Corporate Social Responsibility in Sport

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What it is all about

• CSR - a concept whereby companies decide voluntarily to contribute to a better society and a cleaner environment. Green Paper - European Commission 2001

• Financial crisis intensifies discussion on ethical behaviour

• Social criteria increasingly influencing the investment decisions of individuals and institutions (both as investors and consumers)

• Not just PR - but serious commitment needed

• Transparency of business activities brought about by the media and modern information and communication technology
And what about Sports?

Ideal…

• Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on the joy of effort, the educational value of good example and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles.

• The goal of Olympism is to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of man, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity.

Olympic Charter 1 and 2
And what about Sports?

... and reality in Sports:

- Doping
- Match fixing
- Manipulated elections, awarding of events...
- Players trafficking, child labour...
- Beijing, Sotschi...

Caused by

- Lack of democracy
- Lack of transparency
- Lack of accountability
Behind the Scenes

- Success in sport - joint interest of
  - Sports (athletes, coaches, federations, clubs etc.)
  - Politics
  - Sponsors
  - Media
- Who really wants a clean sport?
- Examples
  - Schachtior Donezk (Ukraine – Football)
  - THW Kiel (Germany – Handball)
- No democratic or professional control
CSR in Sport

• To build up reputation takes a long time – to destroy it takes just one scandal
• Sport is no longer a guarantee for a positive image - but a risky communication platform
• Serious sponsors engaged in CSR will draw back from sport
• Newly rich like Russian oligarchs will still use sport to gain social acceptance

Example: Consequences of doping in cycling 1998 (Festina) compared to 2006
What has to be done

• Sport organisations need to adopt business principles of transparency and accountability
• This will not happen without pressure from outside
• Sponsors are playing a key role for change

⇒ Sport has no choice – if it goes on setting a bad instead of a good example, it will not only lose its credibility but its financial basis, too.
Thank you for your attention!