

Philosophy of Sport - What Makes a Game Into a Sport

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(Newswire.net -- June 18, 2018) -- It's very tricky to know when a game should be considered as a sport. There isn't a single governing body or entity that ultimately decides whether a game is a sport or not. In order to know whether to call a game a sport or not, it is important to understand the [philosophy of sport](#) which includes the definition of a sport and the governing rules surrounding it.



Knowing when a game is called a sport isn't that simple. [There are a lot of theories and philosophies](#) when it comes to sport and to know when to call a game a sport, you must truly understand the philosophy of sport. The philosophy of sport includes the definition, key ideas, practices, and ethics of a sport. It gathers various insights from different fields of philosophy while allowing the public to appreciate sports. The philosophy of sport is not fixed and can therefore change over time. The methods rely on guiding principles and conceptions that arise.

Definition of Sport

According to Michael Beloff, Marie Demetriou, Tim Kerr, and Rupert Beloff in their book called "Sports Law", sports can be defined as:

1. An activity, human or animal
2. In which 2 or more players, human or animal, compete against each other
3. According to predetermined rules
4. Pursuant to which someone wins, and which determine who wins

The Element of Luck

With these guidelines alone, [mind games such as poker](#) and bridge can be considered as sports. As mentioned earlier, there are different governing bodies when it comes to sports. According to SportAccord, an international sport organization that is the umbrella organization for all international sports federations, a sport should not depend on any element of luck that is infused into the sport. With this in mind, it would disqualify card games where it's but natural to have an element of luck or chance while playing a game.

In contrary to this definition of sports, mind sports have been established over the years. The International Mind Sports Association or IMSA was even created to govern the different federations of traditional mind sports such as chess, poker, mah jong, bridge, xiangqi, go, and draughts. Poker was established as a mind sport and has been accepted by the International Mind Sports Association in 2010 while bridge was established as a mind sport in 2017.



When looking at another perspective, some physical sports also rely on luck when winning. It's not all about skill. Chance and luck also play a role in physical sports. Otherwise, skilled players would always win. Chance and luck play a role in games such as basketball and football. Some teams win out of pure luck although this isn't always the case. Skill is still a lot more important over luck when playing physical sports. Individuals and teams often win games and tournaments because of their skills. There are only times when they are lucky enough to win games out of luck. Given this perspective, then the rule stated above should not be applicable.

Sport and Physical Exertion

Sport, as defined in the dictionary, is an activity that involves physical exertion and skill wherein an individual or team competes against each other for entertainment purposes. Mind sports are not physically tiring like other sports such as football and basketball but it doesn't mean that the physical attributes of a person are not involved when playing mind sports. Despite this definition of sport, mind sports can still be considered as a sport. Mind sports such as poker, chess, bridge, and the like don't use the physical skills when playing, but they do require its players to be physically fit in order to play these games well. The tournament sessions for mind sports can be long and physically tiring. Tournaments usually last an entire day for these kinds of sports. Players, rather athletes, of mind sports need a lot of stamina in order to survive these long tournaments. They need to eat and sleep well and also stay in shape, in order to play well in tournaments. Mind sports require a lot of focus and stamina which can be achieved by staying in shape and by being physically fit. It is clear that players of mind sports benefit a lot in their sport when they are in their peak physical condition.

According to John F. Kennedy, a former president of the U.S., there is a relationship between physical and mental exertion. He said that physical fitness is the basis of creative and dynamic intellectual activity.

Fans

Sports usually have a lot of fans whether these fans play the sport or not. Fans would usually watch games and wear the jerseys and merchandise of their favorite players and teams to show their support. Poker also shares a similar fan culture. Pro players of mind sports like poker have sponsors too. Poker also has some merchandise and shirts for its fans. There are also live streams, television coverages, a number of websites like 888poker, and also magazines that are dedicated to poker. Sports bets are also available for poker just like other sports such as horse racing, football, basketball, etc.

The Importance of Skill

While skill plays an important role when it comes to physical sports, it also plays an important role to mind sports. Mind sports aren't always about chance and luck. It's true that you need luck in order to win mind sports but having skills is more important. According to the International Mind Sports Association, mind sports such as poker are officially a game of skill. Skilled players usually win over those who are less skilled and who are relying purely on luck to win.



To consider a game as a sport depends on different perspectives but as of ruling, some of the mind games like poker, bridge, chess, and the like are now officially considered as mind sports. Whether you consider poker as a game or as a sport, one thing is for certain. Poker and other mind games share similar attributes as other sports.

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