

Basketballer suspended for one-month for anti-doping rule violation

A national league basketball player returned an Adverse Analytical Finding (AAF) from an In-Competition doping control test on 17 May 2022. His sample was analysed at laboratories accredited by the World Anti-Doping Association, which detected the presence of a prohibited substance, namely methylenedioxymethamphetamine ('MDMA').

MDMA is listed under Class S6 'Stimulants' of the 2022 Prohibited List and is also classified as a Substance of Abuse. In taking MDMA, the 2021 Sports Anti-Doping Rules adopted by Basketball New Zealand were violated.

The athlete admitted the violation and it was accepted by the Tribunal that he took the substance out-of-competition for a reason unrelated to sport performance.

On Friday 16 September 2022, the Sports Tribunal imposed a one-month ban on the athlete. The one-month ban, consistent with SADR 10.2.4.1, is conditional on the athlete completing an approved drug treatment programme to Drug Free Sport New Zealand's satisfaction. If the treatment programme is not completed, the Tribunal will extend the ban to three months.

Since the athlete had already accepted without contest a provisional ban since 19 August 2022, he is now free to compete.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE PROHIBITED SUBSTANCE AND OUT-OF-COMPETITION INGESTION

All prohibited substances are added to the Prohibited List because they meet two of the three following criteria:

- Use of the substance has the potential to enhance performance
- Use of the substance can cause harm to the health of the athlete
- Use of the substance violates the spirit of sport

MDMA is classed as a stimulant that is prohibited In-Competition. It is also specified as a "substance of abuse". Substances of abuse are those considered by WADA as frequently abused in society outside of the context of sport and whose use by athletes should be dealt with principally from a rehabilitation rather than punitive perspective.

Where a sample is taken for testing in competition, any AAF is treated as the presence of the prohibited substance In-Competition and mandatory sanctions apply. However, if the athlete is found to have ingested or consumed the detected substance out-of-competition, and it is a substance of abuse that was not taken for a sport performance purpose, reduced sanctions are available.