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LA VANGUARDIA

13/05/2020

Suspenden por 4 años a entrenador ruso de judo por suministrar estimulantes

Moscú, 13 may (EFE).- El entrenador ruso de judo Suleim Mutaliev ha sido suspendido durante cuatro años por suministrar a sus pupilos el estimulante metilhexanamina.

Según informó hoy la Agencia Antidopaje Rusa (RUSADA), Mutaliev cometió esa infracción hace un año durante el campeonato del Norte del Cáucaso celebrado en la ciudad de Nazrán.

"Durante la competición el técnico les dio a los deportistas una bebida que contenía una sustancia prohibida", explicó Margarita Pajnotskaya, subdirectora de la RUSADA, a la agencia TASS.

Pajnotskaya agregó que, "según ambos deportistas, ellos desconocían que la bebida contenía una sustancia prohibida".

Pese a todo, los deportistas fueron sancionados con dos años de suspensión por consumo de sustancias dopantes.

Rusia, que logró dos oros y un bronce en los Juegos Olímpicos de Río 2016, no podrá participar en Tokio 2021 después de ser sancionado durante cuatro años por la Agencia Mundial Antidopaje.

Moscú ha recurrido el fallo, vista que ha sido aplazada hasta junio debido a la pandemia del coronavirus.EFE

<https://www.lavanguardia.com/deportes/20200513/481133574030/suspenden-por-4-anos-a-entrenador-ruso-de-judo-por-suministrar-estimulantes.html>

AS

14/05/2020

Armstrong y su documental: "Voy a contar mi verdad"

La cadena ESPN emitió el trailer del documental '30 for 30' sobre el exciclista texano que se estrenará el próximo 24 de mayo y en el que podría hablar sobre sus episodios de dopaje.



STEFANO RELLANDINI REUTERS

Lance Armstrong vuelve a la primera plana de la actualidad del ciclismo tras la emisión este miércoles de un [adelanto del documental '30 for 30' de la cadena estadounidense ESPN](#) que estará centrado en la figura del exciclista texano y que se emitirá el próximo 24 de mayo.

Armstrong, ganador de siete Tour de Francia de los que fue desposeído cuando admitió haberse dopado, manifiesta que en este documental dará su versión sobre este episodio. "No voy a mentirte. Voy a contar mi verdad", manifiesta el texano en este adelanto.

En este documental también aparecerán figuras del ciclismo estadounidense, como el exjefe de USA Cycling Derek Bouchard-Hall, que admite que "todos los elogios que le dedicamos fueron bien merecidos. Ganar siete Tour de Francia no es fácil, es algo difícil de lograr". También aparece el exciclista George Hincapie, compañero de Armstrong en el US Postal y uno de los que le animó a contar su versión. "Le dije a Lance que saliera y lo dijera, esto es real ahora". Habrá que esperar al próximo día 24 para conocer cuál es la verdad de Armstrong.

https://as.com/ciclismo/2020/05/14/mas_ciclismo/1589444264_141184.html

AMERICA TV

12/05/2020

UEFA suspende un año a Artem Besedin del Dynamo de Kiev por dopaje

Artem Besedin, delantero ucraniano de 24 años. | Video: YouTube

El delantero del Dynamo de Kiev dio positivo por Fonturacetam

El delantero internacional ucraniano del **Dinamo de Kiev, Artem Besedin**, que dio positivo por un estimulante en un partido de Europa League, fue suspendido un año por la [UEFA](#), anunció este martes la instancia europea.

Besedin, de 24 años, dio positivo al **Fonturacetam**, un estimulante que figura en la lista de productos prohibidos por la Agencia Mundial Antidopaje (AMA).

El control tuvo lugar el 28 de noviembre de 2019, al término del partido entre Malmö y Dinamo de Kiev, válido para la fase de grupos de la Europa League y ganado por 4-3 por los suecos.

La **suspensión del jugador**, que es **definitiva**, ya que no hubo apelación por su parte, irá hasta el 19 de diciembre de 2020, precisó la UEFA.

En el Dynamo de Kiev desde 2015, Besedin ha sido 13 veces internacional con Ucrania. AFP

<https://www.americatv.com.pe/deportes/futbol-mundial/uefa-suspende-ano-artem-besedin-dynamo-kiev-dopaje-n402597?ref=hcron>

INSIDE THE GAMES

13/05/2020

WADA praise success of partnership between South Africa and Ethiopia

- By [Michael Pavitt](#)



The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) claims a three-year partnership agreement between the South African Institute for Drug-Free Sport (SAIDS) and the Ethiopian National Anti-Doping Organization (ETH-NADO) has had significant benefits for the protection of clean sport in Africa.

Under the terms of the agreement, which was facilitated and monitored by WADA, SAIDS provided support, guidance and expertise to ETH-NADO to help build its anti-doping capacity.

The WADA says the partnership has led to improvements in the organisation and structure of ETH-NADO, as well as boosting its doping control programmes including urine and blood testing.

Progress has reportedly been made in intelligence and investigations, including whistleblower provisions.

Education and information for athletes was also deemed to have improved, along with results management.

"WADA's partnership programme is crucial to strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of NADOs worldwide by fostering a spirit of cooperation, collaboration and trust between nations," said Mekonnen Yidersal, ETH-NADO chief executive.

"It provides the opportunity to share knowledge and experience.

"Moreover, it brings NADOs together in one team, working together with the common aim of protecting clean sport.

"This partnership has been extremely beneficial to anti-doping in Ethiopia and I would like to thank our friends at SAIDS and WADA for their invaluable input and guidance."

The partnership is also claimed to be beneficial for SAIDS, in areas such as upskilling staff and highlighting where the organisation's own programmes could be developed.

WADA said ETH-NADO have now committed to helping other developing NADOs, having been mentored by SAIDS.

Director general Olivier Niggli said the partnership was one of several agreements which sees developed NADOs help developing bodies.



WADA director general Olivier Niggli said cooperation was vital for regional development of NADOs ©Getty Images

"Cooperation between NADOs is vital for regional development," Niggli said.

"Developing NADOs really benefit from having access to the experience and resources of others, particularly when they are in the same region and understand the challenges specific to that area.

"Just as a young athlete can learn from a more senior mentor, so too is the case with National Anti-Doping Organisations.

"Commitment on both sides is very important in these partnerships, and in this case, it was outstanding with both National Anti-Doping Organisations fully engaged with the concept and reality of the initiative.

"The fact that there was regular communication and feedback between the NADOs and with WADA also ensured that the partnership kept momentum throughout the three years.

"In short, this partnership has helped to build anti-doping capacity and strengthen the system within Ethiopia, further protecting clean sport in that important African sporting nation."

Similar agreements are in place between Norway and Kenya, Canada and Jamaica, Poland and Azerbaijan and the United Kingdom and Belarus.

<https://www.insidethegames.biz/index.php/articles/1094196/wada-south-africa-ethiopia-anti-doping>

SPORTSPRO

12/05/2020

Putting anti-doping centre stage: The drama of rebuilding trust in the wake of the Russia scandal

Russia’s cheating on an unprecedented scale shocked the global anti-doping system and put sports governing bodies under the microscope as never before. Facing their sternest examination to date, can those who profess to fight for clean sport defeat the drug cheats once and for all?

- Posted: May 12 2020
- By: Michael Long
-



With shadowy villains and dark sub-plots, meddling agents and a murky web of illicit interests, the protracted Russian doping saga has played out like a Shakespearean drama.

Some might call it a tragedy. In any case, the so-called 'biggest scandal in sports history' was both bewildering in scale and staggering in its effectiveness, the stuff of Hollywood screenplays and, indeed, Oscar-winning documentaries.

Russia’s sustained theatre of “deception and denial”, as former World Anti-Doping Agency (Wada) president Sir Craig Reedie put it, has raised more questions than answers. Among other things, the yearslong, multi-act affair has revealed troubling cracks in the anti-doping system and deep divisions within the world of sports politics, prompting a period of collective introspection and leaving many to doubt whether current protocols and practices are indeed fit for purpose.

The global anti-doping system is, after all, built upon a complex and sprawling network of interconnected yet disparate stakeholders, all of whom have a part to play in preserving the system’s integrity and, by extension, that of sport itself. So when the system is subverted and

corrupted on an unprecedented scale, each of those actors is left to reexamine their role in the whole production.



Stanislav Pozdnyakov, president of the Russian Olympic Committee, pictured in Moscow in February.

IOC: The starring role

“I wish Russia hadn’t been cheating,” laughs Reddie, reflecting on his six-year tenure as Wada president, which culminated at the end of 2019, during an interview with *SportsPro* in March. “But apart from that we made pretty massive progress; we’re a better organisation now than we were six years ago. If you look at the improvements the code is better, the rules are better and, above all, the compliance system is better. The science is better, and we’re also very used to being in the public eye and dealing with it.”

One might assume that Wada, as the global regulator, plays the lead role in the fight against doping, but many would argue it is actually the International Olympic Committee (IOC) that is the star of the show.

Though Wada has the power to ban any athlete, organisation or country from international sporting events like the Olympic Games, such a decision requires approval by the Wada executive committee, half of which is comprised of officials from the IOC and other sporting bodies. This governance structure has inevitably fuelled concerns over possible conflicts of interest, and indeed the IOC’s continued influence over Wada remains a highly contentious issue.

“I think, unfortunately, the IOC controls Wada and it’s not independent in the way that it needs to be in order to be successful,” says Travis Tygart, the chief executive of the US Anti-Doping Agency (Usada).

“Most importantly, they could say: ‘We’re going to remove ourselves from the governance structure because we know the fox can’t guard the henhouse effectively. We’re going to agree not to have half the seats on the executive committee or the foundation board, and we’re going to let the organisation be governed by truly independent people who don’t have an interest in the outcome of the decisions that they’re making.’ They could do that tomorrow.”



Russian javelin thrower Maria Abakumova tested positive for a banned substance following the reanalysis of her samples taken during Beijing 2008.

When it comes to the case of Russia, the IOC has shown itself to be against blanket bans, opting for individual sanctions rather than collective punishment. Ahead of the Rio 2016 Games, after Wada took the firm stance of recommending an outright ban on Russia, the IOC memorably left it up to the governing bodies of individual sports to rule on whether Russian competitors should be allowed to take part - a decision which led to scores of the country’s athletes competing as neutrals. Prior to the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics, too, IOC officials were accused of ‘backroom deals’ with Russian authorities.

In 2015, at a time when the various threads of the Russia scandal were beginning to unravel, the IOC began the process of forming the International Testing Agency (ITA), a Lausanne-based non-profit organisation that now acts as an anti-doping services provider to international federations (IFs) and major event organisers, or MEOs. Founded in July 2018 with the support of Wada, the ITA was created in an attempt to standardise anti-doping programmes across sports and make their administration, at the international level, independent from sports organisations.

“It was found that potentially we should slowly move away from a system where, at national level, the Swiss are testing the Swiss, the French test the French, the British test the British, the Russians test the Russians, and at the international level you have the International Tennis Federation testing tennis players, Fifa testing the footballers, etc,” explains Benjamin Cohen,

the ITA's director general. "There is the perception of a conflict of interest, and the idea was to make that totally independent."

Yet independence is a nebulous term when it comes to sports governance. Conflicts of interest are unavoidable, and it should be noted that several members of the ITA's own five-member board, whose composition is approved by Wada's executive committee, continue to hold senior IF posts. That the ITA was originally called the Independent Testing Agency but its name was changed after Swiss authorities noted it was not independent perhaps says it all.

The sports world was pretty shaken up by the Russian scandal. Part of the project, for us, is to try and also regain trust in the system.

Benjamin Cohen, International Testing Agency director general

Nevertheless, the birth of the new agency has its merits, says Cohen, who was employee number one at the ITA having been installed in early 2018 after previously leading Wada's European office.

"I think the sports world was pretty shaken up by the Russian scandal," he says. "Part of the project, for us, is to try and also regain trust in the system, especially with the athletes that have some questions about the global anti-doping community, who tests them, what kinds of sanctions [exist], etc. We really want to harmonise the process and provide all the athletes of the world a level playing field by testing them in a similar manner across the globe and across the sports.

"In creating a new anti-doping organisation, I could not reinvent the wheel. For me, it was important to recruit the best in class, the people that can demonstrate truly solid previous experience in a range of anti-doping expertise, so that's what we've been doing.

"I started alone; we are now more than 45 employees at the ITA and still growing. 25 per cent of our staff has a PhD in anti-doping sciences, we have sociologists, we have laboratory experts, doping control officers, lawyers that are doing anti-doping on a daily basis, we have people from national anti-doping organisations as well. We're really trying to create an international centre of anti-doping expertise that can rebuild trust in the system and provide quality services to the anti-doping community."

To date, around 45 IFs and MEOs have voluntarily delegated the management of their anti-doping programmes to the ITA, which charges an administration fee at cost price for providing its various services. The ITA's partners include the IOC, for which the agency is currently overseeing the long-term storage of samples and operating a retrospective reanalysis programme for those taken during recent Olympic Games, including London 2012.

"It's a lot of work, obviously, for us, and a difficult programme," admits Cohen. "Weightlifting has delegated its programme to us, it's a sport that has been affected by doping, but other sports as well: wrestling, judo, aquatics, and other sports that have had a number of issues."

Federations: The supporting cast

"Any country who is thinking of doing what the Russians did, shouldn't, because you can see the embarrassment that has been caused to Russia - in the anti-doping sense they don't have any friends at all, anywhere," says Reddie. "Although it's taken a long time and it was a big investment, they were actually examined and dealt with by the world regulator properly and well."

Recent decisions and events have served as reminders of how much influence Russia, as a leading benefactor of sport, and Russian money retain in IF circles. Indeed, Wada's decision in December to impose a four-year ban on Russia from hosting major sporting events has caused headaches for IFs across the Olympic movement.

Senior Russian officials have decried the sanctions as a western conspiracy, with Dmitry Medvedev, the country's prime minister, claiming that "chronic anti-Russian hysteria" was behind Wada's ban. That sentiment is echoed on the sporting stage, too. Not all IF leaders have been as forthright as Alisher Usmanov, the Russian billionaire president of the International Fencing Federation (FIE) who has denounced the response to Wada's ban as a "lynching", but several administrators have shown a clear reluctance to come out and condemn Russia publicly.

Just because you're stinking of cash, that doesn't mean you get to buy the outcome through state-sponsored doping like Russia did in Sochi.

Travis Tygart, Usada chief executive

With Russia's appeal progressing, at the time of writing, through the Court of Arbitration for Sport (Cas), some IFs have refused to move events already slated to be staged in the country; International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) president René Fasel - who himself has close ties to Russia - insisted it would be "impossible" to relocate the 2023 Men's World Championship, for example. The organisers of the 2021 Beach Soccer World Cup and the 2022 FIVB Volleyball Men's World Championship, both of which are due to be held in Russia, have also said they're awaiting the court's final judgement before making a decision regarding their events.

Elsewhere the convention organiser SportAccord, a sister company of the Global Association of International Sports Federations (GAISF), an influential umbrella group of global governing bodies, has announced it will stage its 2021 edition in the Russian city of Ekaterinburg.

"[IFs are] certainly addicted, on some level, to the money that Russia is pouring into major international competitions," argues Tygart. "That's blinded them to the fact that just because you're stinking of cash that's flowing freely into the Olympics, that doesn't mean you get to buy the outcome through state-sponsored doping like they did in Sochi."

In the interest of dealing with Russia, World Athletics, the global governing body for track and field, has taken the strongest sanctions of any IF. In 2015, it banned the entire Russian Athletics Federation (Rusaf) from competing and twice upheld its suspension before fining the national body US\$10 million this March. By contrast, other federations have appeared more concerned with limiting reputational damage than pursuing justice.



British swimmer Duncan Scott refuses to share a podium with Chinese rival Sun Yang, who is later found guilty of doping violations.

In recent months, former and current presidents of the federations for biathlon, weightlifting and athletics have been implicated in alleged bribery schemes and coverups related to anti-doping violations. Meanwhile the highly controversial case of Chinese swimmer Sun Yang, a six-time Olympic medalist, has raised serious questions over the governance practices and disciplinary protocols of Fina, swimming's governing body.

Following a Fina tribunal into allegations he had tampered with a doping test by attacking vials of blood with a hammer, Sun received only a warning, prompting Wada to pursue a tougher sanction. Only after the case found its way to Cas was the 28-year-old handed an eight-year ban from all competition.

According to Rob Koehler, the director general of Global Athlete, an athlete-led movement which aims to address the imbalance of power between administrators and competitors, cases like Sun's have highlighted clear deficiencies in the anti-doping system and only fuelled the belief that IFs are incapable of self-policing.

"I think the federations need to take responsibility but in a way that offers independence in terms of their programmes," says the Canadian, "and not being operated by them but doing it independently and not through a third-party [such as the ITA]."

For Koehler, a former deputy director general at Wada, the "best model" for anti-doping can be found in the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU), which was set up in 2017 to combat doping in athletics. With its "strong vetting and independent chairs" and a registered testing pool for athletes who have been able to prove their innocence, he says the AIU has shown itself to be an effective testing and disciplinary body within the context of a single sport.

The federations need to take responsibility but in a way that offers independence in terms of their programmes.

Rob Koehler, Global Athlete director general

“I think the Athletics Integrity Unit has done a really strong job in appointing independent people that have been vetted on their board,” he adds. “That independence means there’s no influence coming from the sport federation itself - from [World Athletics president] Seb Coe, from any of the senior management. There’s a wall that’s put between them, and not just a superficial wall, a real wall.”

Such arms-length integrity units have been operative in other sports like tennis and cycling for years, but the creation of the ITA has increased pressure on IFs to outsource their anti-doping programmes. The UCI, cycling’s global governing body, recently agreed to transfer the functions and personnel of its Cycling Anti-Doping Foundation (CADF) to the ITA from January 2021. The move has proved somewhat controversial, with the CADF itself objecting on the grounds that it already had the necessary expertise and independence to function effectively.

“We need to convince international federations to change the model whereby they need to delegate their anti-doping function to an independent agency,” accepts Cohen. “We need to earn their trust.”

Athletes: The ignored protagonists

A movement of athletes seeking to change the anti-doping system has grown increasingly vocal since Russia’s transgressions first came to light, with many criticising Wada for its handling of the case. Last year Beckie Scott, an Olympic gold medalist from Canada, stepped down as chair of the agency’s athlete committee following an alleged bullying campaign against her after she opposed Russia’s controversial reinstatement in late 2018.

Those claims were subsequently dismissed following an investigation, but the episode only underlined, and indeed widened, the chasm that exists between competitors and administrators when it comes to important governance matters like anti-doping.

“If athletes and coaches don’t believe that the global watchdog has their back and is going to protect them, they’re that much more likely not to follow the rules - and therein lies the problem,” says Tygart. “In order to convince athletes that competing clean is the only way, and persuading them to do it the right way, they have to believe that the rules are going to be fairly enforced against everyone.

“Unfortunately, many athletes around the world, from what we know, just simply don’t have that based on the governance structure and the implementation of the rules at Wada.”



Romania's Gabriel Sîncrăian, winner of a bronze medal at Rio 2016, is one of several weightlifters retroactively sanctioned for doping offenses.

World Players, a global union of more than 100 player associations in over 60 countries, has led calls to reform Wada's governance structure to include greater athlete representation. Koehler, for one, supports those calls and insists more must be done to strengthen what he believes are structural weaknesses within the agency.

"Bringing more athletes on board with a collective voice, where they have one-third of the vote around the Wada table, I think that could probably be a game-changer because right now there's too much politics going on," he says. "Wada should not be a political organisation; it should be a regulatory body that focuses on rules and regulations and not politics.

"One of the things that has hurt their transparency is they've moved the declaration of non-compliance away from the foundation board to the executive committee, which is a closed meeting. It used to be transparent with the foundation board, so everybody can hear why someone is either being declared non-compliant or being declared compliant, and people have to face the public perception and the public view."

In March, Global Athlete released a report detailing the findings of a survey into athlete perceptions of the anti-doping system. Based on the responses of almost 500 current and former athletes spanning 48 countries and 56 sports, the report found that the majority of competitors believe Wada lacks adequate independence and transparency, and that the agency requires further governance reforms to ensure athletes have sufficient representation at the table.

The messages were clear: the IOC and sports federations have too much control over Wada and its governance.

“There was a clear message from the athletes indicating that they didn’t think Wada was independent from outside influences,” Koehler says of the report’s findings. “The messages were clear: the IOC and sports federations have too much control over Wada and its governance.”

Besides lacking a say in Wada’s decision-making, many of the grievances athletes have with the current anti-doping system concern apparent inconsistencies in testing and sanctioning. While all elite athletes are required to sign up to the Wada Code, it is often noted that other stakeholders are not held to the same level of scrutiny. Discrepancies in the severity of sanctions has also fostered a climate of suspicion and confusion among those who compete in international competitions.

“The rules are strong and the rules are in place, but it’s almost that the rules are so strong when it comes to compliance that there’s a fear to enact and to use the strongest rules possible against signatories,” says Koehler. “I know that’s been a little bit of a concern for the athletes. That’s the reason the compliance standards were brought in: to put stakeholders to a similar level of responsibility to athletes.

“Athletes test positive, pretty quickly the burden of proof is pretty high on them, and there’s no leeway for their sanctioning. In general, they don’t change the rules for them but it seems stakeholders have the rules changed for them. I think there’s a little bit of a problem there.



“What we see in sport, and it’s no different in anti-doping, is the voice of dissent is cast aside, as opposed to listened to. If you agree with a decision, then you’re promoted or put on a pedestal; if you don’t agree, you’re cast aside. I think that’s concerning because athletes have

the biggest stake in the game when it comes to anti-doping so surely they should be listened to.”

While efforts have been made to harmonise doping controls to ensure equal treatment for all athletes, regardless of their sport and country, testing has yet to be properly codified worldwide. Protocols and resources vary greatly between sports and nations, while significant variances in funding for national anti-doping organisations (NADOs) and the uneven geographical spread of Wada accredited laboratories have led to inconsistencies in the frequency and quality of testing controls. Then, of course, there is susceptibility in certain countries for state interference in anti-doping procedures.

“Our athletes, the elite of the elite, want to know that when they compete at the highest levels, it’s a level playing field and the athletes are subject to the same testing that they are,” says Tygart. “You probably remember from the Rio Olympics in 2016, in ten high-risk sports, there were 1,913 athletes that had no tests leading into the Games.

“When athletes from England and Germany and Australia and Canada and New Zealand and [the US] and France see that, when they’re getting woken up at 6.30am in the morning, have to provide whereabouts, they’re subject to missed tests, they can’t eat supplements, they’re worried about eating meat for inadvertently testing positive, that’s unacceptable, right?

“That’s the level of frustration, and those athletes fall under the jurisdiction of IFs, so even if the country itself doesn’t have the resources or the will to test their own elite-level athletes, the IFs do, and the IFs need to invest money into testing those athletes. And not just creating another organisation, another level of bureaucracy to give the appearance that they’re being tested.

“I’m really anxious to see if the ITA is open and transparent and publishes the testing numbers of all the tests that they’re doing on behalf of IFs. Let’s see what the numbers are leading into the Tokyo Games, and let’s hope that there’s an improvement, a significant improvement, from what we saw in 2016.”

Our athletes, the elite of the elite, want to know that when they compete at the highest levels, it’s a level playing field.

For its part, the ITA says it is taking steps to ease the burden on athletes and include them in the process of designing anti-doping programmes. By the end of this year, notes Cohen, it is envisioned that two more independent members, including one athlete, will be added to the ITA board in order to ensure a majority of independent members on what will become a seven-person panel.

“Anti-doping is pretty intrusive in an athlete’s life and therefore from the very start we wanted to reach out to the athletes to see what they expect from us, and what they would want to see from an ITA as a testing authority but also a sanctioning body, an authority that issues Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUEs), etc,” Cohen says.

“We need to find techniques to make their lives easier in terms of updating their whereabouts but also the way they are tested. As I said, it’s very intrusive especially when we have to collect urine or blood, it’s not easy on the athletes, so we’re also now trying to identify new testing techniques that are a lot less intrusive.”

Cohen cites specific initiatives like the ongoing dried-blood-spot (DBS) project, which is furthering research into the development of a simplified, less invasive method of sample collection that has the added benefit of being less expensive with regards to transportation and storage.

He adds: “We want to be athlete-focused, making sure that they’re comfortable with the system, that they understand why the ITA is there, and that they take an active role in promoting clean sport, that they are not just victims of the system, being tested and being sanctioned, but they are also part of defining what is clean sport and why it is important for them to play on a level playing field and in a healthy environment.”

Public authorities: The scriptwriters

"There are lots of countries that aren't very good at this," says Reedie. "They do as much as they can [but] they're just short of resources."

Anti-doping programmes in many less developed countries are chronically under-resourced, but not even the most powerful and best-funded NADOs can hope to fully eradicate the drug cheats.

In the US, the biggest and most developed sports market on the planet, Usada receives funding of just US\$15 million per year, with roughly two-thirds of its budget provided by the country’s federal government. It collaborates with smaller NADOs in places like the Caribbean and South America to assist anti-doping efforts overseas, but the job of policing hundreds of events and thousands of athletes on home soil is an unrelenting task.

“Look,” says Tygart bluntly, “we’re a large country and have a number of athletes, and while we’re very appreciative of the funding, we need more funding, no doubt about that.”



US lawmakers are currently considering an act, named after Russian whistleblower Dr Grigory Rodchenkov, to criminalise doping conspiracies.

In the US, the political will to strengthen anti-doping systems appears to be mounting, with federal lawmakers currently considering the Rodchenkov Act, a proposed bill that would criminalise international doping conspiracies. Named after Grigory Rodchenkov, the director of the now-defunct Moscow anti-doping laboratory who notoriously masterminded, and then blew the whistle on, Russia's cheating at Sochi 2014, the bill calls for lengthy prison sentences and hefty fines for those who participate in schemes designed 'to influence a major international sport competition through prohibited substances or methods'.

It would also make it easier for information to be shared between US law enforcement entities and Usada, which polices all US national championships in Olympic disciplines and conducts out-of-competition testing of the nation's athletes.

"Where US money is invested in sport, we're going to hold those accountable to ensure the Wada Code rules are upheld," explains Tygart. "We think it's a great law that is narrowly construed to deal with fraudulent actors who conspire to rob athletes and it largely falls outside of Wada's scope and desires."

The law, which passed through the US House of Representatives last November, has garnered broad support, and is now due for consideration in the Senate. Attempts by Wada to limit its scope have, however, drawn criticism and led to accusations, most notably from Rodchenkov's own lawyer, that the agency is somehow acting on behalf of Russia's 'corrupt interests'.

You would have never thought the global watchdog would be opposed to a bill that protects clean athletes.

Wada itself says the bill, if approved with no changes, could lead to 'unintended consequences' that would undermine the global anti-doping system, such as dissuading whistleblowers from coming forward and raising the possibility of discrimination against 'athletes of specific nationalities'. The agency has also noted that the legislation 'excludes vast areas of US sport, in particular the professional leagues and all college sport' whose major properties are notably not current signatories to the Wada Code, the overarching document that standardises anti-doping policies, rules and regulations around the world.

"We're totally surprised by Wada's position until we remind ourselves they're controlled by the IOC," continues Tygart, who says other countries are now considering similar legislation. "You would have never thought the global watchdog, which is supposed to be the champion of clean athletes, would be opposed to a bill that protects clean athletes and upholds their rights to compete clean, protects whistleblowers and has a number of athlete groups supporting it and endorsing it.

"But then we're reminded they're controlled by the IOC, and look, the IOC, some within it are scared. They didn't like the outcome in the Fifa case [in which multiple soccer officials were indicted for corruption by US federal authorities] because some of their pals got removed from office and showed that their corrupt behaviour was going to be held accountable."

Private entities: The unwilling stagehands

Many agree that doping poses a threat to commercial partners who associate with sport, but the extent to which sponsors, broadcasters and other private organisations suffer reputational damage as the result of a scandal is less clear. While it is broadly accepted that reputations can be tarnished by association, not least when a high-profile sponsored athlete fails a doping test, there is little evidence to indicate partner brands take a direct hit, financial or otherwise.

Nevertheless, Wada’s senior management, including its past and current presidents, have long called on private entities with a vested interest in sport to provide direct support to the fight against doping. One proposal that has been mooted on several occasions would see a small levy - a kind of ‘integrity fee’ - included in any sponsorship agreements and broadcast rights deals.

In 2016, Reddie himself suggested just that when he outlined what he called ‘a minute 0.5 per cent tariff’ on all media rights deals, which he claimed would generate more than US\$175 million based on estimated annual media rights revenues of US\$35 billion globally. His argument was that, for brands and broadcasters, directly associating with the fight for clean sport and its values would actually be advantageous from a PR perspective. But such a prospect raises many questions. Should commercial partners cover that cost themselves, for example, or should it be deducted from revenues generated by federations?



Former Nike chief executive Mark Parker stepped aside in 2019 amid questions surrounding the company's controversial Oregon Project.

“Wada has tried for years to leverage sponsorship from corporations and private entities and been unsuccessful,” notes Koehler. “Part of the reason, I think, is anytime Wada is in the media, or anti-doping in general, it’s not a feel-good story. It’s generally negative, there’s criticism, and there’s really not a strong desire for people to sponsor.”

Cohen agrees. “Anti-doping is not the sexiest word for sponsors to be playing with,” he quips. “If you speak to the sponsors, they will say, ‘listen, we are paying to be sponsors of the sports organisations, it’s for them to decide how they want to invest the money’. Everyone is somehow shifting this hot potato onto the others.”

Short of directly funding anti-doping efforts, there are many who believe companies can contribute by providing practical support or value-in-kind services. Reddie has noted that ‘the pharmaceutical industry has a significant stake in ensuring that its products are being used for

legitimate medical reasons, not for abuse by athletes seeking an edge', and would therefore be a logical target for investment.

"We tried to do that by creating a charitable trust arrangement in the United States," recalls Reddie, "but it didn't work. The reason [was] quite simple: the United States is so anti-Russian that it believes helping Wada in any way was seen to be sympathetic to Russia, so therefore it wasn't successful. Timing in sport is everything."

Anti-doping is not the sexiest word for sponsors to be playing with.

Reddie's successor, Witold Bańka, has nevertheless taken up the pursuit of private dollars, yet resistance among private entities to stump up for antidoping efforts remains widespread. Marketers at prominent sponsors, such as Olympic backer Coca-Cola, have long dismissed the notion, leaving Wada and other stakeholders reliant upon government handouts and sporting benefactors.

According to Tygart, that set-up is not only restrictive, but perhaps also convenient for MEOs like the IOC. He believes the global Olympic body's contributions towards the "woefully underfunded" Wada, whose annual budget remains less than US\$40 million, amounts to little more than a token gesture; a means by which it can claim to be taking the issue of doping seriously whilst profiting from the perception that its events are clean and as virtuous as its lofty brand values.

"The folks that have the money are the ones that benefit from it, which is the IOC," he says. "The money invested into anti-doping goes to protect their brand so that they can sell higher sponsorships and get more money to broadcast it because people actually believe in the product. So it's the cost of doing business for them, and certainly the governments have contributed as well."

Such underlying suspicions extend to brands, too. Last year, Usada handed down a four-year doping ban to Alberto Salazar, the founder and head coach of Nike's Oregon Project, an elite athletics training group that was regarded as one of the finest in the world. After a joint investigation by BBC Panorama and ProPublica, Salazar was sanctioned for "orchestrating and facilitating prohibited doping conduct" and the Oregon Project was soon shut down, but not before serious questions were asked over how much Nike bosses, including its former chief executive Mark Parker, knew of Salazar's conduct.

Claims of a cover-up were roundly rebuffed by Nike on the grounds of plausible deniability, but Cohen, Koehler and Tygart all agree that such influential companies cannot simply take a backseat when it comes to protecting the integrity of sport.



“Unfortunately companies, at least publicly, have been very silent,” says Tygart (right), who was instrumental in bringing charges against Salazar. “As you know from the Nike Oregon Project case, we’ve actually seen companies who are pushing the envelope knowing that anti-doping violations were being committed on their corporate campuses. That’s obviously totally unacceptable. The opposite should be happening: they ought to be creating cultures within their own companies but also within companies that they partner with, like the IOC, to ensure that it’s real and not rigged.”

For Koehler, however, any discussion involving the role of sponsors in anti-doping must happen as part of a broader conversation around integrity.

“Should sponsors step up? Yeah, I think they should,” he says. “But I also believe there are many other areas where sponsors need to step up to the plate. It’s not simply just antidoping, I think it’s everything around athlete wellbeing and athlete welfare. It’s more complex than just saying put x per cent into anti-doping.

“Some would argue that matchfixing is becoming even more of a problem in sport than doping, so it’s more of a complex discussion that needs to happen on how we better sport, and the sponsor’s responsibility in that. But I think if sponsors are putting billions of dollars into sport, they should have some responsibility to the product that’s being put on the field or on the ice or on the track.”

The issue of doping is indeed just one of many threats to sport's credibility. But at a time when the industry is awash with more cash than ever, a time when the incentives to cheat have never been greater and the stakes never higher, there is a clear need to ensure every actor in the anti-doping system is reading from the same script.

Anti-doping is extremely complex. We are always running after the cheaters.

“To be honest, there is still a lot of work to be done,” admits the ITA's Cohen. “For me to be able to tell you, ‘listen, the system is robust and everything is going well’, I think it would not be right. Anti-doping is extremely complex. We are always running after the cheaters, there are always new techniques, new methods being developed to give an edge to athletes, so that’s why we need to dig, work, create programmes that are intelligence-led in terms of testing.

“Now we see that doping is across sports, it’s a cross-border problem, so we need to find solutions that allow anti-doping organisations to share information more effectively and to promote exchanges between sports organisations and law enforcement authorities, and invest in intelligence and investigations to really be stronger.

“It’s really complicated because we’re dealing with a lot of regulations, a lot of data protection obstacles. Some people have information, they are just simply not willing or able to share it because of regulatory frameworks, and that’s what makes us a little bit running after the cheats.

“That, I think, will be the next challenge for the anti-doping community: to be a lot more mobile, a lot more agile, and being able to invest in data management and intelligence.”

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