

# **From 'Skategate' to Biathlon: Defining Corruption in Sport**

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# Agenda

The aims of this presentation are to:

- \* Highlight the differences between management and competition corruption in sport, providing examples of each from Winter Sports
- \* Discuss the dilemma in defining corruption in sport
- \* Provide a definition of corruption in sport

# 'Corruption' in Sport

Doping

Vote Rigging

Gambling

Match Fixing

Undue Influence

Points Shaving

Bribery

Embezzlement

Over **2,000** cases of corruption collected SO FAR

# 'Management Corruption'

Maennig (2005)

Involves non-competition decisions made by sporting officials and governing bodies

*For example:*

- ✱ Awarding of host city status for major sporting events
- ✱ Negotiation and allocation of rights (e.g. broadcasting, merchandising)
- ✱ Awarding of contracts for construction of sporting venues and the governance of sport

# IOC Hosting Rights Scandal

2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City

- \* Lost rights to hold the 1998 Winter Games
- \* Paid more than \$1million to 24 member of the IOC panel that chooses the venue for the Games
- \* Two executives on the organising committee forced to resign and leader of the bidding committee dropped from a lucrative consulting role
- \* IOC forced resignation of 4 IOC members and expelled another 6



# 'Skategate'

## 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, USA

- \* Close contest between Canadian pair, Jamie Sale & David Pelletier, and the Russian skaters Yelena Berezhnaya and Anton Sikharulidze
- \* Gold medal initially awarded to the Russian pair
- \* Canadians awarded a gold medal after French judge, Marie-Reine Le Gougne, was 'forced' to vote for the Russian pair in exchange for a French ice dance victory



# 'Competition Corruption'

Maennig (2005)

Involves activities by athletes and/or those officials who have a direct responsibility for the outcome of a sporting contest (i.e. a referee or umpire)

*For example:*

- \* Doping
- \* Match Fixing
- \* Points Shaving

# Doping in Biathlon

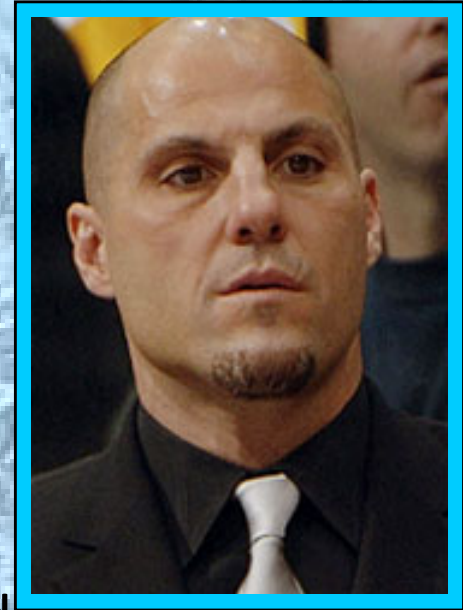
Olga Medvedtseva (Pyleva)

- \* Stripped of her silver medal from the 15km race and kicked out of the Olympics for a positive drugs test for carphedon
- \* Stated that she had been given drugs by a trusted personal doctor for an ankle injury that hadn't included carphedon on its ingredients list
- \* Banned for two years



# 'Tocchetgate'

- \* Investigated as part of Operation Slapshot, an illegal nationwide gambling ring, led by New Jersey State Police
- \* Tocchet, a 22-year NHL veteran, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to promote gambling and promoting gambling
- \* Defence lawyer, Kevin Marino, said that Tocchet was not involved in fixing hockey games
- \* Given two years probation
- \* NJ State trooper, James Harney, sentenced to six years in prison for his part



# Defining the Problem

Sport Sociology

Hughes & Coakley (1991)

- \* Positive Deviance and Overconforming to the Sport Ethic
  - \* Love the thrill of competing and want to continue to participate for as long as possible
  - \* Athletes don't see their overconformity to the sport ethic as deviant
  - \* *'Through positive deviance people do harmful things to themselves and perhaps others while motivated by a sense of duty and honour' (311)*

# Defining the Problem

Sports Economics

*'In sport, corruption may take the form of behaviour by athletes who refrain from achieving the levels of performance normally required in the sport in question to win the competition and instead intentionally permit others to win, or behaviour by sporting officials who consciously perform their allocated tasks in a manner at variance with the objectives and moral values of the relevant club, association, competitive sports, in general and/or society at large'*

Maennig (2005:189)

# Defining the Problem

Clear that these two 'definitions' of corruption are at odds

- \* How can an athlete be doing everything to overconform to the sport ethic, to be seen as an athlete, and allow an opponent to win?

Lack of standardisation in a definition of corruption and in dealing with the behaviour

- \* Lyudmila Blonska or Dwain Chambers
- \* Major League Baseball or National Football League

# Defining the Problem... today

Corruption in sport is:

***Any illegal, immoral or unethical activity that attempts to deliberately distort the result of a sporting contest for the material gain of one or more parties involved in that activity***

Gorse & Chadwick (2009)

# Where now?

- \* Construction of database detailing cases of corruption in international sport
- \* Further development of typology of corruption
- \* Analysis of how corruption impacts on sport marketing strategy



**Thank you for your  
attention**

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