



# BULL'S EYE THE ISSF IPOD ON DOPING

## 2 QUESTIONS

**IN THIS EDITION OF THE IPOD WE ANSWER TWO QUESTIONS THAT WERE SENT FROM READERS ON DIFFERENT ANTI-DOPING TOPICS.**

**TO THOSE WHO HAVE SENT US THESE QUESTIONS, WE THANK YOU AND WE HOPE TO HAVE SHED LIGHT ON THESE ISSUES AND PROVIDED THE ANSWERS YOU WERE REQUESTING.**

**WE CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE ALL OF YOU TO SEND US ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE THAT RELATE TO ANTI-DOPING SO THAT WE MAY ANSWER THEM IN FUTURE EDITIONS OF THE IPOD.**

### #1

***I am an athlete who was recently asked to provide a urine sample after my event. Everything went as it normally does: after finishing out some paper work I picked my bottles and provided a urine sample. But the doping control officer told me afterwards that I had to provide another sample because my urine wasn't ok. So I had to wait until I had to pee again to provide another sample, and the same thing happened. They told me I had to stay under their supervision until I could provide another sample. This was very long. In the end, I do not know if that was the proper procedure, or what happened. Can you explain?***

What happened during this athlete's doping control was that the specific gravity of his urine did not meet the requirements that allow a laboratory to properly analyze the sample.

Although this will not mean much to most of us, the WADA International Standard for Testing (IST) defines "Suitable Specific Gravity for Analysis" as specific

gravity measured at 1.005 or higher with a refractometer, or 1.010 or higher with lab sticks. Although there are many factors independent to each individual that may alter the urine's specific gravity, usually, a sample does not meet the requirement if it is too dilute. *Because this is not an uncommon situation, it is specifically addressed in the WADA's IST.*

Annex G of the WADA IST is entitled "Urine Samples that do not meet the requirement for Suitable Specific Gravity for Analysis". Essentially, Annex G of the IST outlines the procedure that the Doping Control Officer (DCO) must follow when this situation presents itself. First, if after the first urine sample has been provided the DCO realizes that the specific gravity requirements have not been met, he or she must inform the athlete that a further sample is required and that the doping control session will continue until they are able to collect a suitable sample that meets the requirements for Suitable Specific Gravity for Analysis.

While waiting to provide additional samples, the athlete will always remain under continuous observation and will be encouraged not to hydrate excessively. If the athlete's first sample is too dilute, he/

she should not need further hydration and therefore should avoid drinking as long as possible until a sample with a suitable specific gravity for analysis is provided. The IST further explains that the DCO and the athlete should wait as long as necessary to collect such a sample.

Although one would think that drinking more would help the athlete provide another sample faster, this would in fact defeat the purpose, because drinking more water will only make the urine even more dilute and this would delay the athlete's ability to provide a suitable sample. In short, it would prolong the process even more.

Under the Rules, Article 4.6 of the WADA IST clearly explains that it is the responsibility of the athlete to provide a sample with a suitable specific gravity for analysis. So, the athlete must stay at the doping control station as long as necessary to fulfill his or her responsibility. Failure to do so could result in the assertion of an anti-doping rule violation.

And so, as was the case for the athlete who asked this question, if an athlete's initial urine sample fails to meet the IST requirement, the athlete has to stay under observation until he or she can provide an additional sample that meets the specific gravity requirements. And, yes! this process can last quite a while.

If however, after a significant amount of time and after the athlete has provided more urine samples, the requirement for suitable specific gravity for analysis is still not met, the DCO may determine that there are exceptional circumstances existing which mean that, for logistical reasons, it is impossible to continue with the sample collection session. If this is the case, the DCO will carefully document the exceptional circumstances. The DCO will also carefully note on the doping control form and complementary report the period of time between samples, and all other information deemed relevant to the process. Finally, it will be recorded that all the samples collected are from the same athlete. This is so that the Laboratory may still analyze each sample to the best of its ability and make conclusions based on all the athlete's samples that were collected.



Consequently, irrespective of whether or not the samples collected meet the requirement for suitable specific gravity for analysis, once the DCO decides that the sample collection is completed and all the forms and necessary reports have been filled in and signed, in the end all the samples collected are sent to a WADA accredited Laboratory for analysis.

It is important to point out that in those circumstances where an athlete continues to be unable to provide a urine sample with a suitable specific gravity for analysis, the anti-doping organization or sporting federation who ordered the doping control may investigate a possible anti-doping rule violation. It may be that the athlete purposely diluted his or her sample to mask the use of a prohibited substance, and if this is the case, a two years ban may apply.

## #2

**In the news I seem to hear a lot about cyclists and other athletes testing positive for using prohibited substances but not so much about shooters. Why is this? How do we compare with other sports? Are shooters less prone to using drugs? And if not what can we do about it?**

This is a good observation. The reader has brought up many important points each deserving some attention. First, you are correct. In the news, there is a lot of talk about cyclists and track and fielders, for example, testing positive for banned substances. But, this does not mean that shooting is shielded from doping. These sports are very high profile sports carrying huge endorsement contracts, broadcasting rights and high profile personalities. Therefore, it is normal that when an athlete is caught cheating during, before or after a major event, it becomes important sporting news that will make the news headlines. This is why we hear more about them.

There are many reasons why certain sports have more positive tests than others. Because of their nature, some sports have a higher risk factor when it comes to doping. Also, it is important to point out that certain federations conduct far more testing than others. Increased testing has been deemed necessary in certain sports where the proliferation of doping cases was creating a major image and health problem. Also, depending on the amount of athletes competing in the sport and more pointedly the budget a federation may be able to put

towards its anti-doping program, certain federations are able to establish and maintain very sophisticated and expensive anti-doping programs.

For example in the past 10 years, the International Cycling Union (UCI) has had to significantly enhance its anti-doping program. Thanks to all their efforts, the UCI's anti-doping program is now recognized by WADA as one of the best in the World. A committee of independent contributors manages the activities and funding of its anti-doping program, which includes in and out-of-competition testing in urine and blood, as well as the adoption of the Athlete Biological Passport (see the last IPOD Edition for information of the Athlete Biological Passport). But, the cost of sustaining such an extensive program is surely not insignificant. The UCI's anti-doping budget is over EUR 5 million a year! To answer how the ISSF compares to others is not truly possible. Just as it is hard to compare one sport to another because each sport is different and requires different levels of exertion, strength, stamina, physical and mental abilities etc. it is also hard to compare each sport's anti-doping program.

To better put it into perspective, in 2009 the UCI carried out 15,700 anti-doping tests (43 per day) throughout the world. In comparison, in 2009, the ISSF conducted 464 anti-doping tests. This is not to say that the ISSF's anti-doping program is not recognized by WADA as being in compliance with the Code. The ISSF's anti-doping program and all its anti-doping initiatives have been recognized by WADA as being Code compliant. And, the budget allocated to anti-doping by the ISSF is still significant. Because our sport possesses unique physical and mental requirements, the ISSF's methods of catching cheats and deterring the use of prohibited substances must also be unique and differ from the methods used by other sporting federations.

It cannot be argued that statistically, the more testing is conducted, the more anti-doping rule violations are possible. But the planning behind the number of tests conducted on athletes is of utmost if not primordial importance. This involves taking into consideration various factors that are involved with proper target testing, (physiological risk, timing of testing, age, type of sport, etc.)

Finally, it might be assumed that shooters are less prone to using drugs than athletes competing in other sports because of the very nature of the sport.

To use triathlon as an example, because it is an endurance sport that requires strength

and stamina, there are many prohibited substances and prohibited methods that could be used to enhance performance, at different times in and out-of-competition and in different quantities and combinations.

In shooting however, the most prevalent prohibited substance used by shooters is beta blockers. Which to be beneficial when cheating must be used as close as possible to the competition. And so, out-of-competition testing, which is at the core of the International Triathlon Union's doping program is of questionable benefit to the ISSF. So too is blood testing and the establishment of an Athlete Biological Passport program. These costly methods of detecting doping are undoubtedly the corner stone of truly effective anti-doping programs and very beneficial to expose cheaters in sports where doping poses a high risk. But, based on its carefully devised test distribution plan and an extensive physiological risk assessment, these methods are not necessarily beneficial to the ISSF's anti-doping initiatives.

Therefore, no, although the incidence and risk of doping is far smaller and restricted in shooting sport than it would be in other sports, shooters are not necessarily less prone to using prohibited substances. In sum, we cannot compare shooting to cycling or gymnastics as a sport. Similarly, we cannot compare their anti-doping programs, budgets, initiatives and statistics to ours.

The simple truth is that just as there are still cyclists, skiers, and weightlifters that cheat, there are still shooters that cheat and use performance enhancing substances. But, it is far more important to underline there are many more shooters that complete clean and that do not use drugs. The ISSF respects its anti-doping engagements and follows its test distribution plan. We are aware that some shooters still continue to use prohibited substances, especially beta blockers. The objective remains to catch all those cheaters and to deter all other shooters from resorting to the use of drugs to enhance their performance. The ISSF's commitment is to continue to educate its shooters about the dangers of doping and to deter them from using drugs. In so doing, the ISSF will persist in testing shooters in-competition and out-of-competition and will continue to sanction all those shooters who are caught cheating. The end goal is to keep our sport clean and to keep our shooters healthy. But this is as much the responsibility of the ISSF as it is YOURS.

Please send all your questions via email to [Barbara@issf-sports.org](mailto:Barbara@issf-sports.org) with the heading "IPOD question".