

PREVENTING AND RESOLVING DISPUTES IN THE SPORT SYSTEM

With the recent establishment of the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (SDRCC), the Canadian amateur sport field is now governed by its own rules and institutional structure, as are other social fields such as labour law, residential leases, and real estate. In other words, amateur sport is now clearly recognized as a sphere of activity in Canada.

The SDRCC is a not-for-profit corporation established by the Act to Promote Physical Activity and Sport. Although funded by Sport Canada, SDRCC is not a government entity.

SDRCC, which assumed management of the ADReportRED program on April 1, 2004, provides prevention and resolution services to the Canadian sport community at the national level.

The prevention component aims to raise awareness within the sport community about how to avert disputes. Prevention is based on education, and the SDRCC offers its members a resource centre, accessible online at www.adrsportred.ca, which provides relevant information on amateur sport law in Canada. Coaches may consult the general information section, which includes databases containing decisions and legal doctrine, a directory of appeal policies, links to other websites, explanations pertaining to arbitration and mediation, and information kits on major Games. There is also a coach's page that contains contract templates, relevant articles and decisions, and suggestions on how to avoid disputes or resolve unavoidable conflicts.



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The resolution component enables coaches to settle disputes by using the mediation or arbitration services of a tribunal that specializes in amateur sport. Such disputes may include selection for an event, implementation or interpretation of contracts, disciplinary matters, or harassment. The dispute must be national in scope and the parties must agree to use the tribunal.

Because the services provided by the tribunal take into consideration the highly specialized characteristics of the sport field, coaches can now be assured that their cases will be heard by sport law experts within a short timeframe and without undue cost. Access to the tribunal's services is facilitated by online application forms, available at www.adrsportred.ca under "Tribunal", and through a bilingual help line (1-866-733-7767).

In brief, SDRCC allows all members of the Canadian sport community to prevent and resolve their disputes in a fair and equitable manner.

The members of the SDRCC board are **Genevieve Chormenki, Suzanne Dandenault, Christian Farstad, Julie Gagnon, Pierre Hutsebaut, Bruce Kidd, Marc Lemay, Diane Norman, Gordon Peterson, Tamar Pichette, Allan Stitt, and Steven Sugar.** ❖

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