

VONETTA FLOWERS

REALIZING HER DREAMS



VONETTA FLOWERS WON A GOLD MEDAL IN WOMEN'S TWO-MAN BOBSLED AT SALT LAKE CITY IN 2002, HER FIRST APPEARANCE IN THE OLYMPIC WINTER GAMES. HERE, SHE TALKS ABOUT THAT EXPERIENCE, HER PURSUIT OF THE OLYMPIC DREAM, HER APPROACH TO COMPETITION, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPETING CLEAN.

Can you give us some background on your athletic history and how you got involved in bobsled?

I started running track when I was nine years old. My first dream of going to the Olympics was when I was nine; it was for the Summer Olympics. I tried out in 1996 and 2000 and didn't make the track and field team.

When I didn't make the track and field team I decided that I was going to retire. I wanted to start a family. And that's when my husband spotted a flyer. One of the Bobsled drivers, Bonnie Warner, was at the track meet recruiting track and field athletes. He saw one of her flyers and it was like, "Hey let's try out for the Bobsled team." But we were going to go do it, just for fun, not to make the team. We went and tried out and my husband

ended up pulling his hamstring halfway through. Once he pulled his hamstring it was like "You have to continue on, you have to live the dream for our family."

And in two weeks Bonnie Warner called me and invited me to Germany, to teach me how to push the bobsled. At that point I knew nothing about bobsled; the only thing I knew was the movie "Cool Runnings."

Tell us about your achievement in Salt Lake. What happened?

I guess the most exciting part about it was standing on the podium, hearing your national anthem being played and watching the flag. It felt like it was just me standing there on top of the world...you know, just me and the flag at that point. I thought about all the hard work I put in, the

dedication and the injuries and the sacrifices I made to get to this point and I'm just so thankful to have so many different people in my life to help me. Because I didn't do it alone, it was so many people that helped me get to that point.

Another high moment, in winning that gold medal, was hearing that I'm the first African American or first black athlete from any nation to win a winter gold medal. It was just unbelievable.

Do you believe that attitude can affect your performance?

I think so. I think it's most important to have a positive attitude with whatever you're going to do.

As an elite athlete, why is it so important to make good choices?

As an elite athlete, to make good choices is important because I have high goals and I think that once you have those goals you have to follow certain rules.

Why do you choose to compete clean?

I choose to compete clean because... that's me. I don't know another way of competing. I've been doing it all my life and doing it another way would just be wrong.

What do you have to say about your experiences being tested in competition?

Being tested in competition, I think everything has always been professional.

More with Vonetta on Pg. 2....

A publication dedicated to providing timely and accurate information for U.S. Athletes in the Olympic and Paralympic Movement

IN THIS ISSUE:

Flowers Interview [1-2]

Doping Control at the Games [2]

Quick Hitters... [3]

Olympic & Paralympic Games facts
Therapeutic Use Exemption changes
New IAAF rule for Track and Field

Believing in the Value of Fair Play [4]

Athlete's Advantage

ToolKit [4]

VONETTA FLOWERS CONT'D

I compete clean...
because real athletes
play fair.

USA
USADA
U.S. Anti-Doping Agency

Celebrating the value
of clean sport.

Vonetta Flowers
U.S. Olympian - Bobsled

Go Team USA!!

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL ATHLETES
NOMINATED TO THE U.S. OLYMPIC
AND PARALYMPIC TEAMS!

USADA WISHES YOU WELL IN THE
PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE AT THE
GAMES.

What do you have to say to athletes who are going to be tested for the first time? Is it scary?

No...not necessarily scary, being tested for the first time, but the fact of getting used to someone watching you use the bathroom. And sometimes your body just freezes up and you have to go, but the fact that someone is watching you...it gets tough.

Are you confident in USADA's doping control process?

I am confident. I don't think ...with the way the containers are sealed, I don't think there's a way to contaminate them. I'm happy with the process.

What do you have to say to an athlete who is thinking about doping to get ahead?

I would say don't do it, because eventually you will get caught. There are people who have died from it and it harms the body, so I would just suggest not doing it.

When you hear that an athlete has received a doping violation, how does that make you feel?

It makes me feel sad because it's not fair to the other athletes that

compete clean. And they come along and cheat; basically that's what they're doing to get ahead, and I just don't think that's fair.

Can an athlete turn his or her life around after a doping violation?

I think so. I think it's going to be tough if you have a doping violation and come back...just because people are going to be still thinking about what you did that was wrong. But I think you have to...if your goal's to compete you still have to prove yourself again and that's going to be the tough part as far as proving yourself and proving that you can compete clean.

Why is it important to play fair?

It's important to play fair because, if you play fair then I think the right things will happen. Once you start cheating, everything starts to go down. If you play fair you can only have the best outcome.

What do you have to say to other athletes to encourage them to be their best?

To athletes, I say dream big. There's not a dream that you can't obtain, it's all about putting in the work.

Doping Control at the 2006 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games

General:

- The International Olympic Committee (IOC) oversees doping control at the Games.
- The Turin Organizing Committee (TOROC) implements testing within Olympic venues.
- The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), under the authority of the IOC, implements testing outside Olympic venues.
- The IOC is exclusively responsible for results management.

Testing:

- Athletes may be tested anywhere in the world once the Athletes' Village opens on January 31 until the Closing Ceremonies on February 26.
- For the Paralympic Games, the Athletes' Village opens on March 4 and closes on March 22.
- During this entire period, samples are tested in accordance with the In-Competition (full) testing menu on the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) 2006 Prohibited List.
- Athletes are subject to testing even after they are finished with competition.

Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUEs):

- The USOC Sports Medicine Department is completing mandatory Pulmonary Function Tests (PFT) prior to the Games for all athletes requesting to use beta-2 agonists.
- The IOC must approve all TUE applications submitted.
- For more information on the TUE process for the Games, contact the USOC Sports Medicine Department at (719) 866-4668.

Doping a Criminal Offense in Italy:

- U.S. athletes competing in the 2006 Olympic Winter Games in Torino, Italy, should be certain that they understand the implications of Italian laws which can make doping infractions a criminal offense.

The information provided here is only a summary. For more information, visit www.olympic.org



QUICK HITTERS

A QUICK LOOK AT THE LATEST ANTI-DOPING INFORMATION FOR ATHLETES

2006 Winter Olympic Games General Facts and Figures**

- 84 medals will be awarded over a period of 17 days.
- 2,500 athletes and 2,500 officials from 85 National Olympic Committees will be housed in three Olympic Villages: Torino, Bardonecchia, and Sestriere.
- Seven sports will be presented: Biathlon, Bobsled, Curling, Ice Hockey, Luge, Skating, and Skiing.
- Eight competition sites: Bardonecchia, Pinerolo, Pragelato, Cesana-Pariol, Cesana-San Sicario, Sauze d'Oulx, Sestriere, and Torino, joined by two training centers at: Claviere and Torre Pellice.
- 650 judges and referees will participate in the Games.
- 10,000 journalists and media representatives are expected to cover the Games.
- As part of the IOC's zero tolerance approach to doping, the number of tests will increase by 45% in Torino to 1,200, compared to 825 tests in Salt Lake City.

Source: International Olympic Committee

**Anticipated

2006 Winter Paralympic Games General Facts and Figures**

- 58 Medals will be awarded over a period of 10 days.
- 534 athletes and 700 officials from 41 countries will be housed in two Olympic Villages: Torino and Sestriere.
- Four sports will be presented: Alpine Skiing, Ice Sled Hockey, Nordic Skiing, and Wheelchair Curling.
- Four competition sites: Torino, Pinerolo, Sestriere, and Pragelato.
- 1,000 journalists and media representatives are expected to cover the Games.
- 280 doping control tests will be conducted.

Source: International Paralympic Committee

**Anticipated

WHO SAID IT ?

"Doctors and scientists said that breaking the four-minute mile was impossible, that one would die in the attempt. Thus, when I got up from the track after collapsing at the finish line, I figured I was dead."

(Answer on Pg. 4)

Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUEs) Changes

- USADA's new fax number for TUEs is (719) 785-2029.
- Biathlon athletes requesting the use of a prohibited substance **must TYPE** all their information on the appropriate TUE form. The International Biathlon Union will not accept handwritten requests.
- Volleyball athletes requesting the use of a beta-2 agonist must complete pulmonary function tests and submit the results along with their medical file in conjunction with the International Volleyball Federation (FIVB) Abbreviated TUE form to USADA.

For questions in general about the TUE process, call (719) 785-2045.

Track and Field Athletes in IAAF's Registered Testing Pool

The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) Congress voted on a new rule concerning Missed Tests that you need to be fully aware of:

"A failure to submit your whereabouts information to the IAAF upon request, or a failure to submit adequate whereabouts information, shall result in an evaluation for a missed test. If you are evaluated as having three (3) missed tests in any period of five (5) years beginning with the date of the first missed test, you shall have committed an anti-doping rule violation in accordance with rule (IAAF) 32.2(d)."

For more information, visit www.iaaf.org.

DID YOU KNOW ?

Four of the seven IOC-recognized sport categories- bobsled, ice hockey, skiing and skating- have appeared in every Olympic Winter Games.



BELIEVING IN THE VALUE OF FAIR PLAY

Following the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, Greece, U.S. cyclist Erin Mirabella was awarded a bronze medal because of a doping violation by one of the competitors who finished ahead of her. A subsequent appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) resulted in a ruling favoring the athlete who had been charged with the doping violation, and restoration of that athlete's medal. Following are excerpts from a statement by Erin Mirabella in response to that decision which truly captures the Spirit of Sport:

"My goals at the Olympic Games in Athens were to compete to the best of my ability and to represent my country with honor and pride. I believe I did that.

I have always been pleased and proud of my fourth-place performance in the points race at the Olympic Games. When the decision was made in Athens by the International Olympic Committee to award me the bronze medal, it didn't change the pride I felt in my performance.

I read in news reports of a decision made by the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) that may again change the results of the points race. I had no prior knowledge of the appeal to CAS or of their decision. I have had a lot to understand and digest in a very short period of time.

I want to do what is right and what is fair. I believe in the Olympic Ideals and the values of sportsmanship and fair play. As such, if the IOC decides that I should give the bronze medal from the points race to my competitor, Maria-Luisa Calle Williams that is what I will do. If due to a mistake made in Athens, an innocent person was found guilty, then that wrong needs to be righted.

While I still need some time to fully understand and examine the decision made by CAS, I believe it's not fair to complicate matters by refusing to give the medal to an athlete who may rightfully deserve it."

-Erin



TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS!

Are you in USADA's Out-of-Competition (OOC) Testing Program?

Take a Stand for Clean Sport by signing up for the Athlete's Advantage™ Toolkit. For athletes in the OOC Testing Program, it's an all-in-one resource. Contact USADA Education toll-free at (866) 601-2632, ext. 2044; (719) 785-2044; or by e-mail at educationnews@usantidoping.org to request the Toolkit. Plus, you'll also receive a cool gym bag and Toolkit calendar!



SPiRiT of Sport™

Contributors:

Baaron Pittenger
Shauna Prete
James Wagenschutz

Editors:

Karen Casey
Rebecca Pew

U.S. Anti-Doping Agency
1330 Quail Lake Loop,
Suite 260
Colorado Springs, CO 80906
Phone: (719) 785-2000
Toll-Free: (866) 601-2632
Fax: (719) 785-2001
www.usantidoping.org

USADA and the USADA logo are registered trademarks and Spirit of Sport and Athlete's Advantage are trademarks of the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency. All Rights Reserved. © USADA 2006. All rights reserved.