



PRESS RELEASE

BIATHLON

THE COURT OF ARBITRATION FOR SPORT (CAS) DISMISSES THE APPEALS FILED BY EKATERINA IOURIEVA & ALBINA AKHATOVA

Lausanne, 13 November 2009 - The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) has today dismissed the appeals filed by the Russian biathletes Ekaterina Iourieva and Albina Akhatova against the IBU Anti-Doping Hearing Panel's decision of 11 August 2009 in which they were found guilty of an anti-doping rule violation and suspended from competition for two years.

During the Biathlon World Cup at Östersund, Sweden, in December 2008, Ms Iourieva underwent both in-competition and out-of competition doping tests, and Ms Akhatova underwent an out-of-competition. The analysis of the athletes' A and B samples revealed the presence of recombinant EPO. The IBU Doping Hearing Panel set up to investigate the matter ruled on 11 August 2009 that Ms Iourieva and Ms Akhatova had committed anti-doping rule violations according to Rule 1.2.2 of the IBU Anti-Doping Rules and suspended them from competition for two years, starting, respectively, on 4 and 5 December 2008.

In their appeal to the CAS the athletes requested that the decision of 11 August 2009 be set aside and that they be cleared of all charges brought against them in connection with the anti-doping tests carried out on 4 and 5 December 2008. The parties agreed to refer the dispute directly to the CAS, instead of going first before the IBU Court of Arbitration in order to settle the matter before the start of the next season.

The cases were referred to the same Panel of CAS arbitrators: Professor Richard H. McLaren (Canada), President, Mr Efraim Barak (Israel) and Dr Dirk-Reiner Martens (Germany). The athletes, together with their legal representatives and those of the IBU were heard at a hearing that was held at the CAS headquarters in Lausanne on 15 October 2009.

The CAS Panel found that the scientific evidence provided to it by the parties established the presence of recombinant EPO in the athletes' samples and that a doping infraction had been committed. The Panel also concluded that there had been no departures from the applicable rules and technical documents and that the adverse analytical finding of the laboratory in charge

of this case could be fully relied upon by the sanctioning and reviewing bodies. In other words, the CAS Panel found that the IBU Doping Hearing Panel's conclusions in both athletes' cases were correct, and dismissed their appeals.

The full award with the grounds is published on the CAS website (<http://www.tas-cas.org/recent-decision>).