

# EFPM “Fair Play Green Card” Research Project

This case study is the first part of a research project being carried out by the EFPM Scientific Advisory Committee led by Steve Town in partnership with Bournemouth University Colleagues.

Further case studies will be produced as part of this project including the Portuguese National Ethics Plan and their “white card”, and MamaNet (subject to agreements)

The full research article will examine the emergence of a new fair play initiative, the “green card” where this is awarded by an official to a player(s) for acts of fair play as opposed to red and yellow cards for unfair play. There has been no formal evaluation of or research into these initiatives, however, there is anecdotal evidence that this has had a positive impact on values and behaviours. As it has emerged organically there is no codified system or rules of how this card can best be used to maximise impact. It is proposed that this research will lead to a practical tool that can be endorsed by EFPM and promoted widely.

## Case Study 1

### The CSIT World Sports Games (WSG) (with the Permission of the CSIT Director of Sport)

#### 1. Background

The WSG is operated by the International Workers’ and Amateurs’ in Sports Confederation (CSIT)

The CSIT games was first held in 2008 and has run every 2 years since then CSIT 2019)

The World Sports Games (WSG) is an international major event (up to 8,000 participants) every two years full of competitive and non-competitive sports, cultural exchange and fun. These games are not multi-sports games for top athletes, but for all amateurs - young and old, men and women - from different countries and cultures all over the world. In addition to the organisation of competitions, CSIT organises a huge festival with the objective of gathering sports friends as a worldwide family, to advance the making of lifelong friendships, the exchange of information, know-how and experiences within a specific sport or pan-sports.

The WSG is an open event for amateur sportsmen with thousands of participants with each event based on the idea of the former "International Workers' Olympiads" of the 1920s / 30s. A key objective is to promote an environment of tolerance, respect, sustainability and fair play amongst CSIT member and non-member organisations, partners, individual athletes, governmental bodies, trade unions and companies with sports-activities from all over the world. It provides the participants with a real international sports week with touristic and cultural content they will never forget.

#### 2. Fair Play at the Games

CSIT has had a close cooperation with the European Fair Play Movement (EFPM) for many years. CSIT is recognised as an international amateur sports organisation that focuses on fair sports, no doping and fair play. In 2009 CSIT signed a memorandum of understanding agreement concerning the cooperation with the EFPM. In this way the aims of CSIT for Fair Play reflect the real character of practising international amateur sports.

In October 2015 a Fair Play Working Group was established to embed the aim of Fair Play behaviour by athletes deeper into the regulations and make it more visible in the Games, and a new Chapter 5 for the articles of association about Fair Play was adopted by the congress of CSIT.

## **2.1 What is Fair Play.**

### **Principles of Fair Play in CSIT Championships**

Fair play is a complex concept that comprises and embodies a number of fundamental values that are not only integral to sport but relevant in everyday life. By implementing its Fair Play philosophy into its CSIT championships and World Sports Games CSIT strives to ensure: -

- a) Fair competition
- b) Respect
- c) Friendship
- d) Team spirit
- e) Equal opportunities and fair access
- f) Sport without doping and drugs
- g) Respect for written and unwritten rules such as
  - Integrity
  - Solidarity
  - Tolerance
  - Care
  - Excellence
  - Joy

These building blocks of fair play that can be experienced and learnt both on and off the field.

## **2.2 Scope of Fair Play.**

Fair Play principles are valid during CSIT single championships (organised in the year in between two (2) CSIT World Sports Games), CSIT Championships and CSIT Sport for all activities organised during World Sports Games.

During the WSG of 2017 Fair Play received more attention in order to increase its visibility in the Games, and a Fair Play Committee was created in which EFPM, the host, a representative from the sports Technical Commissioners (TCs) and the WSG sports director worked closely together in selecting the candidates to hand over the Fair Play Cup during the closing ceremony. Green cards were handed out to the referees.

An example from 2017 is set out below-

## FAIR PLAY: THE REAL WINNERS ARE

Varda Mirkin from the Israelian Mamanet team Galili got one of the three Fair Play Awards at the 5<sup>th</sup> World Sports Games 2017 in Riga.

The referee called a ball “out” – Varda called it “in” to her own team’s disadvantage. The second award was given to the Austrian judoka Andreas Mruk (picture), who helped an injured opponent by carrying him out of the gymnasium to let him have professional



medical care. The third award was given to the Brazilian table tennis team acceptance of the referees' verdicts and treating referees with respect. CSIT has implemented the Green Card for special merits in the field of Fair Play. Referees can show this card to athletes who deserve it in their opinion.

All CSIT activities have to promote "the right of each human being to practice his/her own choice of sport, whatever his/her social conditions of life and level of practice are" according to the Articles of CSIT.

The General Regulations document (CSIT 2017) for the games has a whole chapter dedicated to the pursuit of Fair Play at the games.

These also have a zero-tolerance policy regarding any discriminatory behaviour of any kind.

### 2.3 How is the green card administered and who can nominate?

Before the Games, a Fair Play Commission which comprises of the Sports Director, three (3) members of the TC's, one (1) representative of the host and one (1) of the EFPM (if present) is appointed by the Executive Committee.

In case of CSIT single sport championships the Technical Commission and one (1) representative of the host composes the Fair Play Commission.

The rules are that-

1. A referee of the match can award an athlete, person, or team by showing the Fair Play Green Card during the match to the appropriate athlete, person or team.
2. Members of the Technical Commission (running each individual sport competition) can award an athlete, person, or team with a Fair Play Green Card after the match.
3. An awarded athlete, person or team receives recognition which shows he/she/it is awarded for Fair Play behaviour.
4. A referee or the Technical Commission will fill out an "awarding paper"(nomination) which will be delivered to the Fair Play Commission.
5. Out of the awarded athletes, persons, and teams the Fair Play Commission selects a winning woman, man, and team for a fair play award.
6. Winners will receive a Fair Play Cup which is handed out at the closing ceremony of the CSIT single championship or World Sports Games

### What can nominations be for?

- i. An outstanding act or gesture of Fair Play during the competitions
- ii. For acceptance of the referee's verdicts and treating referees with respect
- iii. For fair behaviour towards opponents
- iv. Support other athletes in the spirit of Fair Play

## 2.4 Actual Awards

In 2017 18 green cards were given to athletes or teams

A Fair Play award was granted to Rooho Mohammadi Mirzaei of Iran during the CSIT World Sports Games of 2015. He was holding a Mexican runner's hand when passing the finish line in the 3.000 metres steeplechase. During the Athletic Championships he was extremely friendly, respectful and an exemplary team leader, always with a smile on his face. He had recently established in close cooperation the Ministry of Interior in Iran a new NGO called "Fatian Fair Play".

WSG 2019 finished in a good atmosphere and 3 winners of the fair play award were selected.

The Executive Committee established specially a Fair Play commission which consisted of: -

1. Representative of the host:
2. Representative on behalf of the TC:
3. Representative on behalf of the Sports Director CSIT:

In total the Fair Play Commission received by form, WhatsApp, and email 9 nominations

1 for women, 3 for men, 5 for teams

The submission for the women's award was unfortunately not of an acceptable standard, which led the Commission to award a mixed team in tennis, a women team in MamaNet and a single man.

- Award winning team: Mixed team Tennis of TUL, Finland
- Award winning team women: Team Vitinia (AICS - Italy) of MamaNet
- Award winning men: Raido Liitmaa - Wrestling and beach wrestling (JOUD – Estonia)

Whilst the number of nominations for the green cards was disappointing, there were unforeseen circumstances e.g. the loss of luggage at the airport which meant no actual green cards or nomination forms were available to give to referees or Technical Commissioners (TCs) for the sports. Copies were made of the nomination form and given to TCs but too late.

## 3. Research

In order to gather both quantitative and qualitative data three tools were used: -

### 3.1. Online survey of participants

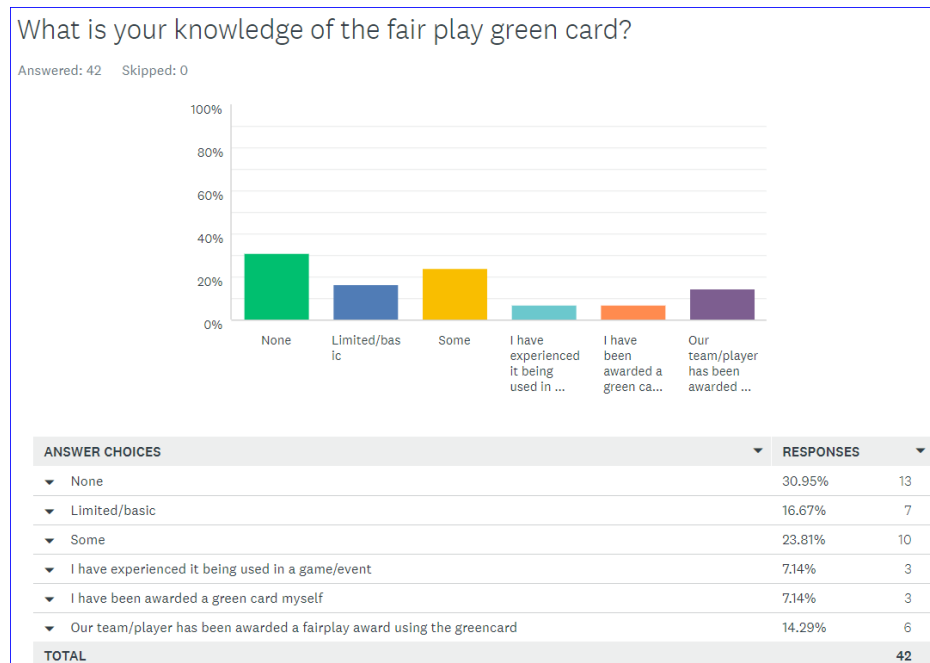
Due to the great cooperation from the CSIT Sports Director, Office, and IT company this on-line approach was made possible. This survey was accessed from a link in the WSG App, which was downloaded by approximately 3,000 athletes, however despite a "push" on the app and various prompts at meetings and at the closing ceremony there were only 42 replies.

Feedback was that is a unique way of collecting views from athletes in large competitions, but more publicity was needed.

### 3.1.1 Findings

Of the 42 respondents 29 were participants, 3 officials, 5 coaches and 5 administrators, and 62% were male, with the largest (50%) age group 35 to 44 years. A whole range of sports were represented with MamaNet, Football, Beach Volleyball, Swimming, Karate and Basketball having the largest numbers.

In terms of attitudes to fair play before the games, 87% said “Fair play is an ongoing part of the way I play and take part in sport” with 2% saying they “hadn’t thought about it”.



We asked what is your knowledge of the Green Card? Its striking that over 70% had some, limited or no knowledge of the green card with 47% none or limited awareness.

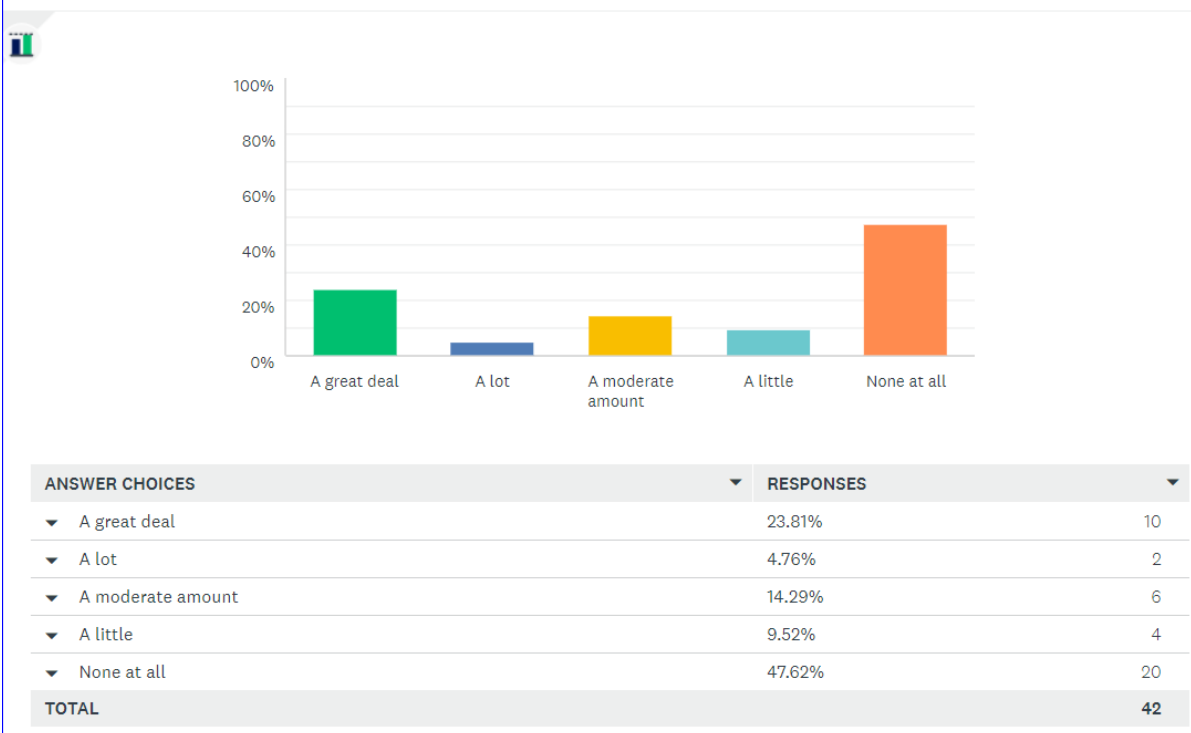
When asked what was your first reaction to the green card initiative? 71% of respondents were “very positive” Respondents comments on the whole were incredibly positive believing it did promote fair play by bringing attention to it. Some had not heard of the initiative. Some desired more use and promotion especially amongst referees. Use in individual sports like swimming is more difficult to apply.

The survey asked, “ Has the green card initiative changed your attitude to fair play in games and matches?”

29% said it had, a lot or a little, but 47% said it had not changed at all.

## Has the green card initiative changed your attitude to fair play in games and matches?

Answered: 42 Skipped: 0



Most of the comments expressed disappointment that they had not seen the card used in any games/matches, some said as they already play fair it won't have any effect.

When comparing these results with only those who had received or had direct experience of receiving a card the change in attitudes was much stronger with

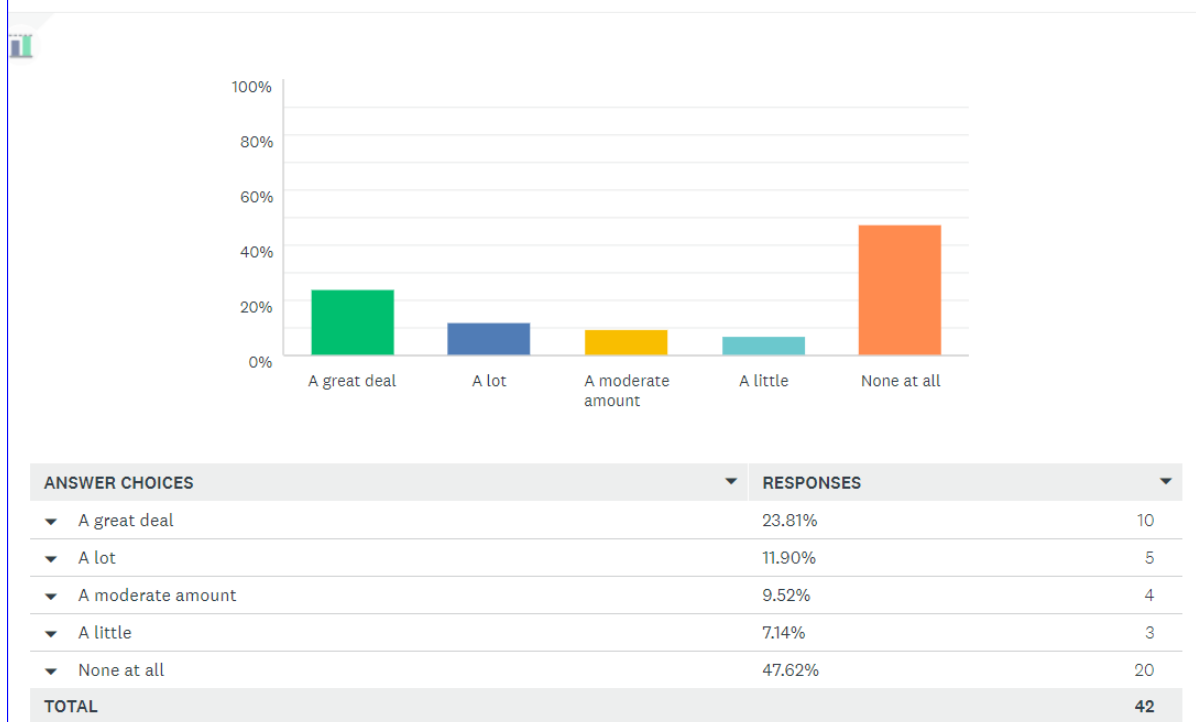
33% saying it had changed them a great deal, and only 22% saying it had no effect.

So, we see an experiential effect? (though numbers are very limited)

If we analyse the response by individual sports (e.g. swimming) rather than team sports then responses are less positive, with only 11% saying a great deal and 55% saying none at all.

## Has your experience of the green card changed the way you might behave in games or matches in the future?

Answered: 42 Skipped: 0

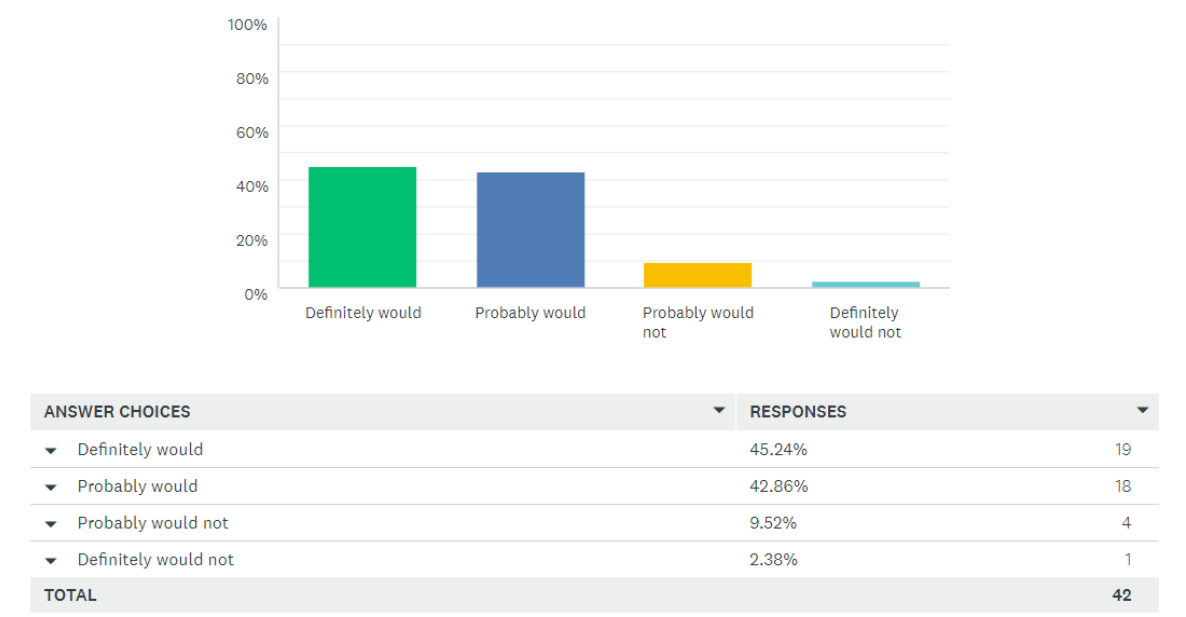


This is very similar to the “in games” results showing attitudes formed or changed in the games might be taken home.

Again, the figures from those who had direct experience of the card was higher with 44% saying it would affect then a great deal in the future and 22% saying none at all.

## When you think about the green card, do you think of it as something that will make any difference in impacting player behaviour in a game?

Answered: 42 Skipped: 0

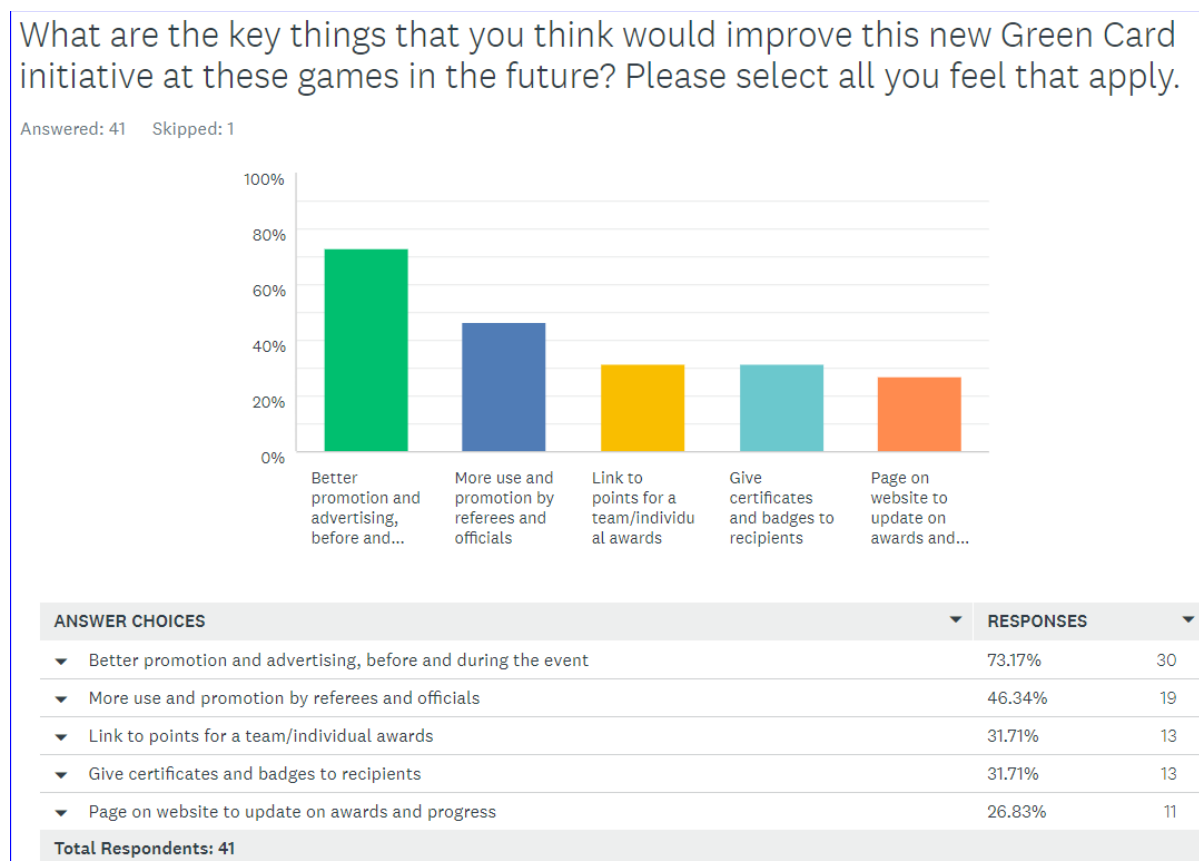


In terms of advocates of the green card, the views of the people completing the survey were most positive here with 88% saying the card definitely or probably would make a difference in impacting player behaviour,

We asked if the green card was available in your sport at home would you support its usage? 90% said they definitely or probably would.

This is again positive for rolling out the initiative more widely in European Federations.

For both of these questions the responses from individual sports were much less favourable but even so support for the impact and dissemination of the card was high in these respondents also.



Clearly better promotion and encouraging use by referees would improve the use of the card at the WSG, but also links to team points, certificates and badges were mentioned.

In terms of the comments here, there were some interesting responses re the WSG e.g.:-

- Teams/countries can compete how many green cards they will get, so have a league table.
- Pictures of the individual or teams which is giving the green card(s)
- During competition days to award every day fair play and promote on social media

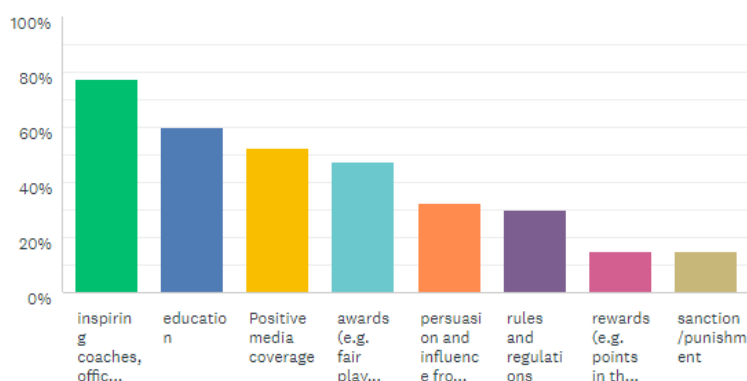
The last question asked about what else needs to be done to promote fair play.

What is interesting here is the fact that the most mentioned thing was education of coaches, leaders and officials, followed by education, media coverage, awards, and persuasion/role model influence. The numbers who believe sanctions promote fair play was very low at 15%.



What else do we need to do as well as the green card to secure higher levels of fair play in games and sports? Please select all the things you feel we need to do.

Answered: 40 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
inspiring coaches, officials and leaders	77.50% 31
education	60.00% 24
Positive media coverage	52.50% 21
awards (e.g. fair play team or individual awards)	47.50% 19
persuasion and influence from e.g. role models	32.50% 13
rules and regulations	30.00% 12
rewards (e.g. points in the game/tournament)	15.00% 6
sanction/punishment	15.00% 6
Total Respondents: 40	

### 3.1.2 Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusion	Recommendation
Fair Play is already recognised by most players before they came to the 2019 WSG.	CSIT can build on this momentum with further improvements. EFPM should promote the card use more widely and develop a branded product with standard guidelines, protocols, and material, maybe the Commonwealth Games.
Knowledge of the Green Card was very limited	CSIT to ensure better promotion in 2021
Strong recognition that the Green Card is a good thing for fair play, with positive reactions recorded, but its impact on some individual sports may be limited	EFPM/CSIT to work with swimming to see if and how the card can be awarded
Whilst a quarter of respondents felt the card had positively influenced attitudes to fair play, almost half said it had not. However, the positive influence was much higher in those who had seen a card given and or had received one.	Encourage referees and officials to give more cards without undermining the value and integrity of the card. Ensure the Card is embedded in coaching and officiating qualifications and briefings
Support for the application and wider use of the card was very strong.	EFPM and CSIT to continue to promote
Green Card needs to be part of a fair play campaign, with leaders, managers, coaches, and officials the key targets, also “education” i.e. why	Ensure the card becomes a tool of EFPM with flexible protocols that can fit in with national or federation fair play campaigns.

fair play is important, and also get the media to promote. Also awards and persuasion by role models. Sanctions were not recognised as valuable.	
Improvements to the card administration could be made	Specifically, include the Green Card in the rules of each sport competition, have an online nomination facility, ensure all referees/officials have actual green cards, amend match record sheets to include the recording of the awards of cards(as well as indiscipline and scores) signed by the ref/table official.
Ideas for Improvements (see 3.3)	CSIT WSG Congress have agreed to to consider these.

### 3.2. Administrators' Questionnaire

These were sent by email to the 6 sports who had made nominations; completed forms were received from 4, Beach Volleyball, Petanque, Mamanet and Karate. Also, the Sports Director completed a survey.

#### 3.2.1 Key Findings

##### Impact

The survey asked what impact the green card had.

No respondent could identify any strong evidence, that the green card helped fair play objectives to be met. All respondents indicated that as fair play is made explicit by promoting the awards, it has a more prominent role. By positive attention towards this, fair play improves as all participants are more aware of fair play. As a result, the tournament level and atmosphere gets better. Example comments -

"In one sport during the games, despite the tension between the teams, mutual respect is maintained as players are aware of the green card and the fair play chapter, this change everything in the players state of mind"

"Before the final game in Spain last July, we arrange an exhibition game between all team captains when one team was called FAIR PLAY and the other was called GREEN CARD

It is a pride for the players to reward with a green card and there is competition among the players for the right to receive a green card"

"Green card motivates positive encouragement and behaviour during the tournament and even influences the spectators and the professional staff"

##### Was the implementation of the Card Based on prior evidence?

No previous cases or examples have been evaluated formally, and the initiative came about through networking.

##### Linked to other fair play initiatives?

Within the WSG there was no explicit links to other fair play initiatives

One response indicated the need for sports to have a "culture" where fair play is embedded.

“Behaviour cannot be assimilated externally. It should be part of the DNA of the sport”

### **Standard Protocol pan-sports**

All respondents agreed that to increase reliability and validity a similar protocol that has to be followed by all participant sports would be helpful. One sport said once the green card is part of the sport regulations/ rules of the whole sport and the game it will be an integral part of the way sport is played.

### **3.3 Improvements**

- An online application where you can fill in the arguments of fair play and to ask for a specific description of a few moments of the nominated athlete /team.
- Green card awareness should be increased through tournaments and social media. Embed the green card under the rules of the game and regulation of various sports. Hold regional tournaments that promote the green card.
- Embed a section re the green card in match sheets where fouls and yellow/red cards are recorded
- Ensure a mixed panel of communities of interest decides the awards in each sport
- All said it should be recommended to other sports
- Very good initiative but a card per sport might be more appropriate
- Maintain a Fair Play commission to oversee Fair Play at any tournament

One responder said “It is a good initiative; however, it needs constant attention of people who are promoting and motivating TCs and referees to actively make nominations. During these Games the Fair Play Commission did not have the manpower to do so. That is a pity. Also, it gives additional work (fill out forms) in order to select the winner in the end. Maybe it should be simpler to nominate athletes without the additional filling out of forms?”

### **3.4 Questionnaire to green card winners**

Unfortunately, it was not possible to send these to the green card winners, due to logistical issues.

## **4. Good Practice -MamaNet**

**As a result of the information discovered in this process MamaNet has been identified as a potential exemplar for the incorporation of the green card into a sports federation. This will be developed as an additional case study.**

Fair play is an integral part of MamaNet League, which is a mothers' league that serves as Role model to their children and families of how a team supposed to play, and how sports should be conducted. In 2016, the FAIR PLAY chapter was embedded as part of Mamanet's Rules of the game and for fair play action the players rewarded with a green card. the fair play chapter is also used to act against those who do not respect their opponent and the referee can stop the game, award a point and even a technical loss can be declared in some situation. This is part of MamaNet zero tolerance policy for violent on and off court.

It is prohibited to boo or cheer in an unsportsmanlike manner or in a manner contrary to the FAIR PLAY. The referee is permitted to interrupt a match or award a point to the opposing team if one of the team members (players, staff, spectators) behave in an unsportsmanlike manner towards the referee and/or the opposing team and/or any other entity. In such a case, a ruling of a technical loss will be made after consulting with the professional coordinator.

During tournaments, the scorer update on the game scoresheet the players who receives a green card and at the end of the tournament one player was selected to receive the Fair Play Cup.

## References

CSIT (2017) Technical Commissions and Championships General Regulations

CSIT(2019) <https://www.csit.tv/en> accessed 22nd August 2019

## Appendix 1 The CSIT/EFPM Green Card



# Green Card



**To be awarded with a GREEN CARD for**

- An outstanding act or gesture of Fair Play during the competition(s)
- For acceptance of the referee's verdicts and treating referees with respect
- For fair behaviour towards opponents
- Support athletes in the spirit of Fair Play

A Fair Play Awarding document must be filled out. Ask the Technical Commission.

**Pour être décerné avec une CARTE VERTE pour**

- Un acte exceptionnel ou un geste de Fair-Play pendant les compétitions
- Pour l'acceptation des verdicts de l'arbitre et le traitement des arbitres
- Pour un comportement loyal envers les adversaires
- Soutenir les athlètes dans l'esprit du Fair-Play

Un document d'attribution de la récompense du FAIR PLAY doit être rempli. Demandez à la Commission Technique.



Mamanet Coaches Course