



Doping

REFLECTIONS of the working groups

The World Conference on Doping in Sport focused on four general themes which were covered by four working groups chaired by the IOC vice-presidents. The themes were as follows: the protection of athletes (working group chaired by Anita L. DeFrantz); the legal and political aspects (working group chaired by Kéba Mbaye); prevention: ethics, education and communication (working group chaired by Pal Schmitt); and financial considerations (working group chaired by Richard W. Pound). These are some of the salient points from the reports of the working groups.

Doping is the use of a substance or method that is potentially dangerous to health and capable of artificially enhancing sports performance. Such practice and behaviour is contrary to sports and medical ethics, the spirit of fair play, and the fundamental principles on which the Olympic Movement is built, from which ensue the obligation to protect athletes' health. They also constitute a violation of the sporting rules laid down by the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the International Sports Federations (IFs) and the National Olympic Committees governing competitive sport.

Recommending, offering, authorizing, tolerating or facilitating the use of any substance or method that falls under the definition of doping is forbidden, as is trafficking in such a substance.

Doping is a social problem and, as such, it must be dealt with by governments and by inter- and non-governmental organizations, by means of preventive education campaigns run in parallel with a common policy of deterrence and concerted communication efforts.

All governments, through their Ministries for Youth, Sport, Education, Health, Justice and Home Affairs, have the primary responsibility for educating and protecting the health of their population, and safeguarding the wellbeing of their children. Inter-governmental organizations such as the United Nations (UN), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), can contribute within their respective fields, after the continental and regional inter-governmental organizations.

The practice of doping is an indirect consequence of the growing pressure on athletes involved in an ever-increasing number of sports competitions, who feel they have an unspoken obligation to be among the best every time. Many athletes may believe that they have no choice but to resort to doping if their sports career is to keep pace with expectations. In order to counteract this tendency, a long-term educational programme must be considered.

The ideology of sporting excellence, which made its appearance with the

fame that goes with sporting success, compounded by the financial and media benefits that champions at all levels enjoy, must not obscure the vital importance of moral, social and professional excellence.

The threats to sport in general, and to the Olympic Movement in particular, arise from the growing perception that outside interests, whether open or hidden, are predominating over many other considerations such as ethical values. Sports leaders must comply strictly with ethical principles, and ensure that the Olympic Movement and the athletes that belong to it are not subject to exploitation that goes against these principles.

The Olympic Movement Medical Code applies to all athletes, coaches, instructors, officials, medical and paramedical personnel working with athletes participating in or preparing for all sports competitions which are practised within the context of the Olympic Movement, particularly those organized under the direct or delegated authority of the International Olympic Committee, an International Federation or a National Olympic Committee. Anyone who enters, prepares for or takes part in any way whatsoever in any competition that comes under the above description is presumed to have agreed to comply with the Medical Code.

An independent international anti-doping agency should be created with the task of reinforcing the ethical principles that are the foundation of

Feature

Olympic sport, as described in the Olympic Charter.

The minimum sanction for major doping substances or prohibited methods should be a suspension from all competition for a period of two years. This period may be reduced in certain circumstances

It is essential to improve and standardize sample-taking and testing procedures, in order to give athletes confidence that the rules are applied uniformly, fairly, efficiently and equitably, while respecting their privacy.

Rehabilitation and counselling should be offered by National Federations and NOCs to athletes who have been sanctioned for doping. Athletes must not be exposed needlessly to health risks in the pursuit of excellence.

Governments assume the responsibility to enact legislation, determine criminal sanctions against people who traffic in banned doping substances or non-therapeutic substances, and take responsibility for the prosecution and punishment of infractions liable for non-sports sanctions.

Governments, in close cooperation with the Olympic Movement, must also assume responsibility for harmonizing national and international legislation on doping, within the framework of the United Nations system and inter-governmental and continental organizations.

It should be possible to join forces with the pharmaceutical industry to

look into the non-therapeutic use and distribution of banned substances, and also research into detecting the use of such substances.

The sports goods industry should also add new clauses to existing contracts, demanding that all athletes found guilty of a doping offence surrender their sponsorship revenues. They should also look into the possibility of including informative documents in the packaging of their products.



The IOC President and Joseph Blatter.



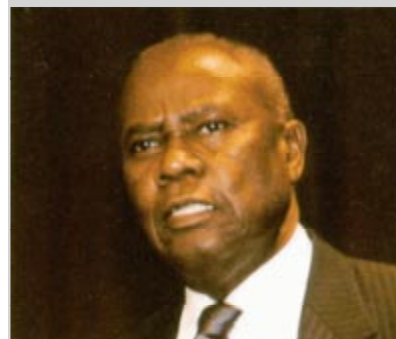
Arne Ljungqvist.



Anita L. DeFrantz.



Richard W. Pound



Kéba Mbaye.



(Forefront) Loring Baker and Anwar Chowdhry. (Background) Mustapha Larfaoui and Hein Verbruggen.



Pál Schmitt.