

Issued Decision

UK Anti-Doping and Thomas Davies

Disciplinary Proceedings under the Anti-Doping Rules of the Welsh Rugby Union

This is an Issued Decision made by UK Anti-Doping Limited ('UKAD') pursuant to the Anti-Doping Rules (the 'ADR') of the Welsh Rugby Union ('WRU'). It concerns Anti-Doping Rule Violations ('ADRVs') committed by Mr Thomas Davies and records the applicable Consequences.

Capitalised terms used in this Decision shall have the meaning given to them in the ADR unless otherwise indicated.

Background and Facts

1. The WRU is the national governing body for the sport of rugby union in Wales. UKAD is the National Anti-Doping Organisation for the United Kingdom. The WRU has adopted, as its own ADR, the UK Anti-Doping Rules¹, which are issued by UKAD and subject to updates made by UKAD, as necessary and in accordance with the World Anti-Doping Code.
2. Mr Davies is a 23-year-old rugby union player for Merthyr RFC. At all material times, Mr Davies was subject to the jurisdiction of the WRU and bound to comply with the ADR. Pursuant to ADR Article 7.2, UKAD has Results Management responsibility in respect of all players that are subject to the jurisdiction of the WRU.
3. On 26 September 2024, UKAD collected a urine Sample from Mr Davies, Out-of-Competition, at a Merthyr RFC training session held at Celyn Ct, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 1AF.
4. Assisted by a UKAD Doping Control Officer ('DCO') in attendance, Mr Davies split the urine Sample into two separate bottles, which were given reference numbers A8144433 (the 'A Sample') and B8144433 (the 'B Sample').
5. Both Samples were transported to the World Anti-Doping Agency ('WADA') accredited laboratory in London, the Drug Control Centre, King's College London (the 'Laboratory'). The Laboratory analysed the A Sample in accordance with the procedures set out in WADA's International Standard for Laboratories.

¹ Version 1.0, in effect as from 1 January 2021.

6. Analysis of the A Sample returned an Adverse Analytical Finding ('AAF') for dehydrochloromethyl-testosterone ('DHCMT') long term Metabolite, 4 α -chloro-18-nor-17 β -hydroxymethyl,17 α -methyl-5 α -androst-13-en-3 α -ol.
7. DHCMT is listed under section S1.1 of the WADA 2024 Prohibited List as an Anabolic Androgenic Steroid. It is a non-Specified Substance that is prohibited at all times (i.e. both In-Competition and Out-of-Competition).
8. On 11 November 2024, UKAD sent Mr Davies a letter (the 'Notice Letter'). The Notice Letter confirmed the imposition of a Provisional Suspension and formally notified Mr Davies, in accordance with ADR Article 7.8, that he may have committed ADRVs pursuant to ADR Article 2.1 (Presence of a Prohibited Substance or its Metabolites or Markers in an Athlete's Sample) and/or ADR Article 2.2 (Use or Attempted Use by an Athlete of a Prohibited Substance or a Prohibited Method).
9. In his initial response to the Notice Letter, dated 20 November 2024, Mr Davies admitted a violation of ADR Article 2.1 and explained that it was a result of his use of supplements. In a further response dated 7 January 2025, Mr Davies also admitted a violation of ADR Article 2.2 and provided further detail regarding his use of supplements. Mr Davies stated that he purchased "*muscle-building*" capsules online, namely "*Quanta pharmaceuticals (4-Chloro-methyl-test) 10mg*", as recommended to him by an individual he trusted, to gain weight and improve strength. Mr Davies said he was unaware that the capsules contained a Prohibited Substance and that he did not check their ingredients or consult medical advice, which he now accepts was a serious oversight.
10. On 7 March 2025, UKAD proceeded to issue Mr Davies with a Charge Letter in accordance with ADR Article 7.11.2. The Charge Letter asserted the commission of ADRVs pursuant to ADR Article 2.1 (Presence of a Prohibited Substance or its Metabolites or Markers in an Athlete's Sample) and ADR Article 2.2 (Use or Attempted Use by an Athlete of a Prohibited Substance or Prohibited Method).

Admission and Consequences

11. On 27 March 2025, Mr Davies responded to the Charge Letter, admitting both ADRVs.
12. ADR Article 2.1 provides that the following is an ADRV:
 - 2.1 ***Presence of a Prohibited Substance or its Metabolites or Markers in an Athlete's Sample, unless the Athlete establishes that the presence is consistent with a TUE granted in accordance with Article 4.***
13. ADR Article 2.2 provides that the following is an ADRV:
 - 2.2 ***Use or Attempted Use by an Athlete of a Prohibited Substance or a Prohibited Method, unless the Athlete establishes that the Use or***

Attempted Use is consistent with a TUE granted in accordance with Article 4.

14. ADR Article 10.2 provides:

10.2 Imposition of a Period of Ineligibility for the Presence, Use or Attempted Use, or Possession of a Prohibited Substance and/or a Prohibited Method

The period of Ineligibility for an Anti-Doping Rule Violation under Article 2.1, 2.2 or 2.6 that is the Athlete's or other Person's first anti-doping offence shall be as follows, subject to potential elimination, reduction or suspension pursuant to Article 10.5, 10.6 or 10.7:

10.2.1 Save where Article 10.2.4(a) applies, the period of Ineligibility shall be four (4) years where:

(a) The Anti-Doping Rule Violation does not involve a Specified Substance or a Specified Method, unless the Athlete or other Person can establish that the Anti-Doping Rule Violation was not intentional.

(b) [...]

10.2.2 If Article 10.2.1 does not apply, then (subject to Article 10.2.4(a)) the period of Ineligibility shall be two (2) years.

10.2.3 As used in Article 10.2, the term "intentional" is meant to identify those Athletes or other Persons who engage in conduct which they know constitutes an Anti-Doping Rule Violation or they know that there is a significant risk that the conduct might constitute or result in an Anti-Doping Rule Violation and they manifestly disregard that risk.:

15. In accordance with ADR Article 10.2.1(a), since this matter concerns a non-Specified Substance, the period of Ineligibility imposed shall be four (4) years, unless Mr Davies can establish on the balance of probabilities that the ADRVs were not intentional (within the meaning of ADR Article 10.2.3).

16. While Mr Davies has asserted that he did not knowingly seek to enhance his performance, he has not sought to establish that the ADRVs were not intentional within the meaning of ADR Article 10.2.3. Instead, Mr Davies has admitted the ADRVs and accepted the asserted period of Ineligibility. Accordingly, Mr Davies is not entitled to a two (2) year period of Ineligibility pursuant to ADR Article 10.2.2, or any reduction pursuant to ADR Article 10.5 (No Fault or Negligence) or ADR Article 10.6 (No Significant Fault or Negligence) thereafter.

17. For the purposes of imposing a sanction, the ADRVs will be considered together as a single first violation, pursuant to ADR Article 10.9.4 which states as follows:

10.9.4 Additional rules for certain potential multiple offences:

(a) For the purposes of imposing sanctions under Article 10.9, except as provided in Articles 10.9.4(b) and 10.9.4(c) an Anti-Doping Rule Violation

will only be considered a second (or third, as applicable) Anti-Doping Rule Violation if UKAD can establish that the Athlete or other Person committed the additional Anti-Doping Rule Violation after they received notice, or after UKAD or its designee made a reasonable attempt to give notice, of the first (or the second, as applicable) Anti-Doping Rule Violation. Otherwise, the first and second Anti-Doping Rule Violations (or the second and third Anti-Doping Rule Violations as applicable) shall be considered as one single first Anti-Doping Rule Violation, and the sanction imposed shall be based on the Anti-Doping Rule Violation that carries the most severe sanction...

18. The applicable period of Ineligibility for both ADRVs is therefore four (4) years.

Application of ADR Article 10.8.1

19. ADR Article 10.8.1 provides:

10.8.1 One (1) year reduction for certain Anti-Doping Rule Violations based on early admission and acceptance of sanction:

Where UKAD sends an Athlete or other Person a Charge Letter for an Anti-Doping Rule Violation that carries an asserted period of Ineligibility of four (4) or more years (including any period of Ineligibility asserted under Article 10.4), if the Athlete or other Person admits the violation and accepts the asserted period of Ineligibility no later than twenty (20) days after receiving the Charge Letter, they shall receive a one (1) year reduction in the period of Ineligibility asserted by UKAD. Where the Athlete or other Person receives the one (1) year reduction in the asserted period of Ineligibility under this Article 10.8.1, no further reduction in the asserted period of Ineligibility shall be allowed under any other Article.

20. Mr Davies admitted both ADRVs and accepted the asserted period of Ineligibility of four (4) years within twenty (20) days of receiving the Charge Letter. Therefore, ADR Article 10.8.1 applies and Mr Davies shall receive a one (1) year reduction to the period of Ineligibility of four (4) years. The period of Ineligibility to be imposed is therefore three (3) years.

Commencement of period of Ineligibility

21. ADR Article 10.13 requires that the period of Ineligibility starts on the date the Ineligibility is accepted or otherwise imposed where there is no hearing.
22. However, ADR Article 10.13.2(a) allows credit to be given against the total period of Ineligibility to be served where an Athlete has been provisionally suspended and has respected the terms of that Provisional Suspension.
23. Mr Davies has been subject to a Provisional Suspension since the date he received the Notice Letter (i.e. 11 November 2024) and, so far as UKAD is aware, Mr Davies has respected the terms of that Provisional Suspension. Therefore, affording Mr Davies credit for the time he has spent provisionally suspended, his period of Ineligibility is deemed to have commenced on 11 November 2024 and will end at 11:59pm on 10 November 2027.

Status during Ineligibility

24. During the period of Ineligibility, in accordance with ADR Article 10.14.1, Mr Davies shall not be permitted to participate in any capacity (or assist any Athlete participating in any capacity) in a Competition, Event or other activity (other than authorised anti-doping education or rehabilitation programmes) organised, convened, authorised or recognised by:
- a) the WRU;
 - b) any Signatory;
 - c) any club or other body that is a member of, or affiliated to, or licensed by, a Signatory or a Signatory's member organisation;
 - d) any professional league or any international or national-level Event organisation; or
 - e) any elite or national-level sporting activity funded by a governmental agency.
25. Mr Davies may return to train with a team or to use the facilities of a WRU club or a Signatory's member organisation during the last two (2) months of his period of Ineligibility (i.e., from 11:59pm on 10 September 2027) pursuant to ADR Article 10.14.4(b).

Summary

26. For the reasons given above, UKAD has issued this Decision in accordance with ADR Article 7.12.2, and records that:
- a) Mr Davies has committed ADRVs pursuant to ADR Article 2.1 and ADR Article 2.2;
 - b) in accordance with ADR Article 10.9.4(a), the ADRVs are considered as one single ADRV for the purposes of imposing a sanction;
 - c) this constitutes Mr Davies' first ADRV and in accordance with ADR Article 10.8.1, Mr Davies is entitled to a one (1) year reduction to the asserted period of Ineligibility of four (4) years. A period of Ineligibility of three (3) years is therefore imposed;
 - d) acknowledging Mr Davies' Provisional Suspension, the period of Ineligibility is deemed to have commenced on 11 November 2024 and will expire at 11:59pm on 10 November 2027; and
 - e) Mr Davies' status during the period of Ineligibility shall be as detailed in ADR Article 10.14.

27. Mr Davies, the WRU, World Rugby, and WADA have a right to appeal against this Decision or any part of it in accordance with ADR Article 13.4.
28. This Decision will be publicly announced via UKAD's website in accordance with ADR Article 8.5.3 and ADR Article 10.15.

13 June 2025