

Statement of the Presidium of the German Gymnastics Federation

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A. Background to the investigation

Basic position of the DTB Presidium

In the past few weeks, allegations against an am
A trainer working at the federal base in Chemnitz reports. The allegations concern both
psychological violence as well as inappropriate training methods against female athletes
as well as the dispensing of medication without a doctor's prescription.

The German Gymnastics Federation (DTB) takes the allegations extremely seriously and has
decided to have the issues in question cleared up independently. The DTB
asked all athletes, trainers and members of the DTB to carry out the investigation and
To fully support the clarification of the facts.

Our position is clear: We firmly reject all forms of violence
without exception and distance ourselves from those described in the allegations
Training methods. These in no way correspond to the values of the DTB and the
Framework conditions for responsible training. At the same time we are ours
Conscious of special responsibility towards young athletes and their parents. In
We have already taken a number of [measures to be](#) aware of this in the past
[Protection against violence](#) initiated and implemented. Health protection and personal
The DTB's top priority is the development of the athletes.

We ask ourselves whether we have lived up to this claim in the past
are what mistakes were made and what to do to prevent mistakes from repeating themselves.
We therefore expressly welcome that in Germany and beyond
Report former and active athletes and report on their experiences. they
not only make a valuable contribution to a necessary discussion in the
Competitive sport. They also contribute to any current and previous grievances and grievances
To deal with misconduct and to draw the necessary conclusions for the future.

Structured comprehensive education

The DTB has decided to combine the facts on which the allegations are based
to work through a structured and thorough process. In a first step, the
The allegations raised are dealt with independently and professionally. This was done with the law firm
Rettenmaier Frankfurt hired an independent, external law firm. The results
this investigation are now available.

On this factual basis created by the independent external investigation, the
DTB Presidium to discuss the results of the investigation and the first consequences
drawn. In doing so, the DTB has gone beyond the specific issues in question
in particular also critically questioning one's own actions and structures

this with the willingness and the will to make the changes that are now necessary. We are aware that we must also be measured by the trust that the have put in us the athletes and parents involved in the investigation. We as DTB we will continue to work consistently and the necessary
Impose consequences.

Before following the subject, procedure and scope of the investigation as well whose essential results are described, we expressly thank everyone involved, who supported this extensive investigation. Our thanks go above all to the Athletes and other interlocutors who join the team of the investigation entrusted and thus contributed significantly to the processing of the facts.

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The following is the subject of the independent investigation, which Procedure and scope of the investigation as well as its main results described. On this basis, we will then inform you about the first consequences that the presidium of the DTB has drawn from the results of the investigation, and ours rest of the procedure.

The following sections B to D are from the Rettenmaier law firm with the involvement of the graduate and sports psychologist Frauke Wilhelm (hereinafter: law firm Rettenmaier) compiled summary of the subject of the investigation, of the process and scope of the investigation as well as the investigation results.

B. Subject of the investigation

The reason for the investigation were reports from the news magazine DER SPIEGEL from November 27th as well as from December 3rd and 23rd, 2020. In these articles gymnasts report Trainers and parents of issues that they discussed with the local trainer, Ms. Gabriele Frehse, want to experience it. The articles deal with the Gymnasts, dispensing painkillers, dealing with injuries and mental health Anomalies, specifically with eating disorders and self-harm, addressed and criticized.

The DTB contacted the Rettenmaier Frankfurt law firm on December 1st, 2020 with an investigation of the charged allegations. The subject of the commission was initially the Investigation of the suspicions from the SPIEGEL article from November 27, 2020. Here On the one hand, it should be determined whether the suspicions are true and, if so, whether it is this only concerns the cases documented in the report, or whether further suspicions can be assumed. The investigation was based on as a result The Chemnitz location and the trainer who worked there were suspicious limited. In the event that the law firm Rettenmaier in this context Insights gained about other people and locations were also made these insights documented.

In terms of content, the investigation was expanded twice. Once due to the SPIEGEL Reporting from December 3rd, 2020 as well as a second time due to the SPIEGEL Reporting from December 23, 2020.

C. Procedure and scope of the investigation

In addition to a total of four lawyers from the Rettenmaier Frankfurt law firm, Ms. Graduate and sports psychologist Frauke Wilhelm participated in the investigation. None of the The aforementioned persons had professional contact with the DTB in the past.

There are no legally binding requirements for the implementation of a so-called internal Investigation. However, different institutions have non-binding standards which are intended to ensure that the investigation is carried out properly. The The investigation was therefore based on the standard SO4-internal investigations of the German Institute for Compliance (as of July 2019), the theses of Federal Bar Association for Corporate Attorneys in Criminal Law (BRAK-Opinion no. 35/2010) as well as the currently applicable regulations of Code of Criminal Procedure.

Based on the results of the reporting mentioned The facts presented there could be divided into three categories split up: psychological violence, dispensing of medication, supervisory duties. In particular with regard to those related to the exercise of psychological violence Ms. Frauke Wilhelm, a graduate and sports psychologist, was suspicious of it Investigation included. She provided technical support throughout the entire investigation.

The determination of the facts was based on the principle of the witness closest to the facts. The facts described were followed by the law firm Rettenmaier after those involved People analyzed in order to address this group of people. With these people were then interviews conducted in which the respective facts are based on individualized Questionnaires was researched. At the same time, the Rettenmaier law firm requested such written documents which, in your opinion, are decisive for the assessment of the Facts were, and evaluated these documents.

In addition to the people actively approached by the Rettenmaier law firm, others individuals turned to the firm unsolicited and offered to deal with matters express. The Rettenmaier law firm has accepted all of these offers to talk to. A total of ran the law firm Rettenmaier from December 7th, 2020 to January 14th, 2021 with 32 Detailed interviews. As far as the respondents were minors, found the discussions after prior agreement with and sometimes in the presence of the Parent or legal guardian.

Two people have declined requests to speak to the Rettenmaier law firm. In one case the law firm Rettenmaier has for individual reasons from addressing a possible Respondent apart.

All conversations conducted by the Rettenmaier law firm took place under the observance of the four-eyes Principle instead. Ms. Wilhelm, a graduate psychologist, took part in all interviews.

In the course of the interviews, all respondents were initially briefed in detail. The subject of the instruction was the voluntary nature of the information, the lack of legal / legal truthfulness, the possible use of the protocols by state Authorities as well as the possibility to provide anonymized information.

The contents of the conversation were initially all dictated aloud and approved and in this way recorded in the wording. Based on the approved electronic protocol dictations transcripts of the minutes were made. These transcripts were made by the respondents controlled, approved and signed. The Rettenmaier law firm has all the minutes of the conducted interviews with the respondents.

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In two cases, extensive corrections or deletions were made by the informant performed. Here the audio file was checked again and determined in all cases that the minutes accurately reflect the content of the conversation.

The 32 interviews already mentioned lasted on average about 3.5 hours. Approx. 800 pages of protocol created. In addition, numerous documents were submitted to the firm Rettenmaier requested or otherwise received it. The scope of this Document is again over 100 pages.

The groups of people with whom interviews were conducted consisted of athletes Trainers, parents, doctors and officials. So much for the Rettenmaier law firm Conversations with medical staff, the professionals for this are previously from the Secrecy was released.

The DTB was established by the Rettenmaier law firm between December 1st, 2020 and 14.01.2021 was informed twice about the status of the investigation. Here were no information on the content, only on the scope and progress of the Investigation made. The results of the investigation were published on January 14th and 16th, 2021 presented by the law firm Rettenmaier.

D. Main results of the investigation

Approach of the law firm Rettenmaier

In the course of the investigation, the information provided by respondents was given in a first
First step according to the criteria used in the highest court rulings
analyzed to determine true and false statements.

For the assumption of a true statement (so-called reality criteria) speak afterwards:
Concreteness and clarity of the descriptions, also with the spatiotemporal
Links and anchoring of events in concrete life situations,
Richness of detail in the statement, mentioning of details and the granting of
Memory gaps, description of so-called broken chains of action, self-corrections and
- Burdens, originality, in particular reproduction of one's own experience, feelings, worries,
Fears, mentions of unfavorable behavior, internal coherence and consistency
(so-called logical consistency), especially the lack of contradiction in the statements made to others
Facts and empirically verifiable factual laws of science and
Constancy of statements.

Speak against the assumption of a true statement - in the logical inverse conclusion - to the
So-called reality criteria: embarrassment and reluctance of the expressive to
Refusal or flight tendencies, verbal language criteria, submissiveness or -

exactly the other way round - exaggerated determinateness of the statement, advance defense and Indignation symptom, sparseness, abstractness and lack of detail of the representation, so-called smoothness, ie a description without typical complications and structural breaks.

In a second step, the available objective evidence - if available
- compared with the information provided by the person providing the information.

In a third step, the consistency between the information became more different
Respondents rated among themselves.

Concept of psychological violence

The concept of psychological violence was chosen for the purpose of investigation
psychological point of view determined. The detailed derivation of the definition can
can be viewed under the attached link. The essential aspects of the
Definitions are explained below.

[Link: Definition of psychological violence](#)

In the relevant specialist literature there is no uniform definition of the term
psychological violence . The difficulty in defining psychological violence is already reflected
in the many terms used synonymously with psychological violence both in the
psychological literature and practice as well as in everyday language use. While
In abuse research, the term "psychological abuse" is more prevalent
has, is in the practice of child and youth welfare predominantly of "psychological" or
"Mental violence" spoken.

However, a definition has emerged and is often used in science (also
international) cited:

*"Mental abuse of a child involves repetitive occurrence or extreme
Expression of behaviors of a caregiver that make the child understand it
be worthless, flawed, unloved, unwanted, dangerous or only useful for that
To meet a person's needs. "*

American Professional Society on the Abuse on Children (APSAC)

7th

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Even if in this definition of psychological abuse of children (and not
Adolescents or adult adolescents), this definition can be used
can also be applied to adolescents and adult adolescents. This is possible because
regardless of the age of the athletes concerned, the specifics of the
The focus is on the trainer / athlete relationship in the present context.

A definition of the term psychological violence that relates explicitly to the context of the
(Competitive) sports, could not be found in the literature. To make a contribution
for a better understanding of psychological abuse in the theory and practice of
However, Fortier, Parent & Lessard (2020) specifically described performing competitive sports
Behavior in the context of (competitive) sport. You have the following five for this
Categories and associated specific behaviors (not listed here) in their
Category system named:

1. *Verbal abuse and devaluation of a young athlete in context
of the sport.*
2. *Behaviors that encourage the corruption, exploitation and takeover of destructive,
anti-social or unhealthy behavior of a young athlete in*

Promote the context of sport.

3. *Terrorizing or threatening violence against a young athlete in the Connection with sport.*
- 4th *Isolating or limiting a young athlete in the context of sport*
5. *Insufficient support or affection for an adolescent athlete related to sport.*

These five categories largely coincide with a system of categories for the psychological Violence, which is based on the results of American studies (Office for the Study of the Psychological Rights of Children, Indiana University - Purdue University at Indianapolis) and is used more frequently in German abuse research .

After that is

“ To speak of psychological violence when the circumstances described, the individually or in combination, occurring excessively or a recurring one Patterns in the educational process. ”

To check whether the behavior of the trainer in question towards her Gymnasts of psychological violence can be assigned to the two The specific behaviors described above are used and the definition of the APSAC. In addition, attention was paid to whether the The behavior described "occurs excessively and / or a recurring Pattern ”.

Investigation results

In the interviews, the Rettenmaier law firm was informed by a large number of respondents reports on the behavior of the trainer in question that meets these criteria and herself can be assigned to different categories of the category systems. This is about Descriptions that correspond to the following specific behaviors or sub-categories correspond:

- a. “Dismissing, demoting, and other non-physical forms are openly hostile and rejecting treatment "as well as" yelling at a young athlete, humiliate or ridicule. "(Category 1)

8th

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- b. "Choosing the same child / adolescent among others in order to criticize them, to punish, or to give him / her less attention than the others " as well as being “extremely critical of a young athlete.” (Category 1)
- c. “Extreme interference, utilization and / or dominance (e.g. showing one's own The child's / adolescent's views, feelings, and desires are suppressed, governed) with the Consequences of the child / adolescent's renunciation of autonomy "(Category 2)
- d. “Forcing or obliging a young athlete to do extremely intense work Carry out excessive training units until exhaustion or vomiting. " (Category 2)
- e. “Forcing or asking a teenage athlete to exercise while he / she is injured even though he / she has received medical advice not to do so. ”

(Category 2)

- f. "Forcing a young athlete into unhealthy eating habits or ask to reach the ideal weight in his / her sport. "(Category 2)
- G. "Set strict and unrealistic expectations of the child / adolescent in their Failure to meet the child / adolescent is at risk of loss, damage or danger. "
(Category 3)
- H. "Deliberately ignoring the emotional needs of a young athlete" and "being aloof or indifferent to a young athlete" as well as "allowing interaction only when absolutely necessary." (Category 4)
- i. "An adolescent athlete's social interactions are inappropriate restrict ". (Category 5)

Behavior that is subsumed under a, f and g was described particularly frequently could, taking into account the "strict and unrealistic expectations" mentioned under g are, in the vast majority, on how gymnasts deal with pain or refer to own injuries. Many of the respondents also reported two sides of the trainer and the often arbitrary change between them.

The law firm Rettenmaier also considers it important to mention that some of the interviewed People reported mainly positive about the trainer concerned. Also people those who criticized reported positive aspects of the trainer. That was about common called the great commitment with which the trainer works for her gymnasts and dealt with problems in everyday life.

Based on the definition described and the procedure shown the law firm Rettenmaier comes to the conclusion in its investigation report that

- In 17 cases, sufficient actual evidence for the use of psychological
There is violence by the trainer;
- In addition, in several cases, the trainer has to dispense painkillers
to gymnasts and the trainer in one case the opioid tilidine to a gymnast
Surrendered intake at competitions and the gymnast in question under the influence
this drug fell in an international competition;
- Gymnasts had to continue training even with tears and
- The gymnasts' pain reported to the trainer is often not serious
were taken.

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As part of the investigation, the law firm Rettenmaier is also aware of eating disorders and self-injurious behaviors have been reported by gymnasts. These
Due to the structure of the investigation, behaviors could not be related to the
Behavior of the trainer towards gymnasts can be traced back (a
comprehensive psychological assessment in individual cases), even if the behavior of the
Trainers who reported by gymnasts are generally to be regarded as suitable
Promote eating disorders.

From the point of view of the Rettenmaier law firm, there is also the suspicion that the trainer is a
Gymnast in a Bundesliga competition, although she knew that the

The gymnast did not have a medically confirmed fitness to compete, and the trainer the responsible persons by presenting the medical certificate of another gymnast has deceived. The trainer denies such behavior.

The trainer is in the context of the investigation into those that have arisen against her. Suspicions have been questioned. She has the behavior that she is accused of, mostly denied and up in the event that a named gymnast herself. I felt bad about her behavior, sorry. The related explanation is in accordance with the statements of Ms. Frehse in one of the MDR on Interview broadcast on December 3rd, 2020.

On the basis of the knowledge now available, the law firm Rettenmaier the clarification of facts known at the time by the DTB, which was undertaken in 2018 as insufficient. In particular that of the DTB with the help of an external consultant. On-site review of the training for psychological violence is from the point of view of the Law firm Rettenmaier not because of the content and the scope of the review been able to get a valid picture of the training conditions.

Official procedures and procedures of sports organizations:

In connection with the allegation of supplying tilidine to an athlete, the law firm Rettenmaier received knowledge that both against the trainer and against one. In this context, doctors file criminal charges on suspicion of mistreatment was reimbursed by wards and bodily harm.

According to a Dutch employee of the Institut Sport Rechtspraak (ISR) investigation into misconduct in sport initiated been. The basis for this should be the information provided by at least five individuals; this investigation is just beginning.

At this point it should be noted that for both the trainer and the trainer the presumption of innocence applies unreservedly and neither with the filing of a criminal complaint. Reliable conclusions about a possible with the initiation of corresponding proceedings existing (criminal) liability.

E. Consequences on the part of the DTB

From the point of view of the DTB, the investigation has serious breaches of duty in the Federal base in Chemnitz confirmed. This happened despite the concepts and measures that of the DTB in the past - and independent of the federal base in Chemnitz

relevant issues - developed and implemented.

Based on the current knowledge, it is certain that in 2018 and 2019

The measures taken by the DTB were not sufficient to deal with the issues reported at the time to provide comprehensive information and to take preventive action.

As an association and also on behalf of organized gymnastics, we apologize to all gymnasts concerned for the suffering that has arisen. We will do this in express personal conversations with the athletes, whereby in the cases in which people from the Rettenmaier law firm ask to preserve their anonymity have entrusted this anonymity of course to the DTB and is still respected by the DTB.

However, this apology is not enough. Especially since we currently do not can rule out that there are also misconduct in the DTB base system has come, it applies in a comprehensive, general structure and Cultural process both within the DTB and beyond changes bring about such incidents and developments as far as possible in the future to exclude. The mistakes and inadequacies of the past must not be allowed to materialize to repeat.

In this sense, we will all become in a general structure and culture process Review framework conditions, concepts and measures. The DTB makes it a Task to put the athletes even more at the center of action. The whole Training process with the aim of being internationally competitive must be designed in this way that from the beginning to the end of the active career the best interests of the child and the The personal rights and development of the athletes are guaranteed at all times. This is our guiding principle for the necessary changes and Advancements.

The report by the independent law firm Rettenmaier is not the end of the It also provides an occasion and basis, gymnastics in Germany to scrutinize and reform overall with its structures .

The overall structure and culture process cannot take place overnight be completed. This would also not do justice to the importance of the subject. Some Consequences that we must draw from the results of the independent investigation, are already fixed for us or are already emerging:

Direct personnel required from the DTB's point of view Consequences

Based on the results of the independent investigation, the DTB sees no basis for the further care of female athletes at the federal base in Chemnitz by Ms. Frehse and therefore demands the complete termination of the employment relationship of Ms. Frehse the Olympic base in Saxony, where she is employed.

In addition, the DTB does not see any - as has been the case since its discontinuation became known Basis for a cooperation between the DTB and Mr. Beltman and continues to demand expressly the termination of the employment relationship of Mr. Beltman by the TuS Chemnitz-Altendorf, where he is employed.

The DTB rejects a future activity by Ms. Frehse and Mr. Beltman in German Do gymnastics and work towards it within the scope of his possibilities.

Structural measures / changes

Beyond these immediate personnel consequences, which are necessary from the point of view of the DTB there is also a need for structural change. This is initially for the DTB described, with regard to cross-sport measures, the results of the to wait for a supplementary analysis by the DOSB. With this in mind, we welcome expressly the further investigation commissioned by the DOSB on Olympic base in Chemnitz.

Critical and comprehensive examination of the CLT structures in gymnastics

On the basis of the available knowledge, the DTB will use the federal base structures in Continue to critically and comprehensively examine and develop gymnastics.

Opportunities to intervene in terms of service and labor law

As a central association, the DTB is in many cases not able to (under service law) To initiate measures because the staff is not employed by the DTB. We hold on to the ground of the results already available through the current factual report fundamental structural changes for the benefit of the athletes are necessary. this concerns in particular the reorganization of employment relationships and the - how has shown that the DTB as the competent authority has insufficient influence Umbrella association.

The present cases have also clearly shown that in gymnastics the division of tasks between the employee (employer) and the exercise of the restricted Management right (central association) of a clear definition of tasks and competencies opposes. From the point of view of the DTB, this must be the case for future employment relationships must be taken into account.

More effective structures for preventing violence

From the DTB's point of view, more effective structures are needed to protect against violence in competitive sports. The DTB therefore considers it necessary to set up an independent structure for the To examine protection against violence and is also in exchange with international Gymnastics associations. This structure should be used by athletes, but also by coaches, parents and Clubs / associations in competitive sports also serve as a neutral point of contact. The DTB stimulates to check whether such a facility is designed to cross sports.

Sports policy demands / measures

From the point of view of the DTB Presidium, sport-political consequences are also urgently required. Which includes:

Raising the starting age for international competitions

The DTB will - together with other nations - on an international level Use sport policy to increase the starting age for competitions from currently 16 to 18 years increase. At the same time, the DTB advocates that the valuation regulations (Code de Pointage) of the world federation FIG in junior competitive sport the biological Developments such as the growth processes of children and adolescents adapt. Furthermore, the starting age for international championships in Junior women (JEM, JWM, YOG, EYOF) the then changed requirements in Adapt senior indoor area.

Adaptation of the base concept in the federal and state levels

The current developments in the child and youth sector show that through large spatial distances to the parental home do not always fully affect the child's best interests can be guaranteed. The DTB therefore suggests updating the Base concept, especially taking into account the junior area, the needs of children and adolescents in high-performance sport and gives them the opportunity to be closer to their home and thus to exercise closer to family and friends. This could also be used for other sports be helpful.

Adjustment of the squad system

Based on the results available, the DTB is committed to ensuring that the athletes a reasonable time for recovery and for necessary time off is allowed without the Promotion and losing a cadre status. We're holding a reintroduction of one "Special cadre" for necessary, also to avoid an early, unhealthy one Resumption of training as well as premature career drop-outs resulting from it avoid.

Further improvements at the federal bases

Beyond the consequences and demands, the DTB is used in the context of the overall structural and cultural change process in addition directly a bundle Initiate and implement optimizations at the federal bases. These will Among other things, the issues of parenting, admission of gymnastics, Culture of conversation, involvement of former athletes, training for trainers and Concerning cadre athletes and support in ending their careers.

Retreat of the DTB Presidium

In its closed meeting on January 22nd / 23rd, 2021, the DTB Presidium will determine the specific Project structure to initiate the overall structure process and to Advise the further development of the cultural change process and subsequently involve them decide on the next steps by external experts. Our membership and the interested members of the public are informed regularly about the further in the form of a newsletter Process informed.

Frankfurt am Main, January 21, 2021

Attachment 1 [Link: Definition of psychological violence](#)