

Cheating Russian Athletes Exposed By Anti-Doping Scientists

Canadian law professor [Richard McLaren](#) has revealed a 'well-oiled' machine was geared up by Russia to undermine advances in science and anti-doping strategies to help Russian athletes cheat at major international competitions including the London and Sochi Olympic Games.

The report disclosed state-sponsored doping by Russia benefited more than 1,000 athletes at the London and Sochi Olympic Games. The extent of the doping and evolved techniques for hiding the evidence was uncovered by the report.

Commissioned by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), the McLaren report used science for confirming the testimony of Grigory Rodchenkov, the former director of the Russian anti-doping laboratory who fled to the United States in January. The former anti-doping laboratory head developed a test for metabolites of the anabolic steroid Turinabol while working for the lab. He undermined that advance by developing a cocktail of [Oxandrolone](#), Methenolone, and [Trenbolone](#), with a very short detection window.

The Russian lab conducted a program of 'washout' testing to verify if the athletes have been successful in moving from the Turinabol doping regime to the new cocktail so that they do not test positive at the London Olympics. This form of pre-competition testing was facilitated to ensure athletes would be able to compete without being detected by doping control. The Moscow labs recorded negative results on the reporting system of WADA even though a positive pre-competition test would have resulted in an athlete being banned. Non-official sample bottles were used to hide pre-competition results. Athletes that failed to come "clean" were left out of international competitions.

The report also revealed the Russia's sports ministry and the Centre for Sports Preparation of National Teams of Russia compiled a 'protected' list of 37 athletes who were likely to win a medal and managed to dope right up to and possibly during the Sochi Games. These athletes provided "clean" urine that was possibly taken from them while not on the cocktail and the samples were frozen and stored for swapping at the Sochi games.

McLaren had previously accused the International Olympic Committee of completely misrepresenting his findings that were never designed to prove individual doping cases. McLaren said he was asked to write a report to determine the facts and he did that but the IOC turned it upside down. McLaren went on to add that the IOC made it look like whether the report could prove the guilt of individual athletes when it was actually about state-sponsored doping.

Christiane Ayotte, the inquiry's medical and scientific adviser, noted that 'significantly high levels of prohibited substances' were demonstrated by a number of positive results on the washout list. The samples were destroyed by the Moscow labs so that they cannot be retested at a later stage. However, 62 urine samples from 27 of the 37 'protected' athletes were still available to the investigation.

Alan Brailsford at the Drug Control Centre in London said one normally looks to detect something that should not be there but the Russian labs were trying to work out what would indicate tampering.