

## Olympic Champion Callum Skinner becomes latest athlete to officially endorse radical shake-up of World Anti-Doping Agency

- **UK Anti-Doping Athlete Committee member backs overhaul of World Anti-Doping Agency governance, stating: “WADA’s governance, in its current form, is not fit for purpose”.**
- **Rising star of anti-doping movement Skinner calls on WADA to rethink the minor changes proposed by its Governance Committee last week, stating the Committee’s suggestions were “positive but tentative initial steps” and will do little to confront the severity of WADA’s Governance Crisis**
- **The Rio 2016 Cycling Gold and Silver Medalist questions lack of leadership at World Anti-Doping Agency, saying: “In the absence of leadership at the top, it’s now incumbent on the athletes to drive the much-needed change”.**
- **Skinner’s official endorsement of radical WADA reform is backed by thousands of other athletes worldwide who have proposed such ideas over the last couple of years, in what is fast becoming the largest athlete-led anti-doping revolution ever seen.**
- **Third high profile athlete intervention on WADA’s governance raises the stakes and puts further pressure on the global regulator to rethink the modest changes proposed by its Governance Committee, following what has become the greatest crisis in its 19-year history.**

**29 October 2018:** “The governance of the World Anti-Doping Agency of 2018, in its current form, is not fit for purpose”. These were the words of Olympic Champion cyclist Callum Skinner, who today became the third high-profile athlete to officially endorse a radical Reform Paper that will shake-up the World Anti-Doping Agency’s (WADA’s) governance to make it “more in tune with the wishes and rights of the global athlete community”.

Skinner, who is a member of the UK Anti-Doping Agency Athlete Commission and the British Cycling Athlete Committee, lent his full support to the “logical and pragmatic” Reform Proposal Paper launched by Rio 2016 Para-Powerlifting Silver Medalist Ali Jawad on 9 October and supported by Olympic Champion racewalker Jared Tallent last week. Titled [\*The Alternative: Reforming WADA’s Governance for a new Anti-Doping Age\*](#), the Paper is the culmination of a series of ideas and proposals considered over the last couple of years by members of the athlete community. *The Alternative* calls for the sport and government representatives on the influential WADA Executive Committee to be replaced by fully independent\* members; and for future WADA Presidents to be selected as ‘independents’, instead of alternating the Presidency from the worlds of sport and government.

At the heart of the *The Alternative* is a new governance structure for WADA, consisting of three central bodies: a Foundation Board to be led by a fully independent President and Vice President; an overhauled 15-person Executive Committee, consisting of 12 members entirely independent from the worlds of government or sport (i.e. members selected from

\*Independent member: Someone that does not have a material or pecuniary relationship with the sport movement (not holding any elected, appointed or paid position in sport) or governments (either at minister, parliament member or any other related bureaucratic position); and that is not connected to any related persons in those functions; and is free from outside control; and is not depending on an other’s authority within the last 6 months before being elected. No member qualifies as ‘independent’ unless the WADA Foundation Board affirmatively determines that the member has ‘no material relationship’ with the organization, either directly or as a partner, through the sport movement, government or as an officer of an organization that has a relationship with WADA.

professional industries across broader society, to include the independent President and Vice President) and 3 athlete members; and an all-new Governance and Nominations Committee, comprising 5 independent members and 2 WADA Athlete Committee members, that would oversee the representation and assessment of both the Foundation Board and Executive Committee, and in turn ensure that there is much greater scrutiny of the decision-making process that impacts the lives of athletes worldwide.

“In light of the recent Russian doping scandal, one of the biggest doping crises of all time, the governance structure of the World Anti-Doping Agency of 2018 is quite simply, in its current form, not fit for purpose” said the 26-year-old Briton. “The staff at WADA, some of whom I know personally are excellent, talented and driven people who dedicate themselves to making sport clean. They do what is right by the athletes. This is in stark contrast to the majority of those who lead and govern WADA.”

“The lack of independence, along with the fact that decisions that impact the livelihoods of clean athletes are made surreptitiously and ‘behind closed doors’, are two areas of huge concern to international athletes. This is not how sport should be run in 2018, and it is definitely not how something as important as anti-doping should be run. It is time for change and time for athlete-led solutions, and that is why I am proud to give my wholehearted backing to this bold, logical and pragmatic set of proposals that WADA needs to give proper consideration to if we are to regain athlete and public confidence in sport.

Since *The Alternative* was launched earlier this month, WADA has put forward [suggestions of its Governance Review Committee](#) for how its governance might change. Speaking to the Committee’s suggestions, which were released last Wednesday, Skinner said: “On behalf of the international athlete community, I call on WADA to rethink its very modest, minor proposed changes to its governance structure. The proposed changes are, quite simply, just “tweaking around the edges” and fail to confront the severity of WADA’s Governance Crisis. After all the constructive solutions athletes have made, and given the unprecedented uprising of the athlete voice recently, the proposed changes fall woefully short of what the world of sport requires,” he added.

“My message to fellow athletes is simply: I encourage them to back these proposals, and I encourage WADA and the International Olympic Committee to start listening, they must remember who they represent. Things have to change.”

Skinner also today gave his backing to Jawad and Tallent’s calls for the WADA Governance Review Committee to make its discussions and meetings more transparent, and to drop the current “behind closed doors” approach that is undermining athlete trust in the anti-doping system.

The WADA Foundation Board meet in Azerbaijan on 15 November, and on behalf of the global athlete community, Skinner, Tallent and Jawad are urging WADA to start engaging with *The Alternative* and to rethink the Agency’s current proposals which fall well short of athletes’ demands.

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

**The Alternative: Reforming WADA's Governance for a new Anti-Doping Age  
(Summary Paper)**

**The Alternative: Reforming WADA's Governance for a new Anti-Doping Age (Detailed  
Paper)**

### **Media Information**

To request a Media Interview with Callum Skinner, or for more information, contact [athletesforcleansport@gmail.com](mailto:athletesforcleansport@gmail.com) . Please include your name, organization and details along with your request.

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