Issued Decision

UK Anti-Doping and Owen Trout

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 Owen Trout 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 Trout is a 26-year-old National-Level Athlete who, at all material times, was a professional rugby league player for Leigh Leopards. 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 Trout 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 20 March 2026, a UKAD Doping Control Officer ('DCO') collected a urine Sample from Mr Trout, In-Competition, at the Betfred Super League match between Wakefield Trinity and Leigh Leopards at the DIY Kitchens Stadium in Wakefield.

4. Assisted by the DCO, Mr Trout split the Sample into two separate bottles which were given reference numbers A8383266 (the 'A Sample') and B8383266 (the 'B Sample'), respectively.

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

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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 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 level of 565 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 22 May 2026, UKAD sent Mr Trout a letter (the 'Notice Letter'). The Notice Letter confirmed the imposition of a Provisional Suspension and formally notified Mr Trout, 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 Trout of his right to request analysis of the B Sample and of the requirement to provide an explanation for the alleged ADRVs by 1 June 2026. Mr Trout sought (and was granted) an extension to this deadline to 11 June 2026.

8. On 11 June 2026, Mr Trout provided UKAD with a response to the Notice Letter in which he admitted an ADRV pursuant to ADR Article 2.1 but denied an ADRV pursuant to ADR Article 2.2. Mr Trout explained that on 17 March 2026 he consumed a cannabis gummy supplied to him by a friend and that since 20 February 2026 he typically consumed two cannabis joints per week to manage his anxiety. Mr Trout also explained that he had ceased all Use of cannabis and was commencing a Substance of Abuse treatment program through Rugby League Cares.

9. On 12 June 2026, in response to enquiries from UKAD, Mr Trout stated that he consumed the cannabis gummy at or around 7:00pm on 17 March 2026. Mr Trout also stated that he consumed a cannabis joint at or around 4:00pm on 16 March 2026.

10. On 17 June 2026, in response to further enquiries from UKAD, Mr Trout stated that he believed the cannabis joint he consumed on 16 March 2026 contained approximately 1g of ground cannabis bud, namely "*Wedding Cake*". Mr Trout also stated that he consumed two cannabis joints on 15 March 2026, the first at 11:00am and the second at 5:00pm, which contained a total of around 1.5 to 2g of *"Wedding Cake."*

[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 […]*"

11. Following receipt of Mr Trout's responses, UKAD sought the opinion of an independent scientific expert, Professor David Cowan OBE, as to whether the account provided by Mr Trout 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 Trout's last Use of THC took place Out-of-Competition (i.e., before 11:59pm on 19 March 2026) as declared by Mr Trout.

13. On 20 July 2026, UKAD proceeded to issue Mr Trout 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 carboxy-THC.[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 the expert opinion of Professor Cowan, UKAD accepts that any ingestion of THC by Mr Trout occurred Out-of-Competition (i.e., before 11:59pm on 19 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 30 July 2026, Mr Trout provided UKAD with a response to the Charge Letter in which he admitted an ADRV pursuant to ADR Article 2.1. Mr Trout enclosed with his response a report from Rugby League Cares following his completion of a Substance of Abuse treatment program. Upon review of the report from Rugby League Cares, UKAD was satisfied that Mr Trout had completed a Substance of Abuse treatment program which fulfilled the criteria in its 'Substances of Abuse: Policy for determining

[3] Mr Trout 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 Trout ingested THC after 11:59pm on 19 March 2026 (i.e., within the In-Competition period).

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

18. 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.

19. 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.

20. Mr Trout was subject to a Provisional Suspension from the date he received the Notice Letter (i.e., from 22 May 2026) until the date it was lifted by UKAD (i.e., 23 June 2026. As far as UKAD is aware, he respected the terms of that Provisional Suspension.[5]

21. Affording Mr Trout credit for the time he has spent provisionally suspended, his period of Ineligibility is deemed served between 22 May 2026 and 21 June 2026. Mr Trout is therefore eligible to participate in sport forthwith.

Summary

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

    a) Mr Trout 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

    c) In accordance with ADR Article 10.13.2, affording Mr Trout credit for the time he spent provisionally suspended, his period of Ineligibility is deemed served between 22 May 2026 and 21 June 2026.

23. Mr Trout, 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.

[4] https://www.ukad.org.uk/sites/default/files/2020-12/Policy%20for%20Determining%20Approved%20Treatment%20Programmes.pdf

[5] On 18 June 2026, Mr Trout submitted an application for the Provisional Suspension to be lifted pursuant to ADR Article 7.10.3. On 23 June 2026, UKAD lifted Mr Trout's Provisional Suspension in circumstances where it was satisfied that upon receipt of: (1) the independent scientific opinion of Professor Cowan, it was more likely than not that Mr Trout's last ingestion of THC occurred Out-of-Competition and in a context unrelated to sport performance; and (2) evidence from Rugby League Cares, that Mr Trout was meaningfully engaged in a (then ongoing) Substance of Abuse treatment program.

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

12 October 2026