

National Anti-Doping Agency
J.L.N Stadium, Hall No. 103-104,
First Floor, Lodhi Road, New Delhi 110 003
Telefax: 011-24368274

To,

Date: 22.05.2026

Mr. Deepak Singh
Weightlifting – 96 KG
S/o Sh. Raman Singh
R/o Ward No. 9 B, 320 Tilak Nagar,
Bharatpur, Rajasthan – 321001
Email id: bainsladeepak944@gmail.com

Subj: Decision of the Anti-Doping Appeal Panel Case No.-31/ADAP/2025

NADA VS. MR. DEEPAK SINGH (ADAMS ID –SIDEMA76765)

The order containing the decision of the Anti-Doping Appeal Panel dated 20.05.2026 in respect of the final hearing of the above case held on 15.05.2026 is enclosed.

The receipt of this communication may be acknowledged.

Encl: 9 Sheets.



(Yasir Arafat)

Sr. Programme Associate (Legal)

Copy forwarded together with the copy of the order containing the decision of the Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel for information and action deemed necessary:

1. The World Anti-Doping Agency, Stock Exchange Tower, 800 Place Victoria (Suit 1700) P. O. Box 180, Montreal (Quebec), H4Z 1B7, Canada.
2. The Secretary General, Indian Weightlifting Federation, C-2/18, Sector -31, Noida, Uttar Pradesh -201301 (India).
3. International Weightlifting Federation, Maison du Sport International Av. de Rhodanie 54, Switzerland - 1007, Lausanne.

BEFORE THE ANTI-DOPING APPEAL PANEL
J.L.N. Stadium, Lodhi Road, New Delhi -110 003

Appeal No. 31/ADAP/2025

(PROCEEDINGS CONDUCTED THROUGH VIRTUAL MODE)

IN THE MATTER OF:

National Anti-Doping Agency

.....APPELLANT

Vs

Mr. Deepak Singh (Sports – Weightlifting 96 kg.)

..... RESPONDENT

Quorum: Ms. Geetanjali Sharma, Chairperson

Dr. Rana Chengappa, Medical Member

Ms. Rani Rampal, Sports Member

Present: Adv. Prateek Dhanda, Counsel and Mr. Yasir Arafat (Sr. Programme Associate-Legal), for NADA (**Appellant**)

Mr. Deepak Singh, Athlete in-person (**Respondent**)

JUDGEMENT DATED- 20-05-2026

1 The present appeal was filed by National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) on 01-09-2025 in the matter of athlete Mr. Deepak Singh (ADAM ID SIDEMA76765) against the Order dated 9-08-2025 passed by the Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel (“ADDP”) in Case No. 72/ADDP/2024 (“impugned order”). By way of the impugned order, the Athlete has been declared ineligible for Four (4) years w.e.f. 25-09-2024 on account of violation of Articles 2.1(Presence of Prohibited Substance or its Metabolites or Markers in the athlete’s sample) and 2.2(Use or Attempted Use by an athlete of a Prohibited Substance or a prohibited method) of the National Anti-Doping Rules, 2021 (“Rules”) as the athlete failed to satisfy that the ADRV was non-intentional as per Article 10.2.1.1.

I. Brief Facts:

- 1** A urine sample (“Sample”) of the athlete was collected on 24.08.2024 while participating in ‘Rajasthan State Weightlifting Championship 2024-25’, held at Chittorgarh, Rajasthan, by the Doping Control Officer. As per procedure, the Sample (Code 1424518) was split into two separate bottles, hereinafter referred to as Sample A and Sample B.
- 2** The sample was transported to the World Anti-Doping Agency (“WADA”) accredited Laboratory, National Dope Testing Laboratory, Delhi. The Laboratory analysed the

‘A’ sample in accordance with the procedures set out in WADA's International Standard for Laboratories. Analysis of the ‘A’ sample returned an Adverse Analytical Finding ("AAF") for the following substance:

- S1.1. Anabolic Androgenic Steroids/ 1-androstenediol
- S1.1. Anabolic Androgenic Steroids/ 1-androstenedione
- S1.1. Anabolic Androgenic Steroids/ 1-testosterone
- S1.1. Anabolic Androgenic Steroids/ Methyltestosterone metabolite
17alpha- methyl5alpha-androstane-3 alpha, 17beta-diol

Above mentioned substances are listed under S1 of WADA's 2024 Prohibited List which are non-specified substance. According to the records available, athlete do not have a Therapeutic Use Exemption (“TUE”) to justify the presence of the above ‘Anabolic Androgenic Steroids’ in his system.

3 That on 25.09.2024, the Athlete was issued a Notification (F No. K-11/4/2023-SPO) of Adverse Analytical Finding Charge for violation of Article 2.1 and Article 2.2 of the National Anti-Doping Rules, 2021(NADR) and for seeking justification to the Adverse Analytical Finding for the presence of the aforesaid specified prohibited substance in his system. In addition, the Athlete was also informed that he can opt for testing of his Sample B and was given 20 days’ notice to accept the consequences and take the benefit of Article 10.8.1 of the NADR.

4 Article 10.8.1 provides as follows: Article 10.8.1 of the NADR is reproduced herein below:

“10.8.1 One (1) Year Reduction for Certain Anti-Doping Rule Violations Based on Early Admission and Acceptance of Sanction Where an Athlete or other Person, after being notified by NADA of a potential Anti-Doping rule violation that carries an asserted period of Ineligibility of four (4) or more years (including any period of Ineligibility asserted under Article 10.4), admits the violation and accepts the asserted period of Ineligibility no later than twenty (20) days after receiving notice of an anti-doping rule violation charge, the Athlete or other Person may receive a one (1) year reduction in the period of Ineligibility asserted by NADA. Where the Athlete or other Person receives the one (1) year reduction in the asserted period of Ineligibility under this Article 10.8.1, no further reduction in the asserted period of Ineligibility shall be allowed under any other Article.”

- 5 In terms of Article 7.4.1 of National Anti-Doping Rules, athlete vide the above said notification dated 25.09.2024 was also provisionally suspended with immediate effect pending the resolution of her case. Since no response received towards challenging the Adverse Analytical Finding of Sample A, the athlete waived off his right towards B Sample opening and analysis.
- 6 NADA on 23.10.2024 issued Notice of Charge (NOC) to the Athlete for alleged violation of Article 2.1 and 2.2 of the National Anti-Doping Rules, 2021. In the said NOC the athlete was informed about the Potential Consequences and Condition for eliminating, reducing or suspending part of period of eligibility if ADRV upheld against the athlete including consequences under Aggravating Circumstances as defined under in National Anti-Doping Rules, 2021 and stating below:

ARTICLE 10.4: Aggravating Circumstances which may Increase the Period of Ineligibility:

*“If NADA establishes in an individual case involving an anti-doping rule violation other than violations under Article 2.7 (Trafficking or Attempted Trafficking), 2.8 (Administration or Attempted Administration), 2.9 (Complicity or Attempted Complicity) or 2.11 (Acts by an Athlete or Other Person to Discourage or Retaliate Against Reporting) that Aggravating Circumstances are present which justify the imposition of a period of Ineligibility greater than the standard sanction, then the period of Ineligibility otherwise applicable shall be increased by an additional period of Ineligibility of up to two (2) years depending on the seriousness of the violation and the nature of the Aggravating Circumstances, unless the Athlete or other Person can establish that he or she did not knowingly commit the anti-doping rule violation”.*⁴⁸

[Comment to Article 10.4: Violations under Articles 2.7 (Trafficking or Attempted Trafficking), 2.8 (Administration or Attempted Administration), 2.9 (Complicity or Attempted Complicity) and 2.11 (Acts by an Athlete or Other Person to Discourage or Retaliate Against Reporting to Authorities) are not included in the application of Article 10.4 because the sanctions for these violations already build in sufficient discretion up to a lifetime ban to allow consideration of any aggravating circumstance.]

- 7 Subsequently, intimation towards panel constitution to adjudicate the ADRV proceeding against the athlete under the Case No. 72/ADDP/2024 and opportunity to file written submission to both the parties (NADA and Athlete) before the Hon'ble Anti-Doping Disciplinary panel was issued on 10-06-2024.

- 8 After hearing both the parties, the pleadings on record, the submissions advanced by the parties, the documents placed and oral and written arguments the Hon'ble ADDP kept the matter reserved for Order and on 9th August 2025 by the way of impugned order an ineligible for Four (4) years w.e.f. 25.09.2024 being the date of provision suspension for violation of Article 2.1 and Article 2.2 under Article 10.2.1.1 has been imposed upon the athlete. Aggrieved with the decision National Anti-Doping Panel filed the present Appeal before Anti-Doping Appeal Panel.
- 9 On 9th February 2026 the notice for Anti-Doping Appeal Panel constitution and to file written submission was issued to both the parties.
- 10 The final hearing in the present matter before the ADAP was conducted on 15th May 2026, and the Panel reserved the matter for orders.

II. Written Submissions on behalf of the Appellant (NADA)

- 1 At the outset, the Appellant submitted that the present appeal has been preferred against the final order dated 9.08.2025 passed by the Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel in Case No. 72/ADDP/2024 titled National Anti-Doping Agency v. Deepak Singh, whereby the Respondent Athlete was sanctioned with a period of ineligibility of four years from the date of provisional suspension i.e. 25.09.2024 for violation of Articles 2.1 and 2.2 of the National Anti-Doping Rules, 2021 ("NADR").
- 2 The Appellant submitted that although the Learned Disciplinary Panel correctly held that the Athlete had committed Anti-Doping Rule Violations under Articles 2.1 (Presence of Prohibited Substance) and 2.2 (Use/Attempted Use of Prohibited Substance), it failed to properly appreciate and apply the provisions relating to aggravating circumstances under Article 10.4 of NADR, 2021, which warranted imposition of a higher period of ineligibility than the standard four-year sanction.
- 3 It was further submitted by the Appellant that during the Rajasthan State Weightlifting Championship 2024-25 held at Chittorgarh, Rajasthan, the Respondent Athlete provided an in-competition urine sample on 24.08.2024, which was collected by NADA's Doping Control Officer in accordance with prescribed procedures. The sample was thereafter sent to the WADA-accredited National Dope Testing Laboratory, New Delhi for analysis.
- 4 Upon analysis, the Athlete's sample returned an Adverse Analytical Finding (AAF) for the following four prohibited substances classified under S1.1 Anabolic Androgenic Steroids, which are non-specified substances under the WADA Prohibited List, 2024:

(i) **1-androstenediol;**

- (ii) 1-androstenedione;**
- (iii) 1-testosterone; and**
- (iv) Methyltestosterone metabolite (17alpha-methyl5alpha-androstane-3 alpha, 17beta-diol).**

- 5** The Appellant emphasised that the presence of four separate prohibited substances in a single sample is a significant factor that was not adequately considered by the Learned Panel..
- 6** The Appellant further submitted that the Respondent did not possess any valid Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE) permitting the use of the aforementioned prohibited substances. Further, NADA's initial review confirmed that there was no departure from the International Standards for Testing and Investigations or International Standards for Laboratories that could undermine the validity of the adverse finding.
- 7** That, thereafter, the Athlete was duly notified regarding the adverse analytical finding vide communication dated 25.09.2024 and was informed of his rights, including the right to request opening and analysis of the B-sample. However, the Athlete failed to respond, and accordingly his right for B-sample analysis stood waived. Subsequently, a formal Notice of Charge dated 23.10.2024 was issued to him for violation of Articles 2.1 and 2.2 of NADR, 2021.
- 8** That during the proceedings before the Disciplinary Panel, the Athlete contended that he had not intentionally consumed any prohibited substance and claimed that he had been consuming multiple supplements as part of his training regimen, one or more of which may have been contaminated. The Athlete also pleaded lack of awareness regarding prohibited substances and anti-doping regulations and sought leniency on the ground that he belonged to a small village and had inadequate knowledge of anti-doping education.
- 9** That the Appellant argued before the Disciplinary Panel that under Article 2.1.1 of NADR, the liability imposed upon an athlete is one of strict liability, and it is the personal duty of every athlete to ensure that no prohibited substance enters his body. The Athlete cannot escape liability merely by pleading lack of intention or ignorance of Anti-Doping Rules. It was further submitted that being a competitive athlete, the Respondent was expected to exercise utmost caution while consuming supplements and could not shift responsibility onto third parties.
- 10** That the Learned Disciplinary Panel ultimately concluded that the Athlete failed to establish that the violation was unintentional and accordingly imposed a standard period of four years' ineligibility under Article 10.2.1.1 of NADR, along with disqualification of results from the date of sample collection.

- 11 The Appellant submitted that the principal error in the impugned decision lies in the failure of the Learned Panel to consider the applicability of Article 10.4 of NADR, which specifically permits enhancement of sanction where aggravating circumstances are established. Article 10.4 clearly provides that where aggravating circumstances are present, an additional period of ineligibility of up to two years may be imposed depending upon the seriousness of the violation.
- 12 The Appellant contended that the definition of “Aggravating Circumstances” under NADR expressly includes situations where an athlete has used or possessed multiple prohibited substances or prohibited methods. The said definition is illustrative and not exhaustive. Therefore, where multiple prohibited substances are detected in an athlete’s sample, the matter squarely falls within the ambit of aggravating circumstances.
- 13 That in the present case, four distinct prohibited anabolic androgenic steroids were detected in the Respondent’s sample. This is not a case involving an isolated substance or inadvertent contamination of a single product. The multiplicity of prohibited substances demonstrates the seriousness of the violation and clearly attracts Article 10.4 of the Rules.
- 14 The Appellant submitted that the Learned Disciplinary Panel failed to appreciate that the present matter involved exceptional facts warranting enhancement of sanction. Considering that the Respondent tested positive for four prohibited substances, the maximum additional sanction contemplated under Article 10.4 ought to have been imposed.
- 15 That the impugned order dated 9.08.2025 deserves to be modified to the extent of sanction, and the Respondent Athlete ought to be sanctioned with a period of six years of ineligibility, considering the aggravating circumstances involved in the present matter.
- 16 In view of the above submissions, the Appellant prayed to set aside/modify the impugned order to the limited extent of sanction and impose the enhanced period of ineligibility in accordance with Article 10.4 of the National Anti-Doping Rules, 2021.

III. RESPONDENT’S (ATHLETE-MR. DEEPAK SINGH) SUBMISSIONS:

- 1 At the outset, the Respondent contended that he was unaware of the National Anti-Doping Rules and had not intentionally consumed any prohibited substance. He explained that he was taking multiple supplements as part of his training regimen and submitted that one or more of these supplements may have been unknowingly contaminated.

- 2 The Athlete emphasized that he had no intention to violate the National Anti-Doping Rules and expressed his belief that the contamination was inadvertent and arose from the supplements upon which he had placed his trust.
- 3 The Athlete further informed the Panel that he hails from a small village and was unaware of what constitutes prohibited substances. He submitted that he had no knowledge of the National Anti-Doping Rules or its testing procedures and had never received comprehensive education regarding prohibited substances or the testing methods adopted by National Anti-Doping Agency.
- 4 Further, the Athlete stated that he is no longer interested in pursuing sports and has already discontinued weightlifting; therefore, he submitted that he would abide by whatever sanction is imposed under the National Anti-Doping Rules.

IV. OBSERVATIONS OF THIS PANEL

- 1 The Appeal Panel has carefully examined the impugned order dated 09.08.2025 passed by the Learned Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel, the pleadings on record, written submissions filed by both parties, oral submissions advanced during the course of hearing, and the documentary material placed before this Panel.
- 2 There is no dispute regarding the fact that the urine sample of the Respondent Athlete collected on 24.08.2024 during the Rajasthan State Weightlifting Championship returned an Adverse Analytical Finding for the following four prohibited substances:
 - (i) 1-androstenediol
 - (ii) 1-androstenedione
 - (iii) 1-testosterone
 - (iv) Methyltestosterone metabolite (17alpha-methyl5alpha-androstane-3 alpha, 17beta-diol)
- 3 These substances fall under S1.1 (Anabolic Androgenic Steroids) of the WADA Prohibited List, 2024 and are classified as Non-Specified Substances.
- 4 The Athlete did not challenge the sample collection process, did not request B-sample analysis and has not alleged any departure from the International Standard for Testing and Investigations or International Standard for Laboratories. Therefore, the Adverse Analytical Finding has attained finality.
- 5 The Athlete admitted consumption of multiple supplements but failed to identify the exact source of the prohibited substances. No supplement containers, purchase receipts, medical prescriptions, expert reports, laboratory analysis reports, or independent evidence were produced to substantiate the plea of supplement contamination.

- 6 The Panel observes that under Article 2.1.1 of NADR, the principle of strict liability is firmly embedded in anti-doping jurisprudence. It is each athlete's personal duty to ensure that no prohibited substance enters his body.
- 7 In CAS 2011/A/2384 *UCI v. Alberto Contador Velasco & RFEC*, CAS held that an athlete bears personal responsibility for substances found in his body and speculative explanations without proof cannot discharge that burden.
- 8 Similarly, in CAS 2017/A/5015 *WADA v. National Anti-Doping Agency & Anshu Rahat*, the CAS reiterated that mere assertions of contamination without cogent evidence are insufficient to rebut anti-doping violations.
- 9 The Athlete's plea that he belongs to a small village and lacked awareness of anti-doping regulations also cannot absolve him of responsibility. Lack of education or ignorance of Rules is not a valid defence under the anti-doping framework.
- 10 In CAS 2006/A/1130 *WADA v. Stanislav Pozdnyakov*, it was held that ignorance of anti-doping obligations does not excuse an athlete from compliance.
- 11 The Panel further notes that this case involves not one but four separate prohibited anabolic steroids detected simultaneously in a single sample. Such multiplicity of banned substances significantly aggravates the seriousness of the violation.
- 12 The definition of Aggravating Circumstances under Article 10.4 specifically contemplates situations involving the use or possession of multiple prohibited substances.
- 13 In CAS 2018/A/5570 *WADA v. Jarrion Lawson*, CAS emphasized that aggravating circumstances may be invoked where surrounding facts demonstrate conduct beyond ordinary anti-doping violations.
- 14 Likewise, in CAS 2014/A/3820 *WADA v. Damar Robinson*, CAS recognized that repeated or multiple prohibited substances may justify enhanced sanctions where the conduct demonstrates a heightened degree of seriousness.
- 15 The Respondent failed to provide any credible explanation as to how four distinct anabolic steroids entered his system simultaneously. The explanation offered remains vague, unsubstantiated, and speculative.

V. FINDINGS OF THIS PANEL

- 1 This Panel finds no infirmity in the conclusion of the Learned Disciplinary Panel holding the Athlete guilty of violations under Articles 2.1 and 2.2 of NADR, 2021.
- 2 However, this Panel finds merit in the contention raised by NADA that the Learned Disciplinary Panel failed to adequately consider the applicability of Article 10.4 of NADR.


- 3 Article 10.4 clearly provides that where aggravating circumstances are established, the otherwise applicable sanction may be increased by an additional period of up to two years depending upon the seriousness of the violation.
- 4 The simultaneous presence of four anabolic androgenic steroids in a single sample cannot be treated as an ordinary anti-doping violation.
- 5 The explanation advanced by the Athlete regarding possible supplement contamination is unsupported by documentary evidence and fails to meet the standard required under anti-doping jurisprudence.
- 6 This Panel finds that the multiplicity of prohibited substances strongly indicates aggravated conduct warranting a sanction higher than the standard four-year period.
- 7 The Learned Disciplinary Panel erred in failing to appreciate the seriousness of the violation in its proper perspective.
- 8 Accordingly, this Panel holds that the present matter squarely falls within the ambit of Article 10.4 of NADR, 2021.

VI. DECISION

- 1 The impugned order dated 09.08.2025 passed by the Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel is modified to the extent of sanction. The period of ineligibility imposed upon the Athlete is enhanced from four (4) years to six (6) years under Article 10.4 of the National Anti-Doping Rules, 2021.
- 2 The period of ineligibility shall continue to run from 25.09.2024, being the date of provisional suspension with credit of suspension period already served by the athlete.
- 3 All competitive results obtained by the Athlete from the date of sample collection shall remain disqualified, along with all resulting consequences including forfeiture of medals, points, prizes, and titles, if any.
- 4 In view of the foregoing observations and findings, the Appeal filed by National Anti-Doping Agency is hereby allowed.

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Date:
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Ms. Rani Rampal
(Sports Member)

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Dr. Rana Chengappa
(Medical Member)
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Kanganda
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Date: 2026.05.21
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Ms. Geetanjali Sharma
(Chairman)