

MEDIA RELEASE – 25 NOVEMBER 2025

Basketballer suspended for one month for Anti-Doping Rule Violations

Basketballer, Tukaha Cooper, has been suspended by the Sports Tribunal for one month for the presence of the prohibited substance cannabis (Cannabinoids/CarboxyTetrahydrocannabinol).

Mr Cooper voluntarily accepted provisional suspension on 24 October 2025 and the Sports Tribunal provisionally suspended him without opposition on 28 October 2025 following an Adverse Analytical Finding from an in-competition test at a National Basketball League event held in Wellington on 20 July 2025.

Mr Cooper had requested his B Sample be analysed on 10 October 2025, but this request was withdrawn on 28 October 2025. At that stage, the Commission had already submitted the B Sample for testing. The B Sample confirmed the A Sample.

The Sport Integrity Commission filed anti-doping rule violations (ADRVs) against Mr Cooper for presence and use of the prohibited substance cannabis. Mr Cooper admitted the violation in relation to presence and sought to be heard on that sanction, but did not admit use in-competition. His evidence is that his use was out-of-competition and unrelated to sports performance.

On 19 November 2025, the parties filed a joint memorandum of counsel in which the Commission, after considering the evidence, accepted Mr Cooper's position and withdrew the allegation of use. In terms of sanction, the parties submitted that the starting point was a period of three months ineligibility for a substance of abuse and that it was appropriate for a further reduction down to one month ineligibility on the basis that Mr Cooper had completed a substance of abuse programme approved by the Commission.

The Sports Tribunal accepted the joint proposal from counsel and imposed an ineligibility period of one month on Mr Cooper, which was backdated to commence on 24 October 2025 (the date Mr Cooper voluntarily accepted provisional suspension) and thus ended on 24 November 2025.

The decision in this case can be found at www.sportstribunal.org.nz – see *Sport Integrity Commission v Tukaha Cooper* (ST09/25)

Additional information about prohibited substances, anti-doping rule violations (ADRVs), and sanctions can be found in the WADA Prohibited List (www.wada-ama.org/en/prohibited-list) and the Sports Anti-Doping Rules (www.sportintegrity.nz).