

## BOOK REVIEW

### *RISK MANAGEMENT IN SPORT AND RECREATION*

John O. Spengler, Daniel P. Connaughton, and Andrew T. Pittman

[Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics, 2006]

ISBN 978-0-7360-5619-9

U.S. \$39.00

8.5 x 11 Paperback, 184 pages

While new additions to sport law texts and casebooks have been added to the list of available resources during the past few years, current and comprehensive risk management specific publications have been slower to emerge. No doubt professionals have accumulated their own collection of chapters, articles, and cases for use in risk management courses, but in *Risk Management in Sport and Recreation*, John O. Spengler, Daniel Connaughton, and Andrew Pittman have provided an option especially appropriate for those seeking risk management decision-making models and readers with a special interest in risk management for medical emergencies.

Throughout *Risk Management in Sport and Recreation Management*, Spengler, Connaughton, and Pittman employ a Chapter design that is clear and concise, using an economy of words and information-dense text boxes to convey information. The efficiency of this Chapter design might initially mislead readers to dismiss the book on first glance as being improper or insufficient for their needs. However, a thorough investigation reveals the comprehensive coverage of the selected topics and the reader is left with an appreciation for a well-designed Chapter framework or template.

Introducing readers to decision-making as an important theme of risk management and thereby, of this publication, is addressed by the authors in the Preface. Preventative decision-making is a hallmark of risk management, regardless of the application i, e., financial, human resource, and public relations. Spengler, Connaughton, and Pittman provide decision-making guidance for those seeking to apply risk management principles to sport and recreation. They specifically state that the purpose of their text is assisting the reader in decision-making to reduce the risk of injury and death to "participants, spectators, and staff, as well as the potential for lawsuits" (p. 2). It is their intended purpose to provide sport, recreation, medical and technical

risk management resources in one publication for readers interested in sport and recreation management.

Spengler, Connaughton, and Pittman weave a decision-making thread into the content of each chapter. They consistently apply a chapter framework that begins with a brief introduction to the featured concept. In the chapter introductions, the authors use a persuasive voice and relevant statistics or cases to convince readers of the need to address the risks highlighted within that chapter. This persuasion might be necessary as some of the chapters cover very narrow topics i.e., lightning safety, exertional heat illness, thereby perhaps requiring a bit of coaxing of readers working through the text from cover to cover. However, for the reader wishing to extract specific risk management information regarding topics such as exertional heat illness, *Risk Management in Sport and Recreation* is a treasure chest.

Following the introductory segment of each chapter, readers are confronted with a question or "Threshold Issue" for consideration as this is the first decision point in the chapter. For chapters one through five, the first "Threshold Issue" question and chapter titles are as follow: "Deciding Whether to Create and Implement a Risk Management Plan" (Chapter One: Decision Making and Managing Risk); "Deciding Whether to Develop and Implement a Medical Emergency Action Plan" (Chapter Two: Medical Emergency Action Plans); "Determining Whether to Develop and Implement a Safety Plan to Protect Children" (Chapter Three: Protecting Children); "Deciding Whether to Develop and Implement a Heat Illness Plan" (Chapter Four: Exertional Heat Illness in Sport and Recreation); and "Deciding Whether to Develop and Implement a Lightning Safety Plan" (Chapter Five: Lightning Safety).

In chapters six through eleven, Spengler, Connaughton, and Pittman address medical and technical aspects of risk management. This focus might puzzle some readers while pleasing others. The concentration of resources, including published industry standards and related web sources, will no doubt be welcomed by professionals responsible for designing and maintaining risk management plans for specific medical and technical issues including AED use or implementing drug testing programs. The specificity of these chapters is necessary to thoroughly address these narrow but detailed topics. For this reason, the second half of the book (Chapters Six - Eleven) takes on almost a menu approach as readers will likely choose to select and read only the chapters pertaining to their needs and interests. This limitation is not negative as the clean separation of the Chapter content permits for selective reading and application by the reader.

The remaining first "Threshold Issues" and chapter titles are as follows: "Understanding Compliance Issues Relevant to OSHA's Bloodborne

Pathogens Standard" (Chapter Six: Bloodborne Pathogens); "Understanding Issues Relevant to the Purchase and Use of AED's" (Chapter Seven: Sudden Cardiac Arrest and the Use of Automated External Defibrillators); "Understanding the Legality of Developing and Implementing a Drug Testing Plan" (Chapter Eight: Drug Testing); "Understanding Issues Relevant to Maintaining and Providing Proper Equipment and Premises" (Chapter Nine: Equipment, Premises, Instruction, and Supervision); "Deciding Whether to Comply With CPSC and ASTM Guidelines and Standards" (Chapter Ten: Playground Safety); and "Understanding Compliance Issues Relevant to Local, State, and Federal Laws and Codes" (Chapter Eleven: Aquatic Safety).

Within each Chapter of *Risk Management in Sport and Recreation Management*, Spengler, Connaughton, and Pittman present a second "Threshold Issue" question and decision matrix that addresses the reader's recognition and understanding of key aspects of the related plan. The authors have embedded in this section of each Chapter generous amounts of information that will assist readers as they develop their safety plans. By collecting and organizing this information, the authors have saved readers the time and energy of researching related resources on their own. Rather than redress content from other sources, the authors point readers directly to original sources and web sites. A simple locked/unlocked pad lock icon clearly identifies information and items as free download/fee-based resources respectively. Each chapter concludes with a brief summary, a scenario, the description of an appropriate practitioner response to the scenario, and questions pertaining to the chapter content.

Other features of *Risk Management in Sport and Recreation Management* include two content-laden Appendices providing examples of emergency action plans, checklists, sample forms, and links to safety guidelines, recommendations, and standards. The authors have established a Companion Web Site that is available for readers through the Publisher, Human Kinetics. The access information is contained in the text along with suggestions for appropriate use of the Web Site. This resource identifies the numerous web sites mentioned throughout *Risk Management in Sport and Recreation Management*.

Chapter One has the potential to stand alone as a concise and very readable introduction to risk management for faculty who elect to construct their own reading list or course materials, as well as leaders and decision-makers lacking formal education or training in sport law, sport management, or recreation management. Sport and recreation practitioners/managers may also benefit from sharing the contents of Chapter One and other chapters with ill-informed or reluctant organizational leadership such as Board of Directors,

School Board, or Trustee members. It is perhaps this audience for whom Spengler, Connaughton, and Pittman have provided a great, but not targeted, service. Hopefully the Publisher, Human Kinetics, is actively marketing *Risk Management in Sport and Recreation*, to non-academic and practitioner audiences for these and other reasons. Likewise, this text would be a wonderful resource for faculty to use and reference when speaking to community-based sport and recreation managers/practitioners. Perhaps the release of this publication will spur other Publishers to provide resources for teachers, students, and practitioners desiring a formal and more comprehensive presentation of risk management versus the more common one chapter presentation in sport law or sport and recreation management publications.

Rebecca J. Mowrey  
Millersville University of Pennsylvania