Issued Decision

UK Anti-Doping and Shane Tuohey

Disciplinary Proceedings under the Anti-Doping Rules of the Rugby Football League

This is an Issued Decision made by UK Anti-Doping ('UKAD') pursuant to the Anti-Doping Rules (the 'ADR') of the Rugby Football League (the 'RFL'). It concerns an Anti-Doping Rule Violation ('ADRV') committed by Mr Shane Tuohey 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 RFL is the national governing body for the sport of rugby league in England. UKAD is the National Anti-Doping Organisation in the United Kingdom. The RFL has adopted, as its own ADR, the UK Anti-Doping Rules,[1] 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 Tuohey is a 21-year-old National-Level rugby league player. As a player registered with the RFL and a participant in Competitions, Events and other activities organised, convened, authorised, or recognised by the RFL, at all relevant times Mr Tuohey was subject to and bound to comply with the ADR. Pursuant to ADR Article 7.2, UKAD has Results Management responsibility for anti-doping matters in respect of all players that are subject to the jurisdiction of the RFL.

3. On 29 March 2026, a UKAD Doping Control Officer ('DCO') collected a urine Sample from Mr Tuohey, In-Competition, at the Betfred Championship match between Rochdale Hornets and Goole Vikings at the Crown Oil Arena in Rochdale.

4. Assisted by the DCO, Mr Tuohey split the Sample into two separate bottles which were given reference numbers A8384914 (the 'A Sample') and B8384914 (the 'B Sample'), respectively.

5. Both Samples were transported to the World Anti-Doping Agency ('WADA') accredited laboratory, the Drug Control Centre, King's College London (the 'Laboratory'). The

[1] Version 1.0, in effect as from 1 January 2021.

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Laboratory analysed the A Sample in accordance with the procedures set out in WADA's International Standard for Laboratories and Technical Document TD2022DL. Analysis of the A Sample returned an Adverse Analytical Finding ('AAF') for carboxy-THC at a concentration of 203 ng/mL.

6. Carboxy-THC is a Metabolite of tetrahydrocannabinol ('THC'), the psychoactive compound found in cannabis. THC is listed at S8 of the 2026 WADA Prohibited List as a cannabinoid. It is a Specified Substance that is prohibited In-Competition only.[2] Pursuant to Article 4.2.3 of the 2021 World Anti-Doping Code, THC is specifically identified as a Substance of Abuse in the 2026 WADA Prohibited List.

7. On 14 May 2026, UKAD sent Mr Tuohey a letter (the 'Notice Letter'). The Notice Letter confirmed the imposition of a Provisional Suspension and formally notified Mr Tuohey, in accordance with ADR Article 7.8.1, 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 a Prohibited Method). The Notice Letter informed Mr Tuohey of his right to request analysis of the B Sample and of the requirement to provide an explanation for the alleged ADRVs by 26 May 2026.

8. On 19 May 2026, Mr Tuohey provided UKAD with a response to the Notice Letter in which he admitted the ADRVs but stated that his Use of THC occurred Out-of-Competition. Mr Tuohey stated that he ingested cannabis by smoking it at approximately 1:50pm on 28 March 2026, but in a context "*entirely unrelated to sporting performance"*. Mr Tuohey also stated that he was *"willing to undertake any UKAD-approved Substance of Abuse education, treatment or awareness programme".*

9. On 21 May 2026, in response to enquiries from UKAD in relation to his ingestion of THC, Mr Tuohey stated that he smoked approximately 1-1.5 grams of cannabis in plant form. Mr Tuohey also stated that during the weeks leading up to 28 March 2026, he *"may have used cannabis approximately 3-4 times across the period, potentially around every other day during that specific week"* and estimated that he used *"approximately 4-5 grams total*" during that period. Mr Tuohey stated that prior to 28 March 2026, he last used cannabis on 27 March 2026 at 10:00pm.

10. On 28 May 2026, in response to further enquiries from UKAD, Mr Tuohey provided photographic/video material supporting his account regarding the timing of his cannabis ingestion on 28 March 2026 at approximately 1:50pm.

11. Following receipt of Mr Tuohey's responses, UKAD sought the opinion of an independent scientific expert, Professor David Cowan OBE, as to whether the account

[2] In-Competition is defined in the ADR as the "*period commencing at 11:59 p.m. on the day before a Competition in which the Athlete is scheduled to participate through the end of such Competition and the Sample collection process related to such Competition […]*"

provided by Mr Tuohey was consistent with the concentration of carboxy-THC detected in the A Sample.

12. Professor Cowan concluded that it is more likely than not that Mr Tuohey's last ingestion of THC took place Out-of-Competition (i.e., before 11:59pm on 28 March 2026).

13. On 29 July 2026, UKAD proceeded to issue Mr Tuohey with a Charge Letter in accordance with ADR Article 7.11.2. The Charge Letter asserted the commission of an ADRV pursuant to ADR Article 2.1 only, in respect of the presence of carboxy-THC in his Sample.[3]

Admission and Consequences

14. 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.***

15. ADR Article 10.2.4 provides:

> *10.2.4 Notwithstanding any other provision in Article 10.2, where the Anti-Doping Rule Violation involves a Substance of Abuse:*
>
> *(a) If the Athlete can establish that any ingestion or Use occurred Out-of-Competition and was unrelated to sport performance, the period of Ineligibility shall be three (3) months; provided that it may be further reduced to one (1) month if the Athlete satisfactorily completes a Substance of Abuse treatment program approved by UKAD. The period of Ineligibility established in this Article 10.2.4(a) is not subject to any reduction pursuant to Article 10.6.*

16. In light of Mr Tuohey's explanation and the expert opinion of Professor Cowan, UKAD accepts that any ingestion of THC by Mr Tuohey occurred Out-of-Competition (i.e., before 11:59pm on 28 March 2026) and in a context unrelated to sport performance. The applicable period of Ineligibility asserted by UKAD in the Charge Letter was therefore three (3) months.

17. On 29 July 2026, Mr Tuohey provided UKAD with a response to the Charge Letter in which he admitted an ADRV pursuant to ADR Article 2.1. Mr Tuohey stated that he had engaged in a Substance of Abuse treatment program and therefore the period of Ineligibility should be reduced from three (3) months to one (1) month pursuant to Article 10.2.4(a).

[3] Mr Tuohey was not charged with an ADRV pursuant to ADR Article 2.2 (Use of a Prohibited Substance or a Prohibited Method) because THC is prohibited In-Competition only and, in light of his account and the opinion of Professor Cowan, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that Mr Tuohey ingested THC after 11:59pm on 28 March 2026 (i.e., within the In-Competition period).

18. On 31 August 2026, UKAD was sent a report by Mr David Kirk from Rugby League Cares which recorded Mr Tuohey's completion of a Substance of Abuse treatment program. Upon review of the report from Rugby League Cares, UKAD was satisfied that Mr Tuohey had completed a Substance of Abuse treatment programme which fulfilled the criteria in its 'Substances of Abuse: Policy for determining approved treatment programmes'.[4] The applicable period of Ineligibility is therefore one (1) month in accordance with ADR Article 10.2.4(a).

Commencement of period of Ineligibility

19. 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.

20. However, ADR Article 10.13.2 allows 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.

21. Mr Tuohey was subject to a Provisional Suspension from the date he received the Notice Letter (i.e., 14 May 2026) until the date it was lifted by UKAD (i.e., 14 August 2026)[5]. As far as UKAD is aware, Mr Tuohey has respected the terms of that Provisional Suspension.

22. Affording Mr Tuohey credit for the time he has spent provisionally suspended, the one (1) month period of Ineligibility is deemed served between 14 May 2026 and 13 June 2026. Mr Tuohey is therefore eligible to participate in sport forthwith.

Summary

23. For the reasons given above, UKAD has issued this Decision in accordance with ADR Article 7.12.2, and records that:

    a) Mr Tuohey has committed an ADRV pursuant to ADR Article 2.1;

    b) A period of Ineligibility of one (1) month is imposed pursuant to ADR Article 10.2.4(a); and

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[4] https://www.ukad.org.uk/sites/default/files/202012/Policy%20for%20Determining%20Approved%20Treatment%20Programmes.pdf

[5] UKAD lifted Mr Tuohey's Provisional Suspension with immediate effect on 14 August 2026 in accordance with ADR Article 7.10.3(c)(iv) on the basis that (as at that date) he had established his entitlement to a reduced period of Ineligibility of three (3) months under ADR Article 10.2.4(a) and had already served a period of three (3) months under Provisional Suspension (i.e., the same period as the maximum period of Ineligibility asserted by UKAD within the Charge Letter). It was not until 31 August 2026 that UKAD received confirmation of Mr Tuohey's successful completion of a Substance of Abuse treatment program, thereby entitling him to a further reduced period of Ineligibility of one (1) month.

c) In accordance with ADR Article 10.13.2, affording Mr Tuohey credit for the time he spent provisionally suspended, his period of Ineligibility is deemed to have commenced on 14 May 2026, and expired at 11:59pm on 13 June 2026.

24. Mr Tuohey, the RFL, International Rugby League, and WADA have a right to appeal against this Decision or any part of it in accordance with ADR Article 13.4.

25. This Decision will be publicly announced via UKAD's website in accordance with ADR Article 8.5.3 and ADR Article 10.15.

8 October 2026