

World Anti-Doping Agency

The Office of the Independent Observer

Report

32nd FIBA European Championships - Men

31st August – 9th September 2001

(Turkey)

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Background

The WADA office of the Independent Observer attended the 2001 Men's European Basketball Championship in Turkey. The event took place in Ankara and Antalya (qualification rounds), with the finals taking place in Istanbul. The Office of the Independent Observer, observed testing in Antalya and Istanbul.

The purpose of WADA's observations was two fold, to observe doping control to ensure an open and transparent process and that athlete's rights were protected, and to train experts as Independent Observers for future events. All doping controls were conducted in accordance with FIBA rules and regulations.

Independent Observer

Dr. Rima Berloviene Lithuania
Mr. Raymond Hack, South Africa
Ms. Pirjo Krouvila, Finland
Ms. Jennifer Ebermann, WADA
Mr. Casey Wade, WADA (Chair)

Training

In partnership with the European Commission, WADA utilized this event to train Independent Observers (IOs).

All IOs participated in a review and orientation of the IO Operations Manual. A power point presentation was used to assist in the training. The training included a review of the purpose, roles and responsibilities, terms of reference and code of professional conduct.

Observations during the event also provided valuable on-site practical experience and training.

Scope of Observations

1. Doping Control Facilities
2. Doping Control Equipment
3. Doping Control Personnel
4. Athlete Selection Process
5. Athlete Notification/Chaperoning
6. Sample Collection Procedures
7. Chain of Custody
8. Results Management

Laboratory analysis was not observed, as the samples were sent to the IOC laboratory in Athens, Greece.

Doping Control Facilities

Antalya

The doping control facilities in the Antalya stadium were adequate for effective and secure doping control. The area was well secure with access restricted. The facility was within 200 meters of the playing court, en route to the team locker rooms. Both the public and media were restricted from the area.

A security guard restricted access to the doping control station. The facility itself was a temporary, portable room, with adequate size for the small number of doping controls conducted per game. The room had a small waiting area, with room for approximately 8 persons. Athlete processing was carried out in the same room. A small lavatory was located in the facility, with room enough for the athlete and witness.

Istanbul

The doping control facility in Istanbul was more spacious and more secure and isolated from the basketball court. It was located under the stadium. The room was large, with a lavatory in one corner. Twenty individuals could easily fit in the room at any given time.

The processing room was again in the same area as the waiting room. Access was restricted by security guards into the doping control area.

Televisions, reading materials or education videos were not provided in either of the facilities.

Doping Control Equipment

The IOC approved Versapak sample collection equipment was used for the event. Most athletes were familiar with the equipment and confident with its security.

FIBA Doping Control Forms were used. Two (2) separate forms were used by FIBA; an Athlete Notification Form and an Athlete Doping Control Form.

While the Versapak equipment provides security to the samples collected, no Versapak secure transport bags were used. All samples were shipped in cardboard boxes.

Doping Control Personnel

Doping control was conducted under the auspices of the FIBA Medical Commission. The Chair of the FIBA Medical Commission, Dr. Jacques Huguet, oversaw and ran the doping control operations. Dr. Yucesir, of the Championship Organizing Committee, was responsible for doping control on behalf of the Organizing Committee. Both worked well together and were very cooperative with the WADA Independent Observer Team.

Chaperones, witnesses, doping control officers (DCOs) and security personnel were sufficient for the size of the event. As the number of tests conducted was relatively few, only one (1) DCO was used in Antalya and two (2) DCOs were used in Istanbul.

Chaperones and witnesses were briefed on their roles prior to the event.

Both facilities were well secured with security guards restricting flow and access to both the area and facility/stadium itself.

Selection of Athletes

The selection process of athletes was conducted in a professional manner, which ensured a random, unpredictable draw. The selection process was carried out five (5) minutes before the end of each game. The Chair of the FIBA Medical Commission, with an official from the Organizing Committee approached each bench (separately) and asked the respective team doctor to select from a small bag, numbered balls coinciding with each player's uniform number. A ball was drawn, the number was matched to the team roster list, with a player's name and verified by the team doctor. A separate selection form was used writing down the athlete's name, number, and time of the draw. The FIBA Medical Commission Chair and the Head of the Doping Control Station then signed the form. The same process was then repeated at the next team bench. One (1) player from each team was selected for doping control on all occasions.

Athlete Notification/Chaperoning

The Chair, FIBA Medical Commission and the player's team doctor, informed the players of their selection for doping control after the game. Each player signed the selection form. The players, however, were not chaperoned following notification. The players were requested to report for doping control within 15 minutes of notification. The athletes were periodically checked on by the Chair, FIBA Medical Commission; however, the athletes were free to go to their locker room, unobserved, which could allow an athlete to "manipulate" the sample provided.

Sample Collection Process

The following summarizes the sample collection process;

- The sample collection process was carried out by three (3) doping control officers (one (1) in Antalya and two (2) in Istanbul).
- Athletes represented several European countries during the Championship; therefore, language was sometimes a barrier to clear communication.
- The athletes were given a choice of equipment to use.
- There were only two (2) athletes tested per game, so the doping control station was secure at all times.
- The athletes filled out a separate doping control form in the station.
- It was noted, at times, that a full description of the sample collection procedure was not always provided to the athlete. This was probably due to both language barriers and inconsistent approaches by the DCOs in processing the athletes.
- Their respective team physicians always accompanied athletes.
- In general the sample collection process was good and the ownership and security of the samples were maintained.

Chain of Custody

- All samples collected were placed in cardboard boxes and sealed with secure evidence tape.

- A FIBA “Transportation of Samples” form was used for each group/batch of samples sent to the laboratory.
- The samples were driven to the airport by the Head of Doping Control for the Organizing Committee and sent by airplane/courier to the IOC accredited laboratory in Athens, Greece.
- Samples remained secure, although shipment in cardboard boxes is not as secure as sealed, padded transport bags.

Results Management

All samples were analyzed at the IOC accredited Greece laboratory. Samples were not being analyzed on a quick turnaround basis. Therefore, we did not attend and observe the sample analysis process at the laboratory and results were not received until after the event. Results were sent to the WADA office, by fax, following the Championship.

General

The doping control process was run well and samples collected were secure and protected athletes’ rights.

Dr. Jacques Huguet, FIBA Medical Commission Chair, and Dr. Yucesir, Head of Doping Control for the Organizing Committee, were most helpful and professional. The WADA IO Team thanks them for their assistance and cooperation.

There was confusion that arose during the event with respect to the role of the WADA Independent Observers, with respect to observing all aspects of doping control. This was resolved and both doping control forms and test results were received following the event.

WADA also acknowledges and appreciates the generous support provided by the European Commission for the training of WADA Independent Observers.

Recommendations

- That for events such as this with several languages, that multi-lingual information be available and provided to athletes.

- That interpreters be available so that athletes and their representatives fully understand what is being said to them.
- That, for those athletes attending doping control for the first time (which was the case for several tests), Doping Control Officers (DCOs) should provide a thorough explanation on athletes' rights and responsibilities and generally how the sample collection process works.
- That escorts or chaperones be used at all times when athletes are notified to ensure the ownership and integrity of the samples collected. Athletes could report to the doping control station and then attend media, medical, medal ceremonies, etc., as needed, under the observation of a chaperone.
- That reading materials, television(s) and sample collection videos be placed in the doping control station for the athletes and representatives. In particular, sample collection videos would be most beneficial for athletes of different languages.
- That the doping control station have a separate processing room to provide privacy for the athlete and minimize potential confusion over samples.
- While the DCOs were professional and carried out their job well, internal training programs, consistent with the International Standard for Doping Control (ISDC) would be useful to ensure consistent approaches to sample collection, including orientation to the athletes.
- That secure, padded transport bags be used, with a secure seal, to transport the bags.
- That common/familiar forms be used, consistent with the ISDC.
- That a letter of understanding clearly outlining the roles and responsibilities of the WADA IO Team be done in advance of the Event with the respect International Federation.

Respectfully submitted by:
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