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## **Gerhard Treutlein**

### **Wer Doping erfolgreich bekämpfen will, bekommt Probleme: Das Beispiel Sandro Donati**

Der italienische Leichtathletiktrainer und Sportwissenschaftler Alessandro Donati wurde über Italien hinaus durch seinen Kampf gegen Doping bekannt, zuletzt im Zusammenhang mit dem der vermutlichen Manipulationen der Dopingprobe des Südtiroler Gebers Ales Schwazer. Der ehemalige Nationaltrainer des italienischen Leichtathletik-Verbands arbeitete lange an der "Scuola dello Sport" in Rom und berät nebenbei italienische Staatsanwaltschaften, die wegen Dopingvergehen ermitteln.

Im Dezember 1999 hielt Donati vor der internationalen Sport-Journalistenvereinigung einen Vortrag (auf Englisch) zu seinen Erfahrungen mit der Dopingproblematik. Im nachfolgenden von mir gekürzten und zusammengefassten Text<sup>1</sup> erscheinen seine Ausführungen auf Deutsch, besonders wichtige Stellen aus dem Originaltext auf Englisch.

#### **Erste Erfahrungen**

In den siebziger Jahren waren die finnischen Langstreckler – wie schon vor dem zweiten Weltkrieg – überaus erfolgreich. Juha Vaatainen wurde Goldmedaillengewinner über 5000 und 10000 m bei den Europameisterschaften 1971 in Helsinki. Bei den Olympischen Spielen 1972 schlug Pekka Vasala den Favoriten Kipchoge Keino (Kenia) über 1500 m. Lasse Viren gewann die 10.000 m vor dem äthiopischen Favoriten Merus Yifter und wenige Tage später die 5000 m. Als engagierter junger Trainer interessierte sich Donati für die offensichtlich erfolgreichen finnischen Trainingsmethoden. Das italienische Nationale Olympische Komitee (CONI) schickte ihn nach Finnland. Ergebnis dieser Forschungsreise (zusammen mit seinem Kollegen Bellotti) war das Buch „Il nuovo mezzofondo“.

Bei den Olympischen Spielen 1980 gewann der Finne Maaninka Silbermedaillen über 5000 m und 10000 m, gestand dann später in einem Interview, dass er wie auch andere finnische Läufer Blutdoping praktiziert hatte, und gab seine Medaillen zurück. Bezüglich der finnischen Trainingsmethoden waren Donati und Bellotti ebenso wie andere gründlich getäuscht worden. Die Autoren entschuldigten sich deshalb bei den Käufern ihres Buchs.

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<sup>1</sup> Der Originaltext ist über 60 Seiten lang.

1975 wurde Donati erstmals mit Anabolika-Doping in Italien konfrontiert:

„Mr. Enzo Rossi, Head Coach of the Italian Athletics Team, stated in an interview that athletes would have to learn to use anabolic steroids during training because it would help them improve their performance. At the time, few people knew about steroids and there were no reactions to the interview. I therefore decided to write to the newspaper on which the interview had been published and my letter led to a debate between physicians and coaches.“

Vier Jahre später wurde Donati Rossis Kollege als Nationaltrainer der italienischen Leichtathletiknationalmannschaft. Weitergehende Erfahrungen machte Donati bei den Olympischen Spielen 1980 in Moskau:

„There were rumours concerning some of these medals; it was suggested that Francesco Conconi, university professor of biochemistry, like Finnish doctors, had subjected the athletes to red blood cell transfusions at the request of CONI.

At that time I was the National Coach for 400 m runners and my athletes won the bronze medal at the Moscow Olympics. I was not acquainted with Prof. Conconi who was mainly concerned with endurance events, but I had heard of him, described as an eminent sports scientist.“

### **Donatis Verweigerung des Blutdopings 1981 - 1984**

Inzwischen war Donati Nationaltrainer für die 800-m- und 1500-m-Läufer geworden; einige Monate später er traf Conconi bei einem Kongress:

„He was informal, as if we had known each other for a long time, and asked to speak to me. He congratulated me on my new appointment and told me the Italian Athletics Federation had asked him to advise me of their project. He had elaborated a new system, improving upon the one used in Finland, for the transfusion of selected red blood cells, which were stored at -90°, enriched with particular substances and then transfused two or three days before an important event. He said: “it means an improvement of 3 to 5 seconds for 1500 m races, 15 to 20 seconds for 5000 m races and 30 to 40 seconds for 10,000 m races.”. I was astounded as I suddenly understood that doping really did exist and that the rumours concerning the Italian medals at the Moscow Olympics were true! But I did not let on; I immediately decided I would not let him understand what my position was so that I would be able to gather as much information as I could.

He went on to say: ‚in the next few weeks we shall carry out a number of field tests and then draw the blood - a total of 1000 c.c. on two separate occasions - of the athletes you consider more promising in view of the oncoming Athens European Championships‘. I made no comment and just said I would be available for the field tests.

I was very upset when I got home as I realised that in the new environment I had just entered, high level performances were to be obtained through any means. But was there anyone I could take into my confidence?“

Donati informierte zunächst die von ihm betreuten Athleten über Conconis Vorschlag und seine Weigerung, bei einer solchen Vorgehensweise mitzumachen, selbst wenn sie vom IOC nicht verboten sein sollte, denn sie enthalte alle Merkmale des Dopings. Lieber wolle er zurücktreten. Alle sieben Läufer lehnten daraufhin Bluttransfusionen ab. Den von Conconis Assistenten durchgeführten Conconi-Test hielt Donati trotz dessen internationaler Verbreitung für unwissenschaftlich:

„I therefore decided on a counterattack; I refused the test thus putting off the moment in which I would have to give the more important reply, the one about the blood transfusions; a practice that probably killed the young middle distance runner, Fulvio Costa. Prof. Conconi waited for a few weeks and then wrote to Primo Nebiolo who was President of Italian Athletics Federation as well of the International Athletics Federation to report my lack of co-operation. I was summoned by the Head Coach, Enzo Rossi, who very urbanely tried to persuade me; I firmly refused saying that if he wanted to perform blood transfusions on the athletes in my charge, he would first have to find another coach to substitute for me. I knew I had the full support of the athletes and of their respective club coach. He did not insist but said he hoped I would change my mind.“

Trotz des Verzichts Donatis auf Blutdoping waren seine Athleten erfolgreich. 1983 gewannen Claudio Patrignani und Alessio Faustini bei der Universiade in Edmonton Goldmedaillen über 1500 m und im Marathonlauf, 1984 Riccardo Materazzi bei den Europäischen Hallenmeisterschaften die Silbermedaille über 1500 m. Dies war den Verbandsoberen aber nicht genug:

„During that same period, Alberto Cova, who followed the Conconi method, won the 10,000 m race at the European Championships (1982) beating Vainio from Finland, who also practised blood transfusion; the following year Cova also won the gold medal at the Helsinki World Championships. Just before the Los Angeles Olympics, Italian Athletics Federation officials became more determined; the Head Coach summoned my best athletes and asked them whether they wanted to improve their performance in view of the Olympic Games through blood transfusion. I was present in this occasion but had been asked not to express an opinion. All the seven athletes refused! ... After a few days, behind my back, Prof. Conconi invited two of these athletes to visit the University of Ferrara and, once again, tried to persuade them to try blood transfusion without letting me know about it. Both of them refused and came to talk to me that same evening as soon as they returned to the Tirrenia Training Centre.

I protested heatedly but was told I would be relieved from office immediately after the Olympic Games. All the other National Coaches, so had the athletes (5000 m, 10,000 m, marathon and walk races, Men and Women) had accepted blood transfusion. It was then that I understood how, when it comes to doping, the key figure is the coach; it is not really a question of honest or dishonest athletes but of honest or dishonest coaches. I was not even included in the Italian Delegation to the Los Angeles Olympics and immediately after the Games I was moved back to the 400-metre runners and was totally isolated after a number of bitter discussions with my colleagues and with Italian Athletics Federation officials.“

Drei Athleten Donatis schafften trotzdem die geforderten Normen über 800 m und 1500 m. In Los Angeles wurde Donato Sabia fünfter über 800 m, Riccardo Materazzi war Endlaufteilnehmer über 1500 m, zwei weitere Athleten erreichten die Semi-Finals. Diese Ergebnisse wurden von der italienischen Verbandsführung als unbefriedigend bezeichnet, hatten doch die von anderen Trainern betreuten Gabriella Dorio (Gold über 1500 m), Alberto Cova (Goldmedaille) und Salvatore Antibo (Bronzemedaille) über 10000 m wesentlich mehr Erfolg – „the triumph of blood transfusion!“

Nach den Olympischen Spielen wurde Donati als Mittelstreckentrainer abgelöst und wurde Nationaltrainer der 400-m-Läufer. Seine Mittelstreckler lehnten den

neuen Nationaltrainer ab, wodurch für den Leichtathletik-Verband eine schwierige Situation entstand, hatten die Funktionäre doch gehofft, der neue Mann würde die Läufer „zur Vernunft“ bringen.

### **Parlamentsanfrage zur Dopingproblematik**

“During that same period, apart from the blood transfusions organized by Prof. Conconi, Italian Athletics Federation was also implementing another project with Prof. Conconi and with the complicity of one of the major Italian research institutes; the administration of testosterone and of anabolic steroids to athletes specializing in different Athletics events. These procedures were of course kept secret; I heard of them only because I was still working with the National Team. None of my colleagues opposed them, in fact they were very pleased that the Federation provided them with “methods” that would allow them to achieve better results and so improve their reputation.

I did not know how to organize a movement of opposition as I had to be careful not to lose my job with CONI; even my ex-wife thought I should not express my position openly because she feared consequences for the whole family. A dear friend of mine, Renato Marino, suggested I speak to his uncle who was a Member of Parliament. I was very agitated on my way to this appointment but I managed to explain clearly just how dangerous the situation had become with CONI supporting the doping methods carried out by Italian Athletics Federation. He introduced me to a younger Member of Parliament, Adriana Ceci, who was haematologist and immediately took this issue to heart. Together we prepared a question in Parliament to the Minister of Health. The Minister’s reply came after a few weeks - blood transfusions aimed at improving sports performances were outlawed and defined *blood doping*. The reaction of the entire sports system was particularly violent and led to heated debates on the major newspapers and on television. Italian sports officials denied that blood transfusions had been performed on Italian athletes in view of the Los Angeles Olympics, but they had to acknowledge the letter sent by the Ministry of Health and agree to ensure that blood transfusions would not be performed in the future. Also the IOC promptly declared that blood transfusions were forbidden, and this method was officially denominated blood doping.

One little move of a seemingly powerless individual had delivered a sensational blow to the propagators of doping - it was unbelievable! Nobody found out that I was behind the question in Parliament but CONI and Italian Athletics Federation officials suspected it. Even then, there was no movement of opposition to doping within the sports system and it was therefore easy to trace the few who were against such methods. For another three years, in the laboratories of the University of Ferrara, Prof. Conconi secretly continued to perform blood transfusions commissioned by CONI and by various sports federations (Athletics, Swimming, Rowing, Cycling, Pentathlon, Long Distance Skiing and even Alpine Skiing). What I had considered a great victory turned out to be meaningless!

Even though I was National Coach for the 400-metre runners, I still worked with a young and very talented middle distance runner, Stefano Mei, one of the athletes who had refused the blood transfusions suggested by Italian Athletics Federation. His coach was (and still is) a very dear friend of mine and together we conceived a totally new training method based on an audacious combination of endurance and speed development. Mei trained for the 5000 m and for the 10,000 m events but Italian Athletics Federation indicated that he would be included in the official team only for the first event since the three places available for the 10,000 m event had already been allotted - to athletes who had accepted blood doping, of course.“

Trotzdem konnte sich Mei für die Europameisterschaften in Stuttgart über 5000 m und 10000 m qualifizieren.

„The 10,000 m event was scheduled for the beginning of the Championships. It was a very cold and rainy evening. The athletes had to warm-up in a large gymnasium. The Los Angeles Olympic Champion, Alberto Cova, worked with Salvatore Antibo and with three Portuguese runners and agreed upon race tactics that would create difficulties for Mei, because he feared Mei's powerful run-in. I told Mei not to worry, this meant that Cova was afraid of him. At the end of the warm-up, we went outdoors towards the Stadium; it was still raining and very dark. Just before he went in, Mei said to me: ‚that one is not going to beat me tonight!‘. I smiled but I said to myself ‚wishful thinking‘, Cova was going to win, as usual.

Mei gewann überraschend die Goldmedaille.

„A real triumph for Mei, while for us, his coach and I, the importance of this victory was twofold; we had perfected a new training method and, at the same time, brought about the first defeat after four years of an athlete who had undergone blood doping. That same evening my other athletes placed fourth in the 4x400m relay race, setting the new national record which still stands.“

### **Skandal um ein Doping-Tagebuch 1986**

„A physician and former decathlete by name of Daniele Faraggiana, who came from the same town as Primo Nebiolo, had been instructed by Athletics Federation and by the Weightlifting Federation to ‚treat‘ the athletes of their respective National Teams, mostly with anabolic steroids and with testosterone. People talked about it but there was no proof. Proof could come only from photostats of the documents he always carried with him. Far from easy, but at long last it was done!

The documents listed everything: the names of all the athletes involved (between them the shot put Olympic Champion in Los Angeles, Alessandro Andrei) the drugs that had been administered, the respective dosage, the negative effects on their health, the targets that had been set, even the ‚philosophy‘ behind the whole process. It also emerged that the Anti-Doping Laboratory in Rome, duly accredited by IOC, was used for a totally different purpose: to establish after how long traces of these drugs would disappear from the urine samples of the individual athletes.

The documents also proved that Dr. Faraggiana was regularly paid by the two Federations to administer these drugs and that he provided forbidden substances also to Prof. Conconi. After having examined these documents I thought that if I showed them to the Federation officials saying that I would make them public if they did not dismantle the whole operation immediately, they would be easily persuaded. I soon realized just how ingenuous I had been; they tried to prevaricate, to minimize or to deny the incident. I could chose one of three options:

- 1) file a complaint before a judge; Nebiolo's entourage had forestalled me. One of them had gone to see a judge they considered reliable and lodged a complaint against persons unknown for doping incidents. This meant my complaint would be sent to that same judge who would most probably shelve the case; I knew everything and I stopped my action;
- 2) file an official complaint before CONI; the documents showed however that CONI was directly involved since one of its Anti-doping laboratories had been used for the false urine tests of the doped athletes;

- 3) give the documents to an important newspaper for publication, but I considered this improper; I still hoped I could persuade these officials to abandon their doping programs.“

Donati wartete eine günstige Gelegenheit ab. Auf der Grundlage verschiedener Erfolge (z. B. Medaillen der Sprinter Pier Francesco Pavoni und Antonio Ullo bei den Hallen-Europameisterschaften) drückte er sich in Presse-Interviews ziemlich deutlich aus. Auch Pavoni attackierte den italienischen Leichtathletik-Verband sehr massiv.

„Nebiolo summoned me and invited me to put an end to these attacks. He said to me ‚we have a high regard for you; you are achieving excellent results, but I expect you to respect the different roles of office; do not interfere with issues that are not your direct concern‘. I answered that it was only out of respect for Italian Athletics Federation that I had not made public the scandalous behaviour of Dr. Faraggiana and Prof. Conconi who were implementing doping programs on behalf of Italian Athletics Federation. Nebiolo pretended to be greatly surprised and promised he would do something about it; which of course he did not.“

### **Interview für die Zeitschrift „L’Espresso“ und der Evangelisti-Skandal**

Im August 1987 enthüllte Donati in einem Interview für „L’Espresso“ das Blut- und das Anabolikadoping.

„All hell broke loose. Journalists from all over the world were already in Rome as the World Championships were about to begin. Nebiolo and his collaborators asked me to retract; I replied I would not; I would accept only a joint press release in which the Italian Athletics Federation acknowledged that what I had said was true and agreed to start an investigation immediately after the World Championships.

In the end even this request was, once again, quite ingenuous, and even so Athletics Federation refused. My athletes and I were confined to an hotel in the suburbs, the rest of the Italian Team was in the town centre. No one from Italian Athletics Federation talked to me during the Championships ... Italian Athletics Federation had already decided they were going to remove me from my charge as National Coach and get rid of me for good.

The day before the beginning of the World Championships, the secretary of the Field Judges told me that the Long Jump event was going to be arranged so as to favour the Italian athlete Giovanni Evangelisti. She said to me ‚a jump of 8m 38cm will be arranged for him so that he will be third after Carl Lewis and Emmian‘.

I therefore knew that the event would be tampered with but not how they proposed to do it. I was at the Stadio Olimpico and watched the competition very carefully. Evangelisti’s first trial was a no jump, the following ones were quite modest but the distance given was every time over 8 metres. Finally, the fifth jump; a very poor performance, the spectators were disappointed and so was Evangelisti himself. As he was getting dressed, one of the Judges went to him and obviously told him to turn around and look at the electronic scoreboard; after a few seconds it showed 8 metres and 37 centimetres; the exact result that had been established beforehand.

I went home in rage; I couldn’t understand how they had managed it and it drove me mad that they would probably get away with it once again. I didn’t sleep all night and in the morning I went to the police station and reported everything.

When the newspapers took up my accusation, CONI started a separate enquiry. Neither of these investigations seemed to be getting anywhere; on the contrary all the witnesses

denied everything. My situation was becoming extremely difficult as CONI was ready to sack me.

Everything around me appeared to be crumbling. First Athletics Federation withdrew my appointment as National Coach, then the Civil Court of Rome decided my accusations had no foundation and dismissed the case; the Committee established for the CONI investigation was about to do the same. With the few friends still ready to help me, I stubbornly continued to look for proof of the fraud until I found a young Field Judge, who trembled even as he spoke, but told me he had overheard the other judges when they agreed to arrange the fifth jump. He said: ‚I think they recorded the distance, by electronic instruments, before Evangelisti jumped‘.

I now had a clue and I started looking for the television recordings of the event. A journalist friend of mine agreed to let me watch hours of film recorded with various cameras. The film showed clearly how the Field Judge went to the pit, placed the marker, focused the Seiko apparatus, returned to the pit, retrieved the marker and then waited for Evangelisti to jump. Ironically, that jump was particularly poor, about 7 metres and 85 centimetres, quite 50 centimetres below the distance which was officially measured.

A friend of mine broadcast the film during the evening news. A real scandal; also because the item was taken up by the international press and television. Once again, I took this opportunity to talk about doping. The International Athletics Federation, for the first time in his history, had to cancel the jump and take back Evangelisti’s medal while CONI could no longer sack me. I had won, at least for a few days.

As I mentioned earlier, Italian Athletics Federation had withdrawn my appointment as National Coach and had promised Pier Francesco Pavoni, who had become an international level sprinter, a significant amount of money if he stopped training with me and went to Canada to work with Ben Johnson’s group. Pavoni accepted immediately. He told me he was afraid Athletics Federation would otherwise make life impossible for him. I was greatly disappointed; I could never have imagined that Pavoni would accept working in such an environment and with an athlete who was strongly suspected of doping! Only the 800-metre runner Donato Sabia stayed with me. I suggested he think it over since Italian Athletics Federation would probably make him pay for this choice. He answered he was ready to face these problems with me.

## **Erfahrungen (1989) mit der Veröffentlichung des Buchs „Campioni senza valore“**

Donati veröffentlichte seine nunmehr neunjährigen Erfahrungen im Kampf gegen Doping im Buch „Campioni senza valore“:

„During the first week the sales were very successful. Then, all of a sudden, the publisher stopped providing the bookshops and I was submerged by telephone calls and letters from all over Italy: nobody could not find my book. The publisher told me they had problems with the distribution but that everything would be solved shortly. Nothing happened; my book disappeared for ever. A few years later I came to know that an International Foundation, on behalf of Nebiolo and of other high sports officials, had paid a large amount of money to the publisher to stop the circulation of this book. Thinking back, I am not even particularly disturbed; in fact, it is quite a satisfaction to know that my revelations were considered so dangerous that I had to be silenced.“

Als Reaktion wurde Donati endgültig als Nationaltrainer abgelöst, was eine spontane Protestbewegung im Leichtathletikverband auslöste:

„A significant number of coaches created an Association aimed at stopping the diffusion of doping and more generally corruption in athletics. I was unanimously named President of this Association.“

Sein Arbeitgeber CONI versetzte ihn in einen „unproblematischen“ Arbeitsbereich (Sportunterricht für Kinder).

### **Fundierung des Kampfs gegen Doping**

Vier Jahre später wurde Donati vom Präsidenten von CONI zum Leiter der Forschungs-Abteilung von Coni ernannt (Settore Ricerca e Sperimentazione). Kurze Zeit später richtete CONI eine Anti-Doping-Kommission ein, mit sehr zweideutiger Zusammensetzung, da ihr sowohl Conconi als auch die Leiter des Anti-Doping-Labors in Rom angehörten; Donati stimmte seiner Nominierung zu, um in offizieller Funktion Doping bekämpfen zu können.

„To begin with, I introduced anti-doping tests to be performed without prior notice on Italian athletes of all sports disciplines. I then suggested to install a telephone line on which anyone could call, toll-free, to ask for information on medical or pharmacological aspects, or to provide any type of information on events related to doping. The telephone number was widely publicised on the media. I also suggested to reduce the length of the suspension for athletes who had proved positive at anti-doping tests but were willing to co-operate by giving complete information on who had introduced them to doping and provided the forbidden drugs.

At the same time, I obtained the IOC official statistics on the number of positive tests detected in each one of the 21 accredited Anti-doping Laboratories throughout the world. The data clearly showed that the Rome Laboratory was way behind all the others with a ridiculously low number of positive tests. I pondered over the possible meaning of these statistics and then asked to meet both the President and the General Secretary of CONI to advise them of this situation. They pretended to be greatly surprised but I pointed out that the statistics indicated that:

- a) IOC was liable for inadequate supervision, or maybe worse, of the Rome Laboratory;
- b) CONI and some of the Sports Federations were liable for a fraudulent and instrumental use of the Rome Laboratory which had obviously performed incomplete tests, or worse, shelved the results of positive tests.

When the meetings of the Scientific Committee began, it became immediately apparent that it was not an assembly of saints and virgins. As Secretary of the Committee, I was careful to instruct my collaborators to take very detailed minutes of each meeting so as to record the exact details of all discussions. I mentioned earlier that Prof. Conconi sat on this Committee and so did the President of the Sports Physicians Federation, Prof. Giorgio Santilli, and the Secretary of the same Federation, Dr. Emilio Gasbarrone; these two were in charge of the Anti-doping Laboratory in Rome.

Conconi was always particularly nice to me, nearly sickening; Santilli and Gasbarrone pretended to trust me completely. A number of incidents occurred to change the atmosphere and re-establish the distance between the various members of the Committee. Right from the beginning I questioned the work done by the Rome Laboratory on the basis

of the IOC statistics; Santilli and Gasbarrone were not able to find a reasonable explanation for the ridiculously low number of positive tests.

A few months later, I asked Prof. Conconi to perform anti-doping tests on urine and blood samples of a professional cyclist, Francesco Moser, who was ,assisted‘ by Conconi, and was preparing to go to Mexico City to try for a new one-hour track record. Prof. Conconi refused and the other members of the Committee voted against these tests. The newspapers got to know about it and suggested some aspects of Moser’s undertaking were seemingly not quite ,clean‘.

Then, Prof. Conconi submitted to the Committee a request of 150,000 US \$ to finance a research project aimed at the detection of erythropoietin. His request was supported by the President of CONI, Dr. Pescante. I showed Conconi’s project to chemistry experts who concluded it could not possibly be successful since the technical bases were wrong. The request was therefore refused much to the President’s annoyance.

The number of positive tests increased threefold but the Rome Laboratory remained last on the list. I realized that my efforts were still insufficient but I also observed that Gasbarrone managed to avoid performing anti-doping tests without notice on cyclists and football players. I therefore understood where the problem lay.

After the refusal of Prof. Conconi’s request the President of CONI lost interest in the Committee and did not even answer my proposal to organize an International Contest for a method to detect erythropoietin. I realized that the time had come to let this Committee die out as it was ambiguous and I was being used as a screen. Before the Committee was closed down, however, I decided to investigate closely, and very secretly, on the incidence of doping among professional cyclists. I identified twelve key-figures of the cycling milieu, athletes, physicians, officials, and spoke to them assuring that the information would remain strictly anonymous, as my interest lay in collecting information that I would then report to the President and to the General Secretary of CONI in order to establish adequate measures.

After four months of investigation, I arrived to extraordinary conclusions:

1. anti-doping tests on cyclists were very rarely positive because they used new substances, peptidic hormones, which cannot be traced with urine tests;
2. in particular, the erythropoietin hormone also known as Epo, was being used ever more frequently; the idea of using Epo for athletes involved in endurance sports, and therefore also for cyclists, had clearly come from Prof. Conconi, who had been nominated member of the IOC Medical Committee some years before;
3. Prof. Conconi and his assistants had signed very important contracts with professional cyclist clubs to administer Epo to the cyclists;
4. at that time the production of Epo was quite limited and the substance was provided only to the hospitals who treated nephrology and the cyclists therefore obtained it through illegal channels;
5. the cost of Epo on the black market was very high (about 150 US\$ per dose); there were also other very expensive hormones, such as Gh, or Igf1; in other words the doping market was becoming as lucrative as the narcotics market;
6. other physicians with no scruples were beginning to imitate Prof. Conconi and his group so that the use of Epo and of other peptidic hormones which cannot be detected with urine tests was spreading rapidly; the risk was that it would soon get completely

out of hand and reach such proportions as to become interesting for the pharmaceutical companies.

I wrote out a 14-page report and sent it, complete with a protocol letter, to the President and to the General Secretary of CONI. The President did not even answer it. The General Secretary sent for me and said he was very worried. I replied that CONI's behaviour was totally irresponsible and unprincipled; ever since 1980, CONI had financed Prof. Conconi to administer doping substances to the athletes of various Italian National Teams. Time passed but nothing more was said about my report.

I did not even bother to summon a meeting of the Scientific Committee and CONI officials appeared not to notice it. The only outcome of my report on Epo was that the President of CONI stopped talking to me, while the General Secretary talked of other matters; he also mentioned that I should make better use of my capacities, instead of concentrating only on doping.

In the meantime the media had forgotten all about doping and were busy magnifying the performance of this or that champion athlete. Page-long interviews to Prof. Conconi filled all the newspapers. The President of the IOC Medical Committee, Prince de Merode, accorded Prof. Conconi the financial support that had been refused by CONI's Scientific Committee! Prof. Conconi therefore posed as the great champion of the struggle against doping while he actually administered the forbidden substances in his laboratory!"

### **Donatis EPO-Untersuchung wird der Öffentlichkeit bekannt**

Für eine Artikelserie der „*La Gazzetta dello Sport*“ zur Doping-Problematik wurde auch Donati konsultiert. Er riet den Journalisten, sich an Dr. Flavio Alessandri zu wenden, der wichtige Informationen für den „Donati-Report“ von 1994 zum EPO-Missbrauch geliefert hatte. Dieser wunderte sich über die Fragen der Journalisten und bemerkte, er hätte schon zweieinhalb Jahre zuvor Donati für einen Bericht für den Präsidenten von CONI alles gesagt. Letzterer leugnete zunächst die Existenz des Donati-Reports; später konnte er sich nicht daran erinnern, warum der Report so lange in einer Schublade verschwunden war.

„CONI was being asked to answer for:

- a) having ignored the heavy accusations contained in the dossier;
- b) not having reported these accusations to the Court of Law;
- c) not having interrupted, or even discussed CONI's collaboration with Prof. Conconi's Centres.“

Nun wurde auch die internationale Presse aufmerksam, besonders die „*Equipe*“ in Frankreich. Bei Interviews mit Journalisten verfolgte Donati folgende Konzeption:

1. „doping is not a strictly Italian problem but an international one;
2. my reason for talking to them was not only to denounce what was happening in Italy, but mainly to raise the issue at an international level;
3. the root of the problem is international; the pharmaceutical companies which produce these substances are multinational companies; the illegal import and export of these substances is managed by an international racket (one example is via Internet);

4. doping is no longer restricted to high level athletes; for a long time now industrialised production of these drugs and the widespread distribution through a network of peddlers, has turned doping into a social issue;
5. the IOC has lost its struggle against doping, through lack of a clear analysis of the situation and of the capacity to intervene on a practical level.
6. The anti-doping testing techniques have practically not progressed from 1980 onwards, as against the enormous development of doping methods; the IOC must be held responsible for the fact that it did not adequately support Research in its Laboratories to develop new testing methodologies; in alternative, it should have at least advised the World Health Organization (WHO) that its Anti-doping Laboratories were unable to detect hormones such as Epo, Gh, Acth, Igf1 and Igf2 in urine samples;
7. consequently, extra-sports institutions should be made aware of the problem and take the necessary measures to face it.

All this is confirmed by a number of facts:

- as early as 1994, the sale of Epo on the world market greatly surpassed the requirement of patients, so that the proceeds were estimated at two thousand million US dollars, and Epo ranked fourth in the world sales list of pharmaceutical substances (in 1999 the proceeds for Epo have risen to about three thousand million US dollars, it is now third on the world list, and comes even before antibiotics);
- the requests for Gh first created a gigantic racket with East Europe where it was possible to buy Gh extracted from the pituitary gland of cadavers; the substance then began to be synthesized and the sales increased enormously, Gh now ranks seventh on the world sales list;
- the sales of Igf1 (and later Igh2) became so preposterous that the Australian producer found it necessary to release an international notification specifying that the request of these substances was significantly higher than the requirement of patients and that the difference was probably supplied to athletes.“

## **Folgen in Italien**

„The attacks of the media were so pressing that even CONI had to take action. I was summoned by the Committee of Enquiry and my hearing lasted over five hours. I immediately warned them that what I had to say was extremely serious and that they would need courage to face it. I said: ‚I will have to tell you how those same officials who called upon you to form this Committee are responsible for many doping incidents. Do you feel ready to do something about it? If so, you must be prepared to keep all this information absolutely secret; I must warn you that I will not hesitate to attack whoever talks about what I have to say today either to the President of CONI or to one of the officials I will name later‘. They assured me they were ready for action and that all my information would be treated as confidential. I gave them the benefit of the doubt and revealed:

1. Prof. Conconi’s involvement in doping of high level Italian athletes;
2. the wicked collaboration between CONI and Prof. Conconi;
3. the very serious irregularities of the Anti-doping Laboratory;
4. the involvement of various Italian Sports Federations in doping.

They asked me to give them the full name of the persons I had contacted when I was preparing my dossier on the diffusion of Epo among professional cyclists, since I had

indicated only their initials. I refused, explaining that I thought it safer not to do so; in fact I had used a transliteration system even for the initials.

I had been right not to trust them with these names as, a few hours after my hearing, all CONI officials were furiously trying to identify the persons I had spoken to. In other words, all I had said to the Committee was already in their hands. They were unable to find these names but, in a rage, they conceived the terrible revenge.

The Italian Parliament took an interest in these events and formed a Commission of Enquiry who summoned both the President of Coni, Dr. Pescante, and Dr. Santilli President of the Sports Physicians Federation. They were questioned as to the relationship between CONI and Prof. Conconi of the University of Ferrara. Dr. Pescante lied to them saying that the relationship with Prof. Conconi had been ended a few years before, when Prof. Conconi's activities had begun to create suspicion.

There was also criminal investigation; in the month of November 1996, three investigators from the Criminal Investigation Department came to my office in CONI, asking to speak to me. I was no longer alone against a very powerful organization whose choice had irretrievably gone to doping. Two separate criminal investigations followed this interview.“

Neben der „Equipe“ berichteten weitere französische Medien ziemlich ausführlich über die Affäre. Ein Ergebnis war eine harte Reaktion des französischen Sport-Ministeriums, ein anderes die Einführung von Blutproben durch die UCI (die Internationale Radfahr-Union), mit einem Grenzwert für den Hämatokritwert von 50 % für die Männer und 48 % für die Frauen, zwar keine ideale Lösung, aber ein guter Schritt vorwärts im Kampf gegen EPO:

„This hormone causes an haematocrit increase, which leads to a densification of the blood and this is a very significant health hazard. The use of erythropoietin had already caused the death of more than 20 cyclists, while many more had been operated for thrombosis of the hypogastric artery. We had come to know that during the night, those who used Epo were often woken up by a beep of their heart rate meter, and in order to avoid dying of a circulatory collapse, they had to exercise for twenty minutes to restore the fluidity of their blood and increase their heart rate.“

Nach dem Nachlassen des öffentlichen Interesses geriet Donati unter Druck. Unter anderem wurde der Forschungsetat des „Settore Ricerca e Sperimentazione“ deutlich reduziert; zwanzig junge Forscher mussten entlassen werden.

„Then they organized the terrible *coup de grâce*. Anna Maria Di Terlizzi, a young 100 m hurdler I had been training for a few years was tested positive for caffeine on February 7th 1997, after an indoor competition. The caffeine level found in the urine sample was very high, nearly double the value established by IOC. When the girl told me what had happened, I asked if she had taken any medicament. She answered she was on the pill, but had not taken nothing except a cappuccino at breakfast and a cup of coffee after lunch, but the competition had taken place hours later, in the evening. The caffeine value found in the urine sample corresponded to about thirty cups of coffee taken at the same time.

After a week, the second sample of urine was tested in the presence of an expert of our choice, I had chosen a chemist not because I doubted that the first tests had been performed adequately but because I wished to request a test for the metabolites of caffeine in order to understand what had happened in the athlete's organism. But, as we shall see the reason

for the very high caffeine value found in the first test was much simpler than I thought. Right at the beginning, the Head of the Rome Anti-doping Laboratory asked our expert if he chose the normal testing procedure, which would last several hours, or the shortened procedure. The expert was very surprised and answered, that it was, of course, necessary to repeat exactly the procedure used for the first test, the one that had proved positive.

Before the end of the qualitative analysis, the Head of the Laboratory asked our expert if he wanted to go out for a cup of coffee. He refused and noticed that the Head of the Laboratory and his collaborators were becoming increasingly nervous. When the qualitative analysis was over, the result was astounding: no caffeine peak at all! ... Anna Maria's urine sample contained the traces of one cappuccino and one cup of coffee.

At last, it dawned on me; they had prepared an ambush, the worst possible one: they had tried to destroy my reputation, my credibility. I realised then that I had been dealing with really malicious people.

CONI had to set up a Committee of experts who analysed the phial of the first sample and the phial of the second sample and came to a very serious conclusion: caffeine had been poured into the first phial. It appeared obvious that a previously prepared urine sample would have been substituted for Anna Maria's sample during the second test. But they had not been able to accomplish this because our expert had been too careful for them.“

**Trotz einer Parlamentsanfrage führte der Vorfall nur zu Ablösung des Laborleiters des Antidoping-Labors in Rom.**

„As usual, the media lost interest after a few days and the President of CONI, furious because he had failed to get rid of me, took his revenge by cutting off my Department's funds, so that all our work came to a standstill, and by isolating me completely. During the following months I wrote a detailed report of the Di Terlizzi case for the Magistrate because we had lodged a complaint against persons unknown. These were very lonely months. Even the criminal investigation on the relationships between CONI and Prof. Conconi, which had begun in October 1996, seemed to be getting nowhere. I thought the whole situation had become completely hopeless.“

## **Der Skandal um das Antidoping-Labor in Rom**

Im August 1998 griff der Trainer von A.S. Rom, Zdenek Zeman, in einem Interview das Doping im italienischen Fußball an.

„A great scandal ensued as the foreign press took up the news. The most important Italian press agency, ANSA, asked for my opinion and I answered that the problem did exist and that it would be hypocritical to deny it. The Public Attorney of Turin, Raffaele Guariniello, started an investigation; he summoned Zeman first, and then me, on the following day. He asked me to tell him all I knew about doping among soccer players. I answered the question should be worded differently; it should be: ‚how are anti-doping tests performed on soccer players?‘. In following days the press reported that during my hearing I had accused the Rome Laboratory of using irregular testing procedures. The President of CONI and the President of the Sports Physicians Federation, reacted violently; my declarations were false, they said, and I would lose my job at CONI unless I could prove the facts.

And proof was found! The premises of the Rome Laboratory were searched, by order of the Public Attorney, and, as I had said, it was established that the anti-doping tests performed on soccer players did not include tests for the detection of anabolic steroids or of the other hormones! A number of the events that followed will prove decisive in the struggle against doping, namely:

1. the Italian Government appointed a Committee of Enquiry, headed by the Vice President of the Consiglio Superiore della Magistratura, the highest judicial authority in Italy;
2. the Public Attorney of Turin first and then the Public Attorney of Rome prosecuted the President of CONI, the President of the Sports Physicians Federation, the General Secretary of the same Federation and four technicians of the Rome Laboratory (all the persons I considered involved in the Di Terlizzi case, in one go!);
3. at long last, the Public Attorney of Turin forced the IOC to take notice of what was happening; the Rome Anti-doping Laboratory accredited by IOC was closed down.“

Der Präsident von CONI, Mario Pescante, und sein Generalsekretär mussten zurücktreten. Die engen Beziehungen zwischen CONI und Conconi über 20 Jahre hinweg wurden offengelegt, ebenso Betrügereien im Dopinglabor. Darüber hinaus erfolgte die Beschlagnahme der Festplatten Conconis in der Universität von Ferrara. Plötzlich wurde die Verabschiedung eines Doping-Gesetzes wesentlich beschleunigt. In verschiedenen italienischen Städten wurden Untersuchungsverfahren wegen Dopings begonnen, die wichtigsten waren:

1. „the Public Attorney of Torino investigated the Rome Anti-doping Laboratory and then also the first division soccer team *Juventus*;
2. the Public Attorney of Bologna investigated one of the cities chemist's which was charged with import, production and illicit sale of forbidden drugs; the names of important customers were revealed, including the physicians of many National Teams and investigated also the first division soccer team *Parma*;
3. the Public Attorney of Ferrara investigated Prof. Conconi, in particular his twenty-year relationship with CONI and with various Italian Sports Federations;
4. the Public Attorney of Venezia investigated the incidence of doping among the younger athletes and came to shocking conclusions;
5. the Public Attorney of Rome, together with the Public Attorney of Torino investigated the Rome Anti-doping Laboratory, in relation to the Di Terlizzi case;
6. the Public Attorney of Brescia investigated the higher officials of the Italian National Cyclist Team and charged them with the acquisition of forbidden drugs in Switzerland.

Other investigations followed, sixteen in all. Most of them were centred on present circumstances while the one opened in Ferrara was in many ways more significant in that it was aimed at bringing to light what had happened in the past so that, hopefully, such things would never happen again. The Ferrara investigation was not a strictly Italian affair as it touched the higher levels of the international sports milieu, involving IOC officials, UCI officials and the officials of a number of International Federations.“

Die im Sommer 1998 zu Tage getretenen Dopingpraktiken im Radfahren, vor allem während der Tour de France (Festina-Skandal) beschleunigten den Gesetzgebungsprozess. Donati wurde sowohl Berater der Parlamentarier als auch der Staatsanwälte.

### **Das IOC und die Doping-Problematik**

Für Donati war die Bekämpfung des Dopings durch das IOC ungenügend:

„When this body of notables and businessmen allegedly decided to oppose the diffusion of doping, it set up a Medical Committee, and appointed, none other than Prince Alexandre De Merode as its President; not a physiologist or a chemist, no, just a member of the aristocracy. This occurred 26 years ago, and the President had plenty of time to prove his inadequacy: in the implementation of anti-doping methods, in the organization of the Anti-doping Laboratories, in the selection of his collaborators.

Totally deaf and blind to the increasingly widespread use of forbidden substances and methods, the President remained unperturbed; it never occurred to him to resign in favour of a better qualified person. Halfway through his seemingly unending mandate, he fell under the spell of an Italian biochemist, Prof. Conconi, who was strongly supported by the powerful Italian IOC members. To please them, he appointed Prof. Conconi member of the Medical Committee and readily confirmed, in public, his absolute faith in Prof. Conconi even though this man was accused of doping by quite a number of Italian and foreign athletes and coaches. To show his gratitude, Prof. Conconi arranged for the University of Ferrara to confer an honorary degree, in medicine, of course, to Prince Alexandre De Merode.

While the CONI Scientific Anti-doping Committee refused Prof. Conconi's request for funds to study a method for the detection of Epo in urine samples, the highly competent President of the IOC Medical Committee readily accorded these funds. This was back in 1994, having received the funds Prof. Conconi, well aware that no such result would be achieved, secretly passed the research on to the Rome University, so that he would not be personally responsible for the projects' failure. Very soon, a series of public declarations began: De Merode and Conconi jointly declared that the test would be ready "at the beginning of 1996 ... in June ... it is ready, it is a question only of final details ... will be ready for use at the end of 1996 ... in June 1997..." Finally, De Merode had to admit, in great confusion during a press conference that the project had been a total failure.

In January 1999, with the Lausanne Conference dedicated to the struggle against doping, the IOC made a desperate attempt to recover its credibility which had been significantly undermined both by the scandals on the venues of the Olympic Games, and by the fact that doping was increasingly widespread among athletes. The Conference was attended by the Ministers of Sports of the Member Countries, but it backfired as various Ministers openly attacked the IOC for not having implemented an adequate strategy to oppose the diffusion of doping.

As a last resort, the IOC declared its availability for joint projects with the National Governments, but it was obvious that the IOC has lost the leadership of international sports, in particular when the issue is upholding the ethical and educational principles sports should be based on.“

The following facts confirm that my fears were not unfounded:

1. in September of this year, a large operation of the Italian police led to the seizure of relevant quantities of doping substances and to various arrests; evidence clearly pointed to an international racket in the hands of the Mafia;
2. in May of this year a commissioned burglary occurred in Nicosia (Cyprus); four million and five hundred thousand doses of Epo were taken; according to the investigators these were to be sold on the black market to athletes specializing in endurance disciplines;
3. in January of this year in Milan, the Police received an anonymous telephone call and seized various bags containing 35 kilograms of testosterone (...!); enough to dope

700,000 athletes for one day, or if we prefer, 70,000 athletes for 10 days. The telephone call was probably a reckoning between racketeers.

## **EPO- und Nandrolon-Champions auf dem absteigenden Ast**

1999 wurden zahlreiche Athleten durch Positiv-Proben des Nandrolon-Missbrauchs verdächtig. Am spektakulärsten war der Epo-Fall Pantani:

„The other resounding case concerned a professional cyclist, Marco Pantani, who dominated the major stage races in these last few years. This year, the UCI found his haematocrit value well above the establish limit 50 %. This happened just before the second last stage of the Giro d'Italia, which he was dominating once more. The UCI started an investigation and it came out that he was being ‚assisted‘ by Prof. Conconi and his team. In 1995, Pantani came very close to death on account of a sudden decrease of the haematocrit value from 60 % (...!) to below 16 %. Many former champions of endurance disciplines are now under dialysis on account of the side-effects of Epo, but they remain silent, and even deny everything when they are questioned on this subject. It does not occur to them to warn the thousands of young athletes who are following in their steps, all they care about is their own reputation.

Death figures hover behind the stage of sports events as doping becomes increasingly widespread among young and not so young athletes. Hypocrisy is the word for athletes, trainers and sports officials. The media look on a pretend to believe in it all. In the meantime, the producers of these forbidden substances, the complaisant physicians and the peddlers take advantage of such foolishness and falsehood as their profit increases.“

## **Analyse des italienischen Sportsystems**

Ähnlich wie in Deutschland wird in Italien der Spitzensport durch den Staat subventioniert, das Sportsystem als solches bleibt aber autonom. Ein Skandal um das Antidoping-Labor in Rom führte zur Reformierung des italienischen Sportsystems und von CONI:

1. „true democracy in the system for electing federal and CONI officials;
2. a regular shake-up in the higher echelons of these movements by limiting terms of office to a maximum of eight years;
3. sporting practices that safeguard the health of sportsmen and respect ethical and educational rules, in order to totally reject the doping "culture".

Ongoing legal proceedings, furthermore, are keeping many officials on tenterhooks. For many years, these officials have given leading Italian sports a structure similar to that present in former East Germany, at least as far as the organisation of doping is concerned.“

## **Analyse des internationalen Sportsystems**

„The battle to combat doping in the international arena has reached the following situation:

- 1) the IOC has little power over International Federations, which almost always take decisions regardless of the IOC's rules, with regard to the lists of substances and doping methods and to the size and actual application of sanctions. This is true for both anti-doping testing during competitions and especially random testing during training;
- 2) there is moreover no temporal or substantial correlation between the aims of the IOC and those of International Federations, or between the activity schedules of the IOC and those of International Federations. The objectives and consequent activity of the

IOC are indeed focused almost entirely on a four-yearly event, the Olympic Games, while those of International Federations focus more closely on day-to-day events;

- 3) the IOC has gradually become an Organisation that is part corrupt and part inadequate, occupying the demanding and bulky role of the world's foremost sporting institution, but in this capacity it has been unable to dialogue with the world's leading non-sporting institutions - Governments, the World Health Organization, international pharmaceutical companies or international Scientific Organisations - to seek joint solutions to problems;
- 4) at the same time, International Federations have been busy "defending themselves" in the anti-doping battle without defending their sports from doping. Their actions have accordingly been slow and very inadequate. Many International Federations are more concerned about television rights and sponsors' cash, and they make an effort to conceal their drugged champions for fear of a loss in image and in the Federation's bargaining power.“

### **Außersportliche Institutionen**

Das italienische Parlament arbeitete an der Weiterentwicklung der Antidoping-Gesetzgebung. Die Zusammenhänge zwischen Doping im Spitzensport und Missbrauch von Dopingmitteln in anderen Bereichen wurden nunmehr stärker beachtet. In Zusammenarbeit mit dem Gesundheitsministerium hatte das Erziehungsministerium eine spezielle Kommission eingerichtet (mit Donati) und Präventionsmaßnahmen auf den Weg gebracht. Pharma-Produzenten mussten vierteljährlich über die verkauften Mengen EPO, Wachstumshormone (GH) und IGF Bericht erstatten.

Entsprechende Aktivitäten außersportlicher Institutionen fehlten im internationalen Bereich. Donati steht der Welt-Doping-Agentur mit gemischten Gefühlen gegenüber:

„It will be formed by Governments but also by the IOC. The IOC is indeed the real coordinator of the Agency. There is now a danger that IOC representatives might take advantage of their greater knowledge and experience about specific doping problems in the sporting world and guide the Agency towards low-profile objectives and strategies that are not sufficient to tackle such serious problems.“

Den Medien gegenüber hat Donati auf Grund von Erfahrungen eine reservierte Einstellung, denn sie müssen zur Auflagesteigerung Helden (und Skandale) verkaufen.

„Journalists have the following problem: talking about doping or corruption makes you unpopular. It is just the opposite of what is said about journalists making up stories about doping to sell more copies or gain a wider audience: the more you praise the champion the more you sell. When you talk about doping, people do not at first believe you; then, when the proof comes out, readers finally realise and begin to lose interest in sport. This state of affairs is of course very dangerous for sports papers. Any journalist that intends to delve into the doping problem will come up against strong resistance, first of all from his editor. He will have to write with the proof in his hands and with great care if he does not want to be sued for libel, especially if the sportsman in question is very popular. Suing against doping accusations has become all the rage: even those who are guilty resort to the law in a bid to intimidate both the journalist and the paper in question. At this point, the journalist

will ask himself whether it is worth all the trouble. Only if the answer is yes will he have the strength to carry on. If he realises that his profession obliges him to be honest and to keep the public correctly informed, then he will have the courage to go on.“

Ein besonderes Problem sieht Donati bei jenen Medien, die zugleich als Organisatoren und/oder Sponsoren von wichtigen Sportveranstaltungen auftreten wie die italienische Tageszeitung "*La Gazzetta dello Sport*" (Organisation des Giro d'Italia) oder die französische Tageszeitung "*L'Equipe*" (Tour de France):

„How can they combine the need for correct information with that of promoting the race they are organising? How can they talk about doping without covering their creations with mud? As for more general newspapers that also deal with sport, the situation is different. These journalists can be a little freer, as sport is not the only attraction for readers. In conclusion, a sports journalist will only be able to do his job well if he realises that doping is a real, dramatic social problem, and that youngsters are in danger of taking "artificial" champions as role models.“

## **Konsequenzen**

Als wesentlichste Konsequenz fordert Donati eine veränderte Sporterziehung der Kinder und Jugendlichen, ausgehend von der Frage, was für diese wesentlich ist:

- „the need to find youngsters of great sporting talent through a planned selection programme?
- the need to submit youngsters to intense training to verify their real potential?
- the need to identify "winners" from a psychological point of view, thanks to their resistance to stress, their control of anxiety and very strong motivation?

This is the ‚culture‘ which, disdainful of the rights of individuals, has exploited youngsters in a search for CHAMPIONS. A culture that arose in the authoritarian regimes, but that was copied by democratic nations! The social consequences of this process are extremely serious, leading, among other things, to the emergence of the most cynical and unprincipled persons in the sporting sphere. At the same time, this process puts off honest persons who respect children's rights to:

- have fun by playing sports;
- limit their sporting activity so as to fit it in with studies and a normal social life;
- claim victory every time they improve themselves;

Since broad segments of the sporting world have shown themselves to be incapable of adequately performing this educational task, schools in particular must deal with the problem, teaching youngsters to free themselves from conditioning, to view sport as an asset and victory over oneself as more important than victory over others. It is always possible indeed to improve oneself, no matter what level one is at, while victory over others seldom occurs, requiring genetic advantages and a certain ‚diversity‘, which should be accepted as a value and not simply reduced to ‚one winner, all the others losers“.

Im Gegensatz zu vielen sieht er die Hauptschuld für die Beschleunigung der Dopingspirale nicht bei der Kommerzialisierung und den Sponsoren, sondern bei den Spitzensportfunktionären:

„Many observers lay much of the blame for the spread of the doping phenomenon on the shoulders of sponsors. Yet this is clearly a mistaken analysis: the main cause is the behaviour of sports officials. There is no doubt that when Primo Nebiolo encouraged the use of doping and the manipulation of results in the Italian athletics team, he was setting out to create "merchandise" to sell to politicians, television companies and sponsors. Then he did the same with international athletics, before realising, too late, that corruption had grown out of control.

Thus it is that the lack of principles of officials, their ambition and their disdain for sporting values have been the causes underpinning the spread of doping. When sponsors arrived on the scene, they found an already corrupt environment!

I should like to conclude by hazarding a forecast: if sport continues to go down the ‚extreme‘ road towards the destructive spirit of the ‚ultimate fight‘, with deaths caused by Epo in cycling and anabolic agents in power sports, it will no longer have anything to do with that sporting activity viewed as a means of educating youngsters or for the growth and personal well-being of adults. They will be two different worlds. And everybody will realise this. It will be seen by Schools, which will put children on their guard against certain sports, and by single citizens, who will see themselves as being totally different from those gladiators ready to die for victory.“

Die Verantwortlichen und die Täter wurden nie bestraft, Verschweigen und Wegsehen waren und sind Trumpf. Der Kampf Donatis für einen sauberen Spitzensport und die daraus für ihn entstandenen Probleme sind idealtypisch für all jene, die den Betrügern im Sport gefährlich erscheinen, wie Jean-Pierre de Mondenard in Frankreich oder Brigitte Berendonk und Werner Franke in Deutschland.