

MEDICINE AND SPORT

Dr. OZA, of the University of Baroda (India), who wrote the article entitled "Athletes, Doping and Olympism" which was published in Newsletter No. 19, has sent us the following article. We sincerely thank him.



ANTI-DOPING MEASURES IN INDIA

The Maharaja Sayaji Rao University of Baroda sponsored the 30th All India Inter-University Athletics Meeting at Baroda (India) from 27th to 30th December 1969. More than 600 athletes (452 men, 168 women) from 49 Indian Universities participated in this competition.

The decision taken by the Baroda University Board of Sports that the athletes will be subjected to doping tests was communicated to the Universities well in advance.

The 'first few' athletes to take the first two or three places in each discipline were to be examined. And for team sports at least two athletes selected by drawing up lots from each team were to undergo the tests.

But, in view of the letter received from the Assistant Secretary (Sports), Inter-University Board of India and Ceylon, New Delhi I, the athletes were to be subjected then to doping tests in cases of doubt. For he wrote:

"Anti-doping tests are permissible under the international rules but actually, they are not applied even in our national sports meetings on a regular basis. In our Inter-University Meeting, I am of the opinion that it may not be necessary to subject every athlete to such a test; but in cases of doubt, athletes may be medically examined..."

The news that the athletes were to be subjected to doping tests was appreciated by all the participating Indian Universities. In fact, no one was opposed.

However, during the competition there were no doubt cases for subjecting to doping tests.

I believe that the basic idea that one may be subjected to a doping test is in itself an excellent deterrent against the use of drugs in sport.

The Indian Universities are now becoming aware of the necessity to guard against doping of sportsmen in athletics meetings.

The Committee for Anti-Doping Measures consisted of the following personnel for general organisation:

- Dr. G.M OZA, (Convener), Lecturer in Biological Sciences
- Dr. P.T. ACHARYA, (Head of the Medical Team), Professor of Clinical Chemistry
- Dr. N.B. VASAVADA, Lecturer in Bio-Chemistry
- Dr. J.K DESAI, Jr. Lecturer in Pathology
- Mr. S.C. PARIKH, Bio-Chemist
- Dr. U.A. VAIDYA, Physician of the University Health Centre
- Mr. Amul C. MUNSHI, (Receptionist), Medical Student
- Miss A.M. PATEL, (Receptionist), Medical Student

The Committee was concerned basically with the use of:

- a) Amphetamine, ephedrine and similar products
- b) Stimulants affecting the central nervous system such as strychnine, as well as analeptics and similar substances
- c) Analgesic narcotics such as morphine, methadine and similar substances

The arrangements made for the methods and scientific means to conduct the tests, for the first time in the history of Indian Athletics, were conducted in accordance with the Grenoble and Mexico Reports of the Medical Commission of the International Olympic Committee.

We wish to have the Anti-Doping measures with a view to safeguarding the moral and physical health of the athletes from the Indian Universities.

Ultimately, this will safeguard sport's aims - strength, health and purity.

SEX TESTS

I suggest that in addition to the doping tests, the Indian Universities should also undertake tests for determining the sex of athletes. All female athletes will then have to undergo checks before taking part in the competition.

I consider this a complex subject. And to avoid any risks of affront to the human dignity, the Universities will have to observe strict medical secrecy. The sex test may reveal anomaly!

Saliva tests should be used to check on the sex of female competitors and hormone tests should be taken in doubtful cases.

Dr. G.M. OZA

*

*

*