

# Article A

Many teenagers have lost their lives to drugs; nonetheless, it is always sad when another young man or woman is lost. Jordan Simon is no exception. A 17-year-old, promising young man, Jordan was a star on his high school track team at Hilliard Academy. Many thought he was destined for greatness on the track. That is, until his tragic and sudden death his senior year. He was found dead of a heart attack, which was found to be caused by EPO, a steroid. His mother, Kelly Simon, is now one of the many parents who have to deal with the death of their child. But, unlike so many others, Ms. Simon thinks there is more to her son's death than a teen's desire for better performance. That is why she has brought a lawsuit against her son's former school, Hilliard Academy, and it's track coach, Terry Swift, whom she claims neglected to protect her soon from the dangers of drug usage.

Through the testimony of witnesses, the Plaintiff sought to paint a condemning picture of Coach Terry Swift. One of his former runners, Morgan Pearce, testified that the coach often pushed his students to be the best at whatever costs. He also testified that the coach never warned his students on the dangers of EPO, and that he even overtly encouraged them to take drugs, if it would improve their performance. In her testimony, Ms. Simon told how she discovered over twenty-five thousand dollars missing from Jordan's trust fund account. Upon investigation, she found that her son was the culprit, and went to confront him. According to her, when she confronted him, he told her "to talk to coach, that he could explain it". Coach Swift, however, did not, and

simply told her that he would take care of it. she decided to drop the issue, until her son's untimely death forced her to rethink the events of that evening.

The defense tried to paint a very different picture of Coach Swift and Hilliard. Jamie Hagar, athletic director of the school, testified that the school sent its coaches to a conference on the prevention of drug use every year. On top of this, all coaches were required to give a form to their athletes that outlined the drug policy of the school and gave detailed information about the adverse effects of drugs. Aubrey Brady was also called in to testify about the school's efforts in drug-use prevention. Brady, a consultant with the Regulation and Uniform Legal Enforcement in Sports, or RULES, corporation, said that Hilliard Academy and Coach Swift followed all the regulations in place. He further stated that it was the opinion of RULES and himself that it is up to students to stop drug use, not just the schools. Finally, Coach Swift himself testified about his interactions with Jordan; that he talked to the team about the dangers of drugs, and even went one-on-one with Jordan after rumors surface about Jordan's drug use.

Who was at fault in this trial? Did coach swift push Jordan too hard, hard enough to make him turn to drugs? Or was Jordan's death the result of his own bad decision? There is circumstantial evidence to the effect that Terry Swift didn't do enough to prevent Jordan from taking drugs, and that he had motivation to encourage Jordan to take drugs. However, there is equally convincing testimony that Coach Swift was a responsible man who put his team's well-being above their success. There is no clear way to know what happened. Nonetheless, the evidence is must be weighed, and a decision must be made. Drugs have ravaged schools across the nation, taking students

in their prime. Hopefully, this case will help to educate students and teachers alike on the dangers of drugs, and the consequences of their use.