



Press release , July 19th 2016

Health of runners ; a priority for the ITRA

The ITRA (International Trail Running Association) has had the objective, since its creation in 2013, of giving a voice to players in the field of trail-running, so as to promote its values, diversity and development, to improve security of its races and the health of the runners and to favour the dialogue with national and international institutions.

The health policy – which is all the actions which together increase the prevention and protection of health of sportspersons – has, for three years, been one of its priorities. In 2016, the ITRA went even further by becoming a player in the launch of the QUARTZ programme which is funded via donations to Ultra Sports Science (Foundation for Medicine & Science in Ultra-Endurance Sports).

1) Setting up of a health policy

A health page available to all runners

Since 2014, the ITRA has made available, via its web-site, a runner's page developed by Athletes For Transparency (AFT). It is a SHOL (Sport and Health On-Line) platform which allows runners , both elite and amateur, to upload their medical information such as medical certificates, blood group, the person to contact in the case of an emergency or even any Therapeutic Usage Exemptions (TUE). This essential information can be easily exploited by medical teams present at the races so as to make any interventions efficient .

Organisations involved with following the health of runners

Although it has a not insignificant financial charge for organisations, a few, like the TMB® since 2008, the Marathon du Mont-Blanc since 2015, the MaXi-Race on the occasion of the 2015 World Trail-Running Championships and the Trans Peneda Gerês on the occasion of the 2016 World Trail-Running Championships, wanted to get involved in the implementation of following the health of the of the runners through the ITRA health policy.

This innovative action has neither the vocation nor the competence to be a substitute for current regulations regarding the anti-doping fight because it helps sportspersons who are willing to reveal possible anomalies connected to pathologies or the practice of self-medication or non-voluntary drugs which can lead a behaviour related to doping.

In the case of an abnormal profile, the runner is interviewed by the organisation's medical team accompanied by experts commissioned by the ITRA.

According to the case, the committee can take the decision to forbid a runner from taking

the start of the race. It is an important evolution for organisers in regard to their commitment for the health of runners and ethics of the race.

More information at : http://itra.run/page/261/Politique_sante.html

1) Launch of a new programme, Quartz, aimed at high calibre athletes

Within the framework of the continuation of the Health Policy, the QUARTZ Programme is specifically aimed at elite athletes. It is a 6 month pilot study, based on athletes volunteering. The runners agree to numerous analyses and to declare their « health » data such as their medical personnel, their location, the issue of any TUEs (Therapeutic Usage Exemptions) or even any medicines used. Within the framework of an initiative of transparency, the runner can make all their « health » data public.

The 3 best in each category (General, S, M, L and XL according to ITRA ranking) were invited to join the programme free of charge. Piloted by the ITRA, the QUARTZ Programme relies on partners, Ultra Sports Science for finance and Athletes For Transparency (AFT) for the implementation. To date, 16 runners have already joined the programme. The complete list is available on our web-site: <http://itra.run/community>

- Testimony from Sage Canaday (USA) – runner involved in the QUARTZ Programme

« I am very happy about the creation of the QUARTZ Programme and honoured to be part of it. I believe in a clean and transparent sport between the best athletes of the discipline, and for that, I am more than happy to publish my blood test results at any moment.

Thanks to QUARTZ, I think that we can develop the values of trail-running and maintain the runners good health, for their own well-being, work and natural performance.

I think that the sport needs such a health programme, and in the future, with biological passports, random anti-doping tests, the different policies and sanctions organised regarding the fight against doping, we will be able to ensure that athletes do not use doping products as a byway and that they follow all the rules so as to be on an equal footing ».

A new approach to following the health of runners

Via their ITRA health page the runners regularly receive requests for analyses (blood, urinary or capillary) to be carried out in a laboratory of their choice. In total, there are 66 biological markers which can be identified, giving a very large vision of a runner's state of health with the help of different scientific analysis models.

The Quartz programme complements the current tools concerning the fight against doping, like the doping tests (during or outside of competitions) or the biological passport. These two approaches offer a legal capacity to engender sporting or financial sanctions to athletes and those supervising them.

There is more flexibility (the test can be carried out in the athletes locality), allowing a more global way of studying their health and detecting any possible abnormalities.

The first report after the 2016 World Trail-Running Championships at the end of October

All participating athletes will be invited to give a report of their experience and to draw their first conclusions about the programme, so as to think about implicating all those involved, like the runners, organisers, sponsors or institutional members.

More information at : <http://itra.run/community>

1) Creation of Ultra Sports Science (fund of subsidies for the medicine and science of ultra-endurance)

In 2014, ten doctors developed the first international scientific synthesis document listing the specific medical conditions relating to ultra-endurance and open country running races. From this analysis was born the idea of focussing on symptomatic or pathognomonic illnesses in ultra-endurance.

Ultra Sports Science, created on March 5th 2016, accompanies all parties involved with ultra-endurance – sports persons, organisers, researchers, federations, trainers, public authorities - in the improvement and preservation of good health and the well-being of the athletes through the grouping of, and the search for finance for, research projects. The results of these projects are accessible to everybody.

Ultra Sports Science has a unique position at the crossroads of research, sport and health matters.

Numerous studies already carried out are available at:

<http://ultrasportsscience.org/publications-scientifiques/?lang=fr>

The ITRA, first institutional funding partner

To better structure the whole health policy connected with ultra-endurance sports and to ensure total independence between the donors, research projects and other activities, the ITRA actively supports the creation of the Ultra Sports Science fund and is equally the first institutional partner through the QUARTZ Programme.

Ultra Sports Sciences : A fund of donations which allows for the funding of the first studies

- Support for the Quartz Programme
- Study on fatigue in a difficult environment
- Studies on cramps via a new approach looking at introducing cramp in a laboratory.
- And also others

3rd international conference of medicine and science in ultra-endurance sports

Dr Marty Hoffman started, in 2014, an annual conference within the framework of the Western State Endurance Run. The 3rd, under the aegis Ultra Sports Science will take place this year in Chamonix August 21st - 23rd within the framework of the UTMB®.

The aim is to facilitate the meeting between experts specialising in ultra-endurance, to diffuse the recent results of research projects and to broadcast them to all players involved with ultra-endurance.

More information at :

<http://ultrasportsscience.org/>

<http://www.ultrasportsscience-congress2016.com/en/programme/preliminary/>

Informations sur le site : www.itra.run

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