



## FOCUS ON THE WADA ATHLETES COMMITTEE

### WHAT IS THE WADA ATHLETE COMMITTEE?

As stated on the WADA website, the role and vocation of the WADA Athletes Committee is to protect the integrity of clean sport as the leading voice of athletes globally. Its members assist in raising awareness about anti-doping and the promotion of the Play True message, as well as actively liaising with and providing feedback to government, regional and national leaders about anti-doping initiatives.

The WADA Athlete Committee's core strategy is to strengthen the integrity of clean sport. Accordingly, its core values are listed as integrity, authenticity and fairness. These core values will be delivered by the Committee, which will encourage all athletes to:

#### BE COURAGEOUS

Be brave. Make tough decisions. Listen. Challenge status quo. Stand up and speak out despite potential consequences. Set the tone.

#### BE IMPACTFUL

Take purposeful actions towards desired outcomes. Leave a legacy. Cause positive change.

#### BE UNITED

Act as one voice, with aligned intentions and shared values. Accept and include all. Create a place of belonging. Respect agreed-upon outcomes.

#### BE HONEST

Speak and act the truth. Declare conflicts of interest. Say what you believe and reject inappropriate influence.

#### BE TRANSPARENT

Disclose when you can, say when you can't. Share and be forthcoming. Expect and take accountability. Provide direct and open communication. Deliver on promises.

### WHAT ARE SOME OF THE ACTIVITIES?

The WADA Athlete Committee's activities include an assessment of current anti-doping trends and needs to gather insights on anti-doping trends in their relevant communities and geographies and work with WADA to provide leadership and positioning.

Of course, as per its designation, the WADA Athlete's Committee activities include being proactive advocates on behalf of athletes globally. Specifically, this is currently being accomplished by leading the anti-doping portion of the Charter of Athlete Rights.

Perhaps the most important of the WADA Athlete's Committee's roles is to be the leading voice for clean athletes and to engage all athletes, from all sports and all corners of the world, in the fight against doping in sport. To this end, the WADA Athlete Committee outreaches in relevant communities and events with the aim to provide values-based leadership and transfer knowledge on current anti-doping education, regulations and policy and share tools to disseminate information on policy, representation and appropriate action steps.

Finally, the Athlete Committee contributes to and works to influence independent and effective anti-doping governance by contributing to the WADA governance review and providing independent counsel seeking to strengthen the athletes' voice within the anti-doping movement, as well as to provide athlete committee representation on key WADA committees and programs.

The ISSF is proud to have one of its own elite athletes on the WADA Athlete Committee: Danka Bartekova.

### THE FIRST EVER GLOBAL ATHLETE FORUM

As reported on the WADA website, from 3-5 June 2018, the WADA Athlete Committee convened its first ever Global Athlete Forum in Calgary, Alberta, Canada to discuss key developments in anti-doping. The Forum brought together 104 athlete leaders from 54 countries and five continents.

Under the theme 'The sport we want', the Forum saw athlete leaders and leading anti-doping experts discussing the current anti-doping system and stressing the importance of the athlete's voice being further engaged in the decision-making process.

Protecting the rights of clean athletes is the WADA Athlete Committee's highest priority. To that end, the Forum enabled further development of the Anti-Doping Charter of Athlete Rights with the hope of including key principles within the 2021 World Anti-Doping Code.

WADA Athlete Committee Chair, Beckie Scott said:

*"I am thrilled by the success of this first ever Global Athlete Forum; in particular, as it relates to the level of dialogue that led to a series of key outcomes. Based on the feedback that I have received, Forum participants feel better equipped with knowledge and tools and are walking away inspired and empowered to do what they can to strengthen clean sport. Meaningful change to protect clean sport can only be achieved with athletes standing together for a strengthened anti-doping system."*

WADA Deputy Director General, Rob Koehler said:

*"We are pleased to support athletes by working directly with them to protect clean sport. This Forum, the first of its kind, brought athlete leaders together from around the globe and from a multitude of sports with the sole aim of further strengthening the anti-doping movement."*



The President of the Canadian Olympic Committee, Tricia Smith, said:

*“This was a great discussion with athletes at the first WADA Athlete Forum in Calgary. It is our shared responsibility to protect and promote clean sport to level the playing field not just for Team Canada but across the board.”*

## KEY OUTCOMES OF THE ATHLETE FORUM

After two full days of discussions, these were the key outcomes of the Global Athlete Forum:

- The Forum supports the draft Anti-Doping Charter of Athlete Rights and stressed the importance of the Charter to ensure that the rights of all athletes are accepted and that the key principles are incorporated into the 2021 World Anti-Doping Code.
- The Forum identified corruption, conflict of interest and lack of independence as their top three concerns related to the anti-doping system. The WADA Athlete Committee commits to addressing these concerns and to work towards improving the situation; as well as supports WADA's increasing efforts in addressing these concerns.
- The Forum supports WADA's decision to ensure that the outstanding items in the RUSADA Roadmap to Compliance are fulfilled before World Anti-Doping Code compliance is declared.
- The Forum recognized the brave actions by Russian whistleblowers, Yulia and Vitaly Stepanov, in reporting doping in Russian athletics. The Forum thanked them for their courage and continued commitment to clean sport.
- The Forum supports WADA's Speak Up! whistleblower program and the advancements made to ADAMS and also commended the Agency on the new International Standard



for Code Compliance by Signatories and the work of the Independent Compliance Review Committee.

- The Forum calls on leaders of sport and government to facilitate an environment that allows athletes to express their opinions without fear of retribution.
- The Forum calls for more financial investment for global and national anti-doping programs.
- The Forum expressed concerns about sporting organizations hosting events in countries who are not Code-compliant.
- The Forum calls for anti-doping organizations to routinely review their programs.
- The Forum calls on all athletes and athlete representatives to publicly express their views both individually and collectively.
- The Forum reinforced the need for meaningful Athlete involvement in the rules governing anti-doping organizations.
- The Forum stressed the importance of mandatory anti-doping education.
- The Forum overwhelmingly endorsed full membership of the WADA Athlete Committee Chair on the Executive Committee.

## SPORT AND ATHLETES

Athletes have rights, responsibilities and obligations.

Athletes have a voice in shaping the direction sport takes and the environment in which they compete.

Athletes have an active role to play in order to maintain their health, values and integrity.

Let us all continue to support our athletes in every way and any way we can...because sport only exists because athletes compete and participate.

**Janie Soublière** BSS. LL.M. LL.B.

ISSF Counsel and Consultant Anti-Doping in Sport