



## ATHLETICS

### THE SUSPENSION OF DOMINIQUE BLAKE REDUCED TO 4 YEARS AND 6 MONTHS

*Lausanne, 5 May 2014* - The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) has issued its decision in an arbitration brought by the Jamaican 400m-runner Dominique Blake against the Jamaica Anti-Doping Commission (JADCO). The CAS has upheld in part the appeal filed by Dominique Blake and has decided to reduce her period of ineligibility from 6 years to 4 years and 6 months with retroactive effect as of 1 July 2012.

On 1 July 2012, the athlete participated in the National Senior Championships in the 400m. She underwent a doping control and the A sample revealed the presence of methylhexanamine (MHA). She admitted the charge, asserting that she took Neurocore, which contains geranium (the alleged source of the MHA), on the date of the competition. She further asserted that she did not intend to enhance her sport performance or to make use of a prohibited substance while ingesting Neurocore. JADCO, however, disputed the athlete's intent. After an internal procedure, the Jamaica Anti-Doping Appeals Tribunal (JADAT) sanctioned the athlete with a 6-year ban as of 24 July 2012, taking into account the existence of a first doping offence committed in 2006.

The CAS Panel in charge of this matter found that the athlete did not produce any corroborating evidence in addition to her word that she did not intend to enhance her sport performance: she stated that she ingested the stimulant one hour before the race but that she specifically took Neurocore to help her recover from practice. Moreover, she failed to disclose Neurocore on her doping control form despite taking the products for at least two weeks prior to her doping control. For the same reasons, the athlete has failed to establish that she bears no significant fault or negligence.

To the contrary, there is significant evidence warning athletes as to the risk of presence of a specified substance in Neurocore. As the athlete had been already suspended for 9 months (reduced sanction) for a first doping offence, the relevant range for the calculation of the new period of ineligibility was 4-6 years. The 6-year sanction imposed by the JADAT was deemed to severe for the CAS Panel. In view of some mitigating factors, the CAS Panel determined that the appropriate sanction should be 4 years and 6 months. Therefore, the starting point of such period of ineligibility is the date of the sample collection, 1 July 2012.

The full arbitral award, with the grounds, will be published in a few days.

For further information related to the CAS activity and procedures in general, please contact either Mr Matthieu Reeb, CAS Secretary General, Château de Béthusy, Avenue de Beaumont 2, 1012 Lausanne, Switzerland, tel: (41 21) 613 50 00; fax: (41 21) 613 50 01, [media@tas-cas.org](mailto:media@tas-cas.org), or consult the CAS website [www.tas-cas.org](http://www.tas-cas.org).