**Abstract**

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**Presenting author: Saara Isosomppi**

**Authors: Annukka Lahti & Saara Isosomppi**

**Title:**

**” Where is your sense of humor, take it easy this is just a joke, chill”: Joking as harassment in Finnish elite sport**

This paper presents preliminary analysis for an article that examines joking as a form of sexual and gender-based harassment in Finnish elite sport. The topic of harassment in sport has been visible in media both in the experiences of athletes talking about harassment as well as due to a recent case of expelling the head of elite sport in the Finnish Olympic Committee based on the warning for an inappropriate conduct towards women.

In the paper, we analyze data from a survey conducted in 2019 by the Finnish Center for Integrity in Sport (FINCIS) about sexual and gender-based harassment in Finnish elite sport. The survey gathered 9018 responses and FINCIS published its results in 2020. One of the findings was that the most common form of harassment was general harassing talk that concerned offending sexually toned jokes, inappropriate comments on athletes’ bodies and offending jokes about sexual minorities. Of women 24 % and of men 17 % had experienced these forms of harassment. (Lahti et al., 2020).

Despite its prevalence, harassing joking in sport has received very little attention in research also internationally. Based on the data, we thematize joking as harassment from three perspectives 1) sport is fun but easily ruined if joking is banned, 2) enduring harassing joking, and 3) borderlines of joking. We discuss joking as an ambiguous topic and suggest that the concept of affective dissonance (Hemmings, 2012) could be used to grasp its working in sport.