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**Powerlifter suspended for twelve months for anti-doping rule violation**

The Sports Tribunal has suspended powerlifter, Mendrado Catoto, for a period of 12 months for the presence of a prohibited substance, methylhexaneamine, in a sample taken from him at the New Zealand Powerlifting Championships on 6 August 2016. Mr Catoto won a gold medal in the under 74kg division and this will be forfeited accordingly.

Mr Catoto was provisionally suspended without opposition on 30 August 2016. He admitted the violation but asked to be heard as to the appropriate sanction. The presumptive period of ineligibility for the unintentional presence of a specified substance (such as methylhexaneamine) is two years but this period may be reduced if the athlete can show no significant fault or negligence in relation to the violation. Drug Free Sport New Zealand (DFSNZ) did not contend that the violation was intentional.

In order to show no significant fault, Mr Catoto first needed to establish how the prohibited substance entered his system. Through further analysis undertaken by the WADA accredited laboratory which tested his sample, Mr Catoto was able to confirm to the Tribunal's satisfaction that the source of the prohibited substance was a contaminated pre-workout supplement Dust v2 which he had purchased from a supplements retailer near a gym he attended.

The assessment as to whether an athlete has no significant fault in relation to a violation is a fact specific exercise. Having considered all the evidence, the Tribunal was satisfied that Mr Catoto had shown he was not at significant fault in testing positive for methylhexaneamine.

The Tribunal assessed the appropriate sanction having regard to Mr Catoto's degree of fault and considered that a period of ineligibility of twelve months was appropriate taking into account:

- the fact the supplement was a contaminated product and the prohibited substance was not disclosed on the product label.
- the product was purchased from a reputable New Zealand based supplier rather than online from an overseas supplier
- Mr Catoto sought reassurance from the retailer when purchasing the product that it was safe to use in competition. However, he should have gone further by discussing the product with his coach and others on his team and it would have been prudent to speak with DFSNZ particularly given the accompanying marketing of the product around enhancing sports performance and the risky nature of supplements.
- Mr Catoto disclosed the Dust v2 supplement and the quantity taken on his Doping Control Form. He had previously been tested in competition and not received a positive test when he was using another pre-workout supplement. That previous testing ought to have been a salient reminder of the anti-doping regime which applied to him. Mr Catoto asserted that he only had a general awareness of the anti-doping regime and had not attended a DFSNZ seminar before nor was aware of the service provided by DFSNZ to check products. The Tribunal noted that formal anti-doping education is not essential to make athletes aware of the clear obligations under the Sports Anti-Doping Rules.

Mr Catoto's suspension from participating in sport is backdated to the date of testing, 6 August 2016, given his timely admission of the violation and co-operation throughout.

The decision in this case is available for download from the website of the Sports Tribunal ([www.sportstribunal.org.nz](http://www.sportstribunal.org.nz)). See *Drug Free Sport New Zealand v Mendrado Catoto* (ST 14/16). Copies can also be obtained directly from the Registrar, Sports Tribunal of New Zealand (telephone: 0800 55 66 80; e-mail: info@sportstribunal.org.nz).