In 1977, one of East Germany's best sprinters, Renate Neufeld, fled to the West with the Bulgarian she later married. A year later she said that she had been told to take drugs supplied by coaches while training to represent East Germany in the 1980 Olympic Games. At 17, I joined the East Berlin Sports Institute. My speciality was the 80m hurdles. We swore that we would never speak to anyone about our training methods, including our parents. The training was very hard. We were all watched. We signed a register each time we left for dormitory and we had to say where we were going and what time we would return. One day, my trainer, G?nter Clam, advised me to take pills to improve my performance: I was running 200m in 24 seconds. My trainer told me the pills were vitamins, but I soon had cramp in my legs, my voice became gruff and sometimes I couldn't talk any more. Then I started to grow a moustache and my periods stopped