

6.1 Dr. Chris Davies, Cairns, Australia: **“Bringing a sport into disrepute: Tiger Woods and other sporting stories”**

Tiger Woods is a sports person who, over the last decade or so, has gained as much world wide media coverage as any sportsperson. Until recently this has been because of his ability to win on the golf course, particularly in Grand Slam events. In late 2009, however, it was Woods' off-field behaviour that began to receive extensive media coverage and intensive media investigation. This arose after Woods damaged his car, allegedly after it was attacked with a golf club by his wife after she had become aware of his extramarital affairs. The outcome of this negative coverage for someone who previously had a clean cut image raises the issue as to whether sportspersons should be seen as role models, and expected to always behave as such. Since various sponsorship deals form the major part of Woods' income, the matter has raised the legal issue as to whether contracts can be terminated on the basis that a sportsperson's behaviour has had a negative impact on the sponsor's image. The Court of Arbitration (CAS) decisions of *D'Arcy v Australian Olympic Committee* and *Jongewaard v Australian Olympic Committee*, have meanwhile established that if a competitor is charged with a criminal offence, then this in itself is enough to bring a sport into disrepute, regardless of whether there the competitor is later found guilty or not guilty. These cases would also indicate that the 'bringing the sport into disrepute' clauses in the standard playing contracts in most team sports are valid and allow clubs or sport governing bodies to fine and/or suspend players for off-field indiscretions.