”Should there be a third sex in sport?”

Play The Game meeting

Cologne, October 2011

Arne Ljungqvist MD, PhD
IOC Med. Comm. chair
A basic fact
Three basic questions

When introduced by the IOC (1968), the sex test was intended to make sure that men do not compete in women’s events - WHY?

With few exceptions men’s and women’s competitions are distinctly separate – WHY?

What to do with intersex athletes?; compete with women, with men, for themselves ??
IOC Gender Policy

No screening for gender of participants

At the discretion of the IOC medical committee (or equivalent) an athlete’s gender may be investigated

Special requirements for athletes who have been subjected to sex reassignment, and for female athletes with functional hyperandrogenism
Some key years and events

1948   British Women’s AAA requires sex certificate

1966/67  Physical inspection at some comp

1968   Sex chromatin test introduced at OG

1983/85   The case of Maria Patino
Key years and events, ctd.

1985  The IAAF scientific meeting in Canberra
1990/92 The IAAF abandons gender screening
1992  The IOC tests for the Y-chromosome
1995  The IOC session is made aware
1998  The IOC Athletes’ Commission study
1999  The IOC abandons gender screening
Published in 2000
Key years and events ctd.

2000/04  The international feds. follow suit

2003  The Stockholm consensus meeting on sex change

2009  The “Semenya case”

2010  The IOC/IAAF conferences in Miami and Lausanne

2011  The IOC EB decision on “hyperandrogenism”
The IOC/IAAF conferences 2010

- Miami in January; established the “state of the art” from a scientific point of view (scientists attending an international Congress on DSD).

- Lausanne in October; laid down the principles for rules (experts in science, law - including human rights, ethics, sports administration, sports medicine and rep of OII and olympic athletes).
Sport authorities, in conjunction with the relevant medical authorities, have a responsibility to follow up on cases of DSD that arise under their jurisdiction.

Precise diagnosis should be established expeditiously utilizing requisite expertise.

A management plan should be drawn up if treatment is necessary.

Strategically located centers should be established.
Lausanne conclusions

- Support of existing rule that allows for the sex to be determined in a particular case.
- Need for education of the sports community recognized.
- PPHE and athletes passport were found to be important means of identifying DSD cases.
- Rules should be put in place to determine eligibility of female athletes with DSD.
- Such rules should be based on the difference in androgen levels between males and females.
- Independent experts to make a case by case evaluation
- Replace DSD by “Hyperandrogenism” for the purpose of sport participation
The IOC EB Decision in 2011

- A female recognized by law should be eligible to compete in female competitions provided that she has androgen levels below the male range or, if within the male range, she has an androgen resistance;
- An eligibility evaluation should be made anonymously by an independent panel of experts in hyperandrogenism;
- If judged ineligible, the reasons should be given and requirements for becoming eligible explained;
IOC EB decision ctd.

- Failure or refusal to comply with the process, while it is the athlete’s right, results in ineligibility;
- The investigation of a particular case should be conducted under strict confidentiality;
NO – to identify two distinct borderlines (between intersex and male on one hand and intersex an female on the other) instead of one (between male and female) would make the problem double difficult to solve.