



Special Issue - Research Synopsis on:

SAFE, FAIR and INCLUSIVE SPORT

Plus:

Child Safe Organisations: eLearning modules released

When sport mirrors society

2019 Diversity and Inclusion in Sport Forum

2019 ANZSLA Conference

//SAFE/FAIR/INCLUSIVE/SPORT//

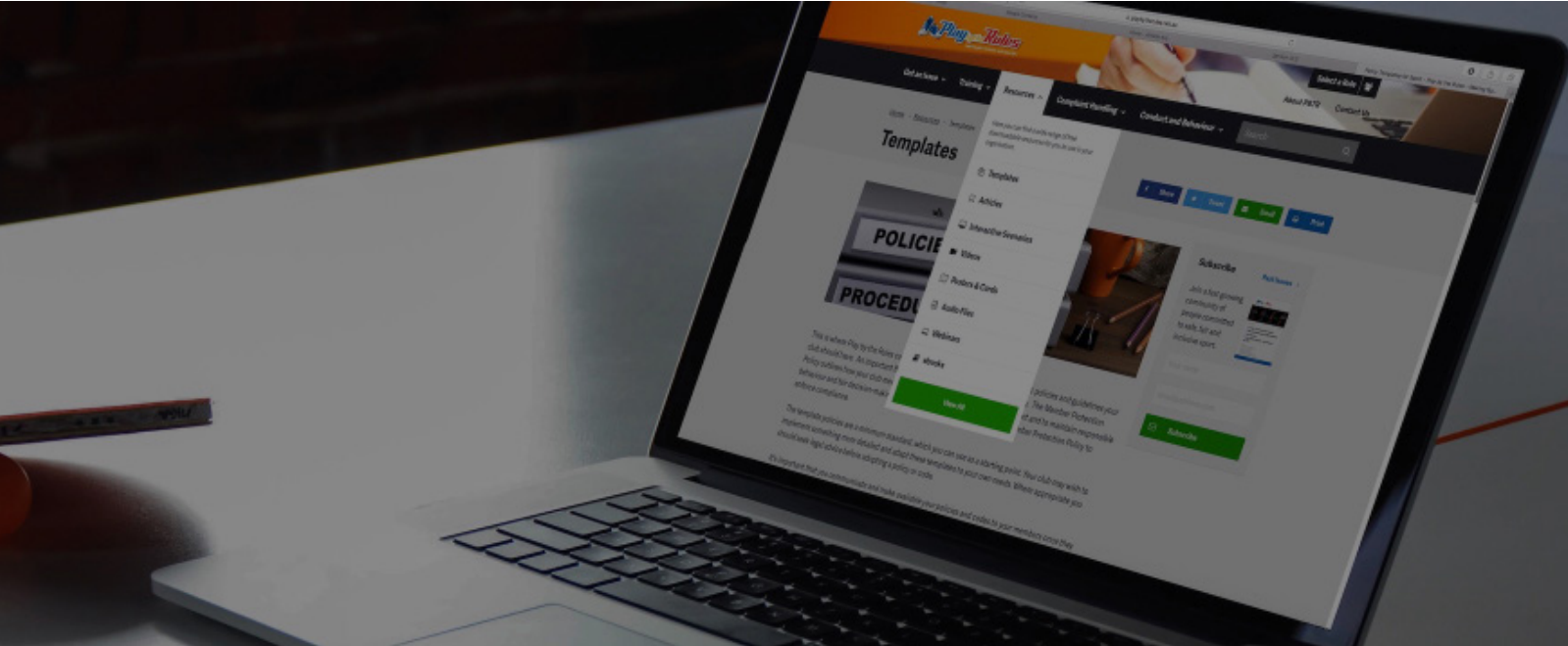


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THE EDITOR

Over the past few weeks I've been travelling around the country conducting Play by the Rules *Theory of Change* focus group discussions. It has been a fascinating time. The idea behind the focus groups is simply to help us focus on the most important issues that impact on safe, fair and inclusive sport. What do we seek to change and influence in the world? What are the new, and old, issues that impact on community sport? What should we do to ensure sport is safer, fairer and more inclusive?

Dr Paul Oliver will pull together the collective focus group discussions and the results of the online user poll (1,673 responses so far) to help inform the final Theory of Change. As part of this work, Paul has also taken a look at existing research and practice and produced 'A Research Synopsis on Safe, Fair and Inclusive Sport'. Three feature articles in this magazine are taken from Paul's research synopsis, focusing on safe, fair and inclusive sport. If you would like a full copy of the report, including all the references, you can download it at <https://www.playbytherules.net.au/resources/ebooks>

Clyde Rathbone pulls it together nicely when he reflects on the power of sport in the broader context. A great little story. Plus the usual updates and conference news. Enjoy!



Peter Downs
Manager - Play by the Rules

News:

Child Safe Organisations: eLearning modules released

A series of free, online training modules to help organisations increase their knowledge and understanding of child safety was released recently by Megan Mitchell, National Children's Commissioner, at a national forum in Sydney.

The Forum on Child Safe Organisations, hosted by the Commissioner, included a range of high-profile leaders of organisations involved in the provision of services and supports to children—from sporting networks to youth groups; education, health, child and family services; and international aid agencies. The forum provided an opportunity for leaders to exchange information about efforts within their own sectors, and organisations to foster and embed the cultural and practice change needed to keep children safe and well.

The modules support the training required to implement the 10 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations which were endorsed by COAG in February 2019, based on the child safe standards recommended by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

'The principles, which were developed by the Royal Commission in partnership with the Australian Government, go beyond sexual abuse to cover all forms of potential harms to children, and apply to all organisations working for and with children across Australia.

'They have a particular focus on the importance of respecting children's rights and the connection between child voice and child safety. The principles also recognise the benefits that children derive from being involved in organisations of various kinds,' said Ms Mitchell.

The Australian Human Rights Commission has also developed a range of practical tools and resources to help organisations implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Among those speaking at the launch was former professional football player and human rights advocate Craig Foster, who says everyone needs to reflect on whether we have



created an environment in which children feel able to voice their concerns.

'So let us be leaders, then, to move forward in a positive way from a process that shocked Australia to its core. We let down so many children whose right to the fullest realisation of their potential was severely compromised. We need to ensure that we look after those in our care, provide safe and protective environments for our children to grow, prosper and excel. Whether within sport, or without.

'May children of every age, background, religion, gender or sexual orientation have an equal, fair, safe and supportive environment in which to fulfil their true potential,' said Mr Foster.

Neville Tomkins from Scouts Australia NSW, Peter Downs from Play by the Rules and Jocelyn Condon from the Australian Council for International Development also addressed the forum and shared their child safe journeys.

To access the eLearning modules go to <https://childsafef.humanrights.gov.au/learning-hub/e-learning-modules>

A research synopsis on:

Safe Sport

Safety has a range of meanings in sport. It can refer to physical safety from injury or concussion, emotional safety from harm or bullying, or can relate to cultural safety, which refers to the environment in which sport operates and the behaviours and standards to which adults adhere to safeguard children's sporting experience. The most serious end of the safety spectrum in sport is child abuse.

Despite protective systems being in place, issues of child safety and abuse still occur across Australian sport. A recent study found one third of Australians surveyed would not immediately tell someone if they thought a child was being abused or neglected.

Of those surveyed, one quarter said they did not know the signs of child abuse and neglect, while 41 per cent admitted they would need to Google how to report suspected abuse.

The recent Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse shone the spotlight on child protection policies and safeguarding children strategies within the sport and recreation sector. The harrowing stories referenced in the Royal Commission report made it clear that not only is sport not immune from issues of abuse, but there were systemic failures of some sports.

The public hearings, private sessions and research of the Royal Commission gave us valuable insights into the characteristics of, and risk factors for, child sexual abuse in sport and recreation. These include grooming—essentially where a perpetrator builds trust with a child, and often the parents, in order to exploit and abuse the child. The two types of grooming identified as most prevalent in sport and recreation were manipulative techniques, such as coaxing and cajoling, and coercive techniques, such as blackmail and threats.

Sport and recreation clubs are influenced by local cultures which can lead to and create risk factors for child abuse. In some circumstances where sports over-emphasise competition and competitive contexts, violent and aggressive behaviours can become normalised and viewed as an important part of being a member of a club. Harassment can be normalised too, in the form of verbal abuse, trash talk, sledging or pranks. Two types of harmful behaviours were identified by the Royal Commission:

- bullying—unwanted, repeated and intentional aggressive behaviour, usually among peers (this can occur online as well as face-to-face)
- hazing—an organised, usually team-based, form of bullying.

A range of recommendations resulting from the Royal Commission have directly related to sport

and sports practitioners. These include having a national approach to improving children's safety by:

- implementing Child Safe Standards to guide policy and practice
- having national leadership, capacity building and support
- developing child safety resources
- having state and territory oversight bodies to support the implementation of child safety practices
- improving communication from governments and peak bodies to the service delivery level
- establishing child safety officers in local government.

Overseas, issues of abuse have arisen in

recent years, with more than 1,000 cases relating to child sexual abuse within football clubs in the United Kingdom reported to police. The USA Gymnastics case involved the sexual abuse of over 368 female athletes, primarily minors, over the past two decades, 'by gym owners, coaches, and staff working for gymnastics programs across the country'.

The 2011 study, 'The Experiences of Children Participating in Organised Sport in the UK', which sets out the many poor behaviours young people experience in sport, makes an alarming point: 'to a great extent all of these behaviours tended to be accepted as normal by young people ... There was little evidence of young people reporting it to adults, or of adults





effectively dealing with it. It provides some evidence of a sporting culture which accepts and condones disrespectful and negative treatment among young people and between young people and coaches’.

The recent focus on physical safety from concussion and violence in sport has also attracted much publicity and debate. A Murdoch Children’s Research Institute study on concussion showed hundreds of children have been treated for sports-related head injuries at the Sydney Royal Children’s Hospital.

A study, published by researchers from Edinburgh University and the National

Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, found that although ‘participating in organised sport is a positive experience for most children and young people ... a negative sporting culture exists, is accepted “as the norm” and is perpetuated by peers, coaches and other adults’ (Taylor 2014).

The study also reported widespread emotionally harmful treatment (75 per cent) and unacceptable levels of sexual harassment (29 per cent). According to Hemphill (1998), violence in sport, whether among participants or spectators, remains a central issue in local, national and international sport.

For many children, sport is a chance to be



with friends and experience freedom away from the confines of school or home. This has associated benefits, as children who take part in organised activities are more likely to experience a sense of wellbeing and achieve success. Participating in sport promotes resilience and self-sufficiency. However, the ways children experience sport is shaped by adults, who determine the content, rules and expectations (Hadi 2014), and this can dramatically affect the experience for many children.

Another safety issue raised in various reports is the increase in doping, Performance and Image Enhancing Drugs (PIEDs) and illicit supplements in sport. While there has always been public awareness of the use of prohibited substances in sport by athletes at the elite level, both domestically and internationally, the 2013 Australian Crime Commission

report 'Organised Crime and Drugs in Sport' revealed the extent to which this issue had infiltrated to the grassroots level of sport and the potential that it may involve junior sports participants.

The report outlined how new generation PIEDs, which were previously thought to be only used by elite athletes, were now widely available and being used by a broad cross-section of the sports community and community generally. The report's findings were alarming on many levels: not only because of the health implications for athletes, but the use of PIEDs and illicit supplements serves to undermine the principles of fair play, and acts to weaken the community's enduring faith and belief in sport.

Safety is a concern at all levels of sport, but perhaps more so for young children whose bodies are still maturing and developing. The effects of supplements and PIEDs on a young person's body can be extremely dangerous and even life-threatening.

Talented children are pressured at younger ages these days—from their parents, coaches and peers—to be the best or to make the next level in sport. This need to excel so early if they want a future in sport poses the question of whether a win at all costs culture is being heightened, and a seriously unhealthy fear of failure or missing out is being engendered in young athletes.

A research synopsis on:

Fair Sport

Values such as fairness, ethics, honesty and sportsmanship have special relevance to sport. Fair play can mean more than simply the absence of cheating, it also means conducting yourself in accordance with what the sport values, even when the rules do not specifically require it (Loland 2002). 'Fair play also has a regulative value within sport; only in the context of fair play can a worthwhile competition take place in which the values athletes pursue through sport have the possibility of being realized' (TH Murray 2010, p. 2).

Fairness has much to do with the choices people involved with sport make, including what they perceive is right and wrong. Fairness requires a reliance on systems, practices and policies, but as Bourdieu highlights, these existing systems may be the issue in the first place, with these structures underpinning who benefits and who is included in the network. Fairness is also an 'equity' issue; there are many people that don't get an equitable chance to play sport.

While recognising that the term 'fairness' is very subjective, Roger Pielke Jnr (2013), believes that sport is governed by rules, including those governing performance enhancement, and where to draw the line on what 'fairness' is, is reflected by broad social values and the values of the sports community.

Cheating, gaining an unfair advantage and the use of performance enhancing substances to improve performance are as old as the history of sport itself. However, recent times have seen an escalation in the frequency and type of integrity and ethical issues in sports.

The Australian sporting environment is being impacted by unprecedented integrity challenges, such as doping, match fixing or the use of inside information for illegal betting purposes, and the increased use of supplements or illicit drugs. Day-to-day issues around governance, poor conduct and anti-social behaviours are also considered significant integrity issues that have come into prominence and affect people involved at all levels of sport.

New laws, rules, codes and government frameworks on illicit drugs, doping, match-fixing and member protection have been established to help provide guidance on rights and responsibilities. Improved governance standards have been enforced to protect against corruption, fraud and inequity, and sporting organisations have implemented policies, programs and training to address player, parent, coach, official and administrator conduct. Yet despite these protections, integrity violations continue to occur from grassroots to elite level.

Governance structures have a significant impact on the performance of sporting organisations. Poor governance has a variety of causes, including director/committee inexperience, conflicts of interest, failure to manage risk, inadequate or inappropriate financial controls, and generally poor internal business systems and reporting. While high-profile FIFA issues around governance and corruption have made national headlines, allegations of conflict of interest, embezzlement, fraud and theft in sports organisations, large and small, are not uncommon. These practices not only impact on the sport and individuals where they are present,

but also undermine confidence in the Australian sports industry as a whole.

Several recent reports and surveys have highlighted the range of integrity issues associated with sport in Australia. The Australian Sports Commission's 'Ethical and Integrity Issues in Australian Sport Survey' (2011), identified the most prevalent and serious ethical and integrity issues in Australian sport. Issues highlighted included those: '... related to: doping and recreational drug use; violence on and off-field; racism; vilification and heterosexism and the impact these have on sports participation at all levels; off-field behaviour in relation to gender, sexuality and sexual assault and violence; institutional fraud; gambling, betting and match-fixing, and coaching and management practices'. The review found 'that sport is found to be a site which is both favourable to the development of integrity and, often simultaneously, unwelcoming towards integrity and ethical values'.

In 2015 the Australian Institute of Criminology issued a 'Corruption in Sport' paper which examined events and issues that affected the integrity of Australian sport between 2009 and 2013, and listed the main risk factors that increase the opportunity for corruption in Australian sport. The paper also proposed crime prevention techniques that might assist in framing and responding to corruption in Australian sport in the future.

A report, 'Threats to the Integrity of professional sport in Australia' by the Australian Crime Commission, highlighted the principal integrity vulnerabilities in Australian sport. It found that 'there are associations between professional athletes and organised crime groups and individuals in Australia. While the vulnerabilities are yet to be systematically exploited, organised

crime groups will increasingly target professional sports as the sports wagering market continues to grow'.

The Federal Government commissioned a review into integrity in Australian sport in 2017 as part of the National Sport Plan consultations. The remit was to examine national and international integrity threats to sport, including the rise of illegal offshore wagering, match-fixing and doping, and also examine the feasibility of establishing a national sports integrity commission. The resultant Wood Review of Australia's sports integrity arrangements found that sports are challenged by a range of mounting integrity threats, which include the increasing sophistication and incidence of doping, the globalisation of sports wagering particularly through rapidly growing illegal online gambling markets, the infiltration and exploitation of the sports sector by organised crime, corruption in sports administration, and growing participant protection issues.

The Wood Review warned that 'without the presence of a comprehensive, effective and nationally coordinated response capability, the hard earned reputation of sport in this country risks being tarnished' and that beyond the immediate impact of corrupt conduct of the kind identified, a public loss of confidence in the sporting contest has direct consequences for the health, economic, social and cultural benefits that sport generates, and undermines significant investment in sport. The centrepiece of the Wood Review recommendations was the formation of a single body to address sports integrity matters at a national level—a national sports integrity commission.

A research synopsis on:

Inclusive Sport

The term 'inclusive sport' is characterised as: friendly, welcoming environments to all regardless of sex, ethnicity, religion, intellectual/physical ability and sexual orientation; where proactive behaviours ensure that everyone is included, treated equally, and made to feel part of an organisation. Inclusion is about ensuring that sport caters for the range of backgrounds, cultures, ages, abilities or socio-economic circumstances of people in the community who may wish to participate in various activities or roles in a club.

Inclusion often gets mixed up or interchanged with diversity. Organisations can be diverse in many ways (that is, they can have members with differences in ethnicity, gender, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, education, religion or financial status), but that doesn't automatically mean that they have created an inclusive club environment. In simple terms, diversity is the mix; inclusion is getting the mix to work well together.

When we critically analyse the concept of inclusion in sport, we quickly realise that sport is a double-edged sword. It may provide a basis for building local networks and bringing different sections of the community together:

'... but for every community that has rallied together around an inspirational team, there

is a community that has been torn apart by blind allegiances. For every individual that has been empowered by participation in sport, there is another that has been further marginalised by the ways that class, race, and gender are structurally embedded in our sportscape (Guest 2015).

Researchers agree that sport can provide a level playing field and bridging and bonding connections (Putnam 2000; Suzuki 2007; Coleman 1990; Skinner, Zakus & Cowell 2008), whereby people from different cultures, genders, ages, abilities and backgrounds can come together, support each other and find a common thread.

These views reflect similar ones in research by Spaaij et al. (2013) and Darcy et al. (2014) and highlight the positive aspects of sport providing a basis for individuals to form friendship bases. The ASC (2011a) has found that 'an emphasis on winning and being competitive has increasingly been found to be in conflict with attitudes towards inclusiveness and community engagement'.

Many sporting clubs and organisations understand that to be inclusive is best practice and brings with it many benefits. However, many give lip service to the concept and do not go out of their way to 'build bridges' and rely instead on new participants 'climbing the fence' to get in. As Taylor & Toohey (2001) stress 'sport providers need to open their doors to all members of the community and actively encourage inclusive practices, rather than just acting as passive purveyors of sport'. If the



negative aspects around these issues are not addressed it could lead to a decline in club membership and also the number of people volunteering in grassroots sport clubs (Nichols, et al. 2004).

Research suggests that a monolithic culture is typical of the majority of sports clubs in Australia (Hanlon & Coleman 2006) as sport participation tends to favour interaction among similar people.

The entrenchment of a culture of similarity reveals an underlying system of shared values, beliefs, and assumptions that result in closed group membership. Core values of such a club culture include parochialism/ethnocentrism, rigidity, intolerance of ambiguity, and a view of difference as deficit (Doherty & Chelladurai

1999). A key challenge for those seeking to promote diversity and equity in sport is to transform ingrained organisational cultures and practices so that they come to value and support diversity (Spaaij et al. 2013).



A Research Synopsis on Safe, Fair and Inclusive Sport - Dr Paul Oliver - download the full report here - <https://www.playbytherules.net.au/resources/ebooks>

When sport mirrors society



Clyde Rathbone

'David, we didn't have the support of 63,000 South Africans today, we had the support of 42 million South Africans.'

These words from South Africa captain Francois Pienaar were delivered in the post-match interview minutes after the final whistle in the now historic 1995 Rugby World Cup final. I think of Pienaar's words often. And especially when the transformative power of sport is brought into question.

In many ways, the 1995 Rugby World Cup final has come to symbolise the unique ability of sport as a uniting force. Clint Eastwood was so inspired by the story of that match and the surrounding circumstances that he made a film dedicated to it.

But what was it about the 1995 final that made it so special? For one thing it pitted two of the world's best teams against one another in the hosting nation's country. The match also featured Jonah Lomu, the freakishly talented 20-year-old who had burst onto the international scene and over the top of

opponents on his way to one spectacular try after another.

But star-studded teams and World Cup deciding matches happen every few years in rugby. Despite this, none of the preceding or descendent Rugby World Cup matches have caught the global attention quite like the 1995 version did.

What made the 1995 event so unique was that it came about at a pivotal time in South Africa's history as a nation. Nelson Mandela had emerged from prison only a few years prior to the World Cup. Rather than suppress what was largely considered a white man's sport, he wisely decided to use the Springbok rugby team as a vehicle to bridge the divide that had split the country in two during the Apartheid era.

Mandela threw his public support behind the Springboks and turned up to the final in Francois Pienaar's Springbok jersey. All this from a man who had spent 27 years of his life in exile. It was a remarkable act of reconciliation and it occurred just as South Africa was attempting to find its new identity as a nation.

Mandela's actions gave permission to all South Africans to unite as one. And the victory of Pienaar's team and his words after the event gave much hope to those who imagined a better future for the country.



What can be learnt from these events? I think it teaches us that special moments occur when sporting events play a role in a far broader context—when sport represents a mirror to society.

Grassroots sport is more than capable of producing moments that bring communities together. Some of the most memorable matches I've been involved in had little to do with the end result of the fixture. Instead they stand out because they highlighted the kinds of things we know matter the most—the charity match to raise funds for an ill child; the final match of a club legend; or the last time a much loved coach takes the

reins. These moments are heartfelt because they point to the bigger picture of life.

While we all want our team to win and many of us hope for personal success in sport, we should never forget that all sport exists inside the vast experience of life, and that the best parts of life are those moments that remind us of that which is bigger than any one of us.

For South Africa in 1995 the transcendent themes were freedom and democracy. But every time we're involved in sport, we have the choice to connect with the bigger picture and make decisions that create special memories.

2019 Diversity and Inclusion in Sport Forum

The 2019 Diversity and Inclusion in Sport Forum will be a 'sold out' event in Sydney on 17 October. This is the first time we've held the Forum outside of Melbourne so we are excited to bring this unique event to a new audience.

Four years ago we were unsure how a TED-style event that addresses inclusion and diversity issues in sport would work. The concept for the forum was to create something different to a regular conference. Based on a TED 'stand and deliver' style event, the first forum in 2016 featured 16 short presentations spread across the broad spectrum of issues. The format proved very popular for a full-day program where registration fees were capped at \$150.

In subsequent years we've added several features such as graphic illustrators, grassroots sports panel discussions, presenter coaching, and introduced extra time for audience question and answer sessions—all this while keeping participant costs to a minimum. You can view all the previous presentations at <https://www.playbytherules.net.au/got-an-issue/inclusion-and-diversity/inclusion-and-diversity-videos>

This year we have ten speakers, again representing a cross-section of issues that impact on inclusion and diversity in sport. There's still time to register. You can see the program and register at

<https://www.playbytherules.net.au/diversity-and-inclusion-in-sport-forum>



Paralympian Katrina Webb will be MC for this years Forum

2019 ANZSLA Conference - Breaking Boundaries



The Australia and New Zealand Sports Law Association's annual conference is only a few weeks away. This year the conference is in Perth, commencing 30 October. The conference program offers delegates two days of engaging discussion exploring current issues in sports law, as well as fantastic social and sporting events where delegates can form and solidify relationships with colleagues.

The theme for the conference this year is 'Breaking Boundaries', and speakers have been asked to use this theme to challenge, inform and entertain. The conference program will be kicked off by a keynote address by Lord Sebastian Coe centred on breaking boundaries during his time with the IAAF, followed by a range of presentations and panel discussions about some of the most topical issues in sports law, including privacy and data protection, ethical decision-making and athlete wellbeing.

For more information and to register go to <https://www.anzsla.com/29th-annual-anzsla-conference-30-oct-1-nov-2019>

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To make Play by the Rules possible, we also work with

