

**ANTI-DOPING
- CONFUSION, OPPOSITION AND VIOLATIONS**

Standing here before you in this magnificent Coventry Cathedral, I think it will be appropriate to start by telling you what I believe in – I believe in a clean sport, but like all believers I am also tormented by little devils and by doubts - but I still believe.

In the past months it has become more and more clear to the wider public that the views on anti-doping, and indeed anti-doping-rules, varies immensely from one sport to another, and from one country to another. This in spite of the fact that more than 570 sports organizations have accepted the World Anti-Doping Code.

Furthermore, more than 100 nations have ratified the UNESCO convention against doping in sport, based on the anti-doping code of the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA).

With this outstanding, global unanimity, among the sports world and the political world alike, combined with the very clear and detailed rules of the WADA Code, it was to be expected, or at least hoped, that the World Anti-doping Code would be implemented and followed by the above mentioned parties.

Unfortunately that is not so. In a number of sports, and a number of countries, the rules are being misinterpreted, bend, or downright violated.

In the International Handball Federation (IHF), fundamental anti-doping rules are being ignored completely. Testing out-of-competition is scarce, if at all performed, testing before and during major championships is non-existent, there is no programme for educating anti-doping officials, and there are no independent anti-doping-officials.

On top of this, all planned doping controls have to be sanctioned on beforehand by the president of IHF himself. This is completely opposed to the WADA Code and obviously destroys any possibility to perform unannounced tests with the necessary independence, security and discretion.

So, five years after the WADA Code was implemented it can be concluded that there are still international federations which are more or less violating the rules.

As late as May 8th this year this was underlined by a statement from WADA, saying that Gymnastics, wrestling, modern pentathlon AND handball had agreed to start out-of-competition testing programmes. Well, obviously they agreed to that also five years ago, and in any case they will now have a very, very long way to go.

The huge problems with abiding by the Code have become even more obvious with the latest changes in the WADA Code concerning the so called whereabouts system

This has caused a great uproar in international federations, among athletes, in governments and in the European Union. FIFA, the international football federation, has protested strongly against this change, and will act only in accordance with its own whereabouts rules.

Also the European Union has been quick in its response to the new whereabouts rule. The EU Sports Commissioner has asked WADA to suspend the rule while EU examined it, and has said in an interview that the rule should be "potentially amended". The general opinion of the EU apparently being that the rules contravenes the privacy laws of the EU and its 27 member states.

Following the change of the WADA rules, the Spanish government, passed a legislation in April that allows athletes in the country to refuse night time doping tests, and to turn away anti-doping agents that appear for a sample between 11 p.m. and 8 a.m. The law will also slacken the whereabouts rule, concerning the demands about where and when athletes must state their whereabouts.

Apart from the obvious, unlimited consequences it will have, if each and every country introduces its own anti-doping and whereabouts system, it will definitely destroy what has been built over the last five years, in terms of a uniform system for all athletes and, together with separate, homemade systems as that of FIFA, and non-functioning systems as that of IHF and others, would destruct the work of WADA, and would bomb anti-doping back to the days of the German Democratic Republic – for some that may very well be the intention.

As the former president of Wada, Richard Pound has stated, the International doping distribution is run along mafia lines.

In Belgium 65 athletes from various sports have started court proceedings against the changes in the whereabouts system, and other high profiled athletes from different sports and various countries have also spoken strongly against the changes.

However, the key point in all the before mentioned, in relation to FIFA, IHF, EU, the Spanish government, the 65 Belgian athletes and all other protesting athletes and sports federations is, that obviously neither of them has understood what the whereabouts rules were about before January 1st 2009, and, consequently, what they are about now.

That is why the criticism and oppositions comes only from those who have not been used to carry out, or undergo, out-of-competition testing.

Since the adoption of the WADA Code in 2003 the whereabouts rules have been the following:

That selected top athletes were required to give three months notice of their location for twenty-four hours a day – seven days a week, and accordingly they could expect to be visited by testing personnel at any hour, any day for out-of-competition testing.

After January 1st 2009 the whereabouts rules stipulate:

That selected top athletes are still required to give three months notice of their location for twenty-four hours a day – seven days a week, but especially for one hour each day between 6 a.m. and 11 p.m. and accordingly they shall specifically be available for out-of-competition testing each day for one hour, at a time of their own choice.

This does not mean that they cannot be sought out at other times, but as testing officials do not like to waste time looking for athletes who are not available, and as the testing procedure will also normally include checking the whereabouts information given for that one hour, that will undoubtedly be the time where by far the most out-of-competition tests will be carried out.

And mind you, every athlete decides for himself the time of the day.

So why this uproar and anger from so many sides, when for five years no-one has objected to the previous rules. Why now indeed when the changes have been an improvement of the conditions for the athletes.

Well to me there is only one logical explanation, either the people and organisations which are protesting, have been completely ignorant of the rules so far, and do not know what they are talking about, or they have deliberately violated them for the last five years, and are doing so continuously.

That is the shocking conclusion that can be deducted from this line of events, a conclusion that – strangely enough - I have not come across anywhere else, and it brings me back to what I said in the beginning, that the views on anti-doping-rules, varies immensely from one sport to another, and also from one area federation to another.

So let us take a look at "my" federation, the European Federation of Athletics (EAA):

Within athletics, 17 out of 18 doping cases in relation to the Olympic Games in Beijing 2008, were related only to European athletes.

In Athens 2004 the same applied to 9 out of 10 doping cases in athletics.

During the last more than 10 years I have worked tirelessly against heavy opposition, in order to improve doping control within European Athletics, until the President and his council – last year - finally found an opportunity to exclude me from the federation's anti-doping activities.

A detailed account of my experiences, and the opposition and difficulties I have been facing, can be found on the website: www.123jemmeside.dk/eea-anti-doping

With the information you can find there, and together with what I have been saying here, I think that most of you will agree that WADA and anti-doping still have a long, long way to go, and many fights to fight.

And opposition can be found on many levels. In my home country, Denmark a recently elected and totally inexperienced President of Danish Athletics, has refused to recommend my continued work as an anti-doping delegate in European athletics, when my present term is ending, after which Danish athletics will no more be represented in international anti-doping.

Apparently he is not only inexperienced. Either he must be against efficient anti-doping activities such as they are documented on my website, or he must be a complete ignorant, especially when it comes to anti-doping.

To strive to improve efficiency within anti-doping is a very tough and most ungrateful undertaking.

With that in mind, let me conclude by saying, that right now it is crucial for WADA to win the fight at hand concerning the whereabouts rules, and to defeat those with shaky hands or doubtful motives, for the sake of all clean athletes, and for the sake of world sport - and I still believe in a clean sport.

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