It's Official: Locating the Generic in Sports

**Introduction**

Official rulebooks for different sports contain much of the same kind of information. I explored how to use this characteristic of the genre to inform the development of an extensible, discipline-agnostic **model of sports**. Formalized as an **ontology**, such a model can turn the unstructured data of rulebooks into powerful **knowledge organization systems**.

**Overview**

A small **sample** of rulebooks [1,2,3,4] was **processed** and then **analyzed** to identify:
- structural and rhetorical **similarities**
- shared **universal entities** and **relationships**
- **thematic recurrences** (i.e. doping, treatment of animals, injury prevention, cheating, special accommodations for competitors, etc.)

After **modeling universals conceptually**, attempts were then made to create a mid-level **Sports Rulebook Ontology** able to be aligned with a sound **upper-level ontology**.

As a **proof-of-concept**, the next step is for the ontology to be **applied** in the form of semantic annotations to a test corpus comprised of the sample rulebooks. This offers a way for the ontology to be **evaluated** and **actively refined**.

**Future Directions**

- A **knowledge base** of sports rules and regulations
- An **interactive browsing environment** for displaying rulebook versions, highlighting changes over time
- Enhanced systems for **electronically authoring**, versioning, and publishing the **dynamic content** of rulebooks

**References**


**Tech**

- **Metadata**
- **Visualization**
- **Natural Language Processing**

**Acknowledgments**

"At its best, sport demonstrates human freedom and possibility and transcendence of what have previously been thought of as traditional ideas of human limitations." [5]