

The constitutive values of fair play

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ABSTRACT

Fair play as a phenomenon of sporting life is present even if only in the form of small acts or gestures in most competitions; its absence is present in cases of foul play. The daily press comments its presence or absence every day in, and not only in the sports sections. Both the public and experts discuss acts from so called grey zone (forms of gamesmanship). Deciding unequivocally on the moral quality of a diverse range of actions, attitudes or statements requires clarity about the values underpinning fair play. Our aim is therefore to find the constitutive values of fair play by examining a set of values from the field of sport, relevant offerings from fundamental ethics, using Abraham Maslow's meta-value system and selection from the fundamental values of fair play considered so far. Organizing the selected values into a meaningful system is the final aim. We used a hermeneutic method to interpret the role of values within fair play. We identify five values and five meta-values as constitutive of fair play, the meta-values of goodness, truth, and transcendence as the basis of the entire system. We identify character (of athletes) and ethos (of sports communities) as both initiators of activities within the system and recipients of benefits.

KEYWORDS

axiology; character; ethos; meta-values; sports ethics

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INTRODUCTION

Although fair play has emerged as an integral part of modern sport, it often pervades the non-sporting sphere (Business Ethics speaks about fair behaviour, there is talk of “financial fair play” etc.). Logically, it has also become a subject of academic interest – philosophy, sociology, psychology and, of course, especially ethics, since it is most closely related to its moral imperatives, ethical codes, and values.

After the formation of the International Fair Play Committee in 1963, there was also a demand from the practical movement for informed reflection on the issue of fair play. The first articles (in the *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*) and subsequently

monographs appeared (McIntosh, 1979; Simon, 1985; Gerhardt and Lämmer, 1993; McNamee and Parry, 1998; Loland, 2002; Simon, 2010). The need for underpinning values, principles, codes, and principles is now satisfied by a considerable number of scholarly articles in peer-reviewed journals and educational materials published by fair play organisations and clubs. Yet there has been no single and universally accepted definition of fair play.

Our aim is not to present a synthetic “winning” definition; we will only overlook a selection of influential approaches and observe which values they rely on. This is not a systematic selection and the search for the core values of fair play must aim to a broader context, namely sportive, in the field of fundamental ethics and in Abraham Maslow’s system of meta-values. After a critical evaluation of the conglomerate of values that, according to the International Fair Play Committee, fund fair play, we will present our own proposal of constitutive (meta)values and their hierarchical ordering.

METHODS

We used a hermeneutic approach to interpret the role of values within fair play. We interpret the key concepts (ethos, character, fairness, value, virtue) of fair play and explained their meaning in general and in the field of sport. Furthermore, we followed the wider context of the issues studied, according to the hermeneutic proposition that “the text without context is only a pretext”. The confrontation of the sets of values related to fair play (from the field of sport, fundamental ethics, and Maslow’s system of meta-values) with the key concepts of fair play revealed both an intersection containing a group of values suitable for our purpose and relevant meta-values. Ten of these were selected as the essentials of fair play. Each of them was described and interpreted. Arguments for this selection were presented.

By examining them, we found (co)relations between them and were able to determine their hierarchy based on the meta-values goodness, truth, and transcendence.

What is Fair Play?

Being fair means making justice, fairness, selflessness, or honesty part of your personality and being able to empathise with others. Cultivated and developed over a time, it crystallises into the virtue of fairness, which then opens the way to fair behaviour in life’s diverse situations. But playing fair is also about making choices. When we interact with each other in sport, we must consider what is right and what is wrong in the situation.

Fair play is the English name for an ancient ethical device designed to soften the severity of the (co)fighths that took place in different competitions, which the ancient Greeks called *agon*. It was enforced by the development of religious festivals, at the heart of which were the ‘sporting’ games, led by the most famous Olympic ones. The educational concepts of *arête* (both excellence and virtue) and *kalokagathia* (harmony of physical beauty and noble soul) developed this tool. Fortunately, we do not forget any of this, and through medieval chivalric virtues we apply it in modern times. As a figure of speech, it appeared in Shakespeare, but as a notion it is linked to the origins of modern sport in Great Britain (Renson, 2009). Its development and the revival of the Olympic Games in the 19th century saw its rapid worldwide acceptance. It

emerged as an organised ‘fair play movement’ in 1963, spearheaded by the International Fair Play Committee, with other organisations gradually emerging at continental and national levels.

This is just a brief history. It is not our task to describe it in detail, but to analyse how the concept of fair play is founded and on what values it is based. As has already been said, there is no single definition of the concept, nor is there a universally accepted definition of fair play. We present only influential concepts from both the academic and sporting spheres that try to approach the essence of the concept and highlight the relevant aspects:

“Fair play is a complex concept that comprises and embodies a number of fundamental values that are not only integral to sport but relevant in everyday life.” (International Fair Play Committee, 2015)

“Fair play incorporates the concepts of friendship, respect for others and always playing within the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just a way of behaving.” (Council of Europe, 2010)

“FP breeds opportunities for non-zero-sum benefits of competition.” (Kretchmar, 2005)

“Fair play – spirit of sport.” (Housiaux, 2022)

Responding to the latter “definition”, serving as a new motto for the European Fair Play Movement, where “spirit” seems to us too vague (and having more than one component – see below), we argue for a combination of fair play and ethos:

“Fair play is the ethos of sport.”

The term *ethos* originally meant the customs or mores of the ancient Greek polis; in modern times it was adopted by most languages and gradually crystallized into an *ethical core of the behaviour* of diverse communities. This includes sporting ones. *Cum grano salis* we can speak of a “collective conscience”. There is no doubt that in sport, fair play fulfils this role in the form of principles, tenets, codes of ethics, etc., which are moral norms (Anzenbacher, 1992) put into practice by the activities of fair play organisations or clubs (promotion, education, announcement of special prizes, etc.). On the relationship between ethos and the conscience/character of individuals, see below. The connection between ethos and fair play is discussed in detail by philosophers of sport Sigmund Loland and Mike McNamee, who conclude that *ethical ethos* depends on the realisation of the following interpretation of the ideal of fair play: *“If voluntarily engaged in sporting games, keep the ethos of the game if the ethos is just and if it includes a proper appreciation of the internal goods and the attitude to playing to win!”* (Loland and McNamee, 2000, p. 76) We can see that the authors work with a broader concept of ethos and, to define its ethical dimension, they use the adjective *ethical ethos*. We consider this a pleonasm. The inclusion of “playing to win” in the ethos of fair play is problematic – one of the frequently used principles of fair play is: *“I want to succeed in the competition, but not at any cost.”*

We have seen that different approaches are based on different values, or rather a selection of values. Therefore, other values associated with fair play need to be sought in a broader context – those of sport and social sciences. First, however, the question needs to be answered:

What are values?

There is a range of approaches: experts understand values as universally valid norms of human behaviour, objects of our efforts, special characteristics or qualities, abstract goals, etc. (more in Crossan and Bednář, 2018). The most influential contemporary definition says that values are “desirable trans-situational goals, varying in importance and serving as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity” (Kluckhohn, 1951; Schwartz, 1994). We identify with this definition, which is well applicable in the field of sport.

One question is where values are “located”. There are two basic approaches: values form a special independent realm (especially Max Scheler), or they are purely personal entities (especially Jean Paul Sartre). We advocate the compromise position outlined by Gabriel Marcel (1998): values are part of the transcendent realm but manifested only as *incarnated in human reality*. Incarnated in an individual personality, we speak of intrinsic values, or in most cases they can become virtues.

Wider context of the search for fair play values

Fair play is a process that takes place at both individual and community levels. It is built upon values that are woven into the lives of individuals and communities. In the search for the values that underpin the fair play movement, values in the world of sport and physical activity are a natural background (a). However, as fair play has ethical foundations, it is also necessary to draw on this sphere (b). Finally, we believe that there is also a transcendent direction at play, so we will try to extract something relevant from Maslow’s theory of meta-values (c).

Ad a)

Here we can draw on Olympism ancient and modern (*arête*, *agon*, *kalokagathia* + “*Citius. Altius. Fortius*”, etc.), the values of the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association), the organization for American college athletes (endurance, resilience, hard work, sportsmanship, etc. – see Brand, 2006) or the work of the American philosopher of sport Scott Kretchmar (1994, 2005), who emphasized health, fun and joy, courage, and conscientiousness. The intrinsic values of sport in fact are also useful in shaping the so-called “spirit of sport”. They are summarised by WADA (World Anti-Doping Agency) in the chapter on the fundamental foundations of its Anti-Doping Code: health – ethics, fair play and honesty – athletes’ rights – excellence in performance – character and education – fun and joy – teamwork – dedication and commitment – respect for rules and laws – respect for self and other participants – courage – community and solidarity. (World Anti-Doping Agency, 2021)

Finally, the values highlighted by the International Fair Play Committee are important to our aim. In 2015, this organisation presented twelve “fundamental” fair play values: fair competition, respect, friendship, team spirit, equality, sport without doping, respect for written and unwritten rules such as integrity, solidarity, tolerance, care, excellence, and joy (International Fair Play Committee, 2015). We do not know how the committee arrived at this set of values, nor what sources it may have relied on. We agree with the choice of respect, equality, solidarity and excellence and they will form a part of our system of *constitutive values* (see below). Yet we have doubts about the other eight values and do not consider them to be constitutive – they are

more results of action of fair play. In the case of *care*, we opt for wider notion of *solidarity*; concerning *sport without doping* we believe that we must include also other negative phenomena (corruption, any type of discrimination, match fixing, different metastases of cheating). We subordinate the fight on this front against foul play to the wider concept of *catharsis*.

Concerning the value of *tolerance*, we have rather controversial opinion and consider it as an ambiguous instrument of interpersonal relations: if it develops into respect for e.g., the otherness of the opponent, then it can become a gateway to an atmosphere of fair play, but if it becomes a comfortable indifference (“letting go”) or even condoning wrongdoing or cheating, it closes the road to fair play. In the latter case, even intolerance is appropriate ...

Ad b)

The individual ethical “organ” that guides our behaviour with morally relevant impact is *conscience*. A complementary concept in the social sphere is *ethos*, regulating the behaviour of diverse communities, starting with the family ethos, and ending with the global ethos, for which Hans Küng coined the term *Welt ethos* (Küng, 1990). The ethos of the communities in whose lines of force the individual finds himself throughout life influences individual consciences. We discussed the possibilities of educating conscience through the ethos of sport in (Bednář, 2011). The fair play movement plays a significant role here through its direct influence and the overall ethical environment.

Relevant for our considerations appear furthermore moral values such as love, courage, honesty, prudence, responsibility, and conscientiousness – incarnated as virtues and conforming our character in an optimal case. As an “ancillary” value we dare to assign resilience, transcending the status of a purely moral value, cementing character by building a strong will. Without it, we can hardly imagine courageous behaviour and the ability to resist temptation, which opens the path to success and closes the slope leading to unfair play.

Ad c)

The fair play movement also has the potential to influence our self-actualization forming the top of Abraham Maslow’s famous pyramid of needs. They are *deficient needs* (physiological, safety, love, self-respect) in it (Maslow, 1954). Yet at the top of a pyramid are *being needs* aiming to *being values*, or *meta-values* (Maslow, 1964). They have power to saturate our need of self-actualization. He names seventeen of them, such as truth – goodness – transcendence – justice – perfection – order – wholeness – playfulness, etc.

RESULTS

Values of fair play according to own analyses

A certain criticality of the International Fair Play Committee choice of values calls for a replication. The above presentation of sets of values from the sphere of sport and the fair play movement in the form of an unstructured conglomerate is also a challenge. The answer is the actual selection of relevant values and the search for hierarchies

and (co)relations between them. We will try to look for values *constitutive* for fair play; they are intertwined with the fundamental values of sport (see above), but at the same time they go beyond them, extending the first part of the definition of values (“trans-situational goals”) also to “trans-sport” goals, and can thus – if they are “addressed” by the subjects of the fair play movement – fulfil their second mandate, namely to become “guiding principles in people’s lives”. The transcendence of fair play into the non-sporting sphere is accepted. We will not go into an analysis of this aspect of fair play, but simply note the ‘evidence’ of common language in the form of expressions such as ‘financial fair play’ or ‘fair play in life’.

So, we will limit ourselves to sports fair play. The first question is: Who is driving the fair play movement? Who generates acts of fair play, or more technically: Which entity generates them? Who bases sporting competition on the values of fair play?

The answer is offered by the long-standing experience of the fair play movement (not only the organised one of the last 60 years): above all, it is the athletes who have managed to exceed their ambitions even in the heat of competition, who have stepped out of the zone of result expectations of the environment, who have managed to “switch” during a sports competition into the mode of a crisis manager to deal with a critical situation, threatening e.g. the health or life of other competitors, etc. These individuals deserve to be awarded (even if they may not get the fair play award) and undoubtedly, as a secondary way, they increase their credit – both sporting and human. So many awards for the act. As we know, athletes are also recognised for ‘a lifetime of fair play’. In these cases, we are certainly not only evaluating the number of fair play acts, but also the overall way of thinking (see one of the definitions of fair play), attitudes and dissemination of fair play values and principles (not only) in the sphere of sport. The specific trigger of these positives is the *character* of the athlete with a core of conscience. Other components of character are incarnated values (especially ethical and aesthetic), self-concept and important dispositions such as attitudes and interests, etc. Positive psychology considers the following six virtues to be the cornerstones of a so-called “good character”: wisdom, courage, love, justice, temperance, and spirituality (Peterson et al., 2007).

Practice shows that even a person with an immature conscience, or who has a biography of unfair acts, or the absence of fair acts in situations that required it, can choose a fair solution. Psychologically, we can justify his “stepping out of his shadow” with a range of motives from epiphany based on a deep experience of the situation, to “reforming the sinner”, to hypocritical image enhancement.

Often entire collectives are rewarded for acts of fair play. This is where the overall moral climate of a sporting community or sporting sector comes into play, often based on a set of values (see above for examples), tradition and nowadays also on codes of ethics and/or fair play principles. At the core of this set of ethical factors is *ethos*. Olympism has a distinct ethos, but remarkable ethos’s shape sporting events, e.g., in combat sports, rugby, etc.

The question we have asked in this article then is: Which are the most important values of fair play (those that constitute and structure the phenomenon)?

Sporting events that add something positive to the competitive level and thus deserve the label fair play have a moral/ethical dimension and inscribe themselves in the character of athletes and community ethos. In the former case, it is part of self-actual-

isation, which we understand as a lifelong task; in the case of ethos, it has a transformative potential and sometimes plays a cathartic role.

So much so, the reasoning behind why we headfirst to the overarching sphere of meta-values, which plays an important motivational role in the self-actualization process of individuals and, analogously, has the power to influence the ethos of sporting collective subjects.

Comparing the myriad of acts of fair play recorded in ancient Olympism and modern sport with the above overview of meta-values, the following three meta-values are the intersection and appropriate foundation of the entire construct of fair play:

GOODNESS – TRUTH – TRANSCENDENCE

Another relevant meta-value is justice, which we subordinate to meta-value “goodness”, and excellence, subordinated to the meta-value “transcendence”. By analysing these meta-values and the conglomerate of values from the field of sport and fair play, the following five values emerged as a complementary and necessary part of the fair play system: equality – solidarity – respect – health – catharsis.

Ad Goodness

This ultimate concept of ethics is preserved in the famous *kalokagathia*, the heritage of ancient Olympism and “gymnastics”. *Agathon*, the Greek word for goodness, was what the Greeks wanted to develop in the souls of Olympians and ordinary citizens alike. After a historical phase of the predominance of abstract considerations of goodness and evil, we are now returning to more practical considerations of how to live well, and a variety of life models with an orientation towards freedom, well-being, etc. are offered by philosophers and psychologists. From this point of view, we understand the goodness as the horizon of human positive activities (individual and universal).

The quoted Scott Kretchmar seems to have been inspired by this trend and in his chef-d’oeuvre links value-oriented physical activities with the “*good life*”. It is not surprising that the *active lifestyle* is at the heart of such a life. (Kretchmar, 2005, p. 205–252) Lukáš Mareš, a Czech philosopher of sport, tries to find the constitutive properties of “*good sport*”. (Mareš, 2023)

Ad Truth

As we have seen, this (meta)value did not appear in the above value summaries. It only appears in the WADA serving as a kind of summary statement of how the “spirit of sport is expressed in how we play true”. They add: “*Doping is fundamentally contrary to the spirit of sport.*” (World Anti-Doping Agency, 2021). Czech theologian Jiří Skoblík makes this aspect of doping even more acute, saying that it “*degrades man into an extremely powerful machine by lying about his possibilities*” (Skoblík, 1997, p. 197).

Of course, every sporting deception is also a lie. Lies about a person’s capabilities, however, also logically raise the question of what the truth about a person’s capabilities is. The answer, based on records and extraordinary performances, is not clear-cut and the search for answers would exceed the scope of this paper. What we can state unequivocally, however, is that fair play contributes significantly to the truthfulness of sportsmanship. It is hard to imagine acts of fair play based on lies. On the contrary, acts of fair play are also motivated by a desire not to lie, e.g., by correction the score sheets to one’s disadvantage.

Ad Transcendence

If we strive for personal or social development, the next steps must aim at more distant horizons; here we have a “menu” of meta-values, having transcendent attributes. Transcendence was originally a religious term which, in a simplification, can be thought of as a journey from the human to the divine. Gradually, however, it has been parcelled out in terms of “what” we want to transcend and/or “where” we direct the transcendence. The religious component is “hidden” in the beliefs of individuals, and Couber-tin’s idea of a kind of “religion of athletes” (*religio athletae*) has not taken hold, but in a way, it has been transformed into a postmodern spirituality that has found its place in the field of sport in recent decades.

Ad Health

Enhancing health, cultivating, and maintaining it is one of the main motives for playing sport. Without taking care of the health of the competitors, we cannot talk about good sport, which should be embedded in a good life model and thus aim at the meta-value “goodness”. The risk is to undermine integrity - physical, psychological, and moral. The fair play movement formulates the principle: “I want to succeed in the competition, but not at the cost of endangering my own or my opponent’s health.” Endangering one’s own health is also on the agenda in situations of exaggerated aspirations, failure to estimate the level of risk or pressure on the result from coaches, or the management of clubs or national teams.

The fair play movement should also monitor more closely and condemn cases of violations of psychological and moral integrity by those competitors who are often in the “grey zone” of gamesmanship (unfair behaviour during competition that still “fits” the letter of the rules, but not their “spirit” – see Howe, 2004) to disrupt the personal zone, the psyche, or the concentration of the opponent. Cyberbullying is also a new unfair phenomenon threatening mental health, as well as other negative phenomena associated with the expansion of social networking.

Ad Justice

The idea of justice has been with humankind since time immemorial and, when it has been fulfilled, has functioned as a social cement and a path to the good life of individuals and communities, in a higher sense, a path to the goodness. Aristotle gave a firm theoretical foundation to this idea, and the Roman law referred to justice as the basis of the entire system.

Justice today is mainly understood – and in favourable social conditions implemented – as distributive (fair distribution of benefits and burdens), retributive (appropriate punishments and rewards), procedural (deciding equal cases equally and unequal cases differently) and last but not least as fairness (!) The fact that sporting themes can be found in all these forms shows how intertwined sport is today with society at large and how the understanding of sport as a separate entity capable of self-regulation has long since fallen away.

Sporting *rules* have been created based on justice since the beginning of modern sport. Adherence to the rules was and is supposed to guarantee fair results of competitions. However, this is not always the case in sporting practice. Moreover, rules cannot capture all situations in a turbulent sport. The awareness of injustice then persists in

the minds of athletes, spectators, and other stakeholders, spoiling the atmosphere and affecting the future competition. This is where the fair play movement should become more involved through targeted publicity, influence the necessary shift towards fairer solutions to controversial situations – present and future.

Ad Equality

There is another principle of justice, which is based on the idea of equality and is implemented in practice as equality before the law requiring equal treatment of all. John Rawls considers certain social and economic inequalities (effectively accepted by communities) to be just, if they benefit the least advantaged members of society and are open to others on the condition of equal opportunity (Rawls, 1971).

Equality of opportunity is also a major theme in contemporary sport. Specific activities aim at eliminating or at least minimizing inequalities: those created naturally or by historical development (physical parameters, age, gender, social and economic inequalities at the level of the individual and communities, including states, etc.), as well as discriminatory ones, created by malicious intent and sometimes ignorance on the part of other sports actors. It should be noted that anti-discrimination clauses are now part of advanced legal systems and most codes of ethics, including those in the field of sport.

While the creation of a level playing field for all competitors is mainly the task of the organisers before the start of the competition, fairness plays a role in situations where *vis maior* intervenes during the competition (change in natural conditions not equally affecting all competitors; injury or technical failure of a competitor, etc.) and the organisers fail to find a solution to compensate for the inequality/inequity created.

We believe that achieving equality in the outlined levels of sporting competition is a certain ideal rarely achievable in practice. Nevertheless, important actors should strive to realise it as far as possible.

Ad Solidarity

It builds on the value of equality and seeks to counterbalance the inequalities (handicaps) that arise through acts of solidarity based on fairness: both long-term and those that arise, often unexpectedly, during the competition. An act of solidarity can be an act of charity or a small act of help to a “rival in need”. In general, solidarity is mostly directed towards disadvantaged members of sporting communities, or towards disadvantaged communities or those affected by natural disasters, etc. Solidarity funds are set up by Olympic Committees or sports federations to support former athletes etc.

It is common for a wave of solidarity to arise across the sporting world when an athlete has a serious personal problem, even if it arises in his or her life outside of sport. This does not have to be limited to well-known athletes – social networks now also make it possible to draw attention to the cases of ‘unknown’ athletes. It does not have to be just material support; often solidarity expressed verbally can mean more.

Ad Respect

Respect is a more powerful tool of interpersonal communication than tolerance and requires a higher degree of empathy, understanding and the ability to find the good in another person, deserving of appreciation and, to the highest degree, respect. In

this way, we help the other to satisfy the need for respect or esteem and thus to gain self-esteem (cf. the 4th layer of Maslow's pyramid of needs). Of course, we have the same need, and here the problem of the lack of reciprocity from the other may arise.

We therefore believe that the fair play movement cannot demand *unconditional* respect, but that competition in the spirit of fair play can only take place based on *mutual* respect. Respect can hardly be demanded for unfair opponents, unfair referees, or misbehaving fans. It is hard to have respect for organisers who do not show respect for the needs of competitors, for example by building dangerous courses in pursuit of their own ambitions. Such actors make competitions – unfortunately – impossible to run in the spirit of fair play. Nevertheless, a higher level of fair play represents the ability of more morally mature individuals to show respect to such actors *at the start* of a new competition. Without prejudice, without generosity, without the burden of resentment – dilemma of a proper reaction must solve the other side ...

Mutual respect also creates mutual responsibility of all actors in sport competitions, an atmosphere of fair play and the credibility of sport competition. Good example is Rugby where “respect for one's rival is the norm, and the ‘third half’ is a time of dignity and largesse. This is when the two teams and the referee come together to show mutual appreciation for a game well played.” (Andreu-Cabrera, 2010)

Within the value system, respect clearly points towards the (meta)value of goodness.

Ad Catharsis

The purifying effect of the phenomenon called catharsis (katharsis in Greek for both purification and cleansing) was discovered by Plato and in another form by Aristotle. “*There are the purification /katharsis/ of living bodies ... effected by medicine and gymnastics ... and of badness and ignorance in souls ... effected by rectification and education.*” (Plato, Sophist, 1989) Aristotle speaks of purification from negative emotions or purification of those with the potential to harmonize the emotional and moral side of man (Aristotle, 1921, 1924). Compassion and enthusiasm are agents in this case.

While the power of cathartic action has been highlighted especially in the field of art and therapy, today's sport is not left behind and all the mentioned aspects of catharsis can be found thanks to its action (Bednář, 2017). Note that catharsis operates at the level of individuals and communities. Especially emotional, ethical, and educational aspects are a matter of interest for us. Sport is an arena of strong emotions, for all actors. Their regulation is a permanent challenge. One of the principles of the fair play movement exhorts athletes to “Control your emotions!” The fight against negative phenomena purifies sport in its ethical dimension, so that it can become “the truth about human potential”. All educational projects of the fair play movement or Olympic education, etc., aim at truth by cleansing ignorance and transgressions, or directly refuting lies. That is why we find the value of catharsis on the way to the meta-value “truth”.

Ad Excellence

This value forms one of the foundations of ancient Olympism under the ancient Greek name of *arête*. It represented the best that an Olympian could perform during the Games: the realization of his potential in the physical, mental, spiritual, and moral components (in the last *arête* is a virtue). The link with transcendence is straightfor-

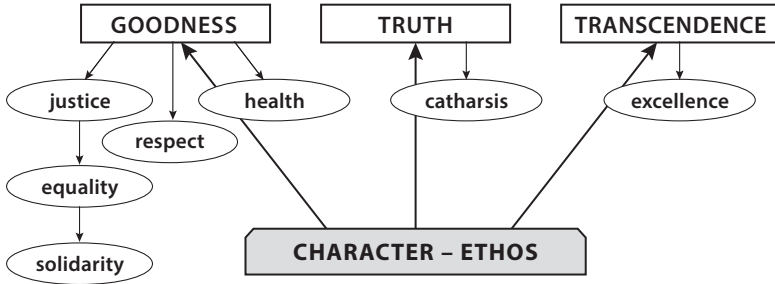


Figure 1 Overview of interrelationships between character and/or ethos and 10 constitutive values

ward here in the expected connection with the divine element based on the belief in the appearance of divine power.

The connection with another building block of Olympism, *kalokagathia*, made it impossible to understand excellence as merely the performance of the maximum measurable feat. There was also an ethical and aesthetic dimension at play. It was therefore not just a question of ‘how much’ but also ‘how’. These tribal values of ancient Olympism were continued by the founder of modern Olympism, Pierre de Coubertin (1863–1937). Although their importance gradually waned during the founder’s lifetime, they retain their place today despite the hypertrophy of the performance orientation. The aesthetic component plays an important part of the performance evaluation in sports like figure skating, gymnastics, or artistic swimming; moreover, it is a kind of surplus value in other sports as well, fulfilling the full meaning of the concept of excellence.

DISCUSSION

We consider the above ten values to be constitutive, i.e., building and structuring the whole fair play system. We see our proposal as open to criticism and further additions or restructuring. When the fair play acts and the overall atmosphere of fairness work optimally, the fair play movement generates other values. International Fair Play Committee named *friendship, care, tolerance, team spirit, and joy* (see above). Let us add *beauty*, which, in the optimal case of harmony with the moral and performance dimension of a successful performance, completes the experience of sporting performance (NB: *fair* in Old English meant beautiful). A special value position has *education*, which introduces the history of the fair play movement and highlights extraordinary acts or personalities with lifelong fair attitudes, The Code of Sports Ethics (The Council of Europe, 2010) is finalized like this: “*To succeed in promoting and developing sport and involvement in sport, respect and education are crucial to the concept of sports ethics.*” Educational action through fair play can thus motivate people to reflect on their own attitudes or to engage in certain activities.

In addition to the direct impact of the movement’s activities, there is also an indirect one at play, where strong sports personalities (‘true champions’) influence other sports people, especially children and young people, through their behaviour and attitudes. It is accepted that character – as opposed to temperament – is the result of

formation and learning. Fair play here has considerable scope to influence the integrity of athletes. It is also accepted, that sport has the power to build character. However, studies from (Doty, 2006; Gerdy, 2000; Sage, 1998 etc.) show a different reality. If there are doubts concerning the role of sport in building character, there is no doubt that fair play does it. In the optimal case, the incarnation of fair play values is the fruit of the valorisation not only of character but also of the ethos of community sporting entities, which enhances, among other things, their credibility and social status. It seems that the spread of the Olympic motto “Citius. Altius. Fortius” to “Communiter” (Together) in 2021 intended to emphasise this aspect.

CONCLUSION

We consider fairness to be essential, even self-preserving, for the functioning and long-term sustainability of sporting competitions. We can observe that building blocks of fair play are experienced and learnt both on and off the field. The values of fair play thus help to fulfil the second main goal of sport (alongside the performance one), so that we could perhaps talk about *double goal competing* (analogous to the now promoted *double goal coaching*), where there is a transcendence of sporting framework to the universal level and personal and community development. In this way, a prerequisite is created to increase the credibility of the whole sport sector, which is undoubtedly important for all participants. However, this requires a constant effort: on a practical level, the adoption of a *values-driven leadership* style into sports organisations and clubs, which should be supplied by a theoretical community with values-based principles and fair play principles as a basis for implementation in practice, with an expected amplification effect enabling to engage as many athletes as possible in “good” sports. We will try to contribute to this task by elaborating our proposed fair play value structure into principles and concrete principles of athlete behaviour and attitudes based on them in the next article.

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