

POSITION STATEMENT ON ALCOHOL SPONSORSHIP IN COMMUNITY SPORTING CLUBS

PURPOSE: The purpose of this document is to advise community sporting clubs of the ADF attitude toward alcohol sponsorship in community sport.

POSITION

- 1) Sponsorships which involve clubs in promoting alcohol products or brands or drinking is inconsistent with the purpose of sport which is to promote health and wellbeing.
- 2) The ADF encourages sports clubs to seek sponsorships that do not involve promoting alcohol products, brands or drinking.
- 3) A sponsorship from an alcohol related business may be acceptable when:
 - a. It does not involve the club in the promotion of alcohol brands, products or risky drinking;
 - b. the sponsorship does not involve an incentive to consume alcohol;
 - c. the source (i.e. business) does not engage in unsafe promotion of alcohol, unsafe serving or risky drinking practices, and
 - d. the club ensures the source agrees to these terms prior to accepting the sponsorship.
- 4) Sports clubs have a role in discouraging the league or association to which they are affiliated from seeking or accepting alcohol related sponsorships which require affiliated clubs to promote alcohol products, brands or consumption.
- 5) All clubs should reduce the risk of alcohol problems in community sport by joining the Good Sports program.

RATIONALE

The ADF position is based on the following

- a) Encouraging consumption of alcohol is inconsistent with the aims of community sport and the beneficial operation of community sports clubs.
- b) The promotion of alcohol products and brands is aimed at encouraging consumption. (Munro G, 2008)
- c) The nature of alcohol sponsorship of sport results in exposure of alcohol product and brand promotion to children (Jones SC, 2006).
- d) A substantial body of research points to the influence of alcohol marketing on young people's decisions about drinking (Smith LA, 2009) (Grenard JL, 2013)
- e) Evidence suggests that adult athletes who receive alcohol sponsorships feel obliged to drink, are more likely to drink to harmful levels and are at greater risk of alcohol dependence (O'Brien K, 2008) (O'Brien KS, 2011).
- f) Evidence suggests that owning alcohol-branded merchandise encourages young people to drink alcohol (Hurtz SQ, 2011).

Given the impact of alcohol sponsorships in sport, and on athletes and children in particular, sports clubs should be free from alcohol product promotion and branding. This includes alcohol product branding in and around club premises, ground signage and facilities such as goal-post padding, alcohol-branded merchandise and team clothing, sampling events held at club premises or grounds, incentives to drink the particular product or brand, alcohol branding of competitions and events, and alcohol product branding associated with team names.

BACKGROUND

Sports clubs promote the health and wellbeing of their members. By taking the focus away from alcohol, encouraging low risk drinking and providing appropriate role models, clubs play an important role in reducing the risk and impact of alcohol-related harms in their club and in the broader community. That is the aim of the Good Sports program that reduces the likelihood of excessive drinking in sports clubs by 37% (Kingsland M, 2015). Consistent with that aim, the ADF encourages sports clubs to seek and develop non-alcohol-related sources of revenue, including sponsorships.

1. The ADF acknowledges two forms of alcohol-related sponsorship of community sport:
 - a) sponsorship arrangements with licensed venues (pubs and clubs) – that can include the provision of a meeting room, an agreement to purchase alcohol through a preferred venue or the provision by the sponsor of a discount for purchases of alcohol by the club, or a cash donation;
 - b) sponsorship arrangements with an alcohol company, especially when a sports league signs up to a sponsorship with an alcohol brand.

Some clubs receive sponsorship from a local licensed venue or business such as a pub, club, winery or distillery which may provide support as in 1(a). In some remote locations or in small towns there may be few alternative sponsors and a sponsorship may be vital to the maintenance of the club as community asset. A sponsorship arrangement with a local alcohol-related business would be acceptable if the club's recognition of the sponsorship acknowledged the business (e.g. hotel, club, winery) rather than promoting alcohol, an alcohol brand or drinking.

Works Cited

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REVIEW DATE: April 2017