

1) Benefits of Sport. What is the CISM-delegates' opinion?

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Individual benefits, national benefits and international benefits of sports have been thoroughly discussed within the sports literature. At the individual level most attention has been paid to individuals' participation in sport, and the physical, emotional, social and educational effects of this involvement. At the national level sport and physical activity has been linked to the development of public health, military defense, national identity, yet also to the development of democracy and social integration. At the world scene (the international level) benefits of sport most often has been associated with the Fundamental Principles of Olympism and international top level sport events.

The sociology of sport has during the last decades expressed a concern for the future of sport both as an actual practice and as cultural phenomenon. In Tännsjö's and Tamburrini's book "Values in Sport" (2000) Tännsjö questions the admiration of the strongest and (as far as he argues) the contempt for weakness, and he questions a rather unbalanced admiration of individual athletic heroes (who some times are disclosed as cheaters). Compared to his contemporary researchers he argues more explicit that the play at the Olympic arena reinforces an unhealthy nationalism in the world wide audience. Tännsjö is deeply criticized by his colleagues who argue that sport nationalism is a rather innocent sort of patriotism and that it should be considered as a positive replacement for more doubtful versions of political nationalism.

The concern for the development of top level sports at the international arena indicates a concern for the future of sport at national levels as well as within local contexts. If the basic values of sports are threatened and, as a consequence of this threat, are about to shift, it will influence not only the sports itself, yet also how sport should be used in education of children, students, soldiers etc.

According to the literature it seems to be reason to argue that sport as a cultural phenomenon is far from being morally innocent and that this may call for awareness. Also within CISM at least three significant questions should to be asked:

- Is there a need to be even more aware of the negative aspects of the modern sport?
- Can critical arguments against the development of sport be abandoned with reference to ethical principles developed several decades or even millenniums ago or do we have to raise better arguments?
- Do we need to protect the positive potential within the sports context, and if so, how do we need to act?

The paper will be based on a critical perspective on the development of sport in the western society. It will discuss the possible consequences of this development regarding the use of sport and physical activity within the military system. In addition the paper will present results from a study of CISM delegates' personal apprehension of the values in sport; their personal perception of benefits of sport and physical activity in society as well as in Military settings (collected in Roma - May, 2006).