PREVALENCE OF THE PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION OF THE ROAD RUNNERS IN BRAZIL.
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INTRODUCTION
With the popularization of road races in last decade there have been a significant increase in the number of participants. In Brazil this increase has been considered very important (1). The most popular Brazilian’s road races have a selective function for national or international competitions. The aim of this study was to compare road runners with professional orientation (Physical Education specialist) and without it and to determine the differences between both groups.

METHODOLOGY
This study was approved by the Ethic Committee in Research from Medical College – UNICAMP. Eight hundred and seventeen volunteers were interviewed in four different road races from the national schedule in 2004. The races were: Integração (I); Maratona de Revezamento Pão de Açúcar (PA); Volta Internacional da Pampulha (P) and São Silvestre (SS). For statistical analysis Chi-Square test and an Odds Ratios test were used. Significance level was fixed at p<0.05.

RESULTS
The samples were mainly composed of men (82.1%). The number of athletes without orientation was 167, 157, 119, 151 and 594 (72.7% of the total sample) for I, P, PA, SS and total, respectively. The athletes with orientation were 39, 47, 82, 55 and 223 for I, P, PA, SS and total, respectively, which means that the number of runners without professional orientation were significantly higher (p<0.05) than those with orientation. Comparing both groups, there were other significant differences. These differences were: the use of heart rate (HR) as a controlled variable during training sessions and the higher existence of previous clinical evaluation among the orientated road runners. Those runners with professional orientation are 3.5 times more likely to have HR controlled (OR=3.67). In addition, the same runners are more likely to have a previous clinical evaluation (OR=2.8).

DISCUSSION
The results show that there are few runners with professional orientation and still less of them use HR as a variable to control their training. However, this variable may not be the best way for training control since other parameters could be more interesting (3). These tests provide greater reliance to the subjects during the sport practice (4). Due to the increase of road races and road runners (1, 2), we believe that it is necessary to give more attention to professional orientation because these road races could not be healthy.

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REFERENCES

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