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Discomforts of *fair play* principle in contemporary sport

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Krępująca zasada *fair play* we współczesnym sporcie

Streszczenie

Zjawisko, które wielu obserwatorów nazywa kryzysem współczesnego sporu wiąże się z inflacją wartości moralnych. Coraz bardziej ekspansywna konsumpcja sportowego produktu sprowadza pierwiastki humanistyczne, będące podstawą nowożytnego sportu, na margines, osławiając opinię publiczną z dewiacyjnymi praktykami życia sportowego. Brak poszanowania zasady *fair play* jest jednym z elementów składających się na szerszy obraz kryzysu wiarygodności współczesnego sportu, w wielu miejscach przepełnionego oszustwem, manipulacją i faulowaniem.

Celem niniejszej pracy będzie prezentacja wybranych przejawów kryzysu wartości współczesnego sportu, szczególnie związanych z łamaniem zasady *fair play*, próba udzielenia odpowiedzi na pytanie, czy zasada *fair play* afirmuje rywalizację sportową, czy też odwrotnie – degraduje, a samą siebie czyni w konsekwencji nieprzydatną. Celem będzie także w konsekwencji ukazanie

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instrumentalnego traktowania zasady *fair play* i licznych działań zmierzających do jej marginalizacji. Będzie to wreszcie spojrzenie na zasadę *fair play* traktowaną jako zbiór niewygodnych, etycznych więzów, krępujących rozwój skomercjalizowanego sportu.

Jako metody badawcze zastosowano jakościową analizę zawartości prasy, analizę dokumentów oraz jakościowe studium przypadku.

Słowa kluczowe: sport, zasada *fair play*, wartości olimpijskie, media, prasa sportowa.

Abstract

A phenomenon that is referred to by many observers as the crisis of contemporary sport is associated with the inflation of moral values. The increasingly expansive consumption of a sports product brings the humanistic coefficient, which formed the foundation of modern sport to the margins, and confronts public opinion with the deviant practices of sports life. Lack of the respect for the principle of *fair play* constitutes one of the elements that make up a broader image of the crisis of credibility of modern sport, in many places full of corruption, manipulation and foul play.

The objective of this paper is to discuss selected symptoms of the crisis of values of modern sport, especially the ones related to violation of the principle of *fair play*, combined with an attempt to answer the question whether *fair play* affirms sport competition or, conversely – it is degraded and makes this competition dispensable. The objective will also involve the demonstration of the instrumental treatment of the *fair play* principle and numerous actions whose aim is its marginalization. Finally, there will be a focus on the principle of *fair play* considered as a collection of uncomfortable, ethical bonds that hinder the development of commercialized sport.

Qualitative analysis of press content, analysis of selected items in a corpus of press releases and a qualitative case study were applied as the research methods.

Keywords: sport, *fair play* principle, Olympic values, media, sports press.

Introduction

The present physical culture has lost its autotelic character and is considered in an instrumental way. In success-oriented sport, based on purely pragmatic activities and built on mercantile foundations, athletes need to act as employees of the sports industry. As a consequence, sport fans are reduced to the role of consumers of a sports product. Due to the intricacy of social media, sports stars have attained a position in terms of the ability to create a lifestyle, but sport is a role model in the sphere of morality to an increasingly lesser extent. Moreover, one gets an impression that moral values play a decreasing role for the stakeholders in sports life.

Professional athletes today can be described as *Homo sportivus oeconomicus* because the most important aspects for them and their milieu are formed by profits and money. Studies have shown that more than 50 percent of athletes list victory in the first place among their goals [2].

The phenomenon that is called a crisis of modern sport by many observers is associated with the inflation of moral values. The increasingly expansive con-

sumption of a sports product reduces the humanistic coefficient, which stood at the basis of contemporary sport, to a marginal role. Besides, the public opinion is confronted with deviant practices of sports life. Lack of respect for the *fair play* principle is one of the elements that form a broader picture of the crisis of credibility of modern sport, which is in many places full of fraud, manipulation and foul play.

The fear that the application of the *fair play* principle may lead to the decrease in pace intensity in team games, and thus their spectacularity, and reduce the number of record-winning events in individual sports disciplines [19] contributes to the permanent marginalization of *fair play* in sports life, making it an uncomfortable principle, as it is considered to restrict the development of modern sport.

Statements regarding the crisis in the world of sport are not a universally binding dogma. We also come across other statements implying that the statements regarding the deterioration of modern sport are outdated and anachronistic, and the claims that autotelic values, success-oriented and material benefits that are commonly attributed to sports activities tend to be misleading [13].

This paper is concerned with the discussion of selected symptoms of the crisis of modern sport values, in particular the ones related to violation of the *fair play* principle, which is combined with an attempt to answer the question whether *fair play* affirms sports competition or, conversely, it is degraded and made impractical. The objective also involves the presentation of how the *fair play* principle is treated instrumentally, coupled with numerous activities aimed at marginalization of this value. Finally, we will take a look at the principle of *fair play*, considered as a collection of uncomfortable, ethical bonds that limit the development of commercialized sport.

Materials and methods

The material base of this work includes a corpus of press releases. Supplementary material for the authors includes websites run by sports editors.

The qualitative analysis of a corpus of press articles, analysis of press and a qualitative case study [37] were applied as the research methods. The analyzed examples involve the cases concerned with the most spectacular behaviours that violate the principle of *fair play*, including the use of pharmacological doping, *foul play*, deceit and simulation. In the area of this study, some of the unquestionable publications include reports and press releases by Butcher and Schneider [3], Loland [20], Lenk [18], Motoarca [22], Kosiewicz [13], Serrano-Durá, Molina and Martínez-Baena [34].

Evolution and atrophy of *fair play*

In the European sports milieu in the 1930s, the cult of victory was not known, and the sporting attitude on the stadium was more important from the result. *Fair play* was equated with victory. Even replacing an injured player with a substitute player was considered as unsportlike behaviour. Today such an attitude can be considered extremist. It was not, however, the same at the time when it was considered unworthy of a gentleman to support a single team only. No aggression in the stadiums and separation of spectator areas did not surprise anyone at that time. Fans were not biased in the sense that we use the term today. In the 1930s, an international football match was followed in the same manner as in the case of going to a theater. During the match between Germany and Italy held in Berlin in November 1936, the home supporters cheered and waved their hats even after the goal scored by the Italians [15].

Along with the increasing popularity of football and its rapid expansion beyond the region of sport, problems occurred with the compliance with the principle of *fair play*. Ever since, moral values have become increasingly embarrassing for players. On the one hand, admiration was directed at the game by gentlemen, and on the other hand everyone realized that football had originated from everyday competition. Therefore, an increasing tension arose between the theory of a fair game and the practice of competition, accompanied by an inevitable note of violence [47].

The above problems were related to the expansion of the most popular sport today – football. We should recall here that even the modern Olympic movement in its early days did not avoid serious mistakes. Even during the lifetime of Baron Pierre de Coubertin, an event occurred that remains to this day a shameful episode in the history of the Olympic movement. Anthropology Days was an event that accompanied the Olympic Games in St. Louis in 1904. The competition was a blatant attempt to demonstrate the inherent inferiority of the world's indigenous peoples, and by making them compete in athletic events the goal was to establish the superiority of the whites. It was a shameful racial experiment and, as a consequence, a flaw occurred in the Olympic idea [41].

Whereas the above incident can be considered unintentional, and taking place in the absence of Pierre de Coubertin, the modern approach to the principle of *fair play* can be considered in many cases dismissive, cynical and bold. As a matter of fact, such an approach degrades sport itself, and in particular its social function, and consequently can also bring adverse effects to many areas of social life, where failure can no longer be alleviated only by formalizing moral norms. An example of the behavior given below makes the fulfillment of the above-mentioned fears even more likely.

The captain of Real Madrid, Sergio Ramos, demonstrated the manner in which the *fair play* principle can be deliberately ridiculed. In the Champions League, during Ajax – Real Madrid football match held in spring 2019, Ramos provoked the referee to give him the yellow card, excluding him from the re-match, which was supposed to be a mere formality after the victory of the Spanish team in the Dutch stadium [40]. As a result of getting this card, Ramos wanted to enter the quarter finals with a clean account, and use his free time in the spectator area to make a documentary by the Amazon team with his involvement. When the Real Madrid player was filmed in his lodge, his friends on the pitch, deprived of their captain's help, were completely lost and sensationally lost the match with Ajax [49].

Current concept of *fair play*

One of the guiding principles of Olympism contained in the Olympic Charter is the human right to compete in sports in the spirit of friendship, solidarity and *fair play* and excluding any discrimination. The document states that the role of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) is, among others, to make efforts to ensure that fair competition is adhered to in sports [9]. The IOC Code of Ethics is an integral part of the Olympic Charter. In one of the sections of this document, concerned with the integrity of sporting competition, stakeholders in the organization of the Olympic Games are obliged to combat all forms of deceit and manipulation during sporting competition. In addition, it is emphasized that participants of the Games must not violate the principle of *fair play* nor demonstrate unacceptable behavior [10].

National sports associations disseminate similar content among their members. The Polish Football Association adopted the set of Football Ethics Rules prepared by Józef Lipiec. This code states that football, as the most popular sport in the world, has taken on a special, increased moral role [25].

In addition to representatives of sports associations and organizations, whose goal is to promote fair competition, there are other initiatives that take actions against negative phenomena in sports. We can remember here that as early as 1963, on the initiative of Tadeusz Olszański, the head of the sports section of "Sztandar Młodych" magazine, a *fair play* award was granted for a "sports gentleman" achievements in sports [28].

In the same year, the International Fair Play Committee was established, which awards the Trophy of Pierre de Coubertin for *fair play* in sports competition. Similarly, the European Fair Play Movement also awards its distinctions [14].

Despite these noble ideas contained in a wide range of papers and initiatives promoting fair competition in sports, there are still cases when the *fair play* prin-

principle is still treated instrumentally. One of the most striking examples of this type of attitude is “Financial Fair Play” distinction in European football.

“Financial Fair Play” (FFP) is a mechanism introduced by the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), whose main goal is to strengthen the development of the discipline [31, 32]. It was developed in 2009, and the complete program has been in force since 2014. The objective of FFP was to reduce club expenses to a reasonable extent. However, according to sports journalists, FFP has never had anything to do with *fair play*. It was only applied to strengthen the football elite [51].

In November 2018, sports journalists revealed the backstage of the activities of the President of the International Football Federation (FIFA) Gianni Infantino, who, as UEFA's Secretary General, attained his post with the statements stressing the idea of clean football and announced that he would not allow financial doping and would do anything to protect football from greed. At the same time, he helped to cover up the scams of clubs managed by Middle Eastern owners – Manchester City and Paris Saint-Germain. These clubs tried to ignore the UEFA regulations, implementing forbidden procedures on their premises that consisted in signing overestimated contracts with state-owned companies to support them, thereby bypassing the laws that provided limitations on the possibility of covering club losses from external sources. Many journalists believe that the principle of *fair play* has been treated instrumentally by the football authorities. It became only a slogan covering the game of interests. The authors of the FFP program turned out to be pretending idealistic hypocrites, who cited noble motives with the intention of sustainable development of the discipline [39].

Once again, it turned out that all these declarations of sport officials regarding respect for the law and following the *fair play* principle do not apply to all participants of sports life, and certainly do not apply to them to the same extent. The ideals remained in the statements, and everyday reality revealed the real face of sporting community.

Doping

When an attempt is made to address the problem of doping in sport, we should not focus solely on recalling doping scandals involving the best and most popular athletes and players. We should note that scandals have also been quite widespread in athletics, cycling or ski running, and efforts have been made to cover them. In particular, we should take into account the fact that the BALCO scandal, the Operacion Puerto, or the fall of the legend of Lance Armstrong do not offer the comprehensive list of doping events in the history of sport, which should also include the latest Aderlass scandal. Nevertheless, we believe that

we should note the complexity of the problem of combating doping and dealing with the fact that not all people involved in sport consider doping to be an evil that needs to be controlled. Numbers of sporting community members are in favor of doping legalization and claim that the ban on doping is an anachronistic relic, and consider the principle of *fair play* to be mistakenly understood as the highest value in modern sport [13, 30, 45].

As a consequence of disclosing and commenting on doping scandals, we can note an increase in disrespect in sport. On the one hand, fans expect that records should be broken, and on the other hand, they are increasingly aware they may be witnessing fraud and manipulation while they follow sports broadcasts. In connection with the above, the actions taken against doping are becoming more and more uncomfortable, which was accurately captured by the German investigative journalist, Hajo Seppelt. His famous words are as follows:

If no one publicizes doping, everyone benefits: firstly athletes – as they get higher bonuses and have more sponsors, secondly, managers who receive better commissions, thirdly sponsors—since the broadcast on television is louder and the product sells better. As a result, TV stations have more viewers and get more money from advertising. Sports associations also benefit as they can demand more money from sponsors. Politicians are proud that their spending on sport benefits and wins strengthen the national bond. Everyone earns, everyone gains benefits [33].

However, the view expressed by Seppelt does not take into account the group of athletes who are wronged in competing with cheaters. Clean athletes emphasize that all the effort of sports managers goes to capture and punish athletes using doping, which is right, but the victims are ignored. There is lack of justice and compensation. The athletes and players who lost in unfair competition are not honored. Adequate conclusions resulting from the clean wins are not brought forward. Broadcasts with the names of the real masters are not provided widely. Athletes cheated on in such conditions postulate an additional ceremony during the most important sports competitions, during which medals taken from doping sportspeople will be awarded to them. Currently, medals are sent by post to sports associations. However, they do not always arrive. The 2000 Olympic champion in Sydney, a hammer thrower, Szymon Ziółkowski confessed to journalists that he had been waiting 22 years for the gold medal from the World Junior Championships, and 11 years for the silver from the Senior World Championships [16].

In this way, the most important problems of modern sport – associated with the crisis of its credibility and related to fight against doping – is raised.

We are still waiting for the final 2012 Summer Olympics medal table. According to the IOC regulations, within 10 years from the date of the competition it is possible to perform analyses of the athletes' samples, thus dishonest athletes can be disqualified until 2022. In weightlifting, almost one-tenth of athletes who

performed on the platform were found to have used prohibited substances. The 2012 Olympics were announced “the cleanest in history,” as 116 doping cases have already been reported [24].

Paradoxically, the fight against doping, which is adhered to by the IOC authorities, reduces the credibility of the Olympic community. One of the first decisions of the IOC Chairman Thomas Bach was to increase the number of doping controls before and during the 2014 Winter Games in Sochi [19]. After a few years, however, public opinion found out how such tests are carried out in Russia and learned about lack of their credibility. It turned out that the highest authorities in anti-doping laboratories gave consent to replace urine samples of doping athletes with clean urine. The doping practice supported by the authorities described in two independent reports commissioned by WADA resulted in the ban imposed on the entire Russian athletics team in the Rio de Janeiro Olympics [16].

As a consequence of covering 643 doping cases in Russia in between 2012 and 2015, the credibility of WADA was considerably undermined. The organization set up in 1999 [7] by the sports and national authorities to fight doping did not predict the audacity of the hosts of the Sochi Olympics, and its controllers could not prevent swapping tainted samples with clean ones. The Richard McLaren Commission was only appointed by WADA after the findings of investigative journalists, and its work showed a terrifying picture of the doping industry in Russia. WADA made a statement with a suggestion regarding the exclusion of Russian athletes from the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, but the IOC did not support this request, leaving the decision to national athletics associations, which only contributed to exacerbation of the WADA crisis and undermining the credibility of this organization [44].

The doping crisis in Russia has encouraged actions from the community, trainers and athletes from other countries to condemn cheaters and declare the purity of domestic sport. However, it turns out that many athletes (e.g. in Germany), including athletes, swimmers and gymnasts, have not been subject to routine doping controls for a long time [1].

The International Olympic Committee and anti-doping agencies face a serious dilemma. The more doping cheaters they manage to identify, the more doubts arise whether professional sport can be practised without doping at all [35].

Another problem is associated with the asymmetry in the treatment of doping athletes by the world sports authorities. On the one hand, there are sports disciplines whose members have joined the ADAMS (Anti-Doping Administration and Management System) online system in accordance with the IOC requirements. In accordance with this system, athletes are obliged to provide information regarding the duration and place of stay on each day of the year. This means that WADA inspectors can carry out the inspection at any time [43]. On

the other hand, there are manifestations of ostentatious impunity and a disrespectful approach to mandatory controls, as was the case with Real Madrid captain Sergio Ramos, who broke the doping rules twice, and despite that no actions were taken against him by the UEFA doping committee and WADA [48].

The approach to taking asthma relieve medicines raises a huge controversy in the sports environment. For several years, the question regarding the effect of asthma medications has been pondered upon by the community, whose members wondered whether such medications just alleviate the patients' medical condition or give them an unfair advantage over healthy competitors [46]. For many years, an asthmatic athlete has had to apply a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE) to be able to compete while using such medications. However, WADA experts concluded that anti-asthmatic drugs, if they are taken at therapeutic doses, do not require exemption. It is worth recalling here that the Norwegian national team took 6,000 doses of asthma medication for their athletes to the Pyongyang Winter Games [17].

TUE and its abuse are also a source of controversy and many ethical doubts in the cycling world, which is best demonstrated by the example of the British cycling group SKY (since April 30, 2019, Team Ineos), which dominated the most prestigious races [26, 54].

Some disciplines which are unable to cope with doping for various reasons are even threatened with exclusion from the Olympic family. The weightlifting community, considered by the sports media to be susceptible to the use of doping to the highest extent, has the greatest cause for concern. Every year, dozens of names appear on the list of weight lifters suspended for doping. If the condition does not improve, the Olympic Games in Tokyo may be the last for this sport. The place for this discipline in the 2024 Paris Games is conditional [12].

Doping in sport is not limited to pharmacological enhancement of results. In chess, there is an open talk about electronic doping in the form of chess engines installed on mobile phones. That is why at chess Olympiads, the players are not allowed to carry watches and pens, and the players pass through the gates, just like at the airport [5].

Foul play

The pursuit of the goal beyond any control is an immanent characteristic of modern professional sport. Most often, such a goal is victory, which is the key to fame and money. In addition, all kinds of remuneration and apanages stimulate players throughout sports competition, and sport is less often performed according to strictly observed rules of a given discipline [6].

In football, as a consequence of the implementation of tactics involving individual coverage of the opponent and thus increasing aggressiveness on the pitch, an increase in the number of violent fouls has occurred. Already before the final match for the world championship between Germany and Hungary in 1954, German coach, Sepp Herberger ordered the defender, Werner Liebrich to eliminate one of the best Hungarian players, Ferenc Puskas from the game:

Don't step on him, if he goes to the left wing, follow him to the left. If he runs to the right flank, then you go to the right with him. Don't leave him a step even if he goes to the toilet. And if you run away, remove the knife and stick it in his back! [19].

The former German representative, 1974 World Champion and 1972 European Champion Paul Breitner understood the *fair play* principle in a similar way. He proudly confessed, "I don't want to be any role model; before I let my opponent score a goal, I have to do everything to prevent him – if not by following the rules, then by foul" [42].

When one comes across the aforesaid statements, no one should be surprised by increased brutality in contemporary football, which is most clearly demonstrated by the fouls of Harald Schumacher on Patrick Battiston in 1982 or Roy Keane on Alf-Inge Haland in 2001.

When fouls take place in the sports arena, they tend to primarily affect the player's body, but when we deal with an off-ball foul, it also affects the psyche and interpersonal relationships. Fouls can take the form of words, sounds or images. They are designed to affect only players, but also, and perhaps above all, members of training staff whose work can be interrupted or slowed down. Manipulation of facts, putting pressure on rivals and referees, diverting attention from the key goals of a sporting event are more and more frequent actions of some football coaches. They also make use of verbal foulards' carrying capacity and their attractiveness for users of social media, "driving" even multi-day polemics.

The Portuguese coach Jose Mourinho is considered to be a specialist in verbal fouls, the so-called mind games. Throughout his career, this distinguished manager often initiated verbal taunts with other trainers, e.g. Arsene Wenger or Claudio Ranieri. The purpose of these verbal wars was to remove pre-match pressure from the players and transfer it to the attacked coaches of the rivals. Mourinho also directed psychological games against referees, which the Swedish judge, Anders Frisk, was victim of. On February 24, 2005, after the Barcelona-Chelsea match as part of the Champions League football, won by the home team 2 : 1, referee Anders Frisk ended his career. First, he was accused by leading English team Mourinho of favoring the hosts. As a consequence of this verbal attack, numerous threats were sent by Chelsea fans to the referee, including telephones in which he was threatened with life deprivation and potential attacks on his family. After several days, the terrified and lonely referee gave up

his career as a referee [27]. It is also worth noting that verbal fouls are harder to identify and are usually not penalized.

Deceit and simulation

One of the consequences of the spread of violent games, especially in places without video analysis, are attempts to draw fouls. Players, who often escape from interventions that pose hazards to their health, have learned how to simulate fouls. In this way, a kind of performance is followed in sports arenas, during which players, like actors, play episodes in order to trigger a specific reaction of the referee.

Simulation in sport is not limited to pretending fouls. One also pretends to take part in a game, while ridiculing the idea of *fair play*, in the name of which such competition was conducted. The best example of this type of behavior is the end of the Japan–Poland match held during the 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia. Polish players were happy with the lead in the match and did not feel like attacking the Japanese. In turn, the Japanese, despite a 0:1 defeat, were guaranteed the promotion to the next round because in the *fair play* classification of the event, made up by adding yellow and red cards, they occupied a higher position at the time than Colombia and Senegal. The part of the match in which the Japanese passed the ball on their side for several minutes despite no attacks from the Poles was called a farce. In turn, an ostentatious simulation of injury by one of the Polish footballers constituted an act of desperation as it was supposed to prompt kicking of the ball outside the pitch by the Japanese (in a gesture of *fair play*, of course), and thus giving an opportunity to perform a substitution and entry of a substitute player [52]. The fans whistled farewell to both teams, and one of the sports journalists wrote about ten minutes of shame. He also asked, “What exactly happened that the winning match changed into an embarrassing show of neglect to fans, football as such and fair play?” [38].

Attempts at deceit at sports are not always straightforward [21] and are subject to territorial interpretations. In England, when the Argentinian coach Marcelo Bielsa sent his colleague to watch the rivals exercise before a league match, it prompted a debate whose aim was to determine rules regarding ethical behavior in football. The above behavior was met by a considerable degree of indignation from the community. It was commented on in various ways, first as lack of respect for colleagues and on other occasions as deceit in sport that should deserve punishment. The League of Managers' Association was also urged to take action against the coach. This type of exaltation may come as a surprise, because all kinds of sports espionage have been known for many years. Sometimes it can irritate opponents, but according to what Bielsa said

without embarrassment, it is employed permanently, in particular in Europe and South America, i.e. where the level of football is the highest [29]. Various training sessions have already been viewed from bushes, from a helicopter, and now it is common to use drones.

Luiz Adriano's anti *fair play* behavior can also be considered an attempt of sports deceit. On November 20, 2012, during the Champions League football match between FC Nordsjaelland and Shakhtar Donetsk after resuming the referee kick, Shakhtar Wilian, a traditionally *fair play* player, kicked the ball out into the opponent's half towards the goalkeeper Jesper Hansen. Unexpectedly, Adriano took the ball and ran towards the goal of the opponent and, with the passive attitude of the players and the goalkeeper of Nordsjaelland, shot a goal. Despite the deafening whistling of the fans and the players' consternation and embarrassment, the goal was considered scored, as the return of the ball to an opponent following a referee's throw is not regulated by any rules [8].

Fortunately for sport, such ostentatious behavior that violates the *fair play* principle is very rare.

Discussion

The crisis of values in the world of sport is a phenomenon that stimulates discussion and encourages the statement of various, often extreme positions by the representatives of the humanities and social sciences involved in the study of phenomena in the field of physical culture: Kosiewicz [13], Lenk [18], Kazimierczak [11], Zieliński [50].

On the one hand, there are opinions pronounced by supporters and even enthusiasts who especially highlight the merits of the entire Olympic movement, as it is considered to be one of the strongest and most recognized international value-oriented movements that provides a long-standing approach that has a significant position and international strength. They see, of course, the problems that modern sport struggles with, but we can get an impression that they do not recognize its weight, focusing primarily on exaggerated nationalist and commercial aspects that accompany competition, and only later on the lack of integrity in the attitude to sport and the efforts to combat doping [18]. The absolute faith in the educational role of sport deserves a particular level of surprise. In the times accompanying the crisis of educational values, the idea of Olympic movement, combined with the principle of *fair play*, could offer one of the effective ways to educate youth, placing itself in the avant-garde of contemporary pedagogy trends [4, 11, 36]. Yet, according to these authors, sport's role does not have to increase, in particular in the face of scandals revealed in recent

years with the participation of coaches and educators who use violence against their trainees.

On the other hand, the spread of pathological and deviant behaviors in sport also leads to its excessive criticism. The supporters of radical solutions even postulate that sport in its competitive version should be abolished. They believe that sport is no longer able to improve since its image is formed by corrupted people who make it insensitive to positive changes. The negative characteristics of modern sport will continue to expand until it is completely deprived of the humanistic, ethical and aesthetic elements, in favor of purely pragmatic activities focused on success, fame and money [50].

The cases of abuse in sport reported in the paper do not incline the authors of this paper to give equally radical statements, but their intention is to clearly demonstrate the marginal role of the *fair play* principle in modern sport, which has become increasingly ruthless, brutal and cruel. The appeal of money and honors encourages athletes to win at all cost. Therefore, in such conditions of competition, which is still taking place under enormous social pressure, the *fair play* principle has become an awkward aspect.

Final remarks

It is difficult to clearly indicate the caesura marking the beginning of the fall of the gentleman's idea in sport. It is worth remembering, however, that in December 1945, British writer and columnist George Orwell published a paper in the *Tribune* magazine containing the following statement, "Serious sport has nothing to do with *fair play*. It is bound up with hatred, jealousy, boastfulness, disregard of all rules and sadistic pleasure in witnessing violence. In other words, it is war minus the shooting" [23].

Nowadays, in the era of overwhelming commercialization of sport and a growing scale of its degeneration, scientific discourse promoted by idealists of noble sport tends to increasingly diverge from the reality on the pitch. That is why a new formula of *fair play* promotion is continuously being sought, which would counteract the dissemination of *foul play*. *Fair play* is being rescued primarily by idealists who believe that sport can only be saved if the *fair play* principle is understood as a formal and compulsory characteristic, which needs to be followed in every discipline to be able to be called sport [19].

It is unlikely to anticipate that any significant support for this new *fair play* formula will be offered by the world sports authorities who have focused on dealing with new problems. One of them is an aging television audience. That is why there is a desperate attempt to reinvigorate the games. The IOC applies the model of X Games (extreme sports games), by introducing new disciplines to the

Olympic program, ones that 20-year-olds are likely to be interested in. The final act of reinventing the games includes the introduction of e-sport. It is very possible that e-sport as a show discipline will already be included in the program of the 2024 Paris Games [53].

That is why the promotion of *fair play* by the supporters of nobility in sport should be associated with various types of awards and distinctions combined with publicizing the *fair play* principle as strongly as possible in the media. Of course, we need to bear in mind that victory is still a more attractive option for players and fans as it is objective, and *fair play* awards, even the most prestigious ones, are only subjective.

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