

SASC Sports Series

Topics and strategies in the 21st century sporting world

Risk management (4)

Sport & Record Keeping

Produced by the Information and Research sub-unit of the South African Sports Commission. Video copies of this Colloquium are available on request. Video extracts are also included on the SASC's Sport Management Toolkit multimedia CDROM.

Enquiries: Charl Durand Tel (012) 677 9700 Email: charl@sasc.org.za Website: www.sasc.org.za



Introduction

In any sport and recreation organisation it is of vital importance to maintain accurate and complete records. There are several reasons why this should be done. Some of the most important reasons are as follows:

- *To make results and scores of games, competitions and tournaments available to interested parties. These could be the participants themselves, the media, parents and family, spectators, sponsors etc.*
- *To have an idea of what equipment and supplies cost in the past. This will prove valuable when shopping around for the best price when renewing or replacing old and worn out equipment, or supplies that have run out.*
- *To control the finances of the club or organisation.*
- *To keep a record of membership.*
- *To provide the information necessary at monthly and annual meetings.*
- *To ensure that the history of the club can be recorded and maintained.*
- *To furnish proof to courts in the event of a court case.*
- *To avoid bad decisions and practices of the past.*
- *To maintain accident and injury records.*

The club or organisation should develop and maintain a filing system which is accessible for review from time to time. These records should be available for as long as there is any possibility of any future safety concerns or athlete injury related litigation.

What information do you keep and record?

The club should retain copies of information distributed to coaching staff, participants and their parents for at least five years. A point to remember is that minors can bring a lawsuit several years after they reach maturity. As far as possible, notices, warnings and circulars should be reviewed and initialled by each participant regularly. This would demonstrate credibility and responsibility on the part of the coach or administrator in the event of a lawsuit.



Accurate and complete records should be kept of the following;

Administrators

- Constitution of the club or organisation.
- Policy documents.
- Rules and regulations of the club.
- Qualifications of instructors, coaches and volunteers.
- Financial transactions.
- Receipts and invoices.
- Notices and agendas of meetings.
- Minutes of meetings.
- Membership register.
- Notices and warnings issued.
- Correspondence received and sent out.
- Risk management plans. *Cont'd.*
- Emergency medical plans.
- Emergency evacuation plans.
- Checklists and inspection records.
- Accident record book.
- Emergency telephone numbers.
- Results of games/ matches.
- Publicity material.
- Assets register.
- Insurance policies.
- Contracts.
- Consent forms.
- Indemnity forms.

Coaches

- Qualifications of instructors, coaches and activity leaders.
- Coaches, instructors and activity leaders should file practice session plans.
- Safety information provided to athletes.
- Safety rules and regulations developed to reduce/ prevent accidents and injuries in the specific activity.
- Day to day instructional activities pertaining to participant safety.

Coaches and instructors should maintain a daily log of sports activi-



ties to help identify the cause of either dangerous or common problems. Items which can be recorded in the log can include the planned sports instruction schedule. Any changes made to the schedule should be noted and any post-session activity comments recorded.

Health & Fitness records

- The health record of participants should carry the names, home and work addresses, and telephone numbers of the parents/guardians or next of kin.
- The health record should contain current and past information that has a bearing on the medical preparedness or eligibility of athletes to participate in sports. It should also carry the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the family doctor and the hospital preferred for medical care by the parent or guardian.
- The health record should contain written permission for the club to obtain emergency medical care when necessary.
- Appropriate people should be made aware of athletes who have health conditions that may create emergencies when they participate in sports activities.
- The wearing of the universal medical identification symbol to indicate the presence of a special condition (such as diabetes, asthma or an allergy to penicillin) that is important to the life and health of the athlete should be encouraged, to ensure proper emergency care.
- Fitness assessment records should be filed and reviewed periodically.
- Injured athletes should only be allowed to return to practice or competition once they have received clearance from their medical doctor. Such medical clearance forms should be on file.

Emergency medical care and accidents

- Records should be kept of all emergency care provided and they should be retained as recommended by a lawyer.
- Before an injured athlete is allowed to resume with activities and participation in competitive sport medical clearance should be provided by his/ her medical doctor.
- In the accident record book specific details covering the facts of the injury, how it happened, what first aid was given, and by whom should be recorded. The first aider should not attempt to diagnose the extent of harm or nature of the injury.



- A uniform accident report form should be utilised by all sports club officials.

Conclusion

Prudent administrators and coaches will put everything they say and do down in writing. They will further file these records so that they can refer to them whenever necessary. In the event of a court case involving them, they will be able to provide the evidence required to defend themselves. If they do this, they will not have to live and work in constant fear of the law.

