

The new performance enhancing drug

By Jason McKenzie, The Carillon
REGINA (CUP) -- A new drug has been discovered and is taking the sporting world by storm. It would appear that the drug of choice today is tetrahydrogestrinone, or THG for short. The name alone suggests some serious science was at work here, which also suggests some serious money was at work too.

It seems every time this sort of revelation is made in the sports world, everyone acts really shocked like they had no idea this was going on. Seriously, is there really any chance that a drug-free competition at the International level can exist? Not when money is involved, at least not with the amount of money attached to competitions like the Olympics.

This is a multimillion dollar, corporate sponsored, materialistic attempt at an amateur sporting event. A gold medal performance can mean millions in sponsorship deals for the cash-strapped amateur athletes. When faced with the notion of a top ten finish or the accolades that go with a medal performance, athletes will look for that edge that will put them over the top.

The blame certainly does not fall on the athletes, because behind every successful athlete is a successful coach whose paid position depends on the performance of his or her program. And behind every coach is a board or committee that sees the success of the athletes as a great bargaining tool to use when seeking money to keep the program going.

When a sport fails to have any notable performances in an event, it receives little to no media coverage. As great as a top ten finish is, it just will not garnish the attention that a top three finish or, ultimately, a first place finish will. The more coverage a sport receives the more noticeable the logos on the athletes' clothing are.

Just look at the coverage that speed-skating gets at the Olympics. Canadian athletes have had a lot of success in speed-skating and this has resulted in a great deal of corporate sponsorship for the sport and the athletes. I am by no means suggesting that any of the Canadian speed-skating

team is taking steroids, but I am suggesting that they have achieved a lot of exposure because of their success. When other sports see what this type of exposure can do for funding it is a no-brainer that a great deal of emphasis is placed on winning.

The athletes pay the biggest price for this desire for gold. It is well publicized about the dangers steroids can have on the health of the user, and, if caught, the athletes are the ones who take all the blame and heat.

Ben Johnson is a prime example of this theory in action. Ben carried the country on his shoulders when he crossed the finish line in world record time at the 1988 Seoul Olympics. Everyone expected him to win, and anything but first place would have been seen as a complete failure.

When the scandal broke, Ben was completely abandoned, not only by those that were closest to him but by the entire country. Instead of this incident causing a complete turnabout on the use of drugs in sport, it resulted in the need for drugs that are harder to detect.

The only solution lies in the hands of the IOC; they could eliminate all drug use in the Olympics by simply establishing a rule that would allow the retesting of all Olympic medalists' tests if a new drug is discovered. If the recently discovered drug is found, then the medal is stripped and given to the first clean athlete after them. If no clean athlete can be found, then let the steroid-enhanced games begin.

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'03 Ranking	University	'02 Ranking
1	St. Francis Xavier	1
2	Mount Allison	2
3	Acadia	3
4	Bishop's	6
5	Trent	6
6	Wilfrid Laurier	5
7	UNBC	8
7	St. Thomas	10
9	UPEI	9
10	Winnipeg	4
11	Saint Mary's	11
12	Brock	14
12	Lethbridge	13
14	Mount Saint Vincent	12
15	Moncton	15
16	Brandon	20
17	Lakehead	17
18	Ryerson	16
19	Laurentian	18
20	Nipissing	19
21	Cape Breton (UCCB)	21

Editor's note: UCCB is one of the few universities to offer their students the use of lockers, and kind of brings back that high school feeling. So why are they 21st???

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