WORLD ANTI-DOPING AGENCY

INDEPENDENT OBSERVERS REPORT

WORLD SHORT COURSE SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIPS, MOSCOW 3 – 7 APRIL 2002

Mrs. Marjorit Elorinne
Mrs. Anik Sax
Mr. Peter Hemmersbach

Content

1. Background and General

The World Anti-Doping Agency,s ("WADA") Office of the Independent Observer, with the support of and invitation from the FINA, was present during the World Short Course Swimming Championships in Moscow, 3 – 7 April 2002.

Its mandate was to observe and report on all aspects of the doping control operations during the event in a neutral and unbiased manner. This included:

- Doping Control Facilities
- Doping Control Equipment
- Doping Control Personnel
- Selection Process
- Athlete notification/Chaperoning
- Urine sample collection
- Blood sample collection/analysis
- Laboratory and Chain of custody
- Result management

The success of the Office of the Independent Observer was depending on the support and collaboration of the FINA and the local organizing committee. In this respect we appreciated the facilitation of our work through the accommodation and support by all involved responsible persons.

Because of the localisation of the events and the number of observers most doping control sessions and all drawing meetings for the selection of athletes could be

observed. Additionally visits on two days to the IOC/WADA accredited laboratory in Moscow were performed.

2. Doping control facilities

The doping control facilities were located quite near to the competition site (pool) that facilitated the access for the athletes and the conduction of the doping control in general, but that at the same time might have guided the media interest (TV-cameras) to this area. The organizers solved this elegantly by setting up a temporary wall in order to prevent the direct observation from the press and spectator areas.

The overall security of the doping station was appropriate and conducted well. Especially the clear statements about the prohibition of using cameras, mobiles etc. were appreciated.

The facilities for both urine and blood taking procedures were well prepared. We understand that it is always a balance of possibilities and non-possibilities, and the organizers got the best out of the available rooms. If one should point out an area for improvement, we would like to mention the area for the urine doping control procedure (filling forms, distributing urine sample, asking the athlete), where through a lack of some space the necessary privacy during the control procedure could not be guaranteed during “rush” hours.

The placement, equipment and area for the blood control were fully satisfying.

3. Doping Control Equipment

Blood testing

The Bereg-kit used for the blood sampling is quite appropriate, because of its size. Athletes need to become familiar with it, especially concerning handling the sealing of the kit (sealing tape).

The same technician who took the samples performed the testing of the blood samples in a neighbouring room. We learned that this practice is due to circumstances blood analysis has to be performed in connection with doping controls in other federations (FIS, pre-start testing). We mention this fact, because it has been an important security element for doping analysis that the laboratory staff does not know the identity of the athlete tested.

The laboratory on-site was equipped with a Sysmex K21N for the measurement of hemoglobin and a SYSMEX K500 for the measurement of % reticulocytes. Our observations of the blood analysis procedure revealed that the instruments functioned properly, that the necessary calibration checks were performed and that all control measurements observed both for hemoglobin and % reticulocytes were in the acceptable range.

The quality control data available at the IDTM-team over the past year should allow an analysis of the precision of the measurements from which a lot of benefits for the understanding and interpretation could be drawn.

Urine testing

Urine testing equipment was the one developed by Berlinger in Switzerland, which has been used for quite a long time and at many major championships. The athletes were very familiar with the Bereg-kit used for the urine testing, which makes all explanations around the testing procedures much easier. Concerning the analytical parameters on-site it has to be mentioned that only one ATAGO-refractometer was available without any manual for its use. May be therefore no calibration was performed before the daily controls.

Concerning the doping control forms it has to be mentioned that some provisions did not comply with the Doping Control Rules (DC) of Part XI of the FINA Handbook. While in rule 8.1.2 a minimum of 75 ml of urine is required, the forms indicated 70 ml. The most probable reason for these non-compliances lies in the fact that the forms indicated the International Association of Athletic Federations (IAAF) as responsible federation, where it clearly should read FINA.

The report from the World Championship in Fukuoka proposed to blank out the event/event number from the copy of the forms going to the laboratory. This resulted in that any information on the forms about the event number was omitted, even from the other copies. The review and evaluation of the forms is becomes more difficult by this.

4. Doping Control Personnel

The staff involved in the doping control procedures consisted of 25 chaperons and 6 Doping Control Officers (DCO) recruited from the organizer in Moscow. It should be pointed out that all DCOs were well trained and experienced. Especially it has to be mentioned that the choice of the chaperones was very smart. The organizing committee choose all chaperons from one language school and succeeded in motivating and leading them in an excellent way. The logistics of the chaperones tasks were properly transferred through a well-chosen “head-chaperon”. There were no language problems between athletes and chaperons.

The work in the station was organised and lead by Mrs. Katarina Medveczky from IDTM, who could build on much expertise of doping control at international events. She was well assisted by Mrs. Monica Harlén who was responsible for blood taking and analysing procedures and Mr. Ulf Sundberg who organized the traffic in the station, both from the same company.

At this stage of the report we use the opportunity to congratulate Mrs. Mountjoy, Dr. Pipe and Dr. Kroshnin from FINA and the local organizing committee, respectively, for the work they performed in heading the doping control testing procedures at the FINA Short Course World Championships in Moscow. They were totally dedicated to

their tasks during the whole championship and facilitated our work as WADA-observers in any way.

5. Selection Process

The selection process before each morning and evening session was well performed and confidentiality of the drawing results well protected. The regulations leave a certain degree of flexibility to this process. The Office observed that the drawing routines applied throughout the Championship was well balanced between medal winners and random choices. Additionally the application of testing for the glycoprotein erythropoietin (EPO) was targeted to the relevant endurance events.

At swimming competitions the notification process is very demanding, partly because of very short lasting events. Therefore it is important that the procedures are well implemented and straightforward. If the selection for doping control is done sometimes according to the finishing place and sometimes according to the starting lane, other athletes might be tested than what the drawing foresaw. This happened once on the first day, but routines were immediately changed in the same way as the FINA responsible staff was very observant and decisive when necessary adjustments of the routines had to be implemented during the Championships.

6. Athlete notification/Chaperoning

The athlete notification was carried out properly, effective and efficient. The process showed a considerable experience of FINA in this respect. The applied procedures were mainly the same than practised in former Championships, including of collecting the accreditation cards from the athletes and using them for identification purposes by the chaperones. One of the major reasons for this performance and success was the under item 4 described method of recruiting an excellent group of chaperones whose members new all about their obligations and duties.

However, some of the media had admission to the area near the pool where the notification took place. This interfered to some extent with the tasks of the chaperones, and it occurred that notifications were broadcasted. We understand that there are considerable requirements by sponsors to take into account, but from a doping control point of view a notification area with restricted admission for media would be preferable.

7. Urine sample collection

In general, the urine sample collection processes were conducted according to the FINA regulations and the overall rights and security of the athletes' samples were well protected. The doping control officers recruited from the Russian organizers

performed their task professionally. The whole procedure benefited from the experienced leadership of IDTM.

A total number of 165 urine samples were collected (including 15 samples after new records), of which 34 samples were sent to the IOC/WADA accredited laboratory in Barcelona for the analytical testing including EPO/NESP. The other samples were sent once a day to the laboratory in Moscow.

The most sensitive part of the doping control, the delivering of the urine sample, was better documented by having the witness, who was present during urination, signing on the doping control form (see recommendation from Fukuoka report).

The responsibles for the doping control station (FINA, IDTM) were very flexible and reacted promptly, when certain aspects of the organisation in the station had to be changed. A meeting every evening after the doping control with all relevant key persons chaired by Dr. Pipe was very useful in this respect.

8. Blood sample collection/Blood analysis

The blood sample analysis – done for the first time at FINA Championships – was performed on 5 ml of EDTA-blood. Berlinger, the same company that also delivers the urine collection kit, delivered the sampling kit. The sample taking procedure is designed for an immediate analysis of haematological parameters like haemoglobin and % reticulocytes. Certain thresholds are established (Hgb > 17,5 g/dl for men, Hgb > 16 g/dl for women, % Ret > 2) and higher concentrations on these parameters will trigger the analysis of the corresponding urine sample for EPO/NESP. A total of 122 notifications for a blood sample were transmitted to the athletes and 92 blood samples were taken and analysed on-site.

The Office got the best impression of both the sample taking procedure and the subsequent analysis. The responsibility for both was placed with IDTM, and the procedures were performed with professionalism and experience. One should remember that it was the first time blood samples were taken at a doping control by FINA. It required a special focus on the explanations and clarifications to be given to the athletes. This led to some waiting time for the blood sampling in the beginning of the Championships, but the way it was handled by the doping control team, IDTM and FINA, it will facilitate the procedure for future events and doping controls.

9. Laboratory and Chain of Custody

The IOC/WADA accredited laboratory in Moscow received once a day a batch of samples, which were transported by courier to their location. The Office accompanied twice this courier and visited the laboratory. During these visits it was observed that the laboratory had received a letter from the IOC Medical Commission of 26 March 2002, where their full IOC/WADA accreditation was reinstated from 1 April 2002. The

laboratory was also in the possession of a certificate indicating their ISO 17025 accreditation for all relevant analytical methods valid to 10 January 2004.

An observation of the receipt, registration, aliquoting, parts of the analysis of the urine samples as well as the evaluation of the results were performed and showed that both the analytical quality and the chain of custody in the laboratory were satisfactory. However, the documentation of the overall quality control would benefit from blind control urines sent together with the normal samples to the laboratory. Concerning the receipt of the samples it might also be remarked that a total list of all samples sent to the lab (transportation form) would facilitate the control of the samples upon reception. A further minor observation is related to the opening of the samples. The laboratory was not in the possession of a proper opening device. This was perhaps due to the fact that the Moscow laboratory normally does not receive samples with the Bereg-kit.

10. Result management

The result management of the analytical laboratory results could only be observed to a limited degree. Firstly, not all analytical results were received by the FINA secretariat during the time of the Championship. The reporting period was set to 30 hours from the laboratory. The Office agreed with FINA to send copies of the other results directly to the WADA office in Lausanne. Secondly, the adverse findings reported in the reports received by the observers were related to beta-agonists. We could verify that all athletes concerned had indicated the use of an inhaler preparation, containing a doping agent that is subject to certain restrictions. It was said that all information about the athlete's permission was filed at the FINA office in Lausanne.

11. Summary

The overall doping control process conducted by FINA and the Organizing Committee, with the assistance of IDTM, was performed in a professional manner, complying with the regulations and protecting the rights of the athletes. The implementation of blood sampling as an additional part of doping control was well prepared and performed. The information to athletes in connection with this new procedure was convincing so that no major problems arose from this item. We appreciate the introduction of a blood sample taking procedure in spite of the fact that the implementation for new regulations in FINA is 60 days. Introducing the collection of blood samples, but giving the right to refuse solved this problem. The percentage of refusals was below 25%.

The FINA representatives were at all times cooperative, provided the Office with all necessary information and ensured by this the appropriate transparency and openness. Minor misunderstandings between the Office and the FINA General

Secretary were sorted out quickly. It is our understanding that also the FINA representatives, we worked together with during the Championships, regarded the WADA Office of Independent Observers as a valuable contribution for an improved fight against doping.

The Office observed the implementation of several proposals, which were set forth after the 2001 World Swimming Championships in Fukuoka. Further recommendations as a result of the Office's work and evaluation are as follows:

12. Recommendations

- FINA would improve their documentation of proper doping control analysis by introducing some blind control samples to the laboratory
- FINA should establish a routine for the control of the forms used during their championships
- FINA should continue to focus on practical problems as the transportation of athletes from the doping station and the provision of food after returning late from the doping control.
- FINA should try to increase their influence for the establishment of a protected area for athlete notification without direct media access.
- It might be considered to have visual/written information on doping control procedures available in the doping control station
- FINA might consider to which extent the anonymity of the athlete's name should be protected towards the analyst of the blood samples.

- The contract between FINA and a sample taking company like IDTM should clearly clarify in advance the extent of the workload and the number of samples to be taken
- FINA or other international federations as well as WADA may ask IDTM in the future to release valuable quality control data on their blood analyses.

- Depending on the future of the WADA Independent Observer Office it would facilitate their tasks to introduce an extra copy of the doping control forms.
- The availability of the contract between the international federation and WADA to the independent observers would minimize possible misunderstandings during the work of the Office.