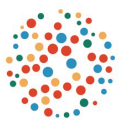




# ANTI- RACISM IN SPORT

## Exploring Experiences of Racism and Anti-Racism in Sport in Winnipeg: FINAL REPORT

By Craig C. Brown, Nikol Veisman, Dalima Chhibber,  
Jessica Praznik, Daria Jorquera Palmer, Allen Mankewich,  
Leisha Strachan, Sarah Teetzel, and Lori Wilkinson



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## ABSTRACT

The Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign, hosted by Immigration Partnership Winnipeg (IPW), includes more than 25 partner organizations, agencies, and educational institutions operating in Winnipeg, Manitoba. A shared goal amongst the partners is to use research and education to develop tools to identify and disrupt racism in sport in order to address and eliminate barriers to sport participation for First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities in Winnipeg. To do so, the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign targets multiple stakeholders, structures, and systems within the sport and education sectors, recognizing that to influence systemic racism, a multifaceted approach is needed. The research described in this report was conducted to inform the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign's public awareness campaign, school presentations, training presentations and workshops, and the development of an Anti-Racism in Sport Accord. To do so, 12 online focus groups (following COVID-19 related research restrictions in place in the summer of 2021) were conducted involving 39 participants who take part in sport in Winnipeg as athletes, coaches, officials and/or service providers. Through focus group discussions, participants provided their insights, via their lived experiences as members of Winnipeg's sport community, to address the following research questions: 1) To what extent is racism present in sport in Winnipeg?; 2) What does racism in sport in Winnipeg look like and what forms does it take?; 3) What do people who experience racism in sport think can be done to address and eliminate it?; 4) How are sport systems in Winnipeg supporting or resisting racism in sport in Winnipeg?; 5) What initiatives have been implemented in order to address racism in sport in Winnipeg?; and 6) How is racism in sport in Winnipeg perceived by related stakeholders (athletes, coaches, administration, ownership, teachers, officials/referees, fans/observers, and the general public)? Partners from the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign's Advisory Committee and Working Groups, and IPW Staff, participated in the planning and administration of this project.





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- Lin Howes Barr (Spence Neighbourhood Association)
- Sara Bennet (SEED Winnipeg)
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- Michelle Chudd (United Way of Winnipeg)
- Andrew Collier (Winnipeg Goldeyes)
- Bree Cruise (Sport Manitoba)
- Maysoun Darweesh (Ethnocultural Council of Manitoba)
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- Loretta Ross (Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba)
  - Clayton Sandy (Independent)
  - Jennifer Sarna (City of Winnipeg)
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We dedicate this report to the athletes, coaches, and sports organizers in Winnipeg who shared their experiences with racism in sport with us openly and courageously as participants in this study.

Please visit <https://antiracismsinsport.ca/> for information on how the research that follows in this report informs the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign's public awareness campaign, school presentations, training presentations and workshops, and the development of the Anti-Racism in Sport Accord.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the summer of 2021 we conduct a qualitative study involving 39 Winnipeggers who participate in sport as athletes, coaches, officials, and administrators. A total of 19 adult males, 20 adult females and 6 youth, along with coaches, referees and officials, and members of sport associations in Manitoba participated in the study. We chose to use focus groups, and some interviews, to gain deep insight into individuals' lived experiences as members of the sport community in Winnipeg. Racism is prevalent in all sports at all levels, although this truth is often ignored, belittled or outright denied. To deny that members of the sport system who are First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized, or members of religious minority communities experience racism in sport is to be willfully ignorant of the realities occurring in the gyms, fields, and arenas in the city of Winnipeg. All study participants who noted they had lived experiences of racism told us that they had experienced, observed, or were aware of racism in sport in Winnipeg. Participants provided their experiences of racism in sport, and then brainstormed what they think needs to change in order for sport to not just be free of racism but to move towards sports organizations becoming actively anti-racist environments. Our findings are clear: racism is a problem in sport in Winnipeg, but it is not limited to Winnipeg nor to sport. Most of our observations are backed by previous research and align with the findings in the broader sociology of sport literature examining racism in sport around the world.

In order to address these inequities and injustices within sport in Winnipeg, mandatory anti-racism training and education for all stakeholders in sport, increasing anti-racism awareness in sport through sharing stories, speaking out, and facilitating more discussions, the creation/implementation of policies to address racism in sport while also keeping decision-makers in sport accountable, and intentional efforts to reduce current barriers to safe, racism-free sport were seen as the best options at this point in time. Training and awareness, in particular, have been noted as instrumental in helping

create tangible change in addressing racism in sport (Barnes, 2020; Bradbury & Williams, 2006). This introspection should not be left to individuals or separate sport entities, but instead built into the overall sport system in Winnipeg. The authors also conclude that in order to address racism effectively in sport in Winnipeg, it must be actively, critically explored in all its iterations, further discussions and collaboration with all stakeholders must take place, especially with First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority organizations, and that racist experiences in sport in Winnipeg must be acknowledged openly and addressed urgently, possibly through sever sanctions (Cleland & Cashmore, 2014), as a present issue in sport in Winnipeg today. It is time for anti-racism initiatives in sport in Winnipeg to move beyond speech to tangible action, as encouraged by Hylton (2010).

### Experiences of Racism

Participants discussed multiple spaces, places, and encounters with racism at all levels in sport. Discussions ranged from personal experiences of racism throughout their careers, to observations of other individuals experiencing racism or exhibiting racist behaviour. Because of racism, participants face additional barriers when attempting to get involved in sports and are subjected to racist and ignorant comments and actions throughout their careers often leading to withdrawal from their chosen sport, or become alienated in other aspects of their lives. This can lead to high school dropouts, low income, and general social disengagement. To make sense of the racism within sport in Winnipeg, we must recognize how racism impacts the provincial sport system, the barriers to participation that First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized, and religious minority communities face, and the influence of wider societal structures that perpetuate racism.

**1. Racism Within the Sport System:** Most participants, Racialized or not, reported that racism exists in Winnipeg, including in their





sport. Repeated failures to address this by managers, coaches, referees, and other persons responsible for organizing sports in Winnipeg has driven many players from the sport.

**2. Racism in Sport Spaces:** Whereas sport is supposed to be a healthy space, most participants report a culture of exclusion and racism making these spaces unsafe for many children, youth, and adults in Winnipeg.

**3. Systemic Racism and Sport:**

- a. Given that racism is part of every institution and organization in Canadian society, it is not surprising to find racism in sport.
- b. Racism in sport is prevalent in Winnipeg—and our participants' experiences are mirrored in the findings of other Canadian and global studies. In other words, racism is a systemic problem in Winnipeg and in Canadian society. As one participant notes, simply 'adding more Brown people' to sport does not address the deeply embedded structures that prevent reporting and addressing the root causes of racism.
- c. There is a culture of minimizing, rejecting and ignoring racist incidents when they are reported. Instead, sport bodies either refuse to acknowledge the problem or when it is discussed often, point to policies that supposedly reject racism rather than addressing the larger problem.

**4. The Impact of Racism for Continued Sport Participation:** There is no proactive policies to recruit and welcome new players from all communities into most sports in Winnipeg. This lack of proactive recruitment results in a shortage of potential coaches and referees—who are largely recruited as former players—so the management of team sports is largely white and born in Winnipeg. This poses long term challenges for recruitment into these important mentorship roles. Research outside of Winnipeg confirms that most amateur sports are facing a shortage of coaches and officials.

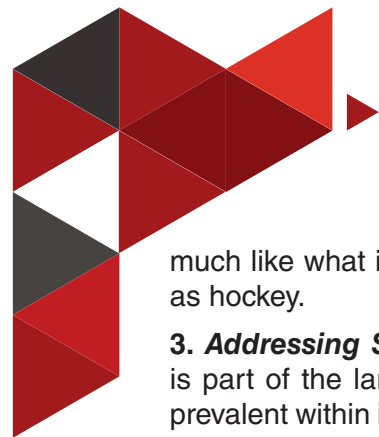
**5. Addressing intersectionality:** As racism takes many forms, so too is racism implicated by various intersections. One example that was repeated across focus groups is the intersection of income, immigrant status and ethnicity. Many newcomers and low-income families cannot afford the high cost of sport fees which prevents newcomer youth, particularly from Racialized groups, out of sport. For those who can enter sport, income inequalities affect them in other ways. Early start times means that after school meal programs must be missed in order to make it to the game on time. We heard about coaches bringing supper for these youth so they would have a meal to end the day. Others just simply cannot afford to miss supper, choosing to miss sport instead. Transportation to sport also has an intersectional component. Some newcomers and those from low-income families often do not have the means to transport their youth to sport. Often youth sporting teams have games that take place throughout Winnipeg, often in places that are not easily accessible by bus. Others have parents that cannot take time off work to take their children to participate.

**Recommendations for Positive Change**

**1. Education and Training Focused on Anti-Racism Literacy:** There is a desperate need to provide anti-racism training for all players in sport. Although racism emanates from many sources aside from teammates and opposing players, it is well documented within our research and in others that racism between players plays a large role in pushing players from sport.

**2. Increasing Anti-Racism Awareness:** Almost all participants reported a lack of formal training among coaches and referees with regard to racism in sport. All participants suggested that training on anti-racism and approaches to addressing racism on the playing field were very important strategies for improving playing conditions and recruitment from all communities. Some participants discussed the need to train parents,





much like what is done in amateur sports such as hockey.

**3. Addressing Structural Inequities:** As sport is part of the larger society and that racism is prevalent within it, it is not surprising that racism is firmly entrenched in sport in Winnipeg. Until issues related to poverty and access, individual and structural racism are addressed, there is little hope that racism can be addressed in sport.

### 1. Introduction

Racism is a problem in sport. It is prevalent in all sports at all levels, and to deny that athletes who are First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority community members experience racism in sport is to be willfully ignorant of the realities occurring in the gyms, fields, and arenas across Canada.

A note on terminology is warranted. The words we use to describe ethnicity, Indigeneity, and religious backgrounds are under constant change and debate. It is always appropriate to directly identify a group as specifically as possible. That means when we are speaking about a specific group, for example, the Star Blanket Cree Nation in Saskatchewan, we should name them as such. If, however, we are discussing Indigenous Peoples more broadly, then we should use the term “First Peoples” specifically. If we are speaking more broadly about Indigenous Peoples in Canada and that we are inclusive of Métis Nations and Inuit, then we should say “First Nations, Métis Nations, and Inuit” specifically. There are times, however, that we need to be more inclusive—such as when we are speaking about racism and its effect on a larger grouping of peoples. In this instance, we may use the term “First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority community members.” Although the term is unwieldy, it is ‘correct’ in terms of its inclusivity. We recognize, however, that from a literary perspective it is a clumsy term. For this reason, we may use the term “Racialized community” to reflect the more broadly inclusive term “First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority community members.”

This is not meant to diminish this group in any way, but to recognize that racism, in its many forms, has a unified and negative effect upon all these peoples. We also recognize, however, that the term “Racialized community” is also highly debated and rejected in some areas of scholarship (see Uyan, 2021). By forwarding “race” over all other types of equity seeking groups, we diminish their experiences. However, there remains no agreed upon terminology at this time and for this reason, we are using this term with some reluctance as it is our only option at this time.

The research described in this report was conducted to inform the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign’s 2021 public awareness campaign, school presentations, training presentations and workshops, and the development of the Anti-Racism in Sport Accord. The Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign is a city-wide campaign including more than 25 partner organizations, agencies, and educational institutions. A shared goal amongst the partners is to use education to develop tools to identify and disrupt racism in sport in order to address and eliminate barriers to sport participation among First Nations, Métis Nations, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities. To do so, the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign targets multiple stakeholders, structures, and systems within the sport and education sectors, recognizing that to influence systemic racism, a multifaceted approach is needed.

The need for this research and the larger campaign is obvious. Reports of racism within the ranks of amateur, novice, and professional sport are significant in number and rising. In 2021 alone, racism has been widely reported in various professional sports most notably hockey (Sachdeva, 2021), soccer (Brunskill, 2021) and cricket (Brown, 2021). Players participating in all sports, at all levels and ages report racism (Dichter, 2020; Heroux and Strashin, 2020). It is perpetuated and promoted by some broadcasters (Kehler, 2019; Walton, 2019). Racism invades the names and logos







of many professional sports teams, many of whom only started to change their names in 2020 (Dunning, 2021). Among university sports, a recent study has shown that athletes, coaches and officials are overwhelmingly white (Joseph et al. 2021). In short, racism in sport is a significant and growing problem in Canada.

In exploring racism in sport, a broad and inclusive definition of sport was utilized. ‘Sport’ for the purpose of this study was not restricted to competitions falling under the jurisdiction of a Provincial Sport Organization (PSO) in Manitoba. Rather, our understanding of sport includes any physical activities that people in Winnipeg choose to engage in, from high-performance competition, to organized recreational leagues, to impromptu games played in parks, and everything in between. Before developing programmes and policies to address racism and discrimination in any sphere, it is helpful to specify the goals of anti-racism initiatives. Definitions such as the Sport Information Resource Centre’s (“the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably” (SIRC, n.d.)) go beyond simply taking a stand against racism, and require a combination of action and planning that seeks to address racism on multiple levels with the aim of empowering those have been or are perceived to be victims or targets of the phenomenon. Where sport is concerned, Hylton (2010) states anti-racism “must pose a level of resistance to sport’s pluralist ideologies of ‘level playing fields’ and ‘colour-blindness’” (p. 340).

### **1.1 Exploring Experiences with Racism and Anti-Racism in Sport in Winnipeg**

The research component of the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign took place throughout 2021 at the height of the 2nd and 3rd waves of the COVID 19 pandemic when Manitoba was in severe lockdown when team sports were banned for nearly half the year. The first step was a review of the literature on racism and anti-racism in sport, followed by the creation of a detailed

literature review. The literature review included an environmental scan of anti-racist policies and initiatives undertaken by sports organizations in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Canada. The results of this review demonstrate that anti-racism initiatives are few and far between, and myriad sport organizations lack the knowledge, skills, and intentional preparation to respond to instances of racism in sport and to develop anti-racist initiatives within their organizations (see Appendix I: Sport is Not an Equal Playing Field: A Literature Review for the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign). These findings provided context for developing the specific research questions explored in this study, which are described in the next section.

Effective educational campaigns need to deliver the right message to the right audience at the right time. To develop a public awareness campaign, school presentations, training presentations and workshops, as well as an Anti-Racism in Sport Accord, deep knowledge of the extent that racism is present in sport in Winnipeg is needed. To move beyond definitions of racism and to engage with how racist behaviours, attitudes, policies, and environments are present in and permitted to proliferate in sport, information was sought from members of Winnipeg’s sport community on their experiences identifying and responding to racism in sport. This report highlights individuals’ experiences of racism in sport in Winnipeg, establishes that immediate interventions are necessary, and drawing on participants’ recommendations and ideas, offers insights into what an anti-racist sport system could look like and what is required to bring it to fruition.

### **1.2 Objectives and Research Questions**

The purpose of this study is to gather information from athletes and sport stakeholders (decision makers, coaches, administrators, referees, and players) within the sport context in relation to their experiences with racism and anti-racism in sport in Winnipeg. The objective of the research was therefore to gain insight into the experiences of racism and discrimination in sports in





Winnipeg through the lived experiences of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities in Winnipeg.

Research questions guiding the project included:

1. To what extent is racism present in sport in Winnipeg?
2. What does racism in sport in Winnipeg look like and what forms does it take?
3. What do people who experience racism in sport think can be done to address and eliminate it?
4. How are sport systems in Winnipeg supporting or resisting racism in sport in Winnipeg?
5. What initiatives have been implemented in order to address racism in sport in Winnipeg?
6. How is racism in sport in Winnipeg perceived by the related stakeholder (athletes, coaches, administration, ownership, teachers, officials/referees, fans/observers, and the general public)?

The next section addresses the literature informing these questions and what is already known about each area of inquiry. Section 3 then outlines the methods that were used to gain insight into these questions, following which Section 4 focuses on participants' experiences of racism and Section 5 presents participants' recommendations for addressing racism in sport in Winnipeg. The final section of this report draws conclusions, addresses limitations and barriers to the study, and identifies next steps in addressing anti-racism in sport.

## **2. Literature Review**

This literature review outlines both foundational and new research addressing how Canadians experience racism and anti-racism in sport, and it identifies existing programs and initiatives implemented in other areas to combat and eliminate racism in sport. Examples of racism in sport abound in Canada and its targets range from the world famous to the youngest of amateurs. From racial aggressions during a

local community youth soccer game in Winnipeg (Macdonell, 2019; Petz, 2019), to the widely reported racial abuses faced by Canadian and international soccer star, Alphonso Davis (CBC Sports, 2020), racism flourishes in our sport clubs. It is systemic, invading the ranks of coaches, linespersons, community club organizations and volunteers in all sports across Canada (Joseph et al., 2021). Additional material is located in Appendix A.

### **2.1 Racism in Canada and Racism in Sport**

It is impossible to provide an extensive overview of the literature addressing racism in sport without recognizing the magnitude of the problem in Canada. White Canadians like to think that racism is not a problem. When it is discussed, blame is often deflected towards the USA in terms like "at least it is not as bad here as it is in the USA" This "deflection" allows white Canadians to ignore the problems here. While Canadians are taught about the history of slavery in the USA, few understand its roots and practices here (Toronto Star, 2021). The historic injustice surrounding the forcible removal of Black residents from Africville, and the town's subsequent destruction, mark a more recent demonstration of the racism faced by Black communities in Canada. More recently, the 'rediscovery' of unmarked graves and unrecorded deaths of Indigenous children and youth in residential schools has led to some white people in Canada to more seriously reckon with their role in past injustices faced by Indigenous Peoples. The Winnipeg School Division released a report in December 2021 showing that Indigenous students were twice as likely as non-Indigenous students to be suspended and expelled from classes (Winnipeg Free Press, 2021). In summer 2021, Canada has experienced an increase in crimes motivated by hate. One of the most high profile incidents involved the purposeful hit and run accident in London Ontario that killed four of five members of the Afzaal family (CBC News, 2021). Racism has historically, and on an ongoing basis, existed in Canada.





Racism in Canada is not just historic; it extends toward other Racialized groups today. Our collective history is steeped in systemic racism that continues in the present. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report of 2015 was a small step forward in the process of healing from the atrocities associated with residential schools and the treatment of Canada's Indigenous Peoples. White settlers stole the land belonging to Indigenous Peoples, who were moved to reserves, had their children taken from them and were placed in residential schools where they were stripped of their culture and abused physically, sexually, deemed as inferior, and subjected to cultural and physical genocide (King, 2017; Dickason & Newbigging, 2019).

Racism has memory—it follows us through our families, collective histories and is the basis from which the organizations that make up society have based many of their rules and practices. The residential school system, the 1960s “scoop” of Indigenous children, the banning of culture, language and religion have roots in the past that carry forward to today. For Indigenous Peoples, this intergenerational trauma shapes their lives today (Bombay, Matheson & Anisman, 2009). Families and communities carry the stories of our collective past. When traumas are experienced and remain unresolved, the pain is passed on to our children. Intergenerational trauma, combined with a system that fosters and encourages racism, has meant a lifetime of struggle and inequality for many Indigenous Peoples in Canada. We can trace a path through which systemic, institutional, and individual racisms, combined with unresolved intergenerational trauma, has created conditions that have led to systemic poverty, overrepresentation in the criminal justice system, and unequal access to education and healthcare, which have negatively affected the lives of First Nations, Métis Nation, and Inuit Peoples in Canada today (Hotez, 2010; Lavallee & Poole, 2010; Maru, Fletcher & Chewings, 2012; Sittner & Estes, 2020; Smylie & Firestone, 2016; Pratt et al., 2016).

We all know that racism in Canada is not limited to First Nations, Métis Nation or Inuit Peoples; the scourge of racism extends more broadly. There is a long and tragic history of racism against Asian Canadians. For example, the Chinese (Li, 1998), Japanese (Omatsu & Price, 2020), and Indian (Bolaria & Li, 1988) communities have experienced centuries of racism in all forms. This historic experience has influenced how Asian Canadians are treated today. Baird (2018), while exploring racism directed at Asians in British Columbia, notes that white-supremacy groups remain active in the province. In 2020, and throughout 2021, Asian Canadians, particularly those from China, have experienced significant racism due to COVID-19 (Wilkinson, 2020; Wilkinson & Ogoe, 2020).

Anti-Black racism is nothing new in Canada either. Mullings, Morgan and Quelleng (2016) describe Canada as a place where “anti-Black racism thrives.” Jean-Pierre and James (2020) chronicle the long history of anti-Black racism in the wake of the Black Lives Matter protests in the summer of 2020. Robyn Maynard (2017) and others have chronicled the racism experienced by African and Caribbean Canadians. Anti-Black racism has invaded the occupations of medicine (Dryden & Nnorom, 2021), nursing (Das Gupta, 2016), the professoriate (Henry et al., 2017), teaching (Munroe, 2017) and other occupations. It is recorded frequently in the way the child welfare system works (Phillips & Pon, 2018; Pon, Gossine & Phillips 2011) and influences the successful integration of African and Caribbean immigrants (Madibbo, 2020). Like racism directed towards other racialized groups, anti-Black racism is historic and pernicious in the Canada of today and yesteryear.

Readers with an interest in learning more about the extensive history of racism in Canada should consult Babcock (2013), Backhouse (1999), Hier and Bolaria (2007), Joseph (2018), Kallen (2003), Li (1988; 1996), McGregor (2004), and McMillan and Yellowhorn (2004). From our knowledge of systemic racism, this history of





racism has affected the development, growth, and maintenance of all economic, political, health and educational institutions in Canada. This history has not left the institution of sport unscathed.

## **2.2 Athlete and Community Sport Stakeholders' Experiences of Racism in Sport**

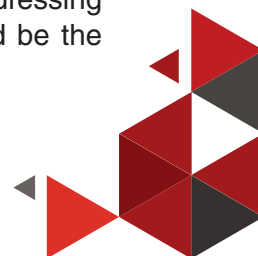
To the best of our knowledge, academic peer-reviewed literature addressing Winnipeg or Manitoban athletes, coaches, or sports administrators' experiences of racism in sport exists. However, racism has attracted a lot of attention on social media in the past year by sport organizations. While this attention has tended to be reflected in social media posts in solidarity with anti-racism movements, only in a few instances the issue has led to some organizations being open to hearing and understanding the views of athletes, coaches, and management in relation to tackling the prevalence of racism and discrimination in sports and releasing statements against racism (Canadian Lacrosse League, 2020). Skate Canada (2021) has established a three-phase education plan for anti-racism and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) to ensure greater understanding of racism in Canadian sports and move towards positive change. Their approach focuses on providing education related to issues of race and anti-racism sport, and the change that needs to occur in to these areas, as well as participation being recommended for participants at all levels. Athletics Canada Athlete's Council (2020) has stated their attempt to show commitment towards bringing change by listening to athletes' experiences and voices as drivers for change. The organization began its efforts to eliminate racism by interviewing players and coaches from various sports, focusing on Black history month, asking what being Black means to the interviewees, and listening to their experiences of racism. Through this roundtable, the organization aimed to use its platform to raise the voices of the athletes and understand the barriers to creating safe and

accessible sporting environments (Athletics Canada, 2021). While these are important steps showing that Canadian sport organizations are addressing racism, more evidence is required to see if these initiatives are leading to change and feelings of belonging for of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority community athletes and community sport stakeholders in their respective sports.

## **2.3 Existing Initiatives Addressing Racism and Promoting Anti-Racism in Sport**

This section focuses on initiatives that have been developed and applied in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Canada more broadly; however, when applicable, additional international initiatives are also discussed. Most of the efforts identified to address racism and promote anti-racism initiatives occur at the university level and in professional sport. As a result, are what we have highlighted.

At the university level across Canada, some anti-racism projects have been created to facilitate an inclusive and equal sporting environment for all athletes. For example, an anti-racism project by Ontario University Athletics (OUA) (2020) aims to collect information for developing strategies that would make the university sport environment inclusive and safe. The project drew its inspiration from the evidence of racial incidents across varsity sports and from the Black, Biracial and Indigenous Task Force of the OUA. Similarly, the Director of MacEwan University's Office of Human Rights, Diversity and Equity (2020), along with the university's athletics department and other community partners, have begun an initiative to address racism in hockey for the growth of the game. Planned activities include a virtual summit along with developing online resources for identifying and addressing racial discrimination in hockey. The project focuses on the community and university hockey organizations as opposed to the major professional hockey leagues. The project is driven by the notion that addressing the issue of racial discrimination would be the key for the positive growth of the game.







Advances in initiatives around anti-racism, inclusivity, diversity, and representation among students are more likely to occur in Ontario universities compared to other provincial universities due to their larger size, and the often- changing demographics of the student body (Douglas & Halas, 2013). Danford and Donnelly (2018), in their pilot study *Racial Representation in Canadian Interuniversity Sport*, focused on student representation among Canadian universities that had demographic data, including Ryerson University, University of Toronto, York University, McMaster University, Queen's University, Western University, McGill University, and the Universities of Alberta and British Columbia. The results of the study indicate that only 18.5% of the student sports players were identified as First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black and Racialized students. In addition, there were over 90% white students on hockey and volleyball teams, three quarters of the football team players were white, and almost two-thirds of basketball players (Danford & Donnelly, 2018). The study also noted that students who do not identify as white are greatly underrepresented in the student population, and emphasized their data is limited as Canadian universities and university sports are behind on collecting data on the racial identities and demographics of student athletes and staff (Danford & Donnelly, 2018). A CBC report mentioned in the study indicates that 63 out of 76 Canadian universities cannot provide information regarding the racial demographics of their student athletes (McDonald, 2017, as quoted in Danford & Donnelly, 2018).

Additionally, the University of Toronto is seen to be leading the country in collecting information regarding the demographic data of student athletes. The Centre for Sport Policy Studies at the University of Toronto, founded in 1999, is the only sport policy centre based in a university in North America, and second in the world. Their mission focuses on ensuring accessible and equitable sport for all, humane and healthy high-performance sport, and an educational mandate for sport in educational institutions

(University of Toronto, 2021). Empirically-based research is utilized to focus on service of sport policy, monitoring and evaluation studies, and education. A key goal of this approach is the participation of various organizations in sports and high-performance elite-level sports, with approaches that take into consideration the recent changes in societal perception of racism and inclusion in sport (University of Toronto, 2021). The mandates of the centre include providing greater working opportunities for scholars and students related to sports policies, advocating for students experiencing injustice and discrimination in university sports, and changing policies to ensure equality among other initiatives (University of Toronto, 2021). The University of Toronto also created the Indigeneity, Diaspora, Equity and Anti- Racism in Sports (IDEAS) research lab, the first research lab to specifically focus on issues of race and movement cultures (University of Toronto, 2021). The lab analyses these issues through the lens of critical race theory in sport, dance, and physical education. The mission of the IDEAS lab includes developing theory, promoting knowledge and developing programs that focus on anti-racism in various forms of sport. They also focus on academic and political work with a decolonizing approach. The lab is also collaborating with equity-focused individuals and organizations to focus on researching and highlighting Black excellence and investigating the oppression that minorities and racialized groups experience in society (University of Toronto, 2021).

McMaster University released a report in October of 2020, focusing on interviewing Black student-athletes about their experience in the McMaster athletics department, concluding that there is “a culture of systemic Anti-Black racism within McMaster Athletics as a result of individual group actions and inactions from staff, coaches and Department administrators” (Joseph et al., 2020, p. i). The report attributes this culture to a lack of awareness and education on the topics of racism and inclusivity. The report describes the gaps (such as absence of







anti-racism policies and training programs) and provides suggestions for improvement, including sharing the report with the public, focusing on representation, increasing accountability and other suggestions, supplemented by interviews with Black athletes and their allies (Joseph et al., 2020).

### **Manitoba**

In Manitoba, few universities are speaking out regularly and publicly against racism or publicizing any anti-racism initiatives they may be pursuing. The University of Manitoba is the first university in Canada to pass an anti-racism policy (DePatie, 2020). However, it only applies to the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences. The University of Manitoba Athletics (2021) website does not contain a statement of inclusion and diversity, nor mention any initiatives or events to increase awareness of anti-racism in sports. The University's Athletic Council website (2021) mentions initiatives against bullying, involvement in Siloam Mission and community outreach, while initiatives and educational campaigns to address racism or promote anti-racism in sport are visibly absent. However, researchers and research assistants at the University of Manitoba are a part of the ongoing anti-racism in sport campaign in Winnipeg, and representatives from Bison Sports are members of the project's Advisory Committee.

The University of Winnipeg Wesmen team display social media posts in support of Racialized and ethnocultural communities on their official website (University of Winnipeg, 2021a). The Wesmen athletic code of conduct mentions a focus on increasing awareness of pressing societal issues and concerns, emphasizes the focus on equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and aims for an environment free of racism, sexism, harassment, hazing and discrimination (University of Winnipeg, 2021b). Also, a representative from the University of Winnipeg Recreation Services is part of the ongoing Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign in Winnipeg as a member of the project's Advisory Committee and Working Groups. The Brandon

University Bobcats initiated a program in 2020, which focuses on striving towards gender equity, inclusion, and reconciliation in sports (Brandon University Bobcats, 2020). The aim of the program is to increase awareness of social issues with the goal of improving the lives of marginalized populations and removing barriers to provide them with opportunities. The program is based on three pillars of anti-racism, diversity and inclusion, and youth active living and education (Brandon University Bobcats, 2018). The athletes participating in the program also urge individuals to form alliances with others with similar goals to contribute to greater awareness in Manitoba. Students at the University of Winnipeg, University of Manitoba, and Brandon University collaborated in September 2020 to film a short video called "Wesmen, Bisons, Bobcats athletes unite against racism," in which three athletes from each school spoke about standing up against racism in sports, educating others about racial injustice, and supporting one another on and off the field (McKendrick, 2020). As of November 2021, none of the other universities and colleges in Manitoba, including Red River College Polytechnic and Canadian Mennonite University, do not describe any initiatives for diversity and inclusion or statements specifically denouncing racism on their websites.

The Manitoba Colleges Athletic Conference (MCAC) has no official statements regarding inclusivity and diversity in sport. Forms and policies available on the site have not been updated since 2019, and only mention a policy on the overall maintenance of respect and dignity in sport, with no indications related to racism or inclusion of minorities or racialized groups (MCAC, 2019). The code of ethics further emphasizes the responsibility of coaches to treat everyone fairly regardless of gender, place of birth, race, sexual orientation, and other factors, but omits information regarding actions that would be taken if racism or discrimination were to occur (MCAC, 2019). The Northern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (NIAC),





which consists of colleges in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Manitoba also fail to address racism or actions to ensure inclusivity in sport on their website (MCAC, 2019).

Sport Manitoba (2020) utilizes prevention as one of their many strategies for addressing racism and developing value in sports in their next five-year plan (2020-2025). Sport Manitoba (2020) seeks to create awareness about the value and positive impact of sports in society through marketing and communications, with one strategy being the education of parents and guardians on issues in the Manitoba sport context. Representatives from Sport Manitoba are part of the ongoing Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign in Winnipeg and sit as members of the project's Advisory Committee and Working Groups. Hockey Manitoba (2020), following the guidelines of Hockey Canada, has also introduced anti-racist initiatives for making hockey in Manitoba more inclusive (Sawatzky, 2020). One significant step taken by the organization was providing support in the call for the cessation of the use of team nicknames that are deemed offensive or racist. Self-education on the issue and the facilitation of discussions on ways to develop strategies to address racism and discrimination in sports were identified by Hockey Manitoba as integral components in creating the initiatives.

### **International**

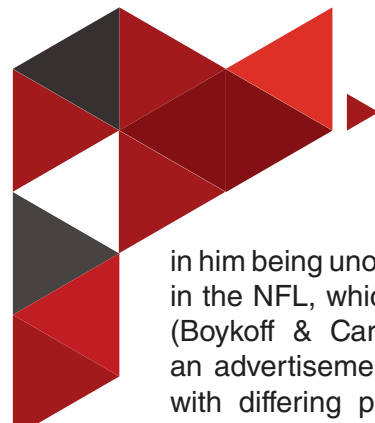
Many initiatives have been created to address racism in various forms across sport internationally. In British football (soccer), many organizations, programmes, and policies have been implemented to address racism and discrimination, some of the most notable include Show Racism the Red Card (SRTRC) and currently, No Room for Racism. SRTRC was established in 1996 as a part of the ongoing fight to tackle displays of racism in football (soccer) in the United Kingdom and it focuses on providing education (through workshops, resources, and events), establishing role models (using notable members throughout football (soccer) to assist in sharing their message), and highlighting

the presence of institutional racism in sport (Dixon et al, 2016). No Room for Racism is an initiative created by the English Premier League (one of the most notable professional club football leagues in the world) with the aim of addressing racism, equality, diversity, and inclusion in the sport in conjunction with key stakeholders in the sport in England (Premier League, n.d.). The Mondiali Antirazzisti was created in Italy to create an atmosphere where varied ethnocultural communities could enjoy football (soccer) in a festival-like atmosphere that was diverse and integrated varied groups from the community in an environment free from competition (Sterchele & Saint-Blancat, 2015). This yearly football (soccer) tournament and cultural festival setting promoted diversity and provided an example of how sport and leisure spaces could be used to reduce discrimination (Sterchele & Saint-Blancat, 2015).

Efforts at fighting racism are not always led by governments and sport institutions. In 2005, sport and recreation apparel giant Nike launched the Stand Up, Speak Up campaign in support of the fight against racism in European football (soccer). The campaign utilized advertisements with well-known football (soccer) players denouncing racism in the sport, and the sale of wristbands with the campaign slogan, with the profits going to the King Boudain Foundation which was responsible for the distribution of the funds to local initiatives focusing on anti-racism and pro-diversity in Europe (Müller et al., 2008).

Former National Football League player Colin Kaepernick was at the forefront of efforts to combat social injustice in the USA by kneeling for the national anthem before games, a move now echoed across various sport leagues (Coombs, Lambert, Cassilo and Humphries 2020). Kaepernick's actions led to him being vilified by some players, fans and the general public, to the point where he was seen as an enemy of patriotism and to where his race and masculinity were attacked on avenues like social media (Schmidt et al., 2019), and also resulted





in him being unofficially barred from employment in the NFL, which later resulted in a settlement (Boykoff & Carrington, 2020). His feature in an advertisement for Nike afterwards was met with differing perspectives as an analysis of responses revealed a racial divide where Black athletes were more supportive of athletes taking on issues relating to racism in comparison to whites athletes (Intravia et al., 2020). After the recent death of George Floyd at the hands of a police officer in the U.S.A, the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) and National Basketball Association (NBA) players were vocal in their stand, with support from varied levels of administration, against the injustice that Racialized communities faced in America. The NBA and the WNBA (2020) also hosted an anti-racism teach-in, which was a series of conversations between prominent thought leaders such as Professor Ibram X. Kendi, and the members of NBA and WNBA aimed at voicing the issues of racism and discrimination in sports. Another notable initiative in sport was the USA's National Soccer Federation (2020) encouraging their players to utilize their social media handles in addressing the issue of racism in sports. The USA's Women's National Soccer Team was observed wearing BLM jackets during their line-up and for the playing of the national anthem while playing in the She Believes Cup (2020) and international friendlies (2020).

The public's willingness to accept new names to replace old racist-inspired team names and logos has been slow to take hold. A Canadian study by the Angus Reid Institute found that 56% of respondents believed that sport teams with names and/or logos that people find offensive should not be changed (Angus Reid, 2019). However, attitudes have been changing since 2020. Jesse Wenthe has been an advocate for the changing of team names and mascots that are offensive to the First Nations, Metis Nation and Inuit population. One initiative led by Wenthe is the removal of Charleswood Hawks (Manitoba) mascot, a movement that has gathered more traction in recent years and that reaches even to the

professional level (e.g., the Washington Football Team) (Monkman, 2020). The effectiveness of this work is evident in the announcement in July 2021 that Cleveland's professional baseball team would change its name to the Cleveland Guardians prior to the next season (Bell, 2021). The prevalence of programmes and initiatives is a positive note in the fight against racism but the effectiveness of these vehicles for change is up for debate.

### **Hockey**

Hockey organizations have implemented more policies and initiatives aimed at creating a more inclusive environment than other sports. The Hockey Diversity Alliance (HDA) is a hockey development program for "Black, Indigenous and children of colour" in the Toronto area founded in June 2020 by San Jose Sharks player Evander Kane, and retired National Hockey League (NHL) player Akim Aliu following the increase in Black Lives Matter protests (HDA, 2020a; The Canadian Press, 2020a). Their purpose is to eliminate systemic racism and intolerance in hockey, and encourage greater diversity in the sport (HDA, 2020a). To achieve these goals, the HDA collaborated or made plans to work with the NHL, the NHLPA, Hockey Canada, USA Hockey and other teams and organizations. Their approach focuses on change in all levels of hockey, including educating and encouraging accountability from leagues and leaders and at lower levels, ensuring hockey is accessible to everyone. The HDA supports organizations with several different goals, including grassroots hockey development and equipment programs, anti-racism and unconscious bias education programs, social justice initiatives in support of Indigenous, Black, and racialized communities, administration and fundraising, scholarships for qualified youth players, and executive training and coaching programs (HDA, 2020a). On their official website, the HDA pledges to work towards changing policies and rules to ensure hockey is more inclusive, focusing on hiring and partnering with Black individuals and businesses, increasing educational programs





that focus on awareness of racism in hockey, and helping fund impactful social justice initiatives (HDA, 2020a).

Hockey Nova Scotia (2021) acknowledged the lack of diversity and the impact of racism in hockey through their diversity and inclusion report. Although progress has been made by Hockey Nova Scotia in the creation of programs for various underrepresented groups (e.g., Black youth, newcomers to Canada, Indigenous girls, and parasport participants), the taskforce put forward recommendations to improve diversity in hockey in Nova Scotia. These recommendations included changes in board composition through the addition of a permanent seat for the person chairing the task force, connecting with the public to discover ways that changes which support for diversity could be enacted, and creating a separate entity which would be responsible for managing most of the recommendations.

In 2020, following the accusations and criticism of the NHL for their decision to continue games after the shooting of a Jacob Blake on August in Wisconsin (The Canadian Press, 2020a), the NHL announced several anti-racism and inclusion initiatives, one of which mandates that all hockey teams are to receive mandatory inclusion and diversity training in a training camp before the 2021 season (Kang, 2020). NHL employees will take part in an “inclusion learning experience” that focuses on “anti-racism, unconscious bias, dimensions of identity, micro-aggressions and cultural competency” (The Canadian Press, 2020a, para. 2). Along with the mandatory training, the NHL formed an executive inclusion council and a player inclusion committee to address the issue of racism in sport. These changes were only put in place after actions were taken by NHL players, independently of the league, who pushed for a two-day stop in the games to share the message that “racial injustice is bigger than sport” (Seravalli, 2020, para. 6). For a short time, the NHL shared the #WeSkateFor campaign that changed from #WeSkateForBlackLives and #WeSkateForEquality into “WeSkateForTheLou promoting the teams that were competing at

the time instead of sharing a message about the prevalence of racism in sport. Seravalli (2020) further indicates that the NHL utilized this campaign for public relations and improved positive perception, while abandoning their commitment to improve the environment of the sport.

The NHL has also started conversations to increase diversity in their business and develop strategies to include more minority organizations in hockey. These changes were proposed in response to the HDA’s request for action to be taken to acknowledge the racism players experience on and off the ice. The HDA (2020b) had a list of eight demands of the league, including ensuring no barriers for Black individuals for getting employed and promoted within the league with specific objectives for each season, greater utilization of Black suppliers, ensuring the voices of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized players are heard and are included in changing the hockey culture, anti-racism education, HDA-approved policies to enforce zero tolerance of racial discrimination, withdraw support from organizations that accept or fail to respond to racism of any kind, transparent sharing of data with the HDA, and providing the HDA with funding to support their initiatives, program development and training to reduce and eliminate racism in hockey (HDA, 2020b). However, in October 2020 the HDA decided to separate from their collaboration with the NHL releasing a statement indicating the absence of support from the NHL after proposing a pledge with their requirements (HDA, 2020c). The press release indicated that the NHL focused on maintaining public relations instead of having important conversations of race that are needed in the sport. The HDA statement expressed their disappointment in the inaction of the NHL to commit to ending systemic racism in hockey and will continue to work towards their goals separately from the NHL (HDA, 2020c). Following their press release, the NHL refused to acknowledge their lack of support for the pledge (The Canadian Press, 2020b).





Hockey Canada developed a 'policy paper for anti-racism in hockey in Canada' which was developed at the Racism in Hockey roundtable at Queen's University on 30th March 2019. The paper seeks to address the importance of having a culture of inclusion and acceptance, by recommending policy changes, and highlighting the need to re-educate, and discusses the importance of anti-racism to coaches, parents, players, and officials involved in the sport of hockey. The main components of racialized inequality in sports are described in three parts, namely, power, privilege, and access (Szto et al., 2019).

The Winnipeg Jets hockey team does not have policies or initiatives independently of the NHL. At this time, there is no method of ensuring if the Jets are complying with the NHL anti-racism mandate, or evidence that the NHL is implementing and following up on their promise to eliminate racism in hockey (The Canadian Press, 2020b). The official Winnipeg Jets website has no mention of inclusion of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black and Racialized community members. However, online search indicated that they work with the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre (WASAC), a non-profit organization focused on Indigenous youth and families to help them participate in sports, culture and recreation (NHL.com, 2021). This program is part of the NHL's "This is Hockey" initiative which aims to promote diversity and inclusion in hockey and emphasize the importance of creating an environment where members of the community can feel safe and included. Collaborations with WASAC include specially-made WASAC jerseys for auction and presentations to feature First Nations, Métis Nation and Inuit Peoples art among others (NHL.com, 2021).

In June 2021, the Manitoba Junior Hockey League (MJHL) released a plan to implement their new Anti-Racism Player Education Program to strengthen their league policies, with a focus on verbal taunts, insults and intimidating actions based on discriminatory behaviour

(MJHL, 2021). Their goal is to provide greater support to First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized communities, athletes, staff and families. Starting in the 2021-2022 season, the MJHL will hold anti-racism player education seminars for their players, coaches and support staff and will cover a range of topics including educating MJHL members on First Nations, Métis Nation, and Inuit Peoples, sensitivity and cultural awareness training and anti-discrimination and anti-oppression education. The goals of the seminars include providing players and staff with the proper terminology regarding anti-discrimination and oppression, aiding players and staff in identifying problematic behaviours in themselves and others, and focusing on involving players and staff in changing hockey culture to be more respectful and inclusive (MJHL, 2021). To further the program's effectiveness, those who do not comply with the program and do not respect other players on ice will face penalties. The first infraction will include a three-game suspension with subsequent infractions resulting in longer suspensions, some of which may be indefinite (MJHL, 2021). The MJHL also worked with APTN Hockey Hopes Program to show the importance of inclusion in hockey. In this program, each MJHL team makes two school visits: one to an Indigenous school and another to a non-Indigenous school to read to classes, talk about inclusivity and answer questions (MJHL, 2021).

At the national level, Hockey Canada issued a statement denouncing racism (Hockey Canada, 2020), and the Canadian Football League (CFL) has been noted for providing greater opportunities to Black players than they could find in the National Football League (NFL) (Khalid, 2016). In 2018, the CFL launched the "Diversity Is Strength" campaign that kicked off the season with a diversity theme in Toronto (CFL, CA, 2020). The campaign continues to highlight the importance of diversity and inclusion in the league and in the country, themes that build upon their campaigns from the previous years. This initiative involves all the CFL teams who







will organize various activities into their game days during the campaign. Some activities included hosting visitors from remote parts of Canada, engaging in citizenship ceremonies for new Canadians, and having cultural showcases during pre-games and halftime to celebrate heritage and community (CFL.CA, 2020). In addition, the CFL will honour twelve trailblazers on their achievements, one of whom is Winnipeg Blue Bombers' Ibrahim "Obby" Khan (CFL.CA, 2020).

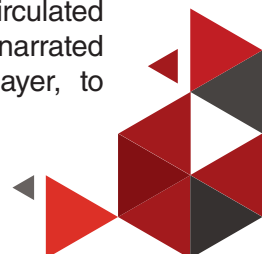
### **Winnipeg**

Several prominent sport teams in Winnipeg have recently taken some steps towards emphasizing inclusion and diversity policies. However, they are still behind sports teams in the United States and other provinces in Canada (Douglas & Halas, 2013; The Drake Group, 2021). The CFL's Winnipeg Blue Bombers have taken an active role in the previously described Diversity Is Strength Campaign of the CFL. They included a statement about diversity on their official website, which emphasizes Canada's diversity and the strength that comes from it. The CFL's diversity statement welcomes players from all backgrounds and emphasizes the signing of the league's first Black quarterback. They also mention participating in shows of diversity during their game days. However, their website does not contain specific information regarding anti-racism programs or initiatives. (Winnipeg Blue Bombers, 2021). a representative from the Winnipeg Blue Bombers is part of the ongoing Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign in Winnipeg as a member of the project's Advisory Committee and Working Groups. Also, alumnae athletes from the team have been trained by the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign and deliver school presentations on anti-racism in sport to middle school students.

Similarly, Winnipeg's baseball team, the Goldeyes does not have any statements on their website regarding diversity, inclusion, or racism (Winnipeg Goldeyes, 2021). In 2016, they had an "inaugural diversity day" to celebrate inclusivity in games and seasons. Emphasis was placed on the organization being a family that welcomes the

diversity among their players, fans, office staff and seasonal workers who provide an awareness of diversity and inclusion among their community. The celebration involved Winnipeg's mayor Brian Bowman who recognized the year 2016 as the year of reconciliation with Indigenous communities (Winnipeg Goldeyes, 2021). The Goldeyes players created a video for the "You Can Play project" that focuses on promoting and ensuring the safety and inclusion for all who participate in sports, including 2SLGBTQ+ athletes, coaches and fans (Winnipeg Goldeyes, 2021). A representative from the Winnipeg Goldeyes is part of the ongoing Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign in Winnipeg as a member of the project's Advisory Committee and Working Groups. Also, an athlete from the team has been trained by the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign and delivers school presentations on anti-racism in sport to middle school students.

Winnipeg's professional soccer team, Valour FC, does not have specific initiatives or policies against racism mentioned on their website (Canadian Premier League, 2020). However, their overview on the 2020 website of the past year focuses on the Island Games, where the league and the players shared powerful messages about social justice and the BLM movement. They focused on spreading a message about the importance of anti-racism. The message was displayed before every match of the season, and during the tournament, the head coach of the team spoke with a Winnipeg community leader and member of the Shamattawa Cree Nation and wore a black arm band to honour the murdered and missing Indigenous women of Manitoba (Canadian Premier League, 2020). Since Valour FC is part of the Canadian Premier League, on August 27th, the team stood together along with the other teams to support the BLM movement. Their website states their commitment to taking action to work towards change and focused on making an impact on communities by bringing positive change and using their platform to support racial equality. Valour FC also circulated a four-minute video about racial equality narrated by Andrew Jean-Baptiste, a Black player, to





spread their message on social media platforms (Canadian Premier League, 2020). They have also participated with Immigrant Partnership Winnipeg to bring awareness to discrimination issues, particularly in relation to refugees, during the 2019 season. A representative from Valour FC is part of the ongoing Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign in Winnipeg as a member of the project's Advisory Committee and Working Groups. Some athletes from the team have also been trained by the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign and deliver school presentations on anti-racism in sport to middle school students.

### **Professional Teams**

Recently, many professional teams have publicly recognized and reckoned with some of the forms of racism that are prevalent in their sport. The Bank of Nova Scotia is sponsoring an advertisement which features Black NHL hockey players lamenting the racism within the sport and the racism that keeps young players from participating. The CFL launched an anti-racism campaign in 2020 called "Diversity is our Strength" which was pre-empted by the pandemic but resurrected in the 2021 season. Although these measures are welcomed, systemic racism is still a problem in the sport, as articulated above. It is these more 'rooted' forms of racism that are the most difficult to resolve.

Many professional teams and players stood in support of the Black Lives Matter movement by either raising a fist in the air or taking a knee during national anthems. Professional players have also used their respective social media handles to voice their concerns about racial injustice in society, and the importance of this stance in creating a better and inclusive sporting environment. Players from the Canadian Football League, National Hockey League, and Canadian Premier League stood in support of BLM by sharing their related personal experiences with racism while also bringing awareness to the importance of addressing the issues in society related to racism. Additionally, William Douglas created a blog in 2012 called Colour of Hockey, for

fans and players of colour in hockey, as a platform for addressing and sharing individual experiences and stories of people of colour in hockey. The blog covers numerous players and their experiences as First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority athletes participating in the sport of hockey, otherwise not known to be a diverse sport.

One of the initiatives in Colour of Hockey was started by Yvan Mongo, a forward on the University of Ottawa men's hockey team in light of George Floyd's death and his own experience with racism from team members he thought respected him. He wanted to take action to address racism in society and in hockey (Douglas, 2020). His program, Mongo's Brave Buddies, focuses on encouraging young people of all backgrounds to attend games and practices and spend time with Mongo and talk to him about their experiences of racism in daily life. Douglas (2020) further noted that white players on Mongo's team are eager to help with the program to show young people that this is not the same reality they have to face daily.

### **2.4 Summary**

From a review of the empirical, peer-reviewed academic literature and web-based policies and resources available online, it is clear that racism exists in sport in Winnipeg, in Manitoba, in Canada, and across the globe. Focusing on racism in sport in Winnipeg, the literature establishes the following five points clearly:

- 1. Racism is present in sport in the Canadian context (including in Winnipeg) in many forms.** Examples related to this statement include systemic racism and historical perceptions towards First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities. Sport reflects the perspectives present within the larger society.
- 2. There is a lack of empirical information detailing the experiences of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities in sport in Winnipeg.** The experiences of those



who have faced racism in sport in Winnipeg have not been compiled in a way that clearly identifies its presence and presentation, resulting in the perception that racism does not exist in sport.

**3. Only a few organizations are publicly addressing racism and discrimination.**

While organizational efforts to address racism have increased in sport, access to detailed information on what is being done is largely unavailable in some cases, and in others, no related information was found.

**4. Although certain organizations may have public policies to ensure safer and more inclusive sport environments, the initiatives in place are rarely enforced and further action should be taken.**

There remains a need to be intentional about actioning policies and collaborating with affected stakeholders.

**5. Some organizations have policies in place to tackle racism, but don't explicitly identify as being anti-racist.**

Being anti-racist connotes an intentional association with efforts to eliminate and condemn racism in all its forms, and ensures an initiative moves beyond performative allyship.

The research conducted in this study is designed to help provide a more comprehensive understanding of the presence of racism in sport in Winnipeg. In moving beyond theory to practical application, we are able to play our part in addressing racism in its myriad forms of existence in sport in order to assist in creating a more diverse and inclusive sport context in Winnipeg that is free of racism. While Love et al. (2019) note the presence of racism, stereotypes, and inequalities at varied levels of sport leadership and administration, there is a lack of sufficient empirical information related to the sport context in Winnipeg to either support or reject this notion. There is a need for an understanding of the comprehensive nature of racism in sport in Winnipeg, including an examination of diversity and inclusion in sport systems, the perspectives and

experiences of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities in Winnipeg sport contexts, and the level of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority community representation in positions of power in Winnipeg sport. With very little in the literature detailing the experiences of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities in Winnipeg with racism, we are left with the following questions: What are the experiences of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities with racism in sport in Winnipeg? How is racism towards First Nations, Métis Nations, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities demonstrated in sport in Winnipeg? How are sport systems in Winnipeg supporting or resisting racism in sport in Winnipeg? What initiatives have been implemented in order to address racism in sport in Winnipeg? How is racism in sport in Winnipeg perceived by the related stakeholders (athletes, coaches, administration, ownership, teachers, officials/referees, fans/observers, and the general public)? It is our belief that an exploration of the varied sport contexts (professional, semi-professional, recreational, educational, and community) will go some way towards answering these questions.

The City of Winnipeg recently hosted its first ever Anti-Racism Week (March 21 to 27, 2021) under the theme "What would Winnipeg look like without racism?" (Winnipeg, n.d.). It forms part of an initiative to address issues related to racism in a city that was labelled by Maclean's magazine as the most racist in Canada while detailing its treatment of the city's Indigenous population (MacDonald, 2015). It is evident that if racism is seen as a problem in society in general, sub-sections such as the sporting context cannot be seen as completely free from its perpetuation and effects. This project contributes to unearthing the depths of these issues in Winnipeg in order to inform and assist those developing anti-racism policies and initiatives in addressing racism more effectively.



If Canada's most beloved professional sports league, the NHL, can exist successfully with Racialized players constituting 5% of its population (Boyd, 2020), and sport-related figures of prominence can voice discriminatory opinions in 2020 and 2021, then Bradbury and Williams (2006) are correct in stating that, "The appearance of change is, after all, not change at all" (p. 82).

### **3. Methodology**

Qualitative focus groups were the primary data collection method utilized to address the objectives of the study. Permission for the research team to conduct the study was obtained from the University of Manitoba's Research Ethics Board (REB-1) (see Appendix II – University of Manitoba Research Ethics and Compliance Certificate). Details about the methods and steps taken to recruit participants to share their experiences with racism in sport in Winnipeg, in small focus group format, are outlined below.

#### **3.1 A Qualitative Method**

A qualitative research approach was designed to gain insight into the participants' lived experiences. This direction was seen as not only beneficial in giving voice to the participants' experiences, but also in providing the researchers with more understanding of the meanings behind those experiences (Markula & Silk, 2011). Focus groups were conducted with sport stakeholders in Winnipeg, including service providers (coaches, administrators, volunteers, staff, and officials) and athletes (participating in recreational grassroots sport as well as high-performance or professional sport).

After discussion with the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign's Advisory Committee and its Research Advisory Subcommittee, focus groups were chosen as the method of gaining insight and information from participants. The reason was two-fold: to enable participants recognize they are not alone in sharing their experiences, and to allow participants to build

on remarks made by other people in their group to draw out richer and deeper responses. Focus groups were conducted in the summer of 2021, when in-person research was prohibited by the University of Manitoba due to the COVID-19 global pandemic.

A focus group guide was prepared and shared with the Research Advisory Subcommittee of the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign's Advisory Committee. We received valuable feedback and adjusted, removed, and added questions accordingly based on their recommendations as community partners.

Focus groups were conducted virtually using the Microsoft Teams platform and facilitated by a member of the research team. Virtual platforms used for video conferencing have been found to be beneficial for conducting focus groups, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic (Nobrega et al., 2021). Prior to the start time of the focus group, participants were required to read and sign/digitally sign an informed consent form, which outlined the study's purpose as well as the risks and benefits of their participation (see Appendix III – Informed Consent Form). Participants under 18 years of age were required to have their legal guardian provide informed consent for them to participate as well as agree themselves via signing an assent form (see Appendix IV – Assent Form for Youth Participants). All participants selected pseudonyms to help ensure confidentiality. All focus group participants signed a confidentiality agreement, committing to maintaining confidentiality of all aspects of the focus group interaction, including participant and organization identity. Some benefits of utilizing computer-mediated interviewing (e.g., the virtual focus groups through MS Teams) are that participants may sometimes feel more encouraged to share information they would not normally share in person, participants were able to keep cameras on or off if necessary, and participation was not limited to a particular geographical area (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). The authors also note that a significant disadvantage





of using this method for data collection is that it makes it more difficult for the researcher to pay attention to verbal and non-verbal cues that would be more easily identified in-person. In addition, the only people who could participate were those who had access to a computer and stable internet access.

During each focus group, the focus group facilitator(s) followed a script created by the research team to ensure consistency among the focus groups (see Appendix V – Focus Group Guide), but which allowed for participants to explore tangential and related ideas relevant to the racism and anti-racism practices in sport as well. Focus groups were designed to last 60 to 90 minutes, depending on the number of participants taking part and the amount of information they felt comfortable sharing.

Given that speaking about experiences of racism can be emotional, triggering, and traumatic, our community partner, Immigration Partnership Winnipeg, arranged for a counsellor from the Elmwood Community Resource Centre specializing in racial trauma counselling and support to be present at the focus groups youth participants attended. At the end of each focus group, the facilitator provided information to all participants on how and where to find out more about racial trauma counselling and to book an appointment if they were interested.

Each focus group was recorded using an audio recorder and immediately saved by the focus group facilitator as a MP4 or M4a file. A confidential transcription service provider, GoTranscript.com, was hired to transcribe the recording of each focus group. Returned transcripts were proofread for accuracy by the research team and then returned to the focus group participants to ensure their statements had not been misinterpreted. At this member checking stage, participants had the opportunity to review, modify, add, or delete any statements they made that they no longer felt comfortable having included in the data analysis. Once all participants had the opportunity to review the transcript of the

focus group in which they participated, the research team began the coding and analysis process. All identifying data was kept separate from the focus group transcripts and kept on a password protected, encrypted computer.

### **3.2 Recruitment of Focus Group Participants**

After obtaining research approval from REB-1 (research ethics board 1) at the University of Manitoba, electronic flyers advertising the study were distributed by members of the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign's Advisory Committee and by Immigration Partnership Winnipeg staff members. The recruitment materials directed interested individuals to scan a QR code to complete an online screening tool (see Appendix VI – Screening Tool). Information provided in the online tool was reviewed by members of the research team (including IPW staff) to arrange a focus group for the potential participant to attend.

Interest in participating was immediate with over 200 people expressing interest and 39 people volunteering to participate. The intent was to recruit 4-10 participants to take part in the following focus groups, or to modify and combine groups as needed:

1. Minimum one focus group with First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority youth ages 16-25;
2. Minimum one focus group with First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority adult athletes;
3. Minimum one focus group with provincial sport organizers and administrators;
4. Minimum one focus with officials and referees (who do not identify as First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority);
5. Minimum one focus groups with coaches (who do not identify as First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority);
6. Minimum one focus groups with organizers of





ethnocultural sport associations;

7. Minimum one focus groups with First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority adult high-performance athletes;
8. Minimum one focus group with First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority officials and referees;
9. Minimum one focus group with professional athletes; and
10. Minimum one focus group with high school physical educators.

As an expression of thanks for sharing their contributions, time, energy, and experiences, an honorarium was provided to all participants in the form of a \$25 gift card for their choice of Skip the Dishes, Superstore, or Good Local. We hosted 12 focus groups involving 39 individuals from a number of stakeholder groups as identified above. The focus groups started on July 27, 2021 and ended on August 16, 2021. All focus group participants selected their own personal pseudonym to help protect their confidentiality.

### **3.3 Attempts to Sabotage the Research**

The first weekend of recruitment was optimistic. We received over 200 responses from people who were interested in sharing their perspectives on racism in sport in Winnipeg. Once we began to contact the participants by email, however, it became clear that they were not real people. We were victims of a well-organized artificial intelligence (AI) bot attack. It is not clear if the bot attack was due to the study subject (anti-racism in sport) or if someone was trying to game our recruitment drive to receive the gift card honorariums. Participants needed to consent to participate and to actually participate in a focus group in order to obtain the gift cards—and when we checked with potential participants who contacted us, all were real persons and all met the study parameters. Some of the AI bots, however, did not meet the study parameters. Several bots had chosen an address and/or an area code within Winnipeg to fit the

parameters of the study. Others did not. During the second round of recruitment, members of the research team contacted potential participants by phone to confirm their interest in the focus groups. Although we have no concrete evidence, we suspect the bot attack was maliciously intended to slow or stop our study rather than collect gift card funds as collection of the honorariums was dependent upon consent to participate and actually participating in the data collection.

We feel it is important to mention the attempts to hijack our research as an important demonstration of the insidious and pervasive nature of racism within Canadian society. Attempts such as these are not rare—in fact, they are reported by multiple research groups. According to recent research by Uyheng and Carley (2020), bots are responsible for the largest number of hate-based tweets in the Twitterverse and that hatred based on race or ethnicity is the most predominant form that tweets take for both humans and bots. Other research has revealed that AI bots can be programmed to respond with racism in less than 24 hours (Schlesinger, O'Hara & Taylor, 2018).

## **4. Participants' Experiences of Racism in Sport**





The next two sections present the findings and themes drawn from the focus group participants' discussions. First, general demographic information about the participants is provided. Next, participants' lived experiences of racism in sport in Winnipeg are presented. Ideas from the focus groups are grouped into the themes of experiences of racism within the system (Section 4.2.1), in sport spaces (Section 4.2.2), connected to wider society (Section 4.2.3), and impacts of racism in sport (Section 4.2.4). Sub-themes within each of the four themes are presented as well.

#### 4.1 Demographics of Study Participants

Twenty of the participants identified as female and

19 identified as male. Most participated in sport as athletes with a significant number of participants also holding roles that intersected the roles of athlete, coach, manager, or administrator in sport in Winnipeg. Of the 39 participants, 28 identified as part of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized or religious minority community.

#### 4.2 Experiences of Racism

Participants discussed multiple spaces, places,

Table 1: Focus Group Participants

Focus Group	Category	Number of Participants	Lived Experience
1	Adult athletes (recreational level)	5	No
2	Adult athletes (recreational level)	5	Yes
3	Adult athletes (recreational level)	3	Yes
4	Adult athletes (high-performance level)	3	Yes
5	Community organizers and/or administrators	2	No
6	Community organizers and/or administrators	1	Yes
7	Community organizers and/or administrators	4	Yes
8	Community organizers, administrators, and/or coaches	4	No
9	Coaches	5	Yes
10	High school educators	1	Yes
11	Youth 16+	2	Yes
12	Youth 14-16	4	Yes

Total: 39 participants

*Continued page 25*



The average length of the focus groups was a bit over an hour. While the goal was for focus groups to include 4-10 participants, some potential participants dropped out right before or failed to attend a scheduled focus group after making a commitment to participate. Even though one or two participants attended, the discussion was continued out of respect for the time and dedication of the attendee(s). These discussions were equally insightful.

Table 2: Pseudonyms Selected by Participants

Pseudonym	Role in Sport	Lived Experience
Alan	Community Organizer	Yes
America	Adult Athlete	Yes
Andrew	Adult Athlete	No
Anthony	Coach	Yes
April	Youth Athlete	Yes
Ariel	High performance athlete	Yes
Elaine	Community Organizer	No
Emma	High performance Athlete	Yes
Eric	Adult athlete	Yes
Essence	Adult Athlete	Yes
Ethan	Adult Athlete	No
Frank	Adult Athlete	No
Galatasaray	Adult Athlete	Yes
Heidi	Community Organizer	No
Hunter	Adult Athlete	Yes
James	Coach	Yes
Jean-Luc	Adult Athlete	Yes
Jessica	Community Organizer	No
Joseph	Community Organizer	Yes
Justin	Coach	Yes
Lincoln	Adult Athlete	Yes
Lorna	Community Organizer	No
Lucy	Community Organizer	Yes
Marcus	Youth Athlete	Yes
Mary	Adult athlete	No
Michael	Coach	Yes
Monica	Community Organizer	Yes
Nicole	High Performance Athlete	Yes
Patrice	Youth Athlete	Yes
Paula	Youth Athlete	Yes
Peter	Community Organizer	No
Rebecca	Youth Athlete	Yes
Ruth	Youth Athlete	Yes
Sam	High School Educator	Yes
Shauna	Community Organizer	No
Steve	Adult Athlete	No
Sylvester	Community Organizer	Yes
Thea	Coach	Yes
Xena	Adult Athlete	No



and encounters with racism at all levels in sport. Discussions ranged from personal experiences of racism throughout their careers, to observations of other individuals experiencing racism or exhibiting racist behaviour. The following sections demonstrate the prevalence of racism in Manitoba sport by discussing the provincial sport system, resulting barriers to participation, and the influence of the wider societal structures that perpetuate racism. Because of racism, participants face additional barriers when attempting to get involved in sports and are subjected to racist and ignorant comments and actions throughout their careers leading to withdrawal from their chosen sport, or potentially greater negative consequences in other areas of their lives.

#### **4.2.1 Within Sport**

Within the theme “Within the System” focus group participants identified three main areas in which racism occurs: 1) exclusion due to a lack of accessibility; 2) the broken, unfair and skewed aspects of the system; and 3) barriers to participation. The third category is broken down further into sections addressing structural and systemic barriers, funding barriers, and barriers to reporting incidents.

##### **4.2.1.1 Exclusion Due to Lack of Social Connections**

The participants were in consensus that sports in Manitoba are racially divided. While sport organizations appear to be welcoming and often claim they are addressing racism or focus on promoting diversity within their respective sport, the reality of many First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority athletes is defined by experiences of racism. Participants spoke about the difficulty of joining a sport and feelings of exclusion when participating in the predominantly white sport organizations. Participants told us that sports clubs that are associated with ethnocultural groups are discriminated against by other groups using actions such as limiting practice space or withholding funding.

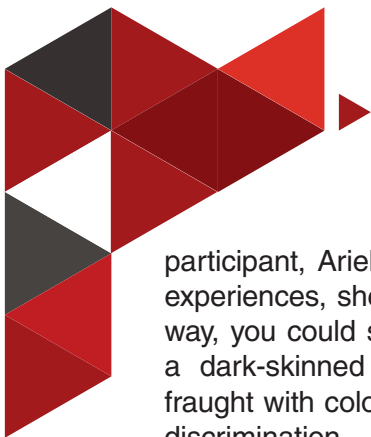
One participant, Lincoln, identified that

Racialized immigrants face additional challenges when attempting to join a sports team. While some might say there are no “visible barriers” preventing them from joining a group, they do not have friends or families to invite them to the sport or to join them on a team. As a result, a sports organization often feels hostile and excluding due to the predominantly white demographic and absence of community outreach on the part of the organizations. Participation for First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized populations often occurs through word of mouth after one person decides to join despite feelings of isolation. Lincoln emphasizes this cycle of exclusion continues intergenerationally, and it could take a long time to build a more integrated community in sport. However, even succeeding in creating a First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized or religious minority team does not eliminate the prevalence of exclusion and discrimination present in sport. Much more must be done to ensure diversity in sport and reduce the empty promises of organizations that they are open for everyone. Another issue discussed in the focus groups concerns the absence of awareness regarding the availability and option to join various sport teams a theme discussed in more detail below.

##### **4.2.1.2 System is Broken, Unfair, and Skewed**

Participants across the focus groups shared their experiences of racism, emphasizing it as deeply embedded within the sport system, rendering it unfair towards First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities and dismissing or outright denying their concerns. Mary explained the issue by posing a question: “we need to level the playing field for everybody. It’s got to be fair and equitable, if it’s not fair and equitable, then who are we serving?” Many are deprived of the chance to participate and be included in their preferred sport and team because of their skin colour and how they are perceived by others. Frequently, participants noted their teammates’ tendency to state how fortunate the participants are to be more “light-skinned” and attribute their success to the “invisibility” of their ethnicity. One





participant, Ariel, stated that because of these experiences, she herself feels that “in a twisted way, you could say I am lucky because I’m not a dark-skinned person.” The sport system is fraught with colourism in addition to racism and discrimination.

Racism continues to be perpetuated by upholding outdated values. Individuals who have been part of the sport system for a long time and are to set an example, continue to maintain racist views and disregard racist behaviour as part of the sports culture. Emma mentioned coaches avoid addressing incidents of racism, or do not have appropriate training to deescalate a situation. Ariel discussed an encounter with a coach who grew up privileged and white-presenting, and therefore did not have his identity questioned. However, this behaviour is not limited to coaches. Referees also rarely address incidents of racism

or make racist comments themselves.

Galatasaray shared his experience of asking a referee to resolve racist-based arguments among teams on the field, to which the referee stated he does not get paid enough to address the issue. When Galatasaray complained about the referee’s behaviour, he was told the referee has a “hot temper,” again minimizing the racist incident and dismissing the referee’s responsibility to ensure that this is a safe and respectful game for all. Another participant, Essence, shared she is used to racism and sexism as a female referee. Jean-Luc, in his experience as an athlete for “x” amount of years, has not seen a referee or a coach address incidents of racism on the field.

Participants have to cope with racism for years in their involvement in sport. Feelings of helplessness and defiance are common as individuals accept that others will not change their perspective or continue to deny the existence of racism in sport. Consensus in one of the focus groups involved changing the standards for everyone and encouraging individuals of all

ages to maintain these standards regardless of their race or privilege. Participants emphasized that the dominant feeling shared by Racialized athletes is that the world is against them, and their involvement in the sport system continues to perpetuate this feeling.

#### **4.2.1.3 Barriers to Participation**

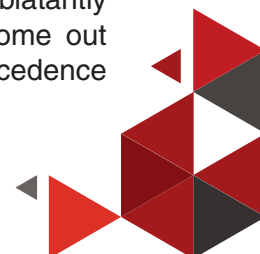
##### **4.2.1.3.1 Structural/Systemic**

Many of the barriers discussed and experienced by the participants in their involvement in sport focus on the deeper systematic and structural reasons that limit or prevent racialized populations from participating in a certain sport. One participant, Hunter, asserted that “the structures of sport are racist, conservative, and run by meritocracy.” Based on the experiences of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized communities, racism is a significant


barrier to participation, and many participants told us that this it is more severe in Manitoba than in other parts of Canada. For instance, one participant told us that she has experienced racism while playing in national and international tournaments, but the most hurtful forms of racism are expressed here, in Manitoba, where she used to play. Others

find it more manageable to ignore or accept the existence of racism in sport, pretend it does not exist or simply focus on the game. For example, after years of enduring racism, Galatasaray’s new response is to walk away from the situation, “I don’t hear things. Maybe I’m just not as careful anymore. I don’t listen, I just play my game.” Experiences shared about the COVID-19 pandemic emphasize how it exacerbated the inequalities and racialization already present in sports. For example, Mary stated she was not surprised that largely “white player” sports such as hockey or baseball were to be resumed first following the easing of pandemic restrictions. For her “it was so blatantly obvious what sports were going to come out first.” Issues in which sport takes precedence

***“we need to level  
the playing field for  
everybody. It’s got to be  
fair and equitable, if it’s  
not fair and equitable,  
then who are we  
serving?”***







are also present at the organizational level. Political structures in place maintain the system of discrimination as participants spoke of their attempts to raise the barriers they face in sport with consistent response: Officials stating they cannot do anything or interfere to change the sport structure in Manitoba.

For participants, the involvement in their preferred sport remains limited by racism. Due to racial discrimination, athletes often have to choose a different sport where they believe they would be able to play and experience lesser forms of racism. It is important to note participants did not believe they could find a sport where they would not be subjected to racism. For example, one participant could not play her chosen sport, volleyball, because of the extreme racism within it. Therefore, she opted for basketball and then eventually transitioned back to volleyball once she felt strong enough to endure the racism upon her return. All sports maintain different standards pertaining to who is admitted to a team, who can participate, and the likelihood of receiving harsher penalties for infractions. This contributes to feelings of exclusion that drives many athletes away from participating in sport.

Participants in the adult athlete focus groups spoke about the added challenges of involvement in sport at the university level. Along with being part of a varsity level sports team and maintaining full time coursework, Racialized communities also have to contend with racist officials and coaches, according to Emma. Joseph indicated there is no diversity in sport since there are almost no Racialized referees and organizations face issues recruiting Racialized referees. Participants also shared their experiences in organizational roles and remembered many negative experiences from their interactions with referees in various sports, which represent the systemic inequalities of the sports system that they are fighting against. For Heidi, “the referee almost represents the system” they are fighting against. Heidi shared that in soccer, referees sarcastically pronounce

names. Joseph shared that in his view, referees tend to assign harsher penalties when players commit a foul against another player. Emma was playing for a varsity team, where a referee would go out of his way to penalize the team with extra penalties.

#### **4.2.1.3.2 Lack of Funding**

In addition to systemic barriers to participation, racialized populations and sport organizations led by First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities are also economically disadvantaged against their white counterparts, and do not have “the navigational wealth of how to get involved in sports.” Individuals interested in sports face financial barriers, including the accessibility of and the high cost of equipment. Participation in hockey continues to decline due to inaccessibility for many who cannot afford the expensive equipment and other fees (Vryonis, 2021; Khaleghi, 2021). For parents new to the sport, additional challenges include the ability to understand and fill out forms, and to whom to reach out with questions they may have. Participants also describe the difficulty of coaches, parents, and other parties in accessing grants for children from low-income households to participate in sports.

Financial barriers occur at all stages of involvement in sport. To become a coach, one has to take several courses, one of which is the mandatory Respect in Sport course. Not all communities are able to reimburse coaches for the cost of courses, and many cannot afford taking coaching course without financial support. Others do not have the time to spare to train to become a referee—which is largely also due to financial constraints.

Organizers within the community also face discrimination from the city and other organizations when attempting to book spaces for sport teams made up of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities. Booking space for an adult [sport] team is almost impossible as those in charge of assigning sport spaces claim they



need to allot the time slots to younger teams. However, when attempting to book time for younger [sport] teams, booking is often cancelled because the space is prioritized for other sports with predominantly white players. Participants emphasize that if teams of sports associated with different ethnicities request funding or space, they undergo a long process of asking many individuals for permission and help and have to be very persistent through all stages. Even if they do receive funding and space, they have to continuously negotiate and approach officials to keep the space. Many sports and teams are shut down due to exhaustion of navigating racism when attempting to form or coach a team.

One participant mentioned their team was charged a higher rate for a time at a Sport Manitoba facility. As long as other sports teams did not require the indoor space, the [sport] team was able to use the space they rented. When the [sport] team, which plays both outdoors and indoors, tried to book the space during the winter months the facility denied their request in favour of other sports. The participant further explains they were given the explanation that their [sport] damages the floor, or a new policy had been put in place prohibiting the organization from renting space to private clubs. These were just some of the excuses given to the team to prevent their use of the space, as other sport teams, some of which are private clubs, left similar damage to the facility and can continue using the club space. When the participant brought up the matter, those in charge of the space refused to discuss the “new policies” and denied any discriminatory treatment of the team. During the pandemic racial discrimination also increased due to the choices of resource allocation. Outdoor sport spaces also remained closed in areas with greater First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities even as restrictions eased.

#### **4.2.1.3.3 Reporting (Reporting Incidents)**

When it comes to reporting incidents of racism,

First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities face numerous barriers to be heard, when the case is addressed at all. Oftentimes their reports are dismissed or are pitted against a white-identifying individual whose words and ability to dispute the accusation is more readily accepted. On the field, coaches rarely step in to address racist behaviour or if they do attempt to resolve the situation, they often do not know how to approach the situation because they lack training to acknowledge racism on the field and to hold proper conversations with others regarding the situation. Many times, they choose to blame the racist behaviour on the temper of a player, rather than racism, and do not pursue the matter further. Officials and referees similarly tend to avoid taking responsibility for racism occurring on the field, or if approached often respond by stating they do not want to address the matter, or it is not their job to resolve the situation. The referees are often never notified of the status of the report and if it has been addressed, which concerns First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority referees and coaches.

Some participants mentioned that their, or other, organizations do collect data on racism and reports of racism by players, but the data is simply accumulated, and nothing is done to address the incidents on the field. This could be attributed to the demographics of the individuals working in the higher levels of sport who are predominantly white presenting. Study participant Emma mentions this as a problem. Another participant, Essence, shared their experience of writing a report of a racial slur used on the field. They hoped the incident was addressed, although they had no means to know if it was because there was a failure to communicate and follow up. The uncertainty of the situation left the participant feeling uneasy because they could not ensure the incident was addressed. In other instances, even when many witnessed and reported racism no action was taken from the involved organizations. The issue is further compounded by younger





or newer athletes who join the team and are fearful to report racism because they are not sure if pursuing the matter is worth the risk of potential consequences, or if it is simpler to accept the racist environment and continue their involvement in the sport.

#### **4.2.2 In Sport Spaces (Interpersonal Interactions)**

Many participants in the focus groups spent considerable time sharing their personal understanding of racism and experiences of racism within their sports. For many, sport was supposed to be their safe space. However, participants faced racism in many forms including name calling, exclusion, microaggressions, as well as inappropriate behaviour. These experiences occurred on and off the field, in locker rooms, and other spaces, and were often ignored or dismissed.

##### **4.2.2.1 Name Calling/Racial Slurs**

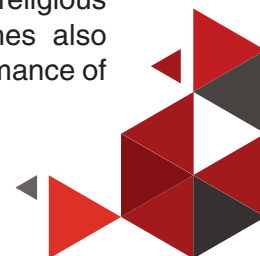
When asked about experiences of racism and more specifically incidents of name calling or racial slurs, one participant, Hunter, stated “the racism I see is verbal, just slight little things that a person either let’s slip” or “just don’t realize what they’re saying that it’s a microaggression or that’s just not acceptable.” Participants across the focus groups shared many experiences of racial slurs aimed at them on the field. Essence spoke about a tournament when a child was called a terrorist because she identified as Muslim and expressed her frustration that the player was not dismissed from the tournament for said comment. Participants also shared their experiences of name calling specific to their ethnicity. An Indigenous participant explained how she was called a very derogatory slur as a child due to her skin colour and hair length. Another Black identifying participant was often surrounded by white individuals and when name calling happened, specifically being called the “N-word” she suddenly felt visible, and that her ability to “blend in” and avoid racist comments was taken away. Others stated the incidents of children being called the “N-word” was a frequent occurrence in the sport spaces they utilized.

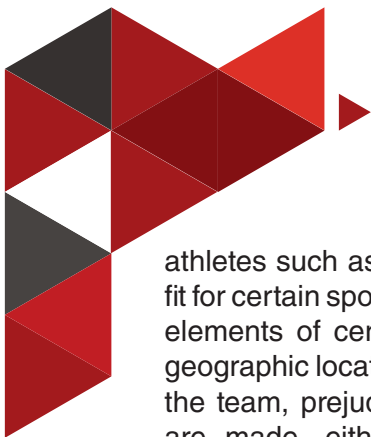
For example, Essence shared an experience of a player who wanted her to address racist language being used on the field. She then spoke to officials in the game and the players, all of whom collectively denied hearing the comments. Racial slurs were also encountered in sports such as basketball, soccer or lacrosse, and participants spoke of other sports that are more contact based where name calling could quickly escalate (e.g., hockey, football). Some participants heard racial slurs muttered quietly, but nonetheless addressed them immediately. These experiences were described by one participant as a continuous battle with more challenges arising over time. Participants also mentioned that the use of name calling, and racial slurs remains more prominent in rural teams.

Racial remarks were also prominent when addressing racialized individuals who others assumed were new to the country. Participants referred to conversations where an individual referred to their lack of proficiency in the English language, most of the time seemingly not recognizing that what they were saying was a racist comment. Participants explained that very often, when a racial slur is used, it is a player from the same or the opposing teams. Zero-tolerance for racial slurs or name calling was addressed only by coaches or Racialized referees who prioritized eliminating racism from the field regardless of the players’ skill. Participants in the study who were athletes explained that they are often distraught by the recurrence of racial slurs on the field, and if they decide to report it, feel more comfortable to report to a Racialized coach.

##### **4.2.2.2 Other examples of individual racism**

In addition to the name calling and racial slurs, participants shared the prevalence of rude ignorant racist comments within sport. Areas of sport are dominated by inappropriate racist and sexist conversations that First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority athletes endure daily. Coaches also often ignorantly comment on the performance of





athletes such as claiming certain races are not fit for certain sports or focusing on the masculine elements of certain sports. Depending on the geographic location of the game or the origins of the team, prejudiced and racialized comments are made, either subtly or more openly by other players, coaches and audience members. Participants mentioned comments about playing against Indigenous teams or teams supported by organizations supporting immigrants (e.g., IRCOM). Comments are a frequent occurrence from all participants, coaches, and players, at all levels of sport. However, they are rarely addressed by anyone in a position of power to prevent it from recurring.

Many comments come from ignorant individuals who assume if a person is of a different race than they must be newcomers to Canada. One participant shared his experience as a Turkish player on a predominantly white team. The team played many hours' outdoors during the summer and towards the end of the season a teammate commented "now you look Turkish to me". Participants from the Muslim community often receive comments stating they are lucky they do not have a "dark skin", a recurring comment that bears no relation to sport. Other ignorant comments include mistaking people for one another when they have nothing in common besides their skin colour. The common identifier for many people seems to be the encompassing category of "not white".

Comments the players endure during their involvement with sport range from subtle comments criticizing their appearance and to borderline by using swear words to remove them from the game. Other comments often concern the calls to First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized individuals to "go back to their country". Referees face racist comments or behaviours when attempting to call the game.

***"We've had everything from referees pulling up a game sheet, and sarcastically pronouncing every name in a French accent because they think every African person speaks French."***

Racialized Coaches are also subjected to ignorant comments, as when individuals walk past them when they are clearly in charge of the situation or claiming they did not hear the coach speak. On the opposite end of the spectrum there are coaches that believe racist behaviour is an unremarkable occurrence on the field and openly dismiss it (e.g., on the ice).

#### **4.2.2.3 Lack of Inclusion and Awareness**

One participant referred to the current sport system as "monochromatic" due to the lack of diversity in all positions. For many others, a significant concern while preparing for a game is whether the opposite team is predominantly white, and how the game will play out. The pre-game period is rife with feelings of exclusion and fear of being as one participant mentioned "whitetized". First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized athletes and sport organizers are continuously told or expected to be associated with a specific sport based on their race in their interactions with others on the field. Participants also expressed that white individuals feel that they have the right to make racially charged comments towards them if they are involved in a different sport. Teams are often subjected to stereotypes depending on their ethnicity or

race, and the players feel like outsiders who are not welcome on the playing field, even if they have been part of a team for a long period of time. These feelings do not remain at the field, but spread to other areas of the individual's life, some of which include feelings of tiredness and negativity towards non-sport related activities. For Black players, racism was always, and remains, extreme. Many feel they should remain quiet and simply focus on the sport when they are able to, because if they speak about their experiences of racism, sport stops being their safe space. Participants emphasized it is important to find the line between what constitutes an acceptable group culture and





understanding when a line has been crossed and people are uncomfortable.

Other athletes at the varsity level faced racism in sport, in classes and other aspects of their life. Their experiences were often horrific and disturbing, which individuals that are supposed to be in control of the situation (e.g., referees) did not know what to do or ignored the incidents. Many participants do not want their children to get involved in sports and be exposed to racism that organizations refuse to address. Others expressed their frustration of having to fit into a certain sports culture, and why they cannot be accepted for who they are. For some, this may mean not bringing attention to their ethnic, cultural or religious background. For 2SLGBTQ+ athletes, coaches and officials, this may mean hiding their identity. Participants shared their exasperation of attempting to fit in and feeling exhausted and “burnt out” before deciding to focus on de-stressing when they are away from sport. Most importantly, there is a need to increase representation in sport, because the sports themselves are a problem. For many organizations the concept of representation consists of simply ensuring there are more players of colour of the field, without considering how the sport could be welcoming to First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority community members. Sport should be fairer, and every player should have an equal chance of advancing and succeeding in their sport with respect to their skills.

#### **4.2.2.4 The Reality of Microaggressions**

For our participants, microaggressions formed a tangible part of their experiences with racism in sport in Winnipeg. One way in which microaggressions were manifested was in the ways individuals’ names were either mispronounced or shortened. Heidi shared, “We’ve had everything from referees pulling up a game sheet, and sarcastically pronouncing every name in a French accent because they think every African person speaks French.” A more subtle consideration was shared by

Jessica for instance, where names were difficult to pronounce. She noted that, “In sport, it seems like its just acceptable to add a nickname because people always use nicknames in sport” but even so, “I think that was one thing that struck me lately was that we need to be better at using people’s names and pronouncing them right.”

Comments and attitudes towards teams and Racialized individuals, especially where there were non-traditional styles of play, also revealed some of the ways participants experienced racism through microaggressions. When referencing the balance of officiating calls for games involving her team, Emma noted, “You would quite literally see teams that were predominantly white often were given calls that teams that were predominantly people of color would not be given.” She goes even further to share that a particular official her team had difficulty with, would still come to their games when he was not scheduled to officiate. She said, “It was tangible, the racism that we were experiencing, and he would come to our games on purpose. He would come to our games even when he wasn’t reffing, and still come against our team.” In relation to the treatment Italian teams receive in soccer, Essence shared, “Those things are in play in the soccer world, because there’s a lot of racism in soccer. You could pick on-- The Italian teams get picked on sometimes even though they’re white.” While speaking about a situation involving the style of play for one of her youth athletes, Elaine shared,

*“We had a situation where a style of play for one of our BIPOC (sic) athletes was not appreciated in terms of aggression, and it kind of became a thing every time... Every weekend, there would be some parent from the other team that would make a comment. The mom of the athlete just got fed up and just started verbally getting after it with every parent who wanted to say something about her daughter. I didn’t disagree with it in the sense that I wasn’t hearing everything, but I put myself in as a mom, and you’re just like, “Yes,*



*you're probably going to defend your kid.”*

Often, players from First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities are often presumed to be ‘aggressive,’ a passive way of expressing a personality trait toward a particular group. The coach from the other team compounded matters when he blamed the athlete, who didn’t foul out, for how the event transpired. According to Elaine, “It kind of came to a head when the coach of the other team... said, “Hey, this is all her fault, all the athlete’s fault. She is aggressive, aggressive player.” When personality traits such as aggression are attributed to any ethnic group, this is a form of racism and contributes to the endurance of false stereotypes.

Jokes and passing comments from opposing teams and within their own teams, sometimes expressed as simply a part of the culture, were revealed in participants’ stories as other ways in which racism was experienced through microaggressions in sport in Winnipeg. Galatasaray shared an incident where teammates made racist comments about a Black player from an opposing team. He stated, “The other team had a Black player entering the field and he looked super fit... Then someone in my team... said, “Jamba, Jamba is going to enter the field now”... they are smiling my team about it.” In relation to comments his own teammates made about him, Joseph shared,

*“My coach will be making these jokes... we were 12 years old... they will make joke... oh, he’s so fast because he used to be chased by a lion in Africa... When I try to complain. I said, oh, like might be the shoes, maybe it’s too tight. I will hear a comment to say, well, in Africa, you guys didn’t have shoes. Suck it up.”*

These layered experiences with microaggressions in sport in Winnipeg were

part of the overall motivation for participants asking for change in sport in Winnipeg. Although it is considered a small sport community where, according to Emma, “Everyone freaking knows everybody,” there was consideration for the reality that, “If one person is impacted by this, everybody’s impacted by this.” Finally, Essence sums it up by stating, “It’s 2021 and things need to change. It just can’t be absorbed anymore and just say, “Oh, yes, that’s the way-” No, that can’t be the way it is. Get rid of the cancer.” If we are to address racism in sport in Winnipeg going forward, there must be change in how underrepresented populations are treated.

#### 4.2.3 Sport and Systemic Racism

Discussions with participants revealed a connection between the racism that exists within the sport context in Winnipeg to the racism present within the wider Canadian context. Their responses also highlighted the social and psychological impact of racism on underrepresented populations in Winnipeg, going beyond a simple interaction within the sport context.

Participants discussed the wider system of racism channeled into the sport system, and how children’s behaviours on field are a direct result from how they are raised and influenced by the beliefs in their homes and by their parents. At the high school level and earlier, sports are racialized, which is attributed to the familial mindset at home, an area that must be addressed in the context of racism within sport.

Participants shared examples of how racism has been experienced similarly within the wider Manitoba context while noting how much it is learned and built into the system. Sam brought consideration to the interconnected nature of racism in sport to the wider culture by noting,

*“Racism is I think, or discrimination, is learned*

***“Racism is I think, or discrimination, is learned behavior. It’s happening in society; it’s happening in sport or it’s transferring in sport. I think I shared with you instances where when I first heard a slur directed toward me, or towards my son... At one point, all this behavior is learned somewhere, and it hasn’t been addressed”***



*behavior. It's happening in society; it's happening in sport or it's transferring in sport. I think I shared with you instances where when I first heard a slur directed toward me, or towards my son... At one point, all this behavior is learned somewhere, and it hasn't been addressed."*

Many participants indicated that for them, racism went beyond the overt experiences within sport but pointed to racism being present in "... the structures, the personal bias, it's the systems that are in place that have been built into the fabric and DNA of the operation of day-to-day life, all the way up to how the country is run" (Heidi). Essentially, the racism present in sport in Winnipeg is a reflection of the racism built into the framework of the wider society. Hunter encapsulates this idea by noting that racism is "... almost baked into the DNA of our society... It's not like individual soccer players that Essence's talking about are just born to be racist, that came from somewhere. It's in the fabric of our schools... of our universities." When connecting residential schools to rates of Indigenous population involvement in sport, Shauna stated, "Considering that as a reason why our Indigenous population may be not be as active in sports or other things because they have been oppressed."

This association between racism and the wider society wasn't limited to a one-time period but was established by participants as present, relevant, and existing over time. When speaking about the perception that race relations in Winnipeg have improved, Xena indicated, "I think there's a lot of people, especially white people that think that... there is no racism, or it doesn't exist just because they're no longer seeing it as overtly as it once was maybe." For Lucy, the reality of the long-standing presence of racism in Winnipeg impacted her further as she dealt with her child experiencing racism in sport recently. She noted,

*"I never thought that 30 years later, 40 years later, that I would still be dealing with the same crap*

*that I was dealing with when I was growing up in the late '70s being the only person of color in my all-white school... I thought we had grown so much. Well, that was a wakeup call for sure."*

The reality of racism in Winnipeg was present for many participants in the examples they shared facing racism outside of the sport sphere. In relaying memories of the experiences with racism and discrimination faced by newcomers to Winnipeg, April shared, "It's very frustrating because like everywhere they go, they would hear names or, people just telling them you're this, you're that... working 10 times harder to get just basic rights or basic opportunities." In a troubling account surrounding an event at her school, Ruth shared, "This person messaged me saying that, 'You wouldn't go to that [event] or else, if I see you there, I'll stab you... I wish this was the 1960s where you're still slaves.'"

Some experiences shared by participants highlighted some of the subtle ways in which they face racism in Winnipeg. When commenting on her experience in interviews Paula stated, "When someone sees my name on a paper... they go into asking questions because they were expecting somebody else" and in responding to her Canadian-born children after they were constantly asked about their background, even after indicating they were Canadian, Monica noted, "I started having those conversations with my children last year... you are Canadian, you are from Winnipeg, but your heritage is Spanish." Emma highlighted another subtle way racism is experienced in the signs and symbols in society when she shared, "I went out to the Pinawa Float last year... and this guy was wearing a confederation hat. You had to order that online... It's not like something you just picked up at Walmart. Manitoba is a racist province." For America, racism was evident in hearing her teachers talk about, "... these poor Indigenous kids that they would foster and how they'd cut their hair and force them to do Bible study... this was in 2016... they'd take them from their reserves and the horrible parents



who are just drunks.” All these examples provide perspective for the variety of ways in which First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities have been exposed to racism outside of sport in Winnipeg. Participants also provided consideration for the influence of racism in wider Canadian society on First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities.

When considering experiences of racism in other parts of Canada, participants lamented the lack of example displayed by persons in positions of influence in sport. Frank noted, “It’s really important for people who’ve been in the sport, and have been in sport involvements for so long, and those leaders in sport, to set an example, as opposed to bringing it down.” For Monica, racism was evident when she was given more access, feedback, and support from her country of origin’s delegation compared to the silence and rejection she experienced interacting with the Canadian delegation while volunteering at an international tournament. She had attained Canadian citizenship at the time. At a national tournament in Quebec, Essence recounted observing an incident of racism that had a profound impact on her. She shared,

*“Racism happens in all sports, but I particularly saw it at a national tournament... in Quebec in 2018 and was exposed to the racism there between two teams... it was between New Brunswick and Quebec, it was horrifying, and I really felt the CSA did nothing, the Montreal Provincial ref, the Quebec Provincial ref was terrified. Kids were in tears; parents were in tears. I had never seen it on that level. Not here, never seen it... but that’s CSA, that national tournament really, really, I found horrifying and I would really, based on that, like to see a big change in that to see no child ever exposed to that at that level of play and to really just have it swept under the carpet, like “Oh, well, suck it up.””*

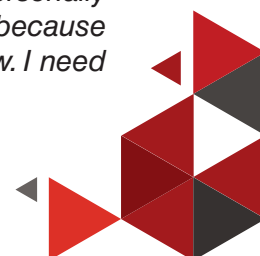
Continuing at the national level, Ariel noted that, “I will never again referee at a national level

because the racism and discrimination that was just there was so, like you could cut it with a knife, it was so tangible and I was so uncomfortable.” From a regional perspective, Emma revealed, “Being in Western Canada and playing university level sport and going off to play across Western Canada, racism, the further west you go, is more extreme,” a view that further outlines the participants notions that the racism experienced in the sport context in Winnipeg is nuanced, real, and informed by wider societal influences.

#### **4.2.4 The Impact of Racism**

The participants’ experiences also highlighted the impact of racism on those who have experienced it in sport settings in Winnipeg, including sport dropout and drop-off, and the emotional and psychological toll left by these experiences. The most common impact noted by participants were related to either a reduction in sport participation (drop-off) or a total exit from sport (drop-out). Justin provides perspective in sharing, “We’ve also seen young people who are in love with sport, due to their experiences of sport in Winnipeg, completely abandon sport and have a relationship with sport that is not good anymore.” He also noted, “When you take that away from them, if someone doesn’t feel like they belong... or have anything to live for, that’s when you create something that’s very dangerous in society and it happens on a monthly basis right now.” Alan recounted a scenario that captures this concept thoroughly. After a decision by the governing body for the sport in which his team participated, a decision that seemingly targeted his team, Alan shared,

*“I can say that out of the roster, probably 75% decided to drop out of the sport that year. They stopped playing... What that translated, it’s the human side. Kids... dropping out of school because there was nothing driving them because we connect success in school with the field... They started dropping out of school. They got into gangs, into drugs. [sobs] I have had to bury two of them. I have personally called the police on many of them because that’s the only help I can give them now. I need*







*to intervene at that rate because I can't bring them back from where they are. I attribute this to that decision at that level, make it so difficult for kids to participate... The human cost of the decisions that are made in board rooms have a real impact for the most vulnerable out there... This is the cost and it's a real cost."*

Beyond the impact on involvement in sport, experiences of racism in sport in Winnipeg carried emotional and psychological considerations for victims of these experiences. After experiencing racism during a game, Anthony found it difficult to continue playing. He shared, "My coach called the referee and he told him this is what he said and the referee still denied it and he said nothing. I was very sad that day to hear that. I couldn't continue the game." Lucy notes that even four years after a racist incident in sport, she remains "... ticked off about it" and Galatasaray has lost his motivation to take a stand whenever he experiences or observes racism taking place in sport. He noted, "I'm a little tired of being vocal and fighting. I'm burned out on that... I'm not going to spend my personal time where I need to de-stress, stressing... I don't put up a fight anymore." Heidi shared further perspective on how experiencing racism over time can result in the display of seemingly negative behaviour from victims of racial abuse. She noted,

*"I have seen children take on unimaginable pain... They have gone through so much over the last games or months or weeks or whatever, that when they break, it's not probably because of that one moment that broke them. It's because they have weeks and months and years of racism that they've faced built up."*

With these considerations for the impact of racism on underrepresented populations in sport in Winnipeg, Essence's questions remain poignant; "Do you understand the weight of the word when you use the N-word against someone? Do you understand what that really

means and how hurtful and painful that is as, let's say, a 15-year-old white kid from Tuxedo?" The impact for many, has been significant.

## 5. Participants' Recommendations

Suggestions on how to address racism in sport in Winnipeg were drawn from the responses of participants and these suggestions focused on formal anti-racism education and training, increasing anti-racism awareness, and addressing systemic racism in sport through changes in policies, processes, and the reduction of barriers.

### 5.1 Education and Training – A Focus on Anti-Racism Literacy

When asked about what steps could be taken to address racism in sport in Winnipeg, participants commonly highlighted formal means by which sport stakeholders could be educated on anti-racism, in a way that keeps all accountable. These steps focused on formal educational pathways (e.g., revising the Respect in Sport (RIS) course to emphasize the creation of an anti-racist sporting environment), making training mandatory for all sport stakeholders, and building anti-racism into the school curriculum. Hunter articulates this position by noting, "There's got to be an education piece. In my dream world, we're just not meeting on the public or the private education system. This gets woven into the fabric of all sport."

While participants acknowledged that training and courses exist currently for various stakeholders in sport in Winnipeg, the effectiveness with which these avenues address issues related to anti-racism has been called into question. In speaking of a recent basketball clinic, Emma shared, "To your point, it's these superficial ideas where it's like, oh, well, we had a session on racial equity in basketball but it was optional, whereas every other session... they felt like

***"There's got to be an education piece. In my dream world, we're just not meeting on the public or the private education system. This gets woven into the fabric of all sport."***



dribbling was required.” The RIS in particular has been identified as an area where more could be done to educate sport stakeholders on issues related to racism in sport. The ineffectiveness of current training was highlighted by Michael who pointed to the disconnect between what is taught and the behaviours observed on the field of play. He shared,

*“I think sports is like a getaway for the youth and everybody. For soccer, we do have like training and go like respect in sport. I think that it does not really teach the coaches a lot because at the end of the day, when they do come to the field, it’s a different thing... Also, the refs themselves too, it has to be a really, I don’t know, what training they do, but their training is not really good enough... I think there has to be a level of training for everybody, a lot of training, probably once a month.”*

James believes that an education program exists in hockey but confesses, “I don’t know how successful it’s been” and Thea adds further perspective in that, even if anti-racism training exists in the RIS curriculum, having additional training would be of benefit to sport stakeholders in Winnipeg. She stated, “I think what would be neat just building on something that’s unified for all coaches, aside from taking Respect in Sport, it’d be nice to take a course.” She also articulates the view of most participants by sharing that, “I’d prefer it being a mandatory course for coaches and parents and athletes.”

For participants, anti-racism training and education within sport should not be optional or limited to particular individuals. The consensus was that this training should be mandatory for everyone involved in sport in Winnipeg. Shauna noted, “As Jessica was saying, I’m in agreement. I think all people who play and participate, whether it’s a coach or a player or even an official, must take the Respect in Sport course.” Jessica referenced the concussion-

related “Making Headway” course in noting,

*“There’s one for parents, there’s one for players, there’s one for coaches, and there’s one for officials. Maybe that’s a way to do that sort of training. You could just adjust the Respect in Sport and so there’s one for each person and it’s something you have to do before your child signs up or you sign up for a sport.”*

Peter pointed to similar requirements in other provinces by stating, “I know Hockey Saskatchewan and Hockey Alberta does it but before parents are even allowed into an arena, they have to take a class and it has to be registered... minor basketball in Calgary started doing that years ago.” Where the education curriculum is concerned, Shauna noted that anti-racism, “... needs to be a part of the curriculum...” but not only for youth, saying,

*“... parents are also a part of that discussion piece and learning because there are many that are set in their ways and have learned certain things or have certain beliefs that needs to change.”*

All these articulations from our participants indicate that there is a desire to see more intentional efforts at building anti-racism literacy into the formal education

system and sport system within Winnipeg, that it should be mandatory, and that all who are stakeholders within the sport system should be required to take part in such training.

## 5.2 Increasing Anti-Racism Awareness

Although participants indicated the need for formal anti-racism education and training for sport stakeholders in Winnipeg, there was an articulation of the need for increasing general cultural awareness, exposing sport participants to race-related discussions and different ways of knowing, and sharing stories of those from underrepresented populations at all levels of sport. The reason for doing so was articulated by Joseph who shared, “It’s hard to fix something if people don’t know that it’s there and it’s broken.”

***“... parents are also a part of that discussion piece and learning because there are many that are set in their ways and have learned certain things or have certain beliefs that needs to change.”***



Thea provides perspective in sharing, “I think a lot of people just don’t even know.” For Jean-Luc, the coach plays an important role in the development of youth sport participants and part of that responsibility is to “Talk to them about why inclusion is important.” This discussion, for him, extends to decisions being made in sport, including when penalties are levied for racist or discriminatory behaviour.

The need for increased awareness isn’t solely based on the need for education but, as Alan indicated, a greater need for understanding within the larger society and a need to establish a personal connection with these issues in the eyes of sport stakeholders. He shared, “I think that we need to make it personal for people to understand what it takes to be in this sport as a person of color or as a minority... understanding the social responsibility of sport.” For Xena, “You’re missing a whole viewpoint” as someone who isn’t from an underrepresented population, if there isn’t a willingness to have these race-related conversations.

Raising anti-racism awareness in sport should go beyond having discussions surrounding topics, according to our participants. They indicated that racist or discriminatory behaviour should be identified and opposed whenever displayed in sport in Winnipeg. Heidi indicated that “It’s really important to start cutting them off every chance we get” whenever racism is being displayed in sport, while April called for similar urgency by saying, “We have to speak up. As newcomers, if we’re facing racism or discrimination, we have to stand up and speak because sometimes our voices might not be heard, but sometimes they might be heard.” Her reasoning was built on the need for those who are targeted by racism to defend themselves, noting, “It’s like standing up for ourselves so other people will see and not try us again.”

April also provided a good perspective for the need to hear the stories of others who have experienced racism in sport, as well as the need for all sports to come together to discuss these topics. For her, “Hearing from other people

might make me feel better because I’m not the only one then,” a position which was articulated by other participants. She continued, “Then you can ask the other team or the other sports how did they deal with it? They might have different strategies... How did they overcome their challenge thing?” This desire to hear the stories of others or to share their own stories to help others and raise awareness was one of the primary motivations for participants who volunteered for this research project.

### **5.3 Taking Action in Addressing Structural Inequities**

In addition to increasing anti-racism education, training, and awareness within sport in Winnipeg, participants called for a change in how sport is administered in Winnipeg. They focused on addressing policies and processes while also reducing barriers faced by First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities in sport in Winnipeg.

#### **5.3.1 A Focus on Policies and Processes**

Participants focused on updating current policies or putting policies in place that address anti-racism within their sport by making them clear and actionable, with zero-tolerance or more stringent sanctions, and that performance management and funding for sport organisations should be tied to adherence to anti-racism policies. For Frank, policy would be a significant way of, “... definitely addressing the overt racism in sports” but participants articulated that any policy should be followed by tangible action that supports that policy. Mary shared, “I think there’s a difference between having a policy on anti-racism or anti-discrimination, and actually putting something into practice... and if there’s no action to that statement, that is just a blanket statement.” For Jessica, the norm for sport organizations in Winnipeg in regards to policy is that, “We’ll have a policy, then we’ll talk about it, and then a year later it might get approved.” As a result, she called for a more expedient approach towards making policy change by noting, “Some of these things I just feel like we need to do these things faster.”







Participants also called for stronger sanctions to be put in place for anyone found guilty of a racist act in sport in Winnipeg. For example, Anthony called for significant punishment or sanctions, while Essence stated formal apologies from perpetrators are needed, and sport associations must be held accountable for incidents that occur within their settings. For our participants, the main way to hold sport associations accountable would be to tie funding and performance management to adherence to anti-racism policies. Alan noted, “Can you attach a set of policies and procedures that need to be adopted in order for you to get your money... I guarantee you, they will do at the next meeting because they need that money.” This need for accountability was required by participants at the individual and the organizational level. Justin

noted, “Anti-racism initiatives or policies or practices and how they’re enforced, all of these things should be tied to individuals’ performance management and also organizational performance management” and Heidi agreed, stating,

“I would change accountability 100%, I would stop letting people off the hook so easily. “Well, they’re a super nice guy, they just said X, Y, Z.” No, that actually means they’re not a super nice guy. I would tie equity and diversity into performance management. Your entire board is old white dudes. You are not doing your job as an executive director... Diversify your board, diversify your coaches, your administration staff, referees, and tie that to performance management. Give them a reason because unfortunately, if you are in that bubble, you often don’t have a reason to want to make all these changes to put your neck on the line. Give them that motivation.”

For participants, this change in policy and focus on processes within sport organizations

is needed in order to create sport spaces that are safe and inclusive and will qualify that organization as fit for operation.

### 5.3.2 A Focus on Barriers

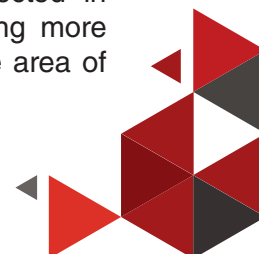
The barriers to sport participation are a reality for many groups in Winnipeg and as such, participants called for the provision of more access to sport in Winnipeg through funding, types of programming, greater representation throughout all levels of sport, diversification of boards, evaluating the system, and making tough changes. Ariel noted,

*“One thing that really jumps out for me is a myth that we’re all equal in the sense that not everybody faces the same hurdles. I think addressing different societal barriers that people face, dependent on their income, dependent of how they grew up, dependent of the color of their skin, or their religion, I think, would be really helpful.”*

Whilst funding exists in some contexts, more can be done to make those funds accessible on an individual and organizational level. For Jessica, even though funding is available through Basketball Manitoba, “We need to do a much better job of promoting those opportunities.”

In calling for change with how forms are designed, Joseph noted, “If I was... working maybe at KidSport, this is something that I will raise up... we need to see how we can redesign some of our forms because it’s a real barrier.” As it relates to how funds are allocated within sport organizations, Sylvester shared, “I think the biggest thing we need to do is when any community center or any organization get... funding... it should be distributed amongst like all the sport activities that neighborhood is playing.” Sam provided consideration for where organizational funding should be directed in stating, “Just having facilities or having more drop-in facilities... say, in a low-income area of

***“I think there’s a difference between having a policy on anti-racism or anti-discrimination, and actually putting something into practice... and if there’s no action to that statement, that is just a blanket statement.”***







the city that you have more youth programs and drop-ins.”

Increasing representation at all levels of sport was an important area our participants focused on in addressing racism in sport in Winnipeg. In order to increase the presence of underrepresented populations in leadership, Joseph called for sport organizations to, “Invest more money into leaders from different communities like First Nation, maybe Black community, Asian community and get them training.” Jessica also shared, “Like Shauna mentioned, offering coaching certifications at no charge is a great way to increase representation in coaching.” Board composition in particular, was an area of focus as these individuals were seen as the primary decision-makers and potential change agents in sport. Lucy noted, “This is a harder thing to police, but I think that the boards of community centers or sport organizations need to be aware that they should have proper representation on their boards and committees.” Heidi echoed this notion when she stated, “Go get a more equitable board because guess what, as soon as a Black, Indigenous, person of color, religious minorities at the table, half the things that that person just said, they wouldn’t have said.” Underrepresented population representation at the board level was important for Frank because, “It’s a lot different when you have someone else speaking about experiences that they haven’t had.”

Where representation on the field is concerned, Lincoln noted, “That’s how you change the sport, is I think at the high school having kids diversify their sports and go into it.” This was important for him in helping to break down the racialization of various sports in Winnipeg.

Jessica shared an experience that helps to articulate the desire of participants to see genuine representation with sport in Winnipeg instead of tokenism. She shared, “I spoke with a really lovely participant who is Indigenous a little while back. I think he framed it as, ‘You’re just trying to make sport more brown. You’re not trying to make it better for us.’” For her, this highlighted the reality that, “Just bringing them into participate is not enough. You need to change the way that it’s delivered.”

All these articulations from our participants give rise to the notion that there is much that can be done to fight racism and discrimination in sport in Winnipeg. These stories and perspectives point at the heart of the matter shared by Alan. His words remain poignant as he stated,

*“I would say, we just want a chance, like a fair chance. We’re not asking for special treatment. We’re not asking for, you know, pity. We’re not asking for a handout. We want a fair chance. We want to earn it like everybody earns it. We want to win the same way everybody does, and if we lose, we’re going to lose like everybody else, but we just want a fair chance. If it’s an interview, we want a fair chance. If we have a chance at a game, we want a fair chance. If it’s access to facilities, indoor, outdoor, we just want a fair chance at that. We just want to be part of a fair process that allows us to be part of the system in a meaningful way, that’s all we ask, and to start to extend some compassion, just be human for a little bit, just see us as humans that deserve a chance, that’s all I want.”*

## **6. Conclusions, Recommendations, and Next Steps**

Focusing on the participants’ voices and experiences shared in the focus groups, this section summarizes what the 39 participants in the focus groups told us about the extent of racism in sport in Winnipeg, and their ideas about what can be done about it.

### **6.1 Conclusions**

The main aim of this research project was to capture a more comprehensive understanding of the presence of racism in sport in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Discussions with our participants revealed that, similar to Burdsey’s (2004) articulation in relation to the complexity of racism in British football, racism in sport in Winnipeg is present, layered, and multi-faceted. Their experiences with racism were not limited to particular sports or settings but occurred in a variety of sport contexts (e.g., amateur, community, varsity, and elite sport). From an interpersonal perspective, racism in sport in Winnipeg was displayed most commonly as racial slurs and comments, discriminatory gestures,



physical attacks, and microaggressions. Whether in the form of jokes described as “everyday ignorance” by King (2006) or the threat against the life of a young participant supporting Baird’s (2018) notion that white-supremacy groups are still functioning healthily in Canadian contexts, the hat-trick of racism spoken about in hockey by Sandrin (2020) exists in sport and generally in Winnipeg. Similar to what Aquino (2015) found in Australia in relation to attitudes towards Filipino street basketballers, racism in sport in Winnipeg is linked to the general societal attitudes towards First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities.

Participants also revealed the systemic nature of racism in sport in Winnipeg in highlighting that First Nations, Métis Nation, and Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities face a number of barriers and policies that promote exclusion (see Tirone, 1999), biased adjudication processes, a lack of equitable representation throughout the sport

system (see Douglas & Halas, 2013; TePoel & Narcotta-Welp, 2020), racialized sports, and insufficient policies to address racism. The sport system in Winnipeg has been shown by participants to disadvantage some populations while promoting whiteness (Dowling & Flintoff, 2018) with the main perpetrators of racism revealed to be participants’ own coaches, teammates, opposing teams, fans/event attendees, game officials, and sport decision-makers.

Whilst some sport organizations in Winnipeg have sought training, worked on changing policies, and created niche options to assist First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities, our discussions highlighted that these initiatives often occur as a result of the efforts of anti-racism champions within the organization. This gives rise to the consideration of whether or not these decisions are all genuine attempts to fully address racism in sport in Winnipeg, or if these actions were, as conceptualized by TePoel and Narcotta-Welp (2020), more reflective of the attempts by the organization to maintain the status quo and their brand by not being perceived

as racist. This project was not able to conclusively indicate which of these positions were more representative of sport organizations in Winnipeg, but there is evidence from the articulations from our participants that both stances have been observed in sport in Winnipeg. Along with the conceptualization that the design of the system perpetuates racism, and that racism isn’t being addressed openly, participants do not generally see sport in Winnipeg as a safe space, but one that causes emotional and psychological harm.

In order to address these inequities and injustices within sport in Winnipeg, mandatory anti-racism training and education for all stakeholders in sport, increasing anti-racism awareness in sport through sharing stories, speaking out, and facilitating more discussions, the creation/implementation of policies to address racism in sport while also keeping decision-makers in sport accountable, and intentional efforts to reduce current barriers to safe, racism-free sport were seen as the best options at this point in time. Training and awareness, in particular, have been noted as instrumental in helping create tangible change in addressing racism in sport (Barnes, 2020; Bradbury & Williams, 2006). This introspection should not be left to individuals or separate sport entities, but instead built into the overall sport system in Winnipeg. The authors also conclude that in order to address racism effectively in sport in Winnipeg, it must be actively, critically explored in all its iterations, further discussions and collaboration with all stakeholders must take place, especially with First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black Racialized and religious minority organizations, and that racist experiences in sport in Winnipeg must be acknowledged openly and addressed urgently, possibly through sever sanctions (Cleland & Cashmore, 2014), as a present issue in sport in Winnipeg today. It is time for anti-racism initiatives in sport in Winnipeg to move beyond speech to tangible action, as encouraged by Hylton (2010).

## 6.2 Limitations

While rich data was shared by the 39 participants, the research team faced several limitations in conducting the study. Due to the very short time period to design the study, conduct the study,



and analyze the results, only English-speaking members of the sport community were invited to participate. As a result, potential participants who wished to participate in another language were not able to be included.

Recruitment efforts were also limited by the COVID-19 global pandemic. As a result of restrictions on in-person research, the only option for participation in a focus group was through a videoconference using MS Teams. Access to the computer and internet technology to join a MS Teams videocall was necessary and may have limited some potential participants' ability to volunteer for this study. The summer timeframe when the focus groups were held may have further impacted participation based on participants' availability around their vacations and other commitments.

The research team was also unable to report on some demographic information on age, religion, income, sexual orientation, or gender identity because it would disclose the participants' identity which is against Manitoba privacy law. Therefore, the initial recruitment process was focused on participants who identified as belonging to one of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minority communities.

A final barrier of the study is the difficult nature of talking about racism in sport. Participants both with and without lived experiences of racism might not feel comfortable sharing their views on racism in sport in Winnipeg in a focus group setting, with fellow participants they do not know or trust. While best practices in focus group anonymity and confidentiality were applied, participants had to

trust that other participants in their focus group would not share their stories without their explicit permission to do so.

### **6.3 Next Steps**

This initial examination of the extent of racism in sport in Winnipeg utilized a qualitative approach to gain insight into participants' lived experience. To quantify the problem and determine more precise or statistically significant results, a wider sample size is necessary. However, the utility in doing so is questionable. It is clear from the powerful stories shared by participants in this study that athletes, coaches, officials, and members of the sport service industry face racism in sport. Intentional action is necessary now to implement the recommendations above.

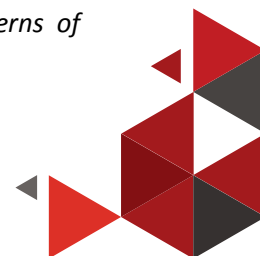
The full confirmation from participants in this study that action is necessary now to combat racism in sport, and to promote and foster anti-racist sport environments, highlights the urgency of the problem. Participants' voices explaining their experiences of racism in sport in Winnipeg and their ideas for what change is needed can be integrated into the educational programming that comes next by the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign. This information should also guide the development of the Campaign's Anti-Racism in Sport Accord.





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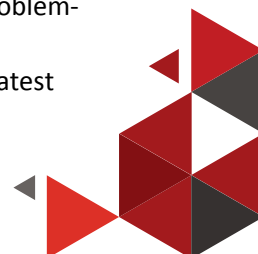
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## 8. Appendices

# Appendix I – Sport is Not an Equal Playing Field: A Literature Review for the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign

by Craig C. Brown, Nikol Veisman, Dalima Chhibber, Jessica Praznik, Daria Jorquera Palmer, Allen Mankewich, Leisha Strachan, Sarah Teetzel, and Lori Wilkinson

## Executive Summary

Empirical, peer-reviewed academic articles and other information sources were examined to identify the degree to which racism exists in Canadian sports. Particular focus was given to identifying evidence that supports or refutes the presence of the phenomenon in sport in Winnipeg. The findings of note include:

- **Racism is present in sport in the Canadian context (including in Winnipeg) in many forms.** Examples related to this statement include systemic racism and historical perceptions towards First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized and religious minority communities. Sport reflects the perspectives present within the larger society.
- **There is a lack of empirical information detailing the experiences of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized and religious minority communities in sport in Winnipeg.** The experiences of those who have faced racism in sport in Winnipeg have not been compiled in a way that clearly identifies its presence and presentation, resulting in the perception that racism does not exist in sport.
- **Only a few organizations are publicly addressing racism and discrimination.** While organizational efforts to address racism have increased in sport, access to detailed information on what is being done is largely unavailable in some cases, and in others, no related information was found.
- **Although certain organizations may have public policies to ensure safer and more inclusive sport environments, the initiatives in place are rarely enforced and further action should be taken.** There remains a need to be intentional about actioning policies and collaborating with affected stakeholders.
- **Some organizations have policies in place to tackle racism, but don't explicitly identify as being anti-racist.** Being anti-racist connotes an intentional association with efforts to eliminate and condemn racism in all its forms, and ensures an initiative moves beyond performative allyship.

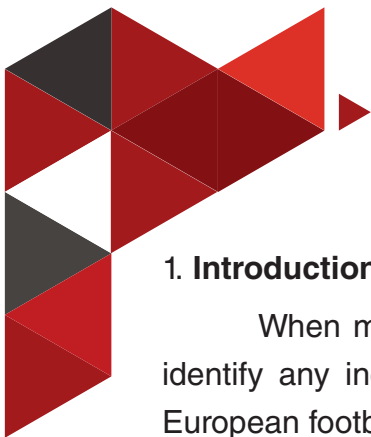




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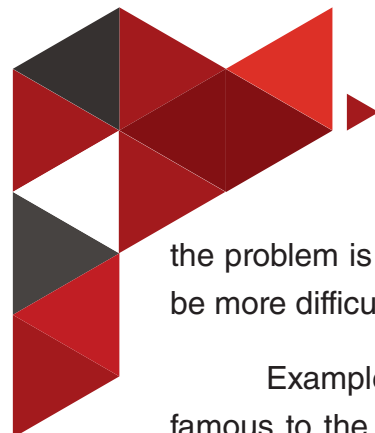
## 1. Introduction

When many white Canadians think of racism in sport, many are hard pressed to identify any incidents of systemic racism. When these discussions arise, English and European football often come to mind. Closer to home, some people think about the Colin Kaepernick saga in the NFL, one player who has sacrificed a promising career in his stand against racism (Bennett & Zirin, 2019). Those with good memories may remember the incident when Canadian Wayne Simmonds had a banana peel thrown at him during a shootout that would determine the game outcome in a pre-season match between the Philadelphia Flyers and the Detroit Red Wings in 2011 (ESPN, 2011). Those who follow sport and news of racism a bit more closely, however, are aware of the long-standing issues with regards to professional and amateur sports team names that have racist connotations. Professional sports clubs in Cleveland and Washington announced in 2020 that they would be renouncing their former racist names and changing their team names (Beiler, 2021). In Canada, after years of debate, the Canadian Football League team in Edmonton finally changed their name to the Elks in 2021 (Canadian Press, 2021), their former name being a well-known racist slur against the Inuit peoples. Despite years of petitions by the community, discussions with Indigenous Elders and national associations, the name change did not happen until major corporate donors, led by Belair Direct, threatened to remove corporate support if the team did not change their name (Slugowski, 2020). It seems that corporate interests are the ones that most matter—and this tells us a lot about how racism operates and persists within all levels of Canadian sport.

As this review of research shows, racism has infiltrated the organization of every sport and at every level it is practiced in Canada. Academics often use the words “institutional” racism to describe the foundations of which sport is organized that allow racism to go unchallenged and unchecked (Henry & Tator, 1994). Institutional racism is allowed to thrive when the country as a whole decides that racism is a problem that can be conveniently ignored. We are currently at a crossroads, both in Canada and internationally. Racism can no longer be ignored. White Canadians can no longer be surprised when incidents of racism are reported. Racism is found in all institutions in our society, and it cannot be ignored. In Winnipeg, the death of Brian Sinclair as he waited for treatment in a Winnipeg city hospital for 36 hours, was called “death by racism” (Brian Sinclair Working Group, 2017). More recently, the racist abuse and neglect experienced by Joyce Echaquan who was hospitalized in the hours before she died has led to a public inquiry in Quebec (Global Citizen, 2021). In both cases, a health care system that allowed racism to go unchecked has led to the deaths of many. Sadly, sport is not alone in its fight against racism—because







the problem is not just institutional, it is systemic. When racism becomes systemic, it can be more difficult to challenge.

Examples of racism in sport abound in Canada and its targets range from the world famous to the youngest of amateurs. From racial aggressions during a local community youth soccer game in Winnipeg (Macdonell, 2019; Petz, 2019), to the widely reported racial abuses faced by Canadian and international soccer star, Alphonso Davis (CBC Sports, 2020), racism flourishes in our sport clubs. It is systemic, invading the ranks of coaches, linespersons, community club organizations and volunteers in all sports across Canada (Joseph et al., 2021).

This literature review begins with a review of definitions of concepts that inform the academic and public discourse on racism in Canadian sport. Next, we discuss the theoretical considerations for understanding racism, as well as how these concepts will inform this research project. These concepts and theories include postcolonial theory, multiculturalism, critical race theory (CRT), intersectionality, and whiteness. Afterwards, an examination of experiences and historical accounts of racism in Canada, international sport, Canadian sport, North American varsity and collegiate sport, systemic racism in sport, and anti-Indigenous racism in sport provide necessary examples of the institutional nature of the problem. This exploration of racism is followed by a look at anti-racism initiatives in sport that have been implemented in the past or are currently in development, with consideration for how the lessons learned from these initiatives can inform this project's approach to addressing racism in sport in Winnipeg.

The data sources for this document are secondary and include discussion of policies and initiatives of various Canadian sports teams at the national, provincial, and local levels, initiatives put forward by universities and community organizations, information, and statistics from American databases to compare initiatives, empirical research articles, and news articles. This report is not meant to be an exhaustive list or accounting of all racist events and individual club-level policies involving anti-racism and tolerance in sport as these would be far too ambitious and numerous to review. Instead, readers should note that the examples we discuss are just a few of the many incidences and initiatives currently underway in Canada. Our intention is to use this critical juncture, where white society



can no longer be ‘surprised’ that racism exists, to move forward with solid, actionable recommendations to address and eradicate racism in sport.

## 2. Defining Racism: Forms, Concepts, and Theories


### 2.1 Definitions

Before discussing racism in sport and identifying its components, it is important to define ‘race’. **Race** is defined by Adair and Rowe (2010) as “simplistically applied to skin colour and stereotypical assumptions about identity and status associated with racialized appearance” (p. 251).<sup>1</sup> **Racism** is commonly understood in relation to interactions between different races or perspectives held about a specific race. While this notion is technically correct, it masks the varied forms which racism takes. In this conception, racism is highly personalized and can take on both physical and verbal abuse (Fleras, 2017). Examples include the use of racial slurs, participation in racial supremacist groups, and the physical and violent attacks that often get the most attention in the media. This more widely acknowledged form of racism is more correctly identified as “individual racism” and is what many people think about when they consider racism.

The Sport Information Resource Centre (SIRC) takes this more individual-centred approach in its discussions about racism. SIRC uses a well-known definition of **individual racism** described as, “structured by an ideology (set of ideas, values and beliefs) that frames one’s negative attitudes towards others; and is reflected in the wilful, conscious/unconscious, direct/indirect, or intentional/unintentional words or actions of individuals” (SIRC, n.d.). When institutions rely on only one singular form of racism to determine their policies and practices, it allows them to ignore the more pernicious and dangerous forms that racism takes. Because SIRC defines racism exclusively through a lens that privileges the individual form of racism, it can be blind to the other forms that racism can take. This stance makes it more difficult for SIRC and other interested organizations to identify, resolve and prevent us from seeing the many other forms that racism takes.

While individual racism is a significant problem, it is not the only form, nor the most prevalent form that racism takes. **Polite racism** is an attempt to “disguise a dislike of others through behaviour that outwardly is non-prejudicial in appearance” (Fleras, 2017, p. 65).


<sup>1</sup> Adair and Rowe (2010) also note that the key foundation for defining ethnicity is associated with “family, language, religion and nationality” (p. 525). Both concepts can be perceived as fluid and socially constructed or defined.



One example arises from a study of rental apartment trends in Toronto which has been repeated in various other jurisdictions (Dion, 2001; Carlsson & Eriksson, 2014; Ahmed & Hammerstadt, 2008). Researchers found that white landlords are far less often to respond to email and telephone inquiries made by individuals with Arabic or African sounding names or names that are difficult for an anglophone or francophone to pronounce. Instead, they use the legal excuse that “the apartment is already rented”.

***Institutionalized racism*** is a bigger problem in our society and is likely the form it takes most predominantly in sport. It is a form of racism that shapes the rules and procedures within organizations (Fleras, 2017) and afflicts many sporting clubs at all levels of play. SIRC also notes the existence of institutional racism and recognizes a culture of racism that is engrained in the fabric of the organization (rules, policies, and regulations). Racism, under these conditions is reinforced when gatekeepers such as governing boards, local sport authorities and other mechanisms do not address racism within their ranks. This form of racism is embodied in the example Harrison (2013) provides from the sport of skiing as he notes it as a predominantly white sport space that is restrictive of Black participation, and that forces Black ski organizations to find alternatives ways of integrating into the sport. Even these spaces reserved for recreation and enjoyment can be used as integral tools for the normalization of racism (Yearwood, 2018). Sport and recreation have been seen as spaces permeated by systemic racism (with consideration for the impact of lack of facilities and programs, connection to poverty, and the impacts of policing policies and actions that have a negative impact on marginalized communities) which is also experienced at the leadership, administration, and community and recreational levels (Love et al., 2019).

Individual, polite, and institutionalized racism are fed and nourished by ***systemic racism***. This form of racism is the most insidious, infiltrating the way we communicate, work, and interact with one another. This form of racism shapes the policies and practices within our larger social structures by shaping its rules, reorganizing its function, and altering its processes (Fleras, 2017). Our beliefs, norms, and values are encoded in legislation, policy, and practice. Think about the various workplace anti-discrimination policies adopted by all provinces. In this legislation, it is against the law to institute or promote policies and practices that privilege one group over the other. It is against the law to discriminate against an individual due to race, religion, ethnicity, sexuality, age, or ability—and yet these forms of discrimination can and do occur regularly. In short, the intention is not to discriminate, but the results actually lead to discrimination (Fleras, 2017).

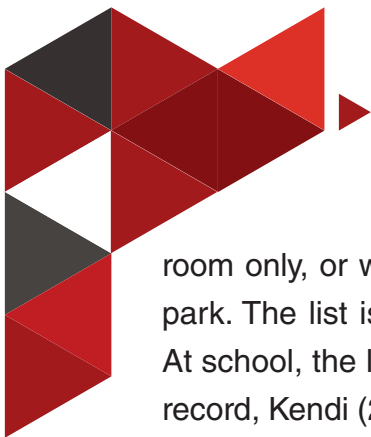


An example of systemic racism in action involves racial profiling and crime. Recently, several high-profile cases in Canada and the USA have involved racial profiling and African, Caribbean, and Indigenous young men. These individuals were killed because they were deemed criminal threats simply because of their ethnicity. George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Colton Boushie are just a few of the household names known in Canada and the USA. They were unarmed at the time of their deaths and died because they were Racialized, young, and male. The association of criminal intent with race, ethnicity, age, and youth is systemic in Canada and elsewhere. This belief that young, Racialized males are a threat to society is ingrained within the way some people think and act. Prosecution of these types of crimes are rarely successful. Colton Boushie's killer was acquitted, and the four officers who killed George Floyd in Minnesota remain some of the first police officers convicted of such crimes. The point here is that these crimes happen with regularity and their perpetrators are rarely punished even though the victims posed no threat. These are, sadly, examples of the systemic nature of racism and it is this form of racism that infiltrates the way we see the world.

Perhaps the recognition of systemic racism in sport is best exemplified by the “take a knee protests” which were started when then NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick knelt during the American national anthem at a game in 2016 (BBC News, 2021). His act of defiance was intended to bring attention to the violence experienced in the USA by Black men at the hands of police officers. His actions were praised by many, but many others saw it differently. Our purpose here is not to dissect the appropriateness of expressing one's right to free speech. Instead, this act of defiance, which has since spread to other sports and across many nations (English Football Association, 2021), is a prominent example of how racism is recognized more broadly and reacted to more directly through protests using sports. Players' recognition of systemic racism and their protests have become an important part of the history of sport. During the Summer Olympics in Mexico City 1968, for example, 200m gold medallist Tommie Smith and bronze medallist John Carlos, both of the USA, raised black gloved fists in protest during the medal ceremony (Smith, Smith and Steele, 2008). Like Kaepernick nearly fifty years later, the two athletes were heavily criticized at home and abroad.

Related to the varying forms of racism is another concept, ***microaggression***. According to Burdsey (2011), microaggressions are often unconscious, negative messages communicated by an individual to another through normal functions such as “gestures, looks, or tones” (p. 268). Kendi (2019) gives particularly clear examples in his book: the seat on the bus beside the Black man remains empty even though the bus is standing





room only, or when the white woman calls the police when she sees a Black man in the park. The list is extensive. We can add our own examples of microaggressions in sport. At school, the last person always selected for the volleyball ‘team’ is a Black child. For the record, Kendi (2019, p. 45) now rejects the use of the term because “micro” seems to imply that the problem is small, and ‘aggression’ is too shallow to describe the “abuse” which should be the new ending of the word. It is often confused with “polite” racism as well.

Canada’s formal attempts to promote ***multiculturalism*** in its society can be traced back to the passing of *Multiculturalism Act* in 1971 and revised in 1988 as the country dealt with the effects of a changing demographic because of immigration (Frisby, 2011). According to the Canadian Race Relations Foundation (n.d.), multiculturalism “promotes the acknowledgment and respect of diverse ethnicities, cultures, races, religious, and supports the freedom of these groups to preserve their heritage “while working to achieve the equality of all Canadians.” As Canada welcomed more immigrants, there needed to be greater consideration for and guidance on how to ensure that all cultures were respected and given space to freely exist while learning Canadian culture and ways of life. This stance on cultural diversity is often contrasted with the perceived melting-pot associated with the US where subcultures are expected to assimilate into the dominant culture, although examples exist to the contrary (Allison, 1982).

There is some debate, however, as to the accuracy of this harmonic depiction of racial and cultural relations in Canada or whether this perspective is more representative of the concept of “colour-blind” ideology that Cleland and Cashmore (2014) associate with football in Britain. Simply put, promoting a narrative of inclusion, diversity, and anti-racism in the face of tangible examples to the contrary is an intentional effort to ignore the phenomenon to give the impression that positive and effective work is being done to remove it. Some examples against Canada’s multicultural claim have been noted in the experiences of newcomer varsity athletes in Manitoba (Brown, 2020), Canadian physical education curriculum and training (Douglas & Halas, 2013), and the barriers Indigenous peoples face in gaining access to welcoming and inclusive sport and recreation spaces (Mason et al., 2019). Pointedly, Roberts (2009) notes that, “the multiracial and multicultural experience can no longer be ignored; although not everyone is ready for the use of more complex models or theories to understand and discuss race and culture from a multi-faceted viewpoint” (p. 506). These examples highlight the problems associated with claims of embracing multiculturalism in Canada, and the inherent connections to experiences of racism in sport.



The concept of **whiteness** also provides some benefit when examining issues related to racism in society. Under this ideology, races are compared or measured against elements (such as the physical body, ideals, and value systems) that are identified as “white” in nature. These elements are considered the norm and positioned as the ideal to strive towards while those recognized as First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized are discouraged and positioned as inadequate. This concept is also sometimes called ‘**benchmarking**’ which is the act of comparing racialized groups against the default position which is always white (Li, 2002). This is very common in research as “white” is often defined as “normal” or “average.” This perspective goes beyond the research but brings focus to the concept of institutional racism whereby whiteness and dominant ideologies are perpetuated through policies and practices. A move away from a focus on the representation of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized communities in areas of society towards a focus on how they are positioned in structures of power in race relations is essential for exploring racism in sport and recreation (Flintoff & Dowling, 2019).

In health and physical education, whiteness has been found to be perpetuated through two discursive techniques: universalisation, where white perspectives and experiences become the main point of reference for all, and naturalism, where definitions of race are positioned in relation to ‘others’ in order to identify “white bodies and perspectives... as ‘natural’ and the norm” (Flintoff, 2018, p. 207). The physical education (P.E.) curriculum has also come into focus as it has been found to promote an ‘us’ versus ‘them’ perspective of whiteness and does not overtly address discrimination and racism, providing a false sense of meritocracy while ignoring the ways in which racism and discrimination exist and operate (Flintoff & Dowling, 2019). In their analysis of physical education policy documents in Norway and England using critical whiteness, Dowling and Flintoff (2018) noted that contemporary PE policy and practice benefits whiteness to the disadvantage of those who are not-white. They found that in policy and practice, white experience and knowledge was held as an invisible and unnamed benchmark for all, a measurement for other races, with whiteness “constructed as a contingent hierarchy” (p. 7). For example, the terms ‘ours’ and ‘us’ were used to describe practices related to Norwegian language and culture, creating a clear demarcation in relationship to ‘other’ marginalized cultures (e.g., the Sami culture in Norway). In both curricula, achieving an active and healthy lifestyle, along with the ideal body, is measured by white ideals and does not take into consideration how these concepts are understood by other cultures within their context (Dowling & Flintoff,

2018). These observations have led Flintoff (2018) to propose that physical educators and white students focus on whiteness, which will help in addressing issues related to racism in this sphere. For example, at the University of Iowa, athletes are encouraged to adopt the “Iowa Way,” which TePoel and Narcotta-Welp (2020) position as a reproduction of the whiteness that is expected as moral and upstanding behaviour. These principles include predetermined conceptualizations of what makes a good student and citizen, reflecting the conceptual perspectives of hard-working white farmers but ignore the lived experiences of athletes from other cultures. The terminology and slogans related to the Iowa way were present in meetings, gatherings, and adorned many walls throughout the institution. It was an expectation that everyone associated with the school would embody this ideal, with other racialized groups expected to conform. Whiteness is a more moderate depiction of racial equality in comparison to the more aggressive notion of white supremacy. White supremacy as a concept, focuses on cultural and biological factors as a means for justifying racial inequality and has been on the rise in the USA (Ferber, 2007).

One final concept that will be introduced in this paper as we explore racism, anti-racism, and the experiences of athletes is Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. 's conceptualization of the **good white moderate**. In their analysis of statements from student athletes, coaches, and athletic department officials at the University of Iowa following a racial controversy, TePoel and Narcotta-Welp (2020) found that the organization focused on preserving its image and the appearance of not being racist instead of pushing for structural and behavioural change, an observation the authors also made in relation to major sports leagues. The good white moderate (not those who blatantly oppose but those who want to maintain order and peace without changing the structure) focus on recognizing the league, organization, or brand as not racist instead of acknowledging and dealing with issues of race, serving as a way of maintaining power structures (TePoel & Narcotta-Welp, 2020). Therefore, any action or behaviour that could bring the organization or structure into disrepute is positioned as an individual fallibility or exception and then the organization is distanced from it. One crucial example highlighted by the authors was the culture created by football coaches, particularly the assistant coach, at the University of Iowa over two decades that was found to be oppressive towards Black athletes after an internal review and social media posts from current and former athletes that confirmed this position. The assistant coach professed innocence and, to a degree, defended his operations within the program and character, while being supported by others in positions of power at the university, even after being released from his position. The head coach did not apologize until after an external review confirmed the inequities affecting Black players, and with the



support of those in authority, painted a picture of possible redemption of the program under his guidance going forward with a commitment to change. These concepts have even more depth and layers to them, and they form a part of the conceptualization of acknowledging and addressing racism in our present day. TePoel and Narcotta-Welp (2020) sum it up by stating,

Owners, executives, commissioners, managers, athletes, agents, journalists, producers, sponsors, fans, scholars, and many more must first identify how the toxins of white supremacy have taken root, shaped, and constrained their own existence before they can dream of making a positive contribution to eradicating its pernicious, corrosive influence on the soul of sport. (p. 13)

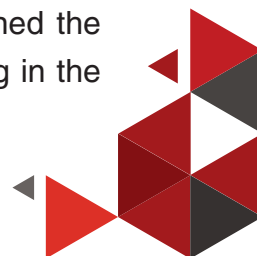
These introductory definitions of race and racism (including individual, polite, institutionalized, and systemic racism) as well as the concepts of microaggressions, multiculturalism, whiteness, benchmarking, and the good white moderate, provide common language and terminology needed to engage in deeper and more complex discussions of racism and anti-racism in sport. These concepts provide further perspective of the lens through which this project will be viewed going forward as we explore racism and anti-racism in sport in Winnipeg both in this literature review and the accompanying research report.

## **2.2 Theoretical Understandings of Racism**

To gain a better understanding of racism, it is important to provide some review of the top theories in the area: postcolonial theory, critical race theory, and intersectionality theory. Together, these theories help explain how the above concepts apply in sport, while challenging us to think critically and more broadly about how and why our sport system continues to tolerate racist behaviours and actions.

### **2.2.1 Postcolonial Theory**

Postcolonial theory, of which Garner-Manzon and Giles (2016) provide a comprehensive discussion, attempts to explain how modern hierarchies regarding the rich and the poor are based upon the historical conquests of colonial settlers who intentionally exploited, dominated, and committed genocide against the Indigenous Peoples of many nations, including Canada. Using racist ideologies, colonists positioned their culture as superior to other others while creating and imposing a structure that has sustained the economic, social and hierarchies that prevent Indigenous groups from succeeding in the





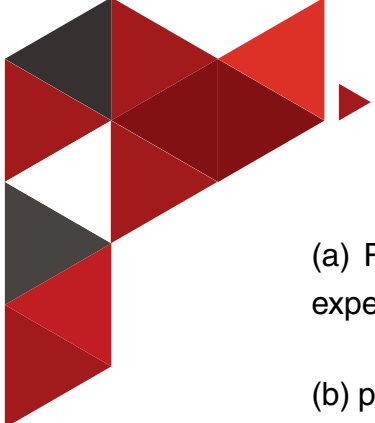
21<sup>st</sup> century. The colonist-imposed structures still shape the way we work, learn, and play today.

In the Canadian context, post-colonial theory is used to explain the historic treatment, attitudes, and behaviours of White Canadians towards the Indigenous population in Canada. Wilmot's (2021) summary of postcolonial theory from the Canadian perspective examines the settling of Canadian land by Europeans (France and Britain), claiming of the land and resources from the Indigenous populations by settlers, the passing of laws and initiatives by settlers aimed at assimilating the Indigenous population, and further actions that have left the First Nations, Métis Nation, and Inuit populations in a disadvantaged position not only historically but one that continues to the present day. From the postcolonial lens, the author summarizes varied analyses of colonialism by deeming it "rooted in economic exploitation which is normalized or concealed in the dominant discourses of colonial societies. The impact of this exploitation on colonized peoples is overwhelmingly negative, running from cultural/psychological disempowerment to genocide" (p. 1).

From the creation and use of residential schools to the treatment of Indigenous players in sport today, negative attitudes towards this population points to postcolonial theory at work in the Canadian context. This paints a contrasting picture of the multiculturalism, diversity, and inclusion that is promoted by the government of Canada when assessing their treatment of and attitude towards First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized, and religious minority communities. A good historical account of the impact of colonization among Indigenous Peoples in sport can be found in Fred Sasakamoose's (2021) *Call Me Indian: From the Trauma of Residential School to becoming NHL's first Treaty Indigenous Player*.

### **2.2.2 Critical Race Theory**

Drawing on ideas discussed by Sojourner Truth, Martin Luther King, Jr., Frederick Douglass and others by legal scholars in the mid-1970s, Critical Race Theory (CRT) has become one of the main tools utilized in evaluating racism in varied contexts. According to Hylton (2010), CRT provides some benefit when evaluating racism and racial inequalities in sport. Hylton notes that CRT begins with the understanding that the society we live in is inherently racist and that the role of structure in the perpetuation of these perspectives against Indigenous, Black, and Racialized communities should not be ignored in any assessment of racism. Other main tenets of CRT noted by Love et al. (2019), referencing the work of Delgado and Stefancic (2017), are

- 
- A decorative graphic in the top left corner consisting of several overlapping triangles in shades of red and black, forming a larger, abstract geometric shape.
- (a) Racism is part of the usual way society does business and an everyday experience for most people of colour,
  - (b) progress on behalf of racially marginalized groups often results from “interest convergence,” in which their interests align with those of elite [w]hites,
  - (c) race is socially constructed,
  - (d) groups of people are racialized differently over time as interests in the dominant society evolve,
  - (e) intersectionality should be appreciated, as everyone may have potentially overlapping identities and loyalties, and
  - (f) people of colour have unique experiences that provide a certain competence to speak about race and racism (p. 228).

CRT becomes pertinent to efforts aimed at addressing racism in varied aspects of society and, as noted by Roberts (2009), becomes one of the central aspects of empowering those aiming to explore issues related to whiteness, privilege, and power in leisure and recreation. So much so, that the author states, “Positive change is not possible without moving social justice postulates such as these into action” (p. 507). In relation to anti-racism in sport, Hylton (2010) posits that CRT becomes useful in challenging “dominant ideas of objectivity, meritocracy, colour-blindness, race neutrality and equal opportunity” (p. 341) and “offers potential for resistance to the reproduction of established practices, knowledge and resources that make up the social conditions that facilitate colour-blindness, ‘race’ logic and racialized processes” (p. 351). An example provided by the author of CRT being used to challenge inequality in sport was of a South African sport minister’s attempts to challenge sport policy and practice to achieve equitable access for all races. If race and racism are to be brought to the forefront of an examination of inequalities in a sporting context, CRT will play a critical role in doing so.

### **2.2.3 Intersectionality Theory**

In her work within the field of jurisprudence, legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw created the term intersectionality to explain how multiple intersecting identities have devastating consequences on the outcomes of racialized persons with various identity



intersections including gender, sexuality, religion, ability, income, and other identifiers (Carbado et al., 2013; Carastathis, 2016). Intersectionality directly concerns the “issues and dynamics” that embody race and gender power (Cho et al., 2013 p.789). The term came into prominent use following Crenshaw’s work on the concept in 1989 and 1991 (Carastathis, 2016). It was focused on “the vexed dynamics of difference and the solidarities of sameness in the context of antidiscrimination and social movement politics” (Cho et al., 2013, p. 787) to explore how different lenses could be applied. The intersectionality framework centers around women of colour, who have been excluded by previous efforts to address gender inequality. While Crenshaw was specifically focused on Black women in the juridical context, the framework has been increasingly used to address power structures outside the realm of law and within “discourses of resistance” (Carbado et al., 2016, p. 2), including feminism and anti-racism that can still contribute to the marginalization of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized individuals. Aspects of power addressed by intersectionality include but are not limited to gender, race and often, within a political framework, addressing the issues ranging from the individual to institutional and more recently national levels (Cho et al., 2013).

Intersectionality theory moved from law into other disciplines and is now widely used to understand how various identities can combine to cause inequality. Increasing awareness of the intersectionality framework drew many to consider the “intellectual traditions arising from Black feminism, ethnic studies and community activism” (Cho et al., 2013, p. 790). In Canada, the framework has been used to examine participation in amateur sport. Abichanhine and Veenstra (2017) find that income status has a high influence on participation in sport by racialized men but has a weaker impact for white men and women. Income has no influence on amateur sport participation by racialized women. 2SLGBTQ+ members who identify as female are also more likely to participate in amateur sport than those identifying as male or nonbinary. What intersectionality theory does is to help us to understand how membership within one or more less privileged groups leads to unequal outcomes in sports.

### **3. Racism in Canada**

We cannot understand the extent to which racism affects sports in Canada without diving into a bit of the history first. This section gives a very brief overview of how racism has shaped many Canadian institutions. It is impossible to provide an extensive overview of racism in Canada given the magnitude of the problem. Readers with an interest in



learning more about the extensive history of racism in Canada should consult Babcock (2013), Backhouse (1999), Hier and Bolaria (2007), Joseph (2018), Kallen (2003), Li (1988; 1996), McGregor (2004), and McMillan and Yellowhorn (2004).

White Canadians like to think that racism is not a problem. When it is discussed, blame is often deflected towards the USA in terms like “at least it is not as bad here as it is in the USA” This “deflection” allows white Canadians to ignore the problems here. While Canadians are taught about the history of slavery in the USA, few understand its roots and practices here (Toronto Star, 2021). The injustice surrounding the forcible removal of Black residents from Africville, and the town’s subsequent destruction, mark a more recent demonstration of the racism faced by Black individuals in Canada. Racism has historically, and on an ongoing basis, existed in Canada.

Racism in Canada is not just historic; it extends toward other racialized groups today. Our collective history, however, is steeped in systemic racism that continues in the present. The *Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report* of 2015 was a small step forward in the process of healing from the atrocities associated with residential schools and the treatment of Canada’s Indigenous Peoples. White settlers stole the land belonging to Indigenous Peoples, who were moved to reserves, had their children taken from them and were placed in residential schools where they were stripped of their culture and abused physically, sexually, deemed as inferior, and subjected to cultural and physical genocide (King 2017; Dickason & Newbeking, 2019).

Racism has memory—it follows us through our families, collective histories and is the basis from which the organizations that make up society have based many of their rules and practices. The residential school system, the 1960s “scoop” of Indigenous children, the banning of culture, language and religion have roots in the past that carry forward to today. For Indigenous Peoples, this intergenerational trauma shapes their lives today (Bombay, Matheson & Anisman, 2009). Families and communities carry the stories of our collective past. When traumas are experienced and remain unresolved, the pain is passed on to our children. Intergenerational trauma, combined with a system that fosters and encourages racism, has meant a lifetime of struggle and inequality for many Indigenous Peoples in Canada. We can trace a path through which systemic, institutional, individual racisms, combined with unresolved intergenerational trauma has created conditions that have led to systemic poverty, over representation in the criminal justice





system, unequal access to education and healthcare which have negatively affected the lives of First Nations, Métis Nation, and Inuit peoples in Canada today (Hotez, 2010; Maru, Fletcher & Chewings, 2012; Sittner & Estes, 2020; Lavallee & Poole, 2010; Smylie & Firestone, 2016; Pratt et al., 2016).

We all know that racism in Canada is not limited to First Nations Peoples, the Métis Nation or to Inuit Peoples; the scourge of racism extends more broadly. There is a long and tragic history of racism against Asian Canadians. For example, the Chinese (Li 1998), Japanese (Omatsu & Price, 2020), and Indian (Bolaria & Li, 1988) communities have experienced centuries of racism in all forms. This historic experience has influenced how Asian Canadians are treated today. Baird (2018), while exploring racism directed at Asians in British Columbia, notes that white-supremacy groups remain active in the province. In 2020, and throughout 2021, Asian Canadians, particularly those from China, have experienced significant racism due to COVID-19 (Wilkinson & Ogoe, 2020; Wilkinson, 2020).

Anti-Black racism is nothing new in Canada either. Mullings, Morgan and Quelleng (2016: 20) describe Canada as a place where “anti-Black racism thrives.” Jean-Pierre and James (2020) chronicle the long history of anti-Black racism in the wake of the Black Lives Matter protests this past summer. Robyn Maynard (2017) and others have chronicled the racism experienced by African and Caribbean Canadians. Anti-Black racism has invaded the occupations of medicine (Dryden & Nnome, 2021), nursing (Das Gupta, 2016), the professoriate (Henry et al., 2017), teaching (Munroe, 2017) and other occupations. It is recorded frequently in the way the child welfare system works (Pon, Gossine, & Phillips, 2011; Phillips & Pon, 2018) and influences the successful integration of African and Caribbean immigrants (Madibbo, 2020). Like racism directed towards other racialized groups, anti-Black racism is historic and pernicious in the Canada of today and yesteryear.

From our knowledge of systemic racism, this history of racism has affected the development, growth, and maintenance of all economic, political, health, and educational institutions in Canada. This history has not left the institution of sport unscathed. The next section discusses racism in sport internationally, followed by a discussion of racism in Canadian sport.



## 4. Racism in Sport

### 4.1 Racism in International Sport

C. L. R. James' *Beyond a Boundary* (1993) highlights the notion that sport and the sporting context are far from apolitical. In thinking of sport as soft power (a persuasive tool for the synchronization of norms, values, and perspectives), the context and those involved can be instrumental in building nationhood and peace, as well as foreign and local policy (Nygård & Gates, 2013). It stands to reason that with sport and recreation functioning as a representation of and vehicle for transmitting the desired values and behaviours of a society, this context may mirror what is seen in the general society. For example, in an online survey of 2500 football (soccer) fans examining the extent of racism, observed or experienced, in British football, Cleland and Cashmore (2014) found that half of all fans are still witnessing or experiencing some form of racism. The authors note that while anti-racism initiatives (e.g., Kick it Out and Show Racism the Red Card) have been implemented and a reduction in overtly racist chanting experienced, the depth of the problem is being ignored, with fans calling for more severe sanctions and social media accountability. The recent social media abuse of Black English Premier League (EPL) players Anthony Martial, Marcus Rashford, and Axel Tuanzebe are notable examples of the evolving face of racism in sport and society. This ineffectiveness could be attributed to anti-racism programs focusing on overt public displays of racism while failing to impact the attitudes and behaviours towards Indigenous, Black, and Racialized communities perpetuated by structures of power (Bradbury & Williams, 2006). Even with progress being made in the fight against overt displays of racism in English Football, such forms of discrimination as anti-Semitism remain a present issue that anti-racism programmes have failed to address adequately (Poulton, 2020).

In his ethnographic study of ex-professional and amateur British Asian footballers, Burdsey (2004) noted that participants believed that racism should be addressed at the amateur level before trying to eradicate it at higher leagues. The author also stated that, "racism in football is neither universally present nor universally absent; it operates in complex, covert and frequently ambiguous ways, and fluctuates contextually and temporally" (p. 288). Filipino street basketball culture in Sydney, Australia was examined by Aquino (2015) who found that his participants' experiences with racism on the basketball court mirrored the stereotypes (e.g., being too effeminate or too violent) Filipinos faced in other contexts within society. The author noted that while Filipinos



in Australia used street ball as a form of resistance to the barriers they faced in sport and society, it was evident that there was evidence of “racialising practices (intersecting with class and gender) that sustain white hegemony in mainstream basketball and connects with wider structures of inequality” (p. 169). These practices were highlighted in examples related to team selection, officiating, lack of access to opportunities based on style of play and being associated with a particular culture, and even physical appearance.

From an institutional/structural perspective, Flintoff and Dowling’s (2019) examination of the narrative stories of physical educators in Norway and England revealed the depth to which texts promoted an ideology of whiteness, the racialized ‘other’, gendered bodies, and the degree to which a colour-blind approach perpetuated these concepts. The authors found that the participants were partly culpable by failing to examine the role they played within the system in shifting the focus from race to other topics like gender or class.

Indigenous, Black, and Racialized community representation in all facets of sport and recreation should not be ignored in efforts to explore racism within the context. Burdsey (2004) noted that for professional leagues, an ex-player or someone who has represented at the top level of sport is more likely to be selected for certain positions at the expense of other candidates who may have more qualifications. If Indigenous, Black, and Racialized communities do not have an equitable opportunity to represent at the highest level, it is understandable why they are not given more opportunities to later on coach or manage professional or high-level sport teams. Even in sports where Indigenous, Black, and Racialized communities have a higher representation, they are not equitably represented in the positions of power in those sport contexts. This perspective is articulated by TePoel and Narcotta-Welp (2020) who state:

It is less and less of an open secret that, like at Iowa, whites dominate positions of power, authority, and leadership across the professional, collegiate, and international sport governance landscape, to say nothing of the socioeconomic and racial disparities in access to the benefits of sport and physical activity at the participatory level. (p. 13)

The presence or lack of representation of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized and religious minorities communities in positions of power in sport is an indicator of how racism can systematically be perpetuated.

As intersectionality theory reminds us, racism is not one dimensional. Players





who are members of multiple oppressed groups experience racism in different ways. Professional athletes Naomi Osaka, Serena Williams, and Simone Biles have all faced challenges due to racism, sexism, and mental health status (Douglas 2012; Douglas 2005). Recently, all three women have been heavily criticized in the media for putting their physical and mental health first when they have made the sound decision to end their participation in various “big money” events including Wimbledon and the Olympics (Razack and Joseph 2021).

The abhorrent treatment of South African runner, Caster Semenya, who has battled with the International Olympic Committee and the international track and field federation, World Athletics, for more than a decade to compete in women’s races without altering her naturally occurring testosterone level, highlights the role of racism in the history and current application of sex testing in sport (Farham 2019; Mahomed & Dhali, 2019). As Anne Fausto-Sterling (2020) explains, “Caster Semenya, questioned not only because of her athletic prowess but also because of her masculine build, her race, and her origin in the Global South, became the perfect foil for trying, once again, to define who was sufficiently female to compete against other (real, white) women” (p. 334). The racism inherent in the policies carefully crafted to gatekeep the women’s events in sport cannot be denied.

#### **4.2 Racism in Canadian Sport**

Canada’s sport history is one that is not free from the effects of racism and discrimination. In their assessment of the experiences of African-American athletes who seemingly left the football leagues in the USA for the Canadian Football League (CFL) to escape the racial injustices they suffered in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, Longley et al. (2008) noted that the athletes faced entry discrimination (such as quotas limiting the number of Black players a team could employ) in the CFL. The authors noted that this discrimination occurred despite African-American athletes out-performing their white counterparts, a perspective reflected currently in the higher prices for player cards of white players of equal talent from that era. Winnipeg’s first Grey Cup win in 1935 was because of the contributions of players from the USA (Longley et al., 2008). The experiences shared by George Reed, Ted Watkins, Willie Fleming, and Leo Lewis (Winnipeg) highlighted the racial injustices faced by Black players in the CFL, the way the media and management ignored the problem, the sport and community discrimination they faced, and that the teams from cities of Vancouver, Regina, and Winnipeg were less likely to have Black players (Longley et al., 2008). Lewis noted that his experiences in Winnipeg in general were good but that the racist perspectives were being driven by his teammates from the southern USA, that he





faced some racial slurs, and that segregated accommodations were a part of the practice of the era (Longley et al., 2008). The authors pointed to their inability to make “conclusive and decisive a priori expectations” about the athletes’ experiences because of the contradictory nature of “cumulative evidence on the discriminatory tendencies of Canadians” (p. 1380).

The CFL has shown initiative in emphasizing inclusion and diversity on the sports field. However, several CFL players state that there is still a lot that must be done to ensure football is an inclusive sport (Karstens-Smith, 2020). Bryan Burnham, a wide receiver for the BC

Lions, has heard many stories of racism that his teammates across the country experienced. The players agreed that more programs and awareness must be created to help Black players and staff be involved in the sport without being subjected to racism from their teammates, staff, and the community (Barnes, 2020; Karstens-Smith, 2020). While the CFL added more Black quarterbacks to its teams throughout the years, more must be done to ensure racial justice in football, including coaching opportunities, training, and internships (Barnes, 2020).

A *Race in Sport* report (1970) re-published by the Centre for Sport Policy Studies at the University of Toronto in 2021 provides statistics regarding the number of Black players in CFL teams between 1954-1969, which are as follows: the Montreal Alouettes had 36 Black players on the team, the Ottawa Rough Riders had 20, the Toronto Argonauts had 36, the Hamilton Tiger-Cats had 32, the Winnipeg Blue Bombers had 18, the Saskatchewan Roughriders had 16, the Edmonton team had 23, the Calgary Stampeders had 26 and the BC Lions had 19 Black players (Smith & Grindstaff, 2021). As the numbers range between 16 to 36 Black players on a CFL team, the Winnipeg Blue Bombers had the second lowest number of Black players on their team during those years. The report also indicates that the Black players who played on CFL teams were denied the chance for leadership and coaching positions despite their qualifications for the roles, and roughly 11 former Black players were appointed in leadership roles since 1999 (Smith & Grindstaff, 2021). These statistics indicate that in more recent years, the position of Black players in the CFL slightly improved, as more Black players are on teams and have more key positions. However, they are still subjected to racism, discrimination, and unequal treatment compared to their white counterparts (Smith & Grindstaff, 2021).

In detailing Satchell Paige’s contribution to sport in Canada, Spivey (2015) noted the negative perception of the Canadian Press towards the USA for its treatment of Black baseball players, especially because of Paige’s greatness. This was in ironic







contrast to the history of Canadian leagues banning Black players and the presence of racial abuse in sports (Spivey, 2015). The author noted that the Canadian experience for Black athletes was considered more favourable than the equivalent experience in the USA, and this perception is part of the reason Canada is believed to be more tolerant of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized communities. Willie O'Ree's contribution to hockey and connections with the Black Hockey League (BHL), established in the Maritimes in 1895 at a time when Black people were not allowed to play in the National Hockey League (NHL), was explored by Boyd (2020) and by Fosty and Fosty (2021). Boyd's (2020) research chronicled O'Ree's experiences of racism while playing in Canada. O'Ree became the first Black NHL player in 1958, and he works to bring hockey to Black communities and the underprivileged. Since 1958 when he played in the NHL, only approximately 100 Black players have played in the league. Boyd (2020) also notes that the BHL failed as a result of the lack of support from the Canadian Government, likening it to the lack of basic resources offered to Black communities like Africville. When the Canadian government desired to build a railroad through Africville, but faced opposition from Black residents, rinks resorted to denying access to Black hockey players as a means of applying pressure to the Black community in solidarity with the government's position (Boyd, 2020).

Racism continues to thrive in ice hockey. In speaking with First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized high-level hockey players in Western Canada, Sandrin (2020) found that players experienced a "hat-trick of racism – the direct verbal incidents; the physical punishments; and the underlying oppression" (p. 24). Verbal incidents consisted of slurs (e.g., racial), taunts, and offensive gestures from opposing players, fans, parents, and even supported by rival coaches. Physical punishments were experienced in the form of excessive physicality during games that accompanied racial slurs. As it relates to underlying oppression, participants noted experiencing exclusion from the group and vague decisions being made about their career (e.g., being cut from the team in favour of a white teammate who was not performing at a higher level with no rationale and being treated differently by coaches in comparison to white players).

Sandrin (2020) noted that such behaviours as racist comments or jokes were expected to remain on the ice and are influenced by masculinity in hockey. Sandrin also explains that the system (officials included) does not do enough to protect First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized communities, that incidents decreased as players get older, and that racism is still present and more covert even with the issuing of recent sanctions





(such as hockey media member Don Cherry being fired for comments regarding the failure of immigrants to wear poppies on Remembrance Day and Calgary Flames head coach Bill Peters being fired for using racist language). The resulting recommendations are that young hockey players be exposed to education about race and related issues from an early age, that a stance on unacceptable behaviours be clearly articulated, and that independent outlets for reporting related incidents be provided for players. These recommendations are salient considering the fact, “recent critical events such as Don Cherry’s racial poppy tirade and coach Bill Peters’ racial slurs at Akim Aliu have cast doubt on both the nation’s embrace of the mosaic, and its beloved game’s inclusivity to minorities” (Sandrin, 2020, p. 19). Locally, Brandon Bobcats basketball player Anthony Tsegakele spoke of experiencing racism as a youth in Quebec and has observed racism while on a road trip with his team (Winnipeg Sun, 2020).

The treatment of Asian people in Western Canada has also come into question when considering discourses related to racism and discrimination in sport and recreation. In their examination of the literature on Chinese-Canadian masculinities in the physical education curriculum in Vancouver, BC, Millington et al. (2008) detail the historic accounts of public policy aimed at marginalizing Asians in BC (e.g., segregation in schools due to concerns about Chinese morality, the presence of an anti-Chinese immigration law until 1947, and limits to which jobs could be accessed by Chinese-Canadians). The authors found that the physical education curriculum in Vancouver was informed by whiteness (e.g., the emphasis on North American sport and the aggressive and dominant masculine ideal) and noted that discourses and attitudes related to Chinese male masculinities exist within sport and physical education, masked by overall Canadian discourses of multiculturalism. They also noted that while formal physical education policies related to anti-racism and discrimination exist, it is left up to interpretation and not overtly enforced, and that, as a means of showing dominance and intimidation, Western sports and language served as spaces of oppression (Millington et al., 2008). An example highlighted by the authors from the literature was of a Vancouver Grade 10 physical education class where athletic, white male students harassed Chinese-Canadian students verbally and physically in environments that favoured dominant masculine physicality (e.g., football and dodgeball). These behaviours were seemingly influenced by the overall societal perspective of Chinese men as effeminate and weak.

While exploring the experiences of 87 upper-level English as a Second Language (ESL) students in Canada, Taylor and Doherty (2005) noted that language issues possibly formed the basis of perceived discrimination in sport settings for immigrants, and therefore





impacted their participation in such settings. After conducting research with 15 South Asian teens in Canada, Tirone (1999) found that participants faced racist remarks, an unwillingness of leaders to intervene when incidents occurred, as well as a general host culture lack of interest (sometimes indifference) towards their culture. Examples of the racism the teens mentioned included taunting, name-calling, as well as comments about their clothing, hair, skin colour, and their command of the English language (Tirone, 1999). Participants shared that the apathy of leadership extended to facilities that supported leisure, and that some sport leaders and coaches were not as willing to facilitate requirements of other ethnicities (e.g., understanding the requirements of an athlete fasting during Ramadan). Some participants even withdrew from sport because of the discrimination they faced, while others indicated that excelling in sport reduced the negative perception the members of the host culture held towards them (Tirone, 1999).

Racism has attracted a lot of attention on social media in the past year by sport organizations. While this attention has tended to be reflected in social media posts in solidarity with anti-racism movements, only in a few instances the issue has led to some organizations being open to hearing and understanding the views of athletes, coaches, and management in relation to tackling the prevalence of racism and discrimination in sports and releasing statements against racism (Canadian Lacrosse League, 2020). Skate Canada (2021) have established a three-phase education plan for anti-racism and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) to ensure greater understanding of racism in Canadian sports and move towards positive change. Their approach focuses on providing education related to issues of race and anti-racism sport, and the change that needs to occur with reference to these areas, as well as participation being recommended for participants at all levels. Athletics Canada (2020) has stated its attempt to show commitment towards bringing change by listening to athletes' experiences and voices as drivers for change. The organization began its efforts to eliminate racism by interviewing players and coaches from various sports, focusing on Black history month, asking what being Black means to the interviewees, and listening to their experiences of racism. Through this roundtable, the organization aimed to use its platform to raise the voices of the athletes and understand the barriers to creating safe and accessible sporting environments (Athletics Canada, 2021). While these are important steps showing that Canadian sport organizations are addressing racism, more evidence is required to see if these initiatives are leading to change and feelings of belonging for First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized, and religious minority athletes in their respective sports.




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### 4.3 Racism in University, Collegiate and Varsity Sport

A scan of several national sports organizations in the USA reveals some promising work related to anti-racism in sport. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) (2016) has focused on raising awareness about the experiences related to discrimination and racism in intercollegiate sports while striving to make the environment inclusive and equitable in terms of opportunities and participation. The NCAA (2016) highlights practices that promote anti-racism and have developed strategies for introducing the topic of and addressing racial injustice, while also providing essential up-to-date information in relation to race and gender demographics since 2010-2011. The demographics database includes information related to student-athletes, coaches, and administrators, including recent and past trends of various racial and ethnic groups by gender, sport, division, and title.

These trends demonstrate that while in certain sports the number of Black student-athletes has been increasing over the years, the coaching staff remains predominantly white. For example, in men's baseball there are currently 878 white head coaches compared to 27 Black head coaches (NCAA, 2021). The statistics also show that there are more Black assistant coaches, while white coaches have more head coach positions. Sports that show more Black athlete involvement than white athlete involvement such as basketball, are consistent with the Drake Group *Academic Integrity in Collegiate Sport* report that indicated greater involvement of Black athletes in sports where they are more likely to receive financial support and recognition (The Drake Group, 2021). However, the NCAA demographics database showed a much lower Black representation in the majority of the men's sports, and even smaller numbers of Asian and Indigenous athletes and athletes who identify as two or more races (NCAA, 2021). The NCAA (2020) provided online programs addressing racial injustice in intercollegiate athletics from various perspectives. The online programs consisted of creating communities of belonging by providing best practices in learning how to be anti-racist.

At the university level across Canada, some anti-racism projects have been created to facilitate an inclusive and equal sporting environment for all athletes. For example, an anti-racism project by Ontario University Athletics (OUA) (2020) aims to collect information for developing strategies that would make the university sport environment inclusive and safe. The project drew its inspiration from the evidence of racial incidents across varsity sports and from the Black, Biracial and Indigenous Task Force of the OUA. Similarly, the Director of MacEwan University's Office of Human Rights, Diversity and Equity (2020),

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along with the university's athletics department and other community partners, have begun an initiative to address racism in hockey for the growth of the game. Planned activities include a virtual summit along with developing online resources for identifying and addressing racial discrimination in hockey. The project focuses on the community and university hockey organizations as opposed to the major professional hockey leagues. The project is driven by the notion that addressing the issue of racial discrimination would be the key for positive growth of the game.

Advances in initiatives around anti-racism, inclusivity, diversity, and representation among students are more likely to occur in Ontario universities due to their larger size, and the often- changing demographics of the student body (Douglas & Halas, 2013). Danford and Donnelly (2018), in their pilot study *Racial Representation in Canadian Interuniversity Sport*, focused on student representation among Canadian universities that had demographic data, including Ryerson University, University of Toronto, York University, McMaster University, Queen's University, Western University, McGill University, and the Universities of Alberta and British Columbia. The results of the study indicate that only 18.5% of the students were identified as First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black and racialized students. In addition, there were over 90% white students on hockey and volleyball teams, three quarters of the football team players were white, as were almost two thirds of the basketball players (Danford & Donnelly, 2018). The study also noted that students who do not identify as white are greatly underrepresented in the student population, and emphasized their data is limited as Canadian universities and university sports are behind on collecting data on the racial identities and demographics of student athletes and staff (Danford & Donnelly, 2018). A CBC report mentioned in the study indicates that 63 out of 76 Canadian universities cannot provide information regarding the racial demographics of their students (McDonald, 2017, as quoted in Danford & Donnelly, 2018).

The University of Toronto is leading the country in collecting information regarding the demographic data of student athletes. The Centre for Sport Policy Studies at the University of Toronto focuses on ensuring accessible and equitable sport for all, humane and healthy high-performance sport, and an educational mandate for sport in educational institutions. Empirically based research is utilized to focus on service of sport policy, monitoring and evaluation studies and education. A key goal of this approach is the participation of various organizations in sports and high-performance elite-level sports, with approaches that take into consideration the recent changes in societal perception of racism and inclusion in sport.





The mandates of the centre include providing greater working opportunities for scholars and students related to sports policies, advocating for students experiencing injustice and discrimination in university sports, and changing policies to ensure equality among other initiatives (University of Toronto, 2021).

The University of Toronto also created the Indigeneity, Diaspora, Equity and Anti-Racism in Sports (IDEAS) research lab, the first research lab to specifically focus on issues of race and movement cultures. The lab analyses these issues through the lens of critical race theory in sport, dance and physical education. The mission of the IDEAS lab includes developing theory, promoting knowledge, and developing programs that focus on anti-racism in various forms of sport. They also focus on academic and political work with a decolonizing approach. The lab is also collaborating with equity-focused individuals and organizations to focus on researching and highlighting Black excellence and investigating the oppression that minorities and racialized groups experience in society (University of Toronto, 2021).

McMaster University released a report in October of 2020, focusing on interviewing Black student-athletes about their experience in the McMaster athletics department, concluding that there is “a culture of systemic Anti-Black racism within McMaster Athletics as a result of individual group actions and inactions from staff, coaches and Department administrators” (Joseph et al., 2020, p. i). The report attributes this culture to a lack of awareness and education on the topics of racism and inclusivity. The report describes the gaps (such as absence of anti-racism policies and training programs) and provides suggestions for improvement including sharing the report with the public, focusing on representation, increasing accountability and other suggestions, supplemented by interviews with Black athletes and their allies (Joseph et al., 2020).

In an environmental scan of Manitoba, few universities are speaking out regularly and publicly against racism or publicizing any anti-racism initiatives they may be pursuing. The University of Manitoba is the first university in Canada to pass an anti-racism policy (Depatie, 2020). However, it only applies to the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences. The University of Manitoba Athletics (2021) website does not contain a statement of inclusion and diversity, nor mention any initiatives or events to increase awareness of anti-racism in sports. The University’s Athletic Council website (2021) mentions initiatives against bullying, involvement in Siloam Mission and community outreach, while initiatives and educational campaigns to address racism or promote anti-racism in sport are visibly absent. However, researchers and research assistants at the University of Manitoba are





a part of the ongoing anti-racism in sport campaign in Winnipeg, and representatives from Bison Sports are members of the project's advisory council. Other universities and colleges in Manitoba, including Red River College Polytechnique and Canadian Mennonite University, do not contain any initiatives for diversity and inclusion or statements specifically denouncing racism on their websites.

The University of Winnipeg Wesmen display social media posts in support of racialized and ethnocultural communities on their official website (Wesmen, 2021). The Wesmen athletic code of conduct mentions a focus on increasing awareness of pressing societal issues and concerns, emphasizes the focus on equality, diversity, and inclusion and aims for an environment free of racism, sexism, harassment, hazing and discrimination (Wesmen, 2021). Also, a representative from the University of Winnipeg Recreation Services is part of the ongoing Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign in Winnipeg as a member of the project's Advisory Committee and Working Groups.

The Brandon University Bobcats initiated a program in 2021, which focuses on striving towards gender equity, inclusion, and reconciliation in sports (Bobcats, 2021). The aim of the program is to increase awareness of social issues with the goal of improving the lives of marginalized populations and removing barriers to provide them with opportunities. The program is based on three pillars of anti-racism, diversity and inclusion, and youth active living and education (Bobcats, 2021). The athletes participating in the program also urge individuals to form alliances with others with similar goals to contribute to greater awareness in Manitoba. Students at the University of Winnipeg, University of Manitoba, and Brandon University collaborated in September 2020 to film a short video called "Wesmen, Bisons, Bobcats athletes unite against racism," in which three athletes from each school spoke about standing up against racism in sports, educating others about racial injustice and supporting one another on and off the field (McKendrick, 2020).

The Manitoba Colleges Athletic Conference (MCAC) does not have a publicly available official statements regarding inclusivity and diversity in sport. Forms and policies available on the site have not been updated since 2019, and only include a policy on the overall maintenance of respect and dignity in sport, with no indications related to racism or inclusion of minorities or racialized groups (MCAC, 2019). The code of ethics further emphasizes the responsibility of coaches to treat everyone fairly regardless of gender, place of birth, race, sexual orientation, and other factors, but omits information regarding actions that would be taken if racism or discrimination were to occur (MCAC, 2019). The Northern Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (NIAC), which consists of





colleges in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Manitoba also does not include on its websites any information pertaining to racism or actions to ensure inclusivity in sport (MCAC, 2019).

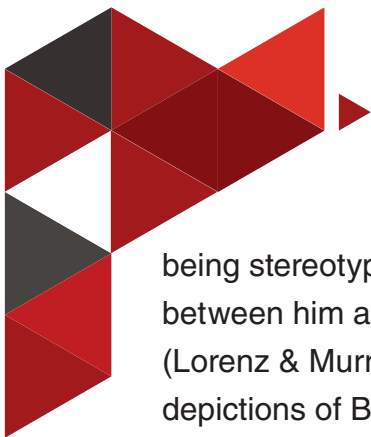
#### **4.4 Exploring Systemic Racism in Canadian Sport**

Racism in sport is not simply located in the interactions between persons from different races; the sporting structure and culture form embodies racist perspectives. From this point of view, consideration for how organizations, policies, programs, and more play a part in working against Indigenous, Black, and racialized communities is needed. The Star's (2021) coverage of the lack of equal participation opportunities, funding, the presence of income and social status inequities, and other gaps faced by newcomers, girls, and racialized communities provides an example of one such exploration.

Institutionalized racism and discrimination in Western Canada towards Chinese immigrants in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (e.g., being deemed unfit for assimilation and education by a federal report, a derogatory term being used in court whenever a case involved a person of Chinese descent, and Chinese gambling establishments being targeted more than others) by members of the judiciary was noted as blatant by Wamsley (1998), who also indicated that these perspectives were sometimes perpetuated in the media. In analysing data from Toronto Raptors games, five promotional videos, and two Toronto newspapers, Wilson (1997) found that the Toronto media stereotyped African-American athletes as either 'good' or 'bad' Black people based on the desired narrative. 'Good' Black people are those who are perceived to have achieved social mobility while also seen as displaying socially accepted qualities. Race is diminished in accounts related to these individuals and their choice to rise above the limitations of society is emphasized (Wilson, 1997). 'Bad' Black people are seen as more representative of African-American culture in dress and behaviour and representations related to them are filled with negative terminology, a focus on their shortcomings, negative backgrounds, history, and behaviours (Wilson, 1997).

In a case study on media narratives in Canada and the U.S.A., in relation to Black hockey player Ray Emery's portrayal, Lorenz and Murray (2014) note, "Media narratives of Emery's experience not only contributed to cultural constructions of Blackness in Canada and in hockey, they also demonstrated that such cultural constructions could be mobilized to constrain certain racialized forms of expression" (p. 43). This led to Ray



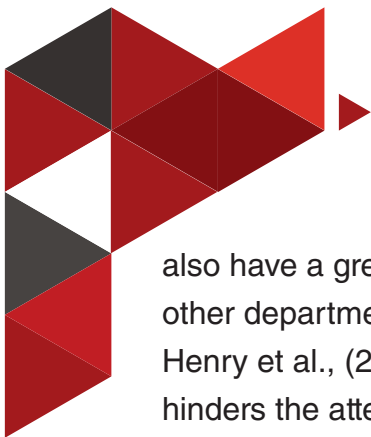


being stereotyped and avoided by his own teammates and the media with comparisons between him and his white peers forming a normal part of narratives surrounding him (Lorenz & Murray, 2014). The authors also highlight covert forms of racism found in depictions of Black athletes in Canada. The role of the media in racial depictions can also be called into focus in casting Wayne Gretzky as the hockey hero and Ben Johnson as the fallen hero in a possible attempt to protect or promote national identity (Jackson & Ponc, 2001), and when Donovan Bailey highlighted the covert racism existing in Canada when referencing the treatment of Ben Johnson after he tested positive for taking a banned substance (Maclean's, 1996). After Johnson won a medal, his Canadian heritage was highlighted but after testing positive for a banned substance, his Jamaican heritage was the identity attached to him. Bailey compared this treatment with that of Silken Laumann whose European heritage was never mentioned after she tested positive for a prohibited substance (Maclean's, 1996).

Along with sport organizations and the media in the management of ethnic culture and behaviour while preserving dominant ideologies (Lorenz & Murray, 2014), the physical education setting is also complicit in reproducing these narratives. While considering the makeup and inclusivity of Kinesiology and Physical Education Faculties across Canada, Douglas and Halas (2013) called for the disruption of the hegemony of whiteness in order to increase inclusivity in physical education. The authors questioned the authenticity of labels promoting Canadian multiculturalism when diversity and inclusion information is missing from higher education, and funding for these purposes remains inadequate. Along with the reproduction of narratives of whiteness through having a majority white faculty and students, "racism is produced through silence, invisibility and exclusion, as well as through often covert, embedded and accumulative actions that can be difficult to identify" (Douglas & Halas, 2013, p. 471). Despite slight changes over the years, the majority of undergraduate students in kinesiology and physical education departments remain mostly white, with small increases in the number of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized communities, depending on the university. While over 75% of the faculty members are white in the United States (Drake, 2021), the equivalent in Canada increases to over 94% (Douglas & Halas, 2013). More recent data in Canada is not available.

Despite amending policies and creating EDI task forces, the demographics of faculty members remain predominantly white and male, with First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized professors severely underrepresented (Henry et al., 2016). First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized communities faculty members





also have a greater chance of employment in the science and engineering fields, leaving other departments such as kinesiology and physical education predominantly white. Henry et al., (2016) further indicate that this contributes to the culture of whiteness that hinders the attention paid to eliminating incidents of racism towards First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized communities students and faculty.

#### **4.5 Anti-Indigenous Racism in Sport**

In any exploration of racism in sport, especially in North America, much can be learned by assessing perspectives related to attitudes and behaviours towards Indigenous populations of that country (O'Bonsawin, 2019). In Canada, recent research on Indigenous athletes' contributions to sport at the national and provincial levels showcase the extent that Indigenous Peoples' impacts and roles in sport history have been neglected (Forsyth 2020; Lamoureux, Taylor & Forsyth, 2021).

While researching Indigenous participation in Australian football, Hallinan and Judd (2012) noted that attitudes and societal perspectives towards the Indigenous population are still being perpetuated by the system in which they operate. While a picture of reconciliation is promoted, covert displays of racism towards the Indigenous population still exist and players are still perceived by some as a spectacle (Hallinan & Judd, 2012). The authors concluded that, "the contemporary relationship between Indigenous People and Australian football can be best understood as shaped by forms of enlightened racism" (p. 975). The distorted account of the Australian Football League's past in relation to the value of Indigenous People's contribution mirrors that of hockey in Canada. The same can be said for Lacrosse which Kossuth and McMurray (2015) noted as being thought of as Canada's national sport. As noted by Robidoux (2002), lacrosse originated from the First Nations game called 'baggatway', which was seen as counter to colonial perceptions of decency, was modernized and renamed by settlers, and then later used to promote a nationalist agenda by George Beers. This overall transformation of the sport resulted in a distortion of the origins, meaning and identity behind the original game, with lacrosse being identified as a distinctly Canadian pastime (Robidoux, 2002).

Barriers inhibiting Indigenous participation in sport have been acknowledged by multiple levels of government in Canada, who also note that there is a need to improve on issues related to access and equity in sport (Sport Canada Policy on Aboriginal People's Participation in Sport, 2005). This Sport Canada policy document highlighted the higher rates of racism affecting Indigenous youth while also emphasizing that racism



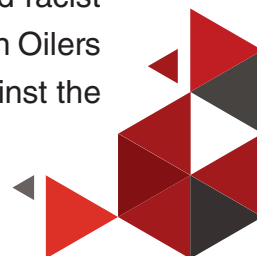




is systemic and reproduced in various segments of society, ongoing, socially constructed, and negatively affects Indigenous participation in society and sport. Some of the barriers mentioned include lack of cultural sensitivity to Indigenous ways of knowing, lack of proper sport supplies and infrastructure for sport, and structure of government and how it can inhibit access community sport programs. The document frames involvement in sport from a perspective of strengthening “the value base of Canada’s sport system and the quality of life of all people in Canada” (Sport Canada Policy on Aboriginal People’s Participation in Sport, 2005, p. 2).

After interviewing 41 Indigenous youth from urban health organizations and local high schools in three Canadian cities (Kamloops, Edmonton, and Winnipeg), Mason et al. (2019) noted that participants experienced racial discrimination in sport in and outside of school, “as a result of the many stereotypes and prejudices in society about Indigenous people” (p. 550). The individuals perpetuating racism in these instances included athletes, peers, teammates, and teachers. One of the stereotypes held was that Indigenous youth were lazy and unmotivated, and participants spoke of facing racist jokes that negatively impacted them emotionally, causing humiliation that resulted in some dropping out of sport. All this occurred while participants failed to receive understanding and empathy in relation to financial and family constraints along with a disregard in teaching for Indigenous ways of knowing (Mason et al., 2019). The authors noted that the racist behaviours of teachers in particular had an impact on how motivated the youth were to participate, but teachers who modelled anti-racist behaviour were essential in creating safe spaces for Indigenous youth. The authors called for an increase in cultural sensitivity from programmes. Similarly, a meta-study of qualitative research examining sport and recreation experiences of Indigenous youth by McHugh et al. (2019) highlighted the holistic benefits of participating in sport and recreation, that multiple levels of barriers (social, racism, financial, facilities/space/programs) exist related to participation, and that fostering relationships with Indigenous communities is important. The authors also noted that sport and recreation are importantly connected to the land for Indigenous youth, who also found unique ways to enjoy sport and recreation, a perspective shared by Paraschak & Thompson (2014).

Although racism and gender inequalities exist in relation to the Indigenous population in sport and society in Canada, participation in sport and recreation programmes have also been used by Indigenous participants as tools in the fight against gender and racist stereotypes (Hayhurst et al., 2015). Recently, an Indigenous player for the Edmonton Oilers hockey team, Ethan Bear, faced racist comments from fans after his team lost against the





Winnipeg Jets (Dhariwal, 2021; Bourne, 2021). Bear, with the support of his team and the NHL, responded to the racist comments by stating he is proud to play and represent himself, his community, and First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized individuals, in addressing racism in sport (Dhariwal, 2021).

While exploring the experiences of nine Tom Longboat Award winners from the Maritimes, Forsyth et al. (2016) note that racism and prejudice is inherent in mainstream sport through the ‘othering’ of Indigenous peoples. Participants navigated these experiences by ignoring comments or positioning them as a source of motivation, as well as by choosing to conceptualize these expressions as a competitive strategy. Some participants were witnesses and not targets of these behaviours. The authors also highlight that racism towards Indigenous participants occurred as a result of their appearance, team belongingness did not prevent racist experiences outside of sport, Indigenous sport participants in lacked mainstream ways of recognition outside of the media, and that acknowledgement of the individuality of different First Nations peoples is needed. All these examples provided serve to highlight that while attempts at inclusion, diversity, and equity have been pursued in relation to the sport and recreation participation of Indigenous, Black, and Racialized communities in Canada, racism and discrimination is still present, serves as a barrier to their involvement, and more work needs to be done to truly address these concerns systemically and individually.

## **5. Anti-Racism Initiatives in Sport**

As noted above, before developing programmes and policies to address racism and discrimination in any sphere, it is helpful to gain an understanding of what anti-racism encompasses to ensure that reasonable measures and strategies are employed. The SIRC’s definition of anti-racism (“the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably” (n.d.)) is an effective starting point for developing anti-racism initiatives. It is not simply taking a stand against racism, but it involves a combination of action and planning that seeks to address racism on multiple levels with the aim of empowering those who have been, or are perceived to be targets, of the phenomenon. Where sport is concerned, Hylton (2010) states that anti-racism, “must pose a level of resistance to sport’s pluralist ideologies of ‘level playing fields’ and ‘colour-blindness’” (p. 340).

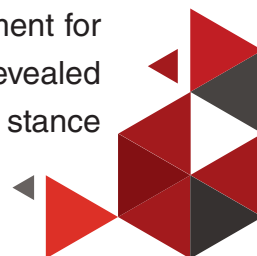
Many initiatives have been created to address racism in various forms across sport internationally. In British football (soccer), many organizations, programmes, and





policies have been implemented to address racism and discrimination, some of the most notable include Show Racism the Red Card (SRTRC) and, currently, No Room for Racism. SRTRC was established in 1996 as a part of the ongoing fight to tackle displays of racism in football (soccer) in the United Kingdom and it focuses on providing education (through workshops, resources, and events), establishing role models (using notable members throughout football (soccer) to assist in sharing their message), and highlighting the presence of institutional racism in sport (Dixon et al, 2016). No Room for Racism is an initiative created by the English Premier League (one of the most notable professional club football leagues in the world) with the aim of addressing racism, equality, diversity, and inclusion in the sport in conjunction with key stakeholders in the sport in England (Premier League, n.d.). The Mondiali Antirazzisti was created in Italy to create an atmosphere where varied ethnocultural communities (including dangerously hardcore fans known as ultras) could enjoy football (soccer) in a festival-like atmosphere that was diverse and integrated varied groups from the community in an environment free from competition (Sterchele & Saint-Blancat, 2015). This yearly football (soccer) tournament and cultural festival setting promoted diversity and provided an example of how sport and leisure spaces could be used to reduce discrimination (Sterchele & Saint-Blancat, 2015). Efforts at fighting racism are not always led by governments and sport institutions. In 2005, sport and recreation apparel giant Nike launched the Stand Up, Speak Up campaign in support of the fight against racism in European football (soccer). The campaign utilized advertisements with well-known football (soccer) players denouncing racism in the sport, and the sale of wristbands with the campaign slogan, with the profits going to the King Boudain Foundation which was responsible for the distribution of the funds to local initiatives focusing on anti-racism and pro-diversity in Europe (Müller et al., 2008).

Former National Football League player Colin Kaepernick has been at the forefront of efforts to combat social injustice in the USA by kneeling for the national anthem before games, a move now echoed across various sport leagues (Coombs, Lambert, Cassilo, & Humphries, 2020). Kaepernick's actions led to him being vilified by some players, fans and the general public, to the point where he was seen as an enemy of nationalism and to where his race and masculinity were attacked on avenues like social media (Schmidt et al., 2019), and also resulted in him being unofficially barred from employment in the NFL, which later resulted in a settlement (Boykoff & Carrington, 2020). His feature in an advertisement for Nike afterwards was met with differing perspectives as an analysis of responses revealed a racial divide where Black individuals were more supportive of athletes taking a stance





for off-field issues in comparison to white individuals (Intravia et al., 2020). After the recent death of George Floyd at the hands of a police officer in the USA, the Women's National Basketball Association and National Basketball Association players were vocal in their stand, with support from varied levels of administration, against the injustice that racialized communities face in America. The NBA and the WNBA (2020) also hosted an anti-racism teach-in, which was a series of conversations between prominent thought leaders such as Professor Ibram X. Kendi, and the members of NBA and WNBA aimed at voicing the issues of racism and discrimination in sports. Another notable initiative in sport was the USA's National Soccer Federation (2020) encouraging its players to utilize their social media handles in addressing the issue of racism in sports. The USA's Women's National Women's team wore BLM jackets during their line-up and for the playing of the national anthem while playing in the She Believes Cup (2020) and international friendlies (2020).

University sport athletes in Winnipeg also supported the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020, through the creation of a joint video sharing their perspectives, as a sign of solidarity in the fight against racial injustice (CTV News, 2020). Jesse Wentz has been an advocate for the changing of team names and mascots that are offensive to the Indigenous population, such as the Charleswood Hawks (Manitoba), a movement that has gathered more traction in recent years and that reaches even to the professional level (e.g., the Washington Football Team) (CBC, 2020). The effectiveness of this work is evident in the announcement in July 2021 that Cleveland's professional baseball team would change its name to the Cleveland Guardians prior to the next season (Bell, 2021). However, only two years ago, a Canadian study by the Angus Reid institute found that 56% of respondents believed that sport teams with names and/or logos that people find offensive should not be changed (Angus Reid, 2019). The prevalence of programmes and initiatives is a positive note in the fight against racism, but the effectiveness of these vehicles for change is up for debate.

Hockey organizations have implemented more policies and initiatives aimed at creating a more inclusive environment than other sports. The Hockey Diversity Alliance (HDA) is a hockey development program for "Black, Indigenous and children of colour" in the Toronto area founded in June 2020 by San Jose Sharks player Evander Kane, and retired NHL player Akim Aliu following the increase in Black Lives Matter protests (The Canadian Press, 2020; HDA, 2020). Their purpose is to eliminate systemic racism and intolerance in hockey, and to encourage greater diversity in the sport (HDA, 2020). To achieve these goals, the HDA collaborated or made plans to work with the NHL, the NHLPA, Hockey Canada, USA Hockey and other teams and organizations. Their approach focuses on change in all





levels of hockey, including educating and encouraging accountability from leagues and leaders and at lower levels, ensuring hockey is accessible to everyone. The HDA supports organizations with several different goals, including grassroots hockey development and equipment programs, anti-racism and unconscious bias education programs, social justice initiatives in support of Black, Indigenous and racialized communities, administration and fundraising, scholarships for qualified youth players, and executive training and coaching programs (HDA, 2020). On its official website, the HDA pledges to work towards changing policies and rules to ensure hockey is more inclusive, focusing on hiring and partnering with Black individuals and businesses, increasing educational programs that focus on awareness of racism in hockey, and helping fund impactful social justice initiatives (HDA, 2020).

Hockey Nova Scotia (2021) acknowledged the lack of diversity and the impact of racism in hockey through their diversity and inclusion report. Although progress has been made by Hockey Nova Scotia in the creation of programs for various underrepresented groups (e.g., Black youth, newcomers to Canada, Indigenous girls, and parasport participants), the taskforce put forward recommendations to improve diversity in hockey in Nova Scotia. These recommendations included recommendations to changes in board composition through the addition of a permanent seat for the person chairing the task force, connecting with the public to discover ways that changes which support diversity could be enacted, and creating a separate entity which would be responsible for managing most of the recommendations.

In 2020, following the accusations and criticism of the NHL for its decision to continue games after the shooting of a 29-year old Black man, Jacob Blake, in Wisconsin, the NHL announced several anti-racism and inclusion initiatives, one of which mandates that all hockey teams are to receive mandatory inclusion and diversity training in a training camp before the 2021 season (The Canadian Press, 2020; Kang, 2020). NHL employees will take part in an “inclusion learning experience” that focuses on “anti-racism, unconscious bias, dimensions of identity, micro-aggressions and cultural competency” (The Canadian Press, 2020, para. 2). Along with the mandatory training, the NHL formed an executive inclusion council and a player inclusion committee to address the issue of racism in sport. These changes were only put in place after actions were taken by NHL players, independently of the league, who pushed for a two-day stop in the games to share the message that “racial injustice is bigger than sport” (Seravalli, 2020, para. 6). For a short time, the NHL shared the #WeSkateFor campaign that changed from #WeSkateForBlackLives and #WeSkateForEquality into “WeSkateForTheLou promoting







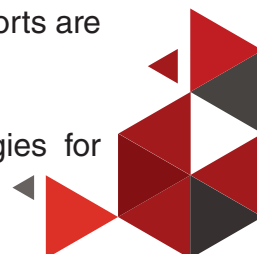
the teams that were competing at the time instead of sharing a message about the prevalence of racism in sport. Seravalli (2020) demonstrates that the NHL utilized this campaign for public relations and improved positive perception, while abandoning their commitment to improve the environment of the sport.

The NHL has started engaging in conversations to increase diversity in its business and develop strategies to include more minority organizations in hockey. These changes were proposed in response to the HDA's request for action to be taken to acknowledge the racism players experience on and off the ice. The HDA (2020) submitted a list of eight demands to the league, including ensuring no barriers for Black individuals for getting employed and promoted within the league with specific objectives for each season, greater utilization of Black suppliers, ensuring the voices of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized players are heard and are included in changing the hockey culture, anti-racism education, HDA approved policies to enforce zero tolerance of racial discrimination, withdraw support from organizations that accept or fail to respond to racism of any kind, transparent sharing of data with the HDA, and providing the HDA with funding to support their initiatives, program development and training to reduce and eliminate racism in hockey (HDA, 2020).

However, in October 2020 the HDA decided to separate from the collaboration with the NHL, releasing a statement indicating the absence of support from the NHL after proposing a pledge with their requirements (HDA, 2020). The press release indicated that the NHL focused on maintaining public relations instead of having important conversations of race that are needed in the sport. The HDA statement expressed their disappointment in the inaction of the NHL to commit to ending systemic racism in hockey and will continue to work towards their goals separately from the NHL (HDA, 2020). Following their press release, the NHL refused to acknowledge their lack of support for the pledge (The Canadian Press, 2020).

Hockey in Canada developed a 'policy paper for anti-racism in hockey in Canada' which was developed at the Racism in Hockey roundtable at Queen's University in March 2019. The paper seeks to address the importance of having a culture of inclusion and acceptance, by recommending policy changes, and highlighting the need to re-educate, and discusses the importance of anti-racism to coaches, parents, players, and officials involved in the sport of hockey. The main components of racialized inequality in sports are described in three parts, namely, power, privilege, and access (Szto et al., 2019).

Sport Manitoba (2020) utilizes prevention as one of their many strategies for






addressing racism and developing value in sports in their next five-year plan (2020-2025). Sport Manitoba (2020) seeks to create awareness about the value and positive impact of sports in the society through marketing and communications, with one strategy being the education of parents and guardians on issues in the Manitoban sport context. Representatives from Sport Manitoba are part of the ongoing Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign in Winnipeg and sit as members of the project's Advisory Committee and Working Groups. Hockey Manitoba (2020), following the guidelines of Hockey Canada, has also introduced anti-racist initiatives for making hockey in Manitoba more inclusive. One significant step taken by the organization was providing support in the call for the cessation of the use of team nicknames that are deemed offensive or racist. Self-education on the issue and the facilitation of discussions on ways to develop strategies to address racism and discrimination in sports were identified by Hockey Manitoba as integral components in creating the initiatives.

Currently, the Winnipeg Jets hockey team does not have policies or initiatives independent of the NHL that are available to the public. At this time, there is no method of ensuring if the Jets are complying with the NHL anti-racism mandate, or evidence that the NHL is implementing and following up on its promise to eliminate racism in hockey (The Canadian Press, 2020). The official Winnipeg Jets website has no mention of inclusion of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized community members. However, an online search showed that the Jets are working with the Winnipeg Aboriginal Sport Achievement Centre (WASAC), a non-profit organization focused on Indigenous youth and families to help them participate in sports, culture, and recreation (NHL.com, 2021). This program is part of the NHL's "This is Hockey" initiative, which aims to promote diversity and inclusion in hockey and emphasize the importance of creating an environment where members of the community can feel safe and included. Collaborations with WASAC include specially made WASAC jerseys for auction and presentations to feature First Nations, Métis, and Inuit art among others (NHL.com, 2021).

In June 2021, the Manitoba Junior Hockey League (MJHL) released a plan to implement a new Anti-Racism Player Education Program to strengthen their league policies, with a focus on verbal taunts, insults, and intimidating actions based on discriminatory behaviour (MJHL, 2021). Their goal to is provide greater support to First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, and Racialized communities, athletes, staff and families. Starting in the 2021-2022 season, the MJHL will hold anti-racism player education seminars for their players, coaches and support staff and will cover a range of topics including educating MJHL members on First Nations, Métis Nation, and Inuit Peoples sensitivity and cultural



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awareness training, and anti-discrimination and anti-oppression education. The goals of the seminars include providing players and staff with the proper terminology regarding anti-discrimination and oppression, aiding players and staff in identifying problematic behaviours in themselves and others, and involving players and staff in changing hockey culture to be more respectful and inclusive (MJHL, 2021). To further the program's effectiveness, those who do not comply with the program and do not respect other players on ice will face penalties. The first infraction will include a three-game suspension with subsequent infractions resulting in longer suspensions, some of which may be indefinite (MJHL, 2021). The MJHL also worked with APTN Hockey Hopes Program to show the importance of inclusion in hockey. In this program, each MJHL team makes two school visits: one to an Indigenous school and another to a non-Indigenous school to read to classes, talk about inclusivity and answer questions (MJHL, 2021).

At the national level, Hockey Canada issued a statement denouncing racism (Hockey Canada, 2020), and the Canadian Football League (CFL) have been noted for providing greater opportunities to Black players than they could find in the National Football League (NFL) (Khalid, 2016). In 2018, the CFL launched the "Diversity Is Strength" campaign that kicked off the season with a diversity theme in Toronto (CFL. CA Staff, 2020). The campaign continues to highlight the importance of diversity and inclusion in the league and in the country, themes that build upon their campaigns from the previous years. This initiative involves all the CFL teams who will organize various activities into their game days during the campaign. Some activities included hosting visitors from remote parts of Canada, engaging in citizenship ceremonies for new Canadians, and having cultural showcases during pre-games and halftime to celebrate heritage and community (CFL.ca Staff, 2020). In addition, the CFL will honour twelve trailblazers on their achievements, one of whom is Winnipeg Blue Bombers' Ibrahim "Obby" Khan (CFL.ca, 2020).

### **5.1 Anti-Racism, Inclusion and Diversity Policies**

Several prominent sport teams in Winnipeg have recently taken some steps towards emphasizing inclusion and diversity policies. However, they are still behind sports teams in the United States and other provinces in Canada (Douglas & Halas, 2013; The Drake Group, 2021). The CFL's Winnipeg Blue Bombers have taken an active role in the previously described Diversity Is Strength Campaign of the CFL. They included a statement about diversity on their official website, which emphasizes Canada's diversity and the strength that comes from it. The CFL's diversity statement, welcomes players from all backgrounds




and emphasizes the signing the league's first Black quarterback. They also mention participating in shows of diversity during their game days. While their website does not contain specific information regarding anti-racism programs or initiatives (Blue Bombers, 2021). A representative from the Winnipeg Blue Bombers is part of the ongoing Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign in Winnipeg as a member of the project's Advisory Committee and Working Groups. Also, alumnae athletes from the team have been trained by the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign and delivers school presentations on anti-racism in sport to middle school students.

Similarly, Winnipeg's baseball team, the Goldeyes, does not have any statements on their websites regarding diversity, inclusion, or racism (Goldeyes, 2021). In 2016, they had an "inaugural diversity day" to celebrate inclusivity in games and seasons. Emphasis was placed on the organization being a family that welcomes the diversity among their players, fans, office staff and seasonal workers who provide an awareness of diversity and inclusion among their community. The celebration involved Winnipeg's mayor Brian Bowman who recognized the year 2016 as the year of reconciliation with Indigenous communities (Goldeyes, 2021). The Goldeyes players created a video for the "You Can Play project" that focuses on promoting and ensuring the safety and inclusion for all who participate in sports, including 2SLGBTQ+ athletes, coaches and fans (Goldeyes, 2021). A representative from the Winnipeg Goldeyes is part of the ongoing Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign in Winnipeg as a member of the project's Advisory Committee and Working Groups. Also, an athlete from the team has been trained by the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign and delivers school presentations on anti-racism in sport to middle school students.

Winnipeg's professional soccer team, Valour FC, does not have specific initiatives or policies against racism mentioned on their website either (Canadian Premier League, 2020). However, their overview of the past year focuses on the Island Games, where the league and the players shared powerful messages about social justice and the BLM movement. They focused on spreading a message about the importance of anti-racism. The message was displayed before every match of the season, and during the tournament the head coach of the team spoke with a Winnipeg community leader and member of the Shamattawa Cree Nation and wore a black arm band to honour the murdered and missing Indigenous women of Manitoba (Canadian Premier League, 2020). Since Valour FC is part of the Canadian Premier League, on August 27, the team stood together along with the other teams to support the BLM movement. The Valour FC website states the team's commitment to taking action to work towards change and making an impact on communities by using their platform to support racial equality. Valour FC also circulated a



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four-minute video about racial equality narrated by Andrew Jean-Baptiste, a Black player, to spread their message on social media platforms (Canadian Premier League, 2020). A representative from Valour FC is part of the ongoing Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign in Winnipeg as a member of the project's Advisory Committee and Working Groups. Some athletes from the team have also been trained by the Anti-Racism in Sport Campaign and deliver school presentations on anti-racism in sport to middle school students.

Other teams have also shown initiative to spread awareness of racism and discrimination, mainly in hockey and football. However, as previously noted, the NHL and other leagues were more likely to release a statement about their intentions without implementing policies and initiatives (HDA, 2021). Therefore, it often falls upon individual players to speak out about racism in the sport, such as the Vancouver Canucks who talked to the opposing team and their Black players about continuing playing days after the shooting of unarmed Jacob Blake. This conversation led to the two-day shutdown of the Stanley Cup playoffs (MacIntyre, 2020). Other teams, such as the BC Lions, created a podcast "Move the Chains," consisting of videos and live seminars to emphasize the importance of the Black Lives Matter movement, systemic racism, women in sports and other initiatives (CFL Enterprises LP, 2021). This new platform is used to bring awareness of many social issues. The podcasts are readily available on many streaming services and emphasize candid conversations with coaches, coordinators, players, media, and other guests (CFL Enterprises LP, 2021). The players on the Calgary Flames hockey team spoke out about racism in 2019, particularly the racial slurs and comments their now former coach regularly directed towards the Black players on the team. The players encouraged others to speak out about racist behaviours among the participants of the sport to eliminate the culture of silence regarding racism and micro-aggressions (Rodriguez, 2019). More recently, racist comments against the Indigenous player Ethan Bear of the Edmonton Oilers showed the high prevalence of racism in hockey and its fan base, supporting the idea that hockey in Canada remains a predominantly white sport in a country with increasingly diverse population (Bondy, 2021; Dhariwal, 2021). On and off the ice, microaggressions and racist incidents occur to the point that every adult Black hockey player has experienced racism several times in the sport, and many children share that experience in their lives as athletes as well (Bondy, 2021).

Professional teams and players stood in support of the Black Lives Matter movement by either raising a fist in the air or taking a knee during national anthems. Professional players have also used their respective social media handles to voice their concerns about racial





injustice in society, and the importance of this stance in creating a better and inclusive sporting environment. Players from the Canadian Football League, National Hockey League, and Canadian Premier League stood in support of BLM by sharing their related personal experiences with racism while also bringing awareness to the importance of addressing the issues in society related to racism.

Nearly a decade ago, William Douglas created a blog in 2012 called *Colour of Hockey*, for fans and players of colour in hockey, as a platform for addressing and sharing individual experiences and stories of people of colour in hockey. The blog covers numerous players and their experiences as Indigenous, Black and Racialized athletes participating in the sport of hockey, otherwise not known to be a diverse sport. One of the initiatives in *Colour of Hockey* was started by Yvan Mongo, a forward on the University of Ottawa men's hockey team in light of George Floyd's death and his own experience with racism from team members he thought respected him. He wanted to take action to address racism in society and in hockey. His program, *Mongo's Brave Buddies*, focuses on encouraging young people of all backgrounds to attend games and practices and spend time with Mongo and talk to him about their experiences of racism in daily life. White players on Mongo's team are eager to help with the program to show young people that this is not the same reality they have to face daily (Douglas, 2020).

## **5.2 The Effectiveness of Programmes and Issues to Consider**

The viability and effectiveness of anti-racism groups in the contemporary fight against racism is unclear. Evaluation of the Show Racism the Red Card program identified many barriers that can negatively impact the work being done or the message being shared, including the strong influence of previous generations (e.g., parents, grandparents), the fallibility of role models used in the programs, and the lack of acknowledgement of the presence of institutionalized racism (Dixon et al., 2016). While corporations like Nike can play a significant part in changing negative cultures in sport and be an integral ally in the fight against racism in sport, their efforts should aim to address racism and discrimination in all their iterations in sport and the general society, as well as bring attention to the ways they are reproduced. In an examination of the impact of Nike's campaign, 112 respondents (12-50 years old, Dutch and Non-Dutch backgrounds and ethnicities, those who suffered racist abuse and those who had not) believed that the campaign was a positive one, but still found it ineffective in addressing the primary concern of racism and discrimination in sport (Müller et al., 2008). A scoping review of the Sport for Development (SFD) programmes in Indigenous communities in Canada resulted in Gardam et al. (2017) calling for more





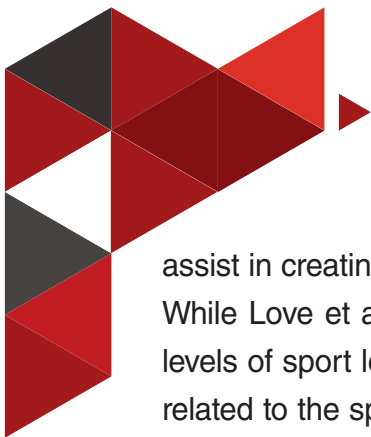
collaboration, mentorship, and community engagement, as well as further research that will help to shape policy decisions related to sport. Before creating any programme or policy related to addressing anti-racism in sport, one should keep all these considerations in mind.

Garner-Manzon and Giles (2016) note that SFD programme participation can have beneficial impact in the fight against racism by highlighting issues related to race and privilege and through building allegiances. Cleland and Cashmore's (2014) work gives rise to the consideration for the identity of those who are in the positions of power and representation in sport organizations. The role of structural forces in the perpetuation of racism in sport cannot be ignored. The motive for the involvement of corporations in areas related to social responsibility comes under scrutiny as Müller et al.'s (2008) work prompts a consideration for whether or not this involvement is guided solely by goodwill. Regardless, organization's attempts at fighting racism in sport should be careful not to paint Indigenous, Black, and racialized communities as the 'other' (as conceptualized by Forsyth et al., 2016) in the dynamic and Hylton (2010) encourages those doing anti-racism work to ensure that initiatives result in action and not only speech. Forsyth et al. (2016) note that acknowledging the diversity in experiences is essential for sport leaders and researchers in addressing the impact of 'othering' and these perspectives should be placed "at the forefront of their strategy for program, policy and research development" (p. 1958). Sport organizations should institute severe sanctions (e.g., banning guilty fans for life, creating networks for reporting incidents of racism, and more stringent fines) against racism (Cleland & Cashmore, 2014) and actively work at creating organizational cultures that promote diversity and inclusivity, which "fosters diversity, equity, and inclusion increases productivity, loyalty and marketability for the organization" (Cooper et al., 2020, p. 14). Legislation, as highlighted by Gardiner and Riches (2016), is helpful and forms a part of the overall approach to addressing racism in sport, but care should be taken in instituting a Rooney Rule (guaranteeing interviews to Black Minority and Ethnic [BME] for head coaching positions in the NFL) replica that could possibly result in positive discrimination and tokenism (Gardiner & Riches, 2016).

### **5.3 The Importance of Understanding Racism in Sport in Winnipeg**

The aim of this project is to capture a more comprehensive understanding of the presence of racism in sport in Winnipeg, Manitoba. In moving beyond theory to practical application, we can play a role in addressing racism in its myriad forms of existence in sport in order to





assist in creating a more diverse and inclusive sport context in Winnipeg that is free of racism. While Love et al. (2019) note the presence of racism, stereotypes, and inequalities at varied levels of sport leadership and administration, there is a lack of sufficient empirical information related to the sport context in Winnipeg to either support or reject this notion. There is a need for an understanding of the comprehensive nature of racism in sport in Winnipeg, including an examination of diversity and inclusion in sport systems, the perspectives and experiences of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized, and religious minority communities in Winnipeg sport contexts, and the level of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized, and religious minority communities' representation in positions of power in Winnipeg sport. With very little in the literature detailing the experiences of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized, and religious minority communities in Winnipeg with racism, we are left with the following questions: What are the experiences of First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized, and religious minority communities with racism in sport in Winnipeg? How is racism First Nations, Métis Nation, Inuit, Black, Racialized, and religious minority communities demonstrated in sport in Winnipeg? How are sport systems in Winnipeg supporting or resisting racism in sport in Winnipeg? What initiatives have been implemented in order to address racism in sport in Winnipeg? How is racism in sport in Winnipeg perceived by the related stakeholder (athletes, coaches, administration, board members, ownership, teachers, officials/referees, fans/observers, and the general public)? It is our belief that an exploration of the varied sport contexts (professional, semi-professional, recreational, educational, and community) will go some way towards answering these questions.

The City of Winnipeg recently hosted its first ever Anti-Racism week (March 21 to 27, 2021) under the theme “What would Winnipeg look like without racism?” (Winnipeg, n.d.). It forms part of an initiative to address issues related to racism in a city that was labelled by Maclean’s magazine as the most racist in Canada while detailing its treatment of the city’s First Nations, Métis Nation, and Inuit population (Macleans, 2015). It is evident that if racism is seen as a problem in the society in general, sub-sections such as the sporting context cannot be completely free from its perpetuation and effects. This project will play its part in unearthing the depths of these issues in Winnipeg to inform and assist those developing anti-racism policies and initiatives in addressing racism more effectively. If Canada’s most beloved professional sports league, the NHL, can exist successfully with players from First Nations, Métis Nation, Black, and Racialized players constituting 5% of its population (Boyd, 2020), and sport-related figures of prominence can voice discriminatory opinions in 2020 and 2021, then Bradbury and Williams (2006) are correct in stating that, “The appearance of change is, after all, not change at all” (p. 82).





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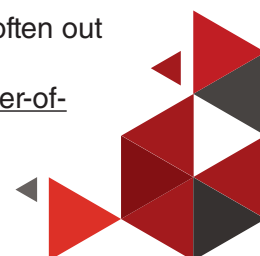


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## Appendix II – University of Manitoba Research Ethics and Compliance Certificate



**University  
of Manitoba**

**Research Ethics and Compliance**

Human Ethics - Fort Garry  
208-194 Dafoe Road  
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N2  
T: 204 474 8872  
humanethics@umanitoba.ca

### PROTOCOL APPROVAL

**To:** Leisha Strachan - Principal Investigator  
Sarah Teetzel - Co-Principal Investigator  
Lori Wilkinson - Co-Principal Investigator

**From:** Jonathan Marotta, Chair  
Research Ethics Board 1 (REB 1)

**Re:** Protocol # R1-2021:065 (HS24886)  
Exploring Experiences with Racism and Anti-Racism in Sport in  
Winnipeg



**Effective:** May 12, 2021

**Expiry:** May 12, 2022

Research Ethics Board 1 (REB 1) has reviewed and approved the above research.

REB 1 is constituted and operates in accordance with the current [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans – TCPS 2 \(2018\)](#).

This approval is subject to the following conditions:

- i. Approval is granted for the research and purposes described in this application only.
- ii. Any changes to this research must be approved by the Human Ethics Office (HEO) before implementation.
- iii. Any deviations to the research or adverse events must be reported to the HEO immediately.
- iv. This approval is valid for one year only. A Renewal Request Form must be submitted and approved prior to the above expiry date.
- v. A Study Closure Form must be submitted to the HEO when the research is complete prior to the above expiry date, or if the research is terminated.
- vi. The University of Manitoba (UM) may request to audit your research documentation to confirm compliance with this approved protocol, and with the UM [Ethics of Research Involving Humans](#) policies and procedures.

**Funded Protocols:** Email a copy of this Protocol Approval, with the corresponding UM Project Number, to [ResearchGrants@umanitoba.ca](mailto:ResearchGrants@umanitoba.ca)



## Appendix III – Participant Informed Consent Form



**UM** | Faculty of Kinesiology and  
Recreation Management

102 Frank Kennedy Centre

University of Manitoba  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

R3T 2N2

Research Project Title: Exploring Experiences with Racism and Anti-Racism in Sport in Winnipeg

Principal Investigators: Dr. Leisha Strachan (leisha.strachan@umanitoba.ca), Dr. Sarah Teetzel (sarah.teetzel@umanitoba.ca), Dr. Lori Wilkinson (lori.wilkinson@umanitoba.ca)

Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management, Department of Sociology, University of Manitoba

My name is Craig Brown and I am a research assistant working on the Exploring Experiences with Racism and Anti-Racism in Sport in Winnipeg project at the University of Manitoba. This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The purpose of this study is to gather information from athletes and sport stakeholders (decision makers, coaches, administrators, referees, and players) within the sport context (professional, semi-professional, educational, community, and recreational) in relation to their experiences with racism and anti-racism in sport in Winnipeg. This is being done in order to gain an understanding of whether or not racism and/or discrimination exists within the sporting context in Winnipeg and if so, what does it look like and what can be done to address it. This research project is a part of IPWs goal to use this research to implement activities through their Anti-Racism in Sport campaign and identify opportunities for partnership, education, and creation of activities that aid in addressing racism and discrimination at various levels of sport in Winnipeg.

If you agree to participate in this focus group, you will be interviewed using open-ended questions in a focus group online using Microsoft Teams that is expected to last approximately 60 to 90 minutes. You will also be asked to review the typed transcript of that focus group, which may take approximately 30 minutes. Each interview/focus group will be recorded on Microsoft Teams and audio recorded using a small digital audio recorder to allow for the subsequent transcription (by **an authorized transcription service**) of each participant's observations, while we may also take notes during the interview. **The transcription service will use the audio files from each focus group (with directly identifying information) to create the transcriptions but will delete all related files (audio and text) from their**





**records seven days after completion of the transcripts. The transcription service will not share the information with any other parties.** This information will only be used for evaluation purposes and will be securely stored for the duration of this study. The digital recorder will be stored in a locked cabinet in the Qualitative Research Lab at room 125 Frank Kennedy Centre, to which I, apart from the departmental backup, have the only key at my personal residence. The digital interview notes and recordings will be stored using Microsoft Teams in a secure folder, to which only the members of the research team will have access. You will be provided with a copy of the transcript, which will be sent to you using Microsoft Teams, of your contribution within four (4) weeks of the focus group taking place. You will have the option to review, verify, and if necessary modify your comments by adding or deleting any material. Your feedback is requested within three (3) weeks' time, after which it will be assumed that revisions are not needed. Once the evaluation is completed, you will be informed of the findings. The questions asked will focus on your sport experiences in Winnipeg, specifically those related to racism and discrimination in sport.

You will be asked to choose a pseudonym/fictional name (see instructions below), meaning that any details discussed during the focus group that might be used to identify you directly will be removed from the transcript and your name will not be used in the study. Though you may be over the age of 18 and have the right to be identified by your name if you so choose, which you also have the right to waive, the use of a pseudonym is meant to protect participants from any reputational or social risk. If participating in a focus group, we will not be able to guarantee the anonymity of all participants. All participants, however, will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement, committing to maintaining the anonymity and confidentiality of all aspects of the focus group interaction, including participant and organization identity.

The potential risk of waiving confidentiality is the fact that you may not want your actual name associated with what you discuss as your past experiences or opinions could potentially become public knowledge. Only you and the research team will have access to the primary research data. You will have access to the transcription of your focus group contribution. Only the research team will have access to any other data. All audio recordings, observation notes, and transcription notes will be destroyed in July 2022. The recorded interviews will be deleted from the audio recording device while all digital files will be deleted from Teams. Paper records will be shredded.

You are under no obligation to participate in a focus group. If you do choose to participate, you will be free to raise questions or concerns with any member of the research team who is present and will have the opportunity to view the transcript contents of your contribution before the completion of this study. You may withdraw from this study at any time, up until the start of data analysis (approximately June 2021), by notifying a member of the research team via telephone or email and all records of your participation will be destroyed.

You will not be subjected directly to any physical or emotional risks beyond the most minimal risks. You should be assured that you do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer nor would you be expected to divulge any information that you are not comfortable sharing. If you do feel discomfort at any time, you can pause or stop your participation in the focus group. Please remember you do not have to answer any question you do not want to and have the option to withdraw from the study at any time, up until the submission of the final findings (approximately July 2021).







Although the findings of this evaluation will primarily benefit you by possibly addressing racism and discrimination in sport in Winnipeg, by participating you will be contributing to the production of new knowledge in this area. You will also be providing sport stakeholders with vital information that could inform their approaches to addressing racism and discrimination going forward. It is unlikely that you will receive any direct benefit from taking part in this study aside from a \$25 gift card from one of Skip the Dishes, Superstore, or Good Local for your participation. If you would like to receive a brief (1-3 pages) summary of the findings, they will be provided to you no later than June 2021.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researcher or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the evaluation at any time, up until the start of the analysis of the data (approximately June 2021), and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation. The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the evaluation is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba, Fort Garry Campus. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact the Human Ethics Coordinator at 204-474-7122, or by e-mail at [humanethics@umanitoba.ca](mailto:humanethics@umanitoba.ca). A copy of this consent form will be given to you to keep for your records and reference.

---

Participant's Signature

Date

---

Researcher and/or Delegate's Signature

Date

1. Please indicate how you would like to be identified within this study:

†By name: \_\_\_\_\_ †By pseudonym: \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: You have the option to revise your preference when you review the transcript of this interview.*

2. Please indicate how you would like to receive a copy of your focus group transcript for review:

†Email: \_\_\_\_\_

†Post: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix IV – Assent Form for Youth Participants



**UM** | Faculty of Kinesiology and  
Recreation Management

Research  
Project Title:  
Exploring  
Experiences

with Racism and Anti-Racism in Sport in Winnipeg

Principal Investigators: Dr. Leisha Strachan (leisha.strachan@umanitoba.ca), Dr. Sarah Teetzel (sarah.teetzel@umanitoba.ca), Dr. Lori Wilkinson (lori.wilkinson@umanitoba.ca)

My name is Craig Brown and I am a research assistant for the project Exploring Experiences with Racism and Anti-Racism in Sport in Winnipeg. This assent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The purpose of this study is to gather information from athletes and sport stakeholders (decision makers, coaches, administrators, referees, and players) within the sport context (professional, semi-professional, educational, community, and recreational) in relation to their experiences with racism and anti-racism in sport in Winnipeg. This is being done in order to gain an understanding of whether or not racism and/or discrimination exists within the sporting context in Winnipeg and if so, what does it look like and what can be done to address it. This research project is a part of IPWs goal to use this research to implement activities through their Anti-Racism in Sport campaign and identify opportunities for partnership, education, and creation of activities that aid in addressing racism and discrimination at various levels of sport in Winnipeg.

If you agree to participate in this focus group, you will join a group of 4-9 other people online using Microsoft Teams for about 60 to 90 minutes. I will record the discussion and type up a summary. I will send you the summary to read and see if you want to make any changes to it. That will take about 30 more minutes of your time. The recording and our notes will be kept safe and no one but the research team **and a professional service that will convert the audio files to text** will have access to them. **The professional service that converts the audio to text will have access to that directly identifying information while they do the conversion, but once they are finished and send the files back to us, they will delete all the files from their records after seven days in order to protect your privacy and confidentiality. They will not share your information with anyone else.** Your feedback is requested within three (3) weeks' time, after which it will be assumed that revisions are not needed. Once we have finished the research project, we will send you the findings. The questions asked will focus on your



experiences providing sport services in Winnipeg, specifically those related to racism and discrimination in sport.

You will be asked to choose a different name to be referred to (a pseudonym - see below), meaning that any details discussed during the focus group that might be used to identify you directly will be removed from the transcript and your name will not be used in the study.

We cannot guarantee that no one will ever know what you said in the online meeting. Everyone who participates will have to sign a confidentiality agreement, committing to not talking about what other people said.

Only the research team will have access to any other data **than what was mentioned previously**. All audio recordings, observation notes, and transcription notes will be destroyed in July 2022. The recorded interviews will be deleted from the audio recording device while all digital files will be deleted from Microsoft Teams. Paper records will be shredded.

It is your choice if you want to participate or not. If you do choose to participate, you will be free to raise questions or concerns with any member of the research team who is present and will have the opportunity to view the transcript contents of your contribution before the completion of this study. You may withdraw from this study at any time, up until the start of data analysis (approximately June 2021), by notifying a member of the research team via telephone or email and all records of your participation will be destroyed.

You will not be subjected directly to any physical or emotional risks beyond the most minimal risks. You should be assured that you do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer nor would you be expected to divulge any information that you are not comfortable sharing. If you do feel discomfort at any time, you can pause or stop your participation in the focus group. **A counsellor from Elmwood Community Resource Centre [Charlene Connors] may be present at your focus group. The role of the counsellor is to help anyone who experiences difficult emotions to leave the focus group feeling supported. The counsellor may offer you the option to participate in a calming exercise before you log off.** Please remember you do not have to answer any question you do not want to and have the option to withdraw from the study at any time, up until the submission of the final findings (approximately July 2021).

This study might benefit you by possibly addressing racism and discrimination in sport in Winnipeg, by participating you will be contributing to the production of new knowledge in this area. You will also be providing sport stakeholders with vital information that could inform their approaches to addressing racism and discrimination going forward. It is unlikely that you will receive any direct benefit from taking part in this study aside from a \$25 gift card from one of Skip the Dishes, Superstore, or Good Local for your participation. If you would like to receive a brief (1-3 pages) summary of the findings, they will be provided to you no later than June 2021.

By signing below, it means that you have understood what this project is about and what participating involves, and you agree to take part. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researcher or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the evaluation at any time, up until the start of the analysis of the data (approximately June 2021), and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or





consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation. The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the evaluation is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba, Fort Garry Campus. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact the Human Ethics Coordinator at 204-474-7122, or by e-mail at [humanethics@umanitoba.ca](mailto:humanethics@umanitoba.ca). A copy of this assent form will be given to you to keep for your records and reference.

---

Participant's Signature

Date

---

Parent's/Legal Guardian's Signature

Date

(For participants 17 years and younger)

---

Researcher and/or Delegate's Signature

Date

1. Please indicate how you would like to be identified within this study:

† By name: \_\_\_\_\_ † By pseudonym: \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: You have the option to revise your preference when you review the transcript of this interview.*

2. Please indicate how you would like to receive a copy of your focus group transcript for review:

† Email: \_\_\_\_\_

† Post: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

3. If you would like to receive a summary of the findings of this research, please indicate the method by which you would like this delivered to you:

† Email: \_\_\_\_\_





↑ Post: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher and/or Delegate's Signature      Date

1. Please indicate how you would like to be identified within this study:

↑ By name: \_\_\_\_\_ ↑ By pseudonym: \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: You have the option to revise your preference when you review the transcript of this interview.*

2. Please indicate how you would like to receive a copy of your focus group transcript for review:

↑ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

↑ Post: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

3. If you would like to receive a summary of the findings of this research, please indicate the method by which you would like this delivered to you:

↑ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

↑ Post: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_





## Appendix V – Focus Group Guide

### Demographics

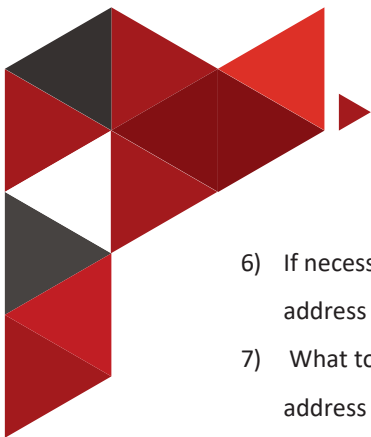
- 1) Please confirm the name/pseudonym you've selected and which sport(s) are you associated with
- 2) What specific sport service do you offer?
- 3) How long have you been involved with your sport program and in what capacity/position?
- 4) Where in Winnipeg is your sport program located?
- 5) What is the normal demographic of the participants in your sport program?
- 6) How often do you interact with the participants within your sport program?
- 7) Why did you volunteer to participate in this study?

### Preliminary Questions on Racism

1. How do you define discrimination and what does it look like to you?
2. How do you define racism and what does it look like to you?
3. What is your opinion on racism in Canada? (Probe: What is an example of what you have observed?)
4. In your general experiences in Winnipeg, where have you witnessed racism and/or discrimination demonstrated/observed? (Follow up: What did it involve? Please tell me more about...)

### Main Questions

- 1) If someone were to say to you "There is no racism or discrimination in the sporting context in Winnipeg." What is your response to that statement? Why? Can you recall any examples of racism or discrimination in sport in Winnipeg?
- 2) When these events took place, how did you feel? Did you or others react?
- 3) What have others shared with you about their experiences with racism and/or discrimination in the sport context in Winnipeg?
- 4) How do you feel your **organization/sport/coach (\*)** is working to reduce racism and/or discrimination? (If anything noted, is it information that is public and readily accessible? Can it be shared with the research team?) \* **Tailor words in bold based on the group**
- 5) How have you contributed to creating a space for people that makes them feel welcome, appreciated, or that they belong? (Probes: Have you led any intentional effort to make your sport more inclusive? Were there any lessons learned from that initiative?)



- 6) If necessary, what would you change in your organization, program, or industry in order to address racism and discrimination and create a more inclusive and safe space?
- 7) What tools, resources, and support would you (or your organization/sport) need to better address racism and discrimination in your sport?
- 8) If you were to design a campaign for addressing racism or discrimination in sport in Winnipeg, what would it include?
- 9) If there is anything else related to racism and discrimination in the Winnipeg sport context that we haven't covered in our focus group, what would you say it is?
- 10) What would you say to someone who has experienced racism and/or discrimination within your sport/organization?

## Appendix VI – Screening Tool

Thank you for your interest in participating in our Anti-Racism in Sport Research Project. The following information is only being collected to assist us in scheduling focus groups and providing an honourarium for participation.

Name:

Email:

Phone:

Address:

Some of our focus groups will be scheduled just for those who identify as part of a First Nations, Metis, Inuit, Black, Racialized, and Religious Minority community, so the following question is only being asked to assist us with scheduling focus groups. Do you identify as part of a First Nations, Metis, Inuit, Black, Racialized, and/or Religious Minority community [Yes] [No] [Prefer not to disclose]

If you would like to share more about which racial or ethnic group(s) you identify as, please do.

[\_\_\_\_\_]

We will be scheduling focus groups based on participant's involvement in sport. What is your involvement in sport? Please click all that apply.

[Athlete (youth 16-25 years)]

[Athlete (adult recreation player)]

[Athlete (professional)]

[Athlete (high performance, i.e. university, college, national)]

[Coach]

[Official (Referee)]

[Community sport organizer]

[Board member or upper-level management of a sport organization or community centre]

[Ethnocultural sport association organizer]

[High school physical education teacher]

[Other][\_\_\_\_\_]

If you filled out more than one category above, please state your top two preferences for which focus groups you would want to participate in.

[\_\_\_\_\_]



We will be providing a \$25 Gift Card for your participation in our research project. What is your preference for gift card: [Superstore] [Good Local] [Skip the Dishes]

Focus group will take place over Microsoft Team, if you require any accommodations please let us know  
[\_\_\_\_\_]

Thank you for your interest in our research project, a research team member will get in contact with you to schedule the focus group. However, if you have any questions please contact Craig Brown at [brownc18@myumanitoba.ca](mailto:brownc18@myumanitoba.ca)

## Appendix VII – Recruitment Poster



Winnipeg | Treaty No. 1 Territory

## PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

Have you experienced or witnessed racism in sport in Winnipeg? Would you like to share your experiences to help address this issue?

### We want to hear from you!

If you would like to participate in our confidential focus groups, please fill out the following form by **Monday, July 19 at 4:00pm:**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NXWVRKM>



If you have any questions please contact the research team by email with the subject line "Research":

[info@antiracismsport.ca](mailto:info@antiracismsport.ca)

**Participants will receive a \$25 gift card**

### Principal Investigators

**Dr. Leisha Strachan**, Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management

**Dr. Lori Wilkinson**, Faculty of Arts

**Dr. Sarah Teetzel**, Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management

This research has been approved by the Research Ethics Board #1 at the University of Manitoba. Contact information: [humanethics@umanitoba.ca](mailto:humanethics@umanitoba.ca)



Faculty of Kinesiology and  
Recreation Management



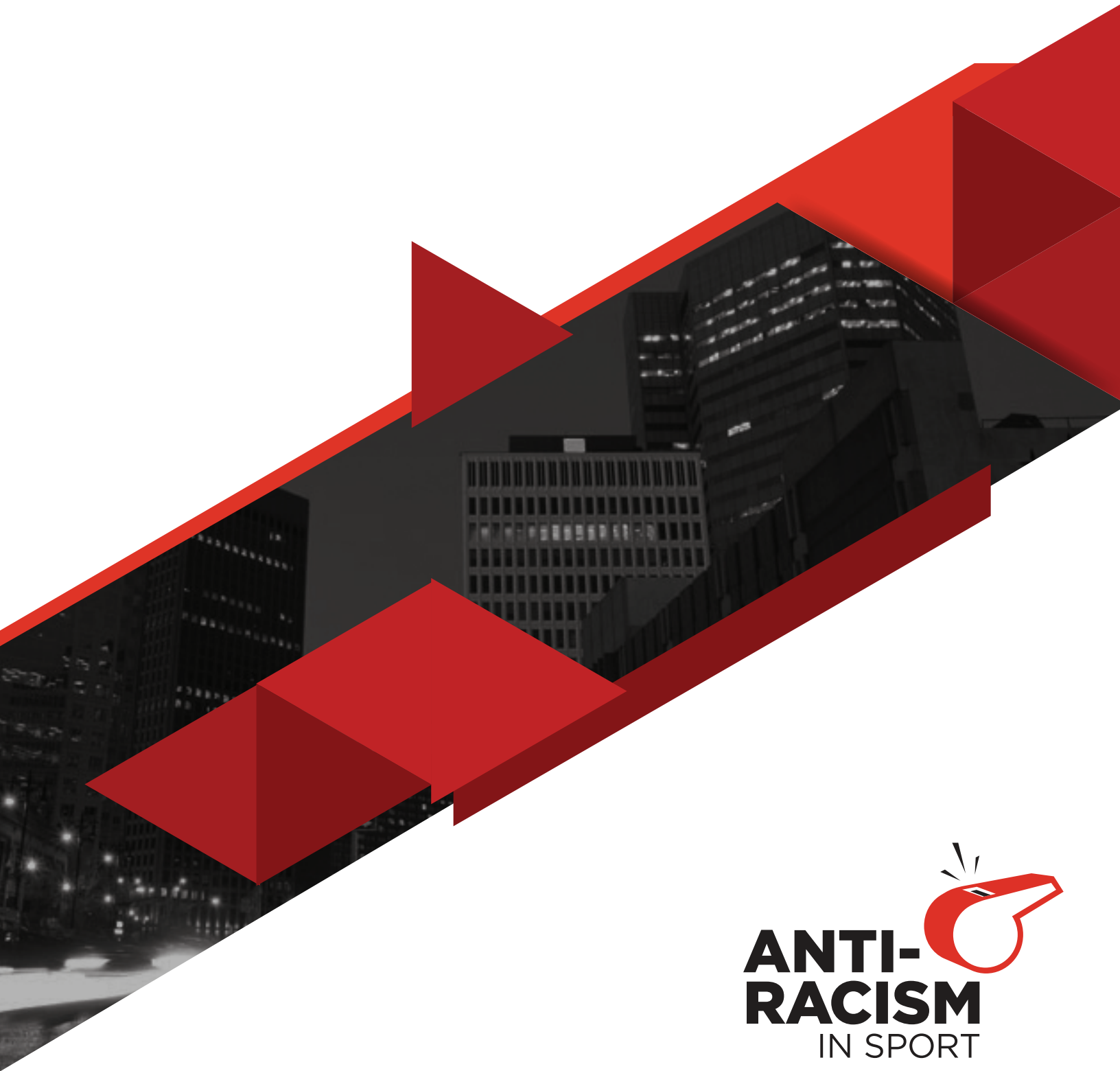
Faculty of Arts



Immigration  
Partnership  
Winnipeg

Funded by the  
Government  
of Canada

Canada



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RACISM**  
IN SPORT