

Ethical Issues In Recent Sports

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Foundations of Ethics in Professional Sports

Like any other field, professional sports is also not free from corruption, mismanagement and ethical dilemmas that professional management fails to understand. Cheating is prevailing in sports still in the 21st century when the huge improvements in technology and sporting rules have made sports a lucrative career for world-class professionals. Day after day, we hear scandals coming on the front page of websites and newspapers about our favorite sports stars; these scandals make headlines in professional sports that hurt the careers of talented sportsmen and the pride of their country.

Sports management is a daunting task; it is not easy for sports managers to work in this challenging field where the pride of the country is at risk; one of the most important skills that sports managers these days are lacking is the ability to navigate the murky waters of sports ethics carefully. Let us explore and outline some recent ethical issues in sports and how to deal with them below:

Performance-Enhancing Drugs and Competitive Integrity

1. The first major problem and a huge ethical issue in professional sports is the use of steroids and drugs by professional athletes. Since the college days, the sports women and men have a serious problem of using drugs since the 1960s. They take drugs to enhance their performance, which is a dilemma and an ethical issue in sports of all kinds. PED Performance Enhancing Drugs include anabolic steroids, human growth hormone, and stimulants with other supplements like androstenedione. These ingredients in drugs help the body to process well, but the battle against PEDs has been a failure since the early days of sports.

In the recent year, Lance Armstrong was stripped of the Olympic Medal and also Tour de France after he confessed that he took drugs for performance enhancement. According to CNN, the American League baseball sued Biogenesis, which resulted in the 20-player ban, including Ryan Braun of the Milwaukee Brewers. Some more legendary players like Barry Bonds and Roger Clemons were also rejected from the Baseball Hall of Fame due to their habit of using drugs like steroids. Their performance was enhanced illegally by using drugs that became the basis for their rejection.

Some experts and sports analysts argue that the use of PEDs should be legalized, the younger American sportsmen are not troubled at all by using the PEDs and their recent poll on the New York Times has proved that PEDs should be widespread in American sports. PEDs may be a solution for

temporary performance enhancement, but the present battle against the use of PEDs for athletes and sports executives/managers is still going on strong.

Discrimination, Gambling, and Corruption

2. Discrimination is another ethical issue in sports these days; discrimination exists in many forms and shapes, like racism, homophobia and gender discrimination in sports. These issues give rise to social justice issues that are plaguing a wide range of areas in American society and sports. Racism is still a big problem in sports, where African Americans still feel they are not treated as white Americans on the basis of their skin color and race. There are racist views from the commentators recently about the individual athletes that represent their racist thinking; it seems like society has a lot of immaturity to treat African Americans equally in sports, which applies to both men and women belonging to the black community.

3. Gender discrimination is another widespread issue in sports these days. It exists in the business world of America as well as the sports world, where the male-dominated society again restricts women from playing their all-important part actively and fully towards the development or enhancement of sports in the country. Women are usually not given a chance to rule the executive committee in many sports; men are mostly chosen to play the roles of higher executives, decision-makers and managers. Even girls are prohibited by their families not to enter professional sports due to male dominance. Girls are considered a weak and fragile commodity as compared to men, who seem to be stronger in ruling the world of professional sports. The disparity between the genders in sports management careers is grossly evident. In 2010, only 9.5% of schools in America had a female sports director, and all the head coaches were also men.

4. Gambling has made a big impact on professional sports in the past few decades; this plague was born due to the lust for illegal profit from sporting events around the world, especially the World Cup events, giving rise to a huge number of professional and occasional gamblers to bet on the winning side and earn a lot of profit. The infamous rigging of the 1919 World Cup, where the eight members of Chicago White Socks were involved in the scandal, was banned from playing for the rest of their lives. Ever since then, heavy sanctions against match-fixing have been imposed, and the players lose their prime years in jail or pay the price of their gambling. Lifetime bans and hefty fines are the most common punishments for the players involved in gambling and disgracing their country's image through intentional bad performance.

Even the executives and captains are involved in this gambling sometimes; players keep it a secret from the media and their management to avoid the risk. The issue of gambling, therefore, persists; the intention of such players is to become rich overnight through gambling. Many players have gone from rags to riches even though they get the most competitive salaries in the sports business today. Sports agents like John Phillips are willing to do anything to sign a player because their income depends on it. Corruption is high in college sports due to agents. The average NFL career is only five

years long and players go through a lot of pressure to make huge money. It is the moral responsibility of players to understand sports ethics and display professional behavior. Athletes are humans and make mistakes, but gambling is a crime that represents ethical unawareness.

Athlete Conduct and Sports Medicine Ethics

5. ESPN airs stories every year about the athletes who play with the law, and that affects their status on the team. They are good athletes and still do not manage to play honestly. Aroldis Chapman of Cincinnati Reds has been a subject of domestic violence allegations; he was involved in gunshots and choking incidents, which forced Major League Baseball to plan a strict domestic violence policy for players, but the action has not yielded positive results. The speaker of NYC City Council has decided to Boycott the game and she asks fans to boycott as well to solve this dilemma. She reveals that many of these players are overlooking their ethical shortcomings. Chapman throws the fastest pitch at 105 mph speed. He has disgraced himself and his talent. Baseball players have also been found to be involved in sexual violence and child abuse. They ignore the policy that provide protection to the victims and their families, it seems players do not respect the system of government and justice. (Welcome, 2017)

6. The ethical issues are presenting a massive challenge for healthcare professionals who work with athletes in professional teams. These people, including the team therapist, physician and trainer, work hard to prepare the athlete for the best performance, but the ethical issues are still prevailing in sports medicine that need improvement and ethical decision-making on the part of these professionals. The coaches are doctors paid fewer salaries as compared to sportsmen, healthcare professionals develop the society and sportsmen through sports medicine and physical therapies; potential ethical conflicts between the players and healthcare professionals arise during competition. (Greenfield & West, 2017)

Doctors are involved in decision-making about the player's health; they face conflicting obligations from various stakeholders to return the athlete back to sports. This conflict problem gives rise to ethical issues, the principles of confidentiality and autonomy are not followed properly into the sports medicine which leads to lack of clarity. The relationship between the coaches, general managers and doctors has suffered in professional sports in recent days. The healthcare professionals are conflicted about the course of treatment for an unfit athlete; the top conflicts are interdisciplinary conflicts and miscommunication. The loyalties of players and doctors are also divided, which does not work in the best interest of the team. The pressure to return to the team on the athlete increases.

Cultural Representation, Compensation, and Hiring

7. The native Americans have traveled a tough road through history to make it into American sports and culture. Most of them have recently become unhappy about the name of the NFL team, which

seems offensive to Native Americans. American Indians are presented as mascots that hurt their feelings as citizens. This tradition has been long adopted by the American sports, a name like Redskins is offensive to many people.

8. The huge income of athletes is also an injustice in the eyes of many critics and team members who are not paid millions as athletes in a team. Stars are invited on television and get huge financial rewards, they get interviewed and are paid extra by the government on victorious performance. It is not their job to appear on television and collect gifts for millions, but this is the reward for their hard work and talent. However, some people do not agree that athletes are the only ones who should take all the credit for victory; the management, physio and coaches should also be paid more. Players are the ones who actually put their lives and bodies at risk to entertain the crowds and pull a victory for their teams, but the people working behind the scenes are often ignored and given less credit for the overall victory and glorious ratings. This can also be regarded as an ethical dilemma in the sports world that gives rise to jealousy and envy.

9. People with bad legal histories and current ethical issues are hired into the sports, which ruins the morale of teams further. They do not make their decisions on ethical grounds and force many players to quit the game or retire early. For example, if Mr. Chapman does not perform well in the Yankees team, the circumstances in the background may be huge mismanagement and corruption of officials.

Ethical Reform and Professional Responsibility

Therefore, the conclusion is that sports professionals and management are facing a huge challenge of corruption and ethical problems in the sports world. Students who are interested in becoming sportsmen can join the professional course of Sports Management at the universities to learn more about the challenges of this field and prepare them for the future to deal with the ethical dilemmas in the sports business. They can explore various legal aspects that can save them from years of ban and termination. Ethics plays a huge role in professional sports; sports are the backbone of American culture. Where millions of Americans watch the Superbowl, and people watch it worldwide on television. Most professional sports are in the form of entertainment, but they shape society and play a significant role in shaping the values of society. (University, 2017)

The players are treated as the national hero when they win for their country, the cheating and many other ethical issues have plagued the sports business in America which needs attention. With so much money involved in sports these days, it is important to deal with the ethical issues in recent sports. Everybody, from managers to sportsmen, is responsible for cheating and corruption in sports; to make professional sports more enjoyable and entertaining, they all must learn to battle the ethical issues prevailing in American sports.

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