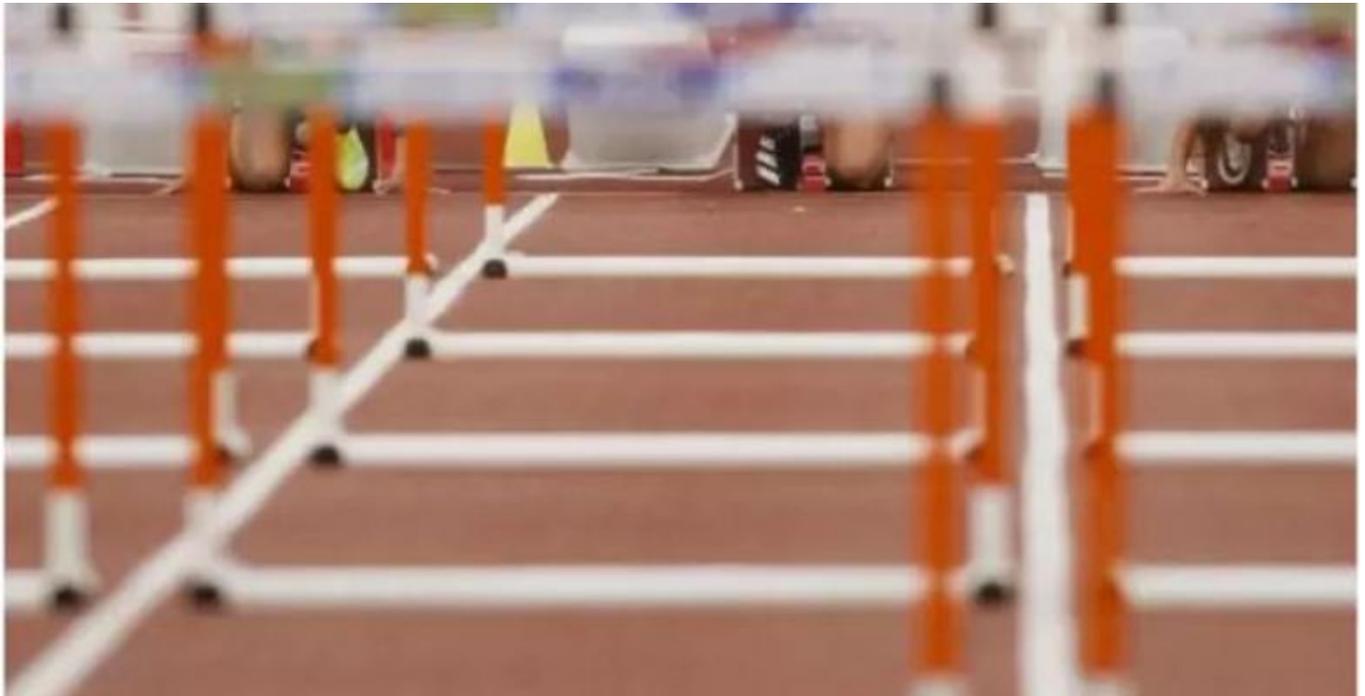

OPINION: Doped Games, but What is This?

By: Lemay Padrón Oliveros / Special for CubaSi

08/04/2024



Someone may have found interesting the idea of organizing a world event with doped athletes, but it really seems surreal that this type of proposal is taken seriously, as it is.

The first edition of the so-called Enhanced Games is scheduled for 2025, and beyond the controversy, the support of a considerable number of athletes calls my attention.

Of course, there are many detractors, including myself, because from the outset the idea of competing on equal terms has always seemed non-negotiable to me, and this type of appointment does not guarantee it, let's be clear.

Access to top-quality doping products, to the currently banned running shoes and the infamous swimming "supersuits" that would also be tolerated, will never be equal, to begin with the most honourable, and of course, the greatest risk is precisely the health of those involved, even though organizers boast that many medical tests will be carried out.

After saying that products can be used to improve performance, are they going to want to control it? Oh really? Once the possibility of doping is unleashed, people are invited to be more ambitious and reckless, and this risk can be fatal.

The strange idea of Aron D'Souza, a businessman born in Melbourne and based in London, contemplates for the initial version competitions in athletics, swimming, weightlifting, gymnastics and some combat sports.

In this regard, team sports and ball disciplines were eliminated to focus on individual performance to focus on speed, strength and endurance.

"We are conducting tests to make sure our athletes are healthy to compete. I don't want an athlete to get injured or die in competition. We will do checks on all of our athletes: blood tests, echocardiograms and maybe even MRIs," said D' Souza, as if that would solve the problem.

They are sold as Safe Games, but the carrot is really on the financial side, because all athletes competing in the Enhanced Games will be paid.

As they explain in their proposal, eligible athletes will receive a base salary and compete for prizes, which will be greater than those of any other comparable event in history, and they keep criticizing the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for not paying competitors in Olympic Games.

Basically, here we cannot forget that beyond individual freedoms there's ethical commitment, and although there will always be people willing to risk everything for money, we cannot forget that in the current scenario, where the battle against doping is essential, we already experienced the suspicious death of several promising athletes who set amazing marks and died before turning 50. If that happened with restrictions, the fatalities in a scenario like the one proposed by the Enhanced Games can be multiplied by a thousand.

Translated by Amilkal Labañino / CubaSí Translation Staff
