

Survey reveals that 25 percent of athletes use drugs

From Associated Press reports

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The chairman of the NCAA committee on drug education says every college in the country has a drug problem, and that an effective testing program deters abuse by athletes.

Dr. Robert J. Murphy, an associate clinical professor of preventive medicine and the head physician at Ohio State University, says data shows that in the last five years 20 percent to 25 percent of college athletes have used marijuana or cocaine — some use both — on an average of once a week.

Murphy, also the chairman of the NCAA's committee on drug education, provided information presented to the Big Ten Conference Awareness Committee on Alcohol and Drug Abuse that found 36 percent of 2,039 athletes in a 1984 NCAA survey had used marijuana within the previous 12 months, 17 percent cocaine, 8 percent amphetamines and 6.5 percent anabolic steroids.

A 1984 multi-college survey compiled by Heitzinger & Associates of Madison, Wis., found that of 2,100 athletes at 12 colleges, 27 percent used marijuana and 14 percent used

cocaine.

"Every college in America has a drug problem because it's a reflection of our society and of the student body," Murphy said during an interview. "Drug use among athletes is approximately 50 percent that of the general student population."

Cocaine was cited as the cause of deaths this month of Maryland basketball player Len Bias and Cleveland Browns football player Don Rogers. Bias died June 19 and Rogers died eight days later.

Murphy said that seldom does anyone use just one substance, instead mixing marijuana with alcohol or cocaine with alcohol.

Murphy said that when an Ohio State athlete is detected using drugs, "We feel they should not play... If they have drugs in their system, they run the risk of injuring themselves as well as causing other players to be at risk because of their lack of performance."

The solution, Murphy said, is drug testing as a deterrent, not as a way of punishment.

"The Olympic program of testing is based upon identifying (people who test positive for drugs) and punishing them. Our program (at Ohio State) and the one I advocate is based upon, first, to deter use, and second, to identify the kids with problems and try to get them clean."

"We work with some for two or three years, Murphy said. "If they are in treatment for two or three years

and we eventually get them clean, well, that's our goal."

Murphy said that every athlete, coach, trainer, team physician, manager and other staff member affiliated with the program at Ohio State is tested. In the 1984-1985 school year, Murphy said Ohio State tested three men's teams and two women's teams and 5 percent of the urine samples showed use of illegal substances.

He added that in tests of four men's teams and two women's teams during 1985-1986, 1.5 percent came up positive.

"We consider that (random, weekly) drug testing has proven to be a major deterrent to drug abuse during the season," Murphy said.

He said that when an athlete tests positive the first time, they are rechecked by a second test. So-called "false-positives" occur in less than 1 percent of the tests, Murphy said.

On the determination of a positive on the first test, the athlete is placed on probation but is not disciplined by the coach by a loss of playing time. For the remainder of his or her college career, the athlete must submit to weekly tests. Positives are cumulative, so that if an athlete fails a test as a freshman and then again as a senior, it is still a second positive.

A second drug test failure brings intra-squad discipline. Starters do not start, those on the traveling squad are left at home, and those who are on the non-travel squad are taken off

the training table.

The athlete is suspended on a third positive test. They may be reinstated after they have been declared clean for a period of four to six weeks, Murphy said.

"Every player who has been suspended over the last two years (at Ohio State) has been reinstated," said

Murphy, who said that six of seven athletes at the university had failed a third test over that period.

Murphy said that Ohio State sets up counseling for those who have failed tests and also arranges frequent visits by speakers such as National Football League drug enforcement officials.

Polo club finds pool place to be

By BONNIE BISHOP
Staff Writer

Since the 1984 Olympics, more people have become interested in the sport of water polo, and those at UNC are no exception. Interest in the UNC Water Polo Club has increased a great deal over the past two years.

The club, like most athletic clubs at the University, is open to everyone, men and women alike. During the school year, they play tournaments against varsity teams such as University of North Carolina at Wilmington and Virginia Tech and also other club teams, such as Duke and N.C. State. They play in the Southern Water Polo League Tournament in Virginia in the fall; if they do well, then they play in other invitational tournaments in the spring. The club usually participates in about twenty matches a year.

This summer, they invite anyone interested in the sport to come out Monday and Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. These practices are very informal, with their main objective being to familiarize people with the sport.

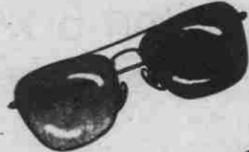
Water polo is a strenuous game. Quarters are seven minutes long and a player must tread water the whole time. "The game takes a lot of finesse and a lot of strength, not just the speed of swimming," said club president Jonathan Fassberg.

Fassberg stressed the point that clubs were for fun. "It is nice to win but we just want to have a good game," he said.

Because UNC has such good varsity athletic teams, it sometimes takes away from the interest of club sports. Fassberg said that club sports are getting bigger at the University and are now trying to gain notoriety and respect from students and faculty.

"It would be nice if students would support clubs more by coming out and being spectators," Fassberg said.

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