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Sport4Rules

Handbook



REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA
Ministry of Youth and Sports





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INTRODUCTION

1. WHAT IS SPORT?

Basing on Cambridge Dictionary, sport is *“a game, competition, or similar activity, done for enjoyment or as a job, that takes physical effort and skill and is played or done by following particular rules”*¹. A broader sociological report identified a total of 24 functions and forms of significance in sport. Shortly, it fosters health, democracy through its openness to individuals regardless their gender, status, culture and physical abilities; it offers individuals an opportunity to identify with a specific group or individual, it is leisure²; it can be a tool of education and personal development through its value of leadership, teamwork and self-esteem³. This is why, as stated in the article 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, coaches, volunteers and professionals in sports, it is a priority *“ensure that sport is practised in a culture of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, friendship and fair play among all people.”*

2. VIOLENCE IN SPORT

2.1 General overview of the phenomenon

Violence is part of human nature, it is all around us: it in our homes, in our society, in schools, in the workplaces and so on.

Sport is not excluded from this: the use of violent tactics, fighting among athletes and between athletes and spectators, post-game riots, and hazing incidents make handling with increasing regularity. In particular, the most violent sports are boxing, wrestling, football, hockey, rugby⁴.

In any case, *“some employ violent tactics as a way to injure or intimidate an opponent, and there are some coaches who use violence as part of their overall strategy for defeating an opposing team”*⁵; actually, *“some athletes and coaches believe that a certain level of aggression in sports is necessary*

¹ Cambridge Dictionary, 2022

² Evens, Tom & Iosifidis, Petros & Smith, Paul. (2013). The Social and Cultural Value of Sport. 10.1057/9781137360342_4.

³ Protecting Children from Violence in Sport: A Review with Focus on Industrialized Countries. Italia, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 2010.

⁴ Peco, Jasmin & Gerin, Jasmina. (2022). Sports and violence.

⁵ Amanyire, Daniel. (2018). Causes of Violence in Competitive Sports in the Sports Clubs in Kyenjojo District: A Case Study on Four Football Clubs around the District, Kampala International University, school of science with education.

to achieve athletic success”⁶. In addition, for others, “violence in sport is demonstration patriotism, but in an actual sense it is a barbaric act which usually uncalled for”⁷.

2.1.1 Sport violence in Europe

One of the most violent sports in Europe is football. In 2016, over 120 million people attended more than 16.000 football matches across it. This placed a substantial burden on the police and security forces. The movement of millions of fans is a serious challenge to those tasked with securing a safe and friendly environment on the ground. Indeed, research co-funded by the European Commission and the Council of Europe shows that nearly 2 million police officers, stewards, and private security personnel were employed to secure the football matches throughout that year. Despite this, 15.000 incidents were registered in connection with professional football matches, which had taken place at almost every match played (93%) although only 1 % of those incidents were very serious. The unauthorised use of pyrotechnics was the most common incident inside stadiums (65 %), followed by various types of violent behaviour (16%), such as threatening behaviour, violence against the police, throwing of objects, and vandalism. Similarly, incidents outside stadiums were marked by the violent behaviour of fans (74%), including mainly threatening behaviour and violence against rival fans, and use of pyrotechnics (20%). The police arrested over 6.700 people, mostly outside stadiums (64 %). The arrests resulted in more than 5.700 criminal or administrative convictions issued by national courts, and over 9.200 banning orders, 13% of which included geographical or other constraints⁸.

In order to face the wave of violence, the Council of Europe drew up the European Convention on spectator violence and misbehaviour at sports events and in particular at football matches. It focused on preventing, deterring and responding to incidents of violence and misbehaviour inside or near stadiums, placing the responsibility of ensuring that stadium infrastructure complies with national and international standards and regulations on the participating countries. National authorities should also have effective crowd management and safety schemes and emergency and contingency plans, tested and refined in the course of regular exercises.

The document further requires the parties to ensure that spectators feel welcome and well treated throughout events, including by making the stadiums more accessible to children, the elderly and people with disabilities, and by improving sanitary and refreshment facilities.

With respect to prevention and sanctions, the convention provides that all necessary measures should be taken to reduce the risk of incidents of violence and disorder and that, in respect of

⁶ Peco, Jasmin & Gerin, Jasmina, idem

⁷ Amanyire D., idem

⁸ European Parliament, 2016.

national and international law, adequate effective exclusion arrangements should be put in place to deter and prevent such incidents.

Finally, it is envisaged that individuals committing offences abroad should receive appropriate sanctions. Those who have caused or contributed to incidents of football-related violence and/or disorder should also be subject to travel restrictions to football events held in another country.

2.2 Causes of violence in sports

There are two main perpetrators of violence and both have different motivations and express the abuse in different way.

*Competitors*⁹

The competitors have a tendency to violence as a form of self-protection, provided no lasting injury to be inflicted upon or by participants, nevertheless injuries have become more frequent and severe in recent years. A player once said *"I started playing Hockey because it's the sport where you can hit somebody and got away with it"*. Each circumstance of competitors/athletics violence can be fit into one of the three categories:

3. **Brawling:** it is the primary cause of athlete violence that will have an effect on the event venue. This situation occurs when the athletes are involved in violent situation among each other. spectators, game officials, or coaches. it can occur during the games or in the time surrounding the game, and can often also place the venue staff in to a dangerous situation.
4. **Hazing:** hazing will affect the athletes on the team; however, it is generally an internal issue among the team and therefore can be found in form of both verbal and physical abuse. It occurs among teammates and has grown into a major challenge in competitive sport.
5. **Foul play:** foul play can be controlled through rules, however it is addressed within the rules of the game. These situations occur when the player inflicted violent act upon one another throughout the cause of the game. Generally, these situations are controlled by game officials, yet the situations are ruled by how the game officials interpret the act. These calls can lead to ensure act of violence if the athletes or fans feel as through a foul was either call unfairly, or not called when deserved.

⁹ Amanyire D., idem

Fans¹⁰

Some of the worst examples of competitive sport violence occur among the fans watching an athletic contest. Every sport event is attended by individual who may instigate fan violence. These are individuals who score high in the personality disposition of anger and physical aggression. These individuals are attracted to violence and fighting among fans and exhibit a false belief about the willingness of other fans to join in act of violence. Motivated by socio-psychological factors fans result to copy act aggression when players are seen to get away with such acts so they act out of feeling that would be unacceptable in other contexts. An expert stated that by psychological problems of losing prestige status or job, which may encourage violent in face of an impending defect. He stated further the immediate cause as the following:

- the nature of certain supporters of the games;
- poor or biased officiating;
- philosophy of mass media, inadequate facilities and infrastructure;
- political undertone and rivalry;
- availability of been near sport area;
- ignorance of players and spectators about the law governing the match.

Considering what was said before regarding the value of sport, protecting it from violent acts or other violations must be one of the main aims of its operators. As evident, the perpetrators of sports violence in competitive sports are spectators, officials, competitors themselves and coaches. In this context, the duty of maintaining good conduct is placed, in first place, on the referee. However, many measures can be taken in order to improve the behaviours of the perpetrators.

¹⁰ Amanyire D., idem

THE ROLE OF REFEREES

According to the Dictionary of Sport and Exercise Science¹¹, a referee is “*an official who oversees the play in a sport or game, judges whether the rules are being followed, and penalizes fouls or infringements*”. As such, referees are an integral and important part of the sport environment. Good referee–player interactions can build a positive climate during the game and the referee’s responsiveness to the health, emotional, social, and cognitive needs of players. Building a positive climate should be viewed as “*the emotional bond between the referee and players, expressing mutual interest, enthusiastic attitudes and joy of contacts*”, while responsiveness “*reflects the referee responding to the emotional, cognitive, social, and health needs of players*”¹². Moreover, their actions can safeguard the values of sport. Just consider all the football matches suspended because of racist chants by fans against black players or all the gender reports done to protect women victims of abuses. All these episodes are examples of human rights protection.

These aspects make them performers on their own merit¹³: referees have unique motivation¹⁴ and career processes¹⁵, demanding physical standards¹⁶, visual and cognitive requirements¹⁷, emotional coping demands¹⁸, and game management expectations¹⁹.

However, their tasks are not easy to manage. The sport official has to face immense pressure, being able to determine with one single decision about winning or losing, about a gold or silver medal,

¹¹ Dictionary of Sport and Exercise Science. (2006). Referee (p. 175). London, UK: A & C Black Publishers.

¹² Ericsson, K.A., Charness, N., & Feltovich, P.J. (2006). The Cambridge handbook of expertise and expert performance. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

¹³ Dosseville, F., & Laborde, S. (2015). Introduction to the special issue: Officials in sports. *Movement & Sport Sciences*, 87, 3–10. doi:10.1051/sm/2015006

¹⁴ Philippe, F. L., Vallerand, R. J., Andrianarisoa, J., & Brunel, P. (2009). Passion in referees: Examining their affective and cognitive experiences in sport situations. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology*, 31, 77–96.

¹⁵ Samuel, R. D., Galily, Y., Guy, O., Sharoni, E., & Tenenbaum, G. (2019). A decision-making simulator for soccer referees. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 14, 480–489. doi:10.1177/174795411985

¹⁶ Weston, M. (2015). Match performances of soccer referees: The role of sport science. *Movement and Sport Sciences*, 87, 113–117. doi:10.1051/sm/2014011

¹⁷ Helsen, W., & Bultynck, J. B. (2004). Physical and perceptual-cognitive demands of top class refereeing in association football. *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 22, 179–189. doi:10.1080/02640410310001641502

¹⁸ Wolfson, S., & Neave, N. (2007). Coping under pressure: Cognitive strategies for maintaining confidence among soccer referees. *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 30, 232–247

¹⁹ Samuel, R. D. (2015). A psychological preparation framework for elite soccer referees: A practitioner’s perspective. *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action*, 6, 170–187. doi:10.1080/21520704.2015.1065938



about financial consequences²⁰. In addition, basing on 2017 research²¹, the 42% of referees face several problems in responding to abuse (namely, disrespect and verbal abuse from coaches, players, and fans) during the sport events. In the interviews conducted, they explained well their point of view through these sentences:

- *“Belligerent fans and coaches and players with attitudes. Not receiving sufficient training in dealing with these and other challenges.”*
- *“Abuse from coaches and fans who often do not understand the game.”*
- *“The hostile environment. Makes it tough to get people to stick around long enough to develop the knowledge and skills to effectively call a game.”*

A positive case of violence fighting can be provided referring to a 2021 Nice – Marseille football match. French league football match between Nice and Marseille was abandoned when Marseille refused to restart the game after home fans earlier threw objects and invaded the field.

The game had initially been suspended because of the fan violence with about 15 minutes to go. When it was decided to restart play, with hosts Nice 1-0 ahead, Marseille refused to return to the field. *“The league decided to restart the match. We decided, for the safety of our players who were attacked, to not restart the match because the safety of our players wasn’t guaranteed”* Marseille president Pablo Longoria said. *“The referee agreed with us. He confirmed to us that safety wasn’t guaranteed, he didn’t want to restart the match. But the league decided to restart. That’s unacceptable for us and that’s why we decided not to restart the match and to return to Marseille.”* Nice warmed up and the match was meant to restart with a Marseille corner. In surreal scenes, since there were no visiting players present to take the corner, the referee blew his whistle, and the match was abandoned.

Referees not only have problems in dealing with violence during the sport events, between player, between fans and players, between coaches, but also with the aggression towards themselves. Referees from different sports, such as football, hockey, rugby, and cricket, and across different continents suffered hostile reactions to their decisions. For example, the 63.6% of Swedish football referees had suffered verbal aggression at least one occasion either from players, coaches, spectator, and/or others. The most frequent aggressions experienced referees are abusive remarks, followed by threatening and intimidation²².

²⁰ Pizzera, Alexandra. (2015). The role of embodied cognition in sports officiating. *Movement & Sport Sciences*. 87. 53-61. 10.1051/sm/2014013.

²¹ Ridinger, Lynn & Warner, Stacy & Tingle, Jacob & Kim, Kyungun. (2017). Why Referees Stay in the Game. *Global Sport Business Journal*. 5. 22-37.

²² Devis-Devis José, Serrano-Durá José, Molina Pere, “The Referee Plays to Be Insulted!”: An Exploratory Qualitative Study on the Spanish Football Referees’ Experiences of Aggression, Violence, and Coping”, *Frontiers in Psychology*, vol. 12, 2021, doi 10.3389/fpsyg.2021.656437



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As evident, violence is all around and can compromise the values conveyed by sport. Therefore, taking preventive measures that enhance the role of referees is vital. At the same time, it can be functional support a process of awareness also in coaches, sport managers and fans.



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HOW REFEREES CAN PREVENT VIOLENCE DURING SPORT EVENTS

As said, referees can have a strategic role in keeping alive a sport event and to secure it from the occurrence of violent incidents. This can be possible applying some measures.

1. BE A POSITIVE MODEL

1.1 Fair play

Fair play is the first step to take to be a positive model. It is more than playing with the rules; it incorporates the concepts of 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. It incorporates issues concerned with the *“elimination of cheating, gamesmanship, doping, violence (both physical and verbal), the sexual harassment and abuse of children, young people and women, exploitation, unequal opportunities, excessive commercialization, and corruption”*²³. More specifically, an official should:

- make sure that every athlete has a reasonable opportunity to perform to the best of his or her ability, within the limits of the rules;
- avoid or put an end to any situation that threatens the safety of the athletes;
- maintain a healthy atmosphere and environment for competition, supervising the respect of human rights and on the reactions of athletes and coaches during the match;
- permit the intimidation of any athlete either by word or by action;
- be consistent and objective in calling all infractions, regardless of my personal feelings toward a team or individual athlete;
- be open to discussion and contact with the athletes before and after the game;
- remain open to constructive criticism and show respect and consideration for different points of view.

Basically, a referee should be always fair, impartial and consistent, praising good sporting behaviour. He/she has a responsibility and, thanks to the credibility and the fame gained with commitment, can really stand for values, mutual respect and rules.

1.2 Good communication

²³ Unesco, “Fair Play - The winning way”

During a sport events, many factors can put pressure on a referee: he/she has to check the respect of rules and roles, has to supervise the reactions of fans and the wellbeing of players and so on. He/she should have the ability to get his/her message across to players, managers and spectators. Referees are required to remain calm, controlled and develop high concentration levels to be successful but sometimes it can be hard.

Referees frequently debate the most effective techniques, and each have an opinion about the best way to communicate their on-field decisions.

Conventional and well supported referee wisdom dictates that referees should execute and communicate their decisions with a calm tone and that a brief explanation of decisions in certain circumstances improves player reactions. Other affirm that everything depends on the circumstances and on personal experience: on a side, referees advise a personable style with a focus on respect for players, on the other recommend a terse style with a focus on detachment and maintaining their authority. In any case, communication influences player perceptions of fairness and correctness in referee decisions and referees will benefit from their understanding and mastery thereof²⁴.

Some referees say that also body language can have a role in communicating a message: *“referees use body language to enhance performance, show leadership, enhance game management skills such as mediating and creating a connection, and to win trust and respect from players. Body language should be changed to suit the situation. It is a form of communication; it needs to be natural and fluent”*. Like in the case of the communication tone, officials don't have to show off or exaggerate. They should use the right quantity and quality of body language otherwise he/she will force himself/herself into a character which he/she is not, and players will perceive this²⁵.

Any good tool of communication will allow the referee to engage the offenders attention, project confidence in the decision, and promote a perception of fairness. Examples of communication tools are:

- avoiding unnecessary words and actions;
- short but clear explanation;
- don't react, just respond with calm words and body language, they appear fairer than anger;
- having an explanation is perceived as more correct than decision without explanation.

1.3 Respect of code of conduct

²⁴ WineCape's Referee Blog, Referee communication skills, 2010.

²⁵ WineCape's Referee Blog, idem.

Referees, like all officials, have a responsibility to promote high standards of behaviour to prevent violence. Referees represent the Administration of the Sport on the field of play and consequently carry a significant responsibility in ensuring the reputation of the sport is protected and enhanced. That's why each sport club has its code of conduct. It generally gathers all the rules that a referee must enforce and must, in turn, enforce. Following some examples:

World ParaVolley Referee Code of Conduct

Art. 6 Referees should always referee with total impartiality, making all decisions based only on the evidence presented and without considering any incidents from an earlier date. They should, at all times, referee within the true spirit of the game and not only to the simple letter of the rules. Over friendliness with players, coaches and bench personnel before, during and after a match, whether actual or perceived, can be a problem and is discouraged as this can lead to accusations of non-neutrality.

Art. 7 During a match, referees should deal with players and coaches showing respect, even where this courtesy is not returned. Heated arguments and debates with players, coaches, bench personnel or spectators, whatever the cause and under any amount of provocation are to be avoided at all costs.

Australian Fencing Federation Code of Conduct

Referees at AFF events must agree that they will:

- be honest and completely impartial at all times;
- avoid situations which may lead to, or be construed as, a conflict of interest;
- manage every match in a positive, calm, confident and respectful manner;
- deal with all instances of violence, aggression, unsporting behaviour, foul play and other misconduct in an appropriate manner;
- never tolerate offensive, insulting or abusive language or behaviour from athletes, officials or spectators;
- set a positive personal example by promoting good behaviour and showing respect to everyone involved in the sport at all times;
- respond in a clear, calm and confident manner to any appropriate request for clarification by an athlete.

1.4 Training

Each official should attend training courses, depending on his/her needs in order to keep himself/herself update and to keep safe the spirit of the sport from abuses and violence.

Experts generally advice courses in decision making which is the main skill required in their sector. In a research conducted in 2022²⁶, the football referees involved say that well-developed decision-making skills are central for a successful performances, they perceived it as “very important” to “extremely important”. Similarly, they consider useful the development of communication skills (verbal and physical ones) and this objective can be reached through a training or through specific exercises. Then, game management is another skill that officials should deepen. Referees need to manage the players and coaches, in terms of leadership skills, proactivity, assertiveness and “selling” their decisions, coping with aggression and reacting to player vocalizations. Finally, they should attend courses in human rights in order to understand what and which they are and to identify the violation of them during sport events.

2. POSITIVE MODELS EXAMPLES

In Germany, the third national division match between Duisburg and Osnabrück was first interrupted and then suspended in the 33rd minute. This was because 22-year-old Aaron Opoku was subjected to racial insults. In addition to the sadly customary monkey noises, the player had to hear a fan shouting at him “you're a monkey, you don't know how to play!” while he was taking a corner. Referee *Nicolas Winter*, on the instructions of the linesman, decided to stop the game. “Aaron was shocked, I told him we would defend him”, explained the referee at the end of the match. The match, however, never resumed.

- This is a case of good example because the referee showed empathy with the player and he was sensitive to his humanity. Suspending the match, he respected a code of conduct, the spirit of equality promoted by sport and protected the dignity of Aaron.

After six minutes of play, Italy-Serbia match was suspended because of violence in the Serbian fans. About 1.600 ultras of Serbia soon started to throw smoke bombs first towards the supporters of Italy, then towards the football field. There was also the explosion of a paper bomb and they tried to cut the fence dividing the guest sector from the one occupied by the Italian crowd. At the same time, they started raising nationalist chants and shouting "Kosovo is ours!". Given the tense atmosphere from the first minutes of the game, referee Craig Thomson decided to permanently suspend the match.

²⁶ McEwan, Gary & Unnithan, Viswanath & Easton, Chris & Arthur, Rosie. (2020). Development and validation of the Referee Training Activity Questionnaire (RTAQ): Towards a better understanding of the training practices of soccer officials. *Journal of Sports Sciences*. 38. 1-12. 10.1080/02640414.2020.1800371.



- In this case, Thomson immediately realised what the escalation of violence would be shortly thereafter. In order to protect the safety of the players and fans in their entirety, he quickly and firmly decided to suspend the match. He remained lucid, calm and clearly stated his decision.

WHAT A COACH CAN DO TO PREVENT VIOLENCE DURING SPORTS EVENTS

Violence can also be triggered or reflected in the behaviour of some coaches. A case that can be taken into account is what happened during a Naples-Spezia match in 2022, when the Naples coach, Spalletti, literally exploded after Spezia's goal, shouting at the players and staff on the bench and then throwing a chair onto the field. The referee immediately ejected him to preserve the stable atmosphere during the match.

It is clear, therefore, that coaches can also play a key role in ensuring a healthy match and no violent acts. In particular, they should keep in mind that they are a model both for fans and for their athletes. This means that they should adapt different measure depending on their reference target.

*Fans*²⁷

A coach should be always calm and keep fair behaviour to don't stimulate strong reactions in audience. In addition, considering his/her role, he/she can play a role in raising public awareness on the importance of physical activity and sport for their own well-being and healthy development, especially in terms of nonviolent behaviour. He/she can use specific words or touch some topics during the interviews or can share promotional contents on his/her social sport account.

Shortly, a coach can prepare the fans to understand the values of sport and create a safe sport event. He/she should accept being a role model for participants with regard to violence prevention and act accordingly.

*Athletes*²⁸

A coach also has a role of responsibility towards his/her players. In particular, he/she can have an educational and guiding role. First of all, he/she can make athletes critically reflect on their underlying cultural and normative assumptions, and practices, regarding violence and then make them accept existing rules in sporting activities/behaviour, reducing a possible or potential acts of aggression in a coordinated way.

At the same time, he/she can promote the value of sport and the measures to take to ensure it, involving in these actions all the sport staff (sport managers, federation leaders, referees...). He/she can keep some informative sessions with his/her players on different shades of violence or can involve them in specific trainings or in updating the code of conduct of the team. In this way, the

²⁷ Competences of a Coach in Sport for violence prevention, Deutsche Sporthochschule Köln, 2018.

²⁸ Deutsche Sporthochschule Köln, idem.



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coach can create a common responsibility, he/she can make all participants feel affiliated to sport and team and, for this, they will be interested in keeping safe the event.

In conclusion, a coach should sensitize to his/her role about violence prevention and is encouraged to take responsibility for preventing violence, enhancing the ability of participants to think before taking action, managing the potential conflicts, initiating participants to open their minds and develop innovative solutions to solve their own issues in a peaceful way and offering new points of view to his/her players.



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WHAT A PLAYER CAN DO TO PREVENT VIOLENCE DURING SPORTS EVENTS

Like referees and coaches, athletes can also play a key role in preventing violence during sporting events. For many fans, athletes are true examples and role models, figures who are often revered because of their performances and skills on the field. Therefore, players can help promote positive sporting environments by:

- Being a good player, which means:
 - play with respect, integrity and fairness;
 - control the temper;
 - use of good language and of any derogatory remarks.
- Respect of opponent
- Respect of officials, which means acceptance and respect the official's decision and calm discussion of eventual issue.

As in the previous cases, players can also take part in themed seminars to improve their soft skills, or they can create alliances with different stakeholders in order to jointly promote the values of sport. An example of this can be the 2019 meeting held at Leicester City between the athletes Ben Chilwell and James Maddison and the club's LGBT+ supporters' group, Foxes Pride, to learn about the experiences of LGBT+ football fans. During the event, the participants asked questions about the issues faced by LGBT+ fans and the progress that has been made since Foxes Pride was founded in 2014. Since then, the group has worked closely with the club to tackle homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in football and to promote the welfare of LGBT+ supporters by ensuring that everybody feels welcomed and respected²⁹. This type of meeting has certainly improved the team's sensitivity towards human rights and if a discriminatory incident occurs during a match, they can be unite and face it together in a peaceful manner, without fuelling tensions and resulting in extremely violent acts.

²⁹ 'Out! – Good Practice Handbook on Fighting Homophobia and Empowering LGBT+ Stakeholders in Football', 2020.

CONCLUSION

Violence in sport remains a problem. Violence on and off the pitch impacts the image of both the sport and sport representatives as role models. Violent behaviour can also jeopardise the role of sport as a tool to convey positive values. If sport is to remain the best arena for uniting individuals, generations, populations and regions, it is vital to combat in depth the evils which it all too often displays violence, homophobia, racism and sexism.

This handbook was born, in particular, to demonstrate the strategic role a referee can play in a sports match and how he/she can act to prevent violence. The referee, in fact, is an intermediate figure between spectators, on a side, and players/coaches/sport managers, on the other. According to this, in a tense situation, his/her balanced or unbalanced reaction can lead to an escalation of tension or an improvement of the situation. The referee should be able to anticipate and manage conflicts fairly, ready to listen actively and attentive to the needs of the players. At the same time, he/she should understand what can lead a fan to be violent but still be ready to take the necessary measures, decisively but calmly.

Since this professional figure is required to have a number of important skills and a strong sensitivity to sport and its values, it is recommended to increasingly promote training courses on a European level that improve these skills. At the same time, awareness-building actions can be implemented, actions that are multidimensional and that not only involve referees, but also addressed to coaches and players.