



# Norway leads gold medal tally with low-stress junior sport approach

Incredible pic from Cameron Spencer @GettyImages

## Feature articles

- ▶ **Putting 'us' ahead of 'me'**
- ▶ **eSafety and sport: Using technology to best advantage**
- ▶ **Dispute resolution in sport**

## Plus

New Sports Integrity e-book

International Women's Day presents opportunities for men

New Infographics section

Mediation guidelines and information

Check out the Play by the Rules website with many new features and resources:

[www.playbytherules.net.au/](http://www.playbytherules.net.au/)



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## THE EDITOR

### News:

**4** New Sports Integrity e-book

**5** International Women's Day presents opportunities for men

### Feature articles:

**6** Norway leads gold medal tally with low-stress junior sport approach

**8** Putting 'us' ahead of 'me'

**10** eSafety and sport: Using technology to best advantage

**12** Dispute resolution in sport

### Extras

**14 - 17**

Website update - New infographics section

Resource update: Mediation guidelines and information

Subscribe and other things

Back page - partners

## STATE/TERRITORY Play by the Rules CONTACTS

ACT - Grant Voysey (02 6207 2073)  
grant.voysey@act.gov.au

NSW - Shannon Dixon (02 8754 8814)  
shannon.dixon@sport.nsw.gov.au

NT - Zelma Collins (08 8999 4174)  
zelma.collins@nt.gov.au

QLD - Jo O'Neill (07 3338 9253)  
jo.oneill@npsr.qld.gov.au

SA - Marie-Therese Smith (08 8457 1408)  
marie-therese.smith@sa.gov.au

TAS - Al Adams  
(03 6165 5094)  
al.adams@dpac.tas.gov.au

VIC - Jason Calleja (03 9096 9832)  
jason.calleja@sport.vic.gov.au

WA - Helen Cunningham  
helencunningham@wasportsfed.asn.au

NATIONAL - Peter Downs (02 6259 0316)  
manager@playbytherules.net.au

## THE EDITOR

March already, would you believe!

The first Play by the Rules magazine of 2018 has the usual four feature articles. ABC journalist and Play by the Rules friend Paul Kennedy provides a unique perspective on the success of the Norwegian team at the recent Winter Olympics. Could it be that their approach to children's sport is a key? Clyde Rathbone is back with a piece on handling conflict in a team sport and juggling the needs of an individual with that of a group. There is some important information from Kellie Britnell from the Office of the eSafety Commissioner on using technology to best advantage. And we look at the rules and regulations of a sporting association governing the resolution of disputes or grievances.

Plus the usual news items and updates. I hope you find it useful and feel free to share it with your colleagues and friends in sport.



Peter Downs  
Manager - Play by the Rules

News:

## New Sports Integrity e-book

A new e-book on sports integrity has recently been released that will be of interest to sport administrators, officials, coaches, athletes and support personnel. The e-book is a production of the National Integrity of Sport Unit (NISU) in the Department of Health. It was produced in cooperation with the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority, Australian Sports Commission and Play by the Rules.

The e-book is designed to complement the 2017 National Sports Integrity Roadshow, delivered in collaboration with state and territory governments, featuring expert speakers Professor Louise Burke OAM, Head of Department of Sports Nutrition, Australian Institute of Sport; Dr David Hughes, Chief Medical Officer, Australian Institute of Sport; Damian Voltz, Senior Intelligence Analyst, NISU; Jason Whybrow, Acting Director, NISU; and Damien Jennings, South Australian Office for Sport and Recreation.

This information aims to provide a broad overview of some of the integrity issues currently facing sport. The resources, education and contacts aim to assist you with best practice management of sport integrity risks now and into the future.

Download your copy of the e-book at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/sports-integrity-ebook>



News:

## International Women's Day presents opportunities for men

March 8 was International Women's Day. All over the country, sports organisations celebrated the achievements of women in sport. And there's plenty to celebrate! In recent times we've seen a rapid rise in professional and elite women's sport across many codes. Undoubtedly, the rise will continue in 2018.

On March 8, the NSW Office for Sport hosted an International Women's Day Sport Leaders breakfast to celebrate this progress. During the breakfast a 'Press for Progress' panel of women, facilitated by ABC presenter Stephanie Brantz, showcased how sporting organisations, individuals and brands are striving for gender parity in sport.

The event was predominantly attended by women. Sports journalist Tracey Holmes picked up on this via comments made by Chief Executive Matt Miller at the time. Tracey then spoke to Matt about the 'absence' of men at these types of events and of the ongoing role and opportunities men have to capitalise on the rise of women's sport. It's an interesting and much needed discussion you can listen to at: <https://sportandrecreation.nsw.gov.au/file/2739>

Participants in the Office of Sport's Sports Leaders breakfast





Feature article:

## Norway leads gold medal tally with low-stress junior sport approach

It was fascinating to watch the sporting community's response to Norway finishing on top of the Winter Olympics medal tally. For a country of only 5.2 million, they finished with an incredible 39 medals from the 102 events at the games. Journalists went looking for a secret of success.

They found one part of it in the Norwegian approach to children's sport, which values participation above glory. For example, scores are not kept in games involving children under 13. The Guardian interviewed Norway's Olympic Committee president, Tom Tvedt, who said: 'Our vision is sport for all.

'Before you are 12 you should have fun with sport. So we don't focus on who the winner is before then. Instead we are very focused on getting children into our 11,000 local sports clubs.'

Mr Tvedt said 93 per cent of children and young people participated in sport. Another Norwegian sporting boss, Tore Ovrebo, told Time, 'We do it this way, others do it another way.

'We want to leave the kids alone. We want them to play. We want them to develop, and be focused on social skills. They learn

a lot from sports. They learn a lot from playing. They learn a lot from not being anxious. They learn a lot from not being counted. They learn a lot from not being judged. And they feel better. And they tend to stay on for longer.'

I was not surprised Norway enjoyed success both in participation and medals with this approach. Time and time again on resources such as Play by the Rules we're reminded that a focus on fun and friendship compels children to keep playing season after season. Happy athletes are more likely to reach their potential.

I talked about this admirable approach on the ABC's News Breakfast program and for a brief segment on ABC News online. As usual, comments from viewers and online readers varied. Many were impressed by the 'let them play' approach.

A few missed the point and drew attention to other obvious factors — more snow! A minority of viewers and readers were angered by the Norwegian method.

These men and women claimed children still needed to be taught 'life lessons' as early as possible through winning and losing.

The silliest criticism of the Norway approach (similar to the rules employed by many sports



in this country, albeit not up to age of 13) is that children know the score. Of course they do, so why do we need to record it?

The mixed reaction only reinforces the work required by sporting leaders in this country to educate the community about the need for enjoyment in junior sport.

Parents who volunteer as coaches should understand the best measurement of success is not a premiership or producing the league's best player, but the number of children who come back next year.

Surprisingly, after all we have learnt since the inception of professional sport, sporting CEOs still need to be reminded of the benefits of fun coaching. Participation data is a worry for major sporting bodies.

Yet these are the same institutions placing

ever-increasing emphasis on pathway programs aimed at very young children. Such programs often require of families more time, money and stress.

Children who are not picked in these 'elite' training teams are sometimes made to feel inadequate, or hopeless. (In reality, some of these children might be the late bloomers who could go on to become world champions.) How can you tell if an 11-year-old boy or girl is going to 'make it'? Norway doesn't bother trying to foresee greatness, nor should we.

Gold standard is keeping sport fun, challenging and educational.



Paul Kennedy  
ABC News Breakfast

Feature article:

# Putting 'us' ahead of 'me'



Over the course of my rugby career I observed a fair share of conflict within the teams I played for. From personality clashes to competitive friction, it seems that when diverse populations are thrown together conflict is as natural as it is unavoidable.

In the context of team sports, conflict can usually be placed into two categories — that which enhances team culture and that which undermines it. It is fair to say that it is how teams deal with conflict which determines its effect on the group.

During my time in South African rugby I observed an extremely hierarchical culture within teams. In those environments a small group of leaders reported to a coaching staff that often made decisions without consulting the larger playing roster.

That culture stood in near complete contrast with my first exposure to a Brumbies team meeting. I distinctly recall being shocked by the way players from all levels within the team would engage in what can be mildly described as robust debate. From how we were going to play to what we would wear to the airport, the playing group had a voice on every issue.

There is no doubt that the culture the Brumbies developed invited conflict. When every opinion is given airtime and each personality is free to express itself, people are going to butt heads. However, what may have seemed like chaos to an outside observer was actually a direct insight into what made the Brumbies so successful during that period.

I'll never forget the first time I arrived at the Brumbies training facility in Canberra. I drove into the dirt carpark and cast my eye over



a training field which doubled as a public oval. The main building was a tiny collection of offices and the gym looked out onto the bowling green and its members. Juxtaposed with the three-story opulent surrounds of the Sharks' training facility in South Africa, I couldn't quite believe I had arrived at the headquarters of one of the world's leading rugby teams.

When the Brumbies were formed in 1996, they came together as a largely rag-tag group of unproven players, many of whom were unwanted by their home states and keen to make a point.

What's more, the team had a large contingent of players that had begun their rugby journeys before they knew one could have a career in rugby. Which is to say, everyone in the team started playing rugby when it was an amateur game before transitioning into the professional era.

This meant players had real-life experience. They had worked normal jobs, travelled, spent time at university and generally seemed deeply appreciative of the chance to earn a good wage playing a game. All of which made that group a far more worldly bunch than is likely to exist in today's era. It also meant that squad members placed a real premium on their autonomy. Perhaps it's the ability to juggle the needs of the individual with those of the group that defines healthy conflict.

After all, humans existed in relatively small tribal societies for millennia. In those environments, being able to work together could literally be the difference between life and death.

Given all that our species has achieved, it is no stretch to suggest that a capacity for group cohesion is humanity's defining feature. But if we're so good at working together, why does

achieving a healthy culture of collaboration remain a mysterious balancing act for teams of all kinds?

One answer may be that we've never been more free to be ourselves. In 2018, freedom of expression is celebrated like never before, and rightly so. After all what's more empowering than the freedom to feel comfortable in our own skin? And yet since we are all to varying degrees different from one another, are our differences inherently divisive?

In my experience, the only way to navigate the apparent dichotomy between individuality and collaboration is by respecting and remaining curious about what makes each of us unique.

Indeed, one of sport's greatest virtues is its ability to bring people together who might not otherwise have connected. Arriving at the Brumbies I was surrounded by team-mates from all over the world—Fijians, Tongans, Samoans, Kiwis, South Africans and even a healthy dose of Australians! Being immersed in that sort of diversity reminded me that what really matters in teams is shared passion and common goals.

Whenever I find myself on the verge of conflict, I try to remember to ask myself if I'm motivated by what is best for me or what is in the best interest of the group. From there I remember that my own interests are almost always aligned with those of my team.

By coming together to attempt something bigger than ourselves we can learn to put 'us' ahead of 'me'. In this way sport really can teach us to be more selfless, more empathetic, and maybe even a little more human.



Clyde Rathbone  
[www.karmawiki.com](http://www.karmawiki.com)

Feature article:

# eSafety and sport: Using technology to best advantage

It can be challenging to stay up to date with the issues, risks and solutions pertaining to online safety. At the Office of the eSafety Commissioner (the Office) we are committed to providing the most current information, and helping empower Australians to have safer, more positive experiences online.

Technology has been responsible for many advances in modern sport. It has reshaped and redesigned sporting equipment and apparel, helped us analyse and perfect sporting techniques, and led to the collection of detailed statistics which can be shared with audiences worldwide.

Technology—in particular the internet—has also helped us to share,

learn and communicate about sport more effectively. Social media, for example, has altered the sporting experience, while real-time live events streaming and statistical analysis have now become the norm.

Sporting clubs and organisations now have a stronger global and community presence thanks to the world online. Many use Twitter, Snapchat, Facebook, Instagram and other platforms to link with fans, players, officials, coaches, sponsors and their communities. There are many benefits, including enhancing partnerships with sponsors, attracting new audiences, increasing levels of participation, improving profiles and developing stronger links with members and supporters. But, importantly, there are also risks.



## Minimising risk on social media

Social media holds many risks for sporting organisations, ranging from the seemingly innocuous sharing of a photo without full permission, to the most damaging, such as cyberbullying, image-based abuse and online racism. For clubs and organisations, it's important to incorporate strategies into existing policies or to have a specific policy to address the use of new technology, devices and related behaviours. A policy also helps to manage risk, provide member protection and set clear procedures for breaches and complaints.

A social media policy may also outline how your club or organisation will use, publish and store photos and video content of their members. The Office's frequently asked questions can help clubs and sporting organisations assess and plan for how to best manage this content.

## Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is a significant online issue for young people, and one which can appear in a sporting environment. Cyberbullying is the use of digital technology to threaten, menace, harass or humiliate an individual or group. In sport, cyberbullying may look like online racism; targeted threats; intimidation of opposition players, coaches and teams; defaming of referees, coaches or management; or unsubstantiated claims

of drug-taking or favouritism.

Cyberbullying is a very real issue, and there is a need to explicitly educate players on the dangers of both online abuse and acting appropriately online. Where issues arise and a young person under 18 years is the target, the Office can help. We work closely with our social media partners to remove serious cyberbullying from the internet.

## Image-based abuse

Image-based abuse, known colloquially as 'revenge porn' or the non-consensual sharing of intimate images, is another harmful online activity which can affect sporting clubs and their members. The Office will provide assistance to individuals who have been subjected to image-based abuse, with new powers supporting individuals of any age who are victims and need help to remove these images.

## Navigating the world online

All our resources and services are underpinned by evidence-based research into internet use, online safety, e-security and related issues. To learn more about online issues, strategies and solutions—and how to use technology to your advantage—visit [www.esafety.gov.au](http://www.esafety.gov.au)



Kellie Britnell, Program Manager, Outreach and Education, Office of the eSafety Commissioner

Feature article:

## Dispute resolution in sport

It is an inevitable consequence of the passion and pride in sport that disputes will arise between those involved. These disputes can cover a wide range of subject matters, from governance and operational issues; discipline and conduct; promotion and relegation of clubs; to the non-selection of athletes in representative teams.

Disputes can arise between clubs, players, referees, managers, coaches, spectators or the sport's governing body.

The importance of resolving sporting disputes in a fair and efficient manner cannot be overstated. Disputes can often delay participation in sport, disenfranchise the sporting community, waste precious funding and often undermine a governing body's ability to manage its sport or competition effectively.

To minimise such disruption, it is important that sports' governing bodies continue to focus on ensuring:

- the clarity and awareness of their dispute resolution rules
- the effectiveness of their procedures for resolving disputes, and
- that clear lines of communication are maintained between stakeholders.

### Clarity and awareness of dispute resolution rules

Contracts in the area of sport are often made in an unorthodox way and typically involve multiple parties such as participating athletes, participating clubs and sporting organisations. Typically, the relevant 'contract' will be made up of several interlocking documents (such as nomination forms, team membership agreements) entered into by multiple parties, evidencing a multipartite contract.

By way of example, when an individual joins a club or sporting association he or she becomes a party to a contract by agreeing to abide by the rules and regulations of that association. These rules and regulations typically provide for the procedures that must be followed when disputes arise.

In addition to the rules and regulations of a local or state-based sporting association, participating clubs and individuals are often bound by the rules and regulations of the national governing body for the relevant sport. This often occurs where the authority to govern a particular competition or jurisdiction has been granted to a sporting association by the national governing body.



The mandate to govern the sport granted to the local sporting association is typically conditional on that association maintaining and enforcing compliance among its members with the national governing body's regulations. Where this is the case, the dispute resolution process for a sport can involve a fixed hierarchy of tribunals or committees or methods of resolving disputes.

Given the multifaceted nature of the governing documents of sporting associations, it is critical that the dispute resolution rules and regulations that apply are readily identifiable and set out in a manner that provides clarity to all who may be involved in a dispute.

### **Procedure for resolving disputes**

It is equally significant that sporting associations and governing bodies ensure their rules and regulations concerning the resolution of disputes are drafted and applied in a manner that promotes accessibility, fairness and timeliness.

In promoting these principles, sporting associations should prepare their rules and regulations so as to avoid duplication with the rules of a governing body to which they are bound.

In summary, the rules and regulations of a sporting association governing the resolution of disputes or grievances should:

- be readily accessible and clearly understood
- enable the determination of disputes in a fair manner and in accordance with the principles of natural justice
- discourage parties from litigation and incurring unnecessary expense
- promote the credibility of the sporting association
- provide a swift and uncomplicated process, and
- where appropriate, encourage the greater use of mediation as an alternative to, or as a preliminary step before, arbitration.



Callum Fleming  
Lawyer  
K&L Gates  
[www.klgates.com](http://www.klgates.com)

Website Update:

## New infographics section

Infographics are a great tool to visually represent facts and figures, information and key issues. Many of us are visual learners, so representing sometimes complex data or issues in an engaging and graphical way makes sense. They are also terrific as a marketing tool — infographics are very popular on social media. When Play by the Rules recently released the first of a series of new infographics called '9 reasons why kids quit sport', it soon reached more than 161,000 people!

You can download and use any of our infographics at <https://www.playbytherules.net.au/resources/infographics>



## Resource Profile:

# Mediation guidelines and information

Mediation is also known as Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) but may be otherwise described as a managed conversation. Mediation could be the preferred course of action at club level if no formal or informal procedure has managed to settle a dispute. Mediation is used as a mandated step in resolving disputes, whether between big companies tussling over money in court or in arguments between members of sporting clubs.

In late 2017 Play by the Rules worked with experienced sports lawyer Margot Foster to develop some clear guidelines and information around the mediation process. These include the role of the board in dispute resolution, the mediation process, what happens where no agreement is reached, and circumstances where mediation is not suitable.

You can see the full information and download a copy at <https://www.playbytherules.net.au/complaints-handling/mediation>



# Subscribe to Play by the Rules

Come and join the 60,000+ subscribers to Play by the Rules - it's a great way to keep up-to-date with safe, fair and inclusive sport.

## Back Issues

You can access each back issue for this magazine by visiting [this page](#) on the Play by the Rules website. All the feature articles and significant news items are listed here.

## Share and spread the word

One easy way to keep up to date and support safe, fair and inclusive sport is to share Play by the Rules across social media. We post every day on Facebook and Twitter and have audio files on Soundcloud and an extensive collection of videos on YouTube and Vimeo.



<http://facebook.com/playbytherules>



<http://twitter.com/playbytherules>



<http://soundcloud.com/playbytherules>



<http://vimeo.com/playbytherules>



<http://youtube.com/playbytherulesport>

**Subscribe** [Past Issues >](#)

Join a fast growing community of people committed to safe, fair and inclusive sport.



Your name



**Breaking Down Barriers to Sport**

Donate re-usable sports equipment & sports apparel to disadvantaged players across Australia

**BUY** near-new sports gear online

**DONATE** organise a sports gear collection

**boots for all**  
[www.bootsforall.org.au](http://www.bootsforall.org.au)



# BACK PAGE

## Our partners

Did you know that Play by the Rules is one of the best examples of a Collective Impact approach to addressing sport issues in the country? If not the best. Play by the Rules is a collaboration between multiple partners.



## To make Play by the Rules possible, we also work with

