

BETWEEN	SPORT INTEGRITY COMMISSION Applicant
AND	ANTHONY LEPPER Respondent
AND	SQUASH NEW ZEALAND Interested party

DECISION
27 June 2025

Parties	Hayden Tapper, Sport Integrity Commission Adam McDonald & Ben Forbes, counsel for Applicant Anthony Lepper, Respondent Paul David KC, counsel for Respondent
Interested Party	Squash New Zealand
Tribunal Panel	John Macdonald (Chair)
Registrar	Luke Macris

1. Anthony Lepper (Mr Lepper) is a New Zealand squash player and is registered with Squash New Zealand. Squash New Zealand has adopted the 2025 Sports Anti-Doping Rules (SADR) promulgated by the Sport Integrity Commission (SIC) as their anti-doping policy.
2. A sample was collected from Mr Lepper on 4 March 2025 following testing at the New Zealand Squash Open in Christchurch. On analysis, the sample was found to contain the presence of Benzoylecgonine, the metabolite of Cocaine.
3. Cocaine is a Non-Specified Substance and is prohibited In-Competition under class S6.A (Non-Specified Stimulants) on the 2025 WADA Prohibited List. Cocaine is also classified as a Substance of Abuse in the 2025 WADA Prohibited List.

Background and Anti-doping Rule Violations

4. Mr Lepper was notified of his Adverse Analytical Finding (AAF) on 10 April 2025.
5. On 28 April 2025, Mr David KC (counsel for Mr Lepper) confirmed that Mr Lepper voluntarily accepted provisional suspension, and the Tribunal made an order accordingly.
6. On 8 May 2025, Mr Lepper requested that his B Sample be analysed which subsequently confirmed the result of the A Sample.
7. On 10 June 2025, the Commission filed and served its Form 1 and evidence in support. The Commission alleged that Mr Lepper breached:
 - (a) r 2.1 (Presence of a Prohibited Substance or its Metabolites or Markers in an Athlete's Sample); and
 - (b) r 2.2 (Use or Attempted Use by an Athlete of a Prohibited Substance or a Prohibited Method).
8. The evidence filed by the Commission included the Notification of AAF and the test report relevant to Mr Lepper. It also included a statement from Mr Tapper (Investigations and Intelligence Manager for the Commission) which outlined that Mr Lepper is regarded as an International Level Athlete by way of his participation in the New Zealand Squash Open, which is a PSA World Tour Silver event under the World Squash Anti-Doping Rules. Mr Tapper further provided evidence that Mr Lepper had completed at least two WADA Education programmes in June 2023 with the

International Level Athlete training programme he completed including material on Substances of Abuse which mentioned cocaine explicitly.

9. On 18 June 2025, Mr Lepper filed and served his Form 2 and supporting evidence. Mr Lepper admitted the violations but sought to be heard on sanction. His evidence, by way of a signed statement, was that his use of cocaine occurred Out-of-Competition and was unrelated to sport performance. He also provided evidence from Mr De Jong that he had completed a substance of abuse treatment programme related to his recreational use of cocaine.

Sanction – substance of abuse

10. SADR r 10.2.4 sets out sanctions for athletes who have taken Prohibited Substances which are Substances of Abuse.
11. SADR r 10.2.4.1 provides that:

If the *Athlete* can establish that any ingestion or *Use* occurred *Out-of-Competition* and was unrelated to sport performance, then the period of *Ineligibility* shall be three months *Ineligibility*. In addition, the period of *Ineligibility* calculated under this Rule 10.2.4.1 may be reduced to one month if the *Athlete* or other *Person* satisfactorily completes a *Substance of Abuse* treatment program approved by the *Commission*. The period of *Ineligibility* established in this Rule 10.2.4.1 is not subject to any reduction based on any provision in Rule 10.6.

Joint Memorandum of Counsel

12. On 25 June 2025, the parties filed a joint memorandum of counsel in which the Commission, after considering both Mr Lepper's evidence and the concentrations in the A Sample, accepted Mr Lepper's position that his cocaine use had occurred Out-of-Competition and was unrelated to sport performance.
13. The parties also confirmed that Mr Lepper had completed a substance of abuse treatment programme through Mr De Jong and that the Commission was satisfied that it would be appropriate for Mr Lepper to receive the prescribed two-month reduction in sanction.

Decision

14. Having considered the joint memorandum of counsel and the evidence, the Tribunal is satisfied that it is appropriate to conclude, on balance, that Mr Lepper's use of cocaine occurred Out-of-Competition and was unrelated to sport performance.

15. The Tribunal further accepts, in accordance with SADR r 10.4.2.1, that the sanction period of three months be reduced to one month because Mr Lepper has completed a substance of abuse programme that has been approved by the Commission.

Orders

16. The Tribunal **orders** as follows:

- (i) A period of ineligibility from participation in any capacity in a competition or activity organised, sanctioned, or authorised by any sporting organisation that is a signatory to the SADR, of one month is imposed on Mr Lepper under SADR r 10.2.4.1 backdated to commence on 28 April 2025.
- (ii) This means Mr Lepper is ineligible to participate in competitive sports until 28 May 2025. As that date has now passed, Mr Lepper is no longer ineligible and may once again participate in sport.
- (iii) This determination should be the final determination by the Tribunal in this matter, and it may be published in the usual way.

Dated: 27 June 2025



John Macdonald
Chair