



## Chapter 2

# DOPING: FROM OMERTÁ TO PUBLIC AWAKENING

At the first Play the Game event in 1997, the delegates heard one of the world's leading sports physiologists, the Swede Bengt Saltin (1935–2014), asking cautiously: Could there be a connection between the fact that on the one side blood values of Nordic skiers were on a dramatic, inexplicable rise and young cyclists were dying from massive blood clots in the heart, and on the other side the emergence of a new drug called 'erythropoietin'?

The question illustrates how the debate on doping has evolved over a quarter of a century. Bengt Saltin's assumptions have been more than confirmed. Every sports fan today has heard about the drug named by its abbreviation EPO, and she or he may suspect top athletes to use it widely.

Moreover, doping is no longer perceived as only a matter of individual cheating by athletes with a bad character. One year after Bengt Saltin raised his concerns, the Festina scandal in the Tour de France opened the doors for the wider public to understand that illegal drugs were taken on an industrial scale in elite sport.

Playing by the rules has been essential to modern sport since its inception in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. And the attempts to bend or break the rules are just as old.

Today, all sport governing bodies have signed up to the World Anti-Doping Code and a list of substances that are banned for at least two out of three reasons: They must be

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*Track star Marion Jones speaks to the media at Federal Court after pleading guilty to lying to a federal agent about her drug use. Jones was the most prominent athlete involved in the BALCO scandal in the US, and she was stripped of five Olympic medals, among others. Photo: Stephen Chermis/Getty Images*





*The Swedish physiologist Bengt Saltin hinted at Play the Game in 1997 that loose EPO rules might drive athletes to experiment and risk death. Photo: Niels Nyholm/Play the Game*

performance-enhancing, pose a health risk, or be against the spirit of sport.

It took more than a hundred years of modern sport to reach that agreement.

According to the research article ‘A Historical Timeline of Doping in the Olympics’, published by the Kawasaki Journal of Medical Welfare in 2006, athletes have been doping for more than a century, often with assistance from scientists and sports organisations.

The first documented case of doping in the modern Olympics occurred at the 1904 Olympics in St. Louis. At the 22-mile mark of the Olympic marathon race, the American marathoner Tom Hicks was given small bits of strychnine with brandy and a little egg-white “in order to stimulate him and help him finish the race”, his coach explained. But in those days, athletes who doped didn’t breach any fair play rules in sport and athletes’ health wasn’t an issue.

In the 1930s, the use of strychnine and alcohol to enhance performance was outdated by the invention of synthetic drugs such as amphetamine and testosterone. At the beginning of the Cold War in the 1950s, synthetic drugs were used as popular weapons in the sports power battle between the Soviet Union and the US, and ambitious athletes in other countries were doped too.

### **Doping and death**

In 1960, the Danish cyclist Knud Enemark Jensen died during the road race at the Olympic Games

in Rome, allegedly because he had taken Ronicol, a blood circulation stimulant, or amphetamine. One year later, American female athletes were accused of using male hormones and American strength athletes of using Dianabol, an anabolic steroid.

The IOC didn't begin to investigate the use and the dangers of doping until 1962 when the American IOC president Avery Brundage set up a Medical Committee and instructed the committee to make recommendations about what to do about doping. And doping wasn't a matter for public authorities until 1963 when the Council of Europe asked the IOC to establish an international commission on doping that should educate athletes and sports officials about the dangers of doping, study athletes' behaviour affected by doping, keep track of doping methods, and list proscribed drugs and activities.

The Council of Europe recommended drug testing too. And at the 1964 Olympics in Tokyo, the International Cycling Union (UCI) introduced the first Olympic doping control to test cyclists for amphetamine. But the IOC didn't adopt an anti-doping policy until May 1967, a few months before the death of British Tour de France rider Tom Simpson, who collapsed at Mont Ventoux with a cocktail of amphetamines in his body.

Ahead of the 1968 Olympics in Mexico, the IOC formed a Medical Commission and introduced a list of banned substances, while drug testing was to be implemented in time for the Olympics. The commission asked international sports federations to test their athletes for stimulants, narcotics, sympathomimetic amines, anti-depressants, and tranquillizers using gas chromatography, but no test for anabolic steroids was planned.

In 1969, West German discus thrower Brigitte Berendonk told *Die Zeit* that the use of anabolic steroids was common among decathletes, discus throwers, shot-putters, weightlifters, and half of the runners and jumpers. And the four-time US Olympics discus champion Alfred Oerter claimed that the use of anabolic steroids was so widespread in elite sport that young athletes were forced to use them if they wanted to stay on top.

### **A communist minister acts**

But in general, doping in sport wasn't a major public issue until three decades later. To many sport fans, it was an eye-opener that the Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson was stripped of his gold medal when he tested positive for anabolic steroids after having won the 100-meter race at the 1988 Olympics in Seoul. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the German Democratic Republic (DDR) in the early 1990s shed light on

systemic doping of East German athletes, children included. But it was only near the end of the decade that a new doping scandal made the public realise the true scale of doping in sport.

Three days ahead of the Tour de France start in 1998, Willy Voet, a Belgian masseur on the French cycling team Festina, was arrested at the Belgian–French border when customs agents searched his car and found huge quantities of doping substances such as growth hormones, testosterone, amphetamines, and erythropoietin (EPO).

Behind the police action was the then French Minister for Youth and Sport, Marie-George Buffet, who as a communist regarded the cyclists as workers who deserved protection from medical abuse.



*Tour de France riders sat down in protest in 1998 when the world's first systemic doping scandal was revealed. They did not protest the doping, but the police raids that were meant to reveal doping. Photo: Bongarts/Getty Images*

Thanks to the anti-doping laws in France, the arrest of Willy Voet kickstarted one of the largest investigations of the use of drugs in sport. The first stage of the race started as planned in Dublin, Ireland. But when the riders arrived in France, the police also arrested Festina's sports director Bruno Roussel and the team doctor Eric Rijckaert. When the police found files on the doctor's computer that documented a systematic doping programme, the entire Festina team was kicked out of the tour and the police began to investigate other teams.

The investigations made the remaining Tour de France riders arrange two sit-down protests during the race arguing they would no longer tolerate being treated like criminals. Five teams ultimately withdrew from the race in protest, and less than 100 of the 189 riders that started in the 1998 Tour de France finished the race in Paris.

Dozens of the riders who finished the race later admitted having taken performance-enhancing drugs or were found guilty of doping, including the overall 1998 winner Marco Pantani who died in a hotel room in 2004 under unclear circumstances.

Some of the helpers that supplied the riders with doping were sanctioned too. Willy Voet was given a suspended sentence of 10 months in prison and a fine of 30,000 francs while Bruno Roussel received a suspended sentence of one year in prison and a fine of 50,000 francs.

### **Anti-doping awakening**

The Festina affair marked the beginning of a new era in sport where public authorities tried to take more control over sport while more sports journalists began investigating doping.

As a result of pressure from the public and big North American sponsors, the IOC decided to arrange the first world conference on doping in sport. The conference was held in Lausanne in February 1999 and resulted in the creation of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) which was to be jointly financed and run by sports organisations and national governments. The conference was also the first step towards a global harmonisation of anti-doping rules across all sports.

It became clear that some sports leaders wouldn't give up control over national and international anti-doping without a fight. At the end of the Lausanne conference, most sports leaders and politicians agreed on a minimum sanction of two years' suspension for



*The Italian anti-doping expert Sandro Donati paved new ways at Play the Game 2005 when exposed how organised crime was running a giant global market for sports drugs. Photo: Niels Nyholm/Play the Game*

athlete violations of anti-doping rules across all sports. But two of the most prominent sports leaders, FIFA president Sepp Blatter and UCI president Hein Verbruggen, were in opposition. The two IOC members argued that a two-year sanction would destroy the career of a professional football player or a professional cyclist and could result in expensive legal battles that would harm the reputation of the entire Olympic movement.

On 4 February 1999, the conference signed the Lausanne Declaration which stated that “the minimum required sanction for major doping substances or prohibited methods shall be a suspension of the athlete from all competition for a period of two years, for a first offence.”



However, the declaration also stated that “based on specific, exceptional circumstances to be evaluated in the first instance by the competent International Federation’s bodies, there may be a provision for a possible modification of the two-year sanction.”

This was the first of many anti-doping compromises between the public authorities and the sports authorities that opened the door for legal battles over doping sanctions that are still present in anti-doping today.

### **Drawing a world map of illegal trade**

WADA and governments still had much to learn about the scale of sports drugs. In a ground-breaking presentation at Play the Game in Copenhagen in late 2005, Italian anti-doping expert Alessandro Donati pieced together information available on the internet, composing a jaw-dropping picture of a giant global market for sports drugs. The illegal trade routes across the globe were designed by organised crime networks, leading not only to elite sport, but also to private gym facilities, military, and police environments.

WADA’s then-general director David Howman was in the room and immediately initiated a research cooperation with Donati. A few months later, WADA president Richard W. Pound warned that the illegal market for sports drugs worldwide – including steroids, growth hormone and EPO – was larger than the markets of marijuana, cocaine, and heroin put together. Consequently, WADA started a cooperation with Interpol.

Sandro Donati’s work for WADA resulted in the 2007 report ‘World Traffic in Doping Substances’ in which the Italian estimated that 31 million people worldwide were involved in doping, including athletes of various levels, soldiers in the military, police officers, bodyguards, private surveillance agents, people in showbiz, and victims of improper administration of drugs.

The report noted that the market for sports doping grew big in the early 1970s when American mafia families Gambino, Lucchese, Colombo, Gotti, and others made anabolic steroids part of their illegal drug trade and produced films like ‘Pumping Iron’ that introduced famous bodybuilders as movie stars, most notably the Austrian-American actor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

According to Donati, the American mafia controlled the doping market in the US until the middle of the 1990s when the Russian mafia in cooperation with the Sicilian mafia



became a new player on the market by selling cheaper drugs of high quality produced by Russian factories built for the former Soviet Union's medical industry.

But many of the mafia-controlled drugs on the illegal American medical market were also produced at a factory in Mexico owned by the former Scottish athletics star David Jenkins and his partner Juan Javier Macklis and supported by Panama's General Manuel Antonio Noriega.

For Sandro Donati, the legal medical industry was partly responsible for the illegal market because the industry produced far more substances than needed in the treatment of sick people.

"For decades, the medical industry has systematically expanded its production, marketing, and distribution of drugs. But it is far more serious to ask people to risk their health by taking medicine they don't need than it is to convince people of their need to buy a new car even if their old car can last five more years," he said.

### **Pharma threat to society**

Donati's report documented that the global anti-doping movement faced serious challenges such as the absence of national anti-doping laws in many countries and the failure to enforce existing laws in others, as well as the dearth of reliable information to accurately describe the problem and develop solutions.

He also pointed out that the medical expenditure to cure pathologies caused by drugs and doping in 2007 was higher than the entire illegal business of these drugs. In the US, it was estimated that an annual medical expenditure of almost 100 billion US dollars was needed to treat the problems of drug addicts, whose drug expenditure amounted to 65 billion US dollars.

"This type of pharmaceutical industry poses a threat to society and for some time now it has been the ideal partner of organised crime. What better agreement could, indeed, be imagined than that established between this kind of pharmaceutical industry and organised crime? The former has the need, once an excess of drugs has been produced (in relation to the real treatment needs of sick people), to sell them, keeping itself as far from suspicion as possible, whilst organised crime networks can obtain unofficial drugs that can be managed with great ease and to great financial advantage," the Italian concluded.

Sandro Donati's research on the world trafficking of doping substances was disturbing news at a time when most anti-doping authorities and journalists were busy exposing individual athletes and doping doctors at a national level.

However, certain national doping cases such as the Operación Puerto in Spain, the Floyd Landis case and the BALCO case in the US helped the public understand the global scale of the doping problem.

### **BALCO set new legal standards**

To many American sports fans, the BALCO case was an eye-opener that documented how doping had become a major problem across many US sports and that many of the greatest national sports heroes in the US were breaking the rules.

The public became aware of the case in September 2003, when federal agents concluded an investigation of doping allegations against the Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative (BALCO) in California by raiding the lab owned by Victor Conte, a former musician who in 1984 started producing sports nutrition. One month later, Travis Tygart, the managing director of USA-DA, announced that the agency had uncovered a doping conspiracy involving previously undetectable steroids and high-profile athletes.

The BALCO case involved track and field athletes such as Marion Jones, Kelli White, Tim Montgomery, Regina Jacobs, Alvin Harrison, Michelle Collins, Dwain Chambers, and Melissa Price, baseball players Barry Bonds and Gary Sheffield, NFL star Bill Romanowski, boxer Shane Mosley, and many other athletes who were later sanctioned for trying to enhance their performances by taking the new designer steroid THG, EPO and other stimulants.



*Doping convict Kelli White in conversation with USA-DA director Travis Tygart at Play the Game 2005 where they exposed the details of the BALCO case together.*

*Photo: Niels Nyholm/Play the Game*

The case became famous for its exposure of THG, but also for setting a new legal standard in US anti-doping. Victor Conte was sentenced to four months in prison for steroid distribution and money laundering. And several of the sanctioned athletes such as Marion Jones and Barry Bonds were sentenced to prison and house arrest for obstruction of justice.

For years, the BALCO case attracted more public attention than any other doping case in the US. But according to Wade Exum, a former anti-doping director at the US Olympic Committee (USOC), many other cases were hidden. In 2003, he accused the committee of a cover-up of more than 100 positive drug tests on US athletes who won 19 Olympic medals from 1988 to 2000, including Carl Lewis, the greatest star in US athletics at the time.

On the eve of the second world conference on doping, held in Copenhagen, Denmark in March 2003, Wade Exum told the Danish newspaper Ekstra Bladet: “Many people see the US Olympic family as a sick family. I agree. The family has a big problem with doping.”

### **A bad team-player**

Wade Exum was fired from his job in 2000 when USOC handed over its drug testing responsibilities to a new organisation, the US Anti-Doping Agency.

In a racial discrimination and wrongful termination suit against the USOC, Wade Exum claimed that he was fired because he was Afro-American. But in the lawsuit, he also accused the USOC of hiding the results of at least half of all positive tests of American athletes and argued that he was fired for trying to change the system.

“I tried to prevent US sports from turning into a sports system like in East Germany, but when I protested the USOC accused me of being a bad team player,” Wade Exum told Ekstra Bladet, and he was supported by Bengt Saltin, then chairman of Anti-Doping Denmark and a member of WADA’s medical committee.

“The world has only seen a small part of the US doping scandal. Wade Exum’s accusations are in line with the information I received from other anti-doping sources in the US. The US is the major doping problem in many sports, especially in athletics. And in many ways, the doping problems in the US are just as bad as they were in the former Soviet Union and East Germany,” Bengt Saltin said.

A few months earlier, the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) decided that USA Track & Field was not obliged to publish the names of 13 US athletes who tested positive between 1996 and 2000 without being sanctioned. The decision upset Arne Ljungqvist, a Swedish IOC member and chairman of the International Athletics Federation's medical committee:

“The CAS decision is disgusting. The court decided that USA Track & Field was obliged to inform us of all positive tests, but only not in these cases. The CAS argued that the 13



*After Wade Exum was fired by the US Olympic Committee, he substantiated his allegations of doping cover-ups by outing athletics star Carl Lewis (pictured), among many others. Photo: Pool PERRIN/TARDY/Gamma-Rapho/Getty Images*



cases were now history and that it wouldn't be fair to the athletes to open their cases. This really upsets me, because I sent a letter to the USA Track & Field back in 1998 and requested information about all the cases," Arne Ljungqvist told the Danish newspaper.

### **Positive cases, no names given**

In April 2003, a federal court in Denver, Colorado, dismissed Wade Exum's lawsuit against the USOC. But then the former US anti-doping director released more than 30,000 pages of confidential USOC documents to Sports Illustrated and The Orange County Register. The documents allegedly supported his accusations of a major cover-up of US athletes cheating with performance-enhancing drugs, and Wade Exum's release of the documents became a big news story in the US.

"It's what many people suspected about the US Olympic Committee, that it was being covered up. There were lots of rumours around," the founding president of WADA, the Canadian IOC member Richard W. Pound, told the Associated Press.

According to Wade Exum, US athletics superstar Carl Lewis tested positive three times for small amounts of stimulants at the 1988 Olympic trials. The USOC first disqualified him, then accepted his appeal, claiming 'inadvertent use'. Carl Lewis went on to win two gold medals at the 1988 Olympics in Seoul in the long jump and the 100 meters after the disqualification of Ben Johnson for using steroids.

### **A wave of confessions**

The US did not fix the doping problem. And neither did the rest of the world. In 2007, a few months after WADA released Sandro Donati's report on world traffic of doping substances, a new wave of doping confessions made by former Tour de France riders once again documented the global scale of the problem.

The new confessions were caused by doping accusations in the book 'Memoirs of a Soigneur' written by the former soigneur Jef d'Hont from the cycling teams La Française des Jeux and Telekom. According to the Belgian soigneur, doctors at the University in Freiburg for years supplied Telekom with EPO and a chemist in Freiburg was paid per prescription by team director Walter Godefroot and his assistant Rudy Pevenage.

But when Bjarne Riis, a former Telekom rider and winner of the 1996 Tour de France, admitted at a press conference in Copenhagen that he began using doping in the 1980s and used EPO, growth hormones, and corticosteroids until 1998, he didn't reveal details of his long-time co-operation with Italian doping doctors.

The Dane wasn't the only professional athlete who almost a decade after the Festina affair was still respecting the *omertá* – the law of silence in sport.

Lance Armstrong, the winner of seven consecutive Tour de France titles from 1999



*Two years after Lance Armstrong won his seventh and last Tour de France, Sunday Times journalist David Walsh shared his findings on Armstrong's medical practices at Play the Game 2007 in Reykjavik. It took another five years before Armstrong was sanctioned. Photo: Niels Nyholm/Play the Game*



*When former Tour de France winner Greg Lemond shared his critical views on Lance Armstrong's success at Play the Game 2009 in Coventry, and Armstrong then tweeted about it, Play the Game's website crashed due to more than 20,000 unexpected visits. Photo: Jens Astrup/Play the Game*

to 2005, wasn't banned from cycling until 2012 when the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) released a 200-page report which included testimonies from 11 of Lance Armstrong's former teammates and 15 other witnesses. The report stated that Lance Armstrong as the captain of the US Postal team for years engaged in "the most sophisticated, professionalised and successful doping programme that sport has ever seen."

At first, Lance Armstrong denied all the accusations and portrayed himself as an innocent victim of USADA's 'witch hunt'. But months after the release of the report, he finally accepted that he had lost the battle when he met opposition from sponsors and the International Cycling Union (UCI) for the first time in his career.

In December 2012, USADA rejected Lance Armstrong's request to reduce his lifetime ban to one year in exchange for his cooperation. One month later, the former Tour de France winner accepted an invitation from Oprah Winfrey to confess his doping career as a guest on her television show. One and a half decade after the Festina affair, the former cancer patient then admitted that he doped during most of his career and that his million-dollar sports business was built on a lie.

Thanks to the doping history in the Tour de France, Lance Armstrong's confession didn't come as a big surprise. To many sports fans and anti-doping authorities, the question was why it took so long to finally catch the American. But recently highlighted doping cases in the US also

document that doping investigations may take years if the dopers investigated have strong financial and legal support.

### **Catching individuals, not states**

Overall, the European and American doping cases show that no matter how many anti-doping rules the sports authorities and the public authorities agree on, many stakeholders in sport seem to be more than willing to break the rules and take the risk of being caught and sanctioned. But the cases also document that although the global anti-doping system is still relatively new, many individual doping cheaters in sport have been caught and sanctioned.

Before the creation of WADA and the global harmonisation of anti-doping policies, dopers were at little risk of being caught. Now, at least some of the cheaters who destroy the fun of sport for clean athletes, fans, and sponsors are exposed. Often thanks to investigative journalists and whistleblowers, who put their careers in sport at stake by speaking out on what's wrong with sports.

But anti-doping is not about catching the bad guys only. It's also about catching the bad nations. The case of state-sponsored doping in Russia makes it fair to question how sports organisations and public authorities have handled their responsibilities when investigating and sanctioning the most powerful sports nations in the world for violating international anti-doping rules.



*Lance Armstrong wears the yellow jersey in 2000 while riding uphill towards his second out of seven Tour de France wins.*

*Photo: Mike Powell/Allsport/Getty Images*





## I put my life in their hands

*One of the top athletes who lost her career as a consequence of the BALCO scandal was the world-class sprinter Kelli White. At Play the Game 2005 in Copenhagen, she shared her story to an audience listening intently.*



*Photo: Niels Nyholm/Play the Game*

In August of 2003 at the World Championships in Paris, I had captured both the 100 and 200-meter titles and I walked off the track after the 200 meters and I just felt extremely guilty because I knew that what I had achieved at that meet was not right, it wasn't fair and it wasn't real. Instead of being a high point of my career, it really turned out to be such a disappointment not only to myself but to my family and the sport that I love very, very much.

With the help of Mr. Conte, I was able to pass 17 drug tests both in and out of competition, not only in the United States but in different countries. In a relatively short period of time, I became the fastest woman in the world. And for me that was pretty scary – it was exciting, but scary also. I want to explain what it takes for the whole system to work. It not only took Mr. Conte's help, it took my coach making me believe it was okay, and I think that a lot of the time what happens to athletes is that people make you believe that what you are doing is OK because everyone else is doing it. And that is definitely not the truth because I have friends who compete now who are clean. And it takes away from their achievements when you are made to believe that everyone is doing the same thing.

While I was in Paris, I had my first failed drug test. It was actually for a stimulant called Modafonil, and once again with the help of Mr. Conte, I came up with a plan to tell the world that I had been using Modafonil for medical reasons and not the reasons we were actually using them for. A week after the World Championships,

the FBI raided the BALCO laboratories and I decided that for my sanity and for other reasons it would be best that I admitted my use of EPO, THG and the stimulants so that I could be clean and free in my mind.

I believe it is important that I get you to understand the reasons why I chose to do drugs. But first I want to say that those who do use drugs are not bad people, we just have made a bad mistake. And the relationship one has with your coach also extends to the person who is the distributor.

I had a very close relationship with Mr. Conte, I never would have believed that he would hurt me in any kind of way, but now I can see that the disregard for the lives and the health of the athletes was compromised. I am also disappointed in how the punishments have played out for the people who were involved. I think that the athletes are severely punished, but those around them and those who encourage the activity, the behaviour, they are not punished as harshly as we are. I think that four months in prison is in no way equal to two years of not being able to compete.

I trusted the opinion of my coach and he led me to believe that everyone was doing it and that it was okay and that the only way to ever be good was to use drugs. I put my life in their hands and after reading many documents that were seized from the raid, I can see that they really took advantage of me and many, many other athletes.

*Read Kelli White's full speech at [www.playthegame.org](http://www.playthegame.org)*

## A life-long fighter for integrity

It would take a book of its own to account for the life-long fight for integrity that the Italian Alessandro Donati has led against national and international sports authorities. His own motivation stems from feeling betrayed in the early 1980s when he learned that the Finnish middle- and long-distance runners whom Donati admired as an athletics trainer, in reality could thank blood doping for their achievements.

In 1991, Donati became head of research for the Italian Olympic Committee (CONI), and because he never compromised when evidence pointed to doping and fraud, CONI raised 11 court cases against their own employee – and lost them all.

Donati's achievements are documented in articles available at [www.playthegame.org](http://www.playthegame.org), and only a few headlines can be mentioned here. He has:

- Documented that the long jump contest at the IAAF World Championships in Rome 1987 was forged in order to secure an Italian bronze medal.
- Revealed that Italian football players were not subject to the same rigorous doping tests as other athletes in the 1990s.
- Exposed how the IOC member leading Italy's Olympic Committee (CONI), Mario Pescante, was suppressing reports on EPO research carried out by professor Conconi at the University of Ferrara, where numerous international skiers, cyclists, and other endurance athletes received drug therapy.

- Uncovered the use of growth hormone among Italian Olympians in the lead-up to the Sydney Olympics in 2000.
- Mapped the sales of sports drugs from pharmacies in Northern Italy.
- Painted the first world map of illegal doping trade, leading WADA and Interpol into cooperation.

When handing him the Play the Game Award in 2007, the former award winner Laura Robinson said:

"Sandro Donati pioneered a quest for integrity and truth in sport. First, he spent decades working as a coach, and from that vantage point he saw what was happening in his sport in terms of doping, and commenced an incredibly courageous voyage through the dark deep waters of organised crime and drug dealing."

"He became an international expert, not only on the trafficking of drugs, which led him to investigate organised crime and put his career and life in danger. At the same time, he continued to publish articles on methodologies in training and the philosophy of sport and the active body. Sandro Donati is the definition of a renaissance man—one of balance and a graceful but active intelligence," Robinson said.

Sandro Donati has continued to fight against the system of world sport. In 2015, he decided to coach the Italian racewalker Alex Schwazer whose previous doping case Donati had been a key person in documenting.

Donati wanted to restore the prestige of training



*Sandro Donati is an athletics coach who became a self-taught, world-class doping detective. At Play the Game 2002, he unfolded several gigantic Excel sheets documenting illegal sales of sports drugs from one Italian pharmacy. Photo: Niels Nyholm/Play the Game*

methods by showing that Schwazer could reach the world top without doping. Schwazer effectively did become among the world's best, but on 1 January 2016 he delivered a doping sample that was first found clean, but in a re-test traces were found of synthetic testosterone.

Donati and Schwazer suspect a conspiracy and have pointed to numerous procedural flaws in the case,

which have been described by journalist Andy Brown in Play the Game's report 'Schwazer vs. Sport: A race walker's long and winding route towards doping rehabilitation', see [www.playthegame.org](http://www.playthegame.org), and in the Netflix series 'Running for my truth'.

WADA, World Athletics, and CAS reject the conspiracy claims and maintain there is a doping violation.