

Sport Ireland and Raymond Walker

Reasoned Decision of Sport Ireland

The following is the reasoned decision of Sport Ireland pursuant to Article 7.6.4¹ of the Irish Anti-Doping Rules (the "**Rules**"). It concerns an anti-doping rule violation ("**ADRV**") committed by Mr Raymond Walker and records the Consequences² to be applied.

1. Background and Facts

- 1.1 Raymond Walker (the "**Athlete**") is a Gaelic Footballer for Carlow.
- 1.2 Sport Ireland is a statutory body established pursuant to the Sport Ireland Act 2015. The functions of Sport Ireland include taking such action as it considers appropriate, including testing, to combat doping in sport.
- 1.3 On 18 February 2020 the Athlete was selected for Out-of-Competition Testing at a Carlow Gaelic Football training session.
- 1.4 He provided a Sample which was split into A and B Samples. The A Sample was analysed by the World Anti-Doping Agency ("**WADA**") accredited laboratory in Cologne, the Deutsche Sporthochschule Köln Institut für Biochemie (the "**Laboratory**"). The Laboratory notified Sport Ireland of an Adverse Analytical Finding ("**AAF**") on 24 March 2020 for Meldonium (S4.5.3 of the Prohibited List - Hormone and Metabolic Modulators). Meldonium is a non-Specified Substance and is prohibited at all times.
- 1.5 Article 10.1.1 provides that a period of Ineligibility (or ban) of 4 years applies in the case of non-Specified Substances such as Meldonium. This can be reduced to 2 years if the Athlete can establish that the violation was not intentional (Article 10.1.2).
- 1.6 On 30 March 2020 Sport Ireland notified the Athlete that he was alleged to have committed a violation of Article 2.1 - "*Article 2.1 - the presence of a Prohibited Substance or its Metabolites or Markers in your Sample.*"
- 1.7 He was notified of his right to respond in one of the following ways:
 - 1.7.1 to admit the violation and accept the Consequences specified by Sport Ireland after

¹ Article 7.6.4 of the Rules provides that "*In the event that the Irish Sports Council withdraws the Notification, or the Athlete or other Person admits the alleged anti-doping rule violation(s) and accedes to the Consequences specified by the Irish Sports Council (or is deemed to have done so in accordance with Article 7.6.1), neither B Sample analysis nor a hearing is required. Instead, the Irish Sports Council shall promptly issue a reasoned decision confirming the commission of the anti-doping rule violation(s) and the imposition of the specified Consequences, shall send notice of the decision to the Athlete or other Person and to the Athlete's or other Person's National Governing Body and International Federation, WADA and the Irish Sport Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel, and shall publish the decision in accordance with Article 15.*"

² Capitalised terms used throughout this decision shall have the meaning given to them in the Rules.

consultation with him – if he could not establish an entitlement to a reduced ban under the Rules, this ban would be 4 years;

1.7.2 to admit the violation, but elect for a hearing before the GAA Hearings Committee seeking a ban of less than 4 years;

1.7.3 to deny the violation, and to have the matter and the ban and other sanctions (if any) determined at a hearing of the GAA Hearings Committee.

1.8 By way of email dated 1 April 2020, the Athlete accepted the imposition of a 4 year ban and the other Consequences applicable and waived his right to a hearing.

2. Consequences

2.1 The applicable period of Ineligibility is 4 years.

2.2 Sport Ireland is also required to Publicly Report details of the matter following its conclusion³, including the sport, the violation in question, the name of the Athlete, the Prohibited Substance involved and the Consequences imposed.

2.3 Based on the Athlete's timely admission, Sport Ireland has decided to backdate his period of Ineligibility to 18 February 2020 (Article 10.7.2), the date of Sample collection. This means that the period of Ineligibility will expire at midnight on 18 February 2024.

2.4 Pursuant to Article 10.8 of the Rules⁴, during the period of Ineligibility, the Athlete remains subject to Testing. He may not participate in any capacity in Inter-County or Club Gaelic Football or training (or indeed in other organised sport). This includes training and coaching.

2.5 Pursuant to Article 10.8.1, the Athlete may return to train with a team or to use the facilities of a club or other member organisation of a Signatory's member organisation or a National Governing Body, during the last 2 months of his period of Ineligibility.

2.6 In accordance with Article 7.6.4 of the Rules, a copy of this decision shall be sent to the Athlete, the GAA, WADA and the Irish Sport Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel.

2.7 Pursuant to Article 13 of the Rules, the Athlete, the GAA and WADA have a right of appeal. Such an appeal must be made to the Chair of the Irish Sport Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel within 21 days of the date of issuance of this Reasoned Decision.

³ Article 15.3.

⁴ Article 10.8.1 provides that an Athlete who has been declared Ineligible shall not participate in any capacity "*in a Competition or activity, (other than authorised anti-doping education or rehabilitation programs) authorised or organised by any Signatory, Signatory's member organisation, or a club or other member organisation of a Signatory's member organisation, or by any National Governing Body or by a member or affiliate organisation or licensee of a National Governing Body or in Competitions authorised or organised by any professional league or any international or national-level Event organisation or any elite or national-level sporting activity funded by a governmental agency.*"

3. Summary

3.1 Sport Ireland issues this decision pursuant to Article 7.6.4 of the Rules.

3.2 For the reasons given above, Sport Ireland has issued this decision, which records that:

- The Athlete has committed a violation of Article 2.1 of the Rules by virtue of the presence Meldonium (S4. Hormone and Metabolic Modulators) in a Sample collected from him in Out-of-Competition Testing on 18 February 2020.
- The Athlete accepted the imposition of a 4 year period of Ineligibility, which has been backdated in accordance with Article 10.7.2 to 18 February 2020 based on the Athlete's timely admission.
- The Athlete's period of Ineligibility shall expire at midnight on 18 February 2024.

Dated the 8th of April 2020



**Director of Anti-Doping & Ethics
Sport Ireland**