Reviewer's report

Title: Nutritional Supplement Products: Does the label information influence purchasing decisions

Version: 1 Date: 17 June 2013

Reviewer: Andrea Petroczi

Reviewer's report:

The paper addresses an ongoing issue, namely the regulation of nutritional(dietary) supplements, from the athletes' point of view. The complexity of the issue in sport is that in addition to potential consequences to health and drug-interaction, contaminated or incorrectly labelled products may lead to inadvertent doping.

The survey and sampling method yielded useful information, which somehow lost in the dry and repetitive way of reporting the results. I found the text repetitive which also duplicates the information neatly presented in the figures.

Major revisions:

The interpretation of the results (which should replace the majority of the text in the current results section in the context of anti-doping and public health would greatly enhance the impact of this paper. In my opinion, discussion should be expanded to incorporate implications of the findings instead of the mere reporting of percentages (which are shown in the figures). Some background information that would be helpful for further developing the discussion and conclusion is listed below.


Looking at gender differences (if any) along with the sport-involved could provide an interesting insight – of if there is no difference between males and females in any of the factors investigated, the authors should say so (with supporting evidence).

If data are available, authors should also reflect on the type of products likely to
be used by athletes and likely to be contaminated, either owing to poor quality control and deliberate adulteration (spiking).

I also suggest that the authors make recommendations for the regulatory bodies, as well as for those involved in anti-doping, to address the problem highlighted in the paper (i.e. almost unconditional trust in label information). The issue of ‘trust’ could also be an interesting angle to explore – with the support of the literature.

Given that the survey sample consist of high level athletes (i.e. data collected in holding camps), authors should also reflect on what the relevant national anti-doping organisation does to help athletes avoiding inadvertent doping (perhaps to be discussed this in international and global context)

Minor revisions:

The paper is generally well-written, apart from a few awkwardly phrased sentences (e.g. “the absence intentionally or unintentionally of specific information with specific reference to…..” – please revise.

Combine small tables (i.e. Table 1 and Table 2)

Reorganise the results/discussion – currently very segmented with short (one paragraph sections, each with its own subheading)

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.