

19 June 2026

**DECISION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TENNIS INTEGRITY AGENCY
PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 7.14 OF THE 2026 TENNIS ANTI-DOPING PROGRAMME**

I. Introduction

1. The International Tennis Integrity Agency (**'the ITIA'**) is the delegated third party, under the World Anti-Doping Code (**'the Code'**), of the International Tennis Federation (**'the 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 2026 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. Nathan Ponwith (**'the Player'**) is a 28-year-old tennis player from the United States. He has achieved a career-high world singles ranking of 367.² He first registered online for an International Player Identification Number (IPIN) in 2011 and in subsequent years. Thereby, the Player expressly agreed to be bound by and to comply with the Programme. By virtue of that agreement, and by virtue of his participation in ITF and ATP Challenger events (both of which fall within the definition of 'Covered Events' under the TADP), the Player became bound by and was required to comply with the Programme.
3. The ITIA notified the Player of the commission of an Anti-Doping Rule Violation under Article 2.1 and/or Article 2.2 of the TADP involving a substance, Cannabis, which is a Substance of Abuse as defined in the TADP. TADP Articles 2.1 and 2.2 read:

"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. This ITIA issued decision is made in accordance with Article 10.2.4 of the TADP, which provides:

"10.2.4 Notwithstanding any other provision in Article 10.2, where the Anti-Doping Rule Violation involves a Substance of Abuse:

10.2.4.1 If the Player can establish that any ingestion or Use occurred Out-of-Competition and was unrelated to sport performance, the period of Ineligibility will be three months, provided that it may be further reduced to one month if the Player satisfactorily completes a Substance of Abuse treatment program approved by the ITIA. The period of Ineligibility established in this Article 10.2.4.1 is not subject to any reduction based on any provision in Article 10.6.

¹ Any term in this Decision that begins with a capital letter and is not otherwise defined in this Decision has the meaning given to it in the Programme.

² [Nathan Ponwith Tennis Player Profile | ITF](#)

10.2.4.2 *If the ingestion, Use, or Possession occurred In-Competition, and the Player can establish that the context of the ingestion, Use, or Possession was unrelated to sport performance, then the ingestion, Use, or Possession will not be considered intentional for purposes of Article 10.2.1 and will not provide a basis for a finding of Aggravating Circumstances under Article 10.4.”*

II. The Player's commission of an Anti-Doping Rule Violation

5. On 17 February 2026, while competing in the men's singles competition at the ITF WTT M25 tournament held in San Jose, Costa Rica, from 16 February to 22 February 2026 (**'the Event'**), the Player was required to provide a urine sample for anti-doping testing under the TADP. The sample was given reference number 1727986. 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 Montréal, Canada (**'the Laboratory'**) for analysis. The Laboratory reported an Adverse Analytical Finding for Cannabis: Carboxy-THC and 11-nor-9-carboxy- Δ 9-tetrahydrocannabinol, (i.e., metabolites of Cannabis), which are prohibited under the Programme, in the category of Cannabinoids (section S8 of the 2026 Prohibited List). Cannabis is a Specified Substance. The Player does not have a Therapeutic Use Exemption (**'TUE'**) permitting use of Cannabis.
6. The Adverse Analytical Finding reported by the Laboratory in respect of the A 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 sample collection procedures set out in the International Standard for Testing and Investigations or from the sample analysis procedures set out in the International Standard for Laboratories that could have caused the Adverse Analytical Finding. The Review Board noted the Player does not have a TUE. It therefore decided that the Player had a case to answer for breach of TADP Article 2.1 and/or TADP Article 2.2.
7. The ITIA sent the Player a (pre-charge) Notice on 8 April 2026, advising him of his Adverse Analytical Finding and that he may have committed an Anti-Doping Rule Violation under TADP Article 2.1 (presence of a Prohibited Substance in his Sample) and/or TADP Article 2.2 (Use or Attempted Use of a Prohibited Substance). Given that Cannabis is classified as a Specified Substance under the TADP, the Player was not subject to a mandatory provisional suspension under TADP Article 7.12.1.
8. On 14 April 2026 in response to the ITIA's (pre-charge) Notice letter, the Player accepted he that he had committed an Anti-Doping Rule Violation and asserted that he had consumed Cannabis Out-of-Competition and it was unrelated to sports performance. The Player asserted that he ingested Cannabis solely for medicinal purposes and sought to rely upon the process established by TADP Article 10.2.4.
9. On 20 April 2026, the Player, who had waived his right to have his B sample analysed, was notified that the Laboratory had proceeded with the B sample analysis, which confirmed the presence of Carboxy-THC and 11-nor-9-carboxy- Δ 9-tetrahydrocannabinol (i.e., metabolites of cannabis) made in respect of the A sample.
10. On 21 April 2026, the Player was interviewed by an ITIA investigator. During this interview, the Player admitted to consuming Cannabis, Out-of-Competition, in the days before the Event. The Player confirmed that he ingests Cannabis to help his [REDACTED], [REDACTED], relaxation and to aide with sleeping. The Player also confirmed that he holds an [REDACTED] issued by the [REDACTED], which permits the Player to legally possess and use Cannabis for medical purposes. The Player admitted that he did not declare medicinal cannabis

on his Doping Control Form at the Event as he had consumed the Prohibited Substance Out-of-Competition and therefore, the Player did not consider this to be a requirement at the time.

11. The ITIA consulted with the Laboratory who confirmed that the Player's stated use of Cannabis was consistent with the concentration in his sample and, accepted that the Player's Use was Out-Of-Competition. The WADA Prohibited List does not prohibit the use of Cannabis Out-of-Competition.
12. On 26 May 2026, the ITIA formally charged the Player with the commission of an Anti-Doping Rule Violation under TADP Article 2.1. TADP Article 2.1 is a strict liability offence that is established simply by proof that a Prohibited Substance was present in the 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).
13. On 29 May 2026, the Player responded to the formal charge letter. He reiterated his acceptance of the Anti-Doping Rule Violation and asserted that his consumption was unintentional and not related to sports performance, seeking to rely upon the process established by TADP Article 10.2.4.
14. Accordingly, the breach of TADP Article 2.1 was established. This is the Player's first Anti-Doping Rule Violation.

III. Consequences

A. Applicability of TADP Article 10.2.4 sanctioning process

15. The Player asserted that his Adverse Analytical Finding was caused by taking the Prohibited Substance Out-of-Competition in a context with no link to his sports performance.
16. In support of his explanation, the Player provided evidence of an [REDACTED] [REDACTED] issued by the [REDACTED], which allows the Player to legally possess and use Cannabis for medical purposes (including to help with sleep and [REDACTED]). The Player also provided receipts for medical grade Cannabis products that he had purchased from a dispensary on 13 February 2026, several days before the urine sample was collected. The Player confirmed that he had consumed large quantities of Cannabis (approximately 14g per day) between 13 and 14 February 2026.
17. In view of the evidence, the ITIA accepted that the Player's *"ingestion or Use occurred out-of-competition and was unrelated to sports performance."* Therefore, his case qualified for the process set out in TADP Article 10.2.4.1.

B. Period of Ineligibility

18. The default period of Ineligibility under TADP Article 10.2.4.1 is three months. The sanction may be further reduced to one month if the Player satisfactorily completes a Substance of Abuse treatment programme approved by the ITIA.
19. The Player provided details of a Substance of Abuse treatment programme which he will undertake in [REDACTED]
20. The ITIA reviewed the proposed treatment programme and determined that it satisfactorily constituted a Substance of Abuse Treatment Programme. As such, the ITIA took into account the objective of TADP Article 10.2.4.1, that athletes are appropriately rehabilitated from use of Substances of Abuse and that they are given credit at the sanctioning stage for so doing. The ITIA

determined that it would conditionally apply the two-month reduction from the three-month default sanction on the basis that the Player completes the treatment programme. That is, the period of Ineligibility will remain at one month on the basis that the Player completes all modules of the treatment programme and provides a completion report to the ITIA from the programme provider.

21. If the Player does not satisfactorily meet the above conditions, the sanction will revert back to three months, and the additional two months will fall to be served pursuant to a further decision which would be issued by the ITIA at such time. However, for the time being, the sanction on a conditional basis is one month of Ineligibility.

C. Disqualification of results

22. The Player's results at the Event are automatically disqualified in accordance with TADP Articles 9.1 and 10.1.1 (including forfeiture of any medals, titles, ranking points, and prize money received as a result of participation in the Event).

23. TADP Article 10.10 states:

“Unless fairness requires otherwise, in addition to the Disqualification of results under Articles 9.1 and 10.1, any other results obtained by the Player in Competitions taking place in the period starting on the date the Sample in question was collected or other Anti-Doping Rule Violation occurred and ending on the commencement of any Provisional Suspension or Ineligibility period, will be Disqualified, with all of the resulting consequences, including forfeiture of any medals, titles, ranking points and Prize Money).”

24. The Player competed in four events between the date of sample collection (17 February 2026) and the date of this Decision. Notwithstanding the general rule in TADP Article 10.10, in the specific circumstances of this case (in particular, that the Player would not have obtained any competitive advantage from his ingestion of Cannabis in at the Event), the ITIA considered that in the interests of fairness, the Player will retain the results obtained between the date of sample collection and the date of this Decision.

D. Costs

25. Each party shall bear its own costs of dealings with this matter.

E. Publication

26. TADP Article 10.15 states:

“10.15 Automatic publication of Consequences

A mandatory Consequence in every case where an Anti-Doping Rule Violation has been committed will be automatic publication, as provided in Articles 8.6 and 13.11.”

27. Accordingly, this Decision will be publicly reported by being posted (in full and/or redacted form) on the ITIA's website.

F. Notification

28. On 16 June 2026, the Player was advised in summary form of the ITIA's decision pursuant to TADP Article 10.2.4.1, the written reasons for which are now set out in this Decision issued on 19 June 2026.

IV. Rights of appeal

29. This Decision constitutes the final decision of the ITIA resolving this matter pursuant to TADP Article 10.2.4.1.
30. Further to TADP Article 13.2, each of WADA and the National Anti-Doping Organisation of the United States (USADA) has a right to appeal against this Decision to the CAS in Lausanne, Switzerland, in accordance with the procedure set out at TADP Article 13.9.

V. Summary

31. The Anti-Doping Rule Violation was admitted. On the conditions set out in this Decision, the Player is subject to a one-month period of Ineligibility pursuant to TADP Article 10.2.4.1. The one-month (conditional) period of Ineligibility commenced on 19 June 2026 and will conclude on 18 July 2026, on which date he shall be free to return to tennis subject to the conditions set out in this issued Decision. If the Player fails to comply with those conditions, they will be subject to an additional two months of Ineligibility to be imposed by the ITIA in a subsequent decision.

Issued Decision of the ITIA

London, 19 June 2026

Tennis you can **trust.**

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