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ZIKLOLAND

11/05/2020

Manolo Saiz: «Mis equipos han sido los más limpios del ciclismo»

Manolo Saiz (1959) vuelve a repasar su carrera deportiva, los gloriosos éxitos con el equipo ONCE y su caída al infierno con la Operación Puerto, analiza el presente del ciclismo y mira también al futuro con optimismo.

En una entrevista en el diario *Alerta*, Saiz destaca el grupo humano y deportivo que tuvo en la ONCE. «**Teníamos el equipo con los mejores jóvenes del mundo y podíamos haber marcado otra década a la cabeza del ciclismo mundial**». El de Torrelavega dirigió a la formación amarilla, Liberty Seguros y Astana entre 1989 y 2006. La Operación Puerto, hace 14 años, secó su trayectoria y su vida.

Preguntado directamente por cuestiones de dopaje estas son sus respuestas en el diario cántabro:

P: ¿Tus ciclistas tuvieron ayudas biológicas?

R: Son ellos los que deberían contestar.

P: ¿Tuviste conocimiento de que algún corredor tuyo se sometiese a transfusiones de sangre?

R: Lo he dicho siempre y lo seguiré manteniendo toda mi vida. Mis equipos han sido los más limpios del ciclismo. Con eso me quedo.

P: ¿Todo lo que era normal en aquella época, es punible hoy?

R: No tengo ni idea. Hay ayudas biológicas permitidas y hay que tener en cuenta el gran número de controles que se hacen hoy en día. Yo no puedo entrar en casa de nadie para saber si toma o no toma cierto tipo de ayudas. Otra cosa es evaluar si es ético o no. Son cosas completamente distintas.

La victoria del equipo ONCE en la CRE del Tour de Francia 2000:

No oculta el coste emocional y vital que le supuso la Operación Puerto. «**Me ha quitado toda la vida. Estos 14 años podían haber sido los mejores de mi vida. Me ha sumido en mi propia soledad, era un valiente y me ha convertido en un cobarde; y mil cosas más**, por ejemplo, mis hijos quizás podían haber tomado otros destinos», asegura.

Durante tres temporadas, de 2016 a 2018, regresó al ciclismo como el Aldro Team amateur; ahora busca volver a encender llama de un equipo profesional a la espera de un patrocinador. «**Tengo esperanzas en que aparezca una empresa que le guste el ciclismo, que sepa apreciar que no todo lo que se dice es negro**. Lo único que puedo prometer es trabajo y fidelidad. Voy a seguir luchando, por supuesto», afirma.

<https://www.zikloland.com/manolo-saiz-mis-equipos-han-sido-los-mas-limpios-del-ciclismo/>

CYCLING PUB

07/05/2020

Former WADA chief on absence of doping controls: There is no doubt in my mind that some athletes will cheat

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**Photo by Jonathan Roorda / CyclingPub.com**

Sir Craig Reedie, former president of the WADA, has expressed his concerns about the lack of doping controls in times of coronavirus.

Several riders have already complained about the absence of testing and some of them -like Thibaut Pinot (Groupama-FDJ) and Romain Bardet (AG2R La Mondiale)- have even said that they haven't been tested since October 2019. Other voices like Tom Dumoulin, Victor Campenaerts and Nans Peters have also showed their discomfort with the situation.

Sir Craig Reedie -former president of the World Anti-Doping Organisation- is also worried about this situation. The former head of the organisation created to fight the use of illegal substances in sports, discussed this during a talk at the [e-College](#) of the Association Internationale de la Presse Sportive (AIPS).

Reedie was asked if he is concerned about the use of doping by athletes at a moment where the controls are minimal. "The simple answer is yes," he said. "I've always tried to be one of the optimistic people but I have to say being involved in WADA for more than 20 years, I'm afraid you become cynical. There is no doubt in my mind that some athletes will cheat. The testing programs for all athletes have not come to a complete hold but are in a much more limited level of activity and therefore I have to be cynical and say that some people will cheat.

"The challenge is what we do when this finishes and when doping officials can get access to

athletes. They are still returning their whereabouts, so we know where they are. I think anybody who decides to cheat is taking the risk for a number of reasons. First of all, there is now a much greater degree of intelligence within WADA and other anti doping organisations about where the cheats come from, geographically where they are and other aspects of intelligence. So I'm sure when that when testing is resumed there will be a lot of targeting done. Secondly, we are smarter than we were before, we are now better in laboratory examinations, we've got a comprehensive list of prohibited substances and I also think, hopefully there is some understanding that if the 2020 games are going ahead it is very important for sports that people behave.

"Most athletes in my view are clean, some are not. Lastly, we will store samples for a long period and as soon as science gets better we will retest them so anyone who cheats may well be caught."

The WADA has also announced the development of an updated guidance for Anti-Doping Organisations with the practices to follow when the normal doping control programs can resume. "Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, WADA has been keeping in close contact with Anti-Doping Organisations in order to provide leadership and support in the face of this unprecedented situation," said the President of the organisation, Witold Banka. "As always, our first priority must be public health, safety and social responsibility. Therefore, we continue to urge everyone to follow closely the advice of relevant health authorities and government agencies.

"Where testing programs can resume, we are providing clear guidance so that the integrity of the system can be maintained without jeopardizing the health of athletes, sample collection personnel or anyone coming into contact with them. It is crucial that the system can return to full power as quickly as possible once the various restrictions are lifted, in line with the different circumstances around the world."

<http://cyclingpub.com/article/7254/Former+WADA+chief+on+absence+of+doping+controls%3A+There+is+no+doubt+in+my+mind+that+some+athletes+will+cheat>

DAILY NATION

09/05/2020

Doping bans, loss of fame and fortune drive athletes on the path to self destruction



This photo taken on March 6, 2008, shows a runner powering up a country road during an early morning training run near a training camp in Kaptagat, Eldoret. PHOTO | FILE

In Summary

- Bungei emphasises the importance of the athletes having a stable family life.

By BERNARD ROTICH

By JEFF KINYANJUI

Road runner Alex Korio Oliotiptip and marathoner Mikel Kiprotich Mutai became the latest Kenyans to be suspended by the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) early this month for violation of anti-doping rules.

While news of Kenyan athletes getting banned or suspended for doping is slowly becoming the new normal, it is the effect of the sentences on the athletes that is worrying. How do the athletes handle such sanctions? And indeed, how are Kenyan athletes handling challenges and failures in life?

Former world 1,500 metres champion Asbel Kiprop, who was banned for four years for testing positive for erythropoietin (EPO) in an out-of-competition test in 2017, has declared his innocence and taken the fight to AIU's doorstep.

Controversial videos of the runner emerged online of him kissing a woman who wasn't his wife in public and another of him speeding on a busy highway. Kiprop has never shied away from talking about how the doping ban slapped last year affected his life negatively. His marriage broke down and he almost went into depression.

“All the people I had housed left me and my rivals openly ridiculed me. My opponents said that they had realised that I had been beating them in races through doping. There was a lack of trust and it can get worse when it comes to people who are closer. The only people who came through for me were my parents and Inspector General of Police Hillary Mutyambai,” Asbel recently said in an interview on TV show ‘Unscripted With Grace’ which ran on NTV.



A screen grab of Asbel

Kiprop (left) during his interview with Grace Msalame on NTV lifestyle show ‘Unscripted’ on April 4, 2020. PHOTO | ELIAS MAKORI |

“I became an alcoholic, my wife left and friends deserted me. I never planned to end my athletics career this way, and that is why I am so determined. I know it will be hard for me to return strongly to the level where I was, but I have a point to prove since I still have the energy to run,” Asbel added.

Another athlete whose star came crashing is former Olympic women’s marathon champion Jemimah Sumgong. She was banned for eight years after testing positive for erythropoietin. Before she was handed the lengthy ban, Sumgong was preparing to defend her London Marathon title in 2017 but she was given a two-week suspension prior to the race.

NOT BEEN EASY

Sumgong said after her fall from grace, it has not been easy for her. She said that her family has been her pillar as she struggled to make ends meet after she was banned.

“It was tough for me when I was suspended. There was no one to turn to. I want to thank my husband, Noah Talam, who gave me support all through,” she said.



Kenya's Jemima Sumgong wins the Elite Women's race of the 2016 London Marathon in central London on April 24, 2016. AFP PHOTO | JUSTIN TALLIS

The former London Marathon champion said the toughest part that brings down most athletes accused of doping is the loss of training partners and friends.

"It was really a bad experience for me because I lost friends and even those who used to train with me shied away," Sumgong said.

To add insult to injury Sumgong lost her job too after the ban. She said that haunts her to date and she almost slid into depression.

"I thank God because I had started my own business. After the whole saga, I decided to manage the business fully, and I'm happy it is now doing well. One has to invest well while still active in the sport because you never know what will happen in the future," she said.

COUNSELLING DEPARTMENT

Sumgong urged Athletics Kenya (AK) to create a counselling department for the sake of upcoming athletes.

"There are athletes who might end up being banned for committing errors unknowingly and it can affect them mentally. AK needs to come up with a counselling department because these people are also human despite having done something wrong," added Sumgong.

Kenya's 800m great Wilson Bungei sank into alcoholism after winning gold at the Beijing Olympic Games in 2008. However, he was able to overcome the challenge and is now a motivational speaker and a businessman.



The 2008 Beijing Olympics

800m champion Wilfred Bungei at the Athletes Kenya Athletes' Conference in Safari Park, Nairobi on December 6, 2018. PHOTO | SILA KIPLAGAT |

Bungei said Kenya does not have mechanisms to shield its sportspeople from such negative vices. He asked athletes' managers to play an active role in guiding runners besides booking races for them.

"From my experience, I know most high-profile Kenyan athletes struggle with overcoming failure, be it doping bans, loss of form or any other challenge. There is a lot of loneliness up there when they are winning and success has come to their lives. They may have very many superficial friends but in normal lives away from athletics, they are very lonely people and it becomes even worse when they are undergoing problems," Bungei told *Nation Sport*.

"They are, therefore, easily lured into alcoholism, promiscuity and other destructive lifestyles just to hide from the real monster that brought them down. This really doesn't help and ends up destroying their careers and lives in general," he added.

Bungei emphasises the importance of the athletes having a stable family life.

"Many athletes hardly realise they have a problem. When they hit rock-bottom they want to hide since they are regarded as celebrities and they, therefore, do not seek help. Loss of financial streams and fame is hard. It is much tougher if your family is not there for you.

"I believe families are the most important part of our lives but we tend to focus so much on our careers and success. We should have a balance. If you ignore your family then you will have problems," he said.

Bungei said the country lacks mechanisms and the capacity to shield athletes. He said, "If I never sought help I wouldn't be where I am. I could have even drunk myself to death.

"My advice to athletes who are going through problems, be it alcoholism, depression or other issues of life, find the courage to admit that you have a problem and have your family close. The next thing after acceptance is seeking help and you will be on your way to recovery," he said.

Bungei urged managers of the affected athletes to do more than booking races and making money.

“Athletics Kenya (AK) has a role to play in educating and sensitising athletes. But we really cannot blame them when athletes go down the wrong path because of their personal decisions.

“Athletes’ managers should advise runners on the dos and don’ts and where to invest. They should ensure that athletes are okay on and off the track,” Bungei said.

KIPSANG BACKS SUMGONG

Former world marathon record holder Wilson Kipsang backed Sumgong on the need for AK to set up a counselling unit for athletes.



Wilson Kipsang of Kenya crosses the line to win the men's race in the 2014 London Marathon on The Mall in central London on April 13, 2014. PHOTO LEON NEAL | AFP

The 37-year-old athlete was suspended early this year "for whereabouts failures and tampering", which violate World Athletics' anti-doping rules.

Kipsang said that many athletes who are suspended end up turning to alcohol “to avoid stress” which builds following a ban.

"Athletics Kenya has to come up with a counselling department that will help athletes overcome the situation. It is not the end of life when you are suspended," Kipsang said.

He also said that most athletes who are caught up in doping suspensions get lonely because they are avoided by training mates and friends.

"Once the Athletics Integrity Unit suspends an athlete, he loses friends and training mates immediately. That affects him or her mentally. That low moment is crucial as if care is not take, an athlete can easily become depressed," the former Berlin Marathon champion said.

On family disputes, Kipsang said misunderstandings arise mostly due to lack of money since the suspended runner no longer brings in a pay cheque like they used to when they were successful.

"Unless the affected athlete has investments, there might be some problems because there is no more flow of cash," Kipsang said.

RUDISHA DISTRACTED

Loss of form, injuries and other personal challenges almost led former 800m world champion David Rudisha down the path of destruction.



David Rudisha walks out of the Athletics Kenya Conference at Hotel Sirikwa in Eldoret town, Uasin Gishu County on December 5, 2019. PHOTO | JARED NYATAYA |

From going through a painful separation from his wife, death of his father, surviving a horrific car accident, Rudisha admitted to Spikes Magazine that he was on a path to self-destruction.

"With everything else going on in my life, the pressure sometimes got to me. To release it, I'd often hang out with friends, partying too much. It's not something you intend to come your way but sometimes, during periods like that, you look for a bit of destruction to distract yourself," he said in an interview in October last year.

Finnish psychologist Annika Ingendia, who has worked with the Harambee Stars under 17 side, Harambee Starlets, Impala rugby team, Kenya 7s, among other sports teams, said Kenyan athletes rarely seek psychological support.

"From my personal experiences, there are many different reasons why athletes start to engage in the abuse of alcohol, promiscuity, or any other self-destructive behaviour. However, for others, the first step towards alcohol or a sexual activity is the start of an addiction. The problem is, people notice their addictive behaviours when it is too late and the problem has become very severe. Without professional help, they are not able to change and abstain from it," Annika told *Nation Sport*.



Kenya's Asbel Kiprop celebrates after winning the final of the men's 1500 metres at the 2015 IAAF World Championships at the "Bird's Nest" National Stadium in Beijing, China on August 30, 2015. AFP PHOTO | OLIVIER MORIN

“Here lies one of the problems in my view. Seeking counselling has been stigmatised in the Kenyan society and in many other societies around the world. From talks with various Kenyans, I have understood that the older generations especially do not support psychological therapy or counselling. Besides the stigma of seeking help, it is often difficult to find affordable qualified counsellors.

“There are various reasons why athletes will engage or develop alcohol addiction. Some reasons include family members such as parents or older siblings, who are addicted to alcohol, trying to keep up with friends and peers and fit in the "culture / environment" or avoiding to deal with problems and using alcohol to forget and create a happy place.

“Our friends and peers have a huge impact on our development and creating habits. Being surrounded by people who enjoy drinking alcohol, partying, and engaging in promiscuity most likely will lead a person to start engaging in similar behaviours. Here often lies another problem as everything is fun and not serious. The beer after a successful game, celebrating with the teammates, receiving attention and offers for sexual adventures, and so on. It seems innocent and just like a good time,” Annika said.

“The feeling of joy, being in control, and increasing confidence when being able to share about the many different partners the person is engaging with. Athletes often realise too late when the use of alcohol turns into abuse and the adventures turn into an escape from responsibility. It easily happens that they don't see the negative consequences before it is too late.

“Once they are addicted to any behaviour or substance denial of it is common. To realise that we need help to stop a certain behaviour takes time and it will get worse before it will get better, if it does. Then, there are athletes who struggle with many other problems from home or even mental disorders which can cause them to start drinking,” she added.

Annika emphasised that athletes find it tough to take up challenges as they are used to success and fame from a young age.

“The loss of form, financial resources, or ban for doping are very difficult situations. Athletes often tend to identify themselves, their self-worth, and all that they are through their sport. In

other words, they don't know who they are without the sport. Sports, and especially professional sports, take up most of their lives and time.

“Often they don’t develop another identity and when their athlete identity is taken away they fall into a dark place. Some will recover from this without starting to drink, abuse substances, or careless sexual activity. Others will use exactly these things to forget their problems - to escape from having to face one of the most difficult questions in our life of who we are and what our purpose,” Annika said.

“Whenever we are going through transitions in life and everything around us changes we are most vulnerable and look for something to feel safe, happy, and in control. This can then easily end up in addiction. Instead of making things better, the athletes make it worse for themselves. They won't return to their previous shape or better, they won't be able to create an income through sports anymore. When falling into addiction people will start to turn away from them and lastly, their families might too,” she added.

Annika opines early awareness on the effects of alcoholism and other vices would help change the course for athletes.

“I think it is very important to start by raising awareness on alcohol abuse, promiscuity and other self-destructive habits of athletes. We need to start at an early age and educate sportsmen and women about the dangers of the vices. This requires open and honest conversations about these topics, giving our athletes enough information to make valid decisions on such matters. Secondly, coaches, managers, and team doctors need to be educated to see the early signs and start engaging with the player at risk. Knowing that every player who is facing a transition needs extra attention and care,” she said.

“Thirdly, we need to start offering professional help to players who have developed an addiction and live out self-destructive behaviours. These means breaking down the stigma associated with counselling, seeing a psychologist, and receiving help when we need it. This is a fight that has been going on for years and years and still people are perceived as weak when seeking the help of a psychologist.

“We also need to help and support our athletes in their holistic development. We need to help them find out who they are besides the rugby player, football player, swimmer and incorporating sport psychology in technical bench is necessary.”

<https://www.nation.co.ke/sports/athletics/Doping-bans-loss-fortune-drive-athletes-path-self-destruction-/1100-5546714-52n3ghz/index.html>

DAILY MAIL

09/05/2020

Russia face new football scandal as WADA and FIFA uncover evidence of state-sponsored doping programme

- **FIFA will receive new evidence that Russian footballers were helped to cheat**
- **Information relates to the country's state-sponsored doping scandal**
- **WADA has data on 298 Russian athletes across dozens of different sports**

By [NICK HARRIS FOR THE MAIL ON SUNDAY](#)

Fresh evidence that Russian footballers were helped to cheat during their nation's state-sponsored [doping](#) scandal will arrive at [FIFA](#) within weeks.

The World Anti-Doping Agency told FIFA in recent days that new data recovered last year from a Moscow lab at the centre of the scandal includes information about an unspecified number of alleged Russian footballer cheats.

WADA has 'evidence packages' relating to 298 Russian individuals across dozens of different sports that it will forward to anti-doping agencies and global governing bodies.



Evidence has emerged that Russian footballers were helped to cheat during doping scandal

Asked to confirm that WADA has specifically told FIFA that they will receive 'case packages' relating to footballers by the end of May, a FIFA spokesman said: 'This is correct.'

As *Sportmail* revealed in 2017, FIFA were first told by anti-corruption investigators in December 2016 that at least 36 Russian players — and perhaps many more — had been illegally assisted during the doping scandal.

We revealed that assistance came in various ways, including some players being given performance-enhancing drugs, some having failed tests covered up and some being guaranteed they would always be 'clean' regardless of whether they doped or not.

Those initial 36 players included the entire 23-man Russian squad who went to the 2014 World Cup in Brazil.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/sportsnews/article-8304029/Russia-face-new-football-scandal-WADA-FIFA-uncover-evidence-state-sponsored-doping.html>