

The responsibility of the dead and almost-dead in sport

La responsabilidad de los muertos y casi-muertos en el deporte

Pedro Manonelles Marqueta

Presidente de la Sociedad Española de Medicina del Deporte (SEMED).

Experience tells us that media events must to happen in order to have an impact on society.

They say that “every cloud has a silver lining”, but it is a pity to have to apply this saying in a subject of the transcendence of death that happens in people who practice sport and, nowadays and given the recent events, of those who, might have passed away, have not done so because of the fortunate intervention of a savior.

It is a shame that these situations have to hold a media dimension in order to have some kind of beneficial outcomes for athletes.

We have been trying for 25 years, in the Spanish Society of Sports Medicine, to convince authorities and athletes of the need for medical examinations for sports fitness. Little has been achieved by means of reasoning and the attempt to convince them of the need for it, so we are convinced that it is necessary to make it compulsory, especially keeping in mind that the number of athletes is, fortunately, increasing... which also increases the number of these unfortunate events.

However, we will continue trying to convince those people and we propose two reflections. How many deaths and near-deaths are

necessary for those responsible for the registration of athletes (of all athletes) in competitions to take effective measures?

And this one goes to athletes, millions of popular athletes who buy their shoes or bicycles, spend a fortune on supplements, sports materials, travel, etc., but who do not consider visiting a specialist to see if they are fit to practice sport. Have you thought about what happens when an athlete goes out to practice his sport, have a good time, compete or enjoy one of his favorite activities, and has the misfortune of suffering a cardiovascular incident, sometimes deadly? What will happen to the people who are waiting for him at home, with life projects underway, with economic needs to cover, with mortgages to pay, with children who will remain...?

Doctors have a responsibility to society. We have an obligation to take care of sick and healthy people. In the latter case, by doing our job of prevention.

Is it so much to ask to those responsible for sporting activities and, especially to those who are most interested, which are the sportsmen and sportswomen, to share this responsibility?

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c/ Lto. Gabriel Miro, 54, ptas. 7 y 9
46008 Valencia Tel: 963857395
Móvil: 608848455 Fax: 963840104
info@bermellelectromedicina.com
www.bermellelectromedicina.com



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