



IOC Background Guide: Mitigating the Usage of Performance-enhancing Drugs

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Introductions

Hi, I am Nava Riahi and I am thrilled to be your chair for the International Olympic Committee at MAMUNC 2024. I have been involved in Model UN and Congress for over 7 years now, serving as a chairperson for 3 of those years for middle schoolers. In my free time, I enjoy reading and pottery making. Especially after this year's Olympics, I am particularly excited to delve into the important issue of performance-enhancing drug usage in sports at this conference.

Hello, my name is Marley Freyman and I'm excited to chair the International Olympic Committee at MAMUNC 2024. Similarly to my counterpart, I've been involved with Model UN and Congress for 7 years, and I've served as a chairperson for 2 of those years. Nava and I are both prominent members of the League of Creative Minds, competing at high-level MUNC congregations hosted by Ivy League schools. Notably, both Nava and I won awards at Harvard MUNC in Cambridge in the spring, as well as at a plethora of Ivy-hosted MUN conferences in the fall and winter of last year. In my free time, I enjoy spending time outside, preferably with my two dogs, Mavis and Malua. After watching the Olympics and the Euro Cup this past summer, I am excited to explore the nuance of allowing performance-enhancing drugs into official competitions to support athletes.

Committee Background

Established on June 23rd, 1894 to oversee the modern Olympic Games and uphold the integrity of international sports, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) was established. Its mission is to promote ethics in sports, encourage fair play, and foster a culture of clean and safe competition.¹ In recent years, the IOC has implemented strict regulations to stifle the use of performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs) to preserve the spirit of fair competition. This topic is crucial as it directly aligns with the IOC's mission to combat doping and ensure a level playing field for all athletes. The IOC has 6 main purposes²:

1. **Organizing the Olympic Games:** The IOC chooses the host cities for the Summer and Winter Olympics, guaranteeing that the Games follow the Olympic Charter. It oversees the events' planning and implementation, collaborating closely with local organizing committees and international sports federations.
2. **Promoting the ideology of Olympism:** The IOC works to meld together sport, culture, and education all in the name of Olympism. This ideology emphasizes the importance of sports in fostering greater understanding among individuals, encouraging mutual respect, and supporting fair play.
3. **Supporting Athletes:** The International Olympic Committee is committed to providing athletes with the resources and opportunities they need to compete at the greatest level. This involves anti-doping operations, guaranteeing athlete safety, and providing scholarships and financial aid through various initiatives.
4. **Ensuring Ethical Conduct:** The IOC protects the Olympic Movement's integrity by implementing and enforcing ethical guidelines. This includes battling corruption, doping, and any other sort of malpractice that jeopardizes the fairness of the Games and the Olympic brand.

¹ International Olympic Committee. "International Olympic Committee." *Olympics.com*, <https://olympics.com/ioc>.

²H. P. Dijkstra, N. Pollock, R. Chakraverty, & C. L. Ardern, "Managing the Health of the Elite Athlete: A New Integrated Performance Health Management and Coaching Model," *British Journal of Sports*

5. **Sustainability and Legacy:** The International Olympic Committee encourages sustainability in Olympic Games planning and implementation, encouraging host cities to reduce environmental damage while maximizing long-term benefits. The Olympics left a legacy of infrastructure development, economic prosperity, and sports promotion in the host country.

6. **Fostering International Cooperation:** Through sport, the IOC seeks to transcend cultural and national divides, frequently engaging in diplomacy to alleviate tensions and disputes. By bringing together athletes from throughout the globe, the IOC ensures that the Olympic Games serve as a platform for peaceful interaction and mutual respect.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is primarily funded through several key revenue streams, which include broadcasting rights, sponsorship, ticket sales, and licensing.³ The sale of broadcasting rights generates the IOC's main cash stream.⁴ The IOC negotiates and sells



broadcast rights for the Olympic Games to television networks and digital platforms worldwide. These arrangements are extremely profitable, with billions of dollars earned from deals with large networks such as NBC in the United States, which alone account for a sizable portion of the IOC's revenue.⁵

³ "IOC Principles." *Olympics.com*, <https://olympics.com/ioc/principles>.

⁴ International Olympic Committee. "International Olympic Committee." *Olympics.com*, <https://olympics.com/ioc>.

⁵ H. P. Dijkstra, N. Pollock, R. Chakraverty, & C. L. Ardern, "Managing the Health of the Elite Athlete: A New Integrated Performance Health Management and Coaching Model," *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, vol. 58, no. 15, 2024, pp. 870-877, <https://bjsm.bmj.com/content/58/15/870>.

Current Situation

The issue of performance-enhancing drugs (PEDs) has plagued sports for decades, undermining the credibility of athletic achievements and posing serious health risks to athletes. The origins of PED usage can be traced back to the early 20th century, but it gained widespread attention during the 1960s and 1970s. Despite stringent regulations and testing protocols, the use of PEDs persists, driven by the immense pressure on athletes to perform at the highest levels. The high-profile cases, such as those involving Lance Armstrong and the Russian doping scandal, underscore the ongoing struggle to eradicate doping from sports.⁶

In the 2024 Olympic Games, there has recently been doping allegations against Chinese swimmers, focusing on incidents involving anabolic steroids and trimetazidine. Despite positive tests, Chinese anti-doping authorities allowed athletes to compete, citing food contamination as the cause. The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) supported these findings, leading to criticism from U.S. authorities, who questioned WADA's effectiveness and impartiality.⁷ The controversy highlights ongoing concerns about doping in international sports and the challenges in enforcing anti-doping rules fairly and consistently.

However, not all athletes are treated the same when it comes to doping allegations.⁸ There was a clear disparity highlighted when Sha'Carri Richardson, a Black American sprinter, and Kamila Valieva, a Russian figure skater, were treated after testing positive for banned substances. Richardson was barred from the Tokyo Olympics for marijuana use, while Valieva was allowed to compete in the Beijing Winter Olympics despite testing positive for trimetazidine, a performance-enhancing drug. Many are now criticizing the double standard, pointing out racial and systemic biases in how doping rules are enforced.

⁶ "Olympic 'Game Changer' Boosts Sustainability in Sport." *UN News*, 3 April 2023, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/04/1135202>.

⁷ H. P. Dijkstra, N. Pollock, R. Chakraverty, & C. L. Ardern, "Managing the Health of the Elite Athlete: A New Integrated Performance Health Management and Coaching Model," *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, vol. 58, no. 15, 2024, pp. 870-877, <https://bjsm.bmj.com/content/58/15/870>.

⁸ Human Rights Watch. "Olympics: IOC Heeds Calls to Embed Rights." *Human Rights Watch*, 7 June 2022, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/06/07/olympics-ioc-heeds-calls-embed-rights>.

Possible Solutions

Mitigating drug use in the Olympics is a complex challenge that requires a multifaceted approach.⁹ Here are several possible solutions that can help reduce doping and enhance the integrity of the Games:

1. Strengthening Anti-Doping Regulations

- **Harsher punishments:** Stricter punishments for athletes and coaches who dope could serve as a stronger deterrence. This could include lengthier sentences, lifetime bans for repeat offenders, and financial penalties¹⁰.
- **Stricter Testing Protocols:** Increasing the frequency and randomization of drug testing, both in and out of competition, can help catch more violators. This includes testing athletes during training periods, rather than immediately before or during the Games.
- **Advanced Test Methods:** Continuously upgrading and using cutting-edge technology for detecting new and emerging performance-enhancing drugs can help you remain ahead of individuals who are attempting to bypass current testing.

2. ANTI-doping Programs

- **Athlete Education:** Developing comprehensive education programs to educate athletes on the risks and consequences of doping, such as health risks, ethical issues, and the influence on their careers.
- **Youth instruction:** Providing anti-doping instruction to young athletes can help teach clean sports principles early on. This can include incorporating anti-doping education into school athletic programs and youth leagues.
- **Whistleblower Protection:** Strengthening safeguards for whistleblowers who expose doping can encourage more people to speak up without fear of retaliation.

3. Global Cooperation and Harmonization

⁹ ¹ H. P. Dijkstra, N. Pollock, R. Chakraverty, & C. L. Ardern, "Managing the Health of the Elite Athlete: A New Integrated Performance Health Management and Coaching Model," *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, vol. 58, no. 15, 2024, pp. 870-877, <https://bjsm.bmj.com/content/58/15/870>.

¹⁰ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "UNODC - Executive Director's Corner." *UNODC.org*, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/eds-corner/index.html>.

- **International Collaboration:** Strengthening collaboration among national anti-doping agencies, the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), and sports federations to share intelligence, best practices, and testing data can contribute to a more cohesive and effective worldwide response to doping.
- **Uniform Standards:** Making anti-doping policies comparable across all sports and countries can assist in closing loopholes and ensuring that all athletes are held to the same standards.

4. Innovation in Monitoring and Detection

- **Biological Passport Programs:** Expanding the use of Athlete Biological Passports (ABPs) can help detect changes in athletes' biological markers over time, which may indicate doping even if specific substances are not detected.
- **Data Analytics and AI:** Utilizing data analytics and artificial intelligence to monitor athlete performance patterns can help identify suspicious activities that warrant further investigation.

5. Increased Transparency

- **Public Disclosure:** Making doping cases more transparent by publicly disclosing the names of athletes who test positive and the penalties they receive can deter others from doping.
- **Transparent Testing Processes:** Providing more information about the testing process, including how samples are handled and analyzed, can build trust in the anti-doping system.

6. Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programs

- **Support for Offenders:** Offering rehabilitation and education programs for athletes caught doping can help them reintegrate into the sport cleanly. This might include counseling, education on clean sport, and support for transitioning into other career paths if they are banned from competition.

- **Highlighting Clean Athletes:** Promoting and celebrating athletes who are committed to clean competition can serve as positive role models, encouraging others to follow in their footsteps.
- **Ongoing Research:** Investing in research to better understand the factors that lead to doping and developing more effective prevention strategies is crucial for staying ahead of those who seek to cheat the system.

Implementing these solutions requires commitment, resources, and a coordinated effort from all stakeholders involved in the Olympic Movement, including athletes, coaches, national and international sports organizations, and anti-doping agencies.¹¹

Bibliography:

1. International Olympic Committee. "IOC Principles." Olympics.com
<https://olympics.com/ioc/principles>

This page outlines the IOC's mission, the core values of Olympism (excellence, respect, and friendship), and its commitment to promoting sports in society, integrity, and clean athletes.

2. United Nations. "Olympic 'Game Changer' Boosts Sustainability in Sport." UN News, 3 April 2023, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/04/1135202>

The article highlights the IOC's efforts to promote sustainability in sports, featuring an interview with Tania Braga, Head of the IOC legacy department, discussing how the 2024 Paris Games align with sustainability goals and the broader Olympic Agenda 2020.

3. Dijkstra, H. P., Pollock, N., Chakraverty, R., & Ardern, C. L. "Managing the Health of the Elite Athlete: A New Integrated Performance Health Management and Coaching Model." *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, vol. 58, no. 15, 2024, pp. 870-877.
<https://bjsm.bmj.com/content/58/15/870>

This article discusses an integrated model for managing the health and performance of elite athletes.

¹¹ Pharmacy Times. "The Truth About Drug Testing and the Olympics." *Pharmacy Times*, 23 July 2021, <https://www.pharmacytimes.com/view/the-truth-about-drug-testing-and-the-olympics>.

4. Human Rights Watch. "Olympics: IOC Heeds Calls to Embed Rights." *Human Rights Watch*, 7 June 2022,
<https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/06/07/olympics-ioc-heeds-calls-embed-rights>

The article discusses the IOC's efforts to integrate human rights into its operations, following decades of pressure from civil society groups, and outrage over unfair punishments awarded to certain athletes caught in possession of performance-enhancing drugs.

5. International Olympic Committee. "International Olympic Committee." *Olympics.com*,
<https://olympics.com/ioc>

This site provides comprehensive information on the IOC's mission, structure, events, and programs promoting the values of Olympism globally.

6. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "UNODC - Executive Director's Corner." *UNODC.org*, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/eds-corner/index.html>

This page provides insights and updates from the Executive Director on global efforts to combat drug abuse, especially within the Olympics and other national competitions.

7. Pharmacy Times. "The Truth About Drug Testing and the Olympics." *Pharmacy Times*, 23 July 2021,
<https://www.pharmacytimes.com/view/the-truth-about-drug-testing-and-the-olympics>

This article discusses the procedures and challenges associated with drug testing in the Olympics, emphasizing the role of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) in ensuring athletes compete clean.