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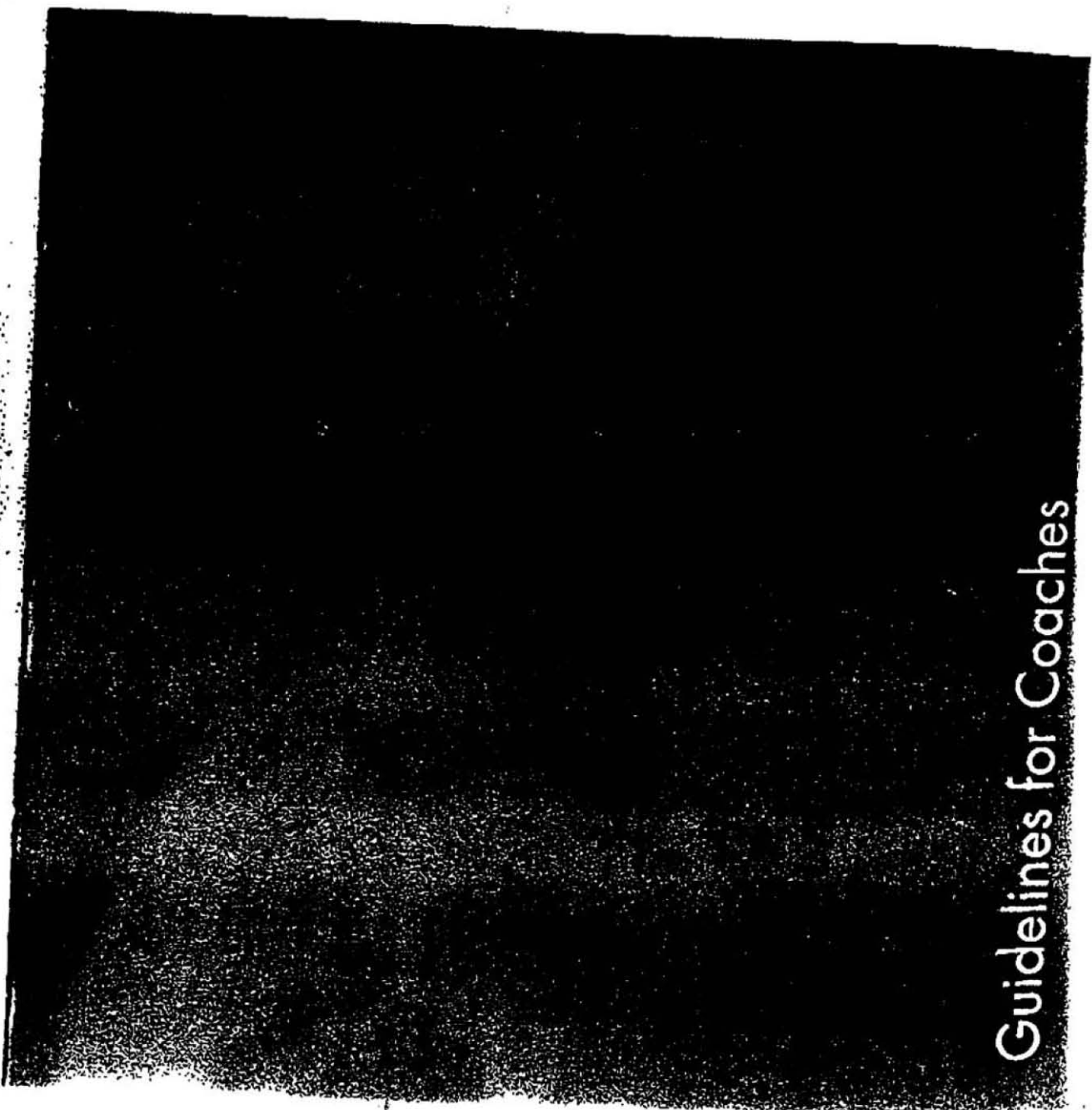
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HARASSMENT-FREE SPORT
Guidelines for Coaches



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THESE GUIDELINES

form part of an anti-harassment in sport strategy that includes policy, procedures, educational material, seminars and training. The strategy aims to create a safer environment in sport and recreation. This will be brought about by the development of a system of dealing effectively and appropriately with, and whenever possible preventing, harassment in sport.

Harassment, and particularly sexual harassment, is being recognised increasingly as a matter of real concern within the sport and recreation industry. Individuals in sport can be particularly vulnerable because it is an environment characterised by close relationships. Coaches often have enormous influence over athletes and athletes' sense of self-esteem. If used recklessly or irresponsibly, this influence can cause great harm. This is particularly so when coaches are working with athletes younger than themselves. It is therefore essential that coaches operate at all times with professionalism and integrity in these relationships.

The following guidelines provide an ethical framework for the behaviour of coaches working with athletes, and are

offered as a way of promoting sensitivity and professionalism on the part of coaches. These guidelines reiterate sections of the current *Code of Conduct for Australian Institute of Sport Coaches* and the *Australian Coaching Council's Coach's Code of Ethics*, and discuss them in more detail.

DEFINITIONS **Definitions**

LEGAL DEFINITIONS

of harassment vary from state to state. The level of protection from harassment also varies according to the type of harassment at issue. However, your sporting organisation wants to deter harassment irrespective of whether it is technically prohibited by law and without requiring you to deal with complicated legislation. For this reason, a working definition of harassment has been provided. The definition includes but goes beyond what is prohibited at law.

Harassment

Harassment consists of offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening behaviour directed at a person or persons because of a particular characteristic of that person or persons (including the person or persons' level of empowerment relative to the harasser). The behaviour must be unwelcome and the sort of behaviour a reasonable person would recognise as unwelcome.

The working definition refers not only to harassment based on particular characteristics, such as sex, disability or race but, also, to harassment sustained by a disparity in the relative power of the harasser and the person harassed. This might simply be regarded as abusive behaviour.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is behaviour that has a sexual element, that is unwelcome and that could reasonably be expected, in the circumstances in which it occurs, to offend, humiliate or intimidate the person or people at whom it is directed.