

Issued Decision

UK Anti-Doping and José Félix Soto

Disciplinary Proceedings under the Anti-Doping Rules of the British Boxing Board of Control

This is an Issued Decision made by UK Anti-Doping Limited ('UKAD') pursuant to the Anti-Doping Rules ('ADR') of the British Boxing Board of Control (the 'BBBoC'). It concerns Anti-Doping Rule Violations ('ADRVs') committed by Mr José Félix Soto and records the applicable Consequences.

Capitalised terms used in this Decision shall have the meaning given to them in the ADR unless otherwise indicated.

Background and Facts

1. The BBBoC is the national governing body for the sport of professional boxing in the United Kingdom. It provides licences to domestic and international boxers, which permits them to participate in bouts in the United Kingdom. UKAD is the National Anti-Doping Organisation in the United Kingdom. The BBBoC has adopted, as its own ADR, the UK Anti-Doping Rules¹, which are issued by UKAD and subject to updates made by UKAD, as necessary and in accordance with the World Anti-Doping Code.
2. Mr Félix is a 32-year-old Mexican boxer. On 25 January 2024, the BBBoC granted Mr Félix a Foreign Boxer licence to compete in a bout on 27 January 2024 against Mr Lewis Crocker. In granting the Foreign Boxer licence, the BBBoC was provided with confirmation that Mr Félix is a licensed boxer with La Federación de Comisiones de Box Profesional de la República Mexicana ('FECOMBOX'), the 'Mexican Boxing Association'.
3. As a boxer licensed with the BBBoC and a participant in Competitions and other activities organised, convened, authorised and/or recognised by the BBBoC at all relevant times, Mr Félix was subject to the jurisdiction of the BBBoC and bound to comply with the ADR. Pursuant to ADR Article 7.2, UKAD has Results Management responsibility in respect of all Athletes that are subject to the jurisdiction of the BBBoC.

¹ Version 1.0, in effect as from 1 January 2021

4. In the early hours of 28 January 2024, a UKAD Doping Control Officer ('DCO') collected urine Samples from Mr Félix, In-Competition, after his bout against Lewis Crocker at Ulster Hall, 34 Bedford Street, Belfast, BT2 7FF.
5. Assisted by the DCO, Mr Félix split the urine Sample into two separate bottles which were given reference numbers A1195346 (the 'First A Sample') and B1195346 (the 'First B Sample'). The first urine Sample collected from Mr Félix did not meet the Suitable Specific Gravity (i.e. concentration) for Analysis at a reading of 1.003. Pursuant to the definition in the World Anti-Doping Agency ('WADA') International Standard for Testing and Investigations (the 'ISTI'), the Suitable Specific Gravity for Analysis is at least 1.005 for urine Samples with a minimum volume of 90mL and less than 150mL.
6. The DCO therefore requested a second urine Sample from Mr Félix in accordance with Annex F.3.2 of the ISTI. The second urine Sample recorded a specific gravity of 1.001, being lower than the requirement of at least 1.005. Assisted by the DCO in attendance, the second urine Sample was also split into two separate bottles by Mr Félix which were given reference numbers A1195339 (the 'Second A Sample') and B1195339 (the 'Second B Sample').
7. As the venue was closing, the decision was taken to conclude the test at 02:20 on 28 January 2024.
8. Both sets of urine Samples were transported to the WADA accredited laboratory in London, the Drug Control Centre, King's College London (the 'Laboratory'). The Laboratory analysed the First A Sample and Second A Sample in accordance with the procedures set out in the WADA International Standard for Laboratories (the 'ISL').
9. Analysis of the First A Sample and Second A Sample returned Adverse Analytical Findings ('AAFs') for:
 - a) the following metabolites of metandienone:
 - i. 6 β -Hydroxy-metandienone;
 - ii. 17 α -Methyl-5 β -androstane-3 α ,17 β -diol;
 - iii. 17 β -Methyl-5 β -androst-1-ene-3 α ,17 α -diol (Epimetendiol);
 - iv. 17 β -Hydroxymethyl,17 α -methyl-18-nor-androst-1,4,13-trien-3-one;
and
 - v. 17-epimetandienone; and
 - b) the following metabolites of stanozolol:
 - i. Stanozolol-1'N-glucuronide;

- ii. 3'-Hydroxy-stanozolol; and
 - iii. 4 β -Hydroxy-stanozolol.
10. Metandienone and stanozolol are both listed under section S1.1 of the 2024 WADA Prohibited List as Anabolic Androgenic Steroids. They are non-Specified Substances that are prohibited at all times (i.e. both In-Competition and Out-of-Competition).
 11. Mr Félix did not have a Therapeutic Use Exemption ('TUE') for metandienone or stanozolol.
 12. On 24 April 2024, UKAD sent Mr Félix a letter (the 'Notice Letter'), formally notifying him that he may have committed ADRVs pursuant to ADR Article 2.1 (Presence of a Prohibited Substance or its Metabolites or Markers in an Athlete's Sample) and/or ADR Article 2.2 (Use or Attempted Use by an Athlete of a Prohibited Substance or Prohibited Method). The Notice Letter also confirmed the imposition of a Provisional Suspension. UKAD invited Mr Félix to provide an explanation for the alleged ADRVs.
 13. On 7 May 2024, Mr Félix responded to the Notice Letter by asserting that the AAFs were caused by the ingestion of medication that he had been prescribed to treat an achilles injury. Along with his response, Mr Félix provided a handwritten prescription from a doctor, dated 15 January 2024, which listed "*Stanozolol 10 mg*" and "*Metandienestenalona 10mg*", among other medications.
 14. In the weeks that followed, UKAD sent a number of questions to Mr Félix in relation to the prescription and his response to the Notice Letter. Mr Félix provided responses to UKAD's questions, including details of the specific medications that he had been prescribed.
 15. On 10 October 2024, having considered Mr Félix's response to the Notice Letter, UKAD invited him to submit an application for a retroactive TUE, in accordance with ADR Article 7.3.3(a), to justify his Use of metandienone and stanozolol and the presence of the metandienone and stanozolol Metabolites detected in the First A Sample and Second A Sample.
 16. On 29 October 2024, Mr Félix submitted a partially completed application form to UKAD for a retroactive TUE. UKAD responded on 5 November 2024, informing Mr Félix that, in order to process the application for a retroactive TUE, he would need to provide a clinic review letter from the prescribing doctor and make certain amendments to the application form.
 17. On 24 December 2024, having not received a response to the correspondence dated 5 November 2024, UKAD wrote to Mr Félix to invite him to provide the requested information by no later than 10 January 2025. UKAD informed Mr Félix that if he did not respond by 10 January 2025, it may proceed to issue him with a Charge Letter in accordance with ADR Article 7.11.

18. UKAD did not receive a response from Mr Félix and proceeded to issue him with a Charge Letter on 25 February 2025. The Charge Letter formally charged Mr Félix with ADRVs pursuant to ADR Article 2.1 (Presence of a Prohibited Substance or its Metabolites or Markers in an Athlete's Sample) and ADR Article 2.2 (Use or Attempted Use by an Athlete of a Prohibited Substance or Prohibited Method). Mr Félix was invited to respond to the Charge Letter, by either admitting or denying the ADRVs charged, by no later than 17 March 2025.
19. On 11 April 2025, Mr Félix responded to the Charge Letter by re-asserting his claim that the AAFs were caused by the ingestion of medication that he had been prescribed to treat an achilles injury.
20. On 16 April 2025, UKAD asked Mr Félix to confirm whether he admitted or denied the ADRVs charged, and whether he accepted or disputed the imposition of a five (5) year period of Ineligibility.

Admissions and Consequences

21. On 23 April 2025, Mr Félix confirmed to UKAD that he admitted the ADRVs charged and acceded to the period of Ineligibility asserted by UKAD (i.e. a five (5) year period of Ineligibility).

22. ADR Article 2.1 provides that the following is an ADRV:

2.1 Presence of a Prohibited Substance or its Metabolites or Markers in an Athlete's Sample, unless the Athlete establishes that the presence is consistent with a TUE granted in accordance with Article 4.

23. ADR Article 2.2 provides that the following is an ADRV:

2.2 Use or Attempted Use by an Athlete of a Prohibited Substance or a Prohibited Method, unless the Athlete establishes that the Use or Attempted Use is consistent with a TUE granted in accordance with Article 4.

24. ADR Article 10.2 provides as follows:

10.2 Imposition of a Period of Ineligibility for the Presence, Use or Attempted Use, or Possession of a Prohibited Substance and/or a Prohibited Method.

The period of Ineligibility for an Anti-Doping Rule Violation under Article 2.1, 2.2 or 2.6 that is the Athlete's or other Person's first anti-doping offence shall be as follows, subject to potential elimination, reduction or suspension pursuant to Article 10.5, 10.6 or 10.7:

10.2.1 Save where Article 10.2.4(a) applies, the period of Ineligibility shall be four (4) years where:

(a) *The Anti-Doping Rule Violation does not involve a Specified Substance or a Specified Method, unless the Athlete or other Person can establish that the Anti-Doping Rule Violation was not intentional.*

(b) *[...]*

10.2.2 *If Article 10.2.1 does not apply, then (subject to Article 10.2.4(a)) the period of Ineligibility shall be two (2) years.*

10.2.3 *As used in Article 10.2, the term “intentional” is meant to identify those Athletes or other Persons who engage in conduct which they know constitutes an Anti-Doping Rule Violation or they know that there is a significant risk that the conduct might constitute or result in an Anti-Doping Rule Violation and they manifestly disregard that risk...*

25. In accordance with ADR Article 10.2.1(a), since this matter concerns non-Specified Substances, the applicable period of Ineligibility shall be four (4) years, unless Mr Félix can establish on the balance of probabilities that the ADRVs were not ‘intentional’ (within the meaning of ADR Article 10.2.3).
26. Mr Félix asserted that his ADRVs were not intentional. In his initial response to the Notice Letter, dated 7 May 2024, Mr Félix stated that it “[n]ever was [his] intention to take advantage or physically harm my opponent (sic)”. In his further response to the Notice Letter, dated 13 August 2024, Mr Félix repeated that “[his] intention never was to take advantage to win the fight” and that “[he] never thought that the medicine [he] took will represent a problem”. When submitting his partially completed application form to UKAD for a retroactive TUE, Mr Félix again repeated that it “[n]ever was [his] intention to take advantage or physically harm [his] opponent (sic)”.
27. Within his responses to the Charge Letter, Mr Félix accepted responsibility for the presence of metandienone and stanozolol Metabolites in the First A Sample and the Second A Sample and the ADRVs with which he was charged. Mr Félix has not sought to establish that his ADRVs were not ‘intentional’ (within the meaning of ADR Article 10.2.3). Accordingly, Mr Félix is not entitled to a two (2) year period of Ineligibility pursuant to ADR Article 10.2.2, or any reduction pursuant to ADR Article 10.5 (No Fault or Negligence) or ADR Article 10.6 (No Significant Fault or Negligence) thereafter. Consequently, the period of Ineligibility under ADR Article 10.2.1(a) of four (4) years applies.
28. For the purposes of imposing a sanction, the ADRVs will be considered together as a single first violation, pursuant to ADR Article 10.9.4, which states as follows:

10.9.4 *Additional rules for certain potential multiple offences:*

(a) *For the purposes of imposing sanctions under Article 10.9, except as provided in Articles 10.9.4(b) and 10.9.4(c) an Anti-Doping Rule Violation will only be considered a second (or third, as applicable) Anti-Doping Rule Violation if UKAD can establish that the Athlete or*

other Person committed the additional Anti-Doping Rule Violation after they received notice, or after UKAD or its designee made a reasonable attempt to give notice, of the first (or the second, as applicable) Anti-Doping Rule Violation. Otherwise, the first and second Anti-Doping Rule Violations (or the second and third Anti-Doping Rule Violations, as applicable) shall be considered as one single first Anti-Doping Rule Violation, and the sanction imposed shall be based on the Anti-Doping Rule Violation that carries the more severe sanction, including the application of Aggravating Circumstances...

Aggravating Circumstances

29. The analysis of Mr Félix's urine Samples revealed the presence of the Metabolites of two (2) Prohibited Substances.

30. ADR Article 10.4 provides as follows:

If UKAD establishes, in an individual case involving an Anti-Doping Rule Violation under Article 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6 or 2.10, that Aggravating Circumstances are present that justify the imposition of a period of Ineligibility greater than the standard sanction otherwise applicable in accordance with Article 10.2 or 10.3, 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 they did not knowingly commit the Anti-Doping Rule Violation.

31. Pursuant to the definition in the ADR, circumstances which may amount to Aggravating Circumstances may include:

... the Athlete or other Person Used or Possessed multiple Prohibited Substances or Prohibited Methods, Used or Possessed a Prohibited Substance or Prohibited Method on multiple occasions, or committed multiple other Anti-Doping Rule Violations.

32. UKAD has assessed the circumstances of Mr Félix's ADRVs, including the Use of multiple Prohibited Substances, and considers that Aggravating Circumstances have been established which justify the imposition of a period of Ineligibility greater than the standard sanction, pursuant to ADR Article 10.4.

33. UKAD has determined that the Aggravating Circumstances established in this case — namely, the Use of two (2) Anabolic Androgenic Steroids — attracts an increase to the standard sanction by one (1) year.

34. Therefore, the applicable period of Ineligibility asserted by UKAD in this case is five (5) years.

Disqualification

35. ADR Article 9.1 provides as follows:

9.1 Disqualification of Competition results as a consequence of an Anti-Doping Rule Violation committed in connection with or arising out of an In-Competition test

An Anti-Doping Rule Violation in Individual Sports in connection with or arising out of an In-Competition test automatically leads to Disqualification of the results obtained in the Competition in question, with all resulting consequences, including forfeiture of any medals, titles, points and prizes.

36. Pursuant to the above, Mr Félix's result in his bout against Mr Crocker on 27 January 2024 is automatically disqualified.

Commencement of period of Ineligibility

37. ADR Article 10.13 requires that the period of Ineligibility starts on the date Ineligibility is accepted or otherwise imposed where there is no hearing.
38. However, ADR Article 10.13.2 allows for credit to be given against the total period of Ineligibility to be served where an Athlete has been provisionally suspended and has respected the terms of that Provisional Suspension.
39. Mr Félix has been subject to a Provisional Suspension since the date he received the Notice Letter (i.e. 24 April 2024) and, so far as UKAD is aware, he has respected the terms of that Provisional Suspension. Therefore, affording Mr Félix credit for the time he has spent provisionally suspended, his period of Ineligibility is deemed to have commenced on 24 April 2024 and will end at 11:59pm 23 April 2029.

Status during Ineligibility

40. During the period of Ineligibility, in accordance with ADR Article 10.14.1, Mr Félix shall not be permitted to participate in any capacity (or assist any Athlete participating in any capacity) in a Competition, Event or other activity (other than authorised anti-doping education or rehabilitation programmes) organised, convened, authorised and/or recognised by:
- a) the BBBoC;
 - b) any Signatory;
 - c) any club or other body that is a member of, or affiliated to, or licensed by, a Signatory or a Signatory's member organisation;
 - d) any professional league or any international or national-level Event organisation; or
 - e) any elite or national-level sporting activity funded by a governmental agency.
41. Mr Félix may return to train with a team or to use the facilities of a BBBoC club or a Signatory's member organisation during the last two (2) months of his period of

Ineligibility (i.e. from 11:59pm on 23 February 2029) pursuant to ADR Article 10.14.4(b).

Summary

42. For the reasons given above, UKAD has issued this Decision in accordance with ADR Article 7.12.2, and records that:
- a) Mr Félix has committed ADRVs pursuant to ADR Articles 2.1 and 2.2;
 - b) in accordance with ADR Article 10.9.4(a) the ADRVs are considered as a single first violation for the purposes of imposing a sanction;
 - c) the applicable period of Ineligibility is five (5) years under the application of ADR Article 10.2.1(a) and Article 10.4;
 - d) acknowledging Mr Félix's Provisional Suspension, the period of Ineligibility is deemed to have commenced on 24 April 2024 and will expire at 11:59pm on 23 April 2029;
 - e) Mr Félix's result in his bout against Mr Crocker on 27 January 2024 is automatically disqualified under the application of ADR Article 9.1; and
 - f) Mr Félix's status during the period of Ineligibility shall be as detailed in ADR Article 10.14.
43. Mr Félix, the BBBoC, and WADA have a right to appeal against this Decision or any part of it in accordance with ADR Article 13.4.
44. This Decision will be publicly announced via UKAD's website in accordance with ADR Article 8.5.3 and ADR Article 10.15.

12 June 2025