

## **Appendix 1 – Background Discussion**

### Structure of Codes of Conduct

Professional codes of conduct usually require the definition of two concepts specific to their unique profession. Codes of conduct typically specify the underlying moral or ethical values that members (in this case athletics officials) hold in common. That is, what values such as fairness, integrity, professionalism, compassion, adherence to scientific standards are required or encouraged among members of the profession. Although some values (e.g., integrity) are likely general across all professions, others (e.g., adherence to scientific standards) may be limited to very specific professions. Values provide the underlying rationale for guiding officials' conduct. Without specification of values, codes of conduct become no more than a list of "do's" and don'ts" with no justification. Usually, the values of a profession are developed by discussion and consensus agreement by a committee or board charged with this task. As one can imagine, there may be individual officials who object to some specific value. For example, among health professions the value of basing one's practice activities on scientific evidence of their usefulness is guaranteed to generate argument among many professionals. Thus, the value of adherence to scientific standards is often watered down in a number of health profession codes of conduct. Thus, values statements for a profession must endure some debate and subsequent consensus before adopting them as part of a code of conduct.

As well, codes of conduct typically define the different groups for whom officials have a duty to care. The term "duty to care" means that athletics officials have responsibility for the well-being of specific clients. That is, professionals have interactions with different groups of people, but having differing levels of duty to people from these different groups. For example, physicians have a duty to care for their patients – which is of higher priority than their duty to care for the family members of patients or for other physicians. As an example, psychologists' codes of conducts centre on the "client." Psychologists must treat information they gain about their clients as confidential unless provided with written consent or a court order to release such information. However, psychologists can be just as gossipy or loose-lipped as they want with information about their neighbours. Although the latter may not be nice, it is not a violation of their code of conduct because psychologists have no professional duty to care for their neighbours.

Athletics officials provide a service to several different groups. In any case where there are different groups whose interests must be considered,

those interests will sometimes conflict and the officials must be thoughtful and consistent in how they balance these different interests. Prioritizing one's duties to different groups is important because officials will occasionally find themselves in situations where the interests of two groups such as athletes and spectators conflict (e.g., providing the best sight lines to spectators versus avoiding distractions for athletes).

"Specific lists of behaviours to strive for and behaviours to avoid (the list of "do's" and "don'ts") follow from individual values. As you can imagine, different values will sometimes generate overlapping lists of "do's" and "don'ts"

### Values Discussions

#### Be a Benefit and Cause No Harm

The motherhood and apple pie value that cuts across most professional codes of conduct is that "(choose your profession here) strive to benefit those with whom they work and take care to do no harm." Although this quote is taken from the Ethical Principles of the American Psychological Association, it reflects the tenor of most ethical codes. This value recognizes a dilemma that can slip past the casual notice of both lay people and professionals: that any profession that has the capacity through its actions to provide a benefit to clients also has a capacity to cause harm. Thus, all actions taken by a professional guided by this value must be screened through both the lens of potential benefit to clients or those to whom one has a duty, and the lens of potential harm. Following serious consideration, the thoughtful professional choose to maximize benefit while minimizing harm. The do no harm part of this is at the heart of malpractice lawsuits. Although no one is likely to sue a track and field official for malpractice, officials can do unnecessary harm to athletes or other people.

#### Accuracy and Responsibility

Accuracy is especially pertinent to track officials who are called upon to measure and record results, as well as make accurate judgements about faults and false starts. All such actions have consequences. Some professions do not have measurement as part of their general activity, but others like psychology, have a heavy measurement emphasis. Thus, psychologists are advised that they must use, when possible appropriate measurement methods/tools, and that they maintain up to date knowledge on technical assessment issues that could affect their measurements. Malpractice cases in medicine often revolve about mis-diagnosis and its

relationship to the physician having fallen below common standards of accuracy in making particular diagnosing, reading imaging test results accurately, etc.

Responsibility, as an ethical value, is nothing more than three related concepts. 1. Know the details of your work assignment. 2. Follow through in a complete manner with that work assignment and its component parts. 3. When you are neglectful in your responsibilities, do not shift blame or find excuses for this neglect. Pretty much all the professional ethical codes have some content relevant to this common sense notion. For example, psychologists are required by their ethical code to be responsible for the work and conduct of their non-psychologist employees whom they supervise.

### Loyalty

Loyalty as a value is not always found in ethical codes, at least not under this precise label. Nonetheless, loyalty is an important value that holds communities together. Simple rules of loyalty (e.g., not speak ill of one's spouse to others) allows members of the same community to trust each other and thus spend their energies on productive labour rather than defending their own individual interests or investigating imagined threats to their safety. "Dysfunctional" work settings are most often characterized as places where there are few common loyalties among employees and thus excessive energy is spent on resolving conflict or protecting one's individual interests than on working together a joint, mutually beneficial goal. Volunteer organizations are in a unique situation in that they do not technically employ most of their members, and their members volunteer their time. Thus, requiring a common value of respecting one's fellow volunteers and avoiding public disparagement of the volunteer organization is a relatively painless value to espouse but very important to publically acknowledge.

### Integrity

All professional codes of conduct that I could find had some reference to the value of integrity. Integrity is the third of five guiding principles in the APA Ethical Principles. Similarly, integrity is the first value mentioned in the Canadian Bar Association "The lawyer must discharge with integrity all duties owed to clients, the court or tribunal or other members of the profession and the public." Integrity also implies the absence of impairment. Most professional ethics codes have a section for dealing with professionals who suffer some health impairment that negatively affects their job performance. Although the most common reasons for findings of "impaired" lawyers, physicians, etc. have to do with substance abuse or dependence, other

mental health conditions are often related to such impairment. At a more subtle level, minor mental health impairments (e.g., chronic irritability) can have a negative impact on customers or clients of a professional who is frequently in contact with the public. As a footnote, problematic interpersonal relationships, anger, and hostility are some of the best predictors of work disability claims. Athletics officials have such frequent contact with their public.

### Fairness

Many professions do not simultaneously serve clients whose individual interests may be in conflict with each other (e.g., lawyers represent one client and have to turn away other clients who may have competing interests). Track officials are constantly in the dilemma of serving clients whose interests conflict as they are officiating during a competition between different parties whose competitive sporting interests are in conflict even during “friendly” amateur competitions. Different professions deal with this in varied fashions. For example, psychologists are asked to attend to the principle of justice, which is explained as follows: “Psychologists recognize that fairness and justice entitle all persons to access to and benefit from the contributions of psychology and to equal quality in the processes, procedures, and services being conducted by psychologists. Psychologists exercise reasonable judgment and take precautions to ensure that their potential biases, the boundaries of their competence, and the limitations of their expertise do not lead to or condone unjust practices” (APA, 2002). The Canadian Bar Association states, “The lawyer should encourage public respect for and try to improve the administration of justice” (CBA, 2009).

Justice or fairness are more than just following the details of the rule book. Rather, they are ensuring that the spirit of the rules are upheld, which means that there will continue to be ongoing debate about the correct interpretation of rules to be found between the lines of text in rule books (e.g., what precisely makes for a fair start in a race?). Thus, fairness and justice are values that officials must aspire to, knowing that when officiating in an athletic competition one can only approximate fairness.

### Respect for People's Rights and Dignity

Again, taking from the American Psychological Association’s code of ethics – “Psychologists respect the dignity and worth of all people, and the rights of individuals to privacy, confidentiality, and self-determination. Psychologists are aware that special safeguards may be necessary to protect the rights and welfare of persons or communities whose vulnerabilities impair autonomous decision-making. Psychologists are aware of and respect

cultural, individual, and role differences, including those based on age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, and socioeconomic status and consider these factors when working with members of such groups. Psychologists try to eliminate the effect on their work of biases based on those factors, and they do not knowingly participate in or condone activities of others based upon such prejudices.”

The reader will note that this particular principle merges two issues – (a) that of generally being respectful and safeguarding other people’s dignity, and (b) being sensitive to more vulnerable persons. It takes a relatively broad view of what are considered vulnerable people by including personal characteristics such as gender and ethnicity as characteristics possibly conveying vulnerability.

Thus, this principle recognizes that professionals, including track officials, will sometimes be faced with behaviour from individual athletes that reflects in part a characteristic common in the athlete’s sub-group. When faced with such sub-group common behaviour, the official must determine how to handle this without unduly discriminating against the athlete. For example, younger athletes are more prone to extreme emotional displays when faced with disappointment and generally have less control over their emotions. This is developmentally appropriate (those frontal lobes haven’t matured yet). Thus, officials must be able to tolerate such emotional displays in the young and deal with such displays in a manner that, while upholding competition rules and protecting other athletes, does not unduly punish the athlete for behaviour not entirely within his/her control.

Similarly, all of us have ethnic biases (even when we speak as if we don’t have such biases, subtle measurements of our attention, language, etc. shows otherwise). Thus, it is critical for officials who subscribe to this value of “respect for other’s rights and dignity” to carefully monitor one’s verbal and body language and other responses to athletes who are clearly of a different ethnicity, background culture, or gender than that of the official.

### Professionalism

This value is seldom stated explicitly in professional codes of conduct. Nonetheless, throughout the professions and business environments, instruction in professionalism is omnipresent if implicit. This value has the goals of inspiring confidence in customers, clients, athletes, coaches, and spectators, as well as projecting a positive image on the profession, business, or in the current case on track and field as an athletic endeavor.

### Protection for Vulnerable Persons

With regard to the behaviour of track and field officials, the application of this value implies that officials will be alert to ways in which individuals from different cultures, backgrounds, gender, and objective markers of disability may respond differently to officials' guidance or instructions. As an example, pre-pubescent boys and girls may differ substantially with respect to their attentional capacities and track officials may need to take greater attention to grasp the attention of young male athletes during initial instructions concerning an event (e.g., start sequence in sprints, call up instructions in jumps or throws). Similarly, officials working with objectively disabled athletes (e.g., wheelchair athletes, special Olympics) needs to be sensitive and adapt to the disabilities of specific athletes as they arise in a manner that ensures the disabled athlete is both treated fairly and does not feel overtly disparaged or discriminated against. This does not mean that track officials must be excessively politically correct (e.g., by not using the "stand up" call at the start line when it is a wheelchair race), but that the official must be prepared to provide appropriately modified instructions and present to the athlete an accepting and supportive demeanor independent of the official's potential underlying biases.

### Modeling Appropriate Health Habits

The value of publically modeling appropriate health habits presumes that athleticism is part of a generally healthy lifestyle, and that BC Athletics and Athletics Canada encourage not only athletic competition but also enhanced health in their members and in the general public. It also presumes that officials comprise part of the public face of track and field, and that athletes (generally younger with their lifestyle habits not entirely formed) can be influenced in their health habits by the behaviour they witness in older members of the athletic community.

Accepting this particular value and the presumptions on which it is based means that athletics officials must model generally accepted positive physical and mental health habits in the presence of younger athletes. Specific prohibitions (e.g., smoking tobacco at an athletic venue, excessive consumption of alcohol at a public athletics social event) arise through this value. Officials would probably be unanimous in denouncing the consumption of alcohol by an official when on duty during an athletic completion. Similarly, most officials would likely think that obvious intoxication by an official in the presence of young athletes is inappropriate. However, there is also a more subtle implication that may be of more general value. Thus, the presumption that athletics officials are role models

for younger athletes when in the competition area means includes the officials modeling good mental health habits (e.g., appropriate social skills, discrete and effective management of one's own emotional distress). All of us have probably observed an athlete, parent, coach or official who loses control of their emotions (e.g., angry tantrums) in a manner that adversely affects others in the competition area. Such behaviour causes harm ranging from minor discomfort to overt interference in performance in our athletes, coaches, and officials who are exposed to such unpleasantness. The modeling of such behaviour also teaches younger athletes maladaptive habits. We recognize that such misbehavior is largely a learned phenomenon. Thus, officials should work to avoid overt expression of emotional outbursts that can distract others in the competition area and serve as bad models of comportment to younger athletes.

### Adherence to Legal Standards

This means obeying the law (e.g., criminal code of Canada, human rights codes, and IAAF or other rules of competition). The prohibitions found in the current BC Athletics Officials' Code of Conduct are limited to not facilitating or encouraging athletes to use performance enhancing drugs or facilitating underage athletes in alcohol consumption. This prohibition is also found in the Athletics Canada Code of Conduct. However, such a general values statement also has implications if, for example, a BCA official was found guilty of criminal conduct outside his/her official role (e.g., fraud, assault). This brings up the question of how broadly or narrowly one wants to define one's value statements as they lead to codes of conduct. Most codes of conduct limit their interest in professionals' adherence to the law to 4 areas: (a) obeying the specifics of their own code of conduct, (b) respecting the legal authority of their regulatory body (e.g., College of Physicians and Surgeons), (c) avoiding criminal acts that have adverse effects on their clients, and (d) avoiding criminal acts that have the potential to harm the reputation of their profession. The latter area is a source of some debate.

## **Appendix 2 – Sources**

Athletics Canada Member Conduct Policy

<http://www.athletics.ca/admin/..%5Cfiles%5C%5C%5CMEMBERCONDUCTPOLICYJULY2010.PDF>

retrieved March 6, 2011.

BC Athletics Codes of Conduct

American Psychological Association (2002). Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct. *American Psychologist*, 57, 1060-1073.

Canadian Psychological Association (2000). Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists: Third Edition.

<http://www.cpa.ca/cpsite/userfiles/Documents/Canadian Code of Ethics for Psycho.pdf>

retrieved March 6, 2011.

The Canadian Bar Association (2009). Code of Professional Conduct.

<http://www.cba.org/CBA/activities/pdf/codeofconduct.pdf> Retrieved on March 7<sup>th</sup> 2011.

National Association of Sports Referees. (U.S.) Sports Officials Code of Ethics.

<http://www.naso.org/benefits/ethics.htm>

Retrieved on September 14, 2011

### Material from BC Athletics Officials Code of Conduct

In registering as an Official member of BC Athletics and/or accepting the responsibility of a position at an Athletics Competition (all disciplines and types) shall, from the time of reporting in until the completion of the schedule, including completion of all the required paper work is expected to:

1. Wear the accepted uniform as outlined by the Officials Committee.
2. Refrain from using tobacco products within the competition arena and/or competition area and only in designated areas if such are provided.
3. Refrain from entering the competition area and/or arena under the influence of alcohol.
4. Be fully prepared to do the job assigned to you.
5. Arrive in good time for the competition and report immediately to the official in charge.



6. Draw all the necessary equipment for the running of the event and ensure that it is returned upon completion of the competition.
7. Conduct the event according to the rules with the welfare of the athlete in mind and do the job in an efficient and non-abrasive manner.
8. Work in a spirit of cooperation with other officials and do not interfere in any way with their duties and responsibilities.
9. Extend the benefit of your experience to the less experienced officials whenever the opportunity arises.
10. Criticize only in a constructive manner and only at an appropriate time and directly to the official concerned.
11. Give evaluations, when requested, in an objective way and without friendships in mind.
12. Act in a manner that will bring credit to the Athletics Community and yourself, both within and outside the competition arena and/or area.
13. Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing or otherwise offensive language in the conduct of his/her duties.
14. Respect the athletes' dignity; verbal or physical behaviors that constitute harassment or abuse are unacceptable. (Please refer to the BC Athletics Harassment Policy)
15. Never advocate or condone the use of drugs or other banned performance enhancing substances, classes or methods.
16. Never provide under age athletes with alcohol.

Individuals registering as Official members of BC Athletics and/or Officiating in a BC Athletics sanctioned/approved activity/competition are advised that by doing so they are agreeing to adhere to this and other policies, rules, regulations, by-laws and constitution of BC Athletics, Athletics Canada and the IAAF.

### Volunteer Code of Conduct

An individual who accepts the position of volunteer within the context of the activities of athletics, agrees to accept the responsibilities as outlined to them and will complete the duties for the agreed to period. As a volunteer in Athletics your role is critical to the success of any activity and in carrying out the assigned responsibilities you are expected to:

1. Refrain from using tobacco products within the arena and/or competition area and only in designated areas if such are provided.
2. Refrain from entering the competition area and/or arena under the influence of alcohol.
3. Be prepared to do the job assigned to you.
4. Work in a spirit of cooperation with other volunteers/officials and do not interfere in any way with their duties and responsibilities.

5. Act in a manner that will bring credit to the Athletics Community and yourself, both inside and outside the competition arena and/or area.
6. Volunteers are not to encourage athletes to consume drugs, alcohol or intoxicants.
7. Be courteous to fellow volunteers, officials, athletes, coaches and the general public.
8. Refrain from the use of threatening, obscene, abusive or vulgar language to fellow volunteers, officials, athletes, coaches and the general public.
9. Treat everyone fairly within the context of their activity regardless of a person's culture, color, ancestry, nationality, age, political beliefs, religion, family status, physical or mental disability, gender or sexual orientation.
10. Refrain from public criticism of fellow volunteers, coaches, officials or a
11. Refrain from harassing any individual or engaging in any unwelcome visual, verbal or physical conduct.
12. Project a positive and enthusiastic attitude towards the event, the sponsors, supporters and the job assigned, approaching these duties with a professional attitude.
13. Be courteous, cooperative and discreet.
14. Carry out your duties willingly, fairly and impartially.
15. Report for the assigned duty on time, be well groomed.
16. Respect the athlete's dignity; verbal or physical behaviors that constitute harassment or abuse are unacceptable. (Please refer to the BC Athletics Harassment Policy)

Individuals Volunteering for position in BC Athletics sanctioned/approved activity/competition are advised that by doing so they are agreeing to adhere to this and other policies, rules, regulations, by-laws and constitution of BC Athletics, Athletics Canada and the IAAF.

### Athletics Canada Member Conduct Policy

#### Expected Standard of Ethical Conduct

- a) All Members of Athletics Canada are expected to:
- Demonstrate through words and actions the spirit of sportsmanship, sports leadership and ethical conduct;
  - Treat others with respect and refrain from negative or disparaging remarks or conduct;
  - Not knowingly place themselves in a situation that could give rise to a conflict between personal interests and the interests of Athletics Canada (see Endnote 1);
  - Avoid and reject the non-medical use of drugs or the use of

- performance-enhancing drugs or methods in accordance with CCES and WADA;
- Refrain from the use or consumption of any illegal products while a member of an Athletics Canada team, where illegal is defined as prohibited by the laws of Canada and prohibited by the laws of all countries that Members may travel to as part of an Athletics Canada team;
- Refrain from using alcohol and tobacco products when involved in Athletics Canada training sessions or competitive events, and consume these products responsibly in association with Athletics Canada social events; NOTE: Athletics Canada has a “zero tolerance” policy in respect of the consumption of alcohol by any athlete, while a member of an Athletics Canada team in a competition setting in Canada or overseas, under the age of 19, irrespective of any other legal requirements. This “zero tolerance” policy on the consumption of alcohol also applies to all Athletics Canada team members (including team staff and coaches) while involved in a competition setting specifically for Junior and/or Youth athletes, regardless of the team member’s age.
- Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes harassment, where harassment is defined as comment or conduct directed towards an individual or group, which is offensive, abusive, racist, sexist, degrading or malicious.
- Refrain from any behaviour that constitutes sexual harassment, where sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances or conduct of a sexual nature, when submitting to or rejecting this conduct influences decisions which affect the individual, such conduct has the purpose or effect of diminishing performance, or such conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment;
- Comply at all times with the bylaws, policies, rules and regulations of Athletics Canada, as adopted and amended from time to time, including complying with any contracts or agreements executed with or by Athletics Canada.

Officials will:

- Conduct all events according to the rules of Athletics Canada with the integrity of the sport and each athlete’s performance in mind;
- Work in a spirit of cooperation with other officials, assisting less experienced colleagues, and refraining from public criticism of other officials.