

RECORDING AND REPORTING INFORMATION IN SPORT

Professor Paul Singh, 2006.

*“Do not tell me what you have done to make your sport safe,
Rather show me the evidence!”*

INTRODUCTION

In any sport or 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 maintain documentation is fundamental to good management.
- ❑ 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.
- ❑ To maintain adequate insurance cover

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. This is particularly important since minor athletes who are injured could wait until after they attain majority to raise a claim for damages.

WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD YOU RECORD AND REPORT?

The club should retain copies of information distributed to coaching staff, participants and their parents for at least five years. All checklists, forms, inspection records etc. should be kept on file. 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.
- Strategic plans
- Occupational Health and Safety Plans
- 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 registers.
- Notices and warnings issued.
- Correspondence received and sent out.
- Risk management plans.

- ❑ Emergency medical plans.
- ❑ Emergency evacuation plans.
- ❑ Checklists and inspection records.
- ❑ Accident record books.
- ❑ Emergency telephone numbers.
- ❑ Contact numbers of club/sport manager
- ❑ 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.
- ❑ Reports of items/areas requiring maintenance or repairs.
- ❑ Job descriptions
- ❑ Performance appraisal reports

Coaches and instructors should maintain a daily log of sports activities 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. Faulty or damaged equipment or structures reported by players should be noted for action.

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 is important to stress that athletes or their parents must declare fully any and all ailments or health problems suffered. 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.
- ❑ Where the athlete or their guardian has medical aid cover, the membership number and name of the medical aid should be kept on file also.
- ❑ 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 action taken and 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 in writing 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, by whom and when 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

With the amount of information that sport clubs and administrators deal with today, it is very difficult to maintain adequate records manually, and for long enough. Where affordable, they should make use of computer systems that simplifies their jobs relating to recording and reporting. The advantages far outweigh the costs of a computer.

Prudent administrators and coaches will put everything they say and do down in writing. Where it may be appropriate, photographic, recordings or video materials should also be developed. In the event of accidents, they should get witnesses to testify their evidence. 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.