

Doping Revelations Won't Hurt My Chances, Says Bach

IOC vice-president Thomas Bach believes the revelations of a government-backed doping program in West Germany in the 1970s will have no impact on his chances to become the next president of the International Olympic Committee.

Bach, who heads the national Olympic body of Germany, remarked he was personally behind the study that was published recently and disclosed a culture of doping among West German athletes for decades. The IOC presidential candidate said his IOC colleagues know that he himself initiated the study and they have known his zero-tolerance policy on doping since decades, especially as chairman of various disciplinary commissions and this is the reason why he doesn't fear consequences for the election.

The President of [Deutscher Olympischer Sportbund](#), the German National Olympic Committee, also remarked that Wrestling, axed from the 2020 Olympic program by the IOC, has a good chance of coming back after making sweeping changes. Bach said he has the impression that the international federation (FILA) has understood very well the messages sent to them and said he personally believes that wrestling has good chances to come through the vote in September.

A gold medal fencer in the 1970s, Bach is the favorite among the six candidates to succeed Rogge in the September 10 election in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and other contenders are [Sergei Bubka](#) of Ukraine, Richard Carrion of Puerto Rico, Denis Oswald of Switzerland, Ng Ser Miang of Singapore, and C.K. Wu of Taiwan. Bach is hoping his credentials as an Olympic champion and IOC veteran would inspire confidence in his candidacy and said he is looking forward to the vote and as a sportsman he naturally wants to win the competition. The affable man has been an IOC member since 1991 and has the distinction of chairing the IOC juridical and anti-doping commissions besides negotiating broadcasting rights. He also recently headed Munich's bid for the 2018 Winter Olympics.

Bach's remarks came after former long jumper Heidi Schueller said in an interview that Thomas Bach must have known more than he's acknowledging now. Heidi was the first female athlete to give the Olympic oath, at the 1972 Games in Munich.

Bach recently remarked that he and his fencing teammates had heard "bits and pieces" about doping but they had always been clean. He went on to remark that he had favored a "zero tolerance" policy against doping and lifetime bans for offenders, even as an athlete. Bach went on

to add that an independent commission had been set up for evaluating the report and making recommendations.

Clemens Prokop, president of the German athletics federation, said we have to call a spade a spade and remarked that was the only way to remove West German athletes from blanket doping suspicion.

In another development, an anti-doping law was called for by Bavarian justice minister Beate Merk who said sports federations were unable to systematically clear up and punish doping. He added that we have to act, we have to uncover, not cover up and we need an anti-doping law worthy of its name.