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BHUTAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

**Social Media Policy for National Athletes and Accredited Officials**  
*Promoting Responsible Use of Social Media in Sports*

Issued by:  
Bhutan Olympic Committee (BOC)

V1.0 – May 2025



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### 1. Introduction

In today's digitally connected world, social media has become a powerful tool for athletes to engage with fans, share personal and team milestones, and promote the spirit of sport beyond the field of play. Recognizing this, the **Bhutan Olympic Committee (BOC)**, along with **National Sport Federations (NSFs)** and **Sport Associations (SAs)**, actively supports and encourages the responsible use of social and digital media by national athletes, coaches, officials, and other accredited personnel.

Our athletes are not only performers on the international stage but also ambassadors of Bhutanese values — humility, integrity, resilience, and unity. Through social media, these values can inspire a broader audience and strengthen the connection between sport and society. This policy seeks to ensure that the online presence of national representatives reflects the high standards expected of them, both ethically and culturally.

While we encourage storytelling and personal sharing, this policy provides clear guidance on the responsible and respectful use of social media to safeguard the dignity of all participants, protect confidential and sensitive information, and maintain the integrity of Bhutanese sport.

### 2. Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to the following individuals and groups:

- National Athletes selected or training for representation in national or international events;
- Officials, Coaches, and Members of the Bhutan Olympic Committee (BOC), National Sport Federations (NSFs), and Sport Associations (SAs);
- Accredited Officials, Selected Athletes, and Coaches representing Bhutan at international multi-sport events, competitions, championships, and other official delegations associated with the BOC, NSFs, and SAs.

This policy remains in effect before, during, and after national and international events, including training camps, media appearances, and personal travel where the individual is associated with national sport representation.



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## **3. Purpose of the Policy**

- Promote a values-based sporting culture that is inclusive, respectful, and inspiring, in alignment with Bhutan's national vision for sport;
- Support athletes and officials in using social media as a positive platform to share their stories, engage meaningfully with the public, and raise the profile of Bhutanese sport;
- Protect the rights, privacy, and reputation of athletes, officials, support staff, sponsors, and other stakeholders by setting clear expectations and boundaries;
- Prevent misuse of social media that may result in reputational damage, harassment, conflicts of interest, or violation of sport ethics and personal dignity.

## **4. Guiding Principles**

### **4.1 Upholding Integrity and Professionalism**

- Avoid spreading misinformation, unverified claims, or content that could mislead the public.
- Do not post content that may bring disrepute to sport, national institutions, sponsors, or partners.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding internal team matters, performance strategies, medical conditions, or other sensitive information.

### **4.2 Respect for Others and Diversity**

- Refrain from using language or imagery that could be seen as sexist, racist, homophobic, or offensive to any religion, ethnicity, or social group.
- Value and embrace diversity within sport and beyond, including interactions with fellow athletes, supporters, competitors, and fans from other countries.

### **4.3 Responsibility and Accountability**

- Think before posting — once shared, digital content can be copied, altered, and remain online permanently.
- If a mistake is made, take ownership, apologize when necessary, and take appropriate corrective action (e.g., removing harmful posts).
- Be mindful that private posts can become public and that public perception can be influenced even by personal social media accounts.



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## **4.4 Alignment with National Representation and Image**

- Content should positively reflect Bhutanese values — humility, respect, community, and discipline.
- Avoid expressing personal political opinions, controversial views, or criticisms of governing bodies that could undermine the image of Bhutanese sport.
- Use national team affiliation responsibly; do not use logos, uniforms, or official branding in posts that do not align with the spirit and purpose of this policy.

## **5. Acceptable Use of Social Media**

### **5.1 Positive Sharing of Personal and Team Achievements**

- Sharing behind-the-scenes moments from training, travel, and competitions.
- Posting results, medals, or achievements in a respectful and inclusive tone.
- Expressing gratitude to coaches, teammates, supporters, and sponsors.

### **5.2 Respectful Engagement with Fans and Followers**

- Responding to comments and messages in a polite and inclusive manner.
- Acknowledging fan support, kind words, and community encouragement.
- Avoiding arguments, sarcasm, or negative interactions in comment sections.

### **5.3 Promotion of Sports and Healthy Lifestyles**

- Sharing posts about training discipline, nutrition, recovery, and mental well-being.
- Encouraging youth participation in sport and highlighting its positive impact.
- Posting about sport initiatives, outreach programs, or community engagements.

### **5.4 Use of Official Hashtags and Team Campaigns**

- Using official hashtags provided by the BOC, NSFs, or SAs during games or events.
- Participating in awareness campaigns, challenges, or promotional activities.
- Tagging relevant federations, partners, and sponsors where approved.



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## **6. Prohibited Conduct**

### **6.1 Hate Speech, Discrimination, or Offensive Content**

- Engaging in or endorsing racism, sexism, homophobia, religious intolerance, or any form of hatred.
- Sharing offensive images, videos, or posts that could harm the reputation of others or the national team.
- Attacking individuals or communities based on their identity or beliefs.

### **6.2 Sharing Confidential or Sensitive Team Information**

- Posting about internal team strategies, player injuries, or confidential communications.
- Revealing team lineups, selection criteria, or any information that is not publicly available.
- Discussing private team meetings or internal disputes on public platforms.

### **6.3 Criticizing Teammates, Coaches, Officials, or Opponents**

- Posting negative comments or complaints about fellow athletes, coaches, or officials.
- Engaging in arguments or public disputes that undermine team spirit.
- Criticizing the performance of other teams, players, or officials in a derogatory manner.
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### **6.4 Misrepresentation of National Team Affiliation**

- Claiming involvement with the national team or using official logos and branding without authorization.
- Misleading followers about your role or participation in events where you are not officially representing Bhutan.
- Sharing content that falsely suggests endorsement by the BOC or other official bodies.

## **6. During Competitions and Events**

### **7.1 Restrictions on Live Updates from Restricted Areas**

- Do not share live updates or post photos/videos from restricted areas without explicit permission.
- Avoid posting sensitive information, such as player injuries, team strategies, or official decisions made behind closed doors.



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- Social media content should only be shared from designated public areas unless otherwise permitted.

### **7.2 Respect for Media Blackout Periods or Embargoes**

- During certain events, there may be media blackout periods or embargoes that prevent the release of specific information until a designated time. Athletes and officials must respect these restrictions to maintain professionalism and avoid legal or contractual breaches.
- Comply with embargoes on the release of results, team lineups, or other sensitive event details.
- Do not share event-related content (photos, videos, or results) before the embargo period is over.
- Follow instructions from the event organizers, sponsors, and relevant media personnel regarding the timing of updates.

### **7.3 Guidelines for Interactions with Media and Followers**

- Be mindful of your tone and content when interacting with media, fans, and followers online.
- Respond respectfully to queries and messages, and avoid engaging in discussions that could harm your or your team's reputation.
- Official communications should be coordinated with the team or event organizers. Ensure that your posts align with any event-specific guidelines or strategies.
- If engaging with media representatives online, ensure that all statements are aligned with the official narrative of the event.

## **7. Privacy and Consent**

### **8.1 Respecting Teammates' and Others' Privacy Before Posting**

- Always ask for permission before posting photos, videos, or personal information that includes teammates, coaches, or other officials.
- If unsure, err on the side of caution and avoid posting unless consent is clearly given.
- Respect private moments, such as personal celebrations or casual moments, that others may not wish to share publicly.

### **8.2 Refraining from Tagging or Sharing Others Without Consent**

- Do not tag or share content that includes other people unless they have explicitly agreed to it.



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- Even if someone is in a public place, it's important to respect their decision if they prefer not to be featured in social media posts.
- Be aware of the context—some individuals may not wish to be part of social media content, especially in moments of vulnerability or high emotion.

### **8.3 Rules on Posting Photos/Videos from Restricted Zones**

- Never share photos or videos from restricted zones, such as locker rooms, medical areas, or behind-the-scenes locations, without prior approval from the relevant authorities.
- Respect confidentiality—posting content from these zones could breach privacy laws, team protocols, and compromise security.
- Follow event-specific rules—always adhere to any guidelines set by the organizing bodies regarding what can and cannot be shared publicly.

## **9. Monitoring and Enforcement**

### **9.1 How the Policy Will Be Monitored**

- The BOC, in collaboration with relevant NSFs and SAs, will carry out periodic reviews of public social media content shared by national athletes and accredited officials.
- Monitoring efforts will focus on identifying potential breaches of the policy rather than policing day-to-day activity.
- Athletes and officials are encouraged to self-monitor their content and conduct, keeping this policy and guiding principles in mind at all times.
- Any flagged or questionable posts may be reviewed in consultation with the respective sport federation or team management.

### **9.2 Reporting Violations**

- Any individual—be it a teammate, coach, supporter, or member of the public—may report a potential policy violation to the BOC or relevant federation/association.
- Reports should be submitted through formal channels, including written notification or an official email to the BOC or designated media/ethics officer.
- All reports will be handled with confidentiality and fairness to protect both the person reporting and the individual(s) involved in the alleged violation.

### **9.3 Investigation Process**

- Upon receiving a report of a suspected violation, the BOC, in coordination with the relevant NSF or SA, will initiate a fact-finding process.



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- The individual(s) involved will be given an opportunity to respond to the concern or clarify the context.
- If a breach of the policy is confirmed, consequences may include:
  - ✓ Verbal or written warnings
  - ✓ Mandatory training or education on responsible social media use
  - ✓ Suspension from team activities or competitions, in serious cases
  - ✓ Disciplinary actions as per the code of conduct or contractual obligations
- All decisions will be guided by fairness, transparency, and the principle of rehabilitation, with the aim of supporting personal growth and protecting the reputation of Bhutanese sport.

### **10. Disciplinary Actions**

#### **10.1 Possible Consequences for Violations**

- For minor or first-time violations, the individual may receive a formal warning to correct their behavior and be reminded of their responsibilities under this policy.
- Repeated or more serious violations may result in temporary suspension from training sessions, competitions, or other team-related activities.
- In cases where the violation compromises team integrity, safety, or national representation, the individual's accreditation for domestic or international events may be revoked.
- If the breach includes defamation, breach of confidentiality agreements, or other legal concerns, further action may be taken in accordance with applicable laws or existing contracts. This may include termination of representation, reimbursement of damages, or referral to legal authorities.

### **11. Education and Awareness**

#### **11.1 Orientation and Workshops**

- All national athletes, coaches, and accredited officials will receive orientation on the Social Media Policy during training camps or team briefings.
- Interactive workshops will be conducted periodically to reinforce understanding of responsible online conduct, privacy awareness, and media interaction.
- Sessions will also address real-life case studies and evolving challenges related to social media in sports.





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## **11.2 Continuous Learning and Updates**

- Given the fast-changing nature of digital platforms, updates on social media best practices, digital safety, and policy relevance will be shared regularly.
- Educational materials (videos, guides, FAQs) will be developed to support continued awareness.
- Athletes and officials are encouraged to approach media officers or team managers if unsure about specific online conduct.

## **12. Policy Review and Updates**

### **12.1 Frequency of Review**

- The social media Policy will be formally reviewed every two years, or earlier if significant changes in technology or sporting regulations occur.

### **12.2 Responsibility for Review and Communication**

- The Media and Communications Division of the BOC, in consultation with NSFs and SAs, will be responsible for leading the policy review.
- Updates to the policy will be communicated clearly to all stakeholders through official channels, team briefings, and digital notices.
- Any revisions will include an updated acknowledgment form for athletes and officials to re-sign, confirming continued understanding and agreement.



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### Acknowledgment and Agreement

By signing this declaration, I confirm that:

- I have read and understood the Policy on the Use of Social Media by National Athletes and Accredited Officials.
- I agree to adhere to the guiding principles, rules of acceptable and prohibited conduct, and specific competition-time guidelines outlined in the policy.
- I understand that my actions on social media reflect not only on myself but also on my team, federation, and Bhutan as a nation.
- I acknowledge that any breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including suspension, removal of accreditation, or legal consequences where applicable.
- I commit to using social media responsibly and respectfully, in alignment with the values of integrity, professionalism, and national representation.
- 

**Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Role (Athlete/Official/Coach/etc.):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sport/Federation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_