

# **Creating a corporate anti-doping culture: understanding the role of sport governing bodies**

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## **Abstract**

The World Anti-Doping Agency's (WADA) vision to promote a new moral order in sport and new forms of organisation and management through the World Anti Doping code (WADC) amount to creating a new corporate culture. WADC's emphasis on policy implementation places sport governing bodies (SGB) and managers at the heart of the enterprise. This represents a double challenge: (i) to the organisational culture of SGBs as it entails creating shared systems of meaning that are accepted, internalised, and acted on at every level of an organization, and (ii) to the IOC and the WADA in regard to universality and particularity, where the general organisational difficulty is how they are to operate at a global (universal) level whilst such apparently intractable differences exist at the particular (local) level. This paper employs Morgan's (1997) metaphor of organisations as cultures to develop an understanding of the process of endorsing a global anti-doping policy. It explores the enactment of the WADC using the Bulgarian Weightlifting Federation as a case in point. While a good level of universal approval of WADC has been achieved the main issue remains how to get SGBs practices in line with it.

## **Creating a corporate anti-doping culture: understanding the role of sport governing bodies**

### **Introduction**

“Doping is a battle which can never be won”, stated Jacques Rogge, President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), in 2003 on a visit to Sofia marking the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bulgarian Olympic Committee (BOC). The IOC president did not just make a gloomy predicament rather he addressed the amount of outstanding work that needs to be done by sport organisations, educational establishments, researchers and anti-doping enforcement agencies in this regard. This would allow developing a corporate anti-doping culture that would align the efforts of international agencies with those of national sport governing bodies and athletes themselves.

The fight against doping in modern sport encompasses a number of practices and institutions that have evolved over the past forty years. These practices are enshrined in various codes and symbols and constitute an inseparable part of the culture of sport organisations. Studies on the culture of sport organisations are still rarity. This holds particularly true for studies dealing with the role of sport governing bodies (SGB) in creating a corporate anti-doping culture. Consistent efforts of the international and national sporting and political communities and ongoing media campaigns have transformed the drug issue from the early concerns with testing to a matter of social and legal responsibility. It has become a norm for SGBs to have an anti-doping policy. This, however, does not mean that an organisation and its members have internalised the values of the anti-doping code and have started to live up to its expectations.

This paper sets to address a largely unexplored issue about the role of national sports governing bodies in interpreting and promoting an anti-doping culture that would ensure the success of the policies and various measures aimed at arresting these practices in sport. It draws on Garrett Morgan’s (1997) notion of enactment of culture. Borrowing from Karl Weick, Morgan proposed that organisations enact their environments as people assign patterns of meaning and significance to the world in which they live. He argued

that “we must attempt to understand culture as an ongoing, proactive process of reality construction”<sup>1</sup>. This view of culture, according to Morgan, “has enormous implications for how we understand organisations as cultural phenomena, for it emphasises that we must root our understanding of organisations in the processes that produce systems of shared meaning”<sup>2</sup>.

A similar view of sport organisations as an enactment of shared reality urges us to redefine the role of sport managers and officials and presents them as reality constructors. Thus, they are seen as agents exercising important influence on an organisation’s culture. It follows that sport organisations’ structures, rules, policies and symbols perform an interpretative function, for they act as primary points of reference for the way people think about and make sense of the context in which they work.

Morgan (1997) proposed eight such images or metaphors of organization including organisations as machines, organisms, brains, cultures, political systems, psychic prisons, flux and transformation and as instruments of domination. While remaining conscious about the interplay between those eight metaphors, this paper employs the metaphor of sport organisations as cultures to develop an understanding of the challenges faced by the international sport movement in endorsing a global anti-doping policy. More specifically, it explores the interpretations of the World Anti-Doping Code (WADC) using as a case in point Bulgarian Weightlifting Federation (BWF), one of the leading schools in this sport in the world.

In the words of Morgan “modern organisations are sustained by belief systems that emphasize the importance of rationality, and their legitimacy in the public eye usually depends on their ability to demonstrate rationality and objectivity in action”<sup>3</sup>. This is what SGBs are trying to demonstrate when signing up to the WADC. They do that for two main reasons: first, because they are genuinely concerned about the integrity of sport, and second, because failing to do so would result in public disapproval, withdrawal of funding, and eventually suspension from national or international sport movements. As this paper demonstrates the practices of SGBs vary according to their belief systems,

history and traditions in certain sports. The culture metaphor offers four major strengths as it: (i) directs attention to the symbolic significance of almost every aspect of organisational life; (ii) shows how organisation ultimately rests in shared systems of meaning, hence in the actions and interpretative schemes that create and recreate meaning; (iii) encourages us to recognise that the relations between an organisation and its environment are also socially constructed; and (iv) makes contribution to our understanding of organisational change<sup>4</sup>. Employing a culture metaphor to study SGBs' interpretations of anti-doping policy help us better understand some of the major challenges in implementing the WADC. These four metaphors will be examined in turn but before we do that it is important first to go beyond the moral debate about the World Anti-Doping Code and to consider it as an organisational context and as an instrument of cultural change.

### **The organisational context of doping and its enactment by Sport Governing Bodies**

Modern sports are highly organised, specialised, bureaucratic, competitive and record oriented enterprises (Gutmann, 1978)<sup>5</sup>. There is no such thing as an independent, versatile, all powerful athlete. The process of becoming an elite athlete involves skilful coordination of the work of various organisations including clubs, sport governing bodies at national and international levels, medical, research and technical agencies. This is an organisational process that in most instances requires full-time professional management. Crucial in this process is the role of SGB at national level. They are responsible for administrating all aspects of different sports in various countries, for representing them internationally, but even more importantly, for promoting sound practices that represent the sites where anti-doping dispositions could be created. A number of high-profile enquiries into the use of doping in sport such as the Dubin (Canada), Black (Australia), Coni and Jacobs (Britain) have criticised SGBs for failing to create those dispositions that led to the spread of doping. In a response to the attack on the IOC by the Dubin Report Michelle Verdier, the press spokeswoman for the IOC echoed clearly this view: “without the IOC the Ben Johnson affair in Seoul would never have come to light. It was the first body to take the problem of drugs in sport, and remember, the IOC only runs the Games

for a fortnight every four years. Who has the control of the competitors for the rest of the time?<sup>6</sup>”

The above situation, however, presents the IOC and the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) with a problem in regard to universality and particularity. The general organisational difficulty in both cases is how they are to operate at a global (universal) level whilst such apparently intractable differences exist at the particular (local) level. Borrowing from Tayeb’s (1994)<sup>7</sup> insightful distinction between *etics* (universals as viewed from afar) and *emics* (locally meaningful elements) aspects of organisations, it could be suggested that the World Anti Doping Code would be the *etics*, whereas the way these are interpreted by SBGs would be the *emics* of anti-doping culture. Sports on the Olympic programme can be seen as universal in that they enjoy world-wide popularity and all participants play them according to the same rules. But the cultural meaning of each sport and the interpretation of its rules varies between countries. When taken out of their cultural context even legal matters pail into insignificance. Olympism, as indeed, the World Anti Doping Code seek to be universal in their values of respect, solidarity, fair play, multiculturalism, etc. These are a quite specific set of values, which, as Parry (2003)<sup>8</sup> argued, also require differential interpretation in different cultures, i.e. stated in general terms whilst interpreted in the particular. In his view there would be different conceptions of Olympism, which will interpret the general concept in such a way as to bring it to real life in a particular context. Since the WADC represents a set of universal Olympic values it follows that different cultures will approach it and prioritise its implementation differently. William Morgan critical remark in this volume, that the current anti-doping strategy (*emics*) of the US Anti Doping Agency undermines the moral principles of fair play (*etics*) illustrates the point.

Therefore, our understanding of the nature of doping in sport will inform our interpretations of the rules that govern its policies of deterrence and prevention. As Morgan maintained “the point is that the norms operating in different situations have to be invoked and defined in the light of our understanding of the context. We implicitly

make many decisions and assumptions about a situation before any norm or rule is applied”<sup>9</sup>.

Houlihan (1999) documented the evolution of the anti-doping policy and the role of the Council of Europe, the IOC and international sport organisations. He identified five policy focuses pertinent to the 1950s, 60s, 70s, 80s, and the 1990s respectively. Two important interrelated strands of the policy focus that emerged only recently concern “the steady shift from the athlete to the athlete’s entourage and the increasingly common debate as to whether the athlete was best seen as the villain, victim or co-conspirator”... and “the degree to which the domestic governing body should be held responsible for the drug abuse of its member”<sup>10</sup>.

The shift of focus of world anti-doping policy from athletes to organisations marks an important cultural orientation, which recognises the mutually constructive relation between the individual and the group, and further reinforces the organisational context of the issue. This is because a similar concern about the role of the collective begs the question of what SGBs (the collective) have done to help their individual members (the athletes and officials) develop the appropriate attitudes needed to nurture an anti-doping culture. The role of SGBs is not confined to establishing rules but also to promoting education that helps athletes acquire the right dispositions. As Girginov and Parry (2005) observed “it is by participating in a practice (and by practising its skills and procedures) that one begins to understand its standards and excellences, and the virtues required for successful participation”<sup>11</sup>.

The individual-group dichotomy reflects a fundamental cultural value tension that underpins the behaviours of members of different cultures. Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars’ Dilemma theory (1993)<sup>12</sup> provides a stimulating account on the nature of this management dilemma and a strategy for its resolution. For example, if we believe that the resourceful individual comes before society, then our thinking and behaviour are likely to run thus: ‘concentrate on your own interest and you will automatically serve your members and society better, which in turn will let you concentrate on your

interests', and the circle is complete. Conversely, if we put society first, our thinking and behaviour are likely to follow the opposite logic 'serve your members and society to the best of your ability and you will automatically achieve your own personal goals, which in turn will let you serve the society' (cf. Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, 1993), and the circle again is complete. Either way of approaching management will have a profound effect on how an organisation is run, its time horizon, how its performance is measured or its people rewarded. Hence, the individual will try to use the collective to achieve greater personal success. In contrast, the group will try to promote a social discourse that nurtures a collective spirit shared by its members. This circular type of thinking about culture is different from Hofstede's (1980)<sup>13</sup> linear view which sees it as opposites on a bipolar axe. The role of cultural values in making management decisions has been discussed by a number of commentators (Hickson and Pugh 1995<sup>14</sup>, Morden, 1999<sup>15</sup>, Hampden-Turner & Trompenaars 2000<sup>16</sup>). In a rare study Girginov, Papadimitriou and D'Amico (2005<sup>17</sup>) demonstrated the link between culture and sport managers' behaviours. Considering the WADC not only as a set of rules to be followed by those concerned, but as an instrument for shaping the organisational context of SGBs allows to better understand the mutually constructive relations between athletes, managers and organisations

### **The World Anti-Doping Code as an instrument of cultural change**

From an organisational point of view the World Anti-Doping Code (WADC) can be seen as an attempt to influence the thinking and behaviours of sport governing bodies. Its two main purposes "(i) to protect the Athletes' right to participate in doping-free sport and thus promote health, fairness and equality for Athletes worldwide, and (ii) to ensure harmonized, coordinated and effective anti-doping programs at the international and national level with regard to detection, deterrence and prevention of doping"<sup>18</sup> are akin to an organisation mission statement as they set out its main purpose, vision of the future and the outcomes it is striving to achieve. SGBs' mission statements provide a frame within which various organisational activities can happen. These are often referred to in organisational literature as "philosophy' or 'set of values'. As such the WADC, developed in 2003, is not qualitatively different from a number of fashionable managerial

initiatives currently in operation in different countries (e.g. public-voluntary-private partnerships in sports development, benchmarking, Quest, or market orientation) aiming at improving the performance of SGBs. Its implicit aims are to create a kind of ‘cultural revolution’, to use Morgan’s expression, which would replace the old way of organisational thinking about doping and put the well-being of the athlete and the integrity of sport as top priorities. It is not a coincidence that the word ‘*Athlete*’ appears in capital letter in WADC’s declared purposes.

It took the international sporting and political community nearly forty years to arrive at this understanding of a doping policy, which in Europe has undergone a qualitative transformation from a charter to a governmental convention<sup>19</sup>. The emphasis of the WADC is on policy implementation, which places managers and SGBs at the heart of the enterprise. WADC’s aspirations to create a new moral order in elite sport or new forms of organisation and management amount to creating a new corporate culture. Conceptually it builds on the notion of Olympism as universal philosophy, while empirically on the findings of a number of enquiries into doping in various countries suggesting the existence of a widespread drug culture. The figures speak for themselves – 25% of the 1988 Australian Olympic track and field squad had taken, or were taking performance enhancing drugs<sup>20</sup>; 83,000 Canadian children between the ages of 11 and 18 had used anabolic steroids and that anabolic steroids are now the third most popular drug offered to children in the UK<sup>21</sup>.

WADC’s aspirations represent also a challenge to the organisational culture of SGBs and governments alike around the world because they involve the creation of shared systems of meaning that are accepted, internalised, and acted on at every level of an organization. It is worth reminding ourselves that 70 percent of the firms that set off on this new path of cultural change were unsuccessful, largely because they failed to replace the bureaucratic logic governing the old mode of operation<sup>22</sup>. Earlier Morgan warned that “mission statements may be important, but certainly are not sufficient to “get people on the same wavelength”, and that “it is one thing for top management to develop a sense of vision. It is quite another to communicate that vision in an accountable manner so that the



vision becomes a reality”<sup>23</sup>. A number of studies provide support for this view: Smith (2003)<sup>24</sup> demonstrated for various sectors in North America that only 19% of the culture efforts were rated as breakthrough; Troy (1994)<sup>25</sup> found 32% change in a group of 166 North American and European companies, while Carr *et al* (1996)<sup>26</sup> 10% and Collins (1997)<sup>27</sup> for the field of leisure services in England.

It should be noted that while the members of a particular group or SBG share similar cultural values, it would appear that a manager’s position in an organisation has an impact on how they approach and interpret particular policies. Moreover, organisational culture is a pluralistic concept which, as Martin (1992) argued, involves three competing perspectives of integration, differentiation and fragmentation that are always simultaneously present in organisations. Each represents a particular managerial horizon, where the integrative perspective concentrates on organisation-wide consistency, the differentiation perspective focuses on dichotomous subcultural conflicts, and the fragmentation perspective views organisations as fluid and characterised by ambiguity, complexity and a multiplicity of interpretations. In Martin’s view the key point is that these three perspectives are not just an intellectual position. Rather, they have political implications because, for example, a concentration on the integration perspective means ignoring the ambiguities and complexity of real life as experienced by managers at lower levels of an organisational hierarchy. Harris and Ogbonna (1998) provided empirical evidence for Martin’s (1992) claim that the nature of hierarchical position shapes and conditions organisational members’ perspectives on culture.

It would be possible therefore, to expect that similar issues would emerge in the formulation and implementation of the WADC. While the WADA is interested in achieving harmonisation of its policy across all SGBs, (i.e. integrative perspective), SGBs would be concerned with the interpretation of the code in a particular cultural context (i.e. differentiation perspective), and coaches and athletes would emphasise the importance of reality of dealing with doping as experienced on a daily basis (a fragmented perspective). This perspective is consistent with the construction of the roles and responsibilities of international and national SGBs, where both the IOC and IWF

(The International Weightlifting Federation) have the right to withhold funding to and sanction membership of national SGBs who are not in compliance with the WADC. Yet the ultimate responsibility for drug violation, or the so-called strict liability principle, stipulates that athletes have to be solely and legally responsible for what they consume. The next four sections deal with four strengths of culture metaphor identified earlier using the Bulgarian Weightlifting Federation (BWF) as a case in point.

### **The symbolic significance of organisational life**

This aspect of culture metaphor focuses on the human side of the organisation. It may include elements of a SGB's life such as its structure, hierarchy, organisational routines and rules. The BWF was established in 1963 and has soon laid down the foundations of what would become a world-leading model of excellence. At the heart of this model of elite athletes' development was the idea of a systematic work of high intensity and volume including three training sessions a day. A typical working day of a weightlifter would start at 8.00 am finishing after midnight with an average amount of weights lifted between 30-40 tones. Pivotal to this model was a national team and those who got selected would follow this routine for eleven months a year with some four weeks off training and competition. The success of the national team, therefore become crucial for the well-being of the BWF. This necessitated putting in place a whole structure of talent identification and nurturing organisationally underpinned by the tenets of the systems approach with its preoccupation with the wellbeing of the system<sup>28</sup>.

As a result between 1956 and 1988 weightlifting established itself as the most successful Bulgarian sport competitively, with 24 Olympic medals including 10 titles and 561 world records<sup>29</sup>. However, the BWF set also an unenviable record of being the only SGB whose athletes four times have been stripped off their Olympic titles, in 1976, 1988 and 2000 Games. They also made a precedent in the World championships in 2003 in Vancouver when three athletes were banned from participation before the tournament started, allegedly for manipulating their earlier drug tests.

Structurally, the management of the BWF has not changed substantially over the years despite recent political and economic turmoils. A 1999 decision of the BWF's General Assembly stipulated that the EB should include only experts, which makes it an exclusive SGB where 'outsiders' are not welcomed. The voluntary base of the BWF has always been very limited numbering less than a hundred volunteers. A similar organisational make up ensures a great deal of consistency in views and practices and is usually reluctant to changes. For example, the current leadership of BWF includes former athletes turned national coaches and top administrators. The BWF is heavily dependent on government subsidies. It is the most funded SGB with shares ranging from 9% to 14% of the total state subsidy for all Olympic sports. Dunning and Waddington (2003) offered an interesting figuration for understanding the relationship between the 'established' and the 'outsiders' in drug taking in sport. In their analysis 'outsiders', labelled as 'drug-users', constitute a threat to the 'moral order of the established', the clean<sup>30</sup>. If the same logic is applied to the operations of the BWF, those with no weightlifting background should be labelled 'outsiders', and dealing with them would always be problematic.

As the first aspect of culture metaphor demonstrates, the BWF is an exclusive and self-recruiting organisation with a well-defined hierarchy where the key positions appear to be those of the national coach and the two top managers, the president and the secretary general. Top managers inevitably come to represent their organisations, thus what they say and do have far-reaching effect of symbolic and practical value. It follows that outside views as to how the BWF should conduct its business are not seen as credible, as they come from non-experts, thus not taken seriously and followed up. In this type of organisations innovations are difficult to introduce if they are not supported by the top management even if the initiative comes from WADA, the ultimate authority in doping matters.

### **Sport organisations as systems of shared meaning**

The second aspect of culture metaphor shows how the organisation of SGB rests in shared systems of meaning. This implies an emphasis on the actions and interpretative schemes that create and recreate meaning. It sensitises us about the importance of various

means of shaping organisational activity by influencing its ideologies, beliefs, norms and other practices guiding organised actions. As Morgan argued “since the 1980s there has been growing realization that the fundamental task facing the leaders and managers rests in creating appropriate systems of shared meaning that can mobilize the efforts of people in pursuit of desired aims and objectives. The two key words here are “*appropriate*” and “*shared*” (our italic)<sup>31</sup>.

The conceptual orientation of BWF subscribes to the ideology of ‘narrow elitism’, characterised by its preoccupation with the national team instead of the whole process of sports development. Key features of this ideology are its infallible drive to produce the best results and its close relations with state’s official political line. Most elite sports systems in the world are heavily subsidised by the state but this funding, as for the BWF, is contingent upon the delivery of medals<sup>32</sup>. The constant supply of positive doping tests has inevitably undermined the credibility of BWF. However, it is determined to demonstrate that it is the best weightlifting school in the world, as a publication marking the over fifty years of organised weightlifting in Bulgaria maintains (Dimitrov, 2004).<sup>33</sup>

The apparent contradiction between BWF’s image of the best school in the world and its unenviable doping record could be explained with the logic of the same ideology of elitism. It was eloquently articulated by the former Secretary General of the BWF (1994-2004), national coach (1992-1994) and two times Olympic champion (1972, 1976). We asked him what would you say to an audience of parents who would like their children to take up weightlifting but have concerns over your doping record to which he replied: “I’ve been asked this question many times and the only possible answer I’ve always given is this: the Belgians and the Swiss don’t get caught with drugs because they don’t have weightlifters. Those who get caught are the Russians, the Chinese, us and all other great in this sport”. We persisted and asked him to elaborate further why that was the case. His answer was: “well...it is all down to the strive to be the best.... I don’t like the word doping. Many people tend to think that ‘they lift because they take drugs’. This is not true. Athletes take some stimulants, but because we (the Bulgarians, explanation added) are lagging well behind the advances in medicine ...well, there are many cutting

edge drugs that are very clean but those cost hundred times more. So, because we are falling behind we use some dated things while the technologies are highly advanced and keep advancing. With all due respect, but as we also happen to know a few things, take the American athletes for example. How would they be able to run so incredibly - with scotch and lemonade? No way!<sup>34</sup>

It would not be an unsubstantiated assumption to claim that everybody in the BWF shares this view. But it is a well-established belief that taking stimulants is an inseparable part of elite sport. It is seen as a game everybody plays, in which getting caught is an acceptable outcome though not sought and undesirable it might be. Hence, the belief becomes 'appropriate' and is 'shared' by organisational members. Compare this logic to the one promoted by WADC. The peculiarity of this aspect of culture metaphor is that beliefs, norms and social practices are self-organising and have the capacity to reproduce themselves, and over time become not only points of reference, but valuable resources as well. The BWF most precious resource has always been the 'know-how' or the methods of selection and training. This explains why the national head coach was spared after the 1988 Olympics damning drug scandal (we return to this informative incident below), although it was a common knowledge that he was the main culprit. Since he took over the national team in 1968 he has been responsible for introducing a highly centralised and uniform system of training for all age groups.

This system epitomises a range of values, norms and practices, which were supposed to be shared and followed by everybody. No detours were allowed and those who dared to question the rules were quickly dealt with. It is a self-perpetuated system, as it was responsible for producing a myriad of world and Olympic champions. Those people now represent a valuable symbolic and tangible capital. What is more, they appear as bearers of a specific organisational culture as they work as coaches with the national teams of over 20 countries around the world. Several of those coaches have already produced Olympic and world champions for various countries. This, of course, does not automatically make them 'drug-ambassadors'. However, if we assume that they are a product of kinds of culture described above and have been schooled in these methods, the

suspicion that they would employ different means to achieve results would always linger large.

### **Sport organisations and their environment**

This aspect of the culture metaphor recognizes that the relations between a SBG and its environment are socially constructed and that they are extensions of ourselves. As Morgan put it: “organisations are always attempting to achieve a form of self-referential closure in relation to their environments, enacting their environments as extensions of their own identity<sup>35</sup>”. A similar understanding will have profound implications for SGBs’ strategic management, which is also a product of cultural interpretations. Higgins and Mcallister (2004) argued that “one of the real keys to achieving the sought after strategic performance is the management of the cultural artifacts that relate to the values and norms pertinent to the strategic change”<sup>36</sup>. Failing to achieve this management of artifacts (myths, sagas, heroes, language and rituals about an organisation) results in building barriers to an organisation’s interactions with its environment.

Of particular relevance for our analysis are the relations between BWF and the state on one hand, and the BWF, the IOC and the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF), on the other. While BWF is ideologically and financially depended on the state, it is the interplay between the latter three organisations that determines to a large extent the standing of this sport nationally and internationally. Three related incidents illustrate this relationship. First, at the 1976 Montreal Olympics one Bulgarian weightlifter tested positive and was stripped off his title. The state and the media showed no interest in the case. There were no hearings, investigations and punishments. This lack of reaction, according to the former BWF President (1985-1988, vice-president 1975-1985, and IWF vice-president 1984-1992), was due to two main factors related to organisational environment. Firstly, Bulgaria was a world champion for 1974 and it would have been inappropriate to use an isolated case to question the practices of this SGB. Secondly, at the time there was no agreement about the list of prohibited substances between the IOC and IWF, which created confusion for many SGBs<sup>37</sup>. If an organisation’s practices are

not externally scrutinised and internally reviewed they would be no corrective to its own image.

Second, at the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games two Bulgarian weightlifters tested positive for drugs (with spuriously high dosage of phurosemid in their urine samples) and lost their medals. This urged the management to withdraw the team from participation half way through the competition. This time, the media got heavily involved and kept the story on the top of public agenda for several weeks. As a result, the entire BWF's Executive Board resigned. Interestingly, as mentioned, the head coach, who is widely regarded as 'the architect of weightlifting', was spared. A similar interpretation of the responsibilities of a SGB and its members appears to be at odds with any organisational standard. However, it supports Morgan's assertion that many of the problems organisations encounter in dealing with their environments are intimately connected to the kind of identity they are trying to maintain<sup>38</sup>. This identity reflects also BWF's relations with the IWF and the IOC. It is widely known that before the 1988 Games Bulgarian team set a goal of seven Olympic titles plus a win in the team competition.

The IWF did not perceive that as a 'healthy' development for the world weightlifting and tried to put pressure on the BWF to reconsider its target to two titles. The BWF refused to back down and after a hugely damaging scandal that affected the whole sport ended up with two titles as offered. Allegedly, after the tournament a highly-ranked IWF's official told the national team representatives "why didn't you listen to what we offered you, so we had to have all these circuses". We should not forget that behind the scandal there is the personal drama of those involved. The incident ruined the life of one of the banned athletes who ended up in prison for rape and assault. Denham's (2004)<sup>39</sup> study on the enactment of drug policy in Major League Baseball provides a similar example for the relations between a SBG, the state and the media in an American context. He demonstrated how the media actively promoted a culture of no-tolerance to the lack of out-of-competition testing, which eventually was adopted by the MLB.

Third, the case of the World championships in Vancouver in 2003 where quotas for the 2004 Athens Olympics were to be contested set a precedent in the world of weightlifting. A few days before the championships, without consulting the EB and any evidence, the president of IWF single-handedly suspended three Bulgarian athletes from participation not on the ground of positive tests but for manipulating their doping samples. The decision triggered a spiral of mutual accusations, threats and even a physical assault on the IWF president by his BWF counterpart. The Bulgarian Sports Ministry stood firmly behind the team and threatened to sue the IWF for violating its own code of conduct. Shortly after that, however, it made a u-turn and offered a number of privileges to the athletes concerned to drop their charges against the IWF. This kind of behaviour is indicative for the complexity of the relations between a SGB and its environment, and that these relations are constantly being constructed and negotiated. In commenting the case the former BWF's president (1985-1988) remarked: "this is number one sport in the country. The Ministry of Sport either feel involved in what has happened or they feel they've been right and should fight till the end"<sup>40</sup>.

Historically the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF)-BWF nexus has always been of particular importance. This provided three key benefits - domestic and international legitimacy, support and influence in the world weightlifting community. After 1988, however, those links have been strained due to concerns over athletes' doping record. Bulgarian weightlifters are no longer seen as a model to be emulated, but equally as a liability to the IWF as for the past 8 Olympic Games 7 of them including 4 champions have been stripped of their medals for positive drug test. By the same token weightlifting turned a liability for the image of the Olympics, as the Seoul incident led the then IOC vice-president Dick Pound to publicly call for dropping weightlifting from the Olympic programme.

The IWF had to be seen of doing something and after the 2000 Sydney Games threatened to suspend the national team from participation in international competitions for 5 years. In an attempt to appease the situation in 2003 the IWF president was invited to Bulgaria and met by the Prime Minister and top sport officials and awarded a honorary Doctorate



from the National Sports Academy. The IOC Programme Commission Report to the 117 Session of the organisation provided a thorough audit of the standing of all sports and their contribution to the Games. The ultimate purpose of this exercise was to identify 'vulnerable' sports that can be deleted from the Olympic programme. According to the report weightlifting doping profile of 27 (out of 5,347 tests - 0.5%) positive drug tests in 2003 compares well with the other major drug violators such as swimming with 19 (9,270 – 0,2%), athletics 120 (18,876 – 0,64%) and cycling 61 (12,352 – 0,49%)<sup>41</sup>.

Those results by no means reflect the true picture of the drug problem in sport, but at least offer some comfort to the leaders of weightlifting internationally and nationally. They serve also as warning to SGBs that their doping image has to be carefully managed. In this process SGBs have to both promote their own identities and to accommodate other parties' views. By doing that they assert an important facet of organizational culture that links an organization's beliefs and ideas about who they are and what they are trying to do with the environment in which they operate. The problem remains that nobody ever explained what actually happened in the three cases discussed above and who should take the responsibility for what. The way the Vancouver case was framed by the media, state officials and the BWF itself promoted a discourse of 'a world conspiracy against the best in the world'. For example, several statements of the sport minister made the headlines: "we are going to sew the International Weightlifting Federation for US\$10 million"; "I trust unreservedly our athletes"<sup>42</sup>. This kind of discourse diverts attention away from the efforts to create a corporate culture, which is based on the idea of co-operation and shared meanings.

### **Culture and organisational change**

The final culture metaphor contributes to our understanding of organisational change. This issue is central to an analysis of doping culture as it directs attention to the values and images that are to guide SGBs' actions. As Morgan maintained: "since organization ultimately resides in the heads of the people involved, effective organisational change always implies cultural change"<sup>43</sup>.

Different approaches addressing the need for changing the doping culture have been proposed, and some of them directly challenge WADA's mission. Dawson (2001)<sup>44</sup> saw harm minimisation and education as the way forward, while Savulesku, Foddy and Clayton (2005)<sup>45</sup> advocated for legalising performance enhancing drugs. A more comprehensive view is taken by Donovan *et al* (2002)<sup>46</sup>, who employed a behavioural science perspective to develop a conceptual framework for achieving performance enhancing drug compliance in sport. Despite its merits, however, the emphasis of this approach is on the behaviour of the athlete and largely fails to address the role of SGBs as custodians of the key values that form athletes' behaviour.

It should be noted that the first three aspects of the culture metaphor are closely related to the notion of organisational change. We have seen that organisations develop and maintain an image of themselves, which they try to extend to the environment in which they operate. A change in doping culture implies re-evaluation of some of those fundamental values and beliefs on which the image is based. A series of organisational events following the poor performance of Bulgarian weightlifters at the 2004 Athens Olympic Games could be seen as a confirmation of the assertion made above that the main problem of the BWF is connected with the identity of the best weightlifting school in the world it is trying to maintain. Conscious of that the former president of the BWF (2000-2004), world champion (1979, 1981, 1982) and a failed top contestant for a new term in office publicly stated after the Games that "the architect of Bulgarian weightlifting has achieved successes but those were entirely due to doping and the chemistry"<sup>47</sup>. The words appear consistent with actions as two years earlier he fired the head coach. It is not clear if this statement reflects what a SGB leadership really thinks or it has been used as a pre-election gimmick to silence the opposition supporting the former head coach. This situation was used by a group of 26 clubs who got behind one of the victims of Vancouver 2003 and put forward his candidature for a president. He promoted the idea of an athlete centered SGB but failed to win. None of the contenders for the leadership position, however, clearly articulated what and how should be done to change the tarnished image of this sport and to improve its achievements. The election results

suggested that the BWF is going to follow a policy pretty much in line with what it has been doing best.

The challenge of changing the doping culture is growing significantly with the rising number of governments and sport organisations who have signed the World Anti Doping Code. In 2003 ninety three governments signed the Copenhagen Declaration on doping which served as a blueprint for the WADC. In May 2005 there were 166 governments signatures to the Code and by mid August their number rose to 173. The WADC of the World Anti Doping Agency promotes a kind of corporate culture that rests in distinctive capacities or incapacities built into the attitudes and behaviours of the SGBs world wide. The four culture metaphors employed by this analysis helped shed a new light on this mutually constructive relationship. They emphasised the symbolic significance of organisational life, how organisations create systems of shared meaning, the construction of the relations between an organisation and its environment and how change occurs. As the case of the BWF demonstrated in order to understand the nature of the anti-doping environment in which it is supposed to operate it has to try to understand itself as an organisation. Morgan calls 'egocentric' organizations which see themselves as discrete entities fighting for survival in a hostile world. They have a relatively fixed notion of who they are and are determined to sustain that identity at all costs. A similar view leads a SGB to overemphasising its importance while neglecting the significance of the wider system of anti doping relations in which it exists. This system includes sports organisations, national governments, educational establishments, research institutions, individuals, and of course, international cooperation. While a good level of agreement at the level of ethics of doping (universal approval of WADC) has been achieved the real challenge to corporate anti-doping culture remains to get the ethics (SGB's practices) in line with the ethics.

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