

Sport and Human Rights

Overview January-March 2024

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List of acronyms

BFLA – Belarusian Federation of Athletics

CAS – Court of Arbitration for Sport

ECHR – European Court of Human Rights

EFL – English Football League

FFBB – Fédération Française de Basketball

FIBA – Fédération Internationale de Basketball

FIFA – Fédération Internationale de Football Association

IIHF – International Ice Hockey Federation

IHFI – Ice Hockey Federation of Israel

IOC – International Olympic Committee

ITF – International Tennis Federation

NBA – National Basketball Association

NCAA – National Collegiate Athletic Association

NHL – National Hockey League

NHLPA – National Hockey League Players' Association

NOC – National Olympic Committee

NWSL – National Women's Soccer League

TFF – Turkish Football Federation

WNBA – Women's National Basketball Association

WSL – Women's Super League

Introduction

In this article we have analyzed the most significant events and news in sports for January-March 2024 through the lens of international human rights standards.

Widespread human rights violations continue in Belarus, manifested in the punishment of representatives of the sports industry for disagreeing with the Belarusian de facto authorities. The reasons were a post in Instagram, posting video content on the resources, recognized extremist in Belarus, and subscription to such resources. The process of making decisions on the admission or non-admission of athletes from Belarus to international competitions is a unique example of the sports industry's reaction to the country's participation in the war as a co-aggressor.

Female athletes and players continue to reach new professional heights, and attendance at women's games is breaking records. Recognizing the achievements of female athletes and increasing their visibility at all levels, as well as initiatives that promote equality, are important steps in building an inclusive environment. However, further work is needed to ensure equal working conditions and pay, and to eradicate sexism, thus ensuring the realization of fundamental human rights.

The issue of admission of transgender athletes to competitions remains relevant. While we have seen some initiatives and statements by athletes in support of the LGBTQ+ community, the industry is still an unsafe place due to widespread transphobia and homophobia. Such incidents are a reminder of the need for education and policy programs to ensure equal access and safety for all participants, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

We continue to see incidents of racism in sports, in particular football. Incidents have caused widespread public outcry, and sports federations have called for tougher action against those who engage in racism. The prevalence of racism in sport not only undermined the dignity and rights of individual athletes, but also perpetuated stereotypes and divisions in society. By creating an environment that supports the principles of equality and respect for all, we can work towards a more equitable and inclusive society where everyone can develop without fear of discrimination or prejudice.

The issue of security at sport events remains a topical one, touching on, among other things, the fundamental human right to life. During the analyzed period, we recorded the following security threats during sport events: falling from the stands, attacks on players by fans and shooting. Such incidents demonstrate the urgent need to develop not only general recommendations to ensure safety at sport events, but also more specific policies at local levels, so that everyone can enjoy sports without fear for their health and lives.

We can observe a positive trend in the aspect of the right to health, where athletes are trying to overcome the stigmatization of the topic of mental health through their own efforts, raising awareness and not being afraid to ask for help. Creating an environment that supports mental wellbeing promotes equal opportunities for all athletes, regardless of their physical or mental health status.

News stories of players and supporters protesting, using sports uniforms as manifestos, making statements to raise awareness of environmental issues and helping animals exemplify the impact of sport on all areas of society, promoting diversity, inclusion and fairness.

What's wrong with human rights in sport in Belarus?

At the end of August 2020 the Minsk triathlon club "Tristail" did not renew the contract with triathlete Valentina Zelenkevich. According to the athlete, this decision was made by the director of the club Dzmitry Tolkachev after he saw Zelenkevich's "protest" post in Instagram. After the dismissal, the triathlete went to work as a coach in Russia, from where she returned to Belarus some time ago and was detained. On March 9, 2024, it became known that Zelenkevich was **sentenced** to **2 years of "home chemistry"**.

3 years of colony was **sentenced** to the photographer from Barysau Aliaksandr Zyankov, who had previously filmed the games of FC "BATE". The photographer was convicted under Part 3 of Article 361-1 of the Criminal Code ("participation in an extremist formation"). According to information from Zyankov's cellmates in the temporary detention center, the charge concerns video footage posted on an Internet resource, recognized as extremist.

Denis Loban', director of the Children's and Youth Sports School "Smarhon", was **sentenced** to **7 days of arrest** for subscribing to Tribuna.com. In December 2023, the website, social networks, application and logo of the sports media Tribuna.com were recognized as "extremist materials" by the de facto Belarusian authorities.

The political persecution of athletes and other representatives of the sports industry in Belarus violates fundamental human rights and freedoms, among them freedom of expression, the right to work and profession, and impedes the development of sport in the country.

The IIHF **extended the decision to suspend** the national teams of Belarus and Russia for the 2024/25 season. The decision will also apply to the Belarus national team for the final Olympic qualifying round to be held in August 2024. The IIHF Council concluded that the national teams' participation at this stage is not safe. The IIHF has previously stated that they are concerned about the safety of athletes, including those from Belarus and Russia, staff and fans, but what exactly is a security threat was not specified. The IIHF Council "will continue to monitor the situation" and the reintegration of the national teams of Belarus and Russia will be reviewed again in May 2025.

World Sailing **decided to admit** Belarusian and Russian athletes to compete at the Olympic Games-2024 in Paris in a neutral status. ITF also **announced the decision to admit** Belarusian and Russian athletes to the Olympic and Paralympic Games in a neutral status. The selection criteria will meet all the conditions for participation in competitions in the neutral status of the IOC.

In its turn, the IOC **created a commission**, which will be engaged in checking the compliance of Belarusian and Russian athletes with the criteria of neutrality. It has already been **announced** that athletes from Belarus and Russia will **not participate in the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games**, as they are individual athletes. Also, **medals** won by neutral athletes **will not be reflected in the overall medal** standings. At the moment 7 Belarusian athletes have qualified for the Olympic Games in the neutral status. The IOC **forecasts** the participation of 22 athletes from Belarus.

The head of the BFLA Ivan Tsihan **commented** on the admission of Belarusian athletes to the Olympic Games in a neutral status: "Now they [Belarusian athletes] see injustice to themselves. In order for them to somehow demonstrate their results, there should be an alternative. This has long been discussed in sports circles. ... We need to have alternative games and come together. Because the current Olympic movement is discrediting itself."

The decision to admit athletes from Belarus to international competitions, and in particular the Olympic Games, in a neutral status gives them the opportunity to compete at the highest level, although under different conditions. The disagreement to such conditions on the part of the de facto authorities of Belarus and the proposal to hold "alternative" competitions can lead to the isolation of Belarusian sport and hinder the development of sports infrastructure and athletes.

The co-founder of the Free Association of Sportsmen of Belarus (SOS BY) and journalist Andrei Hnet is **threatened** with **extradition** from Serbia to Belarus. Hnet was detained in late October 2023 in Serbia, as the warrant for his arrest on charges of "non-payment of taxes" was entered into the Interpol database. Similar charges have repeatedly been the basis for the detention of future political prisoners in Belarus. Hnet's lawyer filed an appeal against the extradition decision and a request to remove the journalist's data from the Interpol database, and on December 20, 2023 submitted a request for interim measures to the ECHR to suspend the extradition.

The Serbian Court of Appeal heard the appeal on February 19, 2024 and **overturned** the extradition decision. The case was sent for reconsideration, which took place on March 26, at the time of publication the outcome is unknown. Since the organization SOS BY is recognized as an "extremist formation" in Belarus, Andrei Hnet may face up to **7 years of imprisonment**.

Women's rights in sport

Katia Itzel Garcia is **the first** female Liga MX match referee in 20 years. Marie-Louise Eta **became the first** female manager in the Bundesliga. Amanda Dlamini is **the first** woman to commentate an AFCON match. Yoshimi Yamashita **became** the first female referee in the history of the Asian Football Cup. Jasmin Paris is **the first** woman to complete the **Barkley Marathon**.

Spectator attendance at women's games continues to break historical records. The Aces **became** the first WNBA team to sell out all of their season-ticket allotment. Tickets for the WNBA-2024 draft, of which there were nearly 1,000, **sold out** within 15 minutes of going on sale. For the first time in their history, Arsenal WFC **sold** out all tickets to Emirates Stadium for a WSL match. The stadium seats **60704 spectators**.

Examples like this are testament to the growing interest in the women's game, the recognition of female players and women's sport.

Shaquille O'Neal, an NBA player, **said** he is watching women's college basketball exclusively this season: "I hate to say it, but the women players are kicking the men's b***s. ... It's just a better game, just more competitive. ... I'm happy for the young female athletes, and it's inspiring to young girls." Fox Sports analyst Michael Mulvihill **shared** on social media X that women's college basketball games draw **981,000 spectators**, while men's games draw 946,000.

For the first time ever, an exclusively female team of stadium management staff **prepared** Emirates field for the WSL Arsenal FC-Tottenham FC match. Despite the growing number of women involved in sport at all levels, **only 2%** of staff in the grounds management sector, which is responsible for maintaining soccer pitches in the UK, are women.

On January 1, 2024, the New York-Toronto game – the first ever Professional Women's Hockey League (PWHL) game – **took place**. Tickets for the match were completely sold out. Billie Jean King, an American tennis player and women's rights defender, performed the ceremonial passing of the puck, visited the teams' dressing rooms before the game and read out the starting lineup. Toronto coach Troy Ryan called the event an "iconic moment."

The Palmeiras FC president **organized** the first exclusive women-only press conference. "I don't know of any other time in the world where there have been women-only press conferences. When we had this idea, we publicized it, and as incredible as it was, I heard a lot of questions: **"Why only women?"** I say to men: don't get hysterical (laughs). Isn't that what they're saying about us? ... We don't want privilege. We want to be able to show that we are competent, we want to have a place in this male-dominated world of football. ... I hope with all my heart that I don't have to call any more press conferences **just** for women to be here with them."

The growing visibility and recognition of all women included in the sports industry reflects positive trends and increased inclusion. But despite the progress made, continued efforts

to ensure equal access to resources, opportunities and support for women in sport are still needed.

Nike and the NWSL have **unveiled** the uniform sets for the 2024 season. The most significant change in this collection is the **absence of the white colour**. This decision was made in response to the expressed concerns of female players and discomfort with wearing white shorts during menstruation. Similar initiatives had previously been implemented by individual teams. According to **research**, insecurity and increased anxiety about their bodies are some of the main factors why young girls drop out of sports. The NWSL initiative is a direct statement about prioritizing playeress comfort over aesthetics and an important decision for women's soccer.

Adidas teamed up with German model and designer Lena Gercke **to create** Bayern Munich's first customized women's uniform. Previously, female players wore the same uniform as the players of the men's team. This is the norm for many women's teams. Adidas and Stella McCartney **did the same** in the WSL, producing the first customized away uniforms for the Arsenal FC players.

Athlete's uniforms are not only a piece of clothing, but can also promote inclusivity and representation, recognizing physiological and anatomical differences.

Diaba Konaté successfully plays basketball in the United States, but **cannot** play in her hometown, Paris, because of the FFBB's ban on wearing "any equipment with a religious or political connotation," which effectively discriminates against Muslim women. This decision is in line with the French government's desire **to separate** religion from the state, but is not in line with FIBA's decision, which officially **allowed** headgear to be worn during basketball games back in 2017. Many female players and organizations are in solidarity with Konaté. For example, on International Women's Rights Day, March 8, an **open letter** was published with over 80 signatures, demanding equal access for players like Diaba Konaté. "You can't congratulate yourself on the feminization of sport in France, while leaving some women on the sidelines or sending them to the stands," – said sociologist Haifa Tlili.

The Canadian Players Association (CPA), which represents the women's national team, **has filed** a \$40 million lawsuit against the board of Canada Soccer over alleged "negligence." The main claim is over the signing of an agreement with Canada Soccer Business (CSB). CSB pays Canada Soccer about \$3 million dollars a year, in turn receiving any federation revenue from media rights and national team sponsorships. In doing so, Canada Soccer is on the verge of bankruptcy. The athletes who won gold at the last Olympic Games have been without labor agreements since 2021, they have not been paid for performances in 2022 and are forced to protest in order to receive minimal support from the federation and to ensure fair and equal working conditions.

Four out of five female soccer **coaches** in the UK **report** having experienced sexism. 80% of respondents have experienced sexism or misogyny in a coaching environment, and

54% have considered leaving their job because of the sexism they have encountered. The majority of cases were the result of the behavior of male colleagues. 71% of those who had experienced sexism in coaching courses did not want to report it to management; respondents criticized clubs for not having adequate systems in place to deal with complaints of sexism. Systemic sexism in sport, which is the result of deep-rooted gender biases and stereotypes, affects women's professional development and is a violation of the human right to freedom from discrimination.

During the period under analysis, we noted positive trends that speak to ongoing efforts to ensure an inclusive environment for women in sport at different levels, but also new examples of existing barriers that highlight the need for concerted efforts to combat discrimination so that all women in the sports industry can equally realize their rights and contribute to the development of sport.

**The rights of
LGBTQ+ people
in sport**

Lucy Clark **has become the first transgender manager** in English soccer. Earlier in 2018, Clark became the first trans referee in the world, and has since served as an inspiration to many aspiring transgender players, referees and managers. This is a significant development at a time of particularly high levels of transphobia in soccer and sport in general.

Swimmers and other athletes **sued the NCAA over its trans person policy**. The athletes have claimed that their rights under Title IX¹ were violated due to the admission of transgender athlete Lia Thomas in 2022. The lawsuit denotes that the case was brought “to secure for future generations of women the promise of Title IX that is being denied them and other college women” (by the NCAA). Studies that unequivocally determine the extent to which trans women have an advantage over cisgender women are currently lacking, but the level of hormones in the bodies of athletes **are not** the only criteria for whether or not an advantage exists.

All people, regardless of their gender identity, have a fundamental right to participate in sport without fear of discrimination or persecution. Discriminatory practices not only violate this right, but also perpetuate stereotypes and exclusionary attitudes. Efforts to combat transphobia in sport are necessary to ensure equal access and opportunity for transgender athletes, recognizing their dignity and right to self-identify.

As part of the LGBTQ+ History Month movement, PUMA and the EFL **unveiled the official Rainbow Match** ball. For every goal scored with this ball, PUMA will donate £75 to the LGBTQ+ Fans for Diversity fund. The money raised will go towards initiatives that promote diversity and inclusivity in soccer, as well as caring for queer fans. Sky Bet and EA FC 24 have also joined the campaign. This initiative helps to send the message that everyone is welcome in soccer.

Austria's national team coach, Ralf Rangnick, **suspended three national team players for making homophobic chants** and stated, “This is something that I will not tolerate in a team where I am a coach, whether in a club or here with the national team.” Players were also instructed to participate in workshops on the issue of discrimination.

While positive developments during the period under analysis show positive steps towards inclusion and equality, instances of discrimination and prejudice highlight the critical need to continue efforts to ensure a sporting environment where everyone, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, can fully realize their rights to participate in sport without fear of discrimination or exclusion.

1 Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 is a federal law that **states**, “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

Combating racism and antisemitism

Patrick Mahomes is **one** of only three black quarterbacks to ever win the Super Bowl, and the only one to do so three times. Sunny Singh Gill **became** the first British man of South Asian descent to referee a Premier League game. These are important achievements in the ongoing journey towards equality and the eradication of racism in sport.

The Utah women's basketball team was forced to **change** hotels after its head coach Lynne Roberts claimed a **"racial hate crime"** before its first game in the NCAA tournament. Details of the alleged incident are not available, but host Gonzaga University said it may have been "racially disparaging comments." The NCAA has condemned such displays and said it is working with universities to provide increased security.

FC Milan goalkeeper Mike Maignan left the field during a match against FC Udinese after being **subjected** to **racist chants** from FC Udinese fans, specifically "monkey noises." "This shouldn't exist in the world of football but unfortunately for many years, this is a recurrence. We all have to react, we must do something because you can't play like this," – said the footballer. Maignan was supported by the players and the club's management. FC Udinese condemned the behavior of their fans, **imposed a lifetime ban** on 4 fans and **played** the next match against FC Monza without spectators.

Kasey Palmer, a midfielder for Coventry City FC, was **confronted with** a "racist gesture" during a match against Sheffield Wednesday FC. Clubs have condemned the alleged racist behavior and South Yorkshire Police are investigating.

These incidents were followed by FIFA's response. Gianni Infantino, FIFA president, **said**, "As well as the three-step process (match stopped, match re-stopped, match abandoned), we have to implement an automatic forfeit for the team whose fans have committed racism and caused the match to be abandoned as well as worldwide stadium bans and criminal charges for racists."

Japan national team goalkeeper Zion Suzuki was also **subjected to** racist insults. Suzuki received racist messages on social media after Japan's 2-1 loss to Iraq in an Asian Cup group match. Japan head coach Hajime Moriyasu spoke in defense of the player.

Racism in sports persists because of ingrained societal prejudice and systemic inequality. This discrimination extends beyond sport, affecting and reflecting society as a whole and reinforcing patterns of injustice. Addressing this problem requires concerted efforts to remove systemic barriers, promote diversity and inclusion, and hold accountable those who promote racist attitudes and behaviors.

War and sport

During the analyzed period, former football player [Viktoria Kotlyarova](#), European and world powerlifting champion [Aliaksandr Bilakon'](#) and ex-Belarusian Football Championship player [Siarhei Razhok](#) died in Russia's war against Ukraine. The tragic deaths of the athletes underscore the devastating effects of war on individuals and their communities.

The Latvian authorities **have banned their national teams from playing with teams from Belarus and Russia**, including those playing in neutral status. The ban applies to both adult and children's junior competitions. "The main idea behind the amendments to the Sports Law is to determine at the level of national legislation that Latvian teams in team sports, such as basketball, football or ice hockey, cannot play international games with teams of aggressor countries, Russia and Belarus," said the head of the Sports Subcommittee of the Semy of Culture and Sports Commission, Dāvis Daugavietis. Thus, in addition to decisions and recommendations, which are made by individual international sports organizations and federations, decisions to boycott competitions involving Belarus and Russia are also taken at the national level.

IIHF **published** a statement, which says that the Israeli teams are **temporarily suspended** from all competitions under the auspices of the IIHF "for security reasons." The IHFI **sued** the IIHF in CAS over the suspension, calling the decision "arbitrary." Israel NOC chairman Yael Arad said the IIHF's decision "stinks of antisemitism under the guise of safety for the athletes."

Youcef Atal, a football player who plays for French club OGC Nice, **was given an 8-month suspended prison sentence and a €45,000 fine** for a post about the conflict in the Gaza Strip. The day after the Hamas attack, Atal made a repost of a Palestinian preacher who called on God to send "a black day over the Jews." The footballer later deleted the post and apologized. A Nice court ruled that the repost provoked hatred based on religion.

A disciplinary investigation **was opened** against midfielder Eden Karzev of Turkish club Basaksehir FK Eden Karzev for his Instagram post supporting Israel in the war against Hamas. The club also claimed a "violating disciplinary regulations of the club" as the player's post "goes against the sensitivities of Türkiye."

Sagiv Jehezkel, an Israeli football player who plays for Turkish club Antalyaspor, showed the inscription "100 days, 7/10" on his wrist, dedicated to hostages held in the Gaza Strip. The athlete was detained in Turkey and later returned to Israel. The football player said he did not want to provoke anyone, "I want the war to end." Antalyaspor **said** the football player "acted against the national values." Jehezkel was suspended, the **club announced its intention to terminate the contract with the footballer.**

The impact of expressing support for one side of a conflict on sport can be complex. But the right of athletes to express their opinions, even in times of war, is a fundamental aspect of free speech. Any restrictions on free speech should be the exception and aimed at pre-

venting harm and ensuring equality or participation in public life for everyone. Clear distinctions should also be made between freedom of expression and hate speech, in line with [international standards](#) in this area.

Safety, security and service during sport events

During the WM Phoenix Open 2024, round three **suspended alcohol sales and closed the entrances** due to larger than usual crowds. Not all people who had purchased tickets were able to get into the event; huge lines were formed and people were shuffled through metal detectors and ticket control. The crowds affected the actual tournament itself. The day before, one fan was **hospitalized** with non-life-threatening injuries after falling from the stands.

During the Kansas City Chiefs' Super Bowl victory parade, a shooting **occurred** that killed 1 person and injured about 20 others, ranging in age from 8 to 47. Mayors of U.S. cities have called for new laws to reduce gun violence. Thought has also been **given** to a possible **"rethinking of championship celebrations."** If the Chiefs win the Super Bowl again, perhaps the celebration could be held in a smaller, less crowded home stadium where security is easier to control.

The Trabzonspor-Fenerbahce SK Super League match ended with the score 2:3. During the victory celebration, Fenerbahce SK players **faced** violence from Trabzonspor fans who ran onto the field. The fans' behavior was condemned by the TFF, the Turkish interior minister and the FIFA president. 12 fans were arrested. The management of Fenerbahce SK **said** they are considering a move to European leagues.

Security at major sport events is necessary to protect participants and spectators from injury, death and a threat to their well-being in general. Neglecting safety measures not only undermines the right to health and the right to life, but also jeopardizes the enjoyment and desire to participate in sport. When assessing safety protocols from a human rights perspective, proactive measures, transparent procedures and the involvement of all stakeholders should be prioritized to mitigate risks.

The right to health

The Los Angeles Dodgers have **extended a \$0 contract** with a player who has not played in 6 years. There has been no official statement from the team regarding this, but it is widely believed that the Dodgers are doing this to ensure the player can continue to use their health insurance to treat his bipolar disorder and schizophrenia.

John Wall, an NBA player, **shared** his story of two suicide attempts and is trying to make people aware of the fact that mental health issues are very serious.

Valeri Nichushkin will be away from the Colorado Avalanche indefinitely and **will take advantage** of the NHL/NHLPA outreach program for players with mental health issues, substance abuse and more. "I have made the decision to seek help and enter the players assistance program. My goal is to address my issues and prevent any negative outcomes once and for all," – the athlete **said** in a statement. Nichushkin will be able to **return** to the ice after permission from the program's admins.

Richarlison de Andrade **shared** his experience of depression after the 2022 World Cup. This state was due to personal problems of the footballer, as well as the fact of Brazil's "dropping out" of the tournament. Richarlison said that during that period he thought about quitting football, and also touched on the topic of stigmatization of mental health problems in football and in society in general. The player stated that **therapy saved his life**.

Taking care of mental health, not just physical health, is a fairly stigmatized topic in sport. Overcoming this stigma not only empowers athletes to seek support and help, but also promotes inclusion and respect within the sporting community. By talking about their experiences, athletes challenge systemic barriers and advocate for necessary changes in policies and practices to ensure that mental health care is prioritized.

The Memphis Grizzlies lineup for the game against the Boston Celtics **did not include 13 of 15 players** on standard contracts due to injuries. The lineup included three players on two-way contracts and three players on 10-day deals.

The French football players' union is **considering** legal action because of the "crazy" competition calendar and the expansion of the FIFA Club Championship, which will only increase the workload.

Finding a balance between organizing multiple competitions and ensuring the well-being of athletes is crucial from a human rights perspective. The current trend of an overloaded competition calendar leading to increased injuries emphasizes the need to prioritize the right to health of athletes. Sports organizations should consider implementing rules and guidelines to ensure adequate recovery time between competitions, contributing to a sustainable environment for the development of athletes.

**Other news in the
field of sport and
human rights**

Congo players **protested** before an Africa Cup of Nations match **to draw attention to the armed violence** taking place in their country. During the national anthem, the players and coach held one hand in front of their mouths and pressed two fingers of the other to their temples; the players also used black armbands during the match. "A national football team is a driving force for a nation, and this evening, it was also our duty to share what's happening in the East," said Sébastien Desabre, the team's coach.

Mason Greenwood, a former Manchester United FC player and current Getafe FC player, was charged with attempted rape and assault causing grievous bodily harm in October 2022 and those charges were dropped in February 2023; the footballer has denied his guilt. The player's debut for Getafe during a match against CA Osasuna **was marred** as the player was subjected to abusive shouts from CA Osasuna fans – "Greenwood, Die!" The club was fined by La Liga. Ahead of the reverse fixture at Osasuna's stadium, the club's fandom ultras called on like-minded fans to publicly denounce Greenwood's presence at their stadium. In addition, the ultras published a public statement criticizing the player and La Liga: "Once again, economic interests come ahead of the fight for a society without oppression."

Arsenal FC wear white No More Red uniform for the first time at the Emirates home stadium. **The uniforms are part of a campaign to combat youth violence.** This is the second launch of the campaign where Arsenal FC have again joined forces with Adidas. This year, No More Red is offering to join the campaign by becoming a volunteer for one of the initiative's charity **partners**. The partners include the **Ben Kinsella Foundation**, founded in memory of the Islington teenager who was stabbed to death in 2008. The T-shirts will not be sold commercially, they will be given to those who are making a positive difference in the community. For example, every volunteer will receive a No More Red T-shirt and be invited to attend an Arsenal FC match at the Emirates Stadium.

In the second half of the game against Belgium, the England national team **played in shirts without names** as part of a campaign to support people with dementia and to raise awareness of the disease. This "disappearance" of names in the second half shows "how people with dementia can lose their precious memories." The initiative is part of a collaboration between the Football Association and the charity Alzheimer's Society. "We hope this striking gesture with the player's shirts will once again get fans across the country talking, and thinking about the signs and symptoms of dementia," – **said** Alzheimer's Society chief executive Kate Lee.

The practice of promoting a particular statement through athletic uniforms gives athletes the opportunity to use their platform to advocate for social justice issues and contribute to public discourse¹.

Mohamed Elneny **opened** Arsenal FC's first ever multi-faith prayer room for players at the

¹ Learn more about how you can talk about human rights and draw attention to social issues through sports uniforms in our **material**.

Emirates Stadium in time for Ramadan. A prayer room for supporters was opened at the stadium 10 years ago. Such an initiative demonstrates respect for the human right to freedom of religion, supports the principles of equality and non-discrimination and promotes diversity in the sporting environment.

A U.S. union representative **ruled** that Dartmouth basketball players are employees of the school, paving the way for an election that would create the first-ever union for NCAA athletes. Unionization would allow players to negotiate **not only salaries but also working conditions, including practice hours and travel**. However, Dartmouth's assistant vice president said the school will seek a review of the decision because, while Dartmouth "respects the rights of employees to unionize," the school does not consider "these students to be employees."

HC "Tractor" together with manufacturers of pet food **have launched** a promotion – they will buy **10 kg of pet food for every minute of the team's suspension**. "Since the beginning of the season our guys have accumulated a penalty for 2.1 tons. This feed will go to our wards very soon," – said the press service of the club.

Hector Bellerin, a Real Betis player, **participated** in a meeting with international media organized by La Liga. The meeting was designed to help promote the environmental sustainability work of the Forever Green platform, which is managed by the foundation at Real Betis. "Football brings people together and that togetherness can be pushed into lots of different projects. A club making it easier for fans and workers, players and staff, to have a greener lifestyle is an inspiration."

The potential for sport to impact various societal issues through the efforts of sports organizations, clubs or individual athletes is not always obvious, but even a few initiatives demonstrate the commitment of representatives of sports industry to social responsibility and community involvement.

FairPlay is a human rights in/through/for sports organization.

Our mission: empowering people in exercising sports and human rights for equal, inclusive, and fair Belarus and the World.

Our goal: human rights are respected in the sports industry.

To achieve our mission, we:

-  **Analyze** policies, laws and practices and share about them in clear and accessible language;
-  **Engage** in human rights **advocacy** at the national and international levels;
-  **Educate** and raise awareness, including through sporting events.

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