

Appendix 17

WADA's 1st Global Athlete Forum, 3-5 June 2018, Calgary

104 athletes from 54 countries across all continents participated in the 1st WADA Global Athlete Forum, hosted by the Canadian Olympic Committee with the support of the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport. After two days of discussions about doping, development of WADA, current situation and issues of doping in the world, trends and the importance of the presence of the Athletes Commissions in sport organizations, the key outcomes has been identified:

- 1) The Forum supports the draft Anti-Doping Charter of Athlete Rights and stressed the importance of the Charter to ensure that the rights of all athletes are accepted and that the key principles are integrated into the 2021 World Anti-Doping Code.
- 2) The Forum identified corruption, conflict of interest and lack of independence as their top three concerns related to the anti-doping system. The WADA Athlete Committee commits to addressing these concerns and to working to improve the situation; as well as, supports WADA's increasing efforts in addressing these concerns.
- 3) The Forum supports WADA's decision to ensure that the outstanding items in the RUSADA Roadmap to Compliance are fulfilled before World Anti-Doping Code compliance is declared.
- 4) The Forum recognized the brave actions by Russian whistleblowers, Yulia and Vitaly Stepanov, in reporting doping in Russian athletics. The Forum thanked them for their courage and continued commitment to clean sport.
- 5) The Forum supports WADA's Speak Up! whistleblower program and the advancements made to ADAMS; as well as, commended the Agency on the new International Standard for Code Compliance by Signatories and the work of the Independent Compliance Review Committee.
- 6) The Forum calls on leaders of sport and government to facilitate an environment that allows athletes to express their opinions without fear of retribution.
- 7) The Forum calls for more financial investment for global and national anti-doping programs.
- 8) The Forum expressed concerns about sporting organizations hosting events in WADA non-Code compliant countries.
- 9) The Forum calls for anti-doping organizations to routinely review their programs.
- 10) The Forum calls on all athletes and athlete representatives to publicly express their views both individually and collectively.
- 11) The Forum reinforced the need for meaningful Athlete involvement in the rules governing anti-doping organizations.

12) The Forum stressed the importance of mandatory anti-doping education.

13) The Forum overwhelmingly endorsed full membership of the WADA Athlete Committee Chair on the Executive Committee.

I had the pleasure to meet very experienced athletes from all over the world. Many of them didn't know floorball at all, but I am sure that they will remember it now. Large part of participants came from disciplines where doping is visible a lot, like swimming or cross-country skiing. In the case of floorball, we spoke about education and how important it is that the players, coaches and clubs are aware about anti-doping issue. Floorball is not there yet, but it might be very soon that the players will have to report their whereabouts in ADAMS system and the tests will be done more often than during the big tournaments. Education is the way to make it easier for everyone in the future to face anti-doping rules. Basically, each member association should have on their website information about anti-doping policy.

WADA's Athletes Commission was happy to hear that IFF's Athletes Commission is active, has its representatives on various IFF's committees and that our chair is on the IFF's Central Board. This is the way to go, they said.

The topic that was discussed actively in my working group is that each athletes commission should have one member educated by WADA on the topic of anti-doping. This person would be the one that the athletes can contact and talk about the issue of anti-doping. It might be easier for the athletes to talk with another athlete who will understand the importance of the issue.

Interesting part of the Forum was discussion about the Speak Up! program. Mr. Gunter Younger, Director Intelligence and Investigations, explained how important it is to speak up. Every time someone steps forward with information on doping, we move closer to a clean and fair playing field for all. Everything that is being reported to WADA is strictly confidential and anyone can report violations. It can be done easily via WADA Speak Up website. Skype conference call with Yulia and Vitaly Stepanov who had to leave Russia to protect themselves after revealing dirty secrets of doping in Russian athletics, was touching moment of the Forum. Unfortunately due to technical issues, we could not ask them many questions.

Members of the WADA's Athletes Commission were there all the time available to talk, as well as the President of WADA Sir Craig Reedie and the Director General Olivier Niggli. All of them were happy to hear about the anti-doping situations in different disciplines and countries.

For me, personally, it was fantastic experience to be part of this group of athletes who came together to discuss key anti-doping developments and issues. Two days of discussions brought a lot of new knowledge and contacts. I hope that WADA's Athletes Commission will keep up the good work they are doing and as it is planned, the next WADA's Athletes Forum is going to be held in 2019.

Example of typical conversation starter that I had over there:

A: Hello, so where are you from?

B: I'm from Portugal.

A: Nice, which sport you are involved in?

B: Swimming, I went to Beijing, London and Rio Olympics, how about you?

A: I play floorball, we do not go to the Olympics...yet.

B:.....(confused face)

A: It is ok not to know what floorball is 😊

B: Ohh, good, so tell me what is floorball?

