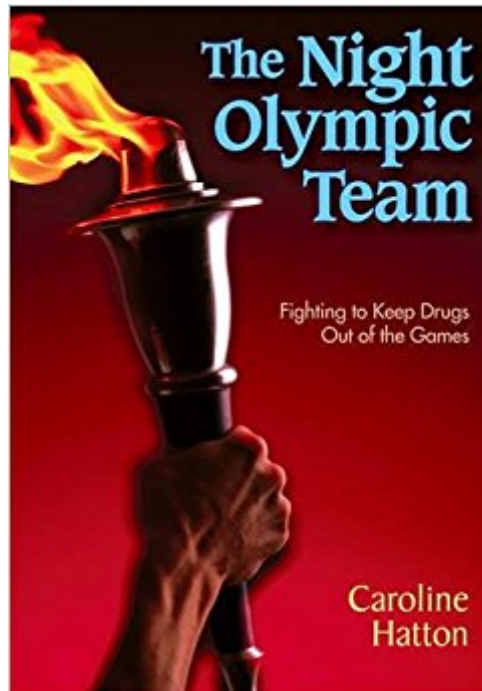




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# The Night Olympic Team: Fighting To Keep Drugs Out Of The Games



## Synopsis

A team of scientists works to expose athletes who use banned drugs to win Olympic medals in this Library Media Connection Editor's Choice. Here is the true, inside story of the UCLA Olympic Laboratory's; the drug-detection team that tests athletes for banned performance-enhancing drugs. The scientists worked long nights to detect a new, never-before-tested performance-enhancing drug called NESP (novel erythropoietic stimulating protein) during the 19th Winter Olympics (2002) in Salt Lake City, Utah. The group's work exposed three NESP users among the winning cross-country skiers. The drug users were stripped of their medals, which were then given to the rightful winners.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Grade 5-8 • Hatton presents a concise, readable account of a group of scientists who are working to detect forbidden drug use in sports. The scientists of the UCLA Olympic lab, or the "night Olympic team," see themselves as custodians of the ideal of fairness. Five months before the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, Amgen Corporation scientists introduced an improved blood-booster, NESP. Like many banned drugs, it has valid uses, but it was feared that some athletes would use it to boost their endurance and, due to its newness, elude detection. The UCLA Olympic Lab set up elaborate testing procedures to ensure fairness and worked around the clock to process test results. They found that three athletes, all cross-country skiers, had used NESP. With the backing of top Olympic officials, their findings were tested and the athletes' medals were

revoked. Hatton's approach to the issues raised by the use of performance-enhancing drugs is fair-minded and kid-friendly. When considering why athletes cheat, she observes: "A gold medal might make an athlete a national hero or lead to fabulous wealth. Some athletes feel too much pressure to win from fans, loved ones, or even themselves." Teachers and young readers will appreciate Hatton's personable manner and her keen perspective on this timely subject. Full-color photos appear throughout.

•Marilyn Taniguchi, Beverly Hills Public Library, CA Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

"Readers will certainly understand one of the more complicated subtexts of the upcoming Olympics much better after spending some time with this slim, readable offering. ('sports smarts,' author's note, glossary, resources, index)" --Kirkus Reviews

Fair-minded and kid-friendly. . . . Teachers and young readers will appreciate Hatton's personable manner and her keen perspective on this timely subject." --School Library Journal

Hatton charts new territory providing a look at the lab that works to keep athletic competitions fair. This is an outstanding resource for reports on drugs in sports or the Olympics." --Library Media Connection

The science adventure story in this book is timeless because it really happened at the 2002 Winter Olympics. But if you want to read the most up-to-date author's note (which sheds light on how the story fits in The Big Picture) and see the most current resources, then get the latest, newest edition, which is updated when the book is reprinted. The book's Publication Date officially remains "2008" but new copies are most likely to be from the latest, up-to-date printing.

Truth is always stranger than fiction, and this story is a must for all young children to read. Any attempt to cheat by taking drugs in sports is a big story - and will ultimately bring down the athlete. Win fair and clean - a strong message.

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