

**OFFICE OF THE
INDEPENDENT OBSERVER**

MISSION REPORT



XI FINA WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS
JULY 16 - 31, 2005



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INTRODUCTION

The Office of the WADA Independent Observer was present during the 2005 XI FINA World Championships in Montreal, Canada. The IO Team was comprised of 5 members: Chair of the IO Team, Prof. Eduardo Henrique De Rose, member of the WADA Foundation Board and Chairman of the Medical Committee of the Pan-American Sports Organization (PASO); Mr. Aad Zoeteman, from DoCoNed, NADO of the Netherlands, Mr. Jean-Christophe Lapouble, from the University of Bordeaux-Victor Segalen; Ms. Anne Cappelen, head of Quality Affairs, Antidoping Norway; and Ms. Angela Iannantuono, WADA Senior Manager, as Team Manager.

The Independent Observer Program was created to ensure transparent doping control procedures which in turn guarantee the rights of the athletes are respected. It also validates the integrity of the process as seen by the athletes and general public.

Testing was carried out by CCES Doping Control offices under the jurisdiction of the FINA Doping Commission in accordance with FINA rules and regulations.

A total of 322 tests were conducted throughout the duration of the Games. The IO Office observed and reported on all aspects of the doping control process in Open Water Swimming (100%), in Water Polo (100%), in Swimming (80%), in Diving (87,5%) and in Synchronised Swimming (75%). All observations included, but were not limited to:

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. Laboratory
9. Results Management
10. Meetings:
 - Doping Control Review Board
 - Doping Control Review Board
 - Chaperone daily briefings

The success of the Independent Observer Mission was due, in large part, to the outstanding support and cooperation of the International Aquatics Federation (FINA), CCES, officials, INRS Institut Armand-Frappier, DCO's and volunteers for their willingness to cooperate and share information on all aspects of the doping control process.

The overall doping control process conducted at the Championships ensured that the integrity of the doping control process was not compromised and that the rights of the athletes were protected.

SCOPE OF OBSERVATION

1 – DOPING CONTROL FACILITIES

The Host Organizing Committee provided two doping control stations. The main area (situated in front of the warm-up pool) used for Swimming, Diving, Water Polo and Synchronised Swimming was secure, being that the access was restricted and controlled by a security guard at all times to athletes, coaches and media. The second station, located at the Open Water Basin area, was not staffed by a security guard. Both doping stations were in close proximity to the competition area. The Stations were never left unattended, otherwise they were locked.

A registration area was in place to monitor the flow of all personnel entering both doping control areas.

The athlete waiting room was sufficiently large to accommodate the flow of athletes during both weeks and was equipped with appropriate beverages. A closed circuit television was available at the main station.

Confidentiality of the athlete at the satellite doping control station situated at the Open Water Basin was perfect.

The latter, had five (5) separate lavatories. When they were used simultaneously by male and female athletes their right for privacy was not thoroughly respected. *In the last four days of the competition that problem was corrected and only one athlete was permitted to enter in the area of passing of the sample at any one time.*

A refrigerator (with lock) was provided but samples were delivered to the laboratory the same day. The IO team observed all session and report that no samples were left overnight.

2 – DOPING CONTROL EQUIPMENT

The approved (new version) Berlinger, sample collection kit (with their partial system) version 1, was used for the event.

Notification Forms and Doping Control Forms used were developed by FINA. Transportation forms were developed by CCES. All forms were adequate.

3 – DOPING CONTROL PERSONNEL

The number of personnel including chaperones, Doping Control Officers (DCO's), and interpreters was adequate for the event size.

All personnel were informed prior to the event of their related duties.

However, it was observed that doping control personnel had varying experience. This lead to some inconsistencies among the DCO's in the execution of the work performed.

During the second week of the event, a designated FINA representative was present to problem solve and provide clear direction to the doping control staff which in turn helped to increase athlete confidence in the process. Unfortunately, this appeared to be lacking during the first week.

During most of the World Championship's duration, particularly at the Swimming doping control station, there were four male DCO's but only one female DCO, which caused some delays in the passing of the urine of the female competitors because, in the majority of cases, the Witness was also a DCO.

The tables provided at the main doping control station were not hygienic (cracked and splintered wood top) and we observed only one DCO wearing latex gloves when handling the sample and throughout the procedure. The same DCO cleaned the table surface before and after the procedure and placed a paper towel on the table. A few others did put a piece of paper on the table prior to the procedure, but others not at all.

4 – ATHLETE SELECTION

Blood sampling was not performed at this World Championship.

The process, a draw, for the selection of athletes to undergo doping control that day, was carried out each morning, at a meeting of the Doping Control Review Board. It was carried out in a very professional manner which ensured an effective and unpredictable process by monitoring and evaluating selection methods on a daily basis. This process adequately protected the rights of athletes and their competitors.

The Office observed, however, that the athlete draw for Open Water Swimming should include all athletes and not only the first ten to arrive (*FINA Rules DC 5.3*).

5 – ATHLETE NOTIFICATION AND CHAPERONING

Athlete notification was carried out in an effective and efficient manner. The Host Organizing Committee recruited sufficient volunteer Chaperones for the notification of athletes. The Chaperones performed their duties appropriately. Eventual problems were dealt with immediately by the CCES team lead and necessary changes were made to reassign those who were unable to perform all the duties rigorously. Written notification was presented to all athletes and no refusals were observed.

The Chaperones remained with the athletes at all times until the doping control process was completed; however in almost all cases the Chaperones did not sufficiently inform the athlete of all their rights (*International Standard for Testing, Article 5.4.1*).

The athletes presented themselves at the Doping Control Station within the allocated hour. In some instances they were permitted to sign in and leave without providing a reason and/or defining a time to return. If they supplied a reason it was not recorded (*International Standard for Testing, Article 7.3.5*).

In one instance a Chaperone lost his athlete and the Athlete reported immediately to the Doping Control Station, a report was completed to explain the situation.

6 – SAMPLE COLLECTION PROCESS

The procedures conducted by the DCO's ensured the overall rights and security of the athlete's sample was sufficiently protected and intact.

It was observed that testing procedures varied from one DCO to another, regarding volume of urine requested, reading of the refractometer (specific gravity) and the process of partial sampling, which could cause some confusion amongst the athletes.

It was decided by the Doping Review Board after the first week of competition that volume of the samples taken should be increased to 100ml.

It is important to emphasize that the Accompanying Person that is present with the athlete at the Doping Control Station should be from the same team in all instances. FINA members can not be an Accompanying Person to athletes or members of the delegation of another country.

Overall the passing of the samples were done quickly and efficiently. During the first week there were a couple of instances where it took a few hours due to the inexperience of the athlete. The DCO could have been impatient but elected to be professional and understanding.

7 – CHAIN OF CUSTODY

The Office witnessed the entire chain of custody process with regard to the handling of samples. The samples were transported by selected DCO's, with their own vehicle, twice per day to the designated lab. It is approximately a 30-45 minute drive to the lab from the venue. The chain of custody was adequate and ensured no breach in the integrity (bags with numbered seal, and numbers recorded on Doping Control Forms) of the sample and timely delivery of these to the laboratory.

The DCO's vehicle was quite a way from the Doping Control Station (20 minutes walk) and they were required to walk amongst the general public without a security escort.

8 – LABORATORY

The laboratory is WADA accredited. The IO Office observed the delivery of samples at the laboratory as well as the handling and reception of the samples within the laboratory.

It is important to mention that no document exists confirming a meeting between the Doping Commission and the Laboratory regarding sample specification i.e. the volume, the pH and density of the sample (*WADA International Standard for Testing, Annex C, Article 1.b., 4.9 and 4.15*).

9 – RESULT MANAGEMENT

With the support of FINA, the Office of the Independent Observer received copies of the doping control forms on a daily basis as well as simultaneous receipt of results directly from the laboratory via a secure fax. It was observed that all results were appropriately dealt with in a timely manner from the laboratory.

There were few Adverse Analytical Findings during the Championships, but they were all previously authorized Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE) and Abbreviated Therapeutic Use Exemption (aTUE), and supporting documentation was supplied for each of the athletes by the FINA Doping Control Review Board (DCRB) and in a timely manner. Therefore, all athletes complied with rules established for TUEs and ATUEs.

The system in place for this control and review as actioned by the Chair of the Doping Control Review Board was considered excellent by the IO Office.

10 – MEETINGS

The IO Office participated in varying frequency to all of the meetings and observed that all these were professionally and efficiently conducted.

During the competition, the Doping Control Review Board conducted daily Chaperone meetings before testing sessions. The IO team only observed the briefings in the 2nd week as they were not informed of their occurrence in the 1st wee. These were however very informative and ensured that any questions or issues were dealt with immediately. This proved to be a very good approach.

SUMMARY

The overall doping control process conducted by FINA and the Host Organizing Committee was done in a secure manner and athlete's rights were sufficiently protected throughout the entire process.

The selection of athletes was always conducted in a very efficient and professional manner by the Doping Control Review Board.

The Office also noticed that many aspects of the doping control were solved during the Championship and a trend towards better control was observed in Swimming, particularly in the last four days.

The Chaperone training was adequate; however few of them stressed all the rights of the athletes.

DCO meetings should have been organised in a manner that could correct eventual doubts and eliminate some individual variances. The tables were not ideal, being from cracked wood and gloves were seldom used, as were the lack of washing hands and table.

While the overall aspect of doping control process was of a good quality, the Office suggested some recommendations set forth below:

RECOMMENDATIONS

- That all aspects of the doping control process be in compliance with WADC International Standard for Testing.
- The Laboratory did not receive, prior to the Championship, the test distribution plan, which made it difficult to assign the personnel in the required shifts and to provide the necessary reactive and ensure that the materials for the analyses were on hand. A prior meeting between the Organizing Committee (in this case rep. by CCES) and the lab would be helpful in identifying plans and agreeing on processes to avoid any confusion during the event itself.

- That Chaperone and DCO meetings be held on a daily basis to ensure that all responsibilities and tasks are consistent and clearly understood and that any issues that arise are dealt with immediately. This also ensures a preparedness of all the personnel which could assist them in anticipating special circumstances.
- That the DCO team should implement, prior to the event, a standardized approach to sample collection in terms of process consistency, (including refractometer readings, urine quantity etc..) in order to prevent any confusion amongst athletes.

The IO Independent Observer Panel would like to express its gratitude to WADA management for its appointment to the XI FINA World Championships.

Prof. Eduardo Henrique De Rose - Chair
Mr. Aad Zoeteman - Member
Mr. Jean-Christophe Lapouble - Member
Ms. Anne Cappelen - Member
Ms. Angela Iannantuono - Team Manager

Montreal, August 2005