**Senior Secondary Physical Education Elective**

**Part 8 Social Aspects**

**Worksheet 4**

**Sport Professional and Amateur**

1. Themes:
2. What are the differences between ‘amateurs’ and ‘professionals’ in sport?
3. What are the rationales for or against amateurism?
4. Taking Olympism and the principles of fairness into consideration, is it appropriate for amateur athletes to compete with professional athletes?
5. Content:
6. The criterion used previously to differentiate between amateurs and professionals in sport is that amateur athletes make no money for their athletic performance or in connection with their status as an athlete.
7. The Ancient Olympic Games allowed all Greek citizens except women to participate and compete in the Games. There was no differentiation between amateurs and professionals in sports contests. Professional athletes emerged later due to the considerable rewards and status gained from winning. The revival of modern Olympic created a new rule to protect the wealthy aristocrats and favour the athletes from wealthy families, and exclude those athletes who earn their living by their sports skills. Therefore, the amateurism in sport development was in dispute.
8. “Fairness in sport” can be interpreted as “playing within certain rules which are based on the principle of justice” and “games are fair if the rules do not discriminate against any of the participants while giving each the same role and the same opportunities. Games are fair if the positions of the players are interchangeable from the very beginning”.
9. When the cut-off line between amateur and professional athletes is removed, the controversial issue between amateurism and professionalism no longer exists.
10. Taking fairness in sport into consideration, the argument has been shifted to how costly it is to nurture an elite athlete at international level. This is also a form of unfairness due to the unbalanced development between developing and developed countries.
11. In ancient Olympics, there is no differentiation between the two, so no comparison can be made. In modern Olympics until 1992, the performance between the two became huge, for instance, the levels between the NBA Basketball or ATP Tennis and amateur competitions are not comparable. Due to the grey area within this definition, the eastern bloc communist countries employed the armies to cover up the professional status of their athletes in Olympic Games. Obviously, the IOC could not come up with a good solution to tackle this issue. In the 1992 Barcelona Olympic Games, the long-time controversial ‘amateur’ and ‘professional’ issue in sport is terminated in 1992 by allowing all professional athletes to compete in Olympics except boxing and whistling events.
12. Nowadays, the advancement of sport science gives tremendous support to sports training, recovery and competition preparation making a great difference to the performance between amateurs and professionals.

1. Questions and activities:
2. Do you think professionalism in sport will bring benefits to the overall development of sport? Why or why not?
3. Do you think the current sports development is heading towards professionalism or amateurism? Why do you think so?
4. Do you agree that the philosophy of “winning at all cost” and sports cheating originated from professionalism? Why or why not?
5. References:
   * 1. Coakley, J. (2015). *Sport in society: Issues and controversies* (11th edition). WCB McGraw – Hill.
     2. Llewellyn, M. P., & Gleaves, J. (2014). A Universal Dilemma: The British Sporting Life and the Complex, Contested, and Contradictory State of Amateurism. *Journal of Sport History*, *41*(1), 95–116.
     3. Mutter, F., & Pawlowski, T. (2014). The Causal Effect of Professional Sports on Amateur Sport Participation - An Instrumental Variable Approach. *International Journal of Sport Finance*, *9*(2), 172–188.