

Fair Play Connected With Ethics and Values

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Abstract – This topic says ethics and values in sport help preserve what sport is all about; achieving excellence through hard work, and to bring people together. These ethics help to keep sport fair, free of corruption, and to ensure that those who have worked the hardest and performed their best are rewarded. Ethics and values also ensure that a sport is played the way its supposed to be played, and its original spirit is maintained. Morals, ethics and values are more than rules or laws. These are implied on duties or actions that one should take. But also judge what is right or good for a person. If somebody don't perform in that way, then it's wrong or bad. One of the common problems of following morals and values in sports is that these differ from one player to another. It thus becomes an obligation of coaches, team captains and leaders to tell about basic sports morals and ethics to their team, as well as adhere themselves to become an example. Fairness, integrity, equity and respect are four important values in sports ethics. What all you feel about co-player or others also determines your moral sense. If a player values others, he will be considerate and will play with moral sense & compassion. Before doing anything, you will always consider what affects your actions will have on others, the fun of the game, and thus you will do what is right and good. If you will feel that opponents are against you, you will lack empathy for their feelings. A player without morals and ethics will not recognize the values and worth of opponent players and will not have any compassion for their welfare.

Key Words: Ethics, Values, Fair play & Morals.

FAIRNESS AND FAIR PLAY AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSONAL BEST

The concept of fairness is a central moral issue for children.¹⁸⁸ Children's first sense of fairness typically is focused on coaching and the referee's behavior. For example, children resent being singled out by coaches in terms of field position, playing time, or starting in a game, and they notice preferential treatment of other players that appear not to be based on competency. Child development research shows that as children mature, they begin to ascertain when an adult's moral authority is legitimate—or illegitimate.¹⁸⁹ and, as children learn about rules and regulations, they also learn that people, including adults, break these rules. How they deal with these dilemmas depends on what they bring to the game and what they expect to get out of it.

The sport psychology literature is replete with studies confirming two primary goal orientations within which athletes compete. The task-oriented athlete defines his or her success or failure on mastery and learning the game. Many children start out their sport career in this framework. That is, they play sport because it is fun—because it provides intrinsic rewards. Athletes who continue to embrace this orientation as they age are likely to believe that competition is a contest with themselves. Their greatest satisfaction comes from achieving a personal best. This is not to say that they

do not enjoy winning. Rather it means that their reward is internal. Truly successful athletes have wedded competition with sportsmanship—witness the careers of Michael Jordan or Cal Ripken.

In contrast, the ego-oriented athlete defines success through wins and superiority—the extrinsic rewards of sport. Research has shown repeatedly that athletes with a strong ego-oriented perspective are more likely to engage in unsportsmanlike play and self-aggrandizing behaviors.^{190,191} Unfortunately, this orientation runs rampant in professional sport. Football players talk trash and dance in the end zone, soccer players head butt their opponents, and baseball players and any number of other athletes use steroids to enhance performance. But these behaviors exist at youth sport levels as well.

THE PRICE OF WINNING AT ANY COST

Increased pressure to win comes from all parties—coaches, parents, institutional leadership, communities, and peers. Yet a 2004 Harris Interactive Survey of 18-year-olds involved in organized sport found that 63 percent of respondents said they would rather be on a team that loses most of its games but allows them to play most of the time rather than on a winning team where they sit on the bench. As early as 1969, Webb noted that as athletes age, their attitude toward their sport tends to professionalize—that is,

they pay less attention to equity and fairness in sport and place a greater focus on winning. It is not surprising, then, that athletes become increasingly motivated by competition and victory and become more accepting of irregular and aggressive behaviors in competitive sport. Greer and Stewart have observed that children cite winning as more important in organized sport than when playing with peers in their neighborhood (i.e., informal sport such as sandlot or pickup games). Developmental theorists suggest that these informal play settings are better learning environments for children with regard to social and moral development.

Athletes with ego orientations rather than task orientations are more likely to adopt a “win at any cost” mentality. When this orientation is egged on by coaches, parents, and spectators, it can become the mode of conduct for an individual or a team.

The Sport in America research supports the idea that in this country society places strong importance on winning in sport; many adults agree that sport places too much emphasis on winning, and many regard our society as one in which winning is rewarded but effort and participation are often overlooked. However, many also believe that the focus on winning in professional sport is acceptable and appropriate, contending that the paychecks received by professional athletes justify this pressure.

Although sport can positively impact ethics, many adults also believe that some More than half of general population adults agree that there are sports that are accepting of unethical behavior. In addition, more than one-third of children agree that some sports do a bad job of teaching the difference between right and wrong. Football is the sport general population adults most frequently mention as accepting of unethical behavior, followed by hockey, wrestling, and baseball.

CHEATING TO WIN

The incentives to cheat increase the more a sport is commercialized, with sponsorships and endorsements. Although less than half of adults think cheating is a highly serious issue facing sport, there is little tolerance for breaking or bending the rules in sport¹ (Figure 10). More than four-fifths of adults agree that breaking or bending the rules in sport is always cheating, whether or not someone notices, and/or that breaking or bending the rules for any reason should not be tolerated. In general, women and older adults (ages 45 to 64) have even less tolerance for cheating than men and younger adults (ages 18 to 34).

Despite the overall disdain for cheating, about one in five adults admits to having bent or broken the rules in a sport (Figure 11). Sport volunteers, sport participants, and fathers of children ages 8 to 17 have

the highest rates of admitted rule bending. Nearly half of adults surveyed for the Sport in America research say they know someone who has bent or broken the rules in sport, a figure that jumps to more than two-thirds among sport participants and children. This number is even higher for those who have cheated themselves—nearly all (96 percent) respondents to the Sport in America survey who admit to bending or breaking the rules say they know someone else who has done the same.

Among children, tweens and teens are more likely to have observed cheating than children ages 8 to 10, and boys are more likely than girls to be aware of cheating in sport. Overall, children understand that breaking the rules in sport is unfair and wrong and that the desire to win does not justify cheating. According to the Sport in America data, more than half of reported incidences of cheating in sport came in the form of intentionally violating the rules.

In qualitative interviews conducted for the Sport in America survey, respondents drew a distinction between minor rule breaking and breaking the rules in order to win, with the latter considered more akin to cheating than the former. Some believe that the motives of the player must be taken into account, saying that accidents should not be punished as severely as willful violations. However, the majority of respondents agree that breaking rules to ensure a win is never justified. There may be a rule that in long distance track, you need to stay within the white line of the track. But if there is bumping going on and you are bumped outside the line, I don't believe it to be your fault and as long as an effort is made to get back inside the line it would be alright (male, age 25 to 34).

Holding in football to protect your quarterback is against the rules but an acceptable offense that brings with it a 10-yard penalty but keeps your quarterback healthy. Then there are people who break the rules to gain a competitive advantage—that's unethical and unacceptable (male coach, age 55 to 64).

Some respondents mentioned instances for which strict rule enforcement may actually lead to the least fair outcome. Others believe that when safety is at stake, it might be worthwhile to violate the rules and be penalized rather than have an athlete get seriously injured. A few respondents observe that “pushing” the rules through innovation in technique is one of the ways that sport evolves.

Everyone tries to find a way to get an edge in competition—as long as they are staying . in the rules, is that bending them?... For example, dolphin kicking underwater off the walls in swimming. In the past it wasn't always explicitly against the rules but people started doing it because it was faster.... Now

it's accepted and explicitly allowed in many situations. The earlier bending brought innovation (male coach, age 25 to 34).

THE HALL OF SHAME— DOPING TO WIN

Fair play, both in academics and sport, is a concept that is challenged by the notion of performance enhancement. Both cognitive and physical performance can be viewed as potentially enhanceable, and arguments can be made that enhancement can serve two purposes: 1) gaining an edge or 2) keeping up with others (who may or may not have used performance-enhancing substances). The Sport in America survey found that a majority of adults (75 percent) agree that athletes' use of performance-enhancing substances is a violation of ethics in sport. This is further underscored by the fact that Americans rank the use of performance-enhancing drugs as the most serious problem facing sport today, closely followed by the focus on money and the criminal behavior of well-known athletes. When serious cheating does occur, adults favor punishment. For example, there is broad support for punishing Olympic athletes who use performance-enhancing drugs. More than three-quarters of adults think that Olympic athletes who cheat in this way should be held accountable. The use of such performance enhancers is overwhelmingly associated with ethics in sport, and athletes who use them are seen as personally unethical.

FAIRNESS IN SPORT, A SOCIAL OBLIGATION:

Sport can enrich society and foster friendship between nations, so long as it is practised fairly. It enables individuals to discover each other, express themselves, secure achievements and self-fulfillment and acquire skills and self-knowledge that demonstrate their personal capacities. Sport provides an opportunity for social interaction. It is a source of pleasure, as well as of health and well-being. Its vast range of clubs and volunteers allows people to become involved and take on responsibilities in societies. A responsible commitment to a sporting activity can also help to foster greater awareness of the environment.

Together in the field of ethics The Code of Sports Ethics urges all those who, directly or indirectly, influence and encourage children and young persons to take part in sport to give absolute priority to sports ethics. Parents, teachers, trainers, referees, managers, administrators, journalists, doctors and pharmacists, top level sportsmen and women who serve as models and even spectators should set a positive example to children and young persons by refusing to reward, close their eyes to or themselves

adopt unfair behaviour and by imposing appropriate sanctions when it occurs. They should ensure that levels of training and qualifications are adapted to children's needs, bearing in mind their particular stage of involvement in a sport.

The health, safety and well-being of children and young athletes are the number one priority. Children must not be treated as young adults and all those concerned must be fully aware of the physical and psychological changes that accompany their development and how these influence sporting performance. They should also show the same concern for those who are less gifted and promote and reward not just success in competition but also personal progress and the acquisition of life skills. Young children should be encouraged to develop their own games and rules and decide for themselves how to encourage fair and penalise unfair competition, and to assume responsibility for their actions.

GOVERNMENTS SHOULD ACCEPT THE FOLLOWING RESPONSIBILITIES:

- promoting demanding ethical standards wherever sport is practised, to improve oversight of the integrity and ethics of sports financing based on income from betting;
- encouraging and supporting organisations and individuals that apply healthy ethical principles in their sport-related activities;
- co-operating in promoting the Code of Sports Ethics and monitoring its application;
- encouraging physical education teachers to give a central role to sports ethics in school sports syllabuses and to emphasise sport's positive contribution to humanity and society;
- committing themselves to maintaining the integrity of sport, which faces such major threats as match fixing, bribery, trafficking in young sportsmen and women and illegal betting;
- supporting any initiatives to promote sports ethics, particularly among young people, and encouraging relevant institutions to make this a priority;
- continuing to promote and monitor Recommendation Rec(2001)6 on the prevention of racism, xenophobia and racial intolerance in sport, in co-operation with the sports movement and the Standing Committee of the Convention on Spectator

Violence and Misbehaviour at Sports Events and in particular at Football Matches;

- encouraging national and international research to gain a better understanding of the complex problems surrounding the practice of sport by young persons, establish the scale of undesirable behaviour and identify the opportunities for promoting sports ethics;
- ensuring recognition that physical and psychological health are highly complementary;

A CODE THAT CONTINUES TO DEVELOP

The Code of Sports Ethics is one of the Council of Europe's strategic documents. It promotes healthy sporting practices and is recognised throughout the world. It was first adopted in 1992 and revised in 2001. But as sport faces the pressures of modern society and new challenges, the Code must continue to evolve. To that end, the Council of Europe's Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) is working on a further revision.

THE CHALLENGES IN SPORTS:

The Code of Sports Ethics promotes fair play among children and young persons via educational and preventive measures to strengthen sports ethics. It encourages the dissemination of good practices to promote diversity in sport and combat all forms of discrimination. Every child and young person has the right to practice sport and to gain satisfaction from the experience. Institutions and adults must be the guarantors of these rights. The Code of Sports Ethics applies to all levels of skills and commitment, recreational activities as well as competitive sport.

SPORTS ETHICS – PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS

Fair play means more than just abiding by the rules. It covers such notions as friendship, respect for others and the sporting spirit. Sports ethics signify not just a certain form of behaviour but also a particular way of thinking. It involves the elimination of cheating, bending the rules, doping, abuse of food additives, physical and verbal violence, the harassment and sexual abuse of young people and women, trafficking in young sportsmen and women, discrimination, exploitation, unequal opportunities, excessive commercialization and corruption.

EQUITY AND SPORTING EXCELLENCE

Equity in sport, which should be an expression of human excellence, has two dimensions:

- Institutional: discrimination based on criteria other than performance must be rejected, rules must be applied uniformly and there must be no resort to arbitrary decisions;
- Personal: there is a moral obligation to abide by the rules, in accordance with the principles of fair play. Sporting excellence must be an expression of human excellence. Performances and results should emerge from the deserved and meritorious development of individual talent.

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