

16 February 2026

**DECISION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TENNIS INTEGRITY AGENCY
PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 7.14 OF THE 2025 TENNIS ANTI-DOPING PROGRAMME**

A. Introduction

1. The International Tennis Integrity Agency (**ITIA**) is the delegated third party, under the World Anti-Doping Code (**Code**), of the International Tennis Federation (**ITF**), the international governing body for the sport of tennis and signatory of the Code. Under the delegation, the ITIA is responsible for the management and administration of anti-doping across professional tennis in accordance with the Tennis Anti-Doping Programme (the TADP or the Programme), which sets out Code-compliant anti-doping rules applicable to players competing in Covered Events.¹
2. Conner Huertas Del Pino (the **Player**) is a 30-year-old professional tennis player from Peru. He has achieved a career-high ATP singles ranking of 520. By virtue of (among other things) his ATP ranking and participation in Covered Events in 2025, the Player was bound by and required to comply with the TADP at all relevant times.
3. Following the detection of the Prohibited Substance boldenone in a sample provided by the Player, the ITIA charged the Player with the commission of anti-doping rule violations under Article 2.1 and/or Article 2.2 of the TADP (copied below), and subsequently proposed certain Consequences based on its analysis of the degree of Fault that the Player bears for those violations:

“2.1 The presence of a Prohibited Substance or any of its Metabolites or Markers in a Player’s Sample, unless the Player establishes that such presence is consistent with a TUE granted in accordance with Article 4.4.”

“2.2 Use or Attempted Use by a Player of a Prohibited Substance or a Prohibited Method, unless the Player establishes that such Use or Attempted Use is consistent with a TUE granted in accordance with Article 4.4.”

4. The Player has admitted the anti-doping rule violations charged and acceded to the Consequences proposed by the ITIA.
5. In such circumstances, 2025 TADP Article 7.14 provides that:

“7.14.1 At any time prior to a final decision by the Independent Tribunal, the ITIA may invite the Player or other Person to admit the Anti-Doping Rule Violation(s) asserted and accede to specified Consequences [...]

¹ Unless specified otherwise, references in this decision to the TADP are to the 2025 edition. The substantive rules of the 2025 TADP and the procedural rules of the 2025 TADP apply to this case (see 2025 TADP Article 1.5). Any defined term denoted by an initial capital letter that is not otherwise defined in this decision has the meaning given to it in the applicable TADP.

7.14.2 In the event that the Player or other Person admits the Anti-Doping Rule Violation(s) asserted and accedes to Consequences specified by the ITIA [...], the ITIA will promptly issue a reasoned decision confirming the commission of the Anti-Doping Rule Violation(s) and the imposition of the specified Consequences [...], will send notice of the decision to the Player or other Person and to each Interested Party, and will Publicly Disclose the decision in accordance with Article 8.6. [...]

7.14.3 Any decision issued by the ITIA in accordance with Article 7.14.2 that an Anti-Doping Rule Violation has been committed [...] will address and determine (without limitation): (1) the factual basis of the decision that an Anti-Doping Rule Violation was committed; and (2) all of the Consequences to be imposed for such Anti-Doping Rule Violation, including the reasons for imposing the Consequences specified, and in particular the reasons for exercising any discretion not to impose the full Consequences available under this Programme."

B. The Player's commission of anti-doping rule violations

6. The Player participated in the ATP Challenger event held in Bogota, Colombia, between 12 and 17 May 2025 (the **Event**). On 14 May 2025, following his match, the Player was required to provide an In-Competition urine sample for drug testing pursuant to the TADP (the **Sample**). The Sample provided was given reference number 1597270 and was split into an A sample and a B sample, which were sealed in tamper-evident bottles and transported to the WADA-accredited laboratory in Montreal, Canada (the **Laboratory**) for analysis. The Laboratory detected the presence of exogenous boldenone in sample A1597270 at an estimated concentration of 5.2 ng/mL.
7. Boldenone is listed in section S1.1 of the 2025 WADA Prohibited List as an anabolic steroid that is banned at all times.
8. The Adverse Analytical Finding reported by the Laboratory in respect of the Sample was considered by an independent Review Board in accordance with TADP Article 7.4. The Review Board did not identify any apparent departures from the applicable sample collection and sample analysis procedures that could have caused the Adverse Analytical Finding. It therefore decided that the Player had a case to answer for breach of TADP Articles 2.1 and/or 2.2.
9. Accordingly, on 7 July 2025 the ITIA sent the Player a formal pre-charge Notice. Given that boldenone is not classified as a Specified Substance under the TADP, the Player was subject to a mandatory provisional suspension under TADP Article 7.12.1, which came into effect on 7 July 2025.
10. The pre-charge Notice informed the Player that two other players had also returned findings for boldenone at the Event. A consent form was attached to the pre-charge Notice which enabled the Player to share his contact details with the other players (a reciprocal form was included in the pre-charge Notices sent to the two other players) so that they may confer and research the possibility of a common source of the boldenone in their samples.² To note, each of the three

² The ITIA was conscious of the amendment to the 2027 International Standard for Results Management (at Article 5.1.2.3) which anticipates that if there is more than two Adverse Analytical Findings resulting from the same Contaminated Source, the athletes should be notified of that fact.

players returned a finding for boldenone only. No other prohibited substances were detected in each of their samples.

11. The Player, and the two other players, consented for their contact details to be shared and so were able to make contact with each other to consider if there was a common source.
12. On 21 July 2025, the Player responded to the pre-charge Notice, denying the charge, and he provided receipts and a list of foods consumed, and restaurants he had attended, whilst in Colombia between 9 and 18 May 2025. The Player further confirmed that he was gathering documentation which he hoped would support that he had eaten contaminated meat. In that response, the Player requested that the B sample be analysed but stated that he, or a representative, would not attend the opening.
13. The Laboratory subsequently analysed sample B1597270 and, on 6 August 2025, reported that it had detected exogenous boldenone in sample B1597270, i.e., the B sample analysis confirmed the Adverse Analytical Finding made in respect of the A sample.
14. On 14 August 2025, the ITIA sent the Player a formal Charge Letter, asserting that the Player had committed anti-doping rule violations in breach of TADP Articles 2.1 and/or 2.2.
15. TADP Article 2.1 is a strict liability offence that is established simply by proof that a Prohibited Substance was present in the Player's sample, i.e., the ITIA does not have to prove how the substance got into the Player's system or that the Player took the substance intentionally (or even knowingly).
16. On 3 September 2025, the Player filed a response to the Charge Letter, admitting that he had committed the anti-doping rule violations with which he was charged, however he maintained that the source of boldenone found in his Sample was the result of his ingestion of contaminated meat in the days prior to the Sample.
17. Following communications with the Player to determine his availability, the Player was interviewed by an ITIA investigator on 20 November 2025. Following this interview, the Player was requested to submit additional information (for example, further evidence of meat consumed at a restaurant). This was provided on 16 January 2026.
18. As explained above and in more detail below, the ITIA considered the Player's explanation and evidence (including through a series of interviews and follow up enquiries and document requests) and ultimately proposed to the Player certain Consequences for the violations, which the Player acceded to.

C. Consequences

Period of Ineligibility

(i) How boldenone got into the Player's system

19. The Player has asserted that he did not intend to cheat and did not knowingly ingest boldenone. He asserts that the boldenone in his urine sample came from portions of meat that he consumed in the days and hours, at various establishments in Colombia, before collection of the Sample and that – unknown to him – that meat was likely to have contained residues of boldenone injected into the animal as a growth promoter prior to slaughter.



20. The Player has provided the following evidence in support of his meat contamination explanation:
- 20.1 Evidence from Professor Pascal Kintz including a report which sets out the results of analysis of the Player's hair and toenails. Following collection of the Player's hair and toenail clippings, Professor Kintz performed analysis on samples of the Player's hair and toenails – boldenone was not detected.
 - 20.2 Statements from the Player including a list of meals which the Player ate in the days before 14 May 2025 (supported by receipts and a credit card statement).
 - 20.3 References to several comparable cases in which contaminated meat has been held to be the source of boldenone in a Player's sample.
 - 20.4 Reference to scientific research, including the CHINADA and WADA International Symposium, in Foodstuff residues and Impact on Anti-Doping in Sport outcomes that took place in October 2017, in relation to meat contamination and the pharmacological intake of boldenone.
21. The ITIA consulted Professor Jean-François Naud, Director of the Laboratory, who confirmed that the Player's explanation is scientifically plausible, i.e., it was not possible to exclude that the Adverse Analytical Finding reported for the Sample is consistent with the timing and frequency of the Player's consumption of meat in the days prior to sample collection and the concentrations of boldenone that may be found in Colombian meat. When reaching his conclusion, Professor Naud considered that there were two other players at the tournament who also returned boldenone findings at the Event.
22. While not decisive, the ITIA further notes that there are no additional factors (such as, for example, the presence of multiple prohibited substances in the Player's sample and/or other intelligence) that would undermine or otherwise reduce the cogency or plausibility of the Player's explanation that the source of boldenone in his sample was the result of his consumption of contaminated meat.
23. Given all of the circumstances of this case, and considering cases involving comparable facts (i.e., the detection of boldenone only, in a low concentration that can plausibly be explained by the ingestion of contaminated meat, and in circumstances where the Player has established that he ingested one or multiple portions of Colombian meat shortly before sample collection),³ the ITIA accepts the Player has established that it is more likely than not that the boldenone found in his urine sample 1597270 was due to the presence of boldenone residues in the meat that he consumed in the days and/or hours prior to collection of the Sample. No other evidence, including from the ITIA's investigations and detailed interviews with the Player and, in particular, the fact that two other players also tested positive at the Event, undermines the evidence provided to demonstrate source.

³ ITF v Farah, ITF decision dated 10 February 2020, in which the ITF accepted that the presence of 1.2 ng/mL of boldenone and 1.8 ng/mL of boldenone metabolite in Mr Farah's sample was more likely than not the result of his consumption of contaminated beef; and ITA v Mosquera, ITA decision dated November 2024, which the ITA has confirmed was based on its acceptance that the presence of 10.1 ng/mL of boldenone in Mr Mosquera's sample was more likely than not the result of his consumption of contaminated beef.

(ii) **TADP Article 10.2 – Analysis of Intent**

24. This is the Player's first doping violation.
25. TADP Article 10.2.1 mandates a four-year ban for a TADP Article 2.1 and/or 2.2 violation that is "intentional" and is a first violation.⁴ If the prohibited substance in question is not classified as a Specified Substance (as here), the Player has the burden of proving that the violation was not "intentional". If the Player can do so, TADP Article 10.2.2 provides for a two-year period of ineligibility, subject to potential further mitigation. TADP Article 10.2.3 explains that in this context "the term 'intentional' is meant to identify those Players or other Persons who engage in conduct that they knew constituted an Anti-Doping Rule Violation or knew that there was a significant risk that the conduct might constitute or result in an Anti-Doping Rule Violation and manifestly disregarded that risk". The jurisprudence is clear that what counts in this context is what the Player actually knew, not what he should have known.⁵
26. As set out above, the ITIA has accepted that the Player's ingestion of meat that, unknown to him, was contaminated with boldenone was more likely than not the source of his positive test. Accordingly, and in line with the jurisprudence on meat contamination, the ITIA accepts that the Player has met his burden of demonstrating that his commission of the violation was not "intentional" within the meaning of TADP Articles 10.2.1 and 10.2.3, and so the two-year period of ineligibility set out in TADP Article 10.2.2 applies.

(iii) **TADP Article 10.5 – Analysis of No Fault or Negligence**

27. TADP Article 10.5 provides that if a player establishes that they bear No Fault or Negligence for the anti-doping rule violation in question, the otherwise applicable period of ineligibility will be eliminated. 'No Fault or Negligence' is defined in the TADP as follows: *"The Player or other Person establishing that they did not know or suspect, and could not reasonably have known or suspected even with the exercise of utmost caution, that they had Used or been administered the Prohibited Substance or Prohibited Method or otherwise violated an anti-doping rule"*.
28. The WADA Technical Letter 23 and the accompanying WADA Stakeholder Notice set out rules for the treatment and assessment of findings of specific Prohibited Substances used as growth promoters in specific countries. A finding of a specific Prohibited Substance below a certain concentration will be treated as an Atypical Finding and subject to further investigation to determine whether or not the cause might have been the athlete's ingestion of contaminated meat. If so, no further action will be taken. If not, an Adverse Analytical Finding is reported and a charge is brought (in which case the athlete may assert that the finding was the result of ingestion of contaminated meat and the athlete acted with No Fault or Negligence, and the evidence adduced in support of those assertions will be judged against the standard of proof). Boldenone does not at present fall within the scope of that Technical Letter.

⁴ In accordance with TADP Article 10.9.4.1, for the purposes of imposing consequences under the TADP, the anti-doping rule violations will be "considered together as one single first Anti-Doping Rule Violation, and the sanction imposed will be based on the Anti-Doping Rule Violation that carries the more severe sanction" if (as here) the Player did not commit the second anti-doping rule violation after he received notice of the first.

⁵ *ITF v Sharapova*, Independent Tribunal decision dated 6 June 2016, para 68, not challenged on appeal, *Sharapova v ITF*, CAS 2016/A/4643.

29. Over the years, athletes in tennis and other sports have been advised to exercise caution when in Mexico/Central or South America due to the possible risk of contamination caused by consuming Mexican/Central or South American meat from certain countries.⁶ However, while the ITIA guidance recommends players consider other sources of protein where possible, neither tennis players nor athletes in other sports are required to refrain entirely from the consumption of meat or to have meat pre-tested for anabolic steroid residues before consumption. Nor is the risk of boldenone contamination in Colombia so high that WADA has addressed this in Technical Letter 23 or issued any official warning, as it has done in the past for other potential meat contaminants (and in particular for clenbuterol in Mexico and Guatemala).⁷
30. The Player does not dispute that he completed an ITIA educational module, most recently in January 2024, where he correctly identified there was a risk of meat contamination in Colombia. The Player also previously correctly answered that he understood that players are solely responsible for what they ingest. However, the Player has explained that he did not properly understand the risk of consuming meat in Colombia prior to eating the meat and providing the doping control sample.
31. In these circumstances, and consistent with other decisions where it has been accepted that Colombian meat contaminated with boldenone was the likely cause of the positive test, the ITIA therefore considers the Player acted with No Fault or Negligence, in that he did not know or suspect that he had Used the Prohibited Substance or otherwise violated an anti-doping rule⁸.
32. For the sake of clarity, following this finding of No Fault or Negligence:
33. TADP Article 10.5 provides that any otherwise applicable period of Ineligibility shall be eliminated entirely. Therefore, the Player's provisional suspension is lifted with immediate effect, and he will not serve any further period of Ineligibility for his violation. Instead, the Player is eligible to resume competition with immediate effect.
34. TADP Article 10.9.3 provides that this anti-doping rule violation shall not be considered a prior anti-doping rule violation for purposes of Article 10.9, i.e., if the Player commits another anti-doping rule violation, that second violation would be considered his first violation for sanctioning purposes.

D. Disqualification of results

⁶ For example, the guidance provided by the ITIA can be found on its website: www.itia.tennis/news/itia-news/meat-contamination-warning/?q=meat.

⁷ Similarly, the general advice on the ITIA's website concerns those substances (clenbuterol, ractopamine, zeranol, and zilpaterol) and countries (China, Mexico and Guatemala) referred to in Technical Letter 23 and the Stakeholder Notice: www.itia.tennis/anti-doping/supplements/.

⁸ For the sake of clarity, the ITIA notes that it is not automatic that a case of meat contamination (with Colombian beef or otherwise) will lead to a No Fault or Negligence finding, and that with further and more specific education it may be increasingly difficult for players (and other athletes) to assert that they did not know or suspect and could not have reasonably have known or suspected even with the exercise of utmost caution that there is a significant risk that the consumption of Colombian beef may contain boldenone and lead to an anti-doping rule violation.

35. The Player's singles and doubles results at the Event are disqualified in accordance with Article 10.1, in each case with all resulting consequences including forfeiture of any medals, titles, ranking points, and prize money received.
36. Under Article 10.1.2 *'if the Player establishes that they bear No Fault or Negligence for the Anti-Doping Rule Violation in question, the Player's results obtained in the Competition(s) other than the Competition during or in connection with which the Anti-Doping Rule Violation occurred will not be Disqualified unless the ITIA establishes that the Player's results in the other Competition(s) were likely to have been affected by their Anti-Doping Rule Violation.* The ITIA accepts that the Player's results following the Event are not disqualified.

E. Costs

37. Each party shall bear its own costs of dealing with this matter.

F. Publication

38. In accordance with 2025 TADP Article 8.6, this decision will be publicly reported by being posted (in full and/or summary form) on the ITIA's website.

G. Acceptance by the Player

39. The Player has accepted the consequences proposed above by the ITIA for his anti-doping rule violations and has expressly waived his right to have those consequences determined by the Independent Tribunal at a hearing.
40. The Player accepted the consequences, and his provisional suspension was lifted on 22 January 2026, and the Player has been able to resume competing since that date.

H. Rights of appeal

41. This decision constitutes the final decision of the ITIA, resolving this matter pursuant to TADP Article 7.14.
42. Further to TADP Article 13.2.1, each of WADA and the Comisión Nacional Antidopaje del Peru, as the Player's NADO, has a right to appeal against this decision to the CAS in Lausanne, Switzerland, in accordance with the procedure set out at TADP Articles 13.8 and 13.9.
43. As part of the resolution of this matter, the Player has waived his right to appeal against or otherwise challenge any aspect of this decision (both as to the finding that the Player has committed anti-doping rule violations and as to the imposition of the consequences set out above), whether pursuant to TADP Article 13.2.1 or otherwise. However, if an appeal is filed with the CAS against this decision either by WADA or the Player's NADO, the Player will be entitled (if so advised) to exercise his right of cross-appeal in accordance with TADP Article 13.9.4.

Issued Decision of the ITIA

London, 16 February 2026

