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Ian S. Blackshaw

International Sports Law: An Introductory Guide



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Foreword

I am very pleased and honoured to write this Foreword.

For a while, there was a significant debate around the question whether one should speak of sports law, or whether it should rather be sport and the law. The argument was that sports law was no more than various other fields of law applied in the context of sport.

However, it has long since become clear that sport poses various unique questions to the law and that various aspects of sport are regulated in ways that have no equivalent in other spheres of business and governance. For instance, safeguarding the integrity of sport against practices, such as doping and match-fixing, hardly has any clear parallels outside the world of sport. In addition, the International Olympic Committee enjoys a special legal status, similar to that enjoyed by international organisations in public international law. As a result, it is now generally accepted that sports law is a distinct subject worthy of recognition, study and research in its own right.

This work by Prof. Dr. Ian Blackshaw is a testament to that.

Professor Blackshaw has succeeded in providing, within a very limited space, a broad glimpse of sports law as a subject and the various intricacies that it holds. Any one of the topics addressed in this work on its own can be the subject of a major textbook. To condense all of this into a single overarching work in a way that maintains the significance of each part and explains it in sufficient detail so that the reader can understand how it impacts on sport requires a lot of skill and expertise—the kind of skill and expertise that one can only acquire with decades of experience in this field of law. And there are few who can challenge Prof. Blackshaw for his vast experience, skill and expertise in sports law.

This work provides a handy guide to sports administrators, coaches and participants with little knowledge of the law. It also provides a handy overview of the subject, which experienced sports lawyers and scholars can consult to get a basic understanding of an issue before seeking further guidance from more specialised and more detailed works.

January 2017

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Preface

Sport has been practised and followed from ancient times to the present day, when it is now a multi-billion dollar 'industry' in its own right. There is so much at stake not only on but also off the field of play to engage sports fans and also a wider general audience.

Consequently, sport today is not confined only to the back pages of newspapers, but is increasingly finding its way onto the front pages as well. Sports cases and developments are also widely covered in other non-print media, especially on the Internet and other digital platforms, as news stories in their own right.

This is especially true of doping cases, which, sadly, are on the increase, despite the efforts of such bodies as the World Anti-Doping Agency, and regularly hit the headlines. In addition, other sports cases and disputes, dealt with, as part of an ever-increasing workload, by the Court of Arbitration for Sport, are also finding their way into our 24/7 media and becoming a staple part of our daily general and sporting news diet.

Sports law is likewise developing apace, as a subject in its own right, and is being studied more and more by a wider constituency at all levels of interest and competency. There is thus a need, not only amongst students, lawyers, accountants and sports marketers, promoters and agents, but also amongst sports administrators, for some basic and general knowledge of the legal aspects of sport.

This introductory guide is intended, therefore, to satisfy these needs, which are not currently being met in the present sports law literature. This book will also, we believe, find a market amongst general readers interested in the subject and sports followers and fans as well.

Although, within the ambit of the book, the topics covered are necessarily selective, sports law being a vast subject, the author and publishers believe that the topics are representative of many of the issues that face the world of sport and also claim the attention of the media at the present time. However, the phenomenal rise of 'E-Sports' - competitive video gaming - deserves, at least, a passing reference: in 2016, E-Sports generated revenues of US\$493 million and reached a global audience of 320 million followers, and are poised to becoming an Olympic sport in the near future!

Throughout the book, the reader is referred to articles, publications and other materials and resources that provide further information and critical analysis on the various subjects treated in the text and thus enhance its value and usefulness.

The Law is stated as at 1 January 2017, according to the sources available at that date.

Cambridge, UK
January 2017

Prof. Dr. Ian S. Blackshaw

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