

Effects of an educational intervention regarding fair play on sports team coaches

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to analyse the effectiveness of an intervention program aimed at coaches to evaluate their attitude in favour of fair play in sports, aspects such as fun, the need to win, antisocial behaviours (hard play, gamesmanship, and cheating) in young athletes of the Balearic Islands. The sample includes soccer, basketball and volleyball teams with a total of 1097 participants (854 boys and 243 girls) with an average age of 12.50 years and an age range between 10-16 years of the categories novice, juvenile and cadet of the 2016-2017 season, to which the adapted Spanish version of the Sport Deception Disposition Questionnaire (CDED) and the Fair Play Attitude Scale (EAF) was administered at two different times (pretest-posttest). The results show that young athletes value sport positively as fun at both moments of the season. The intervention program works, although not significantly, in the reduction of antisocial behaviours of victory, gamesmanship and cheating. With regard to sex, men obtain higher results in the so-called antisocial behaviours of sport in the first phase of the program, while women obtain greater results in pro-social sports behaviours. In a novel way, women obtain higher scores in hard play and cheating in the second phase of the program.

Keywords: Fair play; Gamesmanship; Cheating; Victory; Fun and hard play.

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INTRODUCTION

Sport, as a means of social interaction, has contributed to progress and to mobilise people in common activities, while also strengthening mutual respect and equal opportunities (Shields and Bredemeier, 2007). With current social and economic changes, modern sporting values are transforming, promoting competition as the sole purpose (Genys, 2011). According to Galeano (2007), the game has become a show, with few protagonists and many spectators, and the show has become one of the most lucrative businesses in the world. As such, in recent decades diverse studies have recognised the significance that organisations, parents and coaches put on victory and the little emphasis placed on the sport itself and on the enjoyment of it (Coakley, 1993, García Ferrando, 1990 and Papp and Prisztoka, 1995), causing irreparable damage to its image.

In the context of sport, its psychological development should be enhanced (Holt, 2007; Larson, 2000). That is, when a positive atmosphere for participants is designed into school sports, good results tend to emerge (Fraser-Thomas et al., 2005). For example, participating in sports has a positive influence on personal development (Cote et al., 2008) and in forming close relationships (Carnegie Council, 1995).

Some studies, such as those of Kavussanu, Seal and Phillips (2006), affirm the importance of an appropriate context for fostering prosocial behaviour in sport and steering away from antisocial behaviour, such as gamesmanship and cheating. Prosocial behaviour has been defined as voluntary behaviour aimed at helping or benefitting others (Eisenberg and Fabes, 1998), which may translate in the sport setting, to help opponents off the floor or congratulating them, etc. Antisocial behaviour, on the other hand, has been defined as voluntary behaviour aimed at harming or putting others at a disadvantage (Kavussanu et al., 2006; Sage et al., 2006), such as trying to injure opponents or trick referees, etc.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) includes a reference to the right of children to play and practice sport in a safe environment under the supervision of qualified adults, a right based on an institutional commitment to foster sports training programmes that promote respect, tolerance, equal opportunities and fair play.

The theory of achievement motivation examines motivation from the perspective of pursued individual goals in achievement contexts. The basic premise is that individuals involve themselves in those contexts in order to demonstrate their ability. Ability, however, can be interpreted in different ways according to the orientation of personal goals. Nicholls (1989), states that there are two goal orientations: one in which ability is interpreted as personal improvement (task oriented) and the other in which it is interpreted as a capability created according to others (ego oriented). In the case of a task-oriented individual, the demonstration of ability and the subjective perception of success are experienced through personal improvement, learning something new or challenging, and/or using great effort. In contrast, an ego-oriented individual uses normative or comparative criterion, and the sense of competence arises from demonstrating that one has greater ability than the rest (Nicholls, 1989). That suggests that the conduct and leadership of coaches must reflect the aims to achieve of young athletes, to have a positive influence on them (Barić and Bucik, 2009; Kassing and Barber, 2007; Shields, et al., 2007).

Socialisation agents, such as physical education teachers (Berengüi and Garcés de los Fayos, 2007) and coaches (Conroy and Coatsworth, 2006; Horn, 2008) are important. In terms of coaches, the desired training of athletes depends on these agents and their intervention (Nuviala et al., 2007). Their behaviours and relationship with players, as well as how they communicate with them, are some of the variables that have

an influence on the education and performance of athletes. The training of coaches, as is the case of education teachers, is fundamental in ensuring the materialisation of particular guarantees of appropriate behaviour with their athletes (Goldhaber, 2010; Manrique et al., 2013). In fact, the concept of victory is not the only aim of a successful coach. There are aspects that support the practising of sport as a way of enhancing new abilities or positive self-esteem (Martens, 2012).

The role of coaches in initiation sports and their influence on players has been studied extensively on an international level (Conroy and Coatsworth, 2006; Gallimore and Tharp, 2004) and by research teams in our country (Balaguer et al., 1999; Boixadós and Cruz, 1999.). Coaches have greater influence on decisive psychological aspects regarding the quality of the sporting experience of young people, including interest in practising sport, the motivational orientation of athletes, and commitment and enjoyment (Boixadós et al., 2004; Cervelló et al., 2007; Smith et al., 2009; Torregrosa et al., 2008).

Clear progress has been seen in the training of coaches. Studies conducted towards the end of last century on the initiation of sports refrained from exclusively focusing on how to obtain better athlete performance and started to concentrate on how to advise on coach-related actions (Sousa et al., 2006), which resulted in the emergence of coach intervention programmes.

There are several programmes (Gimeno et al., 2010; Checchini et al., 2003; Bach, 2002) that foster prevention and intervention activities to reduce antisocial behaviour, encouraging prosocial behaviour. Two programmes that stand out are the Coach Effectiveness Training (CET), which is a cognitive-behavioural programme that supports the training of initiation coaches and sports training, aiming to give specific guidelines on their communication style (Cruz et al., 2001), and the Personalised Coach Advising Programme (PAPE, its acronym in Spanish) (Sousa et al., 2006; Sousa et al., 2008). These programmes look to foster a positive communication style and to promote task-oriented motivational strategies (Cervelló et al., 2007). Furthermore, as a common denominator, they include reflection, debate, determent, awareness raising and dissemination activities geared towards the social group involved (Sáenz et al., 2012).

Furthermore, there are also interesting educational initiatives, such as the White Letter (*Carta Blanca*) programme in the study of Ortega et al. (2015) where personal and fair play values are sought to be fostered, opening the door to an innovative interpretation of competition and new training strategies for coaches and educators.

This paper presents the work of the *Ponemos Valores al Deporte (Putting Values into Sport)* programme, which aims to raise awareness of the importance of the role of coaches and trainers in different sport disciplines, football, basketball and volleyball, the importance of which must lead to the improvement of prosocial values in sport (enjoyment) and to the reduction of antisocial values (gamesmanship, hard play and cheating).

Our hypothesis suggests that an intervention on coaches in the area of motivational climate and the improvement of communication style, will have a positive impact on athletes.

METHOD

Participants

Our sample includes 39 competitive football, basketball and volleyball teams from the Balearic Islands. In total, there are 1097 young teenagers (854 boys and 243 girls). In table 1, the sample distribution of this study can be seen.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics based on sport, category and gender.

	Sport	Novice N(%)	Juvenile N(%)	Cadet N(%)	Total N(%)
Boys	Football	181 (29.4%)	203 (33%)	231 (37.6%)	615 (100%)
	Basketball	101 (44.1%)	56 (24.4%)	72 (31.5%)	229 (100%)
	Volleyball	0 (0%)	6 (60%)	4 (40%)	10 (100%)
	Total	282 (33 %)	265 (31%)	307 (36%)	854 (100%)
Girls	Football	16 (76.2%)	2 (9.5%)	3 (14.3%)	21 (100%)
	Basketball	43 (34.7%)	43 (34.7%)	38 (30.6%)	124 (100%)
	Volleyball	3 (3.1%)	49 (50%)	46 (46.9%)	98 (100%)
	Total	62 (25.5%)	94 (38.7%)	87 (35.8%)	243 (100%)

Instruments

Disposition to Cheating in Sport Questionnaire (*El cuestionario de disposición al engaño en el deporte* (CDED its acronym in Spanish, Ponseti, et al. 2012) is based on the Attitudes to Moral Decision-Making in Youth Sport Questionnaire (AMDYSQ-1, Lee, Whitehead and Ntoumanis, 2007). This questionnaire is based on studying attitudes towards cheating and gamesmanship in sport. In the case of the CDED, a questionnaire was created on the disposition to cheat, by experts, based on two scales: "Acceptance of Cheating" and "Acceptance of Gamesmanship" del AMDYSQ-1.

There are six items and it is structured into two subscales with three items in each one, predisposition to accept cheating and predisposition to accept gamesmanship. Each is measured using the 5-point Likert scale (from 1 = strongly disagree, to 5= strongly agree). The CDED questionnaire obtained a reliability value (Cronbach's alpha) of 78, while the subscale of Acceptance of Cheating and Acceptance of Gamesmanship were 74 and 63, respectively. In the individual item analysis, a reliability range of 72-78 was obtained, failing to improve the reliability of the subscales and the CDED due to not eliminating either one.

The correlation between the two subscales of the CDED was 57, which suggests relative independence (although with a higher value than that of the original scale studies AMYDSQ-1) between Acceptance of Cheating and Acceptance of Gamesmanship, but it does not allow them to be completely disassociated. Based on the AMDYSQ1 scale (Lee, Whitehead and Ntoumanis, 2007), the Spanish adaptations of the two subscales of Acceptance of Cheating and Acceptance of Gamesmanship have proven to be characteristics of reliability and factorial validity, which make them sufficiently viable for use in a group of young competitive athletes.

Scale of fair play attitudes (EAF, its acronym in Spanish): Produced by Boixadós (1994, 1995) in master's degree and PhD research. The scale comprises 22 items that form 3 subscales for evaluating the attitudes of football players in terms of rough play ("It is acceptable for players to react violently when fouled", "Rough play is acceptable if the other side does it as well"), victory ("The final result is the most important thing in football", "Finishing top is the most important thing in a tournament," and enjoyment ("Having fun playing is the most important thing in football", "In football, having fun is more important than the final result"). The Alpha

internal consistency indices have values of .74, .66 and .60 for each of the hard play, victory and enjoyment subscales, respectively (Boixadós, 1995). The structure of this questionnaire is based on a Likert scale with answers ranging from 1 to 5, which equate to: 5= Strongly agree, 4= Agree, 3=Neither agree nor disagree, 2=Disagree and 1=Strongly disagree. The EAF is validated in the research conducted by Cruz et al. (1996) in which this scale is applied to grassroots and professional football teams.

Procedure

A presentation was carried out on the guidelines of the participating clubs, explaining the objectives of the programme and its implementation with the coaches and athletes in two periods of time: at the beginning of the season (pre-test situation) and at the end of the season, after the application programme relating to the coach intervention programme (post-test situation). This period tries to ensure the appropriate motivational climate (Smith, Fry, Ethington and Li, 2005). The programme entails a number of set intervention phases. Firstly, at the beginning of the season, a training session is given to several coaches regarding fair play in school sports and entailing two key blocks: adaptive motivational climate and positive communication style. Secondly, the CDED questionnaire is given to the athletes, both the control and the experimental group. Subsequently, periods of time at which to create an audio-visual record of their training and match interventions is agreed to with the coaches. The researcher will analyse the reactive behaviour recorded (support, punishments, instructions). Lastly, the researcher will advise and analyse in an interview the recorded actions, encouraging the positive aspects and discussing the ones to be improved. The CDED questionnaire is once again given to the athletes of the control and experimental groups at the end of the season to assess the suitability of the coach intervention programme.

Due to being a study that analyses particular human conduct, it should be mentioned that, in order to comply with the ethical principles of respect for human dignity, confidentiality, non-discrimination and proportionality between the risks and expected benefits, we have obtained a favourable report with regard to the evaluation of this study by the Research Ethics Committees (CER) of the University of the Balearic Islands (UIB).

The study meets the guidelines established in the 1975 Helsinki Declaration, which was revised in 2000. Furthermore, authorisations from federations, clubs and parents were obtained, as well as voluntary acceptance from the athletes relating to their participation in the programme, confirming data confidentiality. The questionnaires were given out prior to the start of a training session. Researchers were present to resolve any queries. The estimated time for filling out the questionnaire was 20 minutes.

Data analysis

The mean was calculated for each participant according to the answers given. Subsequently, an analysis was conducted on the statistical descriptions of the items on the questionnaire, evaluating the significant differences between variables, mean and degree of significance and the T-test for paired samples. The ANOVA was conducted with the SPSS 21.0.

RESULTS

Using the data presented in Table 1 of the previous section as a starting point, it was observed, in general, and in terms of presence, that football accounted for over half of the sample between boys and girls. Another noteworthy fact is the largely male presence in the two sports analysed. Finally, the presence of the sample in the different categories is similar.

Table 2. Mean differences in the general results of the CDED, EAF and subscale questionnaires and the moments before and after the program.

	Control Group				Experimental Group			
	Pre X (DS)	Post X (DS)	Sig (p)	Cohen's d	Pre X (DS)	Post X (DS)	Sig (p)	Cohen's d
Fun	4.077 (0.905)	4.083 (0.748)	.881	.01	3.991 (0.711)	4.084 (0.690)	.027*	.13
Hard Play	2.623 (0.636)	2.778 (0.544)	.000	.26	2.590 (0.650)	2.736 (0.541)	.000**	.24
Victory	2.669 (0.589)	2.615 (0.612)	.142	.08	2.531 (0.586)	2.438 (0.602)	.015*	.15
Cheating	2.090 (1.03)	2.083 (1.04)	.905	.00	1.872 (0.988)	1.841 (0.979)	.592	.03
Gamesmanship	2.728 (1.06)	2.728 (1.11)	.994	.00	2.540 (1.06)	2.537 (1.11)	.958	.00

Note: * $p = .00$. ** $p < .01$.

In Table 2, the main differences between the mean of the different scales of the questionnaire used in two programme application periods are set out.

Once the effects of the intervention were analysed through the T-test for paired samples, we could see that the intervention influenced hard play as it increases in both cases –probably due to being at the end of the season, cheating and gamesmanship–, although a positive trend is seen regarding a reduction after the intervention. Statistically, there are no significant differences to suggest a change in response.

As regards the perception of victory, a similar value appears in the pre- and post-situation in the control group, while the score is lower in the post-test phase in the experimental group. Finally, the enjoyment factor was valued with a high score in the two periods of time, although there was a small increase in the situation after the intervention programme.

Table 3. Differences of means of the results of the CDED, EAF and subscale questionnaires in football and the moments before and after the program.

	Control Group (N=152)			Experimental Group (N=484)		
	Pre X (DS)	Post X (DS)	Sig (p)	Pre X (DS)	Post X (DS)	Sig (p)
Fun	4.10 (0.79)	3.93 (0.77)	.100	4.04 (0.84)	4.12 (0.76)	.135
Hard Play	2.60 (0.75)	2.72 (0.53)	.085	2.71 (0.62)	2.76 (0.55)	.161
Victory	2.76 (0.63)	2.78 (0.51)	.081	2.76 (0.58)	2.58 (0.58)	.000**
Cheating	2.17 (1.17)	1.93 (0.94)	.065	2.22 (1.05)	2.04 (1.02)	.006*
Gamesmanship	2.84 (1.15)	2.68 (0.99)	.047	2.94 (1.05)	2.66 (1.11)	.000**

Note: * $p = .00$. ** $p < .01$.

In Table 3, the values in sport are set out with a greater sample size. The difference regarding the enjoyment value between the control and the experimental groups after the intervention is interesting. While the value of the experimental group increases, that of the control group decreases.

The results of the control group and the experimental group coincide with respect to rough play, where it increases in both cases after the intervention programme, and to gamesmanship, where it reduces in the two groups after the intervention.

A positive aspect of the programme lies in the victory and cheating values. While the victory value of the control group increases in the second period, that of the experimental group decreases. Furthermore, the cheating value reduces in the two established groups, although the results are not significant.

Table 4. Differences of means of the results of the CDED, EAF and subscale questionnaires in basketball and the moments before and after the program.

	Control Group (N=174)			Experimental Group (N=179)		
	Pre X (DS)	Post X (DS)	Sig (p)	Pre X (DS)	Post X (DS)	Sig (p)
Fun	4.01 (0.71)	4.01 (0.71)	.898	3.99 (0.70)	4.10 (0.67)	.008*
Hard Play	2.55 (0.65)	2.68 (0.51)	.033	2.80 (0.53)	2.42 (0.62)	.000**
Victory	2.37 (0.53)	2.39 (0.59)	.768	2.74 (0.68)	2.44 (0.55)	.000**
Cheating	1.72 (0.90)	1.91 (0.99)	.061	2.28 (1.11)	1.74 (0.87)	.000**
Gamesmanship	2.51 (1.07)	2.61 (0.109)	.356	2.94 (1.09)	2.26 (0.90)	.000**

Note: * $p = .00$. ** $p < .01$.

In Table 4, the values relating to basketball, with a sample of 363 participants, are set out. An increase is seen in the enjoyment value of the experimental group after the intervention programme, while the result is repeated with respect to the control group.

The programme, once again, has an influence on the values of rough play, cheating, gamesmanship and victory, as the scores fall in the experimental group, while, conversely, they increase in the control group in the second phase of the programme.

In Table 5, the values in the first non-contact sport, volleyball, are set out. The results are similar in the control group and the experimental group in enjoyment, rough play and gamesmanship, increasing in both cases following the programme intervention.

The intervention undertaken shows a positive result in the values of cheating and victory. While the control group increases its consideration of these values after the intervention (end of season), both values reduce in the experimental group.

Table 5. Differences of means of the results of the CDED, EAF and subscale questionnaires in Volleyball and the moments before and after the program.

	Control Group (N=59)			Experimental Group (N=49)		
	Pre X (DS)	Post X (DS)	Sig (p)	Pre X (DS)	Post X (DS)	Sig (p)
Fun	4.04 (0.60)	4.22 (0.56)	.078	3.92 (0.83)	4.00 (0.75)	.080
Hard Play	2.52 (0.64)	2.76 (0.59)	.021*	2.50 (0.60)	2.78 (0.52)	.064
Victory	2.26 (0.51)	2.32 (0.70)	.580	2.48 (0.64)	2.26 (0.44)	.845
Cheating	1.70 (0.80)	1.71 (1.00)	.953	2.08 (1.17)	1.54 (0.75)	.032*
Gamesmanship	2.23 (0.94)	2.47 (1.22)	.283	2.36 (1.22)	2.42 (1.05)	.227

Note: * $p = .00$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics and differences in mean of the results of the CDED, EAF questionnaires and their subscales compared with the sex variable.

	Pretest			Posttest		
	Masc. (DS)	Fem. (DS)	Sig. (p)	Masc. (DS)	Fem. (DS)	Sig (p)
Fun	4.04 (0.79)	4.05 (0.66)	.770	4.06 (0.73)	4.12 (.682)	.201
Hard Play	2.63 (0.64)	2.51 (0.61)	.004*	2.75 (0.54)	2.77 (0.55)	.547
Victory	2.67 (0.60)	2.37 (0.52)	.000**	2.54 (0.60)	2.49 (0.62)	.249
Cheating	2.04 (1.03)	1.80 (0.94)	.000**	1.98 (1.02)	1.91 (1.01)	.249
Gamesmanship	2.74 (1.06)	2.35 (1.02)	.000**	2.62 (1.11)	2.67 (1.11)	.460

Note: * $p = .00$. ** $p < .01$.

Finally, Table 6 illustrates the difference between the mean according to gender and the variables analysed in the two periods. Firstly, in the pre-test phase, the highest mean results in all the values correspond to the males, except for the enjoyment factor, where the females have the highest mean. Secondly, in the post-test phase, there is no change to the values regarding the first phase of the programme, apart from rough play and gamesmanship, where the females obtained higher mean results than the males.

DISCUSSION

The figure of sport initiation coaches is extremely important in the field of sports training. Coaches need to focus their practice on acquiring fair play values and skills. To do that, sports competition is understood as an opportunity to measure potential (Damásio and Serpa, 2006).

In a study conducted by Ring, C. and Kavussanu, M. (2018), a positive correlation was found between acceptance of cheating and ego orientation, and a negative correlation towards task orientation. Other studies relevant to this research include P. Palou et al. (2013), Bermejo et al. (2018) and Ponseti et al. (2017),

in which acceptance to gamesmanship was shown (albeit, to a lesser degree) and cheating by young athletes in different sport disciplines. The positive correlation between gamesmanship and cheating with hard play and victory values is noteworthy.

The results obtained allow us to contrast the importance that the enjoyment factor has for young athletes, both before and after the interaction. Furthermore, cheating and gamesmanship lose force after the intervention programme, albeit not significantly. However, the values are above the average, which suggests that there is a tendency to accept this conduct, commonly labelled as antisocial. According to the analysis conducted, gamesmanship is largely accepted in situations that entail a benefit within the limits of legality of the game and not through physical violence. This conduct is seen to be part of the game (Ponseti et al. 2012).

It is also very interesting that disposition to cheating varies in the different sports considered. The greatest noticeable improvement is in volleyball and basketball. Football, due to the very visible presence of unsportsmanlike behaviour compared with other sports, has for many years been the focus of greater concern and attention with regard to the training of coaches and trainers in charge of training young players, which may have produced a contrast effect with regard to other sports that have not merited as much attention in this area by the institutions responsible for specific sports training.

Some penalty systems under the regulations of different sports may even benefit the offender. According to Silva (1981), there are constitutive rules, forming part of the rules and regulations, that are commonly accepted by those who participate. The problem appears when the regulatory rules (for example, committing a tactical foul) infringe the constitutive rules (foul according to the regulations). Lucidi et al. (2017) suggests that players conduct a personal interpretation of the constitutive rules, which strengthens their adhesion to gamesmanship.

In terms of gender, there are greater values of antisocial conduct in males. Conversely, the enjoyment factor is greater in women. These results were corroborated by a previous study with similar scores (Haralabos et al. 2016). In addition, in their study Martín Espinosa et al. (2018) established higher values in the ego orientation in the male gender, while the female gender had higher values in the variable regarding respect and interest for the opponents.

Through this study, it may have been verified that school sport is driven by prominently playful, recreational and enjoyment-related interests in terms of young sportspeople. Conversely, society led by the "survival of the fittest" law, inverts values and fosters those progressively accepted, such as sports gamesmanship, hard play and cheating. Furthermore, this article clarifies the most significant differences between the two genders in relation to the factors studied.

Also extracted from the study is the suggestion that sport initiation may be improved if certain conditions are met, such as understanding sport as a situation where winning and losing form part of sports training, which must serve to regulate and control emotions. Under no circumstance whatsoever must antisocial behaviour, particularly gamesmanship, be associated as prosocial.

Significant importance must be given to the figure of the coach, as a self-control model. As the influence of coaches on athletes has been demonstrated, their behaviour sets an example which is copied by athletes. With regard to training sessions, avoiding anger and reproach and getting annoyed will help to promote sportsmanship in players.

In terms of the limitations of this study, which should be taken as a precaution, we can point to the unequal distribution of gender in the sample and to the impossibility of establishing causal links between the variables, despite being a pre-post longitudinal study that provides results on the changes that occur in a spontaneous manner during the season, e.g., the possible distortion of the value of victory at the end of the season when teams try to achieve their objectives. Furthermore, the so-called attitudinal ambivalence (Armitage and Conner, 2000) must be considered. This is where players can see respect for the rules and fair play as social behaviour that is desirable and beneficial without any long-term cost. However, they may also uphold occasional infringements of the rules or participate in games that generate a short-term benefit that they could not obtain through fair play.

For future lines of research, being able to systemise and classify the types of actions that should be taken into account in each sport would be appropriate so as to classify them into gamesmanship, cheating or hard play. The different regulations of each sport make interpreting every variable analysed different. Conclusions that could be extracted would facilitate the analysis of tactics, training sessions, match situation and of the influence of other psychosocial factors, such as family, coaches and the media, which may make unsporting conduct, gamesmanship, cheating and fair play acceptable by the athlete. In any case, further empirical studies are required to discover the reasons behind the deterioration of fair play, the psychological strategies of the intervention and the effects these strategies would produce in young athletes.

CONCLUSIONS

Taking the results set out into consideration, we believe that the continuity of this line of research, and other similar lines, geared towards the evaluation, prevention of unsporting behaviour and the fostering of sporting conduct in different sports, should take into account enhancement of the actions of other agents, such as the parents of players, and the commitment or participation of those in charge of the sport.

The opportunity to teach values through sport must be maximised. Sport should foster lessons relating to life. Sportsmanship does not mean just following the rules, but rather valuing and believing in them. If these can be explained, reinforced and demonstrated by social agents, such as coaches, our athletes can interiorise them and make them their own.

In terms of coaches, incorporating, into the work scheme of coaches and educators during training, the strategies geared towards fostering the initiative of players to show sporting attitudes and behaviour in different critical situations during a match (e.g., the injury of a player on the other side, a hard tackle or an infringement against an opponent), would be very interesting.

If intervention programmes on fair play values had a global influence, instructions that foster aggressiveness and lack of respect for the rules and other people could be gradually limited, promoting the values of taking responsibility for one's actions, as well as those that help the athlete in terms of appropriate ethical and moral behaviour during the match.

Despite a progressive acceptance of antisocial conduct in sport, the efforts of organisms, sporting entities and, fundamentally, coaches or educators, may restrain that increase, leading to a fair sport where effort, responsibility and togetherness acquire transcendental importance.

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