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## Challenging modern sports' moral deficit

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|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Item Type     | Article                                                                                           |
| Authors       | Vanden Auweele, Yves                                                                              |
| Publisher     | JCHS Department of Physiotherapy, University of the Western Cape                                  |
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| Download date | 2026-07-14 12:31:36                                                                               |
| Link to Item  | <a href="http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/176109">http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12424/176109</a> |

# CHALLENGING MODERN SPORTS' MORAL DEFICIT; TOWARDS FAIR TRADE, CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN SPORT

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## Abstract

Integrity management policy should be built on aberrant behaviour's common grounds rather than on separate aberrant behaviours. A major common ground is likely to be an unhealthy match between the economic globalization and commercialization and some sport intrinsic factors such as egocentrism and a striving for power and glory. We suggest therefore that an integrity management policy in sport should include three components: 1) A reconsideration of the sports structures (**Good Governance**) 2) The development of an ethically more justified relationship with commercialization, media, sponsors and fans (**Fair Trade**); 3) The inclusion of the needs and objectives of the societal context in which sports organisations are operating (**Corporate Social Responsibility**).

## Introduction

Today's worldwide growing irritation and concern with current sports practice has been fuelled by a number of high-profile scandals. These include match fixing and illegal betting in soccer and cricket, child abuse, child trafficking, child labour and corruption of sport managers. Scandals like these have been extensively reported in the mass media (e.g. [www.transparencyinsport.org](http://www.transparencyinsport.org)), analysed in scientific literature (e.g. Brackenridge, 2006; Bredemeier and Shields, 1986; Coakley, 1998; David, 2004; Donnelly and Petherick, 2006; Forster and Pope, 2004; Giulianotti, 2006; Hong, 2006; Lenskyi, 2006; McNamee & Fleming, 2007; Morgan, 2006) and challenged in political documents (e.g. E.U. and U.N. documents: Oxford, 2010; Arnaut, 2006; UNICEF, 2010).

In addition to these abusive and criminal actions less extreme behaviours in sport have also been analysed and described as inappropriate, poor or malpractices. We are talking about athletes cheating, taking doping, being aggressive and intolerant and about trainers, coaches and parents putting exaggerated pressure on young athletes for their own egocentric reasons etc. (e.g. Roberts, 2004, pp. 77-78; Bredemeier & Shields, 1986, pp.15-28; Parry, 2004, pp. 107-115; Vanden Auweele, 2004, pp.179, 180).

Although it is clear that we are dealing here with an amalgam of behaviours that do not feel right in reference to a just as large amalgam of standards, rules, ethical precepts, human and civil rights, it is the authors' opinion that the continuum of aberrant behaviours, ranging from inappropriate to criminal, may be symptoms of the same common grounds. A more effective strategy may be therefore to build on this basic common grounds rather than targeting the major aberrant behaviours, the most vulnerable groups and the most likely groups of perpetrators separately (Oxford, 2010; UNICEF, 2010). Combating causes instead of symptoms may be a more difficult and a more long term strategy; however it may lead to a wider range of strategies and may eventually remove the ground for most aberrant behaviour. This angle also allows us to look at sport from a broad societal perspective and to use a multi-disciplinary discourse: 'Why do sports matter morally? What could and should be the role of sport in current society?'

We agree with Morgan (2006, p. 6) that debunking sports' moral deficit is a delicate exercise and requires a balanced approach excluding both being too hypercritical and cynical versus being too romantic towards the power of the positive potentials of sport. Without denying or embellishing the facts, an effective social criticism should provide

some credible belief that there is a good chance that things can be changed for the better. In line with this position our aims will be first to present our analysis of sports' moral deficit in a way that people can take it to heart, secondly to suggest at least a potential way out of the problems and hopefully to unlock within sports organisations a sense of urgency to do something about it.

To be specific, we will describe some common grounds for behaviours that do not feel right. To substantiate this we will refer to research in sport economy, sociology, psychology and ethics (Allison, 2005; Brackenridge, 2006; Giulianotti, 2006; Forster & Pope, 2004; McNamee, 2008; Morgan, 2006; Roberts, 2004; Tamburrini, 2005). We will then suggest elements to be included in a re-conceptualization of sports that target these aberrant behaviours' basic common grounds.

### **Common grounds in the reported aberrant behaviours**

Gradually and implicitly, some developments in society and the values which they externalize have matched to some intrinsic characteristics of sport (Bredemeier & Shields, 1986; De Wachter, 1980). Described already since the eighties (Eitzen, 1988; Seifart, 1984) these societal developments have acquired a self-evident central place in sports practice and influence to a great extent the moral atmosphere and subsequently the moral behaviour of all stakeholders in sport (McNamee, 2008, p.75).

#### **1. Sport relevant developments in society:**

- The increasing importance of commercialization, sponsorship, marketing, merchandising and the related mediatizing of society has resulted in an increasing commodification of sport.
- The globalization of the world resulted in the development of Global Sports Organisations (GSOs) such as the IOC, FIFA and IAAF that have to manage a surplus of power and money.

#### **2. Sport intrinsic factors as susceptible receptors of these societal developments**

- The basic egocentrism in sport.
- The possibility to acquire power and esteem via sport.
- The passion to explore one's own limits according to the adage 'citius, altius, fortius',

and the pressure to win, whether coming from inside or outside the athlete.

The marriage of these societal and sport intrinsic factors isn't in principle in contradiction with sports' potential to unlock positive values such as well-being, fair play, solidarity and health. We certainly don't argue that this going together automatically leads to aberrations. However it turns out that it easily causes to conflicts of interests and ethical dilemmas and because of maladjusted procedures, structures and attitudes, the positive values usually end up at the losing side (DeSensi & Rosenberg, 2003; Maesschalck & Vanden Auweele, 2010, p.2).

### **Commodification and globalisation of sport as a challenge/threat to its integrity .**

Sport as an economic sector is massive. The total revenue in the five biggest European football leagues has more than tripled from €2.5 billion in 1996-1997 to €7.9 billion in 2007-2008 (www.deloitte.com). A business volume of 200 billion US\$ a year seems to the Australian sport economists Forster & Pope (2004, p. 1) a reasonable figure although they add that this figure may give us only glimpses of the volume of all financial aspects related to sports. Anyway the impact of commerce in sport has never been more important than today. In a few decennia many sports organisations are said to have turned progressively from purely sport oriented into commerce oriented companies. Sport has become a commodity (Walsh, & Giulianotti, 2001).

According to an EU working group (Arnaut, 2006, p. 19) there is a danger that this overly commercial approach to sports will end up compromising important sporting values and undermining the social function of sport. It is true that much of sport remains at the 'village' and 'amateur' level and that there is much difference between leagues in terms of markets for spectacle and participation. It is also true that the greatest proportions of the revenues are to be attributed to only 'some' leagues (e.g. soccer, Formula 1, tennis, golf, etc...) and within these leagues only to 'a few' dominant professional clubs (e.g. in soccer Manchester United, AC and Inter Milan, F.C. Barcelona etc...). However, considering the power and impact of these Global Sports Organisations and elite clubs serving as a model for the lower levels, one may assume that

the same attitudes, orientations and atmosphere filter through to the grassroots.

Without being exhaustive, we will elaborate some 'threats' or (expressed in a positive way) 'challenges' to the integrity of sport linked to the globalisation and the increased importance of commerce: *'competitive imbalance, child exploitation, gambling and match fixing, questionable management, pressure of sponsors and media, conditioning of athletes behaviour'*.

### **Competitive imbalance.**

The fact that sports organisations can have a far greater reach in a globalized world, has resulted in a growing 'asymmetrical' interdependence between sports organisations and between clubs within each sport organisation. Global Sports Organisations (IOC, FIFA, IAAF etc.) and elite clubs (AC Milan, Manchester United etc.) organise themselves in such a way that it becomes more and more difficult to be challenged by national sport bodies, by less professional clubs and clubs with a more restricted market. This creates competitive imbalance and tension between sport in Western and emerging and developing countries; between popular and less popular sports and between elite and less professional and recreational sport clubs' (Arnaut, p. 52, 82, 83). Investment in youth sport and talent development has become less important for them because they can buy the best players on the market.

While this may be acceptable (or even desirable) in a normal business or industry, this shouldn't be acceptable or desirable in sport (Arnaut, 2006, p. 52). The outcome of a sport contest shouldn't be dictated by whoever has the deepest pockets. Sports governing bodies should therefore implement models designed to equalize conditions of competition or at least reduce the scope for competitive imbalance. The introduction of some form of regulatory control (e.g. only a given percentage of club revenues may be spent on players' salaries) has been suggested as well as the redistribution of a greater proportion of centrally generated income (Arnaut, 2006, p. 83; Parrish & McArdle, 2006, p. 112; Forster & Pope, 2004, 38-39).

### **Abuse and exploitation of children, i.e. child trafficking and child labour.**

Any conditions in professional or pre-professional sports that involve individual athletes under the age of 18 being treated as commodity, that involve them moving from their homes and that are unregulated, might be considered as trafficking of children. This is most revolting in soccer. Talent scouts and agents are recruiting young players in Africa and South America young players for the wealthy soccer clubs in Western Europe. Exclusive contracts are signed with poverty stricken parents and it is reported that many are exploited. Many of these children don't make it and the International Office of Migration' reports mentioned that many of these children are abandoned and live in the streets and some are sexually exploited (Donnelly & Petherick 2004, pp. 15-18). Strict laws for licensing both agents and underage athletes should be the answer here (Oxford, 2010, p. 16).

The relocation to developing countries of manufacturing jobs in the sporting goods industry (e.g. sport shoes and clothing) had as a side effect an increase of child labour in these countries due to the poverty of the parents (Donnelly and Petherick, 2006, p.11-15; Frenkel, 2001, pp.531-562). Since some of the adults (e.g. coaches and parents) may depend on the labour and income of young athletes for their livelihood, they may have more interest in the athletes' performance than in their healthy development. The sports sector must be able to ensure that children aren't exploited (Donnelly & Petherick, 2004, pp. 24-26).

### **Gambling and match-fixing**

Where revenues once were the means to sporting ends, it is now sport that is the means not only to financial success for the sports organisations, the media and the sponsors but also to pocket easy money for (legal and illegal) gamblers and Mafiosi (Foster & Pope, 2004, pp. 21, 141; Oxford, 2010, pp. 11-12.). According to the EU working group (Arnaut, 2006, pp. 92-95) some regulatory controls can be introduced and monitored by the sport authorities themselves. Certain other measures will require a more active involvement of the state authorities, working in tandem with the sport governing bodies.

### ***Questionable management of the accumulation of a surplus of power and money***

As mentioned above, sports organisations have been caught as originally non-profit organisations in a commercial environment. Because they have to combine sport-regulatory and commercial functions, conflicts of interest in their actions and decisions have become all the more likely. They have found themselves increasingly involved in off-field issues such as commercial disputes, legal controversies and human rights' violations (Arnaut, 2006, p. 19; Morgan, 2006, p. 191).

The management of sports organisations and in particular the Global Sports Organisations (GSOs), often appears at odds with the behaviour that they impose upon countries, member organisations and individual athletes and with their self-prescribed positive role in global society as a means to preserve peace and human dignity in a globalized world. These GSOs secure substantial revenues from organising mega sport events and take advantage of the bidding countries' eagerness to organise, in putting nations off against each other in order to maximize their profit (Forster & Pope, 2004, pp. 59-62; Kesenne, 2005, pp. 133-142).

The EU working group suggests more financial solidarity and a greater proportion of the generated income to be re-distributed not only to the participant teams or nations but also to grassroots sports and to the specific developmental objectives of the organising city or country (Arnaut, 2006, p. 163).

A humiliating aspect of the questionable management has been revealed by Foster and Pope (2004, pp. 111-114) and Giulianotti (2006, p. 67). Despite the GSOs rhetoric of their interest in human rights and development, they unearthed an indecent imbalance between the amounts of money allocated for humanitarian and local organisers' support and those for inner circle excesses. Moreover, ), the investigative journalist Andrew Jennings ads since 1996 accusation of criminal offense to unfairness and exaggerated self-enrichment ([www.transparencyinsport.com](http://www.transparencyinsport.com); 2000). To conclude: Because sports organisations have to combine sport-regulatory and commercial functions, conflicts of interest in their actions and decisions have become all the more likely. This is a breeding ground for questionable management and corruption.

### ***The pressure of sponsors and media as a threat/challenge to sports' integrity***

The fact that some sports (soccer, tennis, Formula 1, rugby, etc.) are a worldwide favourite consumer product for a lot of fans stimulates both sponsors and media to intensive bidding processes and to offer grandiose sums. Because sponsors want maximum exposure and because the media are dependent of their consumers they both know that ratings and viewing figures and thus financial success are related to their ability to produce what the public want to see by preference at prime time. The public highly estimates emotions related to winning or losing, to risk taking, danger, drama, to ambitious striving but also to identification. Sponsors and media put pressure (directly and indirectly) on nations, Global Sports Organisations, clubs, trainers, parents, medical staff etc. This may result in exaggerated nationalism and patriotism (e.g. Hong, 2006, pp. 53-54), in forcing too strict marketing and commercial favours at the disadvantage of local businesses, in interference with the preparation for competitions, in the shortening of the revalidation period after an injury, in the condoning or trivializing of manifest emotional and physical abuses (Brackenridge, 2006, pp. 41-42; Donnelly & Petherick, 2006; Foster & Pope, 2004, pp. 149-156; Morgan, 2006, p. 192; Vanden Auweele, 2008, pp.363-364). In conclusion, a more ethical justified and regulated relationship between sponsors, media and sports organisations is needed.

### ***The conditioning of athletes' behaviour***

Commerce influences the value which the athletes put on their sporting practice, their motivation, their objectives (e.g. to win at all costs) and the way they look at their body. Their body is considered to be an instrument which must be optimized physically and mentally by preference with legal means (nutritive supplements, mental training etc.) but if necessary with illegal means (doping etc.).

Breaking the rules deliberately, insulting the referee, aggressive behaviour may add an element of excitement, drama and challenge to the action and are therefore are considered attractive from a commercial and spectacle viewpoint. Athletes displaying this type of behaviour have been rewarded let alone by the attention which they receive. As a result the athletes' behaviour has been shaped (conditioned) progressively towards

the expectations of those who pay them, expectations regarding risk taking, pain tolerance and the expression of emotions. The moral dilemma here is the fact that if the outcome of certain behaviour and its related emotions are that important, then each behaviour leading to this outcome is more acceptable. Anyway, the threshold to manifest that behaviour lowers. (Bredemeier & Shields, 1986; McNamee, 2008, p. 73- 80; Roberts, 2004, 77-90).

A corrective comment to the above described sponsors' attitudes and reward practices, might be that today more and more sponsors realize that they have commercial interest in dealing with clean athletes with high moral standards. They no longer want to be associated with cheating, abuses and corruption and recently put pressure on both sports organisations and athletes to cling to the letter and the spirit of the rules, e.g. by including a clause in the athletes' contract of immediate discharge in case of proved drug abuse.

Athletes should be protected against the pressing context by strict codes of conduct regulating their behaviour and their relationship with commerce, sponsors and media.

### **Sport intrinsic factors as susceptible receptors of the commodification and globalization of sport**

Many of the problems of modern sports can be traced to the economic level. However these economic factors couldn't have had such an impact if they haven't matched receptive sports intrinsic factors. Striving for excellence, for good results and to win are sport inherent drives that yield self-esteem, honour, prestige and power which are the most important motives to get involved in sport for all stakeholders in the sports sector. These motives are the driving forces behind all sports practice; the reasons why sports attracts people. They constitute the basic features of sport and are to be considered the workable elements that may produce the positive effects attributed to sport if not undermined by sports external motives.

### ***Egocentrism in sport***

It is inherent to sports to be centred on oneself, to devote oneself for the teams' interests in order to beat the opponent. A game or a competition loses its essence when one of the parties involved refuses to win or to defeat the opponent.

Egocentrism is allowed in sports or evermore it is presupposed. However egocentrism in sport isn't freewheeling individualism. It is only legitimate as far as it is displayed within a framework and strict rules which are agreed upon. These include spatial and temporal borders and so provide an ethical dimension. During the game they guarantee the conditions for fairness; they protect against injuries and specify appropriate sanctions for breaking the rules. After the game all players, winners and losers return to normal life (De Wachter, 1980, pp. 5-20; McNamee, 2008, p.75).

Problems only arise when these limits are crossed. This is the case when specific game strategies and tactics are used without those restrictions or outside the context of play, i.e. outside the playground between fans or managers of competing clubs. This is also the case when sports become labour and sports organisations become profit oriented, when unreasonable high salaries and bonuses are paid to athletes, trainers and managers and substantial flows of money are related to winning, beating records, and thus to competition in se. To control or at least to reduce the uncertainty of competition and the related uncertainty of their income, athletes, trainers and managers are prepared to use game tactics outside the game context.

Both philosophers and psychologists reported logical and empirical evidence for a link between unrestrained egocentrism and unethical behaviour. Athletes perceive their opponents as plain obstacles that need to be surpassed to achieve their goal. This perception is likely to provide them with a justification for engaging in unethical behaviour. Referees, trainers, athletes can be bribed, athletes are put under pressure to play more aggressively (Bredemeier & Shields, 1986, pp.5-28; De Donder, 2006, 45; De Wachter, 1980, pp. 5-20; McNamee, 2008, P. 75; Vansteenkiste, Mouratidis, & Lens, 2010, pp. 237-238).

*Ethical implications* of the acquisition of power, honour, prestige and self-esteem through sport  
Next to the sponsors and media who want, as mentioned above, a return in terms of product publicity or increasing viewing figures, also other actors have an interest in good sport results and in bidding for mega sport events, although partially for other reasons (power, prestige) than money.

*Politicians* know that despite an increasing awareness of aberrations, sports still attracts the masses. Politicians cannot afford to neglect people's basic needs and aspirations and they invest considerably in sport. They especially expect as return for their investments a feeling good for their citizens and an increased prestige for their country (Hong, 2006, p.53-56). The seamy side is that as far as the bidding for mega events is concerned, some nations are prepared to far-reaching sacrifices in order to both bring the mega events in and to organise them. They are prepared to engage in private agreements (concealed bribes?) with the GSOs (see recent reports of the investigating journalist Andrew Jennings, [www.transparencyinsport.org](http://www.transparencyinsport.org)). They are also willing to suffer financial sacrifices (e.g. compliance of South Africa, Brazil, Belgium and The Netherlands with the stringent FIFA regulations and expectations on stadium construction and commercial benefits) and sacrifices as far as human and children's rights are concerned (see recent reports on the relocation of people in China, e.g. Hutongs in Beijing's' city centre, and South Africa, e.g. township areas near Cape Town airport; street children in Durban (Mivelaz & Cahn, 2007). Another constraint or threat to the integrity of sport is that in some nations the striving for nation building, the striving to unite all parties in society turns into a passion of extreme patriotism to show via the number of medals its power to neighbour countries (Hong, 2006, pp. 53-54).

*Fans and Supporters* as sports consumers now have more influence than a few decades ago, they not only encourage, they cheer, condemn, call names, demand the removal of players, trainers, referees, managers etc. (Dixon, 2007; pp. 441-449). Sport can be described as a process of self-enlargement by which an 'I' becomes a 'We'. This means that the actions, the meanings and the values that sports excite are common, including mutual understanding and public acknowledgment of the shared character (Morgan, 2006, pp. 178-179). This is the case for the athletes themselves but also for the spectators, the fans and supporters who vocalize their emotions and passions and are more than willing to argue with one another about what they have witnessed on the field. They range side with their stars to share both in the glory and benefits of success but also in the frustration and

disappointment of defeat.

The passion of the athlete to explore his physical (citius, altius, fortius) and mental limits (resilience, toughness) runs parallel with the scientists' passion to explore and test the technological and scientific frontiers (Allison, 2005; Tamburrini, 2005). The pursuit of progress, improvement and records has always been the driving force behind the search for legal as well as illegal advantages in sport. Technology and science try to improve the equipment, outfit, gear (bicycle, pole, swimming suit etc.) as well as the body of the athlete (nutrition, drugs, pressure cabins, genetic technology etc.). Although these innovations have undeniable resulted in a more sound and proper sports, there is a drawback too. To some scientists sport is an ideal testing ground and athletes are receptive subjects to test experimental devices and products (Tamburrini, 2005).

To conclude, the more influential external actors have (self) interest (not only money but also power and glory) in winning and in well performing athletes, the more positive values such as fairness, self control and respect are under pressure and the more patriotism, prestige, harshness and exaggerated rivalry come to the forefront.

As mentioned in the introduction the aim of our paper is to move beyond complaints about moral deficit of sports and to focus on the common grounds of the aberrations in sport and to suggest a direction of an answer that can add at least to the discussion as to find a way out of the problems. We see a similarity with what has been developed in the international trade and the environmental protection sector and we tried to identify some elements in these sectors that may be relevant in the development of an integrity policy in sport.

### **What should be the leading principles of an integrity policy in sport?**

There is a growing body of opinions both within and outside the sports sector who identify as a common ground of many of the aberrations in sports, the unhealthy match between the commodification and globalization of sports and an exaggerated egocentrism, an unrestrained passion to excel and to win at all costs, and an obsessive striving for power and prestige of the various stakeholders. There are also a growing number of authorities and

organisations within and outside the sports sector who want a re-conceptualization of sport to counterbalance these negative developments (Arnaut, 2006).

Examining all suggestions mentioned to solve the aberrations e.g. redistribution, to level down athletes' salaries, the limitation of transfer sums, a better regulation of children's involvement in high level sports, a more ethically justified relationship with sponsors and media etc., I cannot escape the impression that a way out of the problems may be found in a striving for a new culture of rights and relationships similar to what is developing in the international trade and environmental protection sector. The key concepts which we found relevant in these sectors are: *'Fair Trade, Corporate Social Responsibility (CRS) and Good Governance'*. Being aware of the Western origin of these concepts and their related political discourses, movements and actions we must certainly adapt them to cultural differences and the specifics of the sport context (Giulianotti, 2004, pp. 69-72). In this regard McNamee & Fleming (2007) have already done some pioneering work including these key concepts in their theorized and conceptually informed method to undertake an ethics audit in sports organisations.

### ***Fair Trade and Corporate Social Responsibility in sport***

To answer the negative effects of *globalization and commodification* of sport a redefined and ethically justified relationship with commercialization, media and sponsors should be forged so that both private aspirations no longer take precedence over common public ones (Morgan, 2006, pp.1-2) and the asymmetrical interdependences in sports are corrected (Arnaut, 2006, 131).

Fair trade in sport should exclude exploitation of children and be conceived as a partnership based on dialogue, transparency and respect that seeks greater equity and re-distribution of revenues and preserves competitive balance, encourages player education and training, and fosters ties of sporting and financial solidarity.

*Corporate Social responsibility (CSR)* in sport should include public interest into the organisations 'decision making, i.e. by assuming responsibility for the impact of its activities not only on its

stakeholders but also on the social context in which they operate; by promoting community growth and development and by the elimination of practices that harm the public sphere (e.g. offering better trading conditions and securing the rights of marginalized small businesses, workers and people of the cities and countries in which they organise sport events). (Youth) Olympic Games and all national and international competitions should expand beyond athletic events and provide an array of activities that address the well-being of all humanity in a competitive global economy.

### ***Good Governance in sport***

The legitimacy, autonomy and privileges of at least the GSOs (UEFA, FIFA and IOC as pre eminent examples) are undeniably under question. Good governance should be the answer here. According to the "Principles of Good Governance in Sport", adopted in Budapest 2004 by the European Ministers responsible for sport (cit. in Arnaut, 2006, pp.84-85) 'Good Governance' should include that the relevant sports governing bodies 'continuously' examine their own structures to ensure that they are sufficiently representative and democratic and that their powers are not exercised in an unreasonable, discriminatory or arbitrary manner. Good governance in sport should furthermore include that all stakeholders are properly involved and consulted to give legitimacy to the decisions that they take and that all stakeholders' (sometimes conflicting) interests are balanced to ensure not to favour a single interest group. Good governance in sports should finally include the development of an appropriate integrity management framework that not only prevents serious integrity violations in sports but also supports people in the sports sector in dealing with complicated ethical dilemmas where it is not immediately clear what the appropriate should be (Maesschalck & Vanden Auweele, 2010, pp. 2-4).

### ***Conclusion***

We acknowledge that, despite its low moral status, sports possess important features (i.e. striving for excellence, self-determination, shared commitment and identification with a reference group, a WE-feeling) that have the potential to encourage social moral and political values crucial to a democratic polity. It is this 'potential' that makes sports matter morally. There is no doubt whatsoever about the

limits being overstepped when sexual abuse, illegal trafficking of children are concerned, when matches are fixed or when drugs are sold unrestrained and uncontrolled. However, we acknowledge that all actors in today's sport being challenged by difficult dilemmas and choices; that the behaviours described as poor practices may be related to sport intrinsic values and that it isn't always clear where the lines have to be drawn or whether the limits are just strained or overstepped.

Our basic assumption is that the whole continuum of aberrant behaviour, ranging from inappropriate to criminal, are symptoms of the same common ground, which we have identified as an unhealthy match between the commodification and globalization of modern sport and an exaggerated egocentrism, an unrestrained passion to excel and to win at all costs, and an obsessive striving for power and prestige of the various stakeholders.

As a way out of the problems we have suggested an integrity policy built on the basic common grounds rather than targeting each aberrant behaviour separately. Specifically we have suggested developing a policy including Good Governance, Fair Trade, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and more pro-active measures to defend sports' basic features against any attempt to weaken them, similar to the strategies that have been developed in the trade and the environmental protection sector. A policy including these themes, involves breaking with dominant tendencies and must eventually lead to a New Sports Model.

Sport managers, especially CEO's from Global Sports Organisations, should exhibit appropriate leadership instead of withdrawing in a defensive position and should show both courage and commitment to meet such an ambitious objective. By doing so, without being forced, they would not only remove the ground for most aberrant and abusive behaviour but would also be able to put things in perspective, prevent exaggerations and dramatization and suggest procedures that are in proportion to the size and the nature of the problems. The sports sector should regain credibility and guarantee that the social, political and moral potentials attributed to them be actualized.

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