

From **"School Library Journal Talks to Caroline Hatton about Doping in Sports"**

It's not often that kids get to see science in action, and that's exactly what author/scientist Caroline Hatton had in mind when she wrote *The Night Olympic Team* (Boyd's Mills, 2008). The book takes readers behind the scenes at the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City to see how lab scientists catch athletes on performance-enhancing drugs...

What was it like being a member of the Night Olympic Team?

It was a thrill. I [spent] a few weeks in the constant company of... world authorities in anti-doping science—brilliant, quirky characters. Every night behind closed doors, [our] job was to make darn sure that test results were correct...by trying to shoot them down. We spent hours thinking out loud and spurring each other's imagination. It was like a dream science camp.

Tell us about the night your team discovered NESP in an athlete's urine.

When the lab director, Dr. Don Catlin, handed me a printed image and my brain cells grasped what it meant, it was quite an adrenaline jolt because it was not only the first time that NESP might be reported, but it was also at the Olympics, with the whole world waiting for results! Our team's collective thinking kicked into high gear, white-hot... The responsibility for reporting any drug finding is huge, but we embrace it wholeheartedly... because we know it's in good hands.

Did you feel bad about someone's career being ruined?

We don't ruin the career of an athlete who cheats; he or she does that to himself or herself. Our job is to report the truth. A doper who was caught has damaged not only his or her own career, but also those of clean competitors as well as the reputation of their sport and the very spirit of sport...

Is there any way to ensure that an Olympics can be drug free?

The escalation in the use of new drugs as doping agents has accelerated for years and made it a growing challenge for drug testers to keep up. I can't imagine any practical way to ensure that an Olympics is 100 percent drug free... Even if all drug tests were negative, we could never be certain that no prohibited drug was used.

Why write a children's book on this subject?

I wanted to provide children with accessible information before they make decisions about doping, although unfortunately some of them are being doped by adults around them. I also wanted to reach into the future and address tomorrow's thought leaders. Some kids can grasp complex issues, have insights, and be highly idealistic. Kids who talk about drugs in sports exercise their critical thinking, have a better chance of becoming savvy consumers of health products, and are better equipped to maintain health and fitness through a smart lifestyle.

I would like [readers] to see that science offers opportunities and challenges—even heart-pounding excitement and drama—with immediate and important consequences to other human beings.