

## **MEDIA RELEASE 13 October 2021**

### **Wrestler suspended for 3 years for anti- doping rule violation**

The Sports Tribunal suspended Mahdi Namdari, a wrestler, for three years after his positive test for stanozolol, a non-specified substance prohibited at all times.

He was provisionally suspended on 11 May 2021 and elected to have his 'B' sample tested, which confirmed the original result.

Drug Free Sport New Zealand (DFSNZ) filed anti-doping rule violation proceedings on 29 June 2021.

Mr Namdari admitted the violation and explained he was suffering from a knee injury and accepted pills from a gym member because he thought it would help his recovery. He has never been prescribed with stanozolol, and with limited English he did not understand the risk, but accepts he should not have trusted the gym member.

Mr Namdari sought a preliminary determination on the interpretation of Rule 10.8.1, Sports Anti-Doping Rules 2021. This new Rule allows an athlete facing a ban of four or more years to receive a one-year reduction if they admit the violation and accept the sanction within 20 days of being notified of the alleged violation.

The Tribunal issued its Interim Decision on 29 September. Despite drafting ambiguities, the Tribunal held the Rules should be interpreted to ensure they worked in a practical way, and conform with the object or spirit of the Rules. When DFSNZ notifies an athlete of a rule violation it must state the suspension period, so an athlete may understand and obtain a one-year reduction by timely admission.

The Tribunal gave Mr Namdari two weeks to elect whether he wished to invoke this application of Rule 10.8.1 and on 8 October 2021 a joint memorandum was provided by DFSNZ and Mr Namdari. Having admitted his conduct was in breach and subject to a four-year period of ineligibility, he was entitled to the one-year reduction provided by Rule 10.8.1.

The Tribunal considered all available material and imposed a three-year period of ineligibility commencing 11 May 2021.

This procedure of timely admission and discounted sanction should be understood by all athletes, coaches and management, and sporting organisations.