

## Why some top athletes cheat by using drugs

Elite athletes have revealed some of the motivations behind decisions to cheat through drug-taking. Carried out by researchers from the Department of Physical and Sports Education at the University of Granada, a new study has shown most of these sportsmen and women consider doping substances to be effective when it comes to performance improvement.

Published in the journal *Sports Medicine*, the findings indicate athletes take these drugs in order to achieve athletic success, improve recovery and prevent nutritional deficiencies, as well as for financial gain and simply because other competitors are using them.

It was demonstrated that people believe doping substances to be effective, even though they understand that using them is a form of cheating, can lead to punishment and poses health dangers.

To gather their results, the investigators reviewed 33 subjects on the matter, which had been published between 2000 and 2011.

Researchers Mikel Zabala and Jaime Morente-Sanchez said attempts to prevent drug-taking should not see money simply given to ensure anti-doping tests are carried out, adding: "It would be enough to designate at least a small part of this budget to educational and prevention programmes that encourage athletes to reject the use of banned substances and methods."

Chartered Psychologist Dr Roger Kingerlee comments:

"The pressures, and pay-offs, of elite sport have never been greater than they are now. This study takes a comprehensive look at doping in sport, and highlights the challenges - many of them complex and psychological - in preventing it, and promoting fair play."