

The principles of Sports Archives of Finland to receive paper and digital documentation

Summary

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Sports Archives of Finland was established in 1985 and is nowadays incorporated into the Sports Museum of Finland. Its collections contain the most important archived materials of Finnish sport and physical culture organizations. The Sports Archives has normally 400–600 visits of researchers per year. It preserves documents of 2,989 sports associations, sports clubs and individuals. The collections are accessible through 514 online catalogues.

Sports Archives of Finland receives 50–100 metres of document shelving per year, mainly on paper. Our aim is to receive documents from the most significant Finnish sports associations. Documents of sport clubs are also welcome based on their regional significance. We aim to include material from new sports, such as e-sports. Paper documents must be pre-arranged before the Sports Archives can receive the documents.

Sports Archives of Finland is also starting to collect born-digital material, such as minutes, yearbooks, action plans, contracts, relevant e-mails, results, financial records and material in electronic format.

The problem with digital material is that software and file formats change quickly. We only accept documents and e-mails in PDF/A format. The accepted formats for photographs are TIFF and JPEG. Sound formats accepted are WAV, MP3 or AIFF, and video formats accepted are JPEG 2000, MPEG, WMV or MOV.

The digital materials must also be pre-arranged in a logical order before the archive receives the documents. Materials can be arranged in folders according to function (administration, membership matters, education, communication and financial matters) or document type (minutes, yearbooks, publications and catalogues).

The use of a logical naming of the files is important for the purposes of description of content and information retrieval. It is also very important for the Sports Archives to always receive the final version of the digital documents, and that there are at least three backups of the documents in different storage media.

Sports Archives of Finland sorts out about 60–80 metres of document shelving per a year. Contents of documents are described and arranged, resulting in the creation of 40–60 new archive catalogues each year.

It is important for any organization to preserve its documents for several reasons. First, the organization might need them for future activities. Second, organizations are often legally required to preserve certain materials, especially financial documents. Third, old documents should be preserved for historical and scientific research purposes: for instance, an organization might want to celebrate its anniversary by publishing its history.