

**WADA ATHLETE COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING SUMMARY**  
*17-18 May 2005*

**Meeting Overview**

Athletes learned about WADA's roles and responsibilities under the World Anti-Doping Code, including its relationship with stakeholders and activities in the areas of science, education, and Code compliance and implementation.

Athletes discussed many of the questions and challenges facing the anti-doping community including:

- How do we stay ahead of the cheaters?
- What can WADA do to make things better for the clean athlete?
- How do we encourage clean athletes to lead in the fight against doping?
- How do we ensure clean sport for both parents and youngsters?

**Athletes Identify Important Priorities**

From these discussions, members of the Athlete Committee identified these as key priorities or concepts that are important to the fight against doping in sport.

1. Clean Athlete Movement. Committee members agreed that there is a great need for a worldwide "clean athlete" campaign. They felt that there is not enough public attention focused on clean athletes, and that clean, elite athletes should be more vocal about the importance of keeping sport clean especially because of the influence they can have on youth.
2. Penalties for Athletes. Committee members suggested that there should be harsher penalties for cheating and that the two-year penalty for a first doping violation was not strong enough. Other suggestions included financial penalties and testing during the sanction period.
3. Dangers of Doping. Committee members noted that many athletes are not aware of the serious consequences of doping on health. They agreed that more publicity and information about the consequences would help to deter those who might consider doping.
4. Penalties for Influencers/Entourage. Committee members said that athletes are influenced by several important groups within the athlete entourage, including coaches, trainers, doctors, and parents. They said that athlete agents are especially influential and that there should be penalties for those who pressure or enable athletes to dope.
5. Education. Committee members said that elite athletes need education about the dangers of doping and how to fulfill their responsibilities under the code. For youngsters, they recommended that education focus on instilling the values of clean sport. Committee members stressed that, to reach young athletes, it is important to use the appropriate format and distribution of educational messages. They recommended using music, comic books, video games, poetry, and other culturally sensitive methods for disseminating the anti-doping message to youth.

### **Additional Comments**

Athlete Committee members expressed their views on a number of additional items including:

1. A confidential hotline would be helpful for athletes to call to ask about new substances, report on doping violations, and seek counselling about doping.
2. Other ways to enhance anti-doping include collecting an anti-doping tax or contribution from sponsors, providing a way for people to make financial contributions to the fight against doping in sport, creating an event that promotes clean sport.
3. Athlete Committee members offered to facilitate in the distribution of athlete outreach programs in their own countries and sports federations.
4. Education is needed for members of the athlete entourage (agents, trainers, coaches, parents, doctors) to ensure a better understanding of anti-doping issues.
5. International Federations with strong testing programs should be recognized in order to counter the bad publicity that the sport may receive from doping cases.
6. Stakeholders, including athletes, should put pressure on the supplement industry so that athletes can take "clean" supplements without fear of accidentally taking a prohibited substance.

Committee members agreed to work with WADA to follow-up on these priorities and discussions in the coming months and at a future meeting.