

Controlling steroids

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a couple on each team." They said that even among the strength positions the witnesses' projections of steroid use were too high.

Roger Seaman, associate chair of physical education, while concerned with steroid use among athletes at York and elsewhere, said he doesn't want to suggest a "real big problem."

He views the former players' allegations of wide-spread steroid use as unsubstantiated "locker room talk."

When looking at the total number of athletes involved in inter-university sports, only a small number decided to cheat, said Seaman. "It's a problem for specific athletes."

Concerned over the use of banned substances among its athletes, York will implement Canadian universities' most advanced program on performance enhancing drugs by the fall.

The program was "initiated by the administration in view of the long delay of the CIAU (Canadian Interuniversity Athletic Union)" in implementing such a program," said York provost Tom Meininger.

The catalyst, however, was Ben Johnson's positive drug test at the Seoul Olympics, said Meininger.

"The fact that the Mazda group trained here at York brought it home pretty damn quick," he said.

Johnson trained at the Metropolitan Track and Field Centre located at the northern portion of the Keele campus.

The four-part program hasn't been finalized yet, but in all likelihood it will include the first mandatory short-notice random drug testing procedure among Canadian universities.

The roughly 300 men and 165 women varsity athletes will be placed in a pool and six athletes will be randomly drawn. Three athletes will be selected from teams with a history of drug use, presently football and track and field. Two athletes will be drawn from sports in which steroids would appear to help, such as hockey, rugby, soccer, wrestling and field hockey, and one athlete will be drawn from sports such as swimming, where no benefit from steroids is apparent.

The tests, costing hundreds of dollars each, will be for all substances banned by the IOC (International Olympic Committee).

To be eligible for varsity athletics, athletes will have to provide written consent to random drug testing and to the other three parts of the program. This will include mandatory educational seminars and a statement of the university's philosophy on performance enhancing drugs.

Possibly the most controversial and effective portion of the program will be the formation of a committee to deal with any specific allegation of violations.

The committee will require "clear evidence" before pursuing any allegation, said Seaman. He added that the athlete will have to be seen taking drugs or show

signs or symptoms of steroid use, such as a rapid growth of stature.

"We want to avoid a witch-hunt," he said.

Meininger said the program will be "sensitive" to individuals' rights and freedoms, and will "pay due regard to privacy."

The procedures portion of the program has just been drafted and is in the process of circulating within the department of physical education. The program will be overseen by a committee independent of the university.

A positive steroid test will result in "a lifetime ban from participating in inter-university athletics at York," said Seaman. Athletes found guilty of using non-steroid IOC banned drugs will receive a single year ban from varsity competition and counselling.

Paradiso said this sort of procedure would probably have been the only sort that would have dissuaded him from using steroids as long as "they didn't tell you when you would be tested, and could test you any time throughout the year."

He said most athletes wishing to pursue a professional career would take the chance of random tests — especially if at most four out of 60 roster players are tested, the CIAU's drug testing policy.

And if testing was restricted to training camps, players could abstain from a "cycle" for a couple months. "I went to a doctor (Asthaphan) who is no dummy, he could tell me what to take and when to take it as not to get caught," the York graduate with a BA in geography said.

Paradiso also commented on the limited role the team staff could have on steroid users.

They don't see players for eight months of the year, and therefore don't know whether steroids are responsible for size gains, said Paradiso.

Even though he was never asked, when coaches asked others if they were drug users — some of which were — all denied it.

The *Toronto Star* reports that former head coach Cosentino suspected that some of his players who suddenly bulked up were using steroids.

"When I asked a player point-blank if he was taking steroids, he denied it," Cosentino said.

"I could only go by their word. There wasn't much more I could do," he said.

Coach Wirkowski said he had no idea the four admitted steroid users were taking the drug, and was surprised by their testimony at the Dubin Inquiry.

He said that Marcus and Oxley weren't particularly big, perhaps 220 pounds, and "Warren (Robinson) and Frank (Paradiso) were the two hardest workers on the team," and therefore didn't surprise him by their size gains. He was more suspicious of players who made gains without working as hard.

Team physician Dr. Martin Cloth, while refusing to comment specifically on the four witnesses, said that he suspected steroid use among some players.

During the team physical, a small number of players had enlarged livers, which, in addition to excessive alcohol intake, viral illness such as mononucleosis and certain medications, can be caused by steroid use. The athletes were asked if they were on steroids and answered negatively.

These players were required to take a liver enzyme test. Those with enzyme counts above an acceptable level were informed of the dangers of an impaired liver and required to take a second test. Cloth never found any progressive deterioration in any of the players.

Players were shown a film on steroids produced by Football Canada in 1987, which, according to Wirkowski, "if available earlier, would have been shown earlier."

Before training camp, all football players, as mandated by the CIAU, attended an education seminar on performance enhancing drugs presented by anti-doping expert and chair and director of athletics, Dr. Norm Gledhill.

Attendance at Gledhill's seminar was in fact required by the university for all male and female varsity athletes. Even though not specifically mandated by the CIAU for all athletes, this was done because of concern over steroid use, said Meininger.

UPDATE

On July 1 the CIAU announced that it will commence random drug testing of football players on January 1, 1990. Any varsity athlete caught using a banned substance will be suspended for one year. Athletes will then have to produce a clean drug test in order to be reinstated.

DAVE CHAMBERS OFF TO THE STARS

Dave Chambers "probably will" take the position of assistant coach offered by the Minnesota North Stars last month. Chambers has taken a two-year leave of absence from his position as York's men's athletic co-ordinator but has yet to sign his contract.

"I just received it yesterday (June 29) and will go over it with my lawyer," says Chambers, "but I'll probably sign it."

Chambers will begin his new position in the fall and has plans to return to York's coaching program when his leave of absence is over.

"When I return, I will hopefully have learned a lot by dealing with the elite players in the NHL and can contribute to our own program."

TSN coverage of CIAU events sexist

Coverage is 19 to 1 men over women

The Sports Network (TSN) has announced its Canadian Interuniversity Athletic Union (CIAU) broadcast schedule for the 1989-90 season. There will be 19 men's events, including football, basketball, volleyball and hockey, and one women's event — the national basketball final. This is the first year of a five-year deal between TSN and the CIAU.

Co-ordinator of York's women's athletics Mary Lyons said the CIAU has been trying to get more coverage of women's events.

"Unless we put something out there we're never going to get people interested. We need to get a commitment by the media to promote women's sports," she added.

TSN spokesperson Steve Rayment explained, "The majority of our viewers are interested in the men's events. They have a higher profile." He said if a women's event comes along that has a high enough profile and viewer

demand, there is a possibility of adding more women's events to the schedule.

Lyons said, however, "If you've never seen any women's sports, how do you know if it's good enough?"

John McConachie, director of marketing and communications for the CIAU, said that he understands TSN's position. "It's a market driven situation," he said.

Nonetheless, the CIAU is going to work towards adding more women's events to the lineup, said McConachie.

Coach of Yeowomen basketball Bill Pangos said women's sports aren't marketed properly in Canada. He said the level of play is very high in most university sports, but men's events are marketed better. "Somebody at the CIAU has to do more work. We should be covered more, there's no doubt about it. It's unfortunate that TSN doesn't take a look at it a little bit more, but I understand where they're coming from."

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