alleviated in some small way by sport.

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

**6.2.** It seems clear, as we have pointed out, that different sports may have different standards and expectations with respect to fair play in competition and demonstrating respect for officials.

And that despite a professional ethos towards on-field ‘trash talking’, or bending or selectively breaking the rules or laws in some sports, many athletes - potentially at least - may be able to play a key role in triggering more general attitudinal change around promoting positive values and fairness. This may especially be the case in those sports that attract more ‘purist’ than ‘partisan’ fans.

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

**6.3.** Paradoxically, while win-at-all costs attitudes may pervade some sporting arenas, we can also point to a host of examples that show how today's elite sports stars in Europe invest time and other resources in local and distant communities to try to ensure more societal 'fairness', for example by addressing poverty, gender or 'race' inequality issues, or by opening up opportunities for less advantaged people, both on and off the sports field.

There are also plenty of possibilities for sportspeople to commit to causes outside sport and be involved in promoting various foundations and charities. In short, some professional athletes can (and do) contribute to the greater good by being a good role model away from the sports arena. Indeed, some elite level athletes who might be well known for their overly-aggressive and intensely competitive persona *on* the field, may also be lauded for their modesty and devotion to good causes *off* it.

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

### Corporate Social Responsibility & ethics in sport

**6.4.** Sports are also urged today to demonstrate more corporate social responsibility (CRS) in how they conduct their activities in an around the sporting arena.

CRS has an important public relations function for sport, but it also signals a wider commitment to community support and to promoting fairness. We live in an era in which sport has grown very powerful in terms of its global reach, financial power and its identity functions for young people. But elite sports clubs are also increasingly required to deliver on their local community responsibilities, especially because of the emotional investment many local people have in the fortunes of their clubs.

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

### Corporate Social Responsibility & ethics in sport

**6.5.** The global ambitions of larger sports clubs today – perhaps especially elite European football clubs – can cause a sense of serious dislocation and alienation among more marginal supporter communities back home.

This – and the need to ‘sweat’ stadium assets – is one reason why many top sports clubs in Europe now host community services and events, as well as commercial activities and functions. In the UK for example, while football stadia are increasingly a site for doing business, they also routinely host community events, job clubs, education centres, and even health facilities.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>83</sup> A. Pringle and P. Sayers (2004) ‘It’s a Goal! Basing a community psychiatric nursing service in a local football stadium.’ *The Journal of The Royal Society for the Promotion of Health*. 124 (5): 234-238

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

### Corporate Social Responsibility & ethics in sport

**6.6.** Practices of CRS in sport exist across Europe. The European Club Association (ECA) in football now publishes an annual report of the activities of its elite member clubs across a range of fields, including health, community cohesion and social integration.<sup>84</sup>

In Belgium, for example, ECA member Standard of Liege, a professional football club, has developed several actions to fight against spectator violence in sport known under the *fan coaching*<sup>85</sup> concept. This approach has long been championed in Germany and is based on a socio-preventive and educational approach to violence on and off field (such as a 'fan home' to host young supporters, or sports educators as mediators between rival supporters' group during matches). This reflects a strong concern for fairness and social responsibility in a wider social setting, showing the insight and willingness of sports organizations not to limit their actions to managing the situational factors of sport violence, but also to address deeper, structural causes, linked to the precariousness and vulnerability of social groups.

<sup>84</sup> ECA (2016) *Community and Social Responsibility*, Nyon: European Club Association

<sup>85</sup> M. Comeron (ed.) (2002) *The Prevention of Violence in Sport*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing



## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

### The European Healthy Stadia Network

**6.7.** *The European Healthy Stadia Network* initiative is predicated on sport showing great CRS in relation to supporting and promoting healthier sports fan lifestyles and diet. It was developed from a programme for Healthy Stadia started in the UK in 2005.

Paradoxically, however, sports stadia can be quite difficult settings for health promotion because of the huge gap between the offer made to sports competitors (best sports equipment, healthy food, specialized medical care and high-end psychological support) and the products typically directed to fans at sports events (fast food, fizzy drinks, alcohol, tobacco etc.). Alcohol companies, fast food and carbonated beverage producers and, increasingly, online gambling companies have typically been among the key sponsors in international sport. In this sense, much sports marketing traditionally concentrates on what we might describe as 'unhealthy' products in a way which might be read as a challenge to wider notions of fairness and ethical behaviour. What is offered to fans is clearly very different from the diets favoured by the WHO and possibly those running sports clubs.

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

### The European Healthy Stadia Network

**6.8.** But because they are often sited in less affluent neighbourhoods and they attract large numbers of working class men, sports stadia can still offer an important setting for reaching ‘hard-to-reach’ people, especially younger men, thus potentially improving public health and reducing inequalities.<sup>86</sup>

Reductions in smoking and alcohol use in sports stadia is one example of the impact that Healthy Stadia has been able to claim to have played a part in. Its advocates argue that sports stadia appear to be an underestimated setting for establishing ethical policies, especially around health promotion. A recent Healthy Stadia Good Practices Audit could provide a model for collecting data from across Europe on the wider ethical practices and codes of sports clubs in this arena of work.

<sup>86</sup> W. Drygas, J. Ruskowska, M. Philpott, O. Björkström, M. Parker, R. Ireland, F. Roncarolo and M. Tenconi (2013) ‘Good practices and health policy analysis in European sports stadia: results from the ‘Healthy Stadia’ project’ *Health Promotion International* 28 (2): 157-165

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

### The European Healthy Stadia Network

**6.9.** Making ‘brand’ connections with sport in the global era is a process of legitimisation: one of the ways in which private companies and global corporations make themselves seem more exciting, attractive and appealing to young people. This is one of the reasons why sports stars and sports clubs are paid so much money to advertise products, ranging from skin cream, ketchup and finance brokerage to industrial tractors.

It is also noticeable how powerful major sponsors can promise to be when clearly unethical practices emerge in those sports in which they are investors: businesses that have ethical mission statements for their employees and customers do not typically want to be connected to sporting examples of perceived sharp practice, corruption or cheating. Sponsors, therefore, can apply considerable material and symbolic pressure to ensure sports enforce their core ethical codes: in this specific instance, money might be made to talk, but for an ethical return. But sponsors must be seen to be acting on enforcing a more ethical approach to their support for sport – and sport must be encouraged to become more selective regarding the motivations and ethics of its key sponsors.

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

### The European Healthy Stadia Network

**6.10.** A list of sport's CRS duties and activities – including its greater commitment to health and institutional and individual fairness – can provide a useful checklist for corporations wanting to include sport in their own CSR strategies and against which other organisations might be compared.

Corporate relationships with sports organisations that do not have documented policies outlining these social obligations should be avoided.<sup>87</sup> Connecting with sport is an expressive way for companies to nurture their reputations as social repositories of certain moral values – including in relation to promoting healthier living. Initiatives such as the Novak Djokovic Foundation, supporting education for children in Serbia, show how individual sports stars can exercise their own CRS away from the pressures of top level competition.<sup>88</sup> Many top sports stars across Europe have set up their own foundations and projects to aid disadvantaged young people in projects around the world – a small contribution towards making the world a little less unfair. It is also one way in which successful people in elite sport can demonstrate their relatively 'grounded' nature in a world which can often feel like a fantasy project.

<sup>87</sup> A. Smith and H. Westerbeek (2007) 'Sport as a vehicle for deploying corporate social responsibility.' *The Journal of Corporate Citizenship* 25 (Spring): 43-54

<sup>88</sup> A Croghan (2016) 'Novak Djokovic: athletes absolutely should be role models' Fox 13, 22 February [www.fox13now.com/2016/02/22/novak-djokovic-athletes-absolutely-should-be-role-models](http://www.fox13now.com/2016/02/22/novak-djokovic-athletes-absolutely-should-be-role-models)

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

### Resisting violence & racism

**6.11.** Another example of ethical work by sporting stars away from the sporting arena is taken from the highly aggressive sport of boxing.

It deals with the issue of domestic violence against women. Top male athletes can be powerful status figures for many young men, and they have a very high public profile. So, when male elite athletes are exposed as people who are violent towards women – and there have been a number of recent high profile cases of this kind - this often draws a more general, public condemnation.<sup>89</sup> But such cases – and even the public reaction to them - can also make such behaviour seem more acceptable in the eyes of some younger men.

<sup>89</sup> In June 2015, the Leicester City player Danny Simpson was convicted of assaulting his ex-girlfriend and the mother of his child. Simpson was sentenced to 300 hours of community service. His actions and his response to his sentence provoked hostile press coverage in the UK about sportsmen who abuse family members.

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

### Resisting violence & racism

**6.12.** However, when, as happened in 2014, the then World Heavyweight Boxing Champion, the UK's Lennox Lewis, delivered a public service announcement as part of a campaign asserting that: 'Real Men Don't Hit Women', we might expect a different reaction.

When this macho and highly successful sports star effectively informed young males that beating women is cowardly and wrong – is palpably unfair - this might impact on otherwise hard-to-reach young men who hold Lewis as a role model and for whom such violence may be a means of exerting power and control and attaining 'respect' in a world in which they may think they have little of either.



**Figure 5:** A 'Real Men Don't Hit Women' campaign poster.

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

### Resisting violence & racism

**6.13.** In short, although sport might project its own hyper-masculine credentials - not least in boxing - this sort of wider anti-domestic violence message from sportsmen may connect with marginalised young men and be worth much more than warnings or moral lectures which are handed down from administrators, officials or other authority figures about gender abuse or other similar matters which raise ethical questions and notions of fairness.

In this sense, male athletes who routinely deliver violence in the ring, ironically, can help lead the way in terms of condemning the use of excessive male force elsewhere - in this case, against women.<sup>90</sup>

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

### Resisting violence & racism

**6.14.** Sometimes the individual and courageous actions of professional athletes in relation to acts of extreme, criminal unfairness, racism or homophobia can potentially have the greatest and most immediate public impact, raising broader questions of sport's relation to issues of morality, equality and fairness in the process.

On 3 Jan 2013, for example, the AC Milan soccer player Kevin Prince Boateng, forced a mid-season 'friendly' soccer match against Italian fourth division club Pro Patria to be abandoned after 25 minutes because of the persistent racist chanting aimed at him. Boateng took direct and immediate action: he picked the ball up and booted it towards the offending supporters before, contrary to UEFA guidelines, ripping off his shirt and leaving the pitch for good. Milan's Italian captain Massimo Ambrosini instructed the rest of his team to walk off in common protest, and as a show of support for Boateng. This player action, led to UEFA agreeing to back players and referees who choose to halt matches because of crowd racism.



## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

### Resisting violence & racism

**6.15.** Such protests may raise uncomfortable memories of claims, made here in Europe, about the ways in which the celebratory discourses of multiculturalism solidarity, which are frequently played out in sport, may mask more substantive and deep-rooted forms of societal unfairness and ‘race’ inequality.

In France, for example, the 1998 home World Cup victory in football was argued by many to signal a new model version of successful integration and multiculturalism for both France and Europe. But critics argued that this national sporting success was in fact, ‘largely predicated on the active suppression of certain kinds of cultural and religious difference deemed incompatible or dangerous to the French nation.’<sup>91</sup> Winning the World Cup, clearly, did not in any sense ‘solve’ France’s community relations issues. The thorny question here is about how we articulate and respond to the relationship between material and symbolic unfairness in the wider society, set against the convenient assumptions often made about the ‘level playing field’ of sport and the symbolic integrative and representative functions supposedly performed by sporting success at elite levels.

<sup>91</sup> P. Silverstein (2000) ‘Sporting faith: Islam, soccer and the French nation-state.’ *Social Texts* 65 18 (4): 25-53. p.42

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

### A sporting response to radicalisation and terrorism?

**6.16.** Questions around multiculturalism and migration have also been raised by recent terror attacks in Europe.

The key suspects in the attacks which occurred in Paris in November 2015, killing 130 people, for example, were eventually traced back to the Brussels inner-city suburb of Molenbeek, an area with high levels of social deprivation, where youth unemployment stands at 40%, and around 41% of the local population are Muslim. International media coverage after the Paris attacks had demonised this area as a fertile ground for alienation and violence. But, here, involvement in local sport could also stand as a buffer against the sorts of feelings of unfairness and injustice that can aid terrorist recruitment and accentuate the dual impact of racism and radicalisation. Local sport in Molenbeek is a source of collective local pride and personal dignity, especially perhaps for young Muslim men.

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

### A sporting response to radicalisation and terrorism?

**6.17.** The Academie Jeunesse FC Molenbeek soccer club was founded in 2004 by Omar Tizguine and by 2016 it had over 500 members made up of young players, parents and volunteers, mainly from a Moroccan Muslim heritage.

To help counter widely-held negative assumptions about the area, all players in the club's 10 junior teams - from under-7 to under-18 levels - are instructed to shake hands with their opponents before and after contests. Arguing with officials is prohibited, and visiting teams are often offered food and drink after fixtures. Recent comments by Tizguine, reveal that - as at many other local sports clubs in disadvantaged areas - the philosophy of Academie Jeunesse FC Molenbeek is about much more than sport. He said:

*'Our priority is not football, but discipline and keeping children off the street. Many boys in Molenbeek are poorly educated and unemployed: they get into bad company and this makes them vulnerable. We make it clear that if you do not focus on school and don't behave in all areas of your life, you cannot be part of this club.'*<sup>92</sup>

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

### A sporting response to radicalisation and terrorism?

**6.18.** The volunteers and coaches at FC Molenbeek routinely use the club's identity and its prominent local standing as a route to discussing with local young people the problems of the area and its associated radicalisation issues.

Sport cannot solve such matters, of course, but perhaps it can offer more constructive ways for otherwise disconnected young people to express themselves in difficult circumstances. Participation and expressions of fairness in sport can be a central and positive part of this agenda. The club's teams are reported to have had the best disciplinary records in local leagues, and in 2015 *Academie Jeunesse FC Molenbeek* was voted by its opponents the friendliest club in local soccer in Brussels.

## 6. Examples of Ethical Actions to Promote Fairness Beyond the Sports Arena

### A sporting response to radicalisation and terrorism?

**6.19.** Unlike Academie Jeunesse, Tuffs FC in London has major sponsors and also something of an international profile.

But it was also formed in the wake of terrorism attacks, as part of the Unity for Faiths Foundation in London in 2014. As part of the Prevent agenda in the UK, Tuffs FC now offers soccer training, psychological counselling and integration courses on 'British values' to some 600 inner city boys and girls in the London area. In June, 2016 these two grassroots football clubs, from Brussels and London, met in friendly sporting competition, marking the solidarity between the cities and their opposition, through sport across Europe, to the radicalisation agenda.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>93</sup> D. Pundy (2016) 'Molenbeek: kicking away terror' DW Akademie, 5 June 2016. Retrieved at [www.dw.com/en/molenbeek-kicking-away-terror/a-19308124](http://www.dw.com/en/molenbeek-kicking-away-terror/a-19308124)

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Elite versus grassroots sport

**7.1.** The British – perhaps especially the English – as the developers of many of the modern versions of sport played today, have historically regarded themselves as having a peculiarly highly developed sense of ‘fairness’, rooted in a culturally generated and much mythologised ‘amateur’ ethos of playing sport for its own sake.<sup>94</sup>

Perhaps this is why there is no national agency – or little state involvement – in the UK for generating policies around ethics in sport. Today, such associations and assumptions about Britishness and fairness can also act against fairness, for example by offering a ‘colour blind’ approach to integrating women and new migrant communities effectively into local sport and sports governance.<sup>95</sup> However, all developed countries in Europe today are faced with pressing questions about fairness in terms of how they choose to use and resource sport for the public good. Should one focus mainly on funding elite level sport, for example, in an attempt to inspire more young people from marginalised communities to play and become physically active? Or should one emphasise local campaigns and resourcing the grassroots level of sport to maximise opportunities to participate and improve health and well-being among the least well off?

<sup>94</sup> N. Baker (2004) ‘Whose hegemony? The origins of the amateur ethos in nineteenth century English society.’ *Sport in History* 24 (1): 1-16

<sup>95</sup> J. Lusted (2009) ‘Playing games with ‘race’: understanding resistance to ‘race’ equality initiatives in English local football governance.’ *Soccer & Society* 10 (6): 722-739

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Elite versus grassroots sport

**7.2.** This issue has become a key focus for sports policy in the UK, especially since the hosting of the Olympic Games in London in 2012. London 2012 was regarded as something of a watershed for national integration around elite sport in the UK, and Team GB went on to win a record 67 medals at the Olympic Games in Rio in 2016.

The roots of this national success seemed to lie in directing large amounts of funds generated by the National Lottery in the UK into elite level sport. This was managed via the policy of UK Sport to reward elite level sporting excellence and cut - sometimes absolutely - funding from GB sports unable to guarantee medal competitiveness, no matter their wider popularity. For example, GB Basketball initially had its UK Sport funding removed, despite the sport's recreational popularity in many British cities and especially among poorer, marginalised ethnic minorities. Meanwhile, national funding to promote cycling excellence and for elite Olympic sports, such as gymnastics, rowing and sailing, has been expanded. This direction in UK sports funding has not always been a smooth process. Cycling in the UK, for example, has faced recent charges that its extraordinary recent success at world and Olympic levels has been achieved by developing a 'culture of fear' involving sexism and bullying which was the subject of an official inquiry.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>96</sup> B. Rumsby (2017) 'British cycling accused of covering up bullying culture and misleading UK Sport' *The Daily Telegraph* 21 February

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Elite versus grassroots sport

**7.3.** This UK policy of what critics have described as ‘buying’ Olympic medals and heavily supporting elite sports and athletes in a bid to inspire wider participation in sport in the UK, has been argued by opponents at home and abroad to be both unethical and unfair.

Moreover, it does not seem, definitively, to have inspired significantly more general participation in UK sport, or more physical activity. At the same time, it is argued that facilities to play sport at grassroots level in the UK remain relatively underfunded. Indeed, a survey of ‘a representative weighted sample’ of 2,001 young British adults, commissioned by Pro Bono Economics from YouGov and published in February 2017, seemed to challenge UK Sport’s assumptions that Olympic success is regarded as ‘very important’ by the majority of people in the UK. In fact, 30% of those people asked in the survey said that they had ‘no interest’ in the Olympics at all, and only 7% said that they had been inspired to take up sport because of Britain’s Olympics’ successes. Moreover, nearly 75% of those surveyed said they would prefer to prioritise more grassroots funding for sport over winning medals at the Tokyo Olympics in 2020.



## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Elite versus grassroots sport

**7.4.** Indeed, for some objectors in the UK, rather than celebrating global humanity and promoting sporting participation among ‘ordinary’ people, mega-sports events such as the Olympic Games increasingly signify instead a unique form of ‘celebration capitalism.’<sup>97</sup>

One UK critic has argued that, on the basis of the YouGov survey research: ‘Britain really has got sport upside down. Why spend billions on an Olympics when few kids in the country have the facilities to play judo, fencing or equestrianism anywhere near their homes?’<sup>98</sup> Such findings, alongside these sorts of trenchant public views, certainly sit rather awkwardly with the UK Government’s current funding model for elite and recreational sport. It also raises difficult questions about the social impact of sport and the relationship between funded elite level competition and participation in local, recreational sport in poorer neighbourhoods.

<sup>97</sup> J. Boykoff (2011) ‘The Anti-Olympics’, *New Left Review*, 67: 41-59

<sup>98</sup> ‘Give us goal posts not gold medals’ Simon Kuper, ProBono Economics, 24 February 2017 [www.probonoeconomics.com/news/%E2%80%9Cgive-us-goal-posts-not-gold-medals%E2%80%9D](http://www.probonoeconomics.com/news/%E2%80%9Cgive-us-goal-posts-not-gold-medals%E2%80%9D)

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### i. The 'Respect' Campaign in English football

**7.5.** Away from the elite levels of UK sport, local football is often argued to be the sport which faces the keenest challenges in relation to role-modelling, on-field cheating and indiscipline, and lack of respect for officials.

In 2008 an attempt was made in the UK to counter accusations that local grassroots football was becoming increasingly unruly. This was shaped by UEFA's focus on 'Respect' in a campaign launched across Europe. The Respect project at the EURO 2012 tournament had four main strands: fighting against racism; increasing and improving access for fans with disabilities; promoting health through physical activity; and improving intercultural dialogue between fans.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### i. The 'Respect' Campaign in English football

**7.6.** In England, with many players, parents and spectators allegedly showing too little respect for officials at local levels, and the retention of referees at grassroots levels increasingly becoming a routine difficulty, the English FA introduced its own 'Respect' campaign designed to challenge sexism and racism and promote fair play and respect for opponents, facilities and referees at the grassroots level.

The campaign involves on-line training modules which allow people involved in grassroots football to explore how they might show more appreciation towards match officials and the coaches involved in local football.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### i. The 'Respect' Campaign in English football

**7.7.** How effective has the UK campaign been? Research suggests that experiments with 'Respect' interventions at grassroots levels, including designated spectator areas, new codes of conduct with sanctions, and only the captain being allowed to talk to the referee, produced positive responses from all four stakeholder groups, with referees and spectators very willing to adopt them, and players and coaches also offering general approval but with more equivocation.

But finally, and perhaps most significantly, many of respondents pointed repeatedly towards social emulation and the impact of negative professional role models on the behaviour of players and spectators in the grass roots game.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>99</sup> C. Brackenridge, A. Pitchford and M. Wilson (2011) 'Respect: results of a pilot project designed to improve behaviour in English football.' *Managing Leisure* 16 (3): 175-191

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### i. The 'Respect' Campaign in English football

**7.8.** Later research however suggests that referees in local football in England routinely suffer from abuse and physical intimidation and that this often contributes to them giving up the game.<sup>100</sup>

Using interviews with 11 recently referees recently registered to one English County Football Association, another group of UK academics examined the experiences of officials in a seven-year period since the implementation of the English Respect campaign. Despite this high-profile public information initiative, the results of this small-scale research outlined how little had really changed for those officiating at the youth and adult grassroots level in England. The referees interviewed highlighted the continuing verbal and physical abuse they faced and argued that County FAs needed to demonstrate much greater levels of support towards them when dealing with cases of misconduct.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>100</sup> C. Dell, M. Gervis and D. Rhind (2016) 'Factors influencing soccer referee's intentions to quit the game.' *Soccer and Society*, 17 (1) 101-119

<sup>101</sup> J. Cleland, J. O'Gorman & M. Bond (2015) 'The English Football Association's Respect Campaign: the referees' view.' *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics* 7 (4): 551-563

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### i. The 'Respect' Campaign in English football

**7.9.** This view and the wider experience of grassroots officials in English football seemed confirmed when, in March 2017, a strike by a reported 2,000 local football referees took place in England as a protest at the alleged lack of action taken by The FA to protect referees in grassroots football from abuse and violence aimed at them by players and spectator.<sup>102</sup>

The Respect campaign in England clearly requires further proactive development and improvements due to the 'unwelcome' experiences for many referees when officiating local soccer matches in the UK.

<sup>102</sup> More than 2000 referees on strike leads to grassroots postponements' The Guardian online 5 March 2017. Retrieved from [www.theguardian.com/football/2017/mar/05/referees-on-strike-grassroots-postponements](http://www.theguardian.com/football/2017/mar/05/referees-on-strike-grassroots-postponements)

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

#### ii. Community projects, anti-racism & anti-homophobia campaigns in English football

**7.10.** In England, as we discussed earlier, and partly as a project to counter some of the negative publicity about football player behaviour and the 'excessive' lifestyles of some players in England, all top English soccer clubs are now required to develop or host community projects that involve players in coaching and working with marginalised communities.

In some locations, such schemes may struggle to recruit the top players to help on projects and they may be aimed, partly, to 'compensate' local people for their price exclusion from top level Premier League football. But, although such projects sometimes struggle for resources and an adequate infrastructure<sup>103</sup> and they may require organisational change to deliver on some of their aims<sup>104</sup>, they can also challenge popular ideas about fairness, fan alienation and the commodification of football in England.

<sup>103</sup> B. Maguire (2008) 'Football in the community: still 'the game's best kept secret?'' *Soccer & Society* 9 (4): 439-454

<sup>104</sup> D. Parnell, et al (2013) 'Football in the community schemes: exploring the effectiveness of an intervention in promoting healthful behaviour change.' *Soccer & Society* 13 (1): 35-51

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### ii. Community projects, anti-racism & anti-homophobia campaigns in English football

**7.11.** Responsible professional football clubs can also be used to support local inclusion programmes in education, health and other social arenas – football for girls and people with disabilities, for example – that pertain to questions about inequality, exclusion and fairness.

Recent research on the Brighton & Hove Albion FC community charity, *Albion In the Community*, for example, has shown that the increasing separation between the 'business' of football and the 'service' of local communities offers a fairer, more pluralistic form of engagement, one that can produce 'strong and sustainable connections' between such communities and local professional football clubs.<sup>105</sup>

<sup>105</sup> A. Saunders et al (2014) 'Making a difference: the power of football in the community.' *Soccer & Society* 15 (3): 411-429



## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### ii. Community projects, anti-racism & anti-homophobia campaigns in English football

**7.12.** To make a stand inside and outside sport against social problems and key sources of unfairness, such as racism, homophobia and sexism, is generally an action to be applauded and supported. But, as some critics have argued:

*'Sport has been traditionally resistant to incursions from equity and rights advocates and has had a tense relationship with groups pressing for a better deal for women, blacks and minorities, LGBTQ and disabled athletes. In some parts of the world, it is dangerous for anyone who challenges the status quo in sport.'*<sup>106</sup>

Moreover, different countries in Europe have taken rather different socio-political routes in relation to questions of the 'otherness' of migrant communities, ethnic and cultural diversity in sport and wider matters. Processes of marginalisation, discrimination and exclusion can thus be experienced anywhere in Europe, but the prospects and responses of those who are so marginalised will be profoundly shaped by local and national cultural and political traits.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>106</sup> C. Brackenridge and D. Rhind (2014) 'Child protection in sport: Reflections on thirty years of science and activism.' *Social Science* 3 (3): 326-340, p.331

<sup>107</sup> P. Weiss (2010) 'Single community football clubs and Turkish immigration into France and Germany' in W. Gasparini and C. Talleu (eds.) *Sport and Discrimination in Europe*, EPAS, Strasbourg: Council of Europe: 119-136

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### ii. Community projects, anti-racism & anti-homophobia campaigns in English football

**7.13.** In the UK, the national Kick It Out campaign against racism in football which began back in the mid-1990s has had some considerable success, especially perhaps in relation to opposing, and managing overt, collective racist chanting among English football fans.

Racism among fans in football across different parts of Europe remains a serious problem – and some professional players are not immune to making racist comment, as EPAS has recently pointed out.<sup>108</sup> Today, *Kick it Out* is supported by all the main football bodies in England and it offers a hotline and an App so that fans can instantly and anonymously report instances of racism at professional and local matches. The organisation has also worked hard to generate knowledge about, and opposition to, racism in local football.

<sup>108</sup> V. Sassoon (2010) 'Sport and discrimination: the media perspective' in W. Gaspirinind C. Talleu (eds.) *Sport and Discrimination in Europe*

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

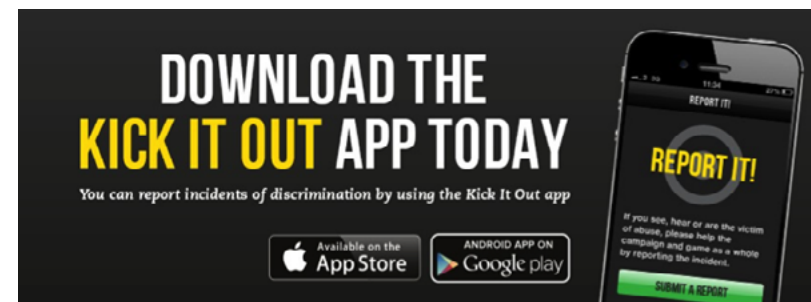
#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around ‘Fairness’ in UK Sport

#### ii. Community projects, anti-racism & anti-homophobia campaigns in English football

**7.14.** The successes of *Kick It Out* at the national level in the UK have also been instrumental in helping to set up the anti-racism *FARE* network, covering professional football in Europe.

In 2003, and then again in 2008 under the moniker Unite Against Racism, UEFA and FARE together produced a comprehensive best practice guide for football clubs in Europe on engaging with minority ethnic fans and communities and working to outlaw racism among fans and in their own organisations.<sup>109</sup> FARE’s week of actions against racism in football has involved thousands of clubs and groups across Europe. Anti-racism messages are displayed at all major football tournaments today, and both FIFA and UEFA

have produced a suite of *No to Racism* media and *Respect* campaigns, involving some of the world’s best players. This is clearly one of the most extensive symbolic campaigns organised in sport to deal with questions of discrimination and racist exclusion.



**Figure 6:** The *Kick It Out* racism reporting App, launched in August 2015.

<sup>109</sup> Unite Against Racism (2008) *Tackling Racism in Club Football: A guide for clubs*. Nyon: UEFA Media Services

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### ii. Community projects, anti-racism & anti-homophobia campaigns in English football

**7.15.** In 2015, the Football League in England introduced a Code of Practice as part of its own commitment to English football's national *Inclusion & Anti-Discrimination Action Plan* first developed by the Football Association in 2013.<sup>110</sup>

The FA's *Action Plan* is designed to cover the whole game in England and to monitor, annually, developments in four key areas: the widening of English football's talent pool; the clarification of anti-discrimination regulations and sanctions; the instilling of confidence in reporting discrimination; and increasing knowledge and awareness about issues of exclusion. Its reports act as a kind of 'clearing house' for measuring social and ethnic change in the governance, participation, coaching and administrative profile of English football at both professional and local levels. It offers a very useful – if still quite limited – published guide to progress, or lack of it.

<sup>110</sup> Football Association (2016) *English Football's Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination Action Plan* London: FA

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### ii. Community projects, anti-racism & anti-homophobia campaigns in English football

**7.16.** The Football League's code of practice is designed to ensure that professional soccer clubs outside the Premier League are inclusive across all sections of their business.

This incorporates match day operations, general operations, community trusts, youth development, fans and the first team. The report includes examples of good practice at selected Football League clubs. At the end of year one, nine Football League clubs (out of 72) were assessed as meeting the Code of Practice foundation level, setting the benchmark for others to follow.<sup>111</sup> Each of these clubs successfully passed an independent assessment across 12 areas of operation, ensuring good practice extends to all employees, spectators and other people engaged with the club. These clubs became mentors for a further 30 Football League clubs in 2016.

<sup>111</sup> The Football League (2015) *Club Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination Code of Practice*: London: The Football League

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

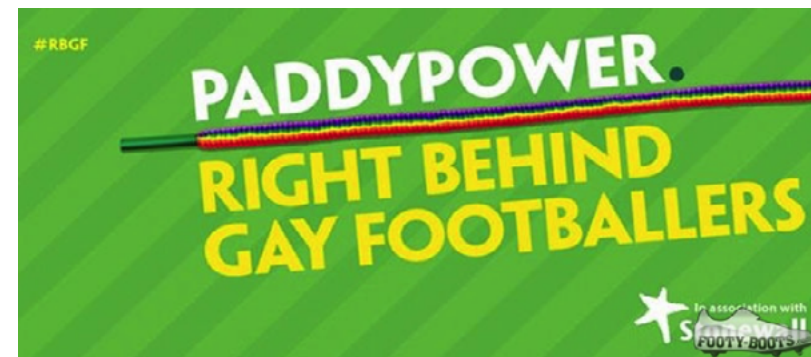
#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### ii. Community projects, anti-racism & anti-homophobia campaigns in English football

**7.17.** In November 2016, following earlier rather stalled events, Stonewall, the equal rights campaigners in the UK, finally enlisted the support of the Premier League, the Football League and the Rugby Football Union to release an anti-homophobia video and to re-promote the wearing of rainbow-coloured boot-laces by professional sport players in support of more inclusion in sport for gays, transgenders and bisexuals.

The impact of such campaigns is difficult to measure, though recent large scale surveys of football fans in England have indicated increasing inclusivity on this score and a

general reduction in homophobic sentiment in the English game.<sup>112</sup> Recent research on the views of male track and field athletes in the UK seems to point broadly in the same direction.<sup>113</sup>



**Figure 7:** Stonewall's Rainbow Laces campaign, backed by bookmaker Paddy Power, 2013.

<sup>112</sup> E. Cashmore & J. Cleland (2012) 'Fans, homophobia and masculinities in association football: evidence of a more inclusive environment' *British Journal of Sociology* 63 (2): 370-387

<sup>113</sup> A. Bush, E. Anderson and S. Carr (2012) 'The declining existence of men's homophobia in British sport.' *Journal for the Study of Sport and Athletes in Education* 6 (1): 107-120

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### ii. Community projects, anti-racism & anti-homophobia campaigns in English football

**7.18.** A very small number of recently retired rugby and football players and some rugby officials in the UK have also revealed publicly details of their homosexuality.<sup>114</sup>

Public response to them has generally been very positive. Tellingly, it remains the case, however, that in English football – and this is echoed around Europe, and in most male sports – there is not a single case in the entire history of the game of a current, elite level, player feeling assured enough to 'come out' as either gay or bi-sexual.

<sup>114</sup> Ex-Welsh rugby union international Gareth Thomas and current Welsh international referee Nigel Owens are the two most high profile cases from male sport in the UK. In February, 2014 the England women's football captain, Casey Stoney, also came out publicly as gay.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### iii. Social inclusion and fairness in UK sports governance: The LeaderBoard initiative

**7.19.** Involvement in professional sport as athletes seems increasingly less difficult for people from ethnic minority backgrounds in Britain – though British South Asians have made relatively little impact on elite level sport in the UK.

But sports governance remains a different matter. Sporting Equals is a UK research and development organisation that champions opportunities in sport, mainly for people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities. This involves work to promote channels to play and watch sport for under-represented BAMEs, especially perhaps those from a British South Asian heritage. Sporting Equals also hosts an annual national sports awards event (the BEDSAs) for people from BAME backgrounds. But its new LeaderBoard project is aimed at engendering more fairness in the selection and inclusion for BAMEs as voluntary board members and as employed senior administrators in UK sports governing bodies and other sporting organisations in the UK.



## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### iii. Social inclusion and fairness in UK sports governance: The LeaderBoard initiative

**7.20.** The LeaderBoard message is that achieving diversity in these crucial areas of governance is a matter of basic fairness. Latest audit figures [2016] suggest that only 17 out of 604 board positions (2.8%) on national governing bodies in the UK are taken by black and minority ethnic members; only one has a BAME CEO and only two have BAME Chairs.

The UK BAME population is steadily rising, from about 8% in the 2011 census to an estimated 14% today. LeaderBoard argues on four counts that increasing fairness in the representation of black and minority ethnic people at higher levels in UK sport (and elsewhere in Europe) is likely to have wider benefits:

- An ethnically diverse workforce will make the sports sector more receptive to the needs of the communities they work with and encourage more people to engage with sport.
- To be effective, increasing diversity should be linked closely with the overall business strategy of the organisation and should permeate through all aspects of the business.
- Increased BAME involvement in sport is likely to be influenced by visible involvement of BAME individuals at the highest levels.
- More BAME involvement will open-up new commercial opportunities & markets for sport.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### iii. Social inclusion and fairness in UK sports governance: The LeaderBoard initiative

**7.21.** In 2016 Sporting Equals launched a new 'tool-kit' to aid UK governing bodies of sport in their efforts to recruit more administrators from BAME backgrounds.

They also announced the development of a new LeaderBoard Academy designed to recruit and train people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds in management and leadership skills, so that these candidates will have the necessary accreditation and experiences to work and offer voluntary expertise at the highest levels in the UK sport sector. The aim is to recruit and train people from black and minority ethnic backgrounds in a new four-year programme.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### iii. Social inclusion and fairness in UK sports governance: The LeaderBoard initiative

**7.22.** This work corresponds with a new UK government emphasis from 2016 on promoting more transparency, trust and diversity in UK sport governance and improving accountability by tying public funding for sporting bodies to demonstrations that, in their governance structures, such organisations properly reflect the people they typically serve.

All National Governing Bodies (NGBs) for sport in the UK will be expected, eventually, to show that they have ethical procedures and that 30% of their governance positions are taken by women. If successful, this will help to demonstrate a strong and public commitment to progressing towards achieving greater gender parity and greater diversity generally on sports' boards, including, but not limited to, Black, Asian, minority ethnic (BAME) people, as well as people with disabilities.<sup>115</sup>

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### iv. Muslim women and inclusive projects in British sport

**7.23.** Addressing a very different, but interconnected, set of issues for Muslim *women* in the UK, the *Learning to Ride* project in Leicester in 2016 set out to school a small group of local Muslim women in cycling in safe public spaces.

The project noted that cycling for women remains a highly-contested issue in many Islamic countries, in the UK and in other parts of Europe. In Islamic countries, some fatwas permit it, but others say cycling is haram.<sup>116</sup> Very recently, women in Iran have been challenging a fatwa on cycling by riding and posting images of their activities online.<sup>117</sup> Closer to home, in the Netherlands the challenges to teaching Muslim women to ride bicycles has been appreciated, but so too have the positive messages for local communities which can emerge from such activities because: 'To see women on bicycles, to realise they are proper women and nothing happens to them through riding, is a strong message'.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>116</sup> Haram is an Arab word meaning 'forbidden' usually in a religious context

<sup>117</sup> 'Women in Iran defy fatwa by riding bikes in public' BBC News online, 21 September 2016, [www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-37430493](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-37430493)

<sup>118</sup> A van der Kloof (2015) 'Lessons learned through training immigrant women in the Netherlands to cycle'; in P. Cox (ed.) *Cycling Cultures* Chester: Chester University Press: 78-105, p.94

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around ‘Fairness’ in UK Sport

##### iv. Muslim women and inclusive projects in British sport

**7.24.** The issues shaping the participation of European Muslim women in cycling and other physical activity tend to coalesce around a range of factors, including race, faith, culture and gender constraints.

However, the Leicester research indicates that whilst religion plays its part in restricting physical activity for some Muslim women, it is not always the deciding factor. Research carried out by the Women’s Sport and Fitness Foundation (WSFF) in the UK similarly found that fear of discrimination or negative attitudes from service providers in relation to their cultural or religious needs can create a climate of unfairness and apprehension, thus preventing Muslim women from taking the first steps to taking part in sport and physical exercise.<sup>119</sup>



**Figure 8:** The Leicester Muslim Women’s Cycling Project 2016.

<sup>119</sup> Sporting Equals and Women’s Sport and Fitness Foundation (2010) ‘Muslim Women in Sport’ London: WSFF

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### i. Sports Policy & Fairness in the UK

#### Examples of Positive Initiatives around 'Fairness' in UK Sport

##### iv. Muslim women and inclusive projects in British sport

**7.25.** The Leicester research demonstrates that, given the right type of promotion, a suitable location, female facilitators and a commitment to challenge patriarchal conventions, making outdoor physical activity available to this relatively inactive group, who have the fewest opportunities, is possible.

Awareness of the different types and levels of barriers experienced by Muslim women also suggests that attempts at addressing and overcoming such barriers must be supported externally, but real change probably lies predominantly within their own communities. The women on the Learning to Ride project experienced personal development and achievement in participating and acquiring new skills. Increased confidence and improved self-esteem were a central part of this mix, along with the feelings of sheer pleasure that simultaneously tackling exclusion and experiencing the freedom of riding a bicycle provides.<sup>120</sup>

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Representations of French Sport

##### i. Sport and moral values

**7.26.** From its inception and throughout its development, modern sport has been popularly associated with ideas of progress, equity or purity. It is these same principles that formed the basis of its development in various institutions (schools, communities, etc.) in France.

It is because, gradually, educators, politicians or physicians have considered that the practice of sport can generate 'appropriate' social behaviour that they have acted to programme it into the educational training curricula of young people in order to transmit to them appropriate ways of behaving. Public sports policies were gradually introduced in France during the twentieth century. As early as 1903 the creation of a sports ministry was envisaged to co-ordinate all activities in this field, but it was not until 1936 that the public sphere seized this issue by creating a Secretary of State for Sport with a mission to reinforce the ethics of the practice of sport in the face of the rise in on-field excesses, due in part to the rise of professionalism. The commitment of the French State and the actions taken have been based on the principle that the development of physical and sports activities is an objective of general national interest.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Representations of French Sport

##### i. Sport and moral values

**7.27.** State intervention in sport was reinforced in France at the end of the 20th century and at the beginning of the 2000s by several laws which specified the features of such interventions.

All the provisions relating to sport were codified in 2006. At the end of these developments, the French Government has a general responsibility which covers the whole field of sports activities, whether they relate to general sports practice or sport at the highest level. The sports code makes it clear that sport is an activity of general interest which must lead to the commitment of the State. To implement public sports policies, the Ministry in charge of sports has a decentralised central administration, as well as a network of relevant public institutions (INSEP, ENSA, ENVSM, CREPS, etc.).



## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Representations of French Sport

##### i. Sport and moral values

**7.28.** The French Government also maintains a singular relationship, both as tutor and partner, with the organized sports movement in France, represented by sports federations.

Relations between the State and the sports federations are marked by agreements specifying the actions which the federations must undertake within the framework of their public service mission and the subsidy paid to them by the federations. These conventions constitute an important means of conducting public policy that the government wishes to stimulate. They make it possible to make the government a true regulator of the national sports movement in France. Since the 1980s, the mission of federations linked to programmes of integration through sport and to the defence of ethics have taken an increasingly important place.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Representations of French Sport

##### i. Sport and moral values

**7.29.** Partly as a consequence of this, no one seems to be able to speak publicly in France today without referring to sport: politicians' speeches are inundated with references about it. It is common to hear or read the words of leaders of federations, sportsmen or coaches, ministers and even the President of the Republic instituting sport as a symbol of an ideal which is rarely defined, but is always exemplary. It is thus understood that sport generates positive values for those who engage in it as much as for the community in which it fits.

Sport bears humanistic values, ethical principles and moral virtues.<sup>121</sup> According to the historian, Pierre Arnaud, there is a myth that sport is 'pure', possessed of the 'virtues' of education and humanism; an activity that is somehow independent of society.<sup>122</sup> All major sporting competitions are, nevertheless, an opportunity to emphasize the extraordinary importance of sporting success and the conditions under which it is achieved. During the 1998 football World Cup and the celebration of the home success of the French team, for example, most observers emphasized the values that allowed the victory of the 'Les Bleus' to complement those which seemed to structure French society. The plurality of origins that characterized this 'Blacks – Blancs - Beurs' team was the very incarnation of a harmonious social mix, thus symbolizing the French model of integration.

<sup>121</sup> Since the 1950s, almost all the Presidents in France have spoken about sport and its social importance. They regularly stressed the importance of sport and the example it provides, especially for youth.

<sup>122</sup> P. Arnaud (2000) 'Sport in the 20th century: identity crisis or perverse logic?' In J. Vanwelkenhuyzen (ed.) *Les tumultes d'un Siècle Complexe*: Bruxelles, p. 252

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Representations of French Sport

##### i. Sport and moral values

**7.30.** Now at the top of the tree alongside actors, filmmakers and pop stars, athletes garner all the public votes in France. For example, a poll carried out every year by the French Institute of Public Opinion (IFOP) on the most popular personalities, regularly places sports stars (Zinedine Zidane, Teddy Riner, Antoine Griezmann, Tony Parker, etc.) among the leading French icons of late-modern times.

If an athlete's talent is recognized in this vote, the image they enjoy, as well as the values they represent, are key. As symbols of a successful programme of integration, they contrast with daily images of social disintegration; they give sport an exemplary value in France. The athlete is then represented as a model whose sporting label seems to ensure, almost by itself, the core virtues which are required and recognized. The conviction that the mere practice of physical activity can generate behaviour, attitudes, morals, or lifestyles far beyond the sporting terrain has been prodigiously developed in France. Mere contact with sport, its practice and its settlement, could, it is believed, change individuals, and consequently, French society. This seems obvious to many.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Representations of French Sport

##### i. Sport and moral values

**7.31.** The historic militancy of the great Olympics hero, Pierre de Coubertin, and the defence of his grand sporting project – a veritable civilization model – circumscribed privileged values and established the global ambition of sport.

But it also revealed a hidden face of its development. Beyond the initial illusions, sport contains in its origins its own limits. The elements underlying sport, and in particular the supposed egalitarian principles of sport, justifies the hierarchy of individuals without jeopardizing the conditions for the preparation of sports rankings. From this acceptance of the meritocratic logic of sport, the confrontation of discourses on the values of sport by new arguments opens the way to more reflection on the legitimacy of sport as a social model.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Representations of French Sport

##### ii. Sport is good for health

**7.32.** The beginning of the 2000s has marked, in France, the rise of national campaigns to challenge the inactivity of the French people.<sup>123</sup> A corollary has been the promotion of physical activity and sport as a key factor in health promotion.<sup>124</sup>

Sport now appears, especially in the media in France, as a tool not only for reducing the risk of illness, but also as a way to improve the daily life of those who suffer from long-term maladies. For example, the National Health Nutrition Program (PNNS) has been using, for more than 15 years now in France, advertising sports to suggest that more frequent exercise and a more balanced diet can be the pillars of a healthier lifestyle. While it is recognized - scientifically - that sport is 'good for health' when it is practiced on a regular and moderate basis, it must also be accessible to all people. For the public authorities in France, this is an ethical issue, especially in relation to the poorest, and most fragile members of society (the elderly, disabled, chronically ill, etc.).

<sup>123</sup> The sedentary lifestyle is presented by WHO as one of the most problematic factors in the development of non-communicable diseases at the beginning of the 21st century. At the same time, the growing concern about the global 'obesity epidemic' reaffirms the need for physical and bodily maintenance as a bulwark against the many modern pathologies amplified by lifestyles that are too sedentary or too risky.

<sup>124</sup> A Radel & Y Morales (2013) 'Health, education and the body: An analysis of two anti-sedentary campaigns (1980 and 2001-2002)'. *Carrefours de l'éducation* 1 (35): 217-234

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Representations of French Sport

##### ii. Sport is good for health

**7.33.** It was in this context that, in 2013, the Ministry of Town, Youth and Sports created a National Sport and Health Resource Centre, whose main objective was to promote sports practice aimed at improving health.

The same year, a National Health and Welfare Plan (SSBE) was launched in France, which aims to strengthen the action of local authorities in favour of physical activity and sport targeted, primarily, at people in situations of physical or social vulnerability. Several French regions, under the aegis of Regional Health Agencies (ARS, Agence Régionale pour la Santé) and in partnership with the Regional Directorate for Youth, Sports and Social Cohesion (DRJSCS), have thus committed themselves to similar actions and have proposed a Specific Sport Wellness charter: 6.X. These new public concerns in France tend to reinforce the ethical link between sport and health, which, although it has existed for many years, is now a major public health issue and, therefore, also a (new) regulatory tool. It is one which can best be summarized by the new ministerial slogan: 'Eat better, move more.'<sup>125</sup>

<sup>125</sup> Cf. [www.mangerbouger.fr](http://www.mangerbouger.fr), Official website of the National Nutrition Health Program (PNNS) implemented in 2001 by the French Ministry of Health

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Representations of French Sport

##### iii. Sport contributes to social inclusion

**7.34.** While the positive representations of sport in France have long remained declarations, rather than ones being backed by any concrete actions, it is now possible to observe a few attempts to structure the use of sport oriented towards social goals.

The emergence of such initiatives is sudden and multifaceted, to such an extent that reading it is a complex matter. Some of these initiatives emanate from private actors, such as foundations of companies, agencies, or non-profit associations, which can claim very different

objectives. While some people simply take advantage of the positive PR from funding their actions as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility, others are more invested in the promotion of these actions, and/or in their design. On the part of the public authorities, the Ministry of Town, Youth and Sports has decided to deploy its activities through a structure (a national resource centre) devoted to the development and coordination of sports projects with education, gender and citizenship concerns as fully-fledged goals. This National Resources Centre now works primarily on the theme of social inclusion by promoting the emergence of organizational models and forms of financing that the decentralised services of the State can use for wider public benefit.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Difficulties of this Positive Representation of Sport in France

##### i. There are few courses which focus on the key ethical issues

**7.35.** Given all these new elements for reflection and development in the sporting arena in France (sport = positive values and improved health and inclusion), it is striking that very few training programmes on ethics in sport for coaches and educators have been put in place, either by federal authorities or local formations.



**Figure 9:** There are few training programmes for coaches in France on sporting ethics.



## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Difficulties of this Positive Representation of Sport in France

##### ii. The complexity of the French sports policy system

**7.36.** In France today, sport encompasses many dimensions that can trigger action by public authorities. It is expected to respond to multiple societal challenges: educational; socialisation and integration challenges; the ability to create positive collective dynamics; and links to public health policy.

It is also based on the personal investment made in sport by more than two and a half million volunteers. This area is also regarded as an important vector of national influence, mainly through high-level sporting success in major international competitions.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Difficulties of this Positive Representation of Sport in France

##### ii. The complexity of the French sports policy system

**7.37.** Sport is associated in France today with the promotion of specific values, such as the commitment or the valorisation of effort and merit, but it is also subject to deviance and drift – high profile cases of violence, doping, and unethical behaviour – that the public authorities attempt to combat and resolve.

On Thursday, January 12, 2017, for example, the Senate in France unanimously adopted a bill to ‘preserve’ the ethics of sport, to strengthen the regulation and transparency of professional sport and to improve the competitiveness of sports clubs. This law demonstrates the strong focus of the French State on this subject:

*‘The text meets the objective of preserving the integrity of the competitions and the behaviour of its actors. The Secretary of State for Sport, Thierry Braillard, on behalf of the government, welcomes the fact that MPs have agreed, in particular, on the establishment of ethical charters and ethics committees charged with ensuring their application within Sports federations and professional leagues, while giving the federations the means to effectively penalize non-compliance with the rules laid down.’<sup>126</sup>*

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Difficulties of this Positive Representation of Sport in France

##### ii. The complexity of the French sports policy system

**7.38.** But alongside the State, another institution has a mission to represent the interests of sports federations in France: the national representatives in France of the Olympic movement.

The French National Olympic and Sports Committee (CNOSF) thus has a specific role in relation to sporting ethics within the domestic sports nexus in France. So, too, does the Ministry of Health. In fact, sport/ethics concerns are at the confluence of many French institutions and organizations. In their report for the AMA on doping in sport in France and Spain (2014)<sup>127</sup>, the authors speak, accordingly, of the layers of involvement: the ‘French Thousand Sheets.’<sup>128</sup> Although this report focuses exclusively on the issue of doping, its conclusions apply equally to other questions around fairness and ethics when sport is mobilized. However, this multiplication of institutions in France which have interests in ethical issues in sport does not always facilitate broader, cross-cutting and decisive actions.

<sup>127</sup> AMA Report (2014) ‘Prevent doping in young athletes in Spain and France: a multidimensional approach of doping processes’. [www.wada-ama.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/bodin-final-2010-fr.pdf](http://www.wada-ama.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/bodin-final-2010-fr.pdf)

<sup>128</sup> The ‘Thousand Sheets’ (Mille-feuilles in French) is a type of French cake, consisting of cream and puff pastry, arranged in multiple, successive strata

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Difficulties of this Positive Representation of Sport in France

##### iii. Media and sport: (When highlighting certain cases obstructs the objective pursued)

**7.39.** Sometimes the media in France do not facilitate debates and do not necessarily report positive initiatives in sport.

Apart from a few significant publications highlighting initiatives to use sporting activities from a social perspective (education, integration or social support), such as the Sport and Form supplement of the newspaper Le Monde which, in its weekly edition, devotes a whole page to a project of education through sport, the mainstream media more often emphasise developments that are contrary to sporting ethics, or else they narrowly report only on one part of a much broader debate.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Difficulties of this Positive Representation of Sport in France

##### iii. Media and sport: (When highlighting certain cases obstructs the objective pursued)

**7.40.** For example, while amateur football in France is regularly criticized for being too violent, and being a ‘theatre’ every weekend for aggressive behaviour (between opponents, between coaches, or towards the referee), an article published on 12 January 2017 in the famous French sports paper *L’Equipe* was headlined: ‘Violence: it only concerns 1.4 % of the games played in amateur football.’<sup>129</sup>

This figure is actually based on a report by the ONDRP (National Observatory on Delinquency and Penal Responses) and covers data from 2015-2016 obtained from a census tool (Behaviour Observatory) which is available

to districts and French football leagues. This online device was first set up in 2006 by the French Football Federation (FFF) and it collects reports on the violence that takes place during amateur football matches. However, what *L’Equipe* does not indicate (but which is emphasised in *Le Monde*), is that:

*‘These figures remain incomplete and do not count all the meetings and violence during amateur football matches. In the absence of sufficient coverage, 12 districts or leagues were not included in the study of the 125 management centres which have the computer tool (6% of the matches from 2015 to 2016). And it does not include the centres which do not yet have this device. Moreover, when several incidents occur in a match, only the most serious one is reported in the Observatory of Behaviour’s database.’<sup>130</sup>*

<sup>129</sup> [www.lequipe.fr/Football/Actualites/Violence-seulement-1-4-des-rencontres-touchees-dans-le-foot-amateur/767919](http://www.lequipe.fr/Football/Actualites/Violence-seulement-1-4-des-rencontres-touchees-dans-le-foot-amateur/767919)

<sup>130</sup> [www.lemonde.fr/football/article/2017/01/12/football-amateur-10-977-matches-marques-par-des-cas-de-violences-ou-d-inciviles-en-2015-2016\\_5061244\\_1616938](http://www.lemonde.fr/football/article/2017/01/12/football-amateur-10-977-matches-marques-par-des-cas-de-violences-ou-d-inciviles-en-2015-2016_5061244_1616938)

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Actions to Develop Fair Play & Ethics in Relation to Sport in France

**7.41.** Despite all this, actions and initiatives to promote and develop fair play and ethics are present in France today. But because of the elements discussed above, these initiatives remain most often the responsibility of a specific sporting federation, or else they fall under a regional or local authority, or a league or a club. As in the UK, few programmes have been launched at national level, or are related to sport in general. Let us consider just a few relevant projects.



**Figure 10:** Actions on sporting ethics in France remain with sports federations.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Actions to Develop Fair Play & Ethics in Relation to Sport in France

##### i. 'Whistle' Campaign<sup>131</sup>

**7.42.** This campaign starts from the observation that the language of sport, like other fields of activity in French society, is imprinted - often unconsciously - on stigmatizing premises based on prejudice.

Even if statistical data on this are scarce there is a risk in the sporting world, as elsewhere, of trivializing racist, homophobic or sexist remarks, or making negative statements about people with disabilities. These remarks may lead to the denigration or exclusion of the victims. The whistle is a common object in the sporting world that symbolizes the call to order. It makes it possible to mark wider disapproval or dissatisfaction. It is used in most sports, on many grounds, but also on the street by the policeman who wants to prevent or report an offence.

<sup>131</sup> [www.sports.gouv.fr/prevention/incivilités-violences/CoupdeSifflet/Presentation-de-la-campagne-CoupdeSifflet/article/Qu-est-ce-que-CoupdeSifflet](http://www.sports.gouv.fr/prevention/incivilités-violences/CoupdeSifflet/Presentation-de-la-campagne-CoupdeSifflet/article/Qu-est-ce-que-CoupdeSifflet)

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Actions to Develop Fair Play & Ethics in Relation to Sport in France

##### i. 'Whistle' Campaign

**7.43.** The targets of this broad campaign are therefore multiple. They include:

- All practitioners, whether they are high-level athletes, professional athletes, amateur athletes or occasional athletes
- All those involved in sport, whether they are leaders, referees, educators, coaches, and whether they are professionals or volunteers
- All supporters, whatever the sporting disciplines, whatever the teams they support
- The general public: young people, adults, seniors, women, men, transgender people
- All of us who, at one time or another, will use a stigmatizing language without identifying it

The campaign was organized around a number of main themes. As can be seen in the graphics below they include racism, sexism, homophobia & disability prejudice:



**Figure 11:** The Themes of the 'Whistle' Campaign.



## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Actions to Develop Fair Play & Ethics in Relation to Sport in France

##### ii. The fight against incivility, violence and discrimination in French sport: Sport Photo Contest<sup>132</sup>

**7.44.** In certain regions in France and under the aegis of the Regional Directorates of Youth and Sports (DRDJS) and the Regional Olympic Sports Committees (CROS), a new competition around sport was launched in 2016. The objective was to celebrate the commitment of young athletes and highlight their positive behaviour by illustrating the values and ethics of sport.

This competition is organized within the framework of the Paris 2024 bid for hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games and is in line with the policy of the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research

(MENESR), which wishes to promote the practice of sport among young people and to mobilize the educational community around three civic and sporting values<sup>133</sup>: friendship; excellence; and respect. This contest was aimed at university and high school students in the region Pays de Loire, from the 1st November 2016 until 23th March 2017. Classes that entered the contest must provide photos related to the theme. These are evaluated according to their relevance, their originality, the emotions they emit, and the technical quality of the photograph. A jury composed of members of DRDJS and CROS will designate three winners. A fourth winner will be nominated by the votes of Net surfers. Social networks are thus mobilized around this competition.<sup>134</sup> The winning classes will be awarded special prizes (books, invitations to sports meetings, etc.).

<sup>132</sup> <http://pays-de-la-loire.drjcs.gouv.fr/spip.php?article685>

<sup>133</sup> Circular 2016-126 of 22-8-2016

<sup>134</sup> [www.drive.google.com/file/d/0B1qum\\_PtaHntUFpvUjjvYkjrEUEU/view](http://www.drive.google.com/file/d/0B1qum_PtaHntUFpvUjjvYkjrEUEU/view)

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Actions to Develop Fair Play & Ethics in Relation to Sport in France

##### iii. Example of inclusion through sporting actions

**7.45.** The actors involved around the themes of inclusion, integration or education through sport are now very variable in France, and the nature of their activities is equally so.

Consequently, the examples of action in this field are innumerable and very varied. Among the private actors invested (corporate foundations, etc.) they act, essentially, as financial partners working within the framework of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Moreover, agencies and Think Tanks in France are more involved in promoting the actions carried out, or in highlighting key themes within national and European political networks. Finally, non-profit associations, most often affiliated to the sporting federations, are more active in implementing actions aimed at targeted audiences. On the part of public actors, the French Ministry of Town, Youth and Sport has, for the last five years, decided to take charge of social inclusion issues through a national sport project entitled: 'Sport Education, Diversity and Citizenship.'

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Actions to Develop Fair Play & Ethics in Relation to Sport in France

##### iii. Example of inclusion through sporting actions

**7.45.** Its role is not so much to create mechanisms for social inclusion through sport, but to identify, coordinate and support the mechanisms that emerge from professionals working at the regional and departmental levels within the framework of the decentralised services of the State. This work was conceived in the light of the diversity of practices in this sector. We give an example below, but it is far from exhaustive in terms of the complexity of the landscape of social inclusion through sport in France:

- Project name: Another image for women in the travellers' community 'Gens du voyage'<sup>135</sup>
- Public targeted: Women in 'Gens du voyage'
- Concept: Involves reading and writing workshops, physical activity and sports sessions to promote the positive image that women should have of themselves
- Funding: General Council (Department)

<sup>135</sup> 'Gens du voyage' is an administrative concept created in French law to designate the community of travellers who are homeless and travel from one town to another by caravan most often. They are indeed French citizens integrated economically, practicing the trades of street traders and fairgrounds in particular, and who initially made the choice of a travelling life. But their way of life does not allow them to enrol their children in schools or sports clubs because the length of their stay in the same territory is sometimes very short (from a few days to a few months).

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Actions to Develop Fair Play & Ethics in Relation to Sport in France

##### iv. Federal Educational Programme (PEF): Educating educators, players and their entourage 'In football, play by the rules!'

**7.46.** On the initiative of the French Football Federation (FFF), this program is aimed at clubs, their educators and their volunteers so that players and their friends and family benefit from educational skills.

The federation has designed this program to provide support to clubs and help them play more of an educational role, to raise the awareness of licensees and others about the fundamental values of football and restore the image of the game to the general public and local authorities. Following a pilot experiment in 2013 in the Maine Region, the program has been offered for every season since 2014.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Actions to Develop Fair Play & Ethics in Relation to Sport in France

##### iv. Federal Educational Programme (PEF): Educating educators, players and their entourage 'In football, play by the rules!'

**7.47.** Different resources are thus made available to the French regions wishing to engage in this programme.

An internet space is devoted to the news of the Federal Educational Programme and a person in each club is responsible for training educators and following them in their educational approach to practitioners. A tool has been developed in the form of a binder composed of four parts (an educational roadmap, teaching sheets, complementary tools, reference sheets). A charter of commitment that marks the will of the club to enrol in the programme has also been produced: 'Incollables du Foot' with more than 200 questions & answers related to the 'PEF' themes.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Actions to Develop Fair Play & Ethics in Relation to Sport in France

##### iv. Federal Educational Programme (PEF): Educating educators, players and their entourage 'In football, play by the rules!'

**7.48.** The PEF is divided into two main components: the 'rules of life' on the one hand, and the 'rules of the game' on the other. Each of these themes is divided into three parts:

##### a) The Rules of Life:

- **Health** - learning to preserve one's health capital; relaying the right messages to prepare well for sport; awareness of the risks of addictive practices, such as drug abuse.
- **Citizen commitment** - adopting exemplary behaviour in sport; allowing the discovery of different roles and responsibilities in your club; encouraging diversity and acceptance of difference.
- **Environment** - raising awareness of the importance of recycling and encouraging the emergence of eco-responsible behaviour; encouraging the use of green transport.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Actions to Develop Fair Play & Ethics in Relation to Sport in France

##### iv. Federal Educational Programme (PEF): Educating educators, players and their entourage 'In football, play by the rules!'

#### 7.48. b) The Rules of the Game:

- **Fair play** - developing sportsmanship; promoting the notion of respect in sport; rewarding positive gestures and good attitudes.
- **Rules of the game and refereeing** - developing the practice of refereeing; transmitting knowledge of the rules/ laws of the game; knowing and understanding sanctions.
- **Culture of football** - developing knowledge of the football world; understanding the club's institutional environment; respecting and enjoying the collective dimension of the activity.



**Figure 12:** PEFs in France aim to develop knowledge about the rules/laws of sport.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Positive Actions to Develop Fair Play & Ethics in Relation to Sport in France

##### iv. Federal Educational Programme (PEF): Educating educators, players and their entourage 'In football, play by the rules!'

**7.49.** An important role is therefore devolved to the local club. This encourages the registration of the club in the PEF, ensures the dissemination of skills to be developed within a time period and by age category, and ensures it organizes meetings for educators, referees, parents, etc.

Staff, coaches and parents are also stakeholders in this programme, being both recipients and disseminators of the toolkit, insofar as it is them who implement the programme and to whom the educational skills are transmitted. The programme targets all clubs with players from 5 to 18 years of age, with the objective of reaching 80% of this age group. Some 141 local soccer clubs have committed to use the tools proposed by the French Football Federation. In three years, more than 500 clubs have declared that they are a participant in the PEF. It is regrettable that no detailed qualitative assessment has been added to this quantitative report of club participation.



## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### **Campaigns for Ethics or Fair Play in France: A Case of ‘Unfinished Business’?**

**7.50.** Despite these various initiatives in France, it remains difficult to establish the real impact of these campaigns.

As in the UK, most of the time no specific measures or indicators are proposed, no detailed assessment is made, and there is generally no longer-term plan to measure any real evolution of the behaviour, attitudes and values deployed by the different protagonists. At the same time, the campaigns often remain very broad (against violence, against racism, etc.), with few details being made explicit. Speeches are often rhetorical, inadequate and repetitive, and lack innovation. They are often perceived as irrelevant, even if the various institutions increasingly use tools and approaches which are more ‘fashionable’, such as social networks and multimedia, in a more systematic way. This, at least, increases interest among young people, and improves dissemination and visibility to wider audiences.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Campaigns for Ethics or Fair Play in France: A Case of ‘Unfinished Business’?

**7.51.** Moreover, despite the important means that can be deployed, whether at the institutional level (ministries, regional or departmental public organisations, sports federations) or more local levels (clubs, voluntary groups, associations, etc.), there is a lack of knowledge among practitioners, parents, and even staff themselves of the actions implemented.

For example, the report submitted to WADA as part of the doping contract (2014) highlighted practitioners’ ignorance of resources, laws, and actions taken to combat doping. For example, for the question: *Do you think that the political bodies (governments, ministries, etc.) in your country seek to actively fight against doping (severe condemnation, prevention, awareness of health hazards, etc.)?*, 43.1% of the 572 participants of the survey responded by saying: ‘Absolutely not’ or ‘Not.’ This result is even more pronounced elsewhere, depending on the country and the gender of the respondents, with Spanish participants and women being even more severe in this observation than French participants and men.

## 7. Selected Examples of National Institutional Contexts

### ii. The Position of France

#### Campaigns for Ethics or Fair Play in France: A Case of ‘Unfinished Business’?

**7.52.** As for sporting bodies, the results are little more reassuring. For the question: *Do you think that the sports bodies (federations, leagues, Olympic committee) in your country are actively fighting against doping (severe condemnation, prevention, awareness of health hazards, etc.),* some 67.1% of the 572 participants responded ‘Yes’ or ‘Absolutely, yes.’

But the same effects by country and gender were also observed. However, 78.5% of respondents agree that the media (television, radio, press and internet) talk more about doping in recent years. The survey also shows that the participants felt some injustice with regards to the measures taken to combat doping. Indeed, in response to the question: *Do you think that the policy of your country in the fight against doping is more severe than that of most other countries?,* only 33.8% of the participants responded by saying ‘Yes’ or ‘Absolutely, yes’. This feeling is higher among Spanish respondents than the French, and among women than men. Identical indicators or other quantitative indicators could be mobilized nationally in France to verify the impact of certain ‘fair play’ campaigns against incivility, violence, etc. - or, on the contrary, campaigns to promote new actions or good practices.

## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

**8.1.** We have briefly considered above the current landscape and debates around questions of fair play and ethics in sport in Europe, focusing especially in the latter sections in a little more detail on the policy and practices currently in place in two of the E4S national partners, the UK and France.

It is a complex, dynamic and fluid picture which we have tried to describe: for example, different sports seem to have different responses to the ‘fairness’ question; secondly, although the situation is improving, access to sport is still often unfairly restricted for marginalised communities and females in many parts of Europe; thirdly, the nature of fandom can and does influence approaches to fairness in elite team sport; fourthly, elite level sport and recreational sport seem to have rather different agendas in relation to operationalising fairness; fifthly, projects about promoting fairness in sport often lack national and international coordination; sixthly, governmental and other agencies at both pan-European and national levels may focus strongly in what they say is the importance of promoting ethical behaviour in sport, but resources around implementation, evaluation and measurement of their effectiveness seem extremely limited; and, finally, the media reporting around sporting ethics seems inconsistent and sometimes, simply, unhelpful.

## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

**8.2.** In short, the *rhetoric* around fairness and access to opportunities in sport remains strong in Europe, and individual projects can garner considerable popular support and can be superficially impressive.

But the development of some more pragmatic, *general principles*, which can be effectively enforced and evaluated, is relatively weak. Partly this is because, as our E4S event in Leicester, *Is Sport Fair*, demonstrated, even for sporting professionals there are grey areas around defining what is acceptable gamesmanship and rule-bending in serious sport and what is unacceptable cheating. Finally, there are difficulties in providing guidance for young people about the importance of behaving ethically in sport when their role models sometimes seem to be operating within a somewhat different moral code; one which is geared primarily to the demanding requirements of their job.

## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

**8.3.** The work of the E4S group has been focused more around considering fairness in recreational and grassroots sport, than addressing the contradictions in elite or professional levels of competition – although some E4S partners play their sport in a very serious way.

We want to talk briefly in what follows about two initiatives that have informed the new work of E4S. The first involves the promotion of the 'Big Six': a set of easily understood illustrated principles which might act as a means of general guidance for young people in grassroots and amateur sport across Europe. These have been piloted in the UK but have been adopted by the other E4S partners. The second is the development in Spain of an App for reporting and analysing positive and negatives examples of ethics in sporting contexts, especially sports clubs. This App allows coaches, parents and others to report on what they see and experience, thus building up a picture of general behavioural patterns in sports clubs, while allowing informed feedback to help coaches and parents deal with ethical problems.

## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

### i. AFC Barwell and the ‘Big Six’

**8.4.** The village of Barwell is a modest and rather undistinguished civil parish some 12 miles south-west of the city of Leicester in the East Midlands region of the UK.

The village has a mainly white population of around just 8,750 people and is not especially affluent, nor terribly poor. Mainly because of the financial input from a local investor, the local senior adult football club, Barwell FC, is the highest placed adult male club in Leicestershire, after the English Premier League champions of 2016, Leicester City FC. Meanwhile, the local junior club in the village, AFC Barwell, caters for over 300 children weekly (mainly boys) most of whom are drawn from the village and the nearby Hinckley & Earl Shilton areas of Leicestershire.

## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

### i. AFC Barwell and the ‘Big Six’

**8.5.** AFC Barwell trains and plays its home matches on the local common (a public park) and has a modest but modern clubhouse and changing facilities.

The club has no real record of playing success. Instead, AFC Barwell is perhaps best known in the local area for its ethical approach and sporting ethos: it has written codes of conduct aimed at its young players, coaches and parents, and an approach to playing sport which prioritises fairness over the importance of winning. As one Barwell parent put it when describing the club:

*‘Fairness is the first thing – everybody plays by the rules. Team spirit too – everybody works together as a team. There is no one person who is above anybody else. They have got some very good managers at Barwell who develop the children and work as a team. They all go through the FA coaching courses and know what it involves.’ (‘Jayne’, parent)*



## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

### i. AFC Barwell and the ‘Big Six’

**8.6.** Interviews like these conducted by E4S with AFC Barwell coaches and parents in 2016 strongly suggest that the inclusivity and positive values espoused by the club outweigh any urgent desire for success on the pitch.

The club also has an inclusivity section, a team which accommodates young people of all ages who may have behavioural or other difficulties. A club coach summed up the core values of the AFC Barwell club thus:

*‘I think Barwell has some great values. It’s part of the Barwell DNA. It’s in the book that they give you. It’s in the club’s ethics: we are a fair, equal club. I think fun is one of our core values. Teamwork – I think we get good values from the core. It is a good set of people here, some driven people who live and breathe it.’ (‘Brian’, AFC Barwell coach)*

## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

### i. AFC Barwell and the ‘Big Six’

**8.7.** Accepting that its own locally developed ethics codes were word-based and rather lengthy and unwieldy – did any children, parents or coaches actually read them? – in 2016, AFC Barwell adopted the ‘Big Six’ schema on fairness in sport developed by their coaches and colleagues in Europe in the E4S project.

These are six basic principles about how to play fairly, respect opponents and officials, and listen to coaches before others. The club then produced a range of coloured posters of each of the ‘Big Six’ in the Barwell livery, using images of the club’s young players. Figure 13 is a copy of the aggregate ‘Big Six’ poster depicting the key themes and some of AFC Barwell’s younger players.

## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

### i. AFC Barwell and the ‘Big Six’

**8.8.** These posters are now used by coaches and are on the walls of the AFC Barwell clubhouse.

The club also has plans to produce smaller ‘flashcards’ covering all six elements of the code for use with young players. Local junior leagues in Leicestershire are also interested in adopting the ‘Big Six’ for their own members. In 2017, E4S will assess the impact of the ‘Big Six’ on people at Barwell, including parents and the club’s younger players.



**Figure 13:** The ‘Big Six’ at AFC Barwell.

## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

### ii. The Sant Cugat Creix Sport & Ethics programme in Spain

**8.9.** Perhaps one of the most sophisticated existing individual models for monitoring fairness and ethics in the local sports context in Europe comes from Spain.

During the 2015/16 period the sports-minded local authority from Sant Cugat, a town just outside Barcelona, put in place a system of continuous assessment and a work programme Sant Cugat Creix, related to measuring and maintaining values in a wide range of local sport clubs. The system was aimed at generating a culture in local sport that fosters discussion among individuals and sports groups with respect to promoting some of the positive core values of sport.

## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

### ii. The Sant Cugat Creix Sport & Ethics programme in Spain

**8.10.** This new system aims to develop the capacity of all actors involved – coaches, parents and young athletes – in the observation and analysis of both ethical and challenging behaviour produced in the fields of sport, whether during training or competitive contests, or in related situations, both before or after active participation.

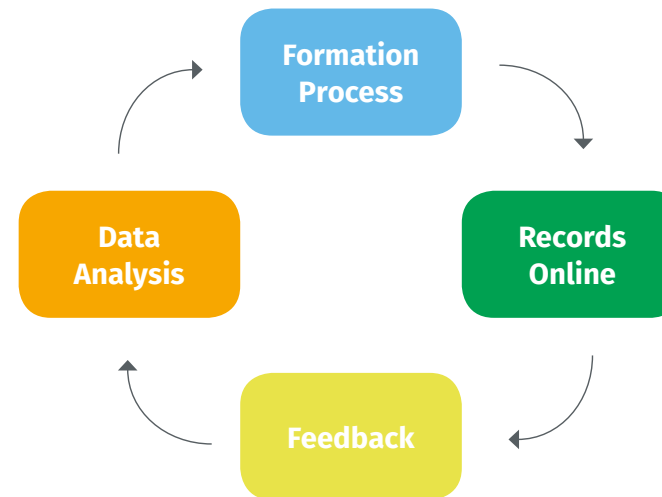
They are then subject to later quantitative and qualitative analysis by a sports psychologist. This provides a record of the examples of good practice and the extent and types of problems involved in local sport and paves the way for the production of policies and programmes designed to reward sportsmanship and address emerging difficulties. The scheme is divided into four elements:

- **Training & information** - Athletes and coaches receive training in relation to preferred ethical behaviour in sport and the systems in place to record any incidents. Coaches are offered training sessions on how the project works and how to approach issues of fairness in sport. Coach facilitators stress that the goal in local sport is ‘not to win but to grow’, that the equation for performance is TALENT + MOTIVATION, and that working as a team means that 1+1 can equal 3. Parents and other parties also receive information about the behavioural standards required and how the reporting system works;

## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

### ii. The Sant Cugat Creix Sport & Ethics programme in Spain

- 8.10.** • **Online recording of the observed behaviour** - An online form is designed for each of those involved which allows for the easy recording of incidents;
- **Feedback** - All records of incidents and the actions and responses of coaches are evaluated by the sports psychologist involved in the project with a view to offering support and advice on future actions and policies;
  - **'Global' analysis of the records** - The Technical Committee of the project analyses all records with the aim of shaping the future behaviour and needs of all individuals and groups involved. Figure 14 outlines the main principles of the Sant Cugat model.



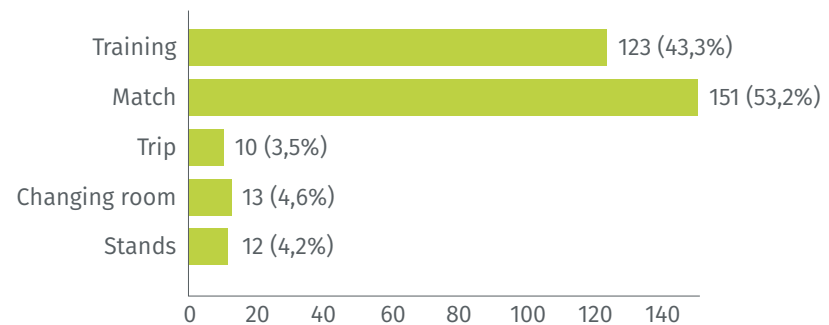
**Figure 14:** The Sant Cugat Creix Feedback Model.

## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

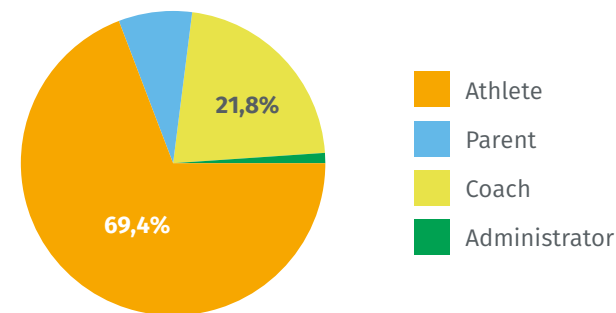
### ii. The Sant Cugat Creix Sport & Ethics programme in Spain

**8.11.** By June 2016 this approach had already covered roughly 5,000 athletes and more than 300 coaches in locally-based sports in and around Sant Cugat, ranging from rugby, hockey, volleyball and football, among others.

In the first year of activity the project had produced 284 reports from coaches and 48 reports from parents. In both groups, roughly half of all cases identified featured positive examples of ethical behaviour or fair play. Figures 15 & 16 provide an early indication of how the data are analysed and presented.



**Figure 15:** Where did the incident take place? In training, in a match, on a trip, in the changing room or in the stands?



**Figure 16:** Who caused the incident? Athlete, parent, coach or administrator?

## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

### ii. The Sant Cugat Creix Sport & Ethics programme in Spain

**8.12.** A new development has been to introduce a ‘Stretching the values’ or PEACE session of around 5-10 minutes at the end of each training or preparation activity in Spain.

This is used to ‘wind down’ the athletes but also to engage them in discussions about playing sport fairly and with ethical concerns. Building on, and developing, the success of the Sant Cugat model, the E4S group is currently developing its own reporting, feedback and analysis App on fairness and ethics in sport to be made available to sports clubs around Europe. Using this technology, we hope to build a more useful picture of the ‘condition’ of non-professional sport in Europe and to develop new ideas about ways of dealing with sport’s routine problems and promoting ethical behaviour in sporting contexts.



## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

### iii. A new ethics code for sports clubs in Europe

**8.13.** Beyond these specific proposals which sports clubs in Europe might choose to use to develop more ethical behaviour among athletes, coaches or parents – such as the AFC Barwell ‘Big Six’ in the UK, or the Sant Cugat Creix ‘Sport & Ethics Programme’ in Spain – it is also useful to reflect on how we might best develop some more generic or common elements of an ethics code for sport in Europe.

These can then be operationalised whatever the sport or the sporting structures involved. Thus, based on the ethical codes initially developed by each partner club in E4S, detailed discussions and analysis has allowed us to identify some core themes or structures of what might be a common ethical code for sport. These general themes summarise the values that are primarily identified as structuring ethical behaviour in sporting contexts. These common sporting values are organized around four general axes:

- **Respect** - This value deals with all the rules or laws involved in sporting activity (social rules; institutional rules; rules of the game, etc.) and a commitment to others that each participant has to uphold the rules and contribute to the generally harmonious development of the life of the community through sport.
- **Team spirit and solidarity** - This value accepts both the weaknesses and strengths of each participant, but promotes in team sport the collective and positive group motivation over individualism.
- **Responsibility** - This value insists on individuals taking responsibility for their own behaviour towards team-mates, opponents and officials.
- **Mindset** - This value demands that, as well as showing confidence in their own and other’s sporting abilities, all participants must also demonstrate a suitable humility and modesty in their sporting activities and behaviour.

## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

### iii. A new ethics code for sports clubs in Europe

**8.14.** Each of these values can be used to promote pro-social behaviour in sporting contexts and can work to regulate and control anti-social or unsporting behaviour.

It is up to each sporting organisation to implement the code and the required actions aimed at achieving these common objectives while taking into account, of course, local issues and its own cultural, sporting, institutional and 'political' characteristics. The analysis, comparison and combination of the various ethical codes initially proposed by each partner has made it possible to demonstrate that these ethical principles apply not only to athletes but they also concern all the stakeholders involved in the relationship with athletes, namely coaches, sports leaders, volunteers and parents.

## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

### iii. A new ethics code for sports clubs in Europe

**8.15.** Indeed, as it has been shown throughout this document, all these people contribute to the moral development of young people through sport, and they constitute the main reference points, models and regulators of the behaviour enacted by young people in sporting contexts.

They must therefore constitute positive models for them. The four values presented above can be embodied in the kind of pro-social behaviour that is common to all the stakeholders, or we can make it specific to just one of them.

## 8. Where Do We Go From Here? E4S – A New Direction

### iii. A new ethics code for sports clubs in Europe

**8.16.** One of the world's greatest scientists Albert Einstein once said that 'play is the highest form of research.' This joyful and exploratory role of play and sport for young people should be cherished and protected.

Rivalry is, of course, a central feature of satisfying organised sporting competition, but maintaining such opposition and a determination to win between acceptable moral limits should also be of the highest value in both recreational and serious sport.<sup>136</sup> Sport needs willing opponents and impartial and confident officials, just for it to be meaningful and to make sense: to make it a true contest. So, valuing all participants in the practice of sport is the basis of a healthy mutualism; one which strives both for victory in sport but also for experiencing the deep satisfaction that comes only from knowing one played the game with honour, with respect for one's opponents, and within the rules.



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