

Doping In Top-Level Sports Recommended By Norwegian Professor

Jan Ove Tangen, a professor of sports sociology at the University of South-Eastern Norway, has advocated [controlled doping](#) use for eliminating suspicion and providing equal opportunities to contenders.

In an opinion piece in Norwegian newspaper *Forskning*, Tangen remarked Norwegian cross-country top-level skiing has given itself further and further into the grey area in its hunt for medals and added some have even gone into the forbidden territory, and some of our most renowned skiers have now been convicted of doping. Tangen radically proposed that doping should be allowed and as accepted.

In recent months, the clean image of Norwegian athletes has been tarnished. The success of the all-time leading Olympic nation in Nordic combined and cross-country skiing has been bruised by dark stains on its "clean" reputation. A few months back, the Finnish anti-doping agency called for a closer review of the practices of the Norwegian Ski Federation. A physician for the Swedish national ski team and member of the Swedish Olympic Committee has communicated to the media that the Therese Johaug case undermines the credibility of all medical professionals in sports and called for a discussion of ethics and morals and a curb on the 'medicalization' of cross-country skiing.

Norway's top male cross-country skier and 2014 Sochi Olympic bronze medalist Martin Johnsrud Sundby was recently given a suspension of two months after he tested positive for [Salbutamol](#), an asthma medication.

Tangen made these comments Therese Johaug, one of Norway's most decorated female cross-country skiers of all times, tested positive for the steroid Clostebol. It was later revealed by the Norwegian ski federation that the substance came from a cream that was given to Johaug by team doctor Fredrik Bendiksen to treat sunburn on her lips during high-altitude training in Italy.

The professor of sports sociology said the legalization of doping may make competition more equal and would even save the necessity of running numerous anti-doping agencies and spending of a fortune by them. Tangen added only athletes get punished most of the

times while coaches, managers and sports federations usually continue unscathed. Tangen also criticized media, sponsors, politicians, and the public for setting too high expectations on athletes to win awards. The sports sociology professor also commented that it is rather difficult to draw a clear line between what constitutes permissible performance-enhancing methods and what is doping that result in lengthy bans and destroyed careers. Tangen also said doping can be used as a legal solution for continuous performance improvements, provided that the intake happens under the control of specialists.

The University of South-Eastern Norway professor said top level sports are already largely unhealthy and imply a tremendous stress for the human body. Tangen added doping is seen by many as a means for keeping athletes healthy. Tangen rhetorically said doping is not really more unjust than the fact that some of the athletes have been blessed with superior genes over their competitors or the fact that a country may have more resources and knowledge to for talent-hunting and performance development.