

Sport Ireland and Lisa Farrelly

Corrected Reasoned Decision of Sport Ireland

The following is the reasoned decision of Sport Ireland pursuant to the Irish Anti-Doping Rules (“**Rules**”) and the International Standard for Results Management. It concerns anti-doping rule violations (“**ADRV**”) committed by Ms Lisa Farrelly (the “**Athlete**”) and records the Consequences¹ to be applied. It is being notified to the Anti-Doping Organisations referred to in Article 14.1.2 of the World Anti-Doping Code (the “**Code**”).

1. Background

1.1 On 14 May 2020 the Irish Sport Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel (the “**Panel**”) issued a decision which found that the Athlete had committed anti-doping violations arising out of in-competition testing at a wrestling event on 2 November 2019. The Panel imposed a four-year ban (the “**Original Ban**”), with the period of Ineligibility commencing on 4 December 2019 and expiring at midnight on 4 December 2023. A copy of the Panel’s decision was issued to the Athlete and was published by Sport Ireland.

1.2 A ban imposed in one sport automatically applies to other sports subject to the Code². Further, participating in international or national level competitions in a sport which is not a Signatory to the Code is also prohibited.

1.3 On 24 February 2023, whilst still subject to the Original Ban, the Athlete submitted an application to become and became a member of the Irish Judo Association and the Portmarnock Judo Club. The membership was terminated in or around 7 June 2023 (the “**Membership Period**”).

1.4 However, during the Membership Period:

1.4.1 The Athlete participated in judo club training and/or activities during the Membership Period.

1.4.2 On 11 March 2023, the Athlete competed in two judo events (i.e., the Lower Kyu F-u63kg event and the Senior F-u63kg event) at the Galway Open Tournament as a member of the Portmarnock Judo Club.

1.4.3 On 1 April 2023, the Athlete competed in the Senior F-u57kg event at the Irish Judo Association’s Club Challenge in Dublin at the National Indoor Arena (the “**Club Challenge**”) as a member of the Portmarnock Judo Club. She competed in and won her first bout.

1.5 Sport Ireland became aware of these matters via the Irish Judo Association and began an investigation.

2. Investigation and Notifications

2.1 On 3 May 2023 Sport Ireland notified the Athlete by letter that she was alleged to have committed a violation of Article 10.10.1 – “*Prohibition Against Participation During Ineligibility or Provisional Suspension*”. In the letter, Sport Ireland notified the Athlete that the alleged ADRVs were based on her participation in club training and/or activities during the Membership Period, her participation in judo competitions at the Galway Open Tournament in March 2023 and her participation in a judo

¹ Capitalised terms used throughout this decision shall have the meaning given to them in the Rules.

² Article 10.10.1 and Article 16.

competition at the Club Challenge in April 2023.

2.2 In response, the Athlete sent an email to Sport Ireland on the same date as follows:

"Sorry I missed your call. I didn't know I couldn't compete in other sports, I thought it was just wrestling. I know now it's all of them so I won't do any."

2.3 On 15 November 2023, having carried out further investigations, Sport Ireland issued a further letter to the Athlete notifying her that in addition she was alleged to have committed a violation of Article 2.3 - "*Evading, Refusing or Failing to Submit to Sample Collection by an Athlete*". In the letter, Sport Ireland notified the Athlete that the additional alleged ADRV was based on evidence from witnesses at the Club Challenge indicating that the Athlete withdrew from the competition and left the event after she became aware that she may be selected for testing.

2.4 Sport Ireland alleged that during the Club Challenge, the Athlete became aware that a Sport Ireland sample collection personnel was present and that the overall winner of her weight division would be selected for testing.

2.5 The Athlete won her first bout and initially it was thought that she was the overall winner of the 57kg event as there were only 2 competitors; however, shortly thereafter, it came to light that another competitor had been entered into the competition as two weight categories had been merged due to the small number of competitors. As such, 2 other bouts would need to take place before the overall winner could be determined. Shortly after this, the Athlete withdrew from the event and left the Club Challenge.

2.6 In response to the notification letter dated 15 November 2023, the Athlete sent an email to Sport Ireland disputing that she evaded sample collection and stating that there was some confusion at the event, where she thought she had been selected for testing based on incorrect information that she was the winner when in fact there still had been no final in that event.

2.7 The Athlete went on to state that, in addition to the Club Challenge, she also competed in the International Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation ("**IBJJF**") No-Gi Championship event which was also at the National Indoor Arena in Dublin the same day and, around the time she was selected for testing at the judo event, she received a call for her next match in the IBJJF event. She stated that she discussed this with a Sport Ireland representative and believed that she could carry on to the IBJJF event with the intention of returning to test after the final.

2.8 The Athlete sent a further email on 24 January 2024 stating that she did not return again to the Club Challenge because she was still competing in the IBJJF event, which she said was her priority.

2.9 The Athlete remained subject to her Original Ban until its expiration in December 2023, at which point she was then Provisionally Suspended pending the outcome of the matter.

3. Charges

3.1 Sport Ireland issued a charge letter to the Athlete on 28 February 2024 (the "**Charge Letter**"), charging her with the following ADRVs:

3.1.1 Article 10.10.1 – "*Prohibition Against Participation During Ineligibility or Provisional Suspension*"; and

3.1.2 Article 2.3 - "*Evading, Refusing or Failing to Submit to Sample Collection by an Athlete*".

- 3.2 The Charge Letter notified the Athlete of the ways in which she could respond to her ADRVs, including her right to provide an explanation that warrants less than the proposed ban of eight years.
- 3.3 The Athlete engaged a solicitor and on 12 April 2024, the Athlete's solicitor provided witness statements to Sport Ireland from individuals who were also present at the Club Challenge and who provided further information around the circumstances of the Athlete's withdrawal from the judo competition. The witnesses confirmed, *inter alia*, that the Athlete was at risk of being disqualified from the IBJFF event due to her being called for her next match and the delay in her leaving from the judo event. It was further confirmed that the Athlete stayed and competed at the IBJFF event until the late evening.
- 3.4 The Athlete disputed that she evaded sample collection, citing the confusion around her initial designation as winner of the event and the urgency in her returning to compete in the IBJFF event.
- 3.5 After careful consideration by Sport Ireland, having regard to the Athlete's response and the witness statements provided on her behalf, the charge with respect to Article 2.3 will not proceed against the Athlete.
- 3.6 With respect to the charge under Article 10.10.1, the Athlete has admitted the charge in that she participated in the following Competitions and activities while subject to a Period of Ineligibility:
- 3.6.1 competing in the Irish Judo Association's Galway Open event (Senior F-u63kg) as a member of the Portmarnock Judo Club in March 2023;
 - 3.6.2 competing in the Irish Judo Association's Club Challenge in Dublin (Senior F-u57kg) as a member of the Portmarnock Judo Club in April 2023;
 - 3.6.3 submitting an application to become a member of the Irish Judo Association and the Portmarnock Judo Club on 24 February 2023 and participating in club training and/or activities.
- 3.7 The Athlete has further accepted the Consequences to be imposed as a result of the violation of Article 10.10.1, which are:
- 3.7.1 a total ban of 4 years with effect from 5 December 2023;
 - 3.7.2 Sport Ireland shall Publicly Disclose details of the matter following its conclusion. The details of the case will be made available on the Sport Ireland website and will be the subject of a media release.
 - 3.7.3 The Disqualification of any results achieved during the period in question, the results obtain in the competitions referred to in paragraphs 2.15.1-2.15.2.
- 3.8 In light of the above, Sport Ireland now publishes this reasoned decision.

4. Consequences

- 4.1 The applicable period of Ineligibility for the Athlete's violation of Article 10.10.1 is four years. In accordance with Article 10.10.3 of the Rules, this period of Ineligibility is equal in length to the original period of Ineligibility and is being added to the end of the original period of Ineligibility, which ended at midnight on 4 December 2023. This means that the new period of Ineligibility will expire at midnight on 4 December 2027.

4.2 Sport Ireland has also decided that it will Publicly Report the details of the matter following its conclusion³, including the sport, the violation in question, the name of the Athlete and the Consequences imposed.

4.3 Any sport-related financial support, including but not limited to funding from Sport Ireland, and other sport-related benefits received by an Athlete or other Person shall be withheld by Sport Ireland, the Irish Judo Association and its affiliates, members and/or licensees.

4.4 Pursuant to Article 10.10.1 of the Rules⁴, during the period of Ineligibility the Athlete may not participate in organised sport in any capacity. This includes training and coaching.

4.5 Pursuant to Article 10.10.2, the Athlete may return to train with a team or to use the facilities of a club or other member organisation of a Signatory's member organisation or a National Governing Body, during the last 2 months of her period of Ineligibility.

4.6 This decision is being notified to the Athlete, the International Judo Federation and WADA, each of whom has a right of appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport within 21 days of receipt of this decision, subject to Article 13.2.6 of the Rules in the case of WADA and the International Judo Federation.

5. Summary

5.1 Sport Ireland issues this decision pursuant to Article 7.4 of the Rules.

5.2 For the reasons given above, Sport Ireland has issued this decision, which records that:

- The charge with respect to Article 2.3 will not proceed against the Athlete.
- The Athlete has committed a violation of Article 10.10.1 of the Rules by participating in Competitions and activities while subject to a period of Ineligibility.
- The Athlete's results shall be Disqualified arising from her participation in judo competitions at the Galway Open Tournament in March 2023 and her participation in the judo competition at the Club Challenge in April 2023.
- A four year ban has been imposed on the Athlete pursuant to Article 10.10.3, with effect from 5 December 2023.
- The Athlete's period of Ineligibility shall expire at midnight on 4 December 2027.

Dated the 16th of July 2024

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³ Article 15.3 of the Rules.

⁴ Article 10.10.1.1 provides that an Athlete who has been declared Ineligible shall not participate in any capacity "in a Competition or activity, (other than authorised anti-doping education or rehabilitation programs) authorised or organised by any Signatory, Signatory's member organisation, or a club or other member organisation of a Signatory's member organisation, or by any National Governing Body or by a member or affiliate organisation or licensee of a National Governing Body or in Competitions authorised or organised by any professional league or any international or national-level Event organisation or any elite or national-level sporting activity funded by a governmental agency."

