
DECISION OF THE ATHLETICS INTEGRITY UNIT IN THE CASE OF MR NAVEEN CHIKARA

Introduction

1. In April 2017, World Athletics (formerly the IAAF) established the Athletics Integrity Unit ("**AIU**") whose role is to protect the integrity of the sport of Athletics, including fulfilling the World Athletics' obligations as a Signatory to the World Anti-Doping Code. World Athletics has delegated implementation of the World Athletics Anti-Doping Rules ("**ADR**") to the AIU, including but not limited to the following activities in relation to International-Level Athletes: Testing, Investigations, Results Management, Hearings, Sanctions and Appeals.
2. Mr. Naveen CHIKARA is a 23-year old Indian shot-putter who is an International-Level Athlete for the purposes of the ADR (the "**Athlete**").
3. This decision is issued by the AIU pursuant to Article 8.4.7 ADR which provides as follows:

8.4.7 "[i]n the event that [...] the Athlete or Athlete Support Person admits the Anti-Doping Rule Violation(s) charged and accedes to the Consequences specified by the Integrity Unit (or is deemed to have done so), a hearing before the Disciplinary Tribunal shall not be required. In such a case, the Integrity Unit [...] shall promptly issue a decision confirming [...] the commission of the Anti-Doping Rule Violation(s) and the imposition of the Specified Consequences [...]."

The Athlete's commission of Anti-Doping Rule Violations

4. On 27 July 2018, the Athlete was subject to out-of-competition Testing pursuant to the Testing Authority of the National Anti-Doping Agency of India ("**NADA**") in Patiala, India. The Athlete provided a urine sample numbered 6342549 (the "**Sample**").
5. On 28 October 2018, the World Anti-Doping Agency ("**WADA**") accredited laboratory in Montreal, Canada, reported an Adverse Analytical Finding for the presence of GHRP-6 in the Sample (the "**AAF**").
6. WADA referred results management for the matter to the AIU in accordance with Article 7.1.1 of the World Anti-Doping Code¹ and the AIU assumed results management responsibility for the matter in accordance with Article 7.2.8(b) ADR.
7. GHRP-6 is a Prohibited Substance under the WADA 2018 Prohibited List (S2: Peptide Hormones, Growth Factors, Related Substances and Mimetics). It is a non-Specified Substance and is prohibited at all times. The Athlete did not have a TUE permitting the use of GHRP-6.

¹ 7.1.1 "[...] Results management and the conduct of hearings for a test conducted by WADA on its own initiative, or an Anti-Doping Rule Violation discovered by WADA, will be conducted by the Anti-Doping Organization designated by WADA. [...]"

8. On 21 November 2018, the AIU notified the Athlete of the AAF and imposed a Provisional Suspension pending resolution of the case. The Athlete was requested to provide an explanation for the presence of GHRP-6 in the Sample and was afforded the opportunity to request analysis of the B Sample.
9. On 23 November 2018, the Athlete acknowledged receipt of the notice from the AIU and waived his right to have the B Sample analysed.
10. On 8 December 2018, the Athlete informed the AIU that he accepted the AAF and that he had been unaware that GHRP-6 was a Prohibited Substance.
11. On 23 January 2019, the AIU wrote to the Athlete requesting, *inter alia*, that he provide further information concerning how GHRP-6 came to be present in the Sample by no later than 29 January 2019.
12. On 13 February 2019, the AIU was advised that the Athlete was serving on an assignment in the Indian Armed Forces and therefore unreachable. The AIU was requested to stay the proceedings in these circumstances and until the Athlete became available.
13. On 24 May 2019, the AIU received correspondence confirming that the Athlete had appointed a legal representative to represent him in these proceedings.
14. On 10 February 2020, the AIU issued a Notice of Charge to the Athlete for committing Anti-Doping Rule Violations pursuant to Article 2.1 ADR (Presence of a Prohibited Substance) and Article 2.2 ADR (Use of a Prohibited Substance) (“the **Charge**”). The Athlete was offered the opportunity to admit the Anti-Doping Rule Violations and accept a four (4) year period of ineligibility, or to request a hearing before the Disciplinary Tribunal, by no later than 20 February 2020.
15. The Athlete did not reply to the Charge within the given deadline.
16. On 27 February 2020, the AIU afforded the Athlete until 5 March 2020 to respond to the Charge, failing which he would be considered to have admitted to the Charge and accepted the specified Consequences.
17. On 5 March 2020, the Athlete wrote to the AIU and admitted that he had “*consumed some substances [...] banned by WADA*”. The Athlete considered that this was a “*big mistake*” and expressed remorse for his actions, however, he failed to confirm his position in respect of the procedural matters raised in the Charge.
18. Therefore, on 9 March 2020, the Athlete was given a final opportunity to respond to the Charge and advised that, if he did not do so by 13 March 2020, he would be deemed to have waived his right to a hearing before the Disciplinary Tribunal, to have admitted the Anti-Doping Rule Violations and to have accepted the Consequences for those Anti-Doping Rule Violations specified in the Charge.
19. On 12 March 2020, the Athlete confirmed that he admitted the Anti-Doping Rule Violations and accepted the Consequences proposed by the AIU (including a period of ineligibility of four (4) years) by returning a signed Admission of Anti-Doping Rule Violation and Acceptance of Sanction Form.
20. The AIU therefore issues this decision in accordance with Article 8.4.7 ADR.

Consequences

21. Together, the Anti-Doping Rule Violations pursuant to Article 2.1 ADR and Article 2.2 DR constitute the Athlete's first Anti-Doping Rule Violation under the ADR.
22. On the basis that the Athlete has admitted to committing Anti-Doping Rule Violations under Article 2.1 ADR and Article 2.2 ADR, the AIU confirms by this decision the following consequences for a first Anti-Doping Rule Violation:
 - 11.1 a period of Ineligibility of four (4) years commencing on 27 July 2018 pursuant to Articles 10.2.1(a) ADR and Article 10.10.2(c) ADR; and
 - 11.2. disqualification of the Athlete's results from 27 July 2018 until 21 November 2018 with all resulting consequences including the forfeiture of any titles, awards, medals, points and prize and appearance money pursuant to Articles 9 and 10.8 ADR.
23. The Athlete has accepted the above consequences for the Anti-Doping Rule Violations and has expressly waived his right to have those consequences determined by the Disciplinary Tribunal at a hearing.

Publication

24. In accordance with Article 8.4.7(b) ADR, the AIU shall publicly report this decision on the AIU's website.
25. This decision constitutes the final decision of the AIU pursuant to Article 8.4.7 ADR.

Rights of Appeal

26. Further to Article 13.2.4 ADR, WADA and NADA have a right of appeal against this decision to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne, Switzerland, in accordance with the procedure set out at Article 13.7.2 ADR.
27. If an appeal is filed against this decision by WADA or NADA, the Athlete will be entitled to exercise his right of cross-appeal in accordance with Article 13.9.3 ADR.

Monaco, 23 March 2020