



PANATHLON INTERNATIONAL

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We have gathered here today to celebrate Fair Play, or *Juego Limpio* in Spain or *Franc Jeu* in Canada. What exactly are we celebrating?

Being 'Fair Play' means being fair and equitable, means behaving in an upfront, honest and unselfish manner in sport and in life in general.

This idea is nothing new. Behaving honestly and equitably already characterised those who, in the 17th and 18th centuries, were referred to as 'gentlemen'. Gentlemen were people who exhibited nobility in their feelings as well as in their conduct.

But let's go back to Fair Play in sport.

Why is Fair Play crucial in sport?

The point is that sport often exacerbates passions. The desire to win or the appeal of reward on the part of sportspeople and exaggerated nationalism on the part of spectators sometimes push to behaviours that are a far cry from Fair Play. Nobody likes losing a match or a game.

One may be greatly tempted to take advantage of the opponent's distress or to pretend not to see a referee's favourable mistake.

Exhibiting fair play to the detriment of one's own performance, reporting errors in judgement or stopping to help an opponent who has been unfairly pushed to the ground by a spectator are rare gestures and deserve recognition more than any other.

These unique features make the practice of Fair Play even harder in sport than in our daily lives, hence more commendable.

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It is first and foremost through education that one learns how to exercise Fair Play.

However, education on this point is often non-existent or insufficient.

Our goal, the goal of the sports organisations that are here today will therefore be to try to bridge this gap.

To promote Fair Play, to inspire people to comply with Fair Play principles, there is no better way than highlighting its achievements, its excellent and admirable gestures.

This is what our three organisations – International Fair Play Committee (CIFP), European Fair Play Movement (EFPM) and Panathlon International – are relentlessly trying to achieve.

Each of these three organisations promotes Fair Play in its own way.

At Panathlon International, the dissemination and demonstration of the ethical values of sport, where Fair Play occupies centre stage, leverage on organising special events where Fair Play gestures are highlighted. They also rely on a visible, active and committed action in the framework of large-scale sports events.

This educational task enshrined in the Olympic Charter is accomplished not only through the action undertaken by the management of our Movement, but also and especially through the efforts deployed by some 300 Panathlon International Clubs across four continents, by means of conferences, by disseminating the Charters of Fair Play, of the rights of children in sport and of the duties of parents in sport, as well as through events involving athletes and their families.

Thank you all for being with us today, personally or virtually, to celebrate this exceptional Day.



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Panathlon International's Wallonie Bruxelles Club is one of the most active promoters of Fair Play within our Movement.

I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to Wallonie Bruxelles Panathlon Club for deciding to resort to its renowned expertise to introduce and organise this World Day gathering the three major international organisations committed to defending and promoting Fair Play.

Pierre Zappelli

International President