Session 3 – Athlete Welfare

Part 1: Harassment & Abuse

Speakers:
Susan Greinig, IOC Medical Programmes Senior Manager
Kirsty Burrows, Consultant Athlete Safeguarding

Moderator:
Mikael Rentsch, FEI Legal Director

Susan Greinig and Kirsty Burrows opened discussion with the definition of harassment and abuse (see below) highlighting that research demonstrates this can occur across all sporting disciplines, at all levels (elite higher risk), and worldwide.

Definition: Harassment and abuse can be expressed in 5 forms which may occur in combination or in isolation. These include:

(i) Psychological abuse
(ii) Physical abuse
(iii) Sexual harassment
(iv) Sexual abuse
(v) Neglect

They then presented the IOC Athlete Safeguarding Toolkit (available at https://www.olympic.org/athlete365/safeguarding/ and soon on the FEI website), which aims to assist National Olympic Committees (NOCs), National Federations and International Federations (IFs) in the development of policies and procedures to safeguard athletes from harassment and abuse in sport. The toolkit is divided in 5 sections (Preparation, Positioning, Core Components, Implementation, and Preventive Measures).

For sport organisations and governing bodies, they emphasised the need to develop policies at two levels:

(i) Organisational Policy (applicable to all stakeholders 365 days a year)
(ii) Competition Policy (applicable at all Events sanctioned by your organisation).

It is also very important to ensure that for each organisation the rejection of harassment and abuse is clearly stated in a code of ethics, code of conduct or Statutes; that harassment and abuse are clearly defined and that a reporting mechanism is put into place, in cooperation with the applicable national authorities where relevant.
Part 2: Concussion & Return to play policy

Speakers:
Dr Peter Whitehead, Chair of the FEI Medical Committee
Catherine Bollon, FEI Athletes Services & Human Anti-Doping Advisor
Laurent Mekies, FIA Safety Director

Moderator:
Mikael Rentsch, FEI Legal Director

The moderator introduced the topic with the purpose and aims of the session explaining that concussion is a very complex condition and often goes unrecognised by athletes, entourage and even medical experts.

What is sports related concussion?
• Sports related concussion is a traumatic brain injury induced by biomechanical forces transmitted to the brain (direct or indirect blow)
  • Sports related concussion typically results in the rapid onset of short-lived impairment of neurological function that resolves spontaneously. However, in some cases, signs and symptoms evolve over a number of minutes to hours. “Delayed concussion”

The FEI’s Concussion Management flow chart was presented. This document details the key steps to follow at FEI Events in order to find out whether concussion should be suspected and know what to do next.

See the “Concussion Recognition Tool (CRT5)” and four easy steps available on FEI website (https://inside.fei.org/fei/your-role/medical-officer/concussion).

The dangers of Return to Sport before full recovery must be taken into account as the effects of a concussion increased the risk of another fall and a second impact. National Federations were urged to assess athlete’s conditions and clearance before allowing them to resume competition.

Catherine Bollon highlighted that in order to inform NFs when one of their athletes is concussed at an FEI event, the FEI Automatic Alert System will be set for all Disciplines (except Eventing as they already have their own system) as of 1 June 2018. This system will work in conjunction with the online reporting for TDs/Foreign Judges. An online form will have to be filled out for each injured athlete by the Technical Delegate and/or Foreign Judges liaising with the on-site medicals during a competition. There will be a record of the injury in the System, which will identify serious cases and will automatically inform the relevant National Federation(s) by email (copy to the FEI).
It was also highlighted that in addition to the CRT5, the Doctor’s Pack was also available on the FEI website (see https://inside.fei.org/fei/your-role/medical-officer/doctor-pack) featuring a variety of useful documents:

- Guidelines for the medical coverage of FEI events
- Athlete Injury Report form for Medical Officers/Emergency core providers at FEI events
- Concussion Recognition and Management at FEI events (flowchart)
- Concussion Recognition Tool 5 (CRT5)
- Child SCAT5
- FEI Concussion Clearance Form

To illustrate concussion policies at the National Federation level, a presentation was made on Equestrian Canada’s policy, and in particular the Medical Suspension protocol.

Equine Canada’s Return to Play form includes a step by step protocol where an athlete cannot move to the next step without having completed and validated the previous one.

Finally, Laurent Mekies, Safety Director for the Fédération Internationale d’Automobile (FIA) presented the Return to Competition procedure applied by the (FIA), as well as several technologies in relation with concussion and injury management.

A number of accident measurement systems were highlighted, such as:

- Accident Data Recorder (recording G-force data in case of a crash and additional data such as car speed, braking, steering etc.)
- High Speed Camera (helping to understand the forces on the head to a given displacement, elongation of the neck and headrest performance)
- Biometric gloves (developed with FIA doctors, the gloves gives vital status on the athlete and the information is relayed live to the doctors on site during a competition)
- Ear plug Accelerometers (to get data on the severity of head acceleration, kinematic (including rotation) of the head and timing of the head movement)
- GPS and Car Data.
Part 3: Medication & Recreational Drugs

Speakers:
Dr Peter Whitehead, Chair of the FEI Medical Committee
Catherine Bollon, FEI Athletes Services & Human Anti-Doping Advisor

Moderator:
Mikael Rentsch, FEI Legal Director

This session focused on medication and recreational drugs from both safety and anti-doping perspectives. The panelists stressed the need for athlete education and a thorough understanding of the Human anti-doping rules and regulations. Human athletes can be tested at any time, in or out of competition and they are subject to the same anti-doping requirements as other athletes such as swimmers, runners and weightlifters.

The World Anti-Doping Agency’s (WADA) Prohibited List was explained as well as Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUEs), which athletes can apply for if they need to use Prohibited Substances/Methods for legitimate treatments. TUE applications are subject to a formal procedure and strict requirements (WADA’s International Standard for TUEs (ISTUE)).

It was highlighted that most positive cases in FEI sports fall under the same scenario: the athlete did not know about TUEs.

The steps which all athletes should follow regarding Medication were explained as follows:

- **« Check it before you take it »**. For any new prescribed treatment; over-the-counter medication, athletes must:
  - Inform doctor that they are subject to anti-doping rules and
  - Contact National Anti-Doping Organisation or FEI to check active ingredient status

- **If a medication contains Prohibited Substance(s)**
  - Over-the-counter medication: do not take it
  - Prescribed medication: put treatment on hold, apply for a TUE
  - Athletes must obtain a TUE before starting a new treatment
  - Retroactive TUEs are possible but under very strict conditions (ISTUE article 4.2)

The procedure to apply for a TUE is detailed along with all relevant information on the FEI website at [https://inside.fei.org/fei/cleansport/humans/tues](https://inside.fei.org/fei/cleansport/humans/tues).
It was highlighted that at their level National Federations must inform and educate Athletes, their entourage, medical personnel, officials; that in terms of information website information should be considered a minimum; and that Education work needs to be undertaken in cooperation with their national/regional anti-doping organisation.

Sources of information was also mentioned, such as WADA’s website (https://www.wada-ama.org/en) and the FEI Clean Sport for Humans Section (https://inside.fei.org/fei/cleansport/humans).

National Federations were also informed that online human anti-doping courses will be delivered this year on FEI Campus for four categories of learners (Adult athletes (18+), Youth, Officials, and Athlete entourage), initially in English first (additional languages will follow).

Various recreational drugs and their effects and risks were also reviewed and discussed, such as cocaine, amphetamine, ecstasy, cannabis, and heroin. It was also mentioned that alcohol is no longer included in WADA’s Prohibited List for any sport. Thus it is for each sport to decide how to regulate the use of alcohol and in particular taking into consideration any safety elements.

Finally, National Federations were reminded that WADA’s International Standard For Code Compliance by Signatories (ISCCS) will be applicable as of 1 April 2018. As part of the WADA’s compliance monitoring programme, the FEI now has an action plan to be complied with, including ensuring that National Federation rules, policies and procedures are in line and compliance with WADA and the FEI Rules. Therefore, the FEI will send out a survey to all NFs with questions on their Human Anti-Doping rules, education, testing, etc.