

THE TOUCHSTONE SPORT INTEGRITY PUBLICATION FOR ALL SPORTS STAKEHOLDERS



SPORT INTEGRITY JOURNAL

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SPECIAL EDITION

Female Leadership in Sport

JOIN OUR GLOBAL MOVEMENT. SEE OUR UPCOMING EVENTS.



Foreword.



Katie Simmonds

GLOBAL COO, SIGA
MANAGING DIRECTOR, SIGAWOMEN

This edition of the Sport Integrity Journal intentionally comes after International Women's Day and Women's History Month as a demonstration of SIGA's commitment to tackle gender equity in Sport throughout the year.

Hot off the heels of the successful fourth edition of the SIGA Summit on Female Leadership in Sport, hosted by SIGA Member, Mastercard, in New York, this Journal celebrates the expertise and careers of women in the Sport Industry that are trailblazing. It is through this

initiative that we show to aspiring female leaders what can be achieved to support their journey and inspire them to follow in their footsteps.

Good Governance in Sport is a key component of SIGA's reform agenda and serves as the foundation to enhance the way in which Sport Organisations operate and leads to better business with integrity at the core.

Female representation in the decision making organs is part of diversity and inclusion and creates a more equitable and innovative organisation, yet Sport remains behind the corporate world. We just need to look at the photographs of Sport Organisations' Executive Committees and boardrooms around the world to see evidence of this and past research that SIGA conducted which shows it fluctuates annually, but consistently at less than 30 percent.

SIGAWomen was created as a branch of SIGA with a single purpose: to narrow the gender gap in terms of female representation in the

decision making organs of Sport Organisations worldwide. This thought leadership initiative is designed to support Sport Organisations reach the GOLD Standard in terms of Good Governance and is gathering huge traction thanks to the generosity of spirit of the one hundred and fifty women that we convened for the fifth cycle of the SIGAWomen Global Mentorship that I have the privilege of leading.

Whilst I am proud that last month's Summit was our biggest yet, in terms of participation, with 250 delegates in person and 2,500 joining virtually, and the most commercial and media partners coming on board, what does the day, month or year after look like? How can we continue to expand the movement, get commitment from Sport Leadership to invest in this cause and positively influence the sponsorship community to use the spending power of their dollars to influence change?

The answer is simple: we need to keep going! Which is what the acronym for SIGA means

in Spanish and Portuguese – to go straight ahead. Empowered by the energy and enthusiasm from the participants of the Summit, inaugural Masterclass and Mentorship Programme, I am doubling down on my efforts and commitment to deliver tangible change and invite everyone reading this Journal to take the following actions:

- Sport Organisations: sponsor one, two, three or more aspiring female leaders in your team to go on the mentorship programme 2024/2025
- Demonstrate your commitment to good governance by implementing our good governance standards and go through SIRVS.
- Brands: also sponsor female executives in your team and partner with SIGAWomen
- Aspiring female leaders apply!

As ever, it is the people, not organisations, that effect change. I thank everyone that plays a role in SIGAWomen and look forward to continuing our work to move the needle. **Enjoy the Journal!**



The Sport Integrity Global Alliance (SIGA) is the largest multi-stakeholder, global coalition for Sport Integrity.

Founded in 2017, SIGA is dedicated to the delivery of Sport, played and governed under the highest integrity standards, free from any form of unethical, illicit and criminal activity, to safeguard values and ensure its positive impact and benefits to all citizens. SIGA's mission is to provide global leadership, promote good governance and safeguard the integrity of Sport through a set of universal standards operated and independently verified by an independent, neutral and global body.

About SIGA

SIGA is an independent, neutral, not for profit, membership based international organisation. We are not driven by any political motivation or commercial interest.

Our Mission

SIGA works towards a vision of sport played and governed under the highest integrity standards, free from any form of unethical, illicit, and criminal activity, to safeguard sports values and ensure its positive impact and benefits to all citizens.

Our Vision

The mission of SIGA is to provide global leadership, promote good governance and safeguard the integrity of sport through a set of universal standards operated by an independent, neutral, and global body.

Editorial.



Welcome to the fifth edition of the *Sport Integrity Journal (SIJ)*.

The SIJ is a core component of SIGA's commitment to delivering accessible content that showcases best practice, unique perspectives, barriers and opportunities for positive evolution and mechanisms to align behind mutual Sport Integrity GOALS. Through every edition it is our objective to provide Integrity Champions a platform to showcase Integrity in Sport and drive cultural change throughout the entire Sports Industry.

This special edition of the SIJ is dedicated to Female Leadership in Sport. Gender Equity is part of good governance in Sport and part of the wider drive for greater diversity and inclusion on the board of sports organisations. SIGA is working with sports organisations to enhance their governance as better governance equals better business to reflect the values of Sport. As such our #SIGAWomen programme works to close the gender gap in Sport Leadership positions by providing mentorship, training, and networking opportunities to women at all stages of their careers, creating more pathways for female leaders across the sports industry. By increasing the

representation of women in Sport Leadership, #SIGA-Women aims to create a more diverse and inclusive sports industry that better reflects the communities it serves, providing access for all.

It is clear that a diverse and inclusive organisation is a productive, dynamic and representative organisation. As such, we are delighted to showcase the perspectives of influential, pioneering and inspirational female leaders in Sport across the following pages.

We trust you will feel equally empowered, enthused and motivated by these articles and will seek to join with us to continue to push for widespread Integrity reform in Sport.

Future editions of the SIJ will continue to apply this framework to different Sport Integrity themes. Our ambition is for the SIJ to continue to be the touchstone for Sport Integrity-related knowledge exchange. We encourage all interested stakeholders that would like to explore collaboration, sponsorship or SIGA membership to contact us directly:

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THE NEXT GENERATION OF FEMALE LEADERS IN SPORT

Join the movement of change makers



CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR FEMALE LEADERSHIP IN SPORT EVENTS 2024

#SIGAWomen PROGRAMME

By increasing the representation of women in sports leadership, SIGAWomen aims to create a more diverse and inclusive sports industry that better reflects the communities it serves, providing access for all!

SIGAWomen's purpose is to close the gender gap in sports leadership positions by providing mentorship, training, and networking opportunities to women at all stages of their careers, creating more pathways for female leaders across the sports industry.

Gender Equity is part of good governance in Sport and part of the wider drive for greater diversity and inclusion on the board of sports organisations. SIGA is working with sports organisations to enhance their governance as better governance equals better business to reflect the values of Sport.



SIGA SUMMIT ON FEMALE LEADERSHIP IN SPORT 2024

PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

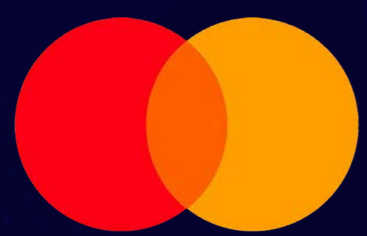


250+
Mid to Senior
Level Executives

2,500+
Virtual Attendees

85,000+
Social Media
Impressions

Hosting Partner



Silver Partner



Session Partners



Media Partner



The PGA TOUR: Driving Towards Social Responsibility, Sustainability & Inclusion



Neera Shetty

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT,
OFFICE OF SOCIAL
RESPONSIBILITY & INCLUSION AND
DEPUTY GENERAL COUNSEL | PGA
TOUR | SIGA WOMEN MENTOR



1 You are certainly in a unique role, serving as both EVP, Office of Social Responsibility & Inclusion and Deputy General Counsel at the PGA TOUR. What can you share about the dual position, and how your background prepared you for it?

It's my privilege to lead the Office of Social Responsibility & Inclusion, where, as Chair of our Inclusion Leadership Council, I'm tasked with overseeing the PGA TOUR's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts as well as developing and executing our environmental sustainability work.

I'm also our Deputy General Counsel, with responsibilities in advising on all legal matters, including international, employment, litigation and immigration issues for the TOUR and Tournament

Players Clubs (TPC) throughout the TPC Network. I also helped from a legal standpoint in navigating our return to golf during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I am so privileged to have a role that challenges me intellectually, but also allows me to build upon my passions for the future of our wonderful sport. We've made progress, but have huge potential to realize more impact. We know the TOUR can best lead by example.

2 You mentioned the TOUR's Inclusion Leadership Council. How and why was the Council first created, and, to date, what accomplishments would you say you're most proud of?

As a global organization, the PGA TOUR as-

pires to reflect the regions and communities where we play. We believe diversity of thought and background is vital to our success and growth. We strive to create an inclusive and welcoming culture and be a positive example for all our constituents and partners.

In 2014, the TOUR adopted a strategic plan formalizing a long-held commitment to diversity efforts to strengthen its workforce. Our six employee resource groups hold an important role in the cultural evolution that is taking place at the TOUR, serving as a voice for change and the importance of accepting the differences in all of us.

Building on these practices and pillars, at the end of 2019, Commissioner Jay Monahan established the Inclusion Leadership Council (ILC), comprised of executives from diverse backgrounds and work experiences to partner collaboratively throughout the organization to strengthen the TOUR's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts that bolster our sport, business, and community impact. In 2020, the TOUR and its tournaments announced a commitment of at least \$100 million over 10 years to support racial equity and inclusion efforts. I'm proud to share that goal was surpassed in just three years in 2023.



3 You've shared that you also have a passion for sustainability. How are those efforts incorporated within the Office of Social Responsibility & Inclusion as well?

As a sport particularly dependent on climate and nature, it is critical that we do our part for our sport and for the communities where we play. PGA TOUR is committed to implementing credible sustainability initiatives that both reduce negative environmental impacts and drive positive change.

Through our tournaments, golf courses and offices across the globe, the TOUR will lead a collaborative effort to reduce emissions, conserve water and divert waste from landfills. With guidance from partners and experts, the TOUR is identifying areas of improvement, innovating new processes and implementing creative programs that achieve measurable results.

4 What about the TOUR's overall charitable impact? Not solely from a DE&I perspective, but as a whole?

The PGA TOUR drives positive impact at unprecedented levels to support and improve local communities. Each tournament is an opportunity

to give back to your community in one of three ways – attending an event, volunteering, or donating money. The vast majority of our tournaments are run by 501(c)(3) charities as their host organizations. All of their net proceeds stay in the community to support local organizations, totaling more than \$3.93 billion in donations to date. And these tournaments wouldn't be possible without the 100,000 volunteers annually who commit their time to ensure each event is a success.

We're unique in sports by hosting events across our four Tours structured as 501(c)(3)s. With our business model, we are able to directly impact more than 3,000 charities and initiatives annually. Giving back isn't just what the TOUR does – it's part of who we are, and is something we've been doing in communities where we play for more than 80 years.

5 With these substantial efforts off the golf course, could you also speak to what's being done "inside the ropes" from a competitive standpoint?

The PGA TOUR formally announced its "Pathway to Progression" player development program in 2023, a comprehensive effort to achieve greater diversity in golf through an increased focus on

developing talent from diverse and historically underrepresented groups.

The Bridgestone Collegiate Development Program has a dedicated focus on elevating the competitive and mentorship opportunities for historically Black college and university (HBCU) golfers, while also providing tangible career development opportunities for both players and coaches.

Additionally, the junior golf program creates competitively focused opportunities for the identification and support of highly talented junior golfers from underrepresented communities.

6 You've covered so much. Is there anything more you'd like to share? Perhaps for those who don't follow the TOUR or game of golf regularly?

Yes, that while we're certainly incredibly proud of our efforts at the TOUR, it's been an industry-wide movement to grow and make our game more inclusive. In 2020, the golf industry including over 40 organizations united under the leadership of Commissioner Monahan and the leaders of the PGA of America, USGA and LPGA to bring greater diversity to our sport and invite all persons of all backgrounds to "Make Golf Your Thing." Highlights include investment of more than \$1.8 million in 237 grassroots programs and steady growth in career and business opportunities for diverse candidates including the first-ever industry-wide career platform that allows golf employers to connect with diverse talent in a singular destination, driving greater awareness of the industry's opportunities. More information can be found at www.makegolfyourthing.org.





Resetting the Paradigm: The Importance of Female Leadership Across All Levels of Football



Latoya Dacosta

HEAD OF SENIOR WOMEN'S
COMPETITION | CONCACAF
SIGA WOMEN MENTOR

affords diversity and inclusivity for them to represent and present different viewpoints, different perspectives on those issues which indirectly and directly affect them.

Good governance and transparency are the buzzwords, important factors in gaining and maintaining respect, trust and partnerships which increases participation, fan engagement and loyalty, fosters positive media coverage and leads to increased investment which drives revenue streams and, ultimately, success.

As Head of Women's Senior Football, spearheading our new Ecosystem for Women's Football in the North, Central American and Caribbean region. This new ecosystem seeks to give our elite women players equal and equitable opportunities for quality competition to enhance their development.

A very proud moment for our region was taking all 6 available qualifying spots to be represented at the Women's World Cup Australia / New Zealand in 2023.

My journey, from being a football fan to working in my country's football association, then the Caribbean regional governing body for football and now both the governing body for football in the North American Region and world governing body for football, gives me, I think, a unique perspective on the importance of female leadership across all levels of football.

In all spheres of life, sport, business and cultures, the fight for equality (giving people the same things) and equity (fairness in every situation) continues, the struggle is real.

Permit me to recap and paraphrase from SIGA articles:

"Gender equity remains a foundational pillar of SIGA's reform agenda for transforming organizations and sports as it is a key component of good governance. SIGA is working with sports organizations to enhance their governance as better governance equals better business."

"Diversity across an organisation ensures a wide background of experiences and perspectives which can be drawn upon." Females having a seat at the table



A historic first.

This was a major boost for women's football in our region, a testament to investment from grassroots through elite women's football in our region, further evidence of the quality, commitment and passion to seize opportunities by our region's female players.

Within the North American region, as evidenced in the "Setting The Pace, Benchmarking Report on Women's Football" and the "Women's Football: Member Associations Survey Report" respectively published last year, there has been significant increase in women on Executive Committees, in addition to the number of girls and women actively involved at all levels.

"More than 700 women have held leadership roles in men's professional football since the late 1980s. These roles include directors, executives, and heads of department. Over 230 of these women currently work in a leadership capacity in football. Many others

have left football but continue to work in leadership in another industry."

In addition, world football has actively promoted safeguarding, ensuring safeguarding officers as part of Team Delegation, requiring females be part of women's team managements. Integrity too, sensitization to the dangers of match manipulation – recognizing, resisting and reporting so that girls and women avoid the pitfalls.... and have the fortitude to speak up and speak out wherever and whenever females are being exploited, abused and denied their right to participate and belong.

As a female, I am passionate about using my position to speak for those who have no voice, for ensuring that wherever possible, females gain the opportunity to be trained, participate, grow, excel and be part of the development of women's football, this beautiful game.



This is achieved through training and being able to fully experience the various spheres of football: administration, coaching, refereeing and sports medicine.

New horizons beckon for those females whose interests, qualifications, experience and talents forge new paths for diversity and inclusion: new media and broadcast, commercial, hospitality and protocol and the many other areas that football now presents as a viable opportunity for involvement as a coach, nutritionist, sports psychologist, safe guarding officer, volunteer, employee, fan etc.

Yet..... the struggle continues.....

Equal and equitable pay and working conditions, maternity leave for female players, ensuring safe working and playing environments (safeguarding), something as simple as female teams moving away from wearing white shorts at particular times of the month to eliminate potential emergencies and embarrassing / traumatizing moments, investigating why female players appear more prone to particular types of injuries (which has been linked to shoe style and other factors). All these issues speak to the necessity for female representation in decision making at all levels

to ensure that our needs are considered and met in delivering solutions and meaningful change.

World football's governing body continues to lead the way in ensuring funding to its member associations, funding that must be utilized only for women's football, a percentage that has increased over time, a recognition of the growing need to provide real capital investment. During Covid, funding was similarly provided to ensure the well-being of those affected through the worst of the epidemic.

Member Associations, one per country, have various development programmes which they can apply for which are dedicated to strengthening women's football. Who better to be ensuring that those programmes are applied for, are delivered and are accessible to those girls and women who need them?

Worldwide, female representation at the highest decision-making levels in football is now a given right, through provisions in statutes that ensures positions for females at board level.

It is not tokenism; females must ensure that they contribute to good governance and transparency and must avoid being involved in even the taint of corruption. The contribution of females must continue to ensure doors open and remain open for all females, football for all then is not merely a slogan, but a testament to the world's most popular sport!

Clear pathways now exist from grassroots to elite, professional status, football as a meaningful tool to earn a living, pursue one's dreams.

Yes..... the struggle continues.....

Ensuring that leagues, competitions at all levels are sustainable through human and financial resources continues to be a challenge. In many instances, investment in sports is seen solely in relation to rate of return on investment. This poses the eternal conundrum - how will development be financed? How do we ensure that females are provided the training and opportunities, salaries and benefits as their male peers?

We must ensure that females are sensitized to recognize, resist and report any instances or approaches of match manipulation for this would be the next frontier for those who have long sought to enrich

themselves off the backs of our male counterparts. Not content merely to place wagers but inevitably to want to ensure that they win those wagers by corrupting all those who appear vulnerable.

Giving voice and a platform to female legends of the game to contribute to decision making through strategic retreats, think tanks, forums such as provided by SIGA so that our unique perspectives shape policy and operational decisions which affect girls and women.

For sure, these challenges are not isolated to football alone so there is need for collaboration and this is precisely where SIGA's programmes provide the catalyst for exchange of views in a safe space.

Are we women in leadership positions in various industries even supportive of female endeavors? Do we challenge ourselves to ensure that we make input at every level, to fight for fair share of sponsorship and partnership pie.

So... how do we reset the paradigm?

Power is only "good" if it is by the people for the people. We must never lose sight of the goal to ensure fair representation, a voice to ensure that female's goals and aspirations are recognized and met.

SIGA continues to zero in on issues such as this, in the quest to bring about enabling good governance and transparency.

We must do our part!

It is imperative that female leadership continues to be seen, be recognized, be empowered, seize the opportunities to show that we belong, at all levels of football we matter!



Concacaf





Since 2018, SIGA has run a successful global mentorship programme that expands year on year.

#SIGAWomen GLOBAL MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME

[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO APPLY TODAY!](#)

Open to women +24, the programme is designed to promote future female leaders in sport and foster greater diversity and inclusion in the industry, as promoted by SIGA's Universal Standards on Good Governance.

Teaching vital leadership skills and creating invaluable networks, the 8-month programme offers mentees the opportunity to forge relationships with women who have pierced the gender glass ceiling, with a combination of group and bilateral sessions.



Debbie Hewitt
CHAIR, THE FA



"My message to all women is: be hungry to learn. Every situation is an opportunity to learn and develop, so enjoy and learn from the journey and don't focus too much on the end game. Trust yourself, trust your inner voice, and when you feel the fear, just do it anyway. The global game needs a pipeline for the next generation of female leaders, and networks and mentoring can help – especially through programmes like the SIGA Global Mentorship Programme."



Alison Giordano
SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT,
GLOBAL SPONSORSHIPS &
CONSUMER MARKETING



"At Mastercard, we believe a world designed with women in mind creates limitless possibilities for all. I look forward to supporting SIGA's mentorship program for aspiring female leaders in Sport and helping unlock opportunities for the next generation."



Aline Candeo
CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP
MANAGER, ION LIVE | 2023
MENTEE



"This connection between my mentor and I was certainly the best thing about this program because we had meaningful conversations about the current state of sports and how we can act to make it a better place for women especially so if you're thinking of having a great group of women who are connected to sports in many different levels this is a program that I would recommend and I can see it evolving into a big network of women that lead each other in the sports market"



Lindsay Gorman
VICE-PRESIDENT,
SPONSORSHIP MANAGER,
M&T BANK | SIGAWOMEN
MENTOR



"I absolutely would recommend that other women should join this program. It connects you with people outside your comfort zone. I think it's really easy to get caught up in your own world, in your own work, and when you expand your network to different areas of sport, to different areas around the world you get valuable input."



Ytannia Wiggins

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER,
CANOC | SIGA WOMEN MENTOR



In the realm of sports, the journey from participant to leadership is a path rich with discovery and transformation. Sports, far more than a mere pastime, serves as a gateway to instilling discipline, pride, and most crucially, leadership among our youth. Forging my own path in this arena, amidst the dynamic mosaic of a small region steeped in community-driven sports and home to world-renowned sporting legends, I've borne witness to the profound impact of sports on character development and community empowerment. My journey, a narrative woven with obstacles overcome and victories achieved, serves as

Pathfinding: Forging A Sport Leadership Career

a testament to the profound influence of sports. It underscores how sports not only facilitate personal growth but also propel societal change.

Reflecting on my journey in this space, I can say without hesitation that participation in sports, competitive or

otherwise, shaped my character, taught me how to exceed my perceived "limits" and most significantly, the importance of cooperation amongst team members, mine and our team's, in order to overcome adversaries and adversities. These lessons, learnt in and on the field of play would be of immense importance in forging my approach to life off the field, in much the same way it did for my teammates.

I endeavored to uphold the enriching environment sports creates by becoming a member of the University first female football team. It was during this period that I encountered a transformative opportunity that would significantly alter the trajectory of my career. Despite not fitting the conventional mold—a woman in her 20s with limited management experience—I was approached by the Barbados Football Association to assume leadership roles within the organization, specifically overseeing the women's senior and under-20 national teams, as well as women's football development initiatives.

Though initially apprehensive given the prevailing so-

cial stigma surrounding women in sports, particularly football, I was assured by the leadership that my knowledge and passion for the game warranted consideration for the position. The prospect of merging my love for sports with the opportunity to empower female athletes resonated deeply with me, making it an opportunity I simply could not turn down. Despite the anticipated blockades and the uncertainty of breaking through existing barriers, I recognized the potential for meaningful impact and embraced the challenge with determination.

Among my most cherished achievements was spearheading the coordination of our country's inaugural participation in a World Cup qualifier hosted at home. Managing the logistics of such a monumental event pushed me beyond my comfort zone. However, witnessing the exhilaration of our team's victory in front of our passionate home crowd made every sleepless night worthwhile. Moments like these bolstered my confidence as a budding leader. It was then that I recognized my aptitude for



rallying people behind a common goal and bringing them together as a cohesive unit.

After witnessing the remarkable growth of female football and the establishment of a women's football league, I felt compelled to expand my impact beyond the realm of football in my native Barbados. Driven by the desire to leverage the transformative power of sports to create opportunities for youth throughout the Caribbean, I embarked on a new chapter by joining a Sport for Development initiative lead by Partners of The Americas. This international nonprofit organization is dedicated to utilizing sports-based programs as

a vehicle for imparting critical life skills to underserved youth.

My involvement with the A-Ganar programme provided me with invaluable insights into the intricacies of running an international NGO. From overseeing budgets to navigating the complexities of diverse languages and cultures, I embraced the challenges with determination and enthusiasm. However, the most gratifying aspect of my experience was witnessing firsthand how sports could uplift and empower at risk youth. Through sports, these individuals were able to access education and employment opportunities, paving the way for a brighter future.

This transition marked a significant milestone in my

journey, as it allowed me to extend my reach beyond the confines of football and contribute to the holistic development of youth across the Caribbean. It reaffirmed my belief in the transformative potential of sports as a catalyst for positive change and served as a testament to the importance of leveraging our passions to make a meaningful impact in the lives of others.

Earning a seat on the Board of Directors for the Barbados Olympic Association marked a pivotal moment in my journey into sports leadership—a full-circle transition from the playing field to the decision-making rooms among the foremost leaders of major sports organizations. Serving on the board of an organization of such magnitude provided an invaluable learning experience, enriching my understanding of sports administration and the intricacies of sports politics. One of the pivotal roles I assumed on the board was chairing the Women in Sport Commission. At the heart of this commission was a steadfast commitment to advancing the development of women's sports. This initiative resonated deeply with me, as I recognized the paramount importance of promoting gender equality and fostering opportunities for women and girls in sports to flourish. Throughout my tenure on the board, one of the achievements I am most proud of is the establishment of various programs focusing on women in leadership and enhancing opportunities for girls in sports. Moreover, the establishment of the Esther Maynard Icon Award, named after the first female on the Board, marked a significant stride in acknowledging and honoring the achievements of female athletes and leaders within the sports community.

Upon the recommendation and with the support of the Barbados Olympic Association (BOA) board, I was nominated and subsequently elected to serve as an Executive Board Member for the Caribbean Association of National Olympic Committees (CANOC). This opportunity provided invaluable experience and exposure to leadership at a regional level, which cannot be acquired through any other means. My focus within CANOC has centered on promoting gender equity, enhancing relations among Caribbean countries, and implementing modern communication strategies. Despite prevailing statistics indicating that women are still significantly underrepresented in top leadership positions within sports, I endeavor to lead by example, inspiring young girls and women to recognize and embrace their capabilities.

Engaging with and collaborating alongside sports

leaders have granted me invaluable insights, with one of the most crucial lessons being the importance of leveraging positions of influence to effect positive change in the sports community. As individuals progress on their leadership journey, it's imperative to recognize the inevitable collisions between different generations, where entrenched traditions intersect with evolving norms and progress. Moreover, the evident dichotomy of gender and experience, especially poignant for female sports leaders, is likely to persist unless deliberate efforts are made to open up opportunities for them.

Reflecting on my career journey, it has been a winding and deeply fulfilling path. Along the way, I've encountered several "firsts" - whether it was becoming the youngest team manager, board member, or executive leader in various capacities. While I might not personally identify as a trailblazer, each of these experiences has significantly influenced my trajectory and propelled me forward.

Taking on those early leadership roles taught me the importance of having the confidence to tackle challenges that others may deem me unready for. Stepping outside my comfort zone has consistently accelerated my growth and capabilities. Therefore, I actively seek out impactful experiences, whether through volunteering for new projects or accepting roles with broader responsibilities. After all, true growth occurs at the edge of our comfort zone.

Progress in forging a clear career pathway in sports for women may be gradual, but every small step plays a crucial role in constructing a ladder for others to ascend. As a mother of two female athletes, my vision is even clearer: to ignite inspiration among more young women in the Caribbean, encouraging them to pursue careers in sports. I aspire to widen the doors so extensively that, in the future, women leaders in sports become the standard rather than the exception.

Surviving and Thriving with a Chronic Illness in the Workplace Through Mentorship



Kelly Gately

COACH DEVELOPMENT
COORDINATOR, USTA NEW
ENGLAND | SIGAWOMEN
MENTEE

According to the CDC, six in ten adults have a chronic disease, therefore it is important for all leaders in the sport industry to know that the vast majority of the population are affected by chronic illnesses in one way or another. Finding an impactful and influential mentor is key to any success in a career, but this can be even more crucial for someone with a chronic illness, and can be even harder to find someone who fits your needs and goals. Having a chronic illness can be a very lonely and uncertain journey, especially when trying to navigate a career in the workplace as you deal with symptoms that are hidden or unknown to your colleagues. Part of my own journey to becoming involved in the sport industry came out of developing Type 1 Narcolepsy, which is a chronic sleep disorder that impairs the brain's ability to regulate the sleep-wake cycle. Narcolepsy looks different in everyone, but for me, it has forced me to live life at a much slower pace. I battle fatigue, pain (physical and mental), excessive daytime sleepiness, brain fog, also while dealing with cataplexy (sudden loss of muscle tone with the onset of extreme emotions), along with many other symptoms.



Prior to becoming ill, I was in a career that soon became progressively more unsustainable to me with the onset of my symptoms, and I know I am not alone in this experience. People with chronic illnesses constantly feel like they are fighting against their own bodies and physical restrictions. Pursuing your career aspirations as a healthy person is hard enough, but with a chronic illness, it can feel like a Herculean task. This is made substantially easier and more obtainable by finding impactful and influential mentors. The best mentors for people with chronic illnesses have the following attributes: trustworthiness, relatability, vulnerability, and the ability to provide guidance and access to helpful resources. I would not have been able to navigate my career so far without several key mentors, both in my professional and personal life, who have been able to support me in these ways.

When I first was going through diagnostic testing and at the height of my worst symptom onset, I was teaching science and social studies to six graders in an urban school for 40 hours a week (with many more uncounted and unpaid hours after school of tutoring, lesson planning, and meeting with parents). My days were long, exhausting, and involved hours on my feet. My job required me to always be "on" to deliver the best content possible to my students, to keep them engaged, and while also contributing and being emotionally attuned to their various needs. As my untreated symptoms of excessive daytime sleep-



iness started to get more and more difficult to battle at work, I turned to a colleague of mine (named Julie) who I felt like I could trust and express everything I was going through. Just being able to talk and share everything that I was battling with Julie made me feel like I had someone who understood why I sometimes needed to sit down for 5 minutes so I wouldn't fall asleep while standing.

As I attended doctors' appointments after doctors' appointments, and completed labs after labs, and after

finally receiving a diagnosis, the reality of being diagnosed with a chronic illness was heavy. It felt like my life was changing so quickly, and I was having to adapt so rapidly, that my world was feeling lonely, and I felt like I couldn't find anyone who could relate to my experiences. When I opened up to a colleague at work, I found out that she was able to relate to me. She told me a story about her son who was diagnosed with sleep apnea, who didn't fit the "stereotypical" doctor's mold for who would get diagnosed. In this moment of connection, I felt like

I found someone who could relate in some way to my experience of dealing with being diagnosed with a sleep disorder. It was refreshing being able to talk to someone who took my symptoms of daytime fatigue seriously as a young adult in her 20's, and didn't brush it off or laugh at me. Some chronic illnesses/disabilities like narcolepsy are invisible, but that does not make their symptoms any less debilitating or life changing.

Another key moment for navigating the workplace with a chronic illness was through a personal mentor of mine named Amanda who openly shares her own health struggles on social media. She is an active advocate for mental health illnesses and personal health and well-being. Her openness with her own health journey made me feel safe to discuss and share my own experiences with her. Her vulnerability allowed me to have a safe space to confide in her my own ordeals, which at the beginning of my diagnosis was difficult to do.

Finding the right resources and support can be hard when trying to figure out what tools and strategies will help you be most successful in the workplace. I was lucky enough to be able to turn to several nonprofits (including Project Sleep and Wake Up Narcolepsy) which have support groups full of people who also have narcolepsy. They have also published resources on navigating workplace accommodations and educational materials. Another resource I have been extremely thankful for is the human resources department in my workplace. They have helped me navigate and understand how to request accommodations at work, and have taught me how to advocate for what I need to be successful. I was also able to find literary resources on first-hand experiences



with chronic illnesses. An impactful moment for me was reading a book called *Wide Awake and Dreaming: A Memoir of Narcolepsy* by Julie Flygare, which recounts her own experiences with narcolepsy and diagnosis. Reading about her path to diagnosis and her openness to share it with the world gave me so much validation in my own experiences and struggles. This also inspired in me the confidence to start sharing little pieces of my illness with those who I felt comfortable with. I only received my diagnosis about 2 years ago now, but I don't think I ever would have imagined writing so openly about this then.

Finding mentors that also have a connection to chronic illness or the ability to empathize with those that do allows me to feel like they understand the struggles I face. One moment that stuck out to me is a networking event I recently attended, and I was surrounded by so many successful and impressive women in the industry. I found that I could not relate to them while I could appreciate their accomplishments, and not knowing their exact experiences, they appeared to be living life at a much faster pace than I could. I am constantly forced to prioritize my health, which can sometimes require sacrifices in my own career. Finding mentors that I can connect with allows me to have

conversations with them about my career aspirations but also my limitations in pursuit of those.

My hope in writing this article is to open up a space for talking about chronic illnesses, specifically in the workplace. I have a passion for helping other people with chronic illnesses and raising awareness on sleep disorders, specifically narcolepsy. My goal is to give hope to people with chronic illnesses and sleep disorders, and some tools on how to navigate their own challenges in the workplace. I also aim to inspire stakeholders to become mentors or strive to become more educated to help those with chronic illnesses.



#SYC2024

SIGA **YOUTH COUNCIL**

SIGA YOUTH COUNCIL 2024

How to Apply?

This programme is available for all young people between the ages of 18-29. We will be promoting this widely through our networks, social media channels and our website when registration opens to apply.

To apply you will need to complete the relevant application form and attach a CV, letter of recommendation and a short video (maximum 2 minutes) stating why you want to join SYC.

Interested in Joining
the SYC in 2024?

SIGA **YOUTH COUNCIL**

**The Application
Process Will Open Soon.**

For more information or to register your interest please contact the SIGA team directly at info@sig-a-sport.com

The SIGA Youth Council was first established in 2020 and we are now at the culmination of the term for the Second Class of Future Leaders who built upon the fantastic foundations of the inaugural group.

The two iterations of the SYC brought together individuals from a range of continents, backgrounds, skills and

experiences that combined to form a formidable team. We are dedicated to providing an environment that supports and enables Youth Leadership, with the strategies, deliverables and opportunities Youth Driven. The creation of invaluable opportunities and experiences, over the course of the 18 month term, will offer members the opportunity to forge long lasting and

invaluable networks with current and future Sport Leaders and help to kick start their own path to the top.

This is your opportunity to take a leadership role and help shape the future of Sport in the way that you envision it – hand in glove with the World's largest coalition in the field of Sport's Governance and Integrity.



If you Believe you Belong, you Belong



Amy Rosenfeld

VICE PRESIDENT, OLYMPICS & PARALYMPICS PRODUCTION, NBC SPORTS

Whenever I answer, I always preface my comments acknowledging that while it has definitely not been every woman's experience in this field – I have had an absolutely wonderful 35+ years working in sports.

As I reflect on possible reasons why, I know there had been one constant throughout the years....it never occurred to me that I did not belong. Why would anyone question me as the production assistant, associate producer, and eventually the producer of whatever game we were there to execute for broadcast?

I have always been a sports fan. My earliest memories of my father were going to Boston Bruins games or watching the NFL where he explained point spreads, and even allowed me to take call-in bets when he was grocery shopping on Sunday mornings. I played sports, I watched sports, and I knew the rules, the key players, and the history of a great many different sports.

When you are the (at that time “television”) producer for a live sporting event, you are the designated leader of a crew numbering typically between 25-50 people gathered to execute the production. For most of my career producing these games, typically the number of women totaled two, and that number included me. In addition, for so many of those shows, I was a freelance producer – hired by one of the various networks to be at the helm. This was the case for the entire crew, they were all day hires, some I had met along the way, others it was my first introduction.



Each show I would walk up to the truck, introduce myself to the guys and explain that I was the producer for the day. I would then proceed to start my preparation for the show. It just did not occur to me that I did not belong doing precisely what I was hired to do. I wasn't afraid to be there, I did not feel insecure about my abilities. I knew the material, and felt sure of my qualifications.

I wanted the crew to feel confident that I would lead, but to also know that they were all critical parts of the team and that together we would all get across the finish line.

For the duration of my freelance career totaling 11 years, I can only recall one moment where I was arbitrarily challenged, it was a replay operator I had never seen before, and within moments my forty-nine “brothers” on the crew descended on this poor chap and escorted him from the venue.



If you believe you belong, you belong – but it is nuanced. It can be such a narrow line that delineates the border between confidence and cockiness. For women in predominately male industries, conveying that right tone is further challenged by a higher level of scrutiny.

All those years in the production trucks with the crews provided enough repetition that I felt well-prepared to apply the same principle of belief in belonging to the corporate world.

It was time to leave the freelance role and move fulltime to a national sports network. As the years went by and management responsibilities increased – I found myself spending more time in conference rooms than production trucks, but as one of the more junior managers.

Knowing that I had significant experience in a wide variety of production roles, and that as the producer

you are ostensibly the manager of your game crew – I sat at the large table in those conference rooms confident that despite my junior status, I would bring value to the discussions that were about to take place. I believed I belonged, not with arrogance but with a comfortable feeling that I had earned my place at that table.

So here you are, you belong - you believe it, as do those around you, but now it is about more than belonging, it is about leading.

For me, leadership represents the ability to unite a collection of individuals toward a common purpose and to create a path for each individual to perform beyond what they ever thought they were capable of achieving.

Who are you as a leader, and how do you convince a collection of individuals to follow you – and oh by the way you are a woman, and your team is likely comprised of men.

So how do you earn their respect and their trust to the degree that they will rally behind you and execute your plan. Do you know the material, are you a genuine fan, are you confident enough to communicate your weaknesses and offer that each member of the crew could fill those gaps and contribute to the overall success.

However, the environment has changed, female leadership in sports has become significantly more prevalent and less an anomaly. Young women enter-



ing a sports profession today are not required to prove their acumen to the degree that existed decades ago. But it is essential to be honest, about your knowledge and with your communication.

The sports world really demands authenticity – in this arena you just cannot fake it until you make it. It is difficult for women to reveal a lack of expertise as there is a fear that the crew will be dismissive and revert to old stereotypes, but the damage done by trying to “wing it” can be more severe. Once a leader is revealed to be inauthentic and potentially dishonest, it is virtually impossible to gain the trust and respect of your team.

In addition, a leader must communicate and behave in a manner that is an accurate reflection of their



personality. There is a temptation, especially as a woman in this environment, to interpret and portray leadership in a manner that is contrary to their true self. This typically has the opposite effect with a team, creating questions about the leaders decision-making ability.

By honestly expressing strengths and weaknesses, it creates a path for the crew to feel that they each can contribute to the success of the production by utilizing

their strengths where the leader falls short.

Women working in the sports field have made significant progress, and are now in roles that would have been unheard of years ago. Questions regarding what it is like to be a woman working in sports have become significantly less frequent, the “why” replaced by “why not”.

Women now believe they belong, so they belong.



Unlocking Revenue to Scale Social Change



Sarah Pickens

VICE-PRESIDENT, PROGRAMS,
US SOCCER FOUNDATION | SIGA
WOMEN MENTOR

There are not many things that people agree about today. But there is one thing that has remained constant: the need for organizations to do more to deliver positive change for communities. This is true for corporations and non-profits. And it's true for the sports industry because people understand that sport has the power to change lives. And that this power can be used as a force for good in communities.

Because of the structure of the economy, it typically requires a financial investment for an organization (whether local or national) to deliver positive impact. And in the non-profit sector, it's imperative that the organization seeks diverse revenue streams to achieve its desired positive change, including investments from individual giving, corporate social responsibility, corporate marketing, philanthropic grant-giving, intermediaries, and more. Why? Because scaling impactful programs takes serious investment.

Unfortunately, sometimes promising programs and

initiatives must be cut because sustainable funding sources cannot be secured. This includes a variety of reasons such as lack of awareness of the issues the program seeks to address, inability to "fit" within funder portfolios, and more. However, funders often provide flexibility and opportunity for program design. And, with resilience, expertise, and yes - connections - a successful organization can continue to build its social impact.

Aligning Values and Centering Communities

One of the keys to successfully working with any type of funder is identifying a strong value proposition for both parties that is communicated clearly and understood by all parties, often in the form of a legal partnership document. Whether it's an individual or a company, doing good is not always enough and all parties need to see how investing in programs and initiatives that drive social change are also good for them, their business, and their stakeholders.

The value proposition should include a values alignment on the initiative, and an understanding on ensuring integrity and respect when entering communities. Not always, but often, social impact initiatives look to support under-represented and under-resourced communities, driving equity in previously disenfranchised communities. While well-intentioned, this sometimes creates unintentional harm in the community. Ensuring representatives of the community are a part of the de-



sign and decision-making process assists in building an appropriate social impact program that benefits the community members.

Given that consumers and customers are requiring more from the organizations and companies they support, funders are even more attracted to authentically engaging in communities and not simply doing something to check a box or for positive PR. In fact, funders are trending towards being more involved with their giving. With this, many are open and interested in learning more about the work and how to be part of the solution. Take them up on the opportunity and educate them.

Understanding Impact

Key to developing a successful program or initiative is ensuring that the change delivers meaningful positive outcomes for beneficiaries. But the field of evaluation continues to evolve. While randomized controlled trials (RCTs) and quasi-experimental designs (QEDs) are still requested by certain funders, and important for certain projects, other methods have become more accepted, and oftentimes, more appropriate so that evaluating impact doesn't shut down a potential successful program or initiative.

When determining how to assess impact, rich data that come from qualitative methods can sometimes provide deeper findings that inform the true positive change that has occurred, and call out the strug-

gles that hindered positive change, informing future program designs. These types of data are important to consider as part of any evaluation and impact reporting strategy, as they are critical to understanding the potential impact in a community in more efficient, cost-effective ways.

Building a Strong Organization Team

Ultimately some of the success (or lack thereof) of social impact efforts depends on the internal workings within the organizational team.

The program function must have strong community partnerships and expertise to design impactful initiatives. The revenue function must effectively build and strategize with the program delivery function of the organization, ensuring both have input into the proposed plan so that the initiatives are appealing to funders. And the marketing and communications function must have input as well, so that they understand and can help determine how to show the impact of the programs through authentic, emotional, and data-driven stories and ultimately to ignite greater change through awareness-building efforts.

This is where people come into play. And finding the right team members that are willing to work together to achieve collective goals is imperative. As we know from sports, finding the right teammates can change the game. This is true in non-profits and social impact work as well.



Stories from the Field: Retaining More Girls in Sports

In 2019, the U.S. Soccer Foundation's partnered with DICK'S Sporting Goods Foundation and adidas to launch the United for Girls initiative. Both funders were acutely aware of a real equity issue plaguing youth sports: that by age 14 girls were dropping out of sports at twice the rate of boys and that the disparities in participation rates of girls of color and those living in under-resourced communities were much bigger than their white and more affluent counterparts. Leveraging both expertise from our community-based partners and our internal team, the U.S. Soccer Foundation designed an initiative to test promising strategies to recruit and retain more girls from under-resourced communities in the game of soccer.

Over a three-year period, the U.S. Soccer Foundation and its partners reached more than 121,000 girls through more than 20 partners and 5,475 women or non-binary coaches in 627 cities. Even more, through the United for Girls initiative, a Count Her In Playbook was created, outlining promising practices for working with girls from under-resourced communities. These tools and strategies accounted for considerations for cultural, regional, economic, and other factors that can be barriers to girls' participation in sport.

This is a powerful example of ensuring representatives are a part of the design process, lifting the expertise and efforts of those within the community. The funders understood that the initiative's success was due in part because of strong community-based knowledge. And the funders not only had a direct impact on girls

across the country, but created something to lift the entire youth sports field.

Scaling Impact in Miami

The Miami Children's Trust is a long-standing supporter of the U.S. Soccer Foundation's programs. The Children's Trust is a dedicated source of revenue derived from property taxes established by voter referendum in 2002. Its mission is to partner with the community to plan, advocate for, and fund strategic investments that improve the lives of all children and families in Miami-Dade County.

The U.S. Soccer Foundation first partnered with the Children's Trust in 2017 to fund our Soccer for Success after-school program to provide kids with an opportunity to learn the sport while also increasing their physical and emotional well-being.

In the beginning, there were just four partners funding Soccer for Success programs in Miami: the U.S. Soccer Foundation, the Children's Trust, the Health Foundation, and the City of Miami. Since then, Target, Anthem, Inc., the City of North Miami, the Miami Foundation, and others have supported programming and the installation of mini-pitches to provide safer places to play right in the communities where the programs were occurring.

Due to the successes of these smaller programs, the U.S. Soccer Foundation unveiled the Miami-Dade Soccer Initiative with an initial \$6M+ investment from Griffin Catalyst (Citadel founder and CEO's Kenneth Griffin's philanthropy) and the Children's Trust in 2023. This additional investment enabled the funding of 50 mini-pitch-

es in Miami-Dade County and the launch of Just Ball League in the county, which provides another no-cost opportunity for older youth to play the game and benefit from all it has to offer.

By starting small and proving the concept worked, the U.S. Soccer Foundation was able to sustain strong partnerships and build new partnerships to scale reputable programming.

Three Keys to Unlocking Revenue

While there are varying approaches to unlocking revenue to scale social change, there are three things that are incredibly important.

The first is aligning around values. This isn't just aligning on values of the funder and the non-profit (or the program or initiative). But it is ensuring that the community also has a seat at the table and a voice in the program delivery.

Second, is understanding impact. This means being creative and strategic about what data to collect and how to collect it so that impact can be tracked in a cost-effective and efficient way.

The third is putting together a strong team and ensuring that the entire team—no matter their job function—are aligned around the same strategic goals.



Who are you as a leader, and how do you convince a collection of individuals to follow you – and oh by the way you are a woman, and your team is likely comprised of men.

So how do you earn their respect and their trust to the degree that they will rally behind you and execute your plan. Do you know the material, are you a genuine fan, are you confident enough to communicate your weaknesses and offer that each member of the crew could fill those gaps and contribute to the overall success.

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Women now believe they belong, so they belong.

Building Bridges in Sport through Gender Equality: A call to action from Sport for Generation Equality Initiative



Ana Carolina Querino

ACTING-REPRESENTATIVE,
UN WOMEN BRAZIL | SIGA
PARTNER

Sport is a tool for social transformation. The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) has understood, since its creation, that the sports ecosystem is important for leveraging human development in various ways. The gender equality twin-track approach adopted in the [2030 Agenda](#) - reflected on the establishment of a dedicated [Sustainable Development Goal \(SDG 5\)](#) and disaggregated targets and indicators present in other SDGs - can benefit from the power of sport to promote the expected social changes towards the realization of the principle of leaving no one behind.

In its fundamental principle number four, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) defines the practice

of sport as a human right (IOC, Olympic Charter, 2023). Access to sport should be encouraged and promoted for all, free from discrimination of any kind. In this regard, it is a principle that echoes the fundamental recognition of human dignity and equal rights that underpin the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights \(UDHR\)](#), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948.

In 1995, the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#) were adopted by the plenary of the Fourth World Conference on Women. The declaration remains, to this day, a landmark for defining equal rights between men and women, outlining commitments and actions for advancing gender equality worldwide. In this context, sport emerges as a strategic vehicle for promoting women's health, eliminating discrimination in education and training for girls and women, as well as fostering the inclusion of women in leadership positions. This, in turn, enhances representation in political, corporate, and social environments. Therefore, the declaration strengthened the role of sports as a tool for the inclusion of women and the promotion of diversity.

Since that first call to action, the UN system has applied sport as a strategic objective and a catalyst for

accelerating gender equality through programs, partnerships and implementations around the world. One flagship sports project, a legacy of the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, is [One Win Leads to Another \(OWLA\)](#). The program was jointly structured by UN Women and the IOC, in collaboration with the NGO Women Win and the Brazilian Olympic Committee (COB), to use sport as an instrument for empowering girls and young women.

Initially implemented in communities facing vulnerability in Rio de Janeiro, the program harnesses the power of sports as an engine to advance gender equality. Through weekly sports practice, the program's methodology seeks to strengthen life skills, addressing topics such as leadership capacities, sexual and reproductive health knowledge, economic empowerment and the prevention of violence against women and girls.

Sport is being leveraged as a safe space facilitator, an Olympic legacy that educates and enhances the capacity of girls and women in vulnerable situations to develop their skills and influence decisions that impact their lives at all levels. A total of 2,000 girls benefited from the program in Brazil during two implementation cycles between 2015 and 2022, and another 1,200 girls

in Argentina, which began applying to the program following the Youth Olympic Games held in Buenos Aires in 2018.

In 2020, UN Women launched the “Sport for Generation Equality” framework with the strategic support of the IOC. The document that embodies this structure represents a set of common principles and aligned objectives to enhance cooperation among members for leveraging gender equality and sharing knowledge and resources to catalyze innovation in the sports ecosystem.

Through these principles and objectives, the initiative aims to create a coalition of various stakeholders



that will accelerate progress towards gender equality, both within and beyond sports. Several signatories are participating in this initiative. More than 50 stakeholders from governments, sports organizations, clubs, brands, media and sports influencers have already become signatories to the principles of Sport for Generation Equality, acting collectively to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

The first principle, which “undertake efforts to promote women’s leadership and gender equality in governance models”, considers various objectives and actions to include women in corporate leadership, management, and administration of sports organizations. The materialization of this principle in the first position is paramount since we understand that the inclusion of women, recognizing the diversity of opinions, experiences and backgrounds that they bring to the planning and management of sports organizations, strengthens the decision-making process of the sports ecosystem with key demographic groups and agendas.

In the same context, a technical cooperation activity promoted in the wake of this initiative between UN Women and the IOC was desk research allied with knowledge production in partnership with the Brazilian Olympic Committee (COB). In 2022, as part of the One Win Leads to Another (OWLA) program, we conducted a mapping of Olympic sports organizations to present a picture of common corporate management challenges that hindered the inclusion or full participation of women in decision-making bodies in International Federations (IFs) and Brazilian Olympic Confederations.

At that moment, we noticed modest progress towards the inclusion of women in leadership positions in International Federations. Only 28% of IFs, at the time, 11 entities out of 39 accredited as Olympic, met the IOC’s target for a minimum inclusion of 30% of women in management positions. When we observe the same management structure in the Brazilian Olympic Confederations, the inclusion was similar, with only 29% of the Confederations, that is, 10 sports entities out of the 34 recognized, meeting the minimum inclusion target.

When we assess more closely executive positions, we realize that only 2 Brazilian Olympic Confederations had, in 2022, women in the Presidency, the highest position in sports management. While this margin increased when considering the position of vice-presidency, the Brazilian national context was still below the development produced internationally, with a comparison of 32% to 46%, respectively. On the international stage,



we also noticed that the IFs had 6 women in the presidency of their organizations, approximately 15% of the total representation of international sports entities.

Even though the international scenario was comparatively producing better management indicators for advancing gender equality within these sports organizations than the Brazilian scenario, the research allowed us to identify areas that deserved greater attention from Brazilian sports organizations to outline better plans, strategies, and projects for promoting gender equity in

their sports environment. This includes the recognition that the few advances made by institutions were organized in Women’s or Diversity Committees, structuring policies on female eligibility or informative actions to combat harassment and abuse in sports, without further advancing with diagnoses and/or programs that articulate specific goals and guidelines for the assessment and monitoring of women’s inclusion in each sport.

Nevertheless, we also understand that, although the research expressed the common challenges of gen-

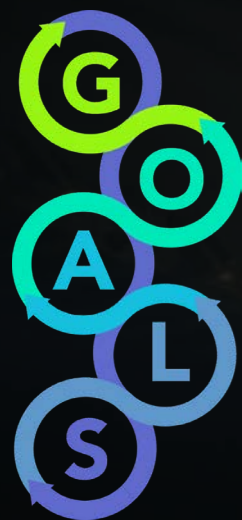
der inequality in sports management, the report was also valuable in identifying and sharing the good policies and practices that were being developed, locally and internationally, for the inclusion of girls and women in these various Olympic disciplines. As a result, the publication also presented concrete guidelines and recommendations in terms of inclusion policies, partnerships, and actions for advancing gender diversity in the Brazilian sports ecosystem.

In this sense, inclusion and diversity matter in the boardroom and at every level of sports management and participation. Considering the principles of Sport for Generation Equality’s framework and *Olympism365*’s strategy, in 2023, UN Women and the IOC launched a new initiative to catalyze the power of sport as a promoter of gender equality. The project “Leveraging sports for gender equality, human rights and a life free of violence” has three main objectives.

Firstly, to develop the capacity of girls and women to defend their rights using sport as a tool. In addition, to strengthen the capacity of the state, sports organizations, and other social agents interested in formulating, implementing, and monitoring policies, laws, and strategies to promote gender equality through sports. Finally, we aim to gather best practices obtained through the implementation of flagship programs on this theme that are being developed in the Latin American-Caribbean and Asia-Pacific regions, which seek to explore the potential of expanding their results.

Our team is working closely to collect, systematize and disseminate a best practice report on the goals and actions of sports organizations that promote gender equality in both regions. We intend to increase the capacity for knowledge exchange and coordination among sports stakeholders to work with the guidelines and objectives of gender equality in sports. With this mission in mind, we would like to end with a call to action to all contributors to the Sport Integrity Global Alliance’s “Sport Integrity Journal” (SIJ), who recognize the principles established in the SIGA Universal Standards on good governance in sport, to also join the Sports for Generation Equality Initiative.

In doing so, we will further strengthen this powerful coalition led by UN Women to promote female empowerment in the sports ecosystem, acting strategically and collaboratively, starting with the inclusion of more women in leadership positions in organizations committed to advancing human and sustainable development through the power of sport.



GOOD GOVERNANCE

Sports organisations must govern themselves and operate under the highest Governance principles, including democracy, transparency, accountability and Stakeholder Engagement.

OUTSTANDING ETHICAL CONDUCT

Sports organisations must uphold and respect the fundamental principles of sports ethics, which reflect the values of the fair play, solidarity, respect for the rule of law, human rights, dignity, integrity, diversity and inclusiveness

ACCOUNTABILITY

Sports organisations must take accountability for their own affairs and implement a zero-tolerance policy against all types criminality (including corruption, bribery, money-laundering, tax evasion, smuggling and trafficking of minors), as well as racism, violence and all forms of abuse and discrimination

LEGACY

Whilst recognising sport's specific nature and autonomy, sports organisations must respect and comply with all applicable laws and regulations in the governance, regulation and administration of sport.

SCRUTINY

Sports organisations must implement and comply with the SIGA Universal Standards on Sport Integrity and be independently scrutinised through SIRVS.



Setting the path for the future of Sport



ONE VISION | ONE MISSION | ONE VOICE

SIGA Invites you to support the Sport Integrity GOALS. A global movement is emerging and **Sport Integrity** is at its core. Bridging the insights of the world's youth and visionary leaders.

Empowering Tomorrow's Champions: The Crucial Role of Mentoring Young Women in Sports



Lynn Casey

CEO AND FOUNDER,
SHINESCOUT

How do we build better tomorrows? I believe this is a question we all seek to answer through the work we do, the relationships we create, and the causes we lend our hearts and hands to. The answers are never easy, but sometimes, they are very clear.

In my work as a human insight expert and cultural cartographer, it is my job to take the pulse of the public, to intuit and understand where we are going and what we want. I highlight emerging challenges and raise uncomfortable truths. One of the most disconcerting ones I have grappled with post-pandemic is the troubling slide in self-confidence and hope among girls and young women today. The Covid 19 epidemic was particularly hard on women and girls. We saw women leaving the workforce in unprecedented numbers as they were crushed by the heavy load of work and running a household that

had become a home school, a short-order kitchen, and a therapy center for a frightened family. Young girls, caught at a critical moment in their development, found their emerging skills at connecting and forming friendships severed, leaving them lonely and risk averse. And, in many households, they were also tasked with supporting the domestic chores and child care, with little room to pursue their own dreams. During my study of this crisis, I asked a teacher what he would want every parent of every girl to know. "Tell them they are valuable," he said. "They need to know that they count."

How do we tell girls and women they matter; how do we help them develop the self-confidence and skills so needed right now to help them thrive in an increasingly challenging world? Where can they gain a love of personal challenge, a place to bond with others, and the knowledge of resilience and grit as means to birth their own bright futures? One of the best places to model this is sports. In study after study, girls and young women who participate in organized sports show greater confidence and self-esteem, set bigger goals, and see brighter horizons. A recent UN study points out "Participation of women and girls in sports challenges gender stereotypes and discrimination. In particular, women in sports leadership can shape attitudes towards women's capabilities as leaders and decision-makers, especially in traditionally male do-



mains." We see proof of this with the clear fact that 94% of C-suite women have played sports. It is not a coincidence. It is, rather, a superpower.

However, the road to encourage young women to participate in sports is equally challenging. Recent research conducted by Dove and Nike found that 45% of young women quit sports before they turn 14 because of a loss of body confidence. They don't think they are good enough; they think they look 'wrong.' At this age, girls' confidence drops by 20%, their belief in their intelligence slips by 50%, their optimism by 52%, and their stress levels increase by 241%.

These are the girls fueling the mental wellness crisis we are all aware of. The US Surgeon General called a state of emergency in 2022, citing young girls as being in the most danger.

I speak from personal experience - I spent 3 months during the summer of 2023 deeply monitoring this crisis-sitting in minivans, bedrooms, playgrounds and kitchen counters, hearing about girls scared to go to school, unsure of their own abilities, afraid to try new things. In fact, parents list anxiety and depression as their number one concern when it comes to their girls.

And these are the same parents who fervently believe that sports empower their girls- gives them a sense

of self-actualization- and actual physical power- a belief that they can do anything!

Knowing the value of sports as a critical foundation for empowering and building up young women, how do we encourage - and keep them - in the game?

In a word- mentorship.

In the realm of sports, the significance of mentoring cannot be overstated, particularly when it comes to fostering the growth and development of young women. From nurturing talent to instilling confidence and resilience, mentoring plays a pivotal role in shaping the trajectory of their athletic and personal journeys.

The SIGA Global Mentorship Survey

Recently, SIGA conducted its own research into the importance of mentoring young women in sports, work that highlights its multifaceted benefits and the transformative impact it has on individuals, communities, and society at large. SIGA launched a survey among a broad group of international women who had participated in sports and received mentorship along the way. The power and impact of both sports and mentorship on their lives were both significant and powerful.

On a scale of 1 – 10, with 10 being the highest score possible, we heard a rallying cry for the power and purpose of sports in every girl's life. The following statements received scores of 8, 9 and 10 from the young mentees surveyed:

- When I was a little girl, being a part of a sports team made me feel like I belonged - I felt safe and connected.
- Being on a sports team helped me develop confidence which I believe gives me special powers to this day.
- Knowing I could learn and grow and gain new skills during my sports years has given me a growth mindset I use to this day.
- Having a sports background has helped me achieve the goals I set for myself.
- Sports in my youth has taught me to take things in stride and bounce back from adversity.
- Sports has given me a really strong personal power that has helped me try new things and push through the tough ones to create a life I love.
- If asked, I would highly recommend that every little girl should spend some time in sports - it is a huge source of personal power and joy.

Sports shows up as a central force in shaping and molding confident, strong, and powerful young women who are ready to take on the tasks of leading in the complicated world we are facing today. It is the force that can change lives and change the world.

But how do we keep them in the game, on the field, in a place where they can feel powerful and strong, where they learn delayed gratification, personal power, and the bonds of team?

Mentorship.

Study after study shows that in sport, as in life, mentorship changes lives. It provides a link to a caring adult and fosters self-belief. Mentors can also convey important life skills and values like leadership and confidence to girls through storytelling. It can lead to knowledge transfer, the fostering of self-concept, the promotion of positive behavioral outcomes, and the sharing of similar feelings and values. These aspects are important to girls as they can translate directly to both sport and non-sport areas of their lives.



We all know the challenges young women are facing – and it is exactly at these moments we must rally to do what is right and what is needed. Today, that looks like mentorship - taking the lead, and allowing others to draft off of your power and purpose, so they can pull all of us forward tomorrow.

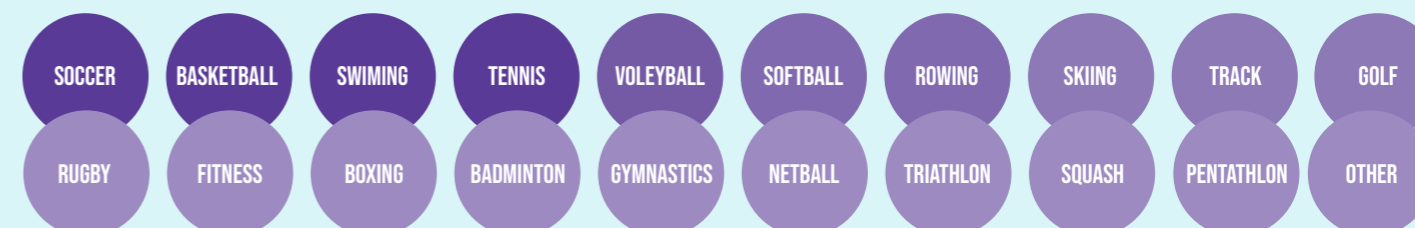
In conclusion, the importance of mentoring young women in sports cannot be overstated. From empowerment and skill development to confidence-building and leadership cultivation, mentoring serves as a catalyst for personal growth, athletic excellence, and social change. By investing in the next generation of female athletes through mentorship, we not only unlock their full potential but also pave the way for a more inclusive, equitable, and inspiring future in sports and beyond. As mentors and mentees come together to pursue their shared passion for athletics, they not only shape individual destinies but also rewrite the narrative of what it means to be a champion in today's world.

SIGA Global Mentorship Survey Results

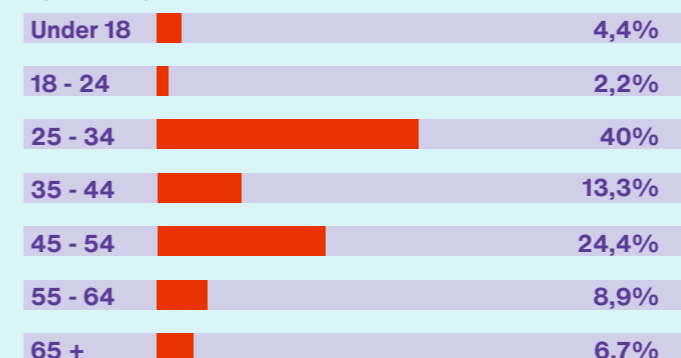
Participating Nations

USA	BRASIL	UK	SWITZERLAND	GERMANY	SPAIN	UGANDA	BELGIUM	ENGLAND	JAPAN
OMAN	FRANCE	NEW ZEELAND	KENYA	URUGUAY	QATAR	BARBADOS	VENEZUELA	CANADA	INDIA

Sport Experience Summary



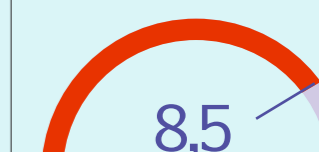
Age Demographics



Question 1: When I was a little girl, being part of a sports team or club made me feel like I belonged, it made me feel safe and connected.



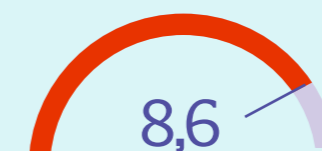
Question 2: Being on a sports team helped me develop confidence which I believe gives me special powers to this day.



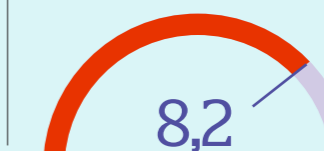
Question 3: Knowing I could learn and grow and gain new skills during my sports years has given me a 'growth mindset' that I use to succeed today.



Question 4: I believe my sports background helps me achieve the goals I set for myself.



Question 5: Sports in my youth has taught me to take things in stride and bounce back from adversity. There is always another shot!



Question 6: Playing sport helped me to develop a better understanding of integrity and the importance of acting with integrity in other aspects of life.



Question 7: Compared to girls who did not play sports, I think I have more self-confidence and self-reliance.



Question 8: My time in sports has given me great mental and emotional grit, attributes that keep me happy and healthy today.



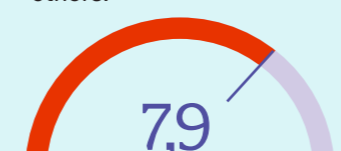
Question 9: Sports has given me a really strong personal power that helps me try new things, and push through the tough stuff to create a life I love.



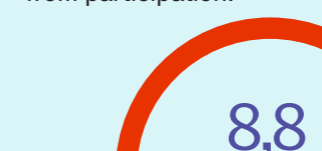
Question 10: Sport is a foundational aspect of who I view myself as today. I don't believe I would have the life I have today, without my time in sports.



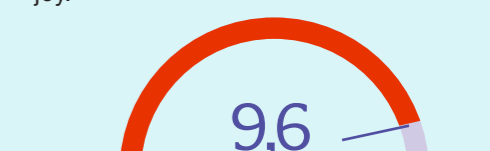
Question 11: Sports in my youth has taught me both how to be a leader and also how to work well with others.



Question 12: Now that I am older I have concerns about sport integrity and governance that should be addressed to help other girls and young women benefit from participation.



Question 13: If asked, I would highly recommend that every little girl should spend some time in sports, as it is a huge source of personal power, confidence and joy.



What's the Problem? Inequity What's the Solution? Reconciliation



Carole Oglesby

FOUNDER, EMERITUS PROFESSOR,
TEMPLE UNIVERSITY | INAUGURAL
PRESIDENT, WOMEN SPORT
INTERNATIONAL | SIGA WOMEN
MENTOR

The challenges facing administration and management of sport today are enormous. Consider these two “day in the life of...” scenarios as examples.

Scenario one

The fifteen-year veteran Athletic Director of WeLuvUniv (WLU), a white, male alum of the university was sitting in his well-appointed office in late Fall. His desk was covered this afternoon with budget figure projections, spreadsheets, promotional materials for his final approval. His concentration was interrupted by his secretary, flustered, and worried about breaking in unplanned. There were three female basketball players waiting behind her and obviously disturbed. They wanted an appointment with him and wanted it now.

Their story was, unfortunately, not unfamiliar. Their new coach, white and a former player with outstanding basketball credentials, was described heatedly, and tearfully, as extremely homophobic.

She had taken steps to control travel policies that blocked player choices in rooming. She had sponsored parent information meetings with only “certain parents” invited and two single-sex partnerships were excluded. Dress regulations outside of on-court appearance pushed players toward stereotypical feminine fashion choices. The three women were products of families from a liberal political spectrum and one player’s father was a prominent lawyer who had a history of pushing hard for university gender

equality steps within athletics. The players wanted to know, in threatening terms, what the AD was going to do to immediately change their situation with the coach.

Scenario 2

The Wolverine’s were a professional football team that had been around since the league began. They had pride of the community standing although, until three years ago, their win record and history of league finishes were mediocre at best. Three years ago, they managed to sign a highly sought African player, an immediate sensation. Wolves were in contention for championships every year since his signing and, to play beside him, three other African-based defensive stars had come onboard. Now the long-time head coach was retiring, and these core players were putting all the pressure possible on management to hire an African coach. The General Manager felt certain if these demands were not met, the impact on team morale, esprit and even performance would be disastrous. These four core players had scheduled a meeting with the GM in 30 minutes. In this situation, the GM’s understandings are not the problem and will not lead to resolution.

Do these scenarios seem far-fetched to you? I doubt it. Even though they are imaginary, they could be pulled from any newspaper pages. Examination could go in many directions, but I want to focus on what I believe is the tragic misunderstanding underlying these, and countless others, in today’s sport. The problem, I believe, is that the AD and the GM understand this situation as 1) a particular set of individuals, 2) in a particular set of circumstances, 3) a time when there is tremendous pressure on each leader to find a particular action or set of immediate actions to resolve the issues.

As a sport psychology consultant as early as 1994, I began working with coaches to “inoculate” them against the kind of behavior that leads to miscommunication, misunderstanding even legal action in personal relationships with players. I was joined in this work by untold individuals around the world, dedicating themselves wholly to addressing the ills of sexual harassment and abuse as well as racial discrimination. Eventually, the highest organiz-

ers of sport systems produced significant policy statements that unambiguously identified harm, punishments, and processes to carry out 'true safeguarding' of athletes and participants.

For the last two years I have been immersed in the religious-political-world view warfare over Transwomen participation raging in the women's sport sector globally and here in USA. Given these and other advocacy efforts, my overall conclusion is we are either going to ultimately come down on the side of collaborative compromise or we will destroy ourselves. If we are to reach a positive outcome, reasonable people must look more seriously (and systematically) at the concept of reconciliation. A world in which people are less disturbed, less violent, closer to optimal function, must be a world in which systemic disparity is (at the least) mitigated. How might we approach reconciliation that reduces (or eliminates) unfair disparity?

Globally, there are very few places where reconciliation has been attempted. Here in the USA, it is a faintly offered word dream. My observation is that this term is completely misunderstood as a single action step. As societies, we have arrived at such gross disparities as a complex process over eons of time; reaching reconciliation will likewise require a complex process.

I am proposing a process we might call "reconciliation planning". Such a program would be designed to inoculate against dissatisfaction, possible and probable legal actions, due to the pervasive sense of disparity within all systems. In my vision I liken this Reconciliation Training Program to the extensive training now occurring in sexual harassment prevention programs ubiquitous in business, education, sport systems to name but a few. There was a time (not more than 10-20 years ago) when no one remotely planned for SH training. Now, no self-respecting company would go without because of the situational liability factor doing so would invite.



The reduction/elimination of unfair systemic disparity will not occur by chance actions in isolated circumstances. System leaders and influencers must come together to formulate proactive plans based on the knowledge and understanding of the roots of inequity, as well as the

methods, and actions by which inequity expresses itself in present operating systems.

Such planning would result in programs that are available to activate the reconciliation process to reduce/eliminate systemic unfair disparity whenever needed. If systemic disparities are noted these disparities are seen as a root cause of discord more so than individual ill intention.

To return to our opening scenarios, reconciliation processes could have been proactively instituted with an expectation that discord about inequalities will always (in the foreseeable future) emerge. Processes then usually begin with what might be termed a "Call to justice". Individuals in the system, often bravely, will identify inequities that are creating problems and reducing effectiveness of the operation of the system. Instead of being seen as troublemakers, these individuals could be re-defined as seeking to improve and enhance system operation. The three basketball players, by stepping forward to administration, had issued a call to justice.

The next step would be the examination of the women's basketball system operation called into question, and those responsible for its operation. It could be labeled as an assessment or an evaluation. Because the examination is directed towards the understanding of systemic inequity as this impairs system operation let us give the examination a special label, reckoning. Utilizing a principle from "restorative justice", the athletic administration had created structures for fostering "encounters" between himself, the coach (who apparently was doing some damage) and, ultimately, some players. These discussions were facilitated in safe spaces in which all had a voice. New knowledge was shared concerning previously unknown factors. For the coach, explanations of homophobia and its harm and damage were explored. For the athletes, some of the coach's past history was shared and painful experiences that contributed to her present attitudes.

The third step in the reconciliation process comes into play if the examination

reveals it is systemic inequity which is impairing operation, and indeed may have been causing impairment for a long period of time. A full and complete reckoning will then reveal that there is some measure and kind of compensation that makes whole that which has been damaged. This step will be called reparations. Ultimately, the Department has non-discrimination policies that ban certain prior coach behaviors. The coach must realize continuing in her position requires adherence to these fairness policies and usually coaches do not intentionally wish to harm players and team with their own behavior. Many changes are well accepted.

The last stage of this complex process brings reconciliation. The people, and the system, are made whole and the people in this system operation are enhanced, benefitted, and developed to the highest degree possible. Because our ecosystems have been degraded by systemic inequities for so long, true reconciliation seems an impossible dream. We can get about the business, however. Because of the complexity of these situations, and the brevity required in this writing, these descriptions are over simplified but hopefully give a picture of a future that is much more desirable than simply "kicking complainers off of teams" OR firing coaches. Let us launch a new initiative to make reconciliation planning an everyday reality.

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Athena P. Constantinou

MANAGING DIRECTOR,
APC SPORTS CONSULTING | SIGA MEMBER

Athena P. Constantinou has over 30 years of experience in the financial field. Athena holds a Bachelor degree in Business Administration, with specialization in Accounting and Business Law, from the Bernard M. Baruch School of Business of the City University of New York. She also holds a Master's in Business Administration (MBA) in Computer Information Systems from the same school. She is a Certified Public Accountant licensed in the State of New York and she is an international member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. She also holds a Chartered Global Management certification, a Financial Education Instructor certification from the US National Financial Educators Council and she is a member of the Sports Financial Advisers Association and the International Wealth Planners Association. She is a member of ACAMS and a Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialist.

Athena has had considerable professional experience on an international level in the fields of financial and business consulting, advising high net worth individuals and entities, mostly in the sports and entertainment industries for more than 30 years. She has practiced as a CPA for a number of years in New York City with in depth involvement in international financial planning and business consulting in the sports and entertainment industries. During her career, Athena has also been heavily involved in providing advice in connection with financial planning, development, valuation, commercialization and management of image rights of athletes and entertainers worldwide. She is the founder of the Sports Financial Literacy Academy, which designs and implements financial literacy courses for athletes globally. She is also the Managing Director of APC Compliance Ltd through which she advises sports organizations and stakeholders on Anti-Money Laundering and Sports Integrity matters.



APC Compliance: New SIGA Member Interview

1 We are delighted to welcome you as a new SIGA member. Can we begin with you sharing an overview of your organisation for those that may not be familiar with your work?

APC Compliance prides itself on being at the forefront of providing bespoke compliance solutions, with a robust emphasis on ethical practices, governance, and regulatory adherence. Our services span expert consultancy, comprehensive training, and meticulous audit processes, all tailored to empower organizations in maintaining the highest standards of integrity. Our expertise is not just in ensuring compliance but in fostering a culture that values transparency, accountability, and ethical operation as the pillars of sustainable business success.

In the sophisticated times in which we live in, the fight to keep sport clean from wide ranging forms of corruption is an ongoing battle and it requires the expertise of many professionals. APC Compliance has a sports integrity dedicated team comprised of Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialists, members of ACAMS, which advises clubs and sports stakeholders on the practical application of AML legislation to their organizations, prepares relevant policies and procedures, creates AML internal manuals and trains internal AML Compliance officers. In addition, APC Compliance provides advice and guidance to sports

clubs, sport governing bodies and regulators on how to safeguard and maintain integrity in sport. In the case of sports clubs, we help them equip themselves with the necessary tools to root out corruption.

2 As mentioned, you have recently joined SIGA. Can you share your reasons for joining our alliance?

Our decision to join SIGA was driven by a shared ethos of integrity and a common goal of upholding ethical standards in the sports industry. As an organization deeply rooted in the principles of compliance and good governance, we see our alliance with SIGA as a strategic collaboration to influence and elevate the standards of transparency, fairness, and ethical conduct within sports, ensuring that the sector becomes a beacon of integrity and trustworthiness. During the past decade, the sports industry has been shaken by a number of scandals, worldwide. We believe that it is time for all sports industry stakeholders to work together to put an end to this. For an equitable and ethical sports industry where all stakeholders are respected and are given the freedom and space to flourish, we all need to do our part. We believe that by joining forces with SIGA and its other members, we will be able to contribute in the reform of the sports industry to a more transparent, ethical and equitable one.

3 SIGA brings together Sport Stakeholders from across the Sport-related eco-system to implement an ambitious reform agenda to deliver good governance, integrity, diversity, inclusivity and transparency for all. Can you share with us how this aligns with your objectives and your vision for Sport?

Aligning with SIGA's comprehensive reform agenda resonates profoundly with our core objectives. We are committed to the enhancement of good governance, promoting a culture of integrity that transcends the sports sector to instigate broader societal impact. Our vision for sport is one where integrity, inclusivity, and transparency are not just ideals but operational norms that define the sector, driving positive change and fostering a global sporting environment that is fair, inclusive, and corruption-free. We are particularly interested in the wellbeing of the most precious assets of the sports industry, its athletes. Athletes have long felt the adverse effects of corruption in the sports industry and they have been financially and otherwise taken advantage by third parties. Our vision is an ethical and transparent sports industry where the wellbeing of its athletes is at the forefront.

4 This edition of the SIJ is dedicated to Female Leadership in Sport. What are your perspectives on Gender Equity, Equality and Female Lead-

ership in contemporary Sport and how do you foresee this evolving in the future?

Gender equity, equality, and the empowerment of female leadership in sport represent fundamental values we advocate for passionately. These principles are critical for the evolution of sport, ensuring it is reflective of our diverse society and accessible to all. Looking ahead, we foresee an environment where these values are increasingly normalized, leading to greater opportunities, recognition, and influential roles for women in sport, thereby enriching the sector with diverse perspectives and leadership styles.

I have recently attended both the SIGA Masterclass and Annual Summit on Female Leadership in Sport in New York City and I must confess that it has been an amazing experience. I got to meet a lot of like-minded people and listen to the experiences of so many female leaders within the sports industry, coming from so many diverse backgrounds and countries.

Although a lot has been done in order to tackle gender inequality, there are still deeply entrenched inequalities between men and women. These inequalities are the result of centuries of structural, cultural and societal obstacles that women have

been forced to deal with and they extend to the sports industry as well.

There have been positive changes in the sports industry which have picked up over the last few years or so. We see a different identity emerging for female athletes; Coverage is rising, interest in female sports is increasing, and marketers have realized that by engaging more with female fans, they can sell more clicks, subscriptions, and merchandise. Nonetheless, there is still a long way to go.

The gender pay gap means that women earn less than men over the course of their lifetimes, which translates to a lesser retirement income as well, since their retirement income is based on their career earnings. Given that women might take pauses in their careers or decrease hours due to caregiving for their family and children, their income is even more reduced as women receive less income from social security and pensions. Putting aside the obvious and fair demand for equal pay, the money disparity makes it almost impossible for many skilled women to follow a career in sport, while on the other hand less talented men get the chance to earn their living through sports.

In regards to female leadership in sport, we believe it is important for a host of reasons. Granted that most females, as opposed to males, will not have the chance to play professional sports, an opportunity is created for females in sports to engage in other forms of sport participation, including that of sport management, performance management, participation in sport governing bodies, which can be an important step in promoting equality in the industry generally.

In addition, female sport role models (as are male role models for that matter) are important since adolescent girls are bombarded with images of external beauty, instead of images of quality characteristics, usually found in female athletes. These role models can help offset the peer pressure and encourage girls to participate

in sports and maintain a healthy and active lifestyle. Female sport role models can instil confidence, strong work ethic and even an emphasis on education. Confidence and leadership, teamwork and cooperation are all very important as qualities, which many female athletes exemplify and young girls need.

We plan to work alongside SIGA to tackle the Gender Equity and Inequality issues within the sports industry. All of us together and united, can keep the momentum going and we hope that some-day soon, we will reach the end-goal of complete gender equality in sports.

5 How does the work that SIGA are currently delivering align to your efforts relating to key Sport Integrity themes and are there any specific areas you are looking to become more involved with through your membership with SIGA?

The work undertaken by SIGA aligns closely with our strategic priorities, particularly in enhancing the integrity and ethical fabric of the sports industry. We are eager to contribute to and engage with SIGA's initiatives, especially those advancing transparency, ethical practices, and governance. Our aim is to actively participate in and support programs that resonate with our expertise, potentially focusing on areas such as compliance training, integrity audits, and advisory services, thereby enriching the sport integrity ecosystem.

In addition, I would like to point out that we have been advocates of financial literacy for athletes for a very long time and we strongly believe that investing in the financial education of athletes can put a halt in their financial exploitation by third parties, giving them the tools to improve their financial and overall wellbeing. We are ready to work together with SIGA in financially educating athletes so as to help them design their financial future and pave the way to financial freedom.





LP Avvocati, are a law firm based in Rome, joined SIGA in January 2024. Flavia Tortorella and Marta Valentini, are Italian lawyers and experts in Sports Law and Compliance and provide defence and consultancy to Italian federations, sporting clubs, athletes and sports workers. In alignment with SIGA, LP Avvocati believe in the added value of diversity and synergistic alignment between people with different background and experiences and in the positive collaboration between men and women. They apply these values within their Law Firm (LP Avvocati has 80% female composition) and outside, by guaranteeing and defending the rights of our clients.



Flavia Tortorella

COUNSELER LP
AVVOCATI STUDIO
LEGALE | SIGA MEMBER



Marta Valentini

LAWYER, LP AVVOCATI
STUDIO LEGALE | SIGA
MEMBER

Gender Equality and Women Empowerment from the Point of View of Justice and Fairness: Prevention is the Best Defence

Topics such as gender equality and female empowerment in sport are not new. Here we would like to focus on the issues that arise when we consider the participation of women

in sport from the point of view of justice and fairness. What does it mean to say that women should have equality of chance in sport? What chances should we aim to equalize, why is it so important and especially how can we reach this goal?

In our experience, as attorneys specialized in sports law and compliance, we have identified two paths along which we assist sports organizations and workers in their effort to eliminate gender inequality.

The first path is the legal defence for the claim of violated or unrecognized women rights.

In this regard, the case of the Italian soccer “female movement” is definitely emblematic. Especially in Italy, soccer is still failing to match the inclusivity shown by

other sport fields (i.e. volley and basket). It is no secret that football is still male-dominated and women are often set aside, so they don’t have adequate rights and are not fully involved in important decision-making processes.

Just consider that women’s soccer gained access to professionalism only in 2022 (2 years ago!), thus conforming women’s Serie A to the other European

Leagues, such as those of England, France, Sweden and Spain, making the players professional athletes.

Professionalism is linked to the recognition of rights for female athletes and sports workers, such as payment (instead of mere reimbursements), social security compensation, insurance protection, collective bargaining and pension coverage; but, mainly, allowing women to realize a dream: they can now think of making soccer a profession, to which they can dedicate energy and full time.



Flavia Tortorella supported and assisted individual women's soccer clubs in the litigation that ended with the great success of determining "female movement" transmigration from the National Amateur League (Lega Nazionale Dilettanti) to the Italian Soccer Federation (Federazione Italiana Giuoco Calcio).

There is still a lot of work to be done. Women's soccer clubs are not represented by their own League, but by a specific Division established within the Federation. The absence of a dedicated Women's Football League implies that female soccer clubs cannot vote in Federal Council elections and have no access to some prerogatives that only Leagues can promote.

The second path is legal and compliance consultancy in order to prevent discrimination phenomena.

Indeed, our work to ensure women's rights in sport takes place not only in Courtrooms (the last and extreme remediation that implies that a violation has already been committed), but also – and preliminarily – in sports clubs and federations, with the drafting and application of specific measures to eliminate, prevent or remedy gender inequalities, together with the establishment of an open culture of respect for women rights.

It is essential to promote a change in sporting organization's mindset to such topics. Our motto is "prevention is the best defence" and we strongly believe in the importance of good governance structure to finally set up a gender-sensitive approach and avoid imbalances.

Marta Valentini uses technical expertise and legal sensitivity in the preparation, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of gender-aware bespoke compliance programs.

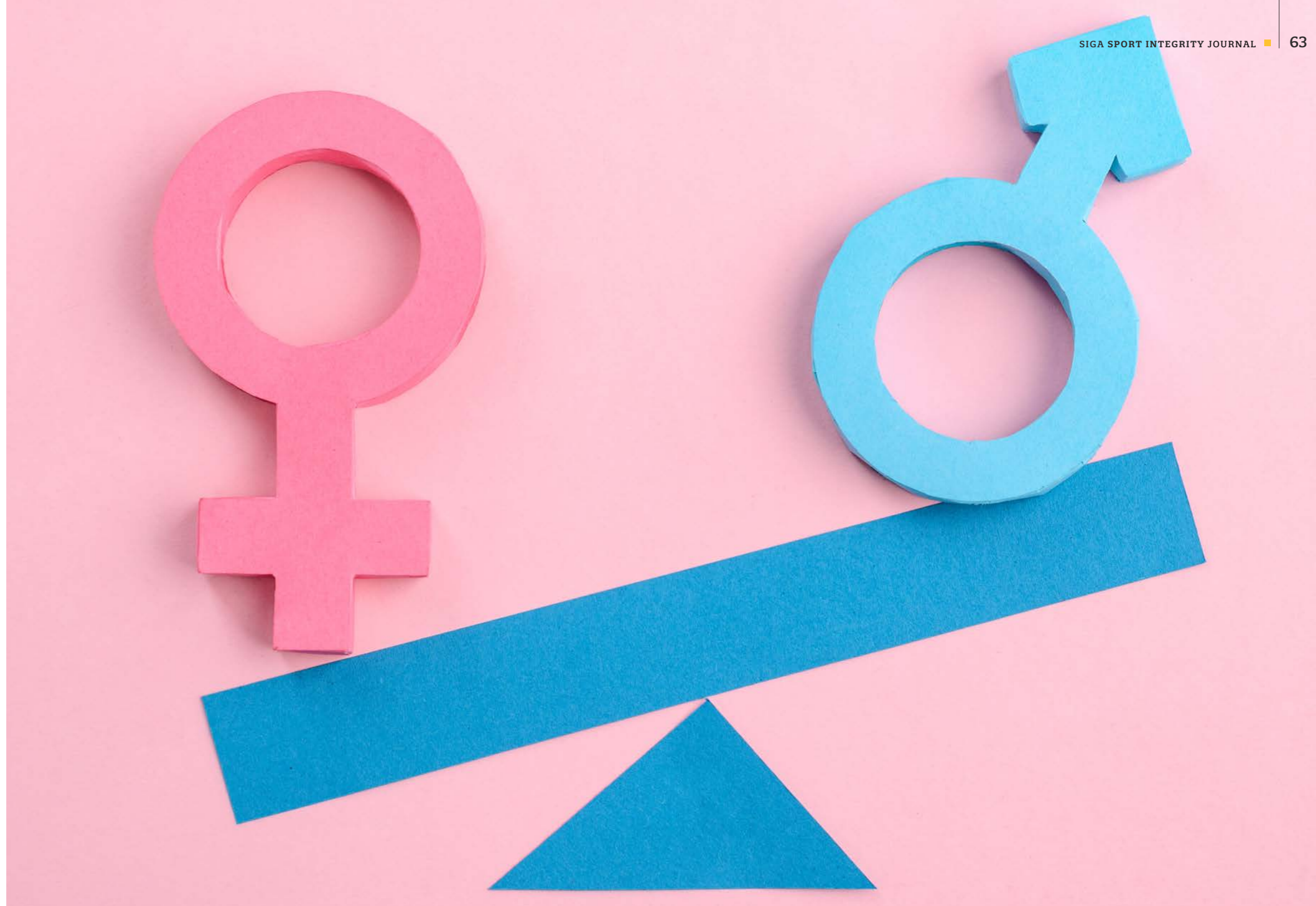
The activities begin with the study of the organization and the analysis of its procedures and internal control system; the consequent detection of its flaws; the indication of specific corrective measures and follow-up.

Communication channels also play a key role in combating inequality within sports organizations. We refer, in particular, to the whistleblower protection policies that, on one side, that allow women to report offenses in a safe and secure way, whilst protecting them from any possible retaliation in the workplace. On the other hand, these policies allow organizations to discover critical internal issues, carry out the necessary investigations and take corrective actions to prevent the risk to commit wrongdoing or to mitigate the consequences of offenses already committed.

Creating a gender equality culture is crucial, as well. We convey the winning message that being a male-female balanced organization is not only fair, but also worthwhile, especially in a long-term perspective, as it aids in fulfilling legal obligations regarding male-female parity and gives access to concrete benefits on the market. In this regard, we point out the imminent publication (scheduled for 2024/2025) of ISO 53800, the global standard on gender equality and women's empowerment, applicable to all organizations, regardless of their size, location, or field of activity and, therefore, also within the sports world. Oper-

ating according to this standard promotes a comprehensive understanding and implementation of gender equality within the organizations and enhances credibility with international stakeholders and investors.

In conclusion, sports organizations can become key actors in combating gender inequalities and our job is to support them in achieving that goal, as well. But according to us, this fight cannot be successful without the adoption of specific compliance programmes and the establishment of a commonly shared culture of gender equality and women empowerment.





**Anca-Maria
Gherghel**

RESEARCH MANAGER, EPIC GLOBAL
SOLUTIONS | SIGA MEMBER



Predictors of Problem Gambling Amongst Elite Female Athletes in the UK

A key concern in the world of professional sports are athletes being at a high risk of developing a gambling problem (Hakansson et al., 2023). To give an idea of the level of risk, certain European countries found problem gambling rates of up to six times higher amongst athletes than the general population (Turk et al., 2023) and some of those rates were higher in team sports. A number of factors related to their sports environment and certain personality traits were identified to have contributed to them being at a higher risk. As a result, elite athletes became a key group of interest for gambling researchers.

For example, a sports environment in which athletes, coaches and managers regularly talk about gambling and a culture in which betting is normalised has been associated with increased gambling participation and in certain cases, higher problem gambling levels (Vinberg et al., 2020; Lim et al., 2017; Turk et al., 2023). Athletes would gamble together as a group, socially and some would end up doing it in isolation which could lead to significant problems (Lim et al., 2017). Athletes sometimes gamble in at-

tempt to capture thrill and euphoria associated with competitive success on the field or to try to alleviate boredom/loneliness during spare time while being loaned out to clubs, away from families (Lim et al., 2017). Increased risk-taking behaviour and explicit and continuous emphasis on competition were also found to contribute to the risk of problem gambling in elite athletes (Curry & Jobu, 1995; Harris et al., 2015; Derevensky et al., 2019).

Despite both male and female athletes being at higher risk of developing a gambling problem, there is a lack of research on the factors that contribute to gambling problems from the perspective of female athletes. As men and women experience gambling differently, McCarthy et al. (2019) and Hakansson et al. (2023) argued that more research in female gamblers is needed in order to understand the factors that contribute to gambling problems from a female's perspective.

EPIC Global Solutions values the importance of using scientific evidence when delivering their programmes while also recognising the responsibility in contributing to

the field of knowledge. EPIC is a globally leading independent gambling harm minimisation consultancy working across the highest risk sectors for gambling-related harm. The organisation draws on lived experience to help individuals and organisations across high-risk sectors and the gambling industry to minimise the risks posed by gambling harm. They deliver gambling harm minimisation programmes to elite male and female athletes while also conducting research with them to monitor the prevalence of gambling and inform the relevant sporting organisations on what they can do to best support their athletes.

Therefore, EPIC has shown its commitment to research by funding a PhD study looking at gambling amongst professional female athletes in the UK, an area which has significant gaps in knowledge. The main aim of the research is to investigate the predictors of problem gambling amongst professional female athletes playing three popular team-sports: football, cricket and rugby union. The two main objectives are to examine gambling culture at clubs as a predictor of problem gambling severity and to identify other potential determinants of problem gambling severity for this group of individuals.

The research objectives of the PhD are planned to be addressed with three sub-studies which will supplementarily inform each other. The first study is a systematic review on elite athletes gambling with a focus on methodologies used, to explore the current landscape, what has been done before and what is most needed. As a result of the systematic review, significant gaps in knowledge were identified, especially when it comes to female athletes. For example, only six studies on elite athletes gambling had gender balanced samples and they were all based on a quantitative research design



meaning that no interviews were ever carried out with elite female athletes in relation to gambling. Additionally, there is a lack of qualitative research focused on gambling culture and the normalisation of sports betting in sports clubs and the possible consequences to athletes.

Therefore, the 2nd study of the PhD is a qualitative study with the main aim being to investigate gambling

culture within female sports clubs. It will provide a base to understand whether gambling is a normalised activity for female athletes and whether a gambling culture exists. Data for this study is currently being collected through semi-structured interviews with elite female athletes playing football, cricket and rugby union in the UK. A total of 12 interviews were conducted with six female footballers (professional and semi-profes-

sional), five professional female cricketers and one professional female rugby union player. The intention is to conduct interviews with three more professional female rugby union players to ensure even coverage of the three sports. It is important to note that recruitment is still open, so any interested players can reach out to participate, using contact details provided below.

One of the main areas covered in the interviews refers to the normalisation of gambling. An initial interesting finding is that every participant from the three sports believes sports betting specifically is a normalised activity in the UK. Some described sports betting to be like a ritual for some people every time their team is playing, going to pubs and placing bets on their teams. When it comes to what sports betting activities they first think of, footballers spoke about how horse racing is the main activity as everyone in the UK enjoys going to horse racing events and cricketers spoke about how they believe bets on football are extremely popular. This finding emphasises that gambling as a normalised activity in the UK, is also a reality for female athletes, and therefore, they should also be a priority when gambling harm reduction initiatives are provided.

Once the qualitative study is completed, the results will be used to inform a further quantitative study. The focus will be on exploring the gambling prevalence and identifying the predictors of problem gambling in professional female sports. Data will be collected using online surveys which will be distributed to all elite female athletes playing the three sports mentioned before in the UK. The results will help understand the factors that contribute to gambling problems from a female athlete's perspective to develop the most effective harm measures, policies and interventions that can be implemented by sporting organisations around the world. The data collection for this study is expected to start around January 2025.

The PhD thus far has identified the need for further research with elite female athletes and has shed some light on the type of activities that female players are surrounded by. It is expected that the overall findings will, in applied terms, lead to the creation of elite athlete educational tools and programmes, and growth in academic research into gambling and females.

If you have any questions or you are interested in participating in the research, please don't hesitate to contact the PhD researcher at: agherghel@epicglo-balsolutions.com or +447402310386

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To act as a platform for collaboration between academia and stakeholders intended to cultivate synergies between research and implementation. Research will focus upon Sport Integrity issues and underpin multi-stakeholder thought leadership initiatives. Emphasis will be placed upon the commercialisation of research and cultivating projects capable of attracting funding and investment from a variety of sources.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

To ensure that Sport Integrity becomes a key component of university curriculum through additions to existing courses and bespoke Executive Education initiatives.

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