

Submission to the 2010 and Beyond Panel

Prepared by the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport

The Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport (CCES) would like to begin its submission by congratulating the Honourable Gary Lunn, Minister of State for Sport, on his vision and leadership in the creation of the 2010 and Beyond Panel. The CCES very much appreciates the opportunity to provide input to the Panel as they chart a course for high performance sport in Canada beyond 2010.

Our submission is organized in response to the 6 questions posed by the Panel. We believe however, that in order to respond to these questions, there is a need to set the context upon which all of our responses are grounded.

If Sport Canada's mandate is to strengthen the unique contribution that sport makes to Canadian identity, culture and society, and more specifically enhance opportunities for all Canadians to participate and excel in sport then we must ensure that sport in Canada, at all levels including high performance, is founded on the values that Canadians embrace.

In order to ensure that high performance sport in Canada contributes to this mandate, we must also ensure that any strategies that are intended to support improving international performances by Canadian athletes are undertaken with appropriate consideration given to their connection to the rest of the Canadian sport system, which is largely organized and delivered at the community level.

There is evidence to support this position in the recently released True Sport Report which validates what Canadians have long intuitively known – that Canada's community sport system possesses a unique potential that we have only just begun to explore. The evidence also bears out Canadians' fundamental belief that realizing this potential is profoundly linked, not just to the availability of community sport, but to the quality of the sport experience itself. Ninety-two percent of Canadians believe that community sport can have a positive influence. However, fewer than one in five believe this potential is being fully realized.

The True Sport Report goes on to illustrate that study after study has shown that the full value of community sport is only realized when sport is conducted in a certain way – when it is inclusive, fair, fun and fosters genuine excellence. What Canadians understand to be good sport – the sport that they seek – is, in fact, the sport that delivers the greatest benefits to their families and communities. (Attached: True Sport Report)

High performance sport, which has at its roots community sport, must therefore be a reflection of what Canadians want – good sport.

(Attached: Letter from Beckie Scott – CCES Board Member and Olympic gold medalist)

1. *What strategies need to be implemented to improve the international performances of Canadian athletes, insuring the development of a stream of talented and well trained Paralympic athletes at the international level?*

As we have noted, the CCES strongly believe that any approaches taken with the intent to improve our international performance must always consider the implications to the entire sport system, which includes community level sport. For this reason we strongly encourage the panel to avoid any recommendations that might “cast the die” in such a way as to ignore, contradict or handcuff future efforts to address the foundation of our sport system.

The only way to ensure that the Panel does not fall into this trap is to examine and consider strategies that originate from the ground up. If form should follow function then we must be clear about the kind of sport we want in Canada and our vision for the future from playground to podium.

With that said, the CCES recommends that one of the most important strategies the panel should consider is the confirmation and publication of the values and principles upon which Canadian sport, including our high performance sector, are founded. As the Panel may be aware much time and effort has gone into determining these values and principles with Canadians at all levels of the sport system in Canada. What emerged from these extensive consultations with Canadians were four fundamental values: inclusion, fairness, fun and excellence and a set of principles for athletes and a set of principles for sport administrators. These values and principles have come to be known as True Sport in Canada. (Attached: The Sport We Want Final Report)

We recommend that strategies implemented in support of high performance sport objectives should be aligned and consistent with these values and principles. In other words the values drive the principles and the principles influence decision-making and all strategies pursued must therefore be congruent with the principles and values – one value must not be pursued at the expense of another.

To illustrate this concept, consider the following: If we say that the Canadian sport system values excellence and fairness then it should follow that excellence can only be achieved if it is pursued fairly. Therefore, any strategies pursued in the name of excellence but which are not fair should not be pursued. In particular, we must be confident that all initiatives undertaken in high performance sport in Canada such as the Own the Podium initiatives known as “home field advantage”, the “Top Secret” program and the “Performance Enhancement” program are deemed to be fair in their entirety.

Because Canadians value fair and ethical sport we know that Canadians value clean sport. Canadians want to believe that our athletes are competing clean. CCES strongly recommends the continued support of a robust and independent anti-doping program. Canadian athletes value a system which levels the playing field and permits them to compete fairly on the international stage. Canada’s World Code compliant Anti-Doping Program, administered by the CCES, has afforded our Canadian athletes this opportunity and been a tangible way for the Government of Canada to demonstrate its commitment to clean sport as one of the first nations to have signed the UNESCO International Convention Against Doping in Sport.

2. *Would changes to the design, structure, accountability, governance and/or leadership of high performance sport in Canada help to deliver on these strategies and build on the positive momentum in high performance that has been created over the past several years?*

High performance in a non-values environment can wander into the gray areas which can undermine its positive influence on people and communities and no longer reflect the sport Canadians want. Implementing a values based management approach would ensure an effective and trusted structure that takes into consideration the public interest.

Under our current structure, in the pursuit of excellence, there are no apparent checks and balances in the system to ensure that excellence is not achieved by sacrificing fairness or other sport system values. The CCES believes there is an opportunity to incorporate a values-based ethical decision-making model into our sport system, inclusive of the structure and form of our high performance sport system.

We would therefore recommend that any changes to design, structure, accountability and governance of high performance should incorporate a management by values model in its design and it should ensure that ethical decision-making forms the basis for all decisions.

The CCES would again caution however, that any decisions to change the design, structure, accountability and governance/leadership of high performance must not be done in isolation. Consideration of the implications to the entire sport system at all levels must be included in the process.

As the panel seeks to find a “better way for high performance” there is a real opportunity for these learnings’ to contribute to the ultimate way forward for all sport.

3. *If so, what approaches to governance and leadership should be considered in order to improve the high performance system? In responding to this question, please consider what sort of relationship should exist between the major funding partners of high performance in Canada.*

It is critical that any governance structure be guided by the Canadian values of inclusion, fairness, fun and excellence. In order to do this, the CCES would recommend, and can assist with, the implementation of a values-based management approach to any organization or governance structure created. This would provide a structure that could measure its decisions against its values. This would create a transparent and trusted structure – a best practice model for all sport to emulate.

Any decisions to change the current system must ensure that the system becomes more efficient and effective, easier to navigate, and transparent. While a one-stop shop would be beneficial to all sport, the CCES would caution the panel to ensure that all ethical work, including anti-doping, remain independent and autonomous from the funding arm. We must guard against the potential perception by Canadians that anti-doping and ethical decisions could be compromised in pursuit of excellence.

Funding stability is crucial in this pivotal area. A values-based approach for our sport system – high performance and community sport alike – is a fundamental requirement. Steps should be taken to

enshrine such values in a manner safe from marketing, corporate or expedient decision making that would jeopardize the very essence of Canadian sport. It is critical that Canadians are provided with the confidence that the foundation, the values that support the whole system, cannot be compromised by budget cuts.

The CCES would embrace the opportunity to provide independent ethical review and anti-doping services to any new structure. This would provide Canadians with the confidence and assurance that the system was nurturing champions that reflected the values of their development and high performance system.

4. *How can service delivery of high performance programming to athletes be improved?*

The panel is reminded that the environment in which our athletes are identified, develop, train and compete is part of a larger scheme. Throughout the system, there are occasions where athletes experience pressure, are exposed to unethical behaviours and face choices regarding their involvement in sport. This is especially true at the international/high performance level where Canadian values are challenged and other value sets become evident.

It is at such times, where young Canadians must count on our sport system to support, audit and guide their behaviours. It is therefore critical that we nurture young athletes in their development within our high performance track beginning at early stages. We must shroud our athletes in a set of core values that aids their development and at the same time protects them against pressures to participate in unethical behaviours such as doping, cheating, influence pedaling and violence.

A clear commitment and tangible investment to ethical sport, including an enhanced anti-doping effort is a sound approach.

The interests of the Panel which may be drawn toward high performance success (perhaps as measured by an increase in podium performances) must be balanced with a recognition and priority on ethical sport and concurrent enhancements in anti-doping initiatives commensurate with the overall strategy.

5. *How should performance targets be set for the 2014 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games and the 2016 Summer Olympic Games, and beyond?*

As the panel considers how performance targets are set for future Games, the CCES recommends that the panel has the performance targets tested against the values prior to finalizing the targets. The CCES could provide assistance, the checks and balances necessary, to ensure that any activities and programs that are designed to meet the performance targets are aligned with the values of the Canadian sport system and do not run contrary to any of the values.

In light of the investment to date in the Long-term Athlete Development initiative, the CCES would also suggest that performance targets reflect the pinnacle of Canadian sport excellence while

realistically reflecting a reasonable progression from targets established at other levels of the High Performance track.

6. *What strategies should be undertaken to develop future HP resources, including the replacement of the \$11M/year from VANOC and the \$5M from sport Canada that are sun-setting after the 2010 Winter Games?*

The CCES would encourage the panel to consider the findings in the True Sport Report, which provides the evidence that sport can help advance a diverse range of societal goals that Canadians care about. This evidence can be used to encourage all sectors to come together to provide the resources and support to sport at all levels. Cross-sectoral collaboration and effort are needed to ensure that sport experiences are positive, accessible to people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, and appropriately designed to meet broader social, economic and environmental goals. This intentionality aligns with the Canadian sport values and could ensure sustainability of support and resources. There is a clear opportunity for other federal departments to look for ways to intentionally use sport to achieve their goals – this could include support of high performance sport.

The CCES also recommends that any strategies undertaken to secure financial support and resources for high performance should be measured against the values. Partnerships should be entered into with corporations and organizations who share the same values and who have a desire to achieve excellence based on our Canadian sport values of inclusion, fairness, fun and excellence.

In concluding our submission to the Panel, we would like to remind the Panel of one of Justice Dubin's insights when he conducted his 1990 inquiry into the use of drugs and banned methods in sport. Justice Dubin wrote in his report, "If the slogan 'winning isn't everything, it's the only thing' is acceptable, then everything is permissible in order to win. If Canadians truly believe that, then as a society we are indeed morally bankrupt." Somehow back in 1988 the Canadian sport system convinced itself that winning was the only thing. Many people knew or suspected that Ben Johnson was using performance enhancing drugs but the potential for gold in Seoul was too seducing for many to see it, acknowledge it and report it. The fall-out as we know was devastating for the country and for sport. As the panel considers targets and a new model for high performance let us be sure we are not seduced into returning to those times.

September 16, 2009

Dr. David Zussman, Chair
2010 and Beyond Panel

Email: vgl@rogers.com

Dear Dr. Zussman and esteemed members of the 2010 and Beyond Panel,

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter in support of the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport's submission to the 2010 and Beyond Panel.

I would like to begin by congratulating the Honourable Gary Lunn, Minister of State for Sport, on the creation of the 2010 and Beyond Panel and the recognition of the need to work as a collective to ensure that aspiring Canadian athletes can strive to reach their goals of being among the best athletes in the world.

There is no doubt that high performance sport shapes our country and our communities; that it unites our citizens and builds national pride. However, it is equally important to recognize that every high performance athlete in Canada began his/her career in the community sport system. It is here that they acquired the skills, the passion for competition, the desire and drive for success, as well as the values and principles that shaped their high performance careers.

By instilling positive values at the community level, we can ensure that Canada's high performance athletes recognize that sport is only great when it is practiced fairly and ethically. These values lend themselves to a high performance program that cherishes the kind of sport that Canadians want – sport that is fair, inclusive, fun and strives for excellence.

One of the cornerstones of Canada's high performance system is clean sport – sport that is free from the negative consequences of doping. Doping is not healthy or fair and undermines the concept of ethical sport and the power of sport to unite us as a nation. Canada's anti-doping program ensures a level playing field for all athletes and must continue to contribute to a positive sport environment in Canada both at the high performance and community levels.

As the 2010 and Beyond Panel strives to ensure that Canadian athletes continue to be successful on the international stage, I would remind you that reaching the podium in a fair and ethical manner guarantees that the victories are sweet. In turn, our high performance athletes who achieve success through fair and ethical means become role models for community level athletes across the country who aspire to reach the podium whether at the Olympics or on the national, provincial, regional or local stage.

Sincerely,



Beckie Scott