

# **COACH'S CODE OF ETHICS**

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Ethics refers to the generally accepted norms of right or wrong behaviour, often based on universal values. Ethics is not about legality nor is it meant to be legalistic.
- 1.2 Coaches, due to their close interaction with athletes, exposure to the public, and the strong pressure to win, are potentially vulnerable to various forms of ethical issues and concerns.
- 1.3 If coaching is to be recognised as a profession, it is important that there exists a code of ethics for coaches. Coaches, by adhering to a code of ethics, would not only minimise the likelihood of being accused of unacceptable behaviour but would also project a sense of professionalism in their dealings with others.
- 1.4 One of the attributes of a profession is that the practitioners subscribe to and enforce ethical codes, which will help to demonstrate their commitment to providing quality services and expertise.
- 1.5 The Coach's Code of Ethics set out herein has been drawn up by SportSG and is applicable to all NROC registered coaches.
- 1.6 Individual NSAs can choose to adopt, or expand on, the Coach's Code of Ethics set out herein.

## **2 PURPOSE OF COACH'S CODE OF ETHICS**

- 2.1 To provide an ethical framework that would guide NROC registered coaches in determining appropriate behaviours.
- 2.2 To raise the status of coaching as a vocation.
- 2.3 To facilitate the self-regulation of coaching standards by coaches and consumers of coaching services by telling the public what is expected of coaches.
- 2.4 To communicate to the public the professional attitude of NROC registered coaches, thereby encouraging greater confidence in these coaches.
- 2.5 The principle of Responsible Coaching requires that the coach be competent and discharge his/her duty of care to the participants such that the participants are not harmed.

### **3 THE THREE PRINCIPLES OF COACH'S CODE OF ETHICS**

Three broad principles form the framework for the Coach's Code of Ethics and are illustrated by a list of key ethical standards related to coaching. The key ethical standards set out below are meant to illustrate and expound on the three broad principles, and are not meant to be an exhaustive list.

The three principles are:

- a. Respect for Individuals
- b. Responsible Coaching
- c. Integrity in Actions

### **4 PRINCIPLE: RESPECT FOR INDIVIDUALS**

4.1 The concept that each individual possesses an intrinsic value and worth is integral to the principle of Respect for Individuals. The coach is called upon to act in a manner respectful of the dignity of individuals.

#### **4.2 Key Ethical Standards**

- 4.2.1 Treat and respect everyone equally, regardless of race, language, religion, culture, gender or physical ability.
- 4.2.2 Recognise that your athletes can contribute in providing positive feedback on training methods and how best performance during training and competition could be optimised. Be a good listener when occasions for such interaction arise.
- 4.2.3 Remember that there is a need for certain information to be kept confidential. Disclosure of such information should only be made with the consent of those who requested confidentiality.
- 4.2.4 Be sensitive to the feelings of your athletes when providing feedback on their training progress and performance during competition. Criticisms, if any, should not be directed at your athlete, instead it should be on your athlete's performance.

### **5 PRINCIPLE: RESPONSIBLE COACHING**

5.1 The principle of Responsible Coaching requires that the coach be competent and responsible, and discharge his/her duty of care to the participants. This encompasses the concept that risks to the participants are minimised and benefits to their holistic development are maximised.

#### **5.2 Key Ethical Standards**

- 5.3.1 Be responsible for periodically updating your coaching expertise through participation in courses, conferences and workshops and through information available in resource materials.

- 5.3.2 Prepare well-planned and sound training programmes and execute them in a manner that would benefit all your athletes.
- 5.3.3 Recognise the limits of your knowledge and collaborate with other qualified practitioners. Where appropriate, refer your athletes to a more qualified coach or specialist.
- 5.3.4 Advise your injured athlete to seek further medical treatment and suggest an appropriate recovery plan whenever possible. When deciding on your injured athlete's ability to continue training or competing, do take into account his/her future health and general well-being.
- 5.3.5 Ensure that training and competition venues meet with minimum safety standards and that your athletes are properly attired.
- 5.3.6 Avoid sexual intimacy with your athlete. Any physical contact with your athletes should be only when absolutely necessary and during appropriate situations.

## **6 PRINCIPLE: INTEGRITY IN ACTIONS**

- 6.1 The principle of Integrity in Actions requires the coach to act with uprightness and coherence. Coaches are expected to be honest, principled and honourable.

### **6.2 Key Ethical Standards**

- 6.2.1 Be honest and sincere when communicating with your athletes. Do not give false hopes to your athlete.
- 6.2.2 Inform a fellow coach if and when you are working with his/her athlete(s).
- 6.2.3 Your coaching qualifications and experience should be accurately represented, both in written and verbal form.
- 6.2.4 Abide by the rules of your sport and respect your opponents and those in positions of authority.
- 6.2.5 Adopt a professional attitude and maintain the highest standards of personal conduct. It should encompass your mannerism, dress and language.
- 6.2.6 Exercise self-awareness and evaluate how your values and actions influence your coaching activities positively or negatively.
- 6.2.7 Uphold the values of clean, dope-free sport, by complying with all relevant anti-doping rules that are in line with the World Anti-Doping Code and cooperating with relevant anti-doping authorities should a need arise. Be a positive influence to those under your charge with respect to the values of clean sport.