

OLYMPIC COACH BANNED FOR FIVE YEARS FOR VIOLATING INTEGRITY CODE

27 FEBRUARY 2024, MONACO: Former Belarus Olympic head coach, Yury Moisevich, has been banned for five years by a Disciplinary Tribunal, after being found in breach of the World Athletics' Integrity Code of Conduct, stemming from Krystsina Tsimanouskaya's controversial withdrawal from the Tokyo Olympic Games in August 2021.

The Tribunal found that 63-year-old Moisevich violated the Integrity Standard for 'Dignity' (Rule 3.3.10 of the Integrity Code) - after his actions were adjudged to be a "a clear affront to the Athlete's dignity and an abuse of...power" - and that he also contravened the Integrity Standard for 'Honesty' (Rule 3.3.1 of the Integrity Code) by "providing false or inaccurate information in the course of events leading up to the Athlete's departure from the Olympic Village" and thereby failing to "act with the utmost integrity and honesty at all times including acting in good faith".

On a third charge under the Protect Reputation Integrity Standard (Rule 3.3.17 of the Integrity Code), the Tribunal said, whilst in no way intending to minimize Moisevich's misconduct, it was not "comfortably satisfied" that he had acted in breach of the Integrity Standard in "this very particular set of circumstances".

The coach, who retired last May, has been immediately barred from participation in any capacity in any aspect of athletics or any activity under the ambit of World Athletics or its Area Associations and Member Federations.

"This ruling represents a significant success for the rights of athletes in the sport of athletics and sends a clear signal that the Athletics Integrity Unit will do its utmost to protect those rights and the sport's core values," said AIU Chair David Howman.

"The dignity of all athletes is of paramount importance and every attempt must be made to guarantee the environment in which they compete is free of harassment, abuse and bad faith dealings of any kind."

Moisevich had been charged by the AIU under Rule 3 of the Integrity Code after the matter of Tsimanouskaya's withdrawal was referred by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and World Athletics (WA) on 30 September, 2021.

A team leader of 31 individuals at the Tokyo Olympics, Moisevich was involved in the decision-making by Belarusian officials to withdraw the 27-year-old sprinter from the showpiece and send her back to Belarus.

This followed Tsimanouskaya's social-media criticism of the coaching staff for entering her in the 4x400-metre relay - an event in which she had never competed individually or team-wise - and her criticism of the Belarus Athletics Federation for having to withdraw some athletes due to non-compliance with Rule 15 of the World Athletics' Anti-Doping Rules.

After removing the social-media post, Tsimanouskaya was subsequently informed by Moisevich of a decision to withdraw her from the Games and send her back to Belarus.

The athlete was taken to the airport on 1 August 2021 but sought assistance from local law enforcement and did not board the flight. She has since re-settled in Poland for whom she now competes in international events.

Tsimanouskaya recorded part of her conversations with Moisevich, the content of which served as evidence during the hearing, and which the Disciplinary Panel said confirmed Moisevich “perpetrated, or, at the very least, assisted in the perpetration of a false narrative concerning the Athlete’s mental and emotional state to justify her immediate removal from the Olympic Games pursuant to an order from the Ministry of Sport”.

Following the incident, the IOC revoked Moisevich’s accreditation and expelled him from the Olympic Village.

Moisevich Decision: <https://bit.ly/WA-v-Moisevich-Decision>

About the Athletics Integrity Unit

The Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) is the independent body created by the World Athletics that manages all integrity issues - both doping and non-doping - for the sport of athletics. The remit of the AIU includes anti-doping, the pursuit of individuals engaged in age or competition results manipulation, investigating fraudulent behaviour with regards to transfers of allegiance, and detecting other misconduct including bribery and breaches of betting rules. It is the AIU’s role to drive cheats out of our sport, and to do everything within its power to support honest athletes around the world who dedicate their lives to reaching their sporting goals through dedication and hard work.

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