

MEDIA RELEASE 28 July 2016

Softball player suspended for one month for anti-doping rule violation

The Sports Tribunal has suspended former representative softball player, Craig Wallace, for one month for the presence of a prohibited substance, Salbutamol in a concentration higher than that permitted under WADA's Prohibited List, in a sample taken from him in competition on 21 February 2016.

Mr Wallace was provisionally suspended without opposition on 29 June 2016. Mr Wallace admitted the violation but asked to be heard as to the appropriate sanction. The case involved the unintentional over-use of Salbutamol (commonly known as Ventolin), for which the standard period of ineligibility is two years under the Sports Anti-Doping Rules 2015 (SADR).

The Tribunal accepted this was a case where it could consider a reduction of the two year period of ineligibility on the basis that there was no significant fault or negligence in relation to the violation. The Tribunal assessed the appropriate sanction having regard to Mr Wallace's degree of fault in a context where athletes have strict obligations under SADR to exercise utmost caution and understand what constitutes a violation. The Tribunal considered that a period of ineligibility of one month was appropriate taking into account:

- the clear evidence that Mr Wallace took Ventolin as prescribed for therapeutic use and the exacerbation of his asthmatic symptoms due to stress and his physical condition at the time of the violation;
- the evidence that the elevated level of Salbutamol in Mr Wallace's system was due to his incorrect technique in using his inhaler and consequently taking more puffs;
- Mr Wallace's immediate acceptance of the violation and working constructively with DFS; and
- the fact Mr Wallace had played softball at the highest level and knew about the work of DFS, yet took no steps to check the status of his medication, instead relying on the fact it was prescribed by his doctor.

Mr Wallace's suspension of one month from participating in sport is backdated to his provisional suspension. The Tribunal acknowledged that Mr Wallace is a highly respected and dedicated member of the softball community who contributes his time extensively across many facets of the game. The Tribunal anticipates that he will use this experience to promote awareness of the strict obligations of the anti-doping regime within his chosen sport.

The decision in this case is available for download from the website of the Sports Tribunal (www.sportstribunal.org.nz). See *Drug Free Sport New Zealand v Craig Wallace* (ST 06/16). 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).