

## Sports and Ethics

Sports is described either as "a physical activity that is governed by a set of rules or customs and often engaged in competitively" or "an active pastime; recreation". Sport may be a pastime or recreation or a huge business environment, a part of a grand industry. Sports have attracted great public interest since the early ages.

### 1) PLAYERS:

Until very late in the century, athletes in other sports were considered amateur, even though they were paid, since they had no contracts or legal documents. Starting with Barcelona, the IOC changed its rules for amateurism, making it possible for NBA and other professional athletes to participate in the Olympics. For most of the last century, this was a very important ethical problem for players. Now, in most countries, players are professionals, have contracts and play by the business rules.

We cannot overlook doping and drug issues. Unfortunately, there is quite a large number of professional players who use drugs. Being wealthy and popular at a young age makes a professional athlete very vulnerable in this regard. In addition to considering the athlete's health, we have to be very careful about their images since many successful young athletes are role models for children around the world.

As for doping, nowadays, international governing bodies of sports have a long list of forbidden substances that should not be taken before, during or after training periods and competitions. However, this can be a very controversial issue. We have witnessed a small number of cases where innocent athletes have been penalized. In the majority of the cases, however, both players and coaches act in full awareness of the consequences.

### 2) COACHING STAFFS and MANAGEMENT:

Management's actions towards the players should be unbiased and just. The rules and regulations of any organization should be available to the players, clearly written and not favoring any party. Evaluations should be fair and just. All players deserve to be treated equally and justly.

### 3) MEDIA:

In today's world of sports, media is a very important element. It is one of the most discussed issues of ethics. How true and unbiased are the evaluations of the media? Does the media always tell the truth about a player or a club? These are just a few of the very basic questions that come to mind.

### 4) REFEREES:

This is the most controversial group among the elements of the sports industry. In today's world, where huge amounts of money and/or other valuables are at stake, ethical values are critical for this group. Under certain circumstances referees may be vulnerable to making decisions in favor of a party that provides him with benefits.

### 5) FANS:

The fans should understand, that the opponents have the right to win as much as "their" teams. Supporting a team or a club is very different than believing "everything is fair for my team to win". We have, unfortunately, experienced quite a few incidents when a simple game turned into a war between two neighboring countries or bloodshed between the fans of two clubs.

- suggest any other ethical issues in sport that you can think of