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The Legal Aspects of Athletics. By Andrew Grieve.

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During the past decade, there has been a phenomenal increase in the popularity and profitability of professional athletics of all types. The invasion of television into various sports has popularized athletics and individual athletes with the general public to an extent previously limited to the devoted fan. The sale of broadcast rights has supported professional baseball for years; it has financed the bidding between the two football leagues for top players prior to their merger; and it explains in part the expansion of hockey and basketball into those population centers necessary to create the nationwide, yet locally oriented, audience in the large metropolitan areas which are demanded by the sponsor before he will commit his advertising dollar. Even in those sports where limited numbers of spectators watch the event in relative discomfort, the revenues to be had from television have made it feasible to establish professionalism when it had not overtly existed before. The sale of television rights to college and other amateur athletic events is becoming more prevalent, creating a spectator availability for sports hitherto unknown to a majority of its potential fans.

Together with this increased interest in, and expansion of, professional athletics, much has been written about the emerging business acumen of the amateur athlete as he turns professional, or about the professional athlete's emerging prominence in the business world. The Legal Aspects of Athletics, despite its title and its timing, is about none of this. Mr. Grieve, the author, has written about the problems and legal liabilities inherent in the development and day-to-day operation of an amateur athletic program. He has apparently spent most of his life directly associated with athletic programs of various schools, and at varying levels, as a teacher-coach, coach, athletic director or in some related capacity. Mr. Grieve is not a lawyer. He does, however, have an organized grasp of the problems facing an athletic program administrator, an ability to communicate some of these problems and the pitfalls surrounding them, and a more than nodding familiarity with the areas of legal liability.

This is a thin book, anemic by any conceivable standards that might be set for legal texts, and deficient in its presentation of the rationale and reasoning used by the courts in reaching their
decisions. The book begins with a chapter of legal definitions which are probably satisfactory for the non-legal audience at whom the book is primarily directed, but which, on occasion, are totally inaccurate as definitions of legal principles. There are well over 100 cases cited, all but a few of them with improper citations, and a few without more reference than a case name and the identification of the state in which it was decided. Mr. Grieve has placed a certain gloss on the facts surrounding the cases cited and the basis for the decision: "dictum" was not one of his defined terms. The most troublesome aspect of Mr. Grieve's book is the apparent hiatus between the time he did his research and writing and the publication date. While the copyright shows a 1969 date, Mr. Grieve refers on several occasions to "recent litigation" giving citations to cases handed down in 1963. The most recent dated material in the book is a reference to the July 12, 1965 issue of Sports Illustrated.

And yet this book should be, it seems to me, on the reading list of any lawyer who feels that public service is a part of his practice of the law. Mr. Grieve's past experience in school systems and his present position as an Assistant Professor of Physical Education in the New York state college system foreshadow the tenor of the book—it is directed at school athletic programs. He reviews numerous aspects of supervision of the field or playground, or lack of it; responsibility for determination of physical qualifications to participate in an athletic program and liability for medical treatment following an injury; proper equipment and facilities; transportation; injuries to spectators; insurance; eligibility standards; as well as numerous other items, including his forecast as to future developments and their eventual effect on liability for the operation of athletic programs.

This book's primary value to the attorney must be as a guide to the athletic administrator, his program and his problems. The attorney's contact with this sort of person, program and problem may be much more immediate than he realizes: the attorney who helps form a little league or is asked to serve on its board of directors; who is asked to perform similar services for a Pop Warner league, an amateur hockey program, the YMCA or YWCA, a neighborhood park, a non-profit tennis or swimming club; or who is asked to participate in activities of the Indian Guides, Cub Scouts or Boy Scout programs, summer camps,
programs for disadvantaged children. The list is endless. *The Legal Aspects of Athletics* offers the attorney the opportunity to view an athletic program from the standpoint of the intelligent administrator who is concerned about that program, aware of the problems inherent in its conduct and intent on avoiding undesired consequences. It should provide the attorney who does become involved a short, excellent and easily readable summary of the problem areas in an athletic program and a basis from which to review the personnel, the program and the facilities.

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