

## **FACT SHEET:**

# ***CHAMPIONS OF SPORT***

## **NATIONAL CAMPAIGN ON SPORTSMANSHIP AND FAIR PLAY**

*“In the 1990 world championship of tandem kayak racing, the Danish team was leading the race when their rudder was damaged in a portage. The British team, in second place, stopped to help them fix it. The Danes then went on to beat the British--by one second in a contest of nearly three hours. And while they lost the race, the British kayakers ended up being awarded the highest honor in all sports, the Pierre de Coubertin International Fair Play Trophy.*

*The trophy, named for the founder of the modern day Olympic Games, has been awarded annually for the past 28 years to athletes who demonstrate the greatest nobility of spirit. In a world in which baseball players sell autographs to children and the Olympic Games are treated unashamedly as an investment opportunity, it is unfortunate that this exalted trophy is among the most obscure.”*

*Wall Street Journal*

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

It is time that America took its rightful place in promoting sportsmanship and fair play with its own U.S. counterpart to the Pierre de Coubertin Fair Play Trophy. The mission of *Champions of Sport*, a campaign organized and run under the auspices of the National Academy of Sportsmanship, a 501(c)3, is to raise the standards of ethics in sports at all levels of play; to teach people once again how to play with honor and integrity.

## **NATIONAL AWARDS / PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW**

Since the 80's, sports seem to have joined the ranks of the political and corporate arenas with their fair share of scandals and excess - precisely because that's what's missing: *fairness*. The *Champions of Sport* campaign will help America regain what has been lost, and will bring the virtues of honor, respect and fair play back into sport. These virtues are not only key components of good sport – they are key components of a healthy, well-balanced life. Without them, the chances for success are fleeting.

The *Champions of Sport* campaign, created by award-winning producer and Black Belt, Jim Grapek, with the support of the National Association of Sport in Physical Education, is designed to encourage students, teachers, coaches, parents and athletes to place greater emphasis on the higher values of the game. Sports are supposed to build character, not break it down. The *Champions* campaign provides a counterbalance against the “win at any cost” attitude that too frequently dominates sports and extends out into all facets of life. True, winning is important, yet one can win or lose on many levels, and sport is about much more than just the final score.

The *Champions of Sport* campaign will bring celebrated athletes and unsung heroes from all walks of sporting life to center court, through an inspiring, full-scale outreach and media campaign. At the heart of *Champions of Sport* will be a prestigious awards ceremony that will be broadcast to millions, promoting the time-honored tradition and ethos of sportsmanship and fair play. This annual awards gala, associated with the highest ideals, will be the culmination of a year-long public service and publicity campaign – one which will encourage all Americans to ‘reach for the stars!’

The National Academy of Sportsmanship will confer awards in three categories:

1. For an act of fair play, which cost or could have cost the victory to a contender who sacrificed or comprised his or her chances of winning by complying not only with the written rules of the sport, but also with the ‘unwritten’ ones.

2. A general attitude of sportsmanship all along a sports career, marked by an outstanding and constant spirit of fair play, and
3. An activity aimed at promoting fair play, such as the organization of local or even national campaigns, lectures, articles or reports in the media (and so on).

In ascending order of merit, the National Academy of Sportsmanship awards will be as follows:

- Letters of Congratulations in all of the three categories,
- Honorary ‘diplomas’ in all of the categories – PLUS an honorary diploma given to an outstanding team or athlete in the five, highest profile, U.S. sports, and
- *Champions of Sport* trophies for each of the categories, with sub-categories of: High school, Collegiate and Professional Athletes for Category 1, and sub-categories of Collegiate and Professional for Category 2.

These awards will be conferred by the Academy’s Board of Advisors – respected men and women from all walks of life. This Board will meet one time a year for the purpose of reviewing the top submissions and deciding on the new recipients.

The *Champions of Sport* campaign, endorsed by national sports teams and sports organizations, will be funded by those high profile, corporate sponsors who want to make a difference by supporting the community and our children. To keep integrity high, potential sponsors will be carefully screened and strict guidelines will be established in terms of how the *Champions of Sport* materials may be used. *Champions of Sport* will be a win-win partnership for all involved.

## **OUTREACH TO SCHOOLS**

Public service announcements, print ads and media tours, featuring celebrated athletes of the highest caliber, will take the *Champions* campaign to the public, promoting such messages as, “It’s Cool to Respect Others,” “Be a Good Sport,” “Win and Lose with Honor,” and “Sport is about much more than winning.”

These and other multimedia materials will then be packaged for schools, from elementary levels through collegiate, in an effort to enhance physical education and sports management curriculums. These packages will include teaching guides as well as separate materials designed specifically for parents.

## **INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT**

A number of prestigious organizations have already endorsed *Champion of Sport* including:

- The National Hockey League
- The American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance
- The National Coaches Association
- The National Association of Secondary School Principals
- Healthy American Fitness Leaders

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