

Steroid Abuse Involving Collegiate and Professional Athletics

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## Abstract

Doping is the use of prohibited substances to enhance performance in sports both at college and professional levels. Athletics used to be the most popular sport until in the 1960's when anabolic androgenic steroids became a formality for any sportsman to use. What people never cared so much about are the health and family impacts of doping.

Blood pressure and liver damage are among the diseases dopers risk contacting. Low sex drive is never off the books either. The World Anti-Doping Agency must stop at nothing until the act is eliminated from sports completely. Short-term suspension of offenders of sports regulation bodies is not enough to make athletes think twice before rushing to over-the-counter drugs with the view of acquiring unfair competitive advantage.

The research paper; therefore, discusses the meaning of doping, its mitigating circumstances, its impact of the user and what anti-doping bodies must do to zero it down. WADA is left with a mountain to climb, especially now that national anti-AAS organs have failed to put sustained and resourceful efforts. The other sections of paper continue to labor the point.

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## Introduction

Athletics is losing its grip as the most powerful sport as a result of the continuous and beyond-control utilization of federally controlled drugs like anabolic androgenic steroids (AAS) by sportsmen whose ambitions for economic and intangible rewards come ahead of dignity and fairness. Present-day athletics are significantly rewarding because sponsorship and other lucrative deals have gone through the roof, so both collegiate and professional athletes buy illegal performance-enhancing drugs to better on-field fitness (Mitten, 2006; Kersey et al., 2012). This is a recipe for federal and sports regulations, which is always answered with equal intensity in the form of bans, sanctions and even prison sentences in other countries (Mitten, 2006; Kersey et al., 2012).

The podium finishes, hall of fame status, record breaking, and financial fortunes for exceptional on-field performance is the dream of every athlete. Hard work in combination with integrity and the usage of legitimate performance-improving foods, drinks, and drugs are what people need to keep the sport alive. Not doping. Benson Johnson, Carl Lewis, Marion Jones, and Maurice Green made names, but later on retired as disgraced sportspersons; the reason being the intentional use of banned substances. There are many forms of athletics that have not being mentioned, but to have a clear picture of what the sport is all about, watch the Olympics Games. The Olympic Games are international athletics competitions held after every four years and this is where most doping cases are. However, the Diamond League sponsored by Samsung Electronics is another platform for doping. It is purely the responsibility of the athlete and their trainer to identify and avoid illegal substances, so the pretexts always offered about people having ingested them without knowledge do not hold water. Apparently, reviewing the

background of doping would make the discussion a complete academic circuit (“2006 Steroids Report”. United States Sentencing Commission).

### Background of Doping

Doping is the unconscious or conscious use of banned substances to enhance on-field performance. Virtually, doping affects off-field stability of athletes some of who extend the enhancements into domestic violence applications. It is for this reason that doping has to be regarded as a crime, not just a violation of sports regulations.

Anabolic androgenic steroids (AAS) were originally developed in the 1930’s by German nationals who used them on dogs and then World War II soldiers. In WWII, a lot of soldiers died of malnutrition, so it became a necessity to use the drugs on the men and women in uniform. Later in 1956 Olympics, the weightlifting team from the Soviet Union first began using artificial testosterone in sports where they smashed previous world records. Not long after, Dr. John Zeigler, the physician for the American weightlifters developed the first AAS meant to strengthen athletes. A few years that followed saw the drug become a global favorite. Every athlete desperately desired to land their hands on the ‘magic charm’. In other words, throughout the 1960’s and 1970’s, AAS were used as the invisible weapon for weight lifters, shot putters and discus throwers. Sooner than later, AAS became a basic need for even collegiate and professional footballers, basketballers, and runners (Journal of Addictive Disorders 2004”).

The global anti-doping outcry from fans and sponsors resulted in the banning of non-prescription steroids in 1991. This was a strong political process under the then Senator Joe Biden. John Biden is currently the Vice President of the United States. Schedule III of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA) was the parent document safeguarding the usage of AAS by

college students and professionals. This is how the usage of illegal substances became a federal crime in the United States. Other countries followed suit and after two more decades, it is observed that the use of AAS is showing signs of disappearing (“Journal of Addictive Disorders”).

### Why Ban AAS Usage?

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Code condemns pharmaceutical performance-boosting substances due to their health and competitive integrity impacts on the user. Any substance that boosts on-field sports performance, create an actionable health threat, or acts in violation of the spirit of the sport is regarded by WADA as a doping agency. The United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) works closely with WADA to ensure that United States Olympians do not use AAS. More generally, every country has their own anti-doping agency to ensure no athlete walks into the Olympic Games without integrity (Mitten, 2006). It is sad that performance-enhancing drugs are addictive and affect the mental and physical health of athletes. Domestic violence, regular fights and general breaking of laws is greatly caused by doping.

### Effects of AAS

It is indeed a futile endeavor to have a podium finish and get all on-field accolades, but fail to make one’s marriage work or raise children in the most fatherly way. Steroids have nothing good for athletes; that is, liver damage, high blood pressure, gynecomastia (hormonal imbalance disorder that affects mood), and the alteration of levels of cholesterol (the reduction and increment of high-density lipoprotein and low-density lipoprotein respectively) are caused by steroids (Mitten, 2006; Kersey et al., 2012).

### Recommendations

That said AAS should not be abused. The substances play vital roles in bone marrow stimulation, growth stimulation, appetite stimulation, and hormone replacement for men. Under no circumstance is one to use it for sports performance purposes and I think it is time that anti-doping agencies work with governments to make doping a severely punishable crime. People should be going to prison for doping (Kersey et al., 2012). To be honest, doping is on the rise despite the collective measures taken against it. Banning dopers for 4 years or even more from the sport does not make them fearful anymore. These people get a lot of money from on-track and off-field deals and rewards, and somebody would rather stay out of practice for even 10 years to test victory through doping. Anti-doping tests should be treated as internal responsibilities. For that matter, national anti-doping agencies should partner with other organizations to ensure that dopers are detected and dealt with before being discovered on international stage (Kersey et al., 2012).

### Conclusion

Athletics is losing its grip as the most powerful sport as a result of the continuous and beyond-control utilization of federally controlled drugs like anabolic androgenic steroids (AAS) by sportsmen whose ambitions for economic and intangible rewards come ahead of dignity and fairness. While it is believed that some athletes consume AAS without knowledge, it is imperative to understand the devastation one experiences up on being discovered and make it their own business to know what is and what is not allowed in collegiate and professional sports.

The off-field effects of doping have a huge beneficial deficit with on-field prospects. For instance, hypertension, liver disease, variation of cholesterol levels and low sex drives destroy

the health of the athlete. Wife beating, poor interpersonal skills and acting ungentlemanly cannot be avoided as long as AAS are used. The malpractice must be stopped at all costs of the sport is to regain it lost glory. Stop doping to have a better future (Kersey et al., 2012).

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