

# Drugs for sport

Reprinted from *The Lance*

It is not easy to forget the dream shattering deaths of Len Bias, a former University of Maryland basketball star and professional football player Don Rodgers, both of whom fell under the terrifying spell of cocaine.

The Canadian and American governments were not the only ones concerned; the Canadian Inter-University Athletics Union (CIAU) officials have made drug testing for national-level amateur athletics mandatory. Mary Appleton, the CIAU's coordinator of international programs, said that so far testing will be a last resort for the varsity athletes at Canadian Colleges and Universities.

"There seems to have been some misconception among the universities that we have been or will be, testing athletes for drug use. 'That simply isn't true,' she said.

Dr. Michael Salter, Dean of the Faculty of Human Kinetics and track coach for the University of Windsor said mandatory drug tests at the university level would not be fair.

"I don't have any problem in terms of drug testing as long as it doesn't interfere with an individual's right," Salter said in an interview.



"The only thing that concerns me is subjecting every athlete to drug testing in an athletic program — you might as well test all the students on campus."

The coach of Toronto's Ryerson Rams hockey team refuted some of the misconceptions of drug testing that concern many university athletes.

"The Canadian Sports Federation has asked that the CIAU cooperate in honouring any suspension of the Canadian Amateur athlete for the use of illegal drugs," Jim Cairn said in an interview.

He will shield his players from drug tests if the CIAU does decide to make them mandatory.

"My own feeling, is that at this level of competition the CIAU does not have the right to request what an athlete does away from the contest — I don't believe that I do either," Cairn said.

While drug testing among university athletes will not become mandatory in the near future, the CIAU has made moves in that direction.

"Recent success on the international level has prompted concern within Sports Canada of drug use

among our world class athletes," Appleton said.

A recent crackdown by Sports Canada cost Canada chances for medals in the throws (shotput, javelin, and discus) and suspensions for three top throwers last summer in the 1986 Commonwealth Games.

National champions, Mike Spiritoso, 23, Rob Gray, 29, and Peter Dajia, 22, all from Toronto, were banned at the Nationals when urine tests showed levels of anabolic steroids — illegal drugs that increased the athletes' strength.

Spiritoso and Dajia are students in the United States. Both will continue to compete but only in the United States.

Gray, a lawyer in Toronto, was the least fortunate of the three; he will never compete again. The expense has been the greatest for Gray because he was favored to win medals in the Games.

Denise Hebert, 22, a fourth year Human Kinetics student at the University of Windsor is a competitor in shotput and javelin for the university, and is a member of the women's Canadian Na-

tional Team. She said that Gray was a professional 'A' carded athlete.

"An 'A' carded athlete receives funding from the government. This is really tough to get but Rob received the money because he was in the top 10 in the world," she said.

Hebert has been surrounded by the drugs since she was 15 when she started competing at the national level.

"You hear about the drugs, you know who is taking them, it filters," she said.

Herbert quotes Gray's coach: "Judge our performance against drug-free opposition. To expect us to be drug-free and then rank us for carding purposes against the top 100 in the world, most of whom are not clean, is not only unfair but immoral."

"If you are a university student and you have to work, you go home, take your steroids or uppers just to keep going and achieve your card...It's ludicrous to compete without taking steroids," Herbert said. "Don't get me wrong though, I'm not opposed to drug testing. I

think they should test, I have nothing to hide."

Appleton requested that the university establish positions to administer drug testing. Salter said he is "prepared to do this but only when there is the need."

"The testing will be set up through the health services — someone outside of the Human Kinetics faculty," Salter said.

These experts will aid the National Sports Organization to test athletes competing in events held in university faculties.

The National Sports Organization (NSO) runs non-university sporting events such as the Olympic trial for Canada's Track and Field Association.

"Next year the Canadian Open will be held at the University of Windsor," Salter said. "the drug test policy must occur in this meet."

International sports has been given a higher priority in drug testing than the inter-Canadian university competition because the government funds international athletes to compete, which means they must produce.



"CATCH!"