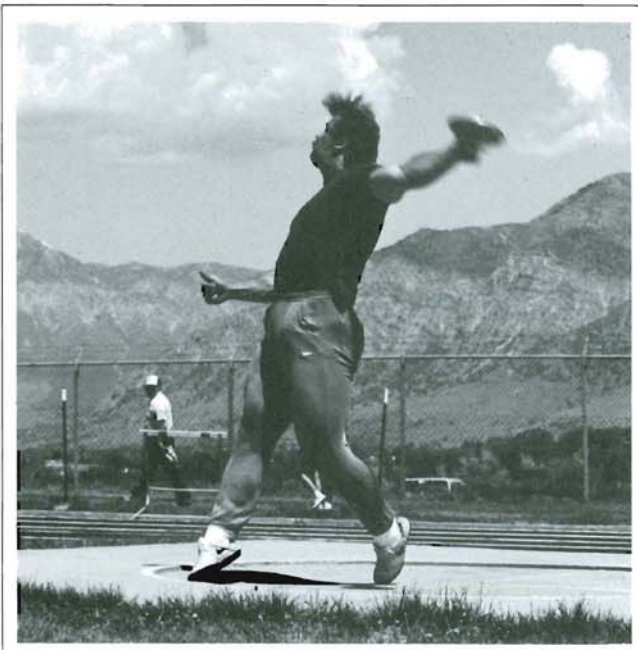


STEROIDS AND THE USOC DRUG CONTROL PROGRAM

Part One
In A Series



Stefan Fernholm – Olympic Discus Thrower: “Steroids are really overrated. You become great by a lot of hard smart work in the weight room and combining that with technique, flexibility, sprints and plyometric training.”

Editors Note: The United States Olympic Committee has prepared a brochure on Substance Abuse. Presented here are excerpts from that brochure. Their Drug Control Hotline is 1-800-233-0393.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. WHAT ABOUT ANABOLIC STEROIDS?

Anabolic Steroids are drugs that act like testosterone, the male hormone. Natural testosterone regulates, promotes, and maintains physical and sexual development in normal males. The abuse of Anabolic Steroids may result in increased body hair, deepening of the voice, decreased sperm production and liver disease. Many of the masculinizing changes also occur in the female and are apt to be irreversible once experienced.

2. AREN'T ANABOLIC STEROIDS USED FOR SICK PEOPLE AND IF SO WON'T THEY BENEFIT HEALTHY PEOPLE?

Anabolic Steroids promote protein synthesis necessary to develop muscle tissue. They have been used in cancer and debilitated patients where a deficiency is present, but their use has generally been discontinued because of severe (liver and heart) side effects. The only generally accepted therapeutic uses of Anabolic Steroids is to bring a testosterone deficient male back to normal, to treat certain advanced cases of breast cancer, to treat a

rare medical condition known as hereditary angioedema, and to stimulate the bone marrow in patients with unusual and rare animals.

3. IF ANABOLIC STEROIDS BUILD MUSCLE, ISN'T THAT BENEFICIAL TO STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE?

Even though use of Anabolic Steroids causes weight gain and enlargement of muscle, most scientific evidence does not show that strength, endurance or agility are enhanced. In fact, the muscle produced by Anabolic Steroids has a higher concentration of water and salt, making the muscle look larger, but the muscles may be weakened by too much water and salt. This also leads to increased injuries like tendonitis and ruptured tendons and ligaments.

4. THEN WHY DO SOME ATHLETES TAKE THEM?

Some athletes are convinced that Anabolic Steroids do increase performance and that without use of these drugs, they won't be competitive. It is irrelevant to argue the point. The key point is that even if they do work, all the other effects of these drugs must be accepted as well.

5. IS HUMAN AND THE NEW SYNTHETIC GROWTH HORMONE SAFE TO USE?

No. Use of the Human Growth Hormone (HGH) is also considered doping by the U.S. Olympic Committee and the International Olympic Committee.

6. WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF USING HGH?

Side effects are many and well documented. Not only does HGH cause muscle growth but it also causes growth of other body tissues, i.e., increase in skin thickness, internal organs, bones, and facial features. It also increases laxity of muscles and the protective fat surrounding the abdominal organs and, when present in excess of normal levels, causes disease, acromegaly, which consists of changes in the head and skull, enlargement of fingers, ears, nose and toes, diabetes, mellitus, heart disease, thyroid disease, menstrual disorders, decreased sexual desire, impotence, and shortened life span.

7. HOW WOULD I BE SELECTED FOR A DRUG-TEST?

Every occasion for drug-testing has a pre-planned method for selecting athletes. In most cases, testing will be on a random basis and not just for the medalists. At the Olympic Trials, every athlete who is apt to make the team, even as an alternate, will be tested.

IF YOU HAVE FURTHER QUESTIONS,

Contact the USOC Drug Control Hotline
1750 East Boulder Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80909
1-800-233-0393