

Weightlifter Patrick Mendes Banned

The United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) has banned Olympic weightlifter Patrick Mendes after he tested positive for human growth hormone (HGH), a banned substance.

The weightlifter from “Average Broz’s Gymnasium” in Las Vegas, Nevada failed anti-doping controls on February 7 and February 27, 2012 prior to the 2012 United States Olympic Team Trials for Weightlifting that determine who would represent the United States at the 2012 Summer Olympics in London. Patrick Mendes was the top-ranked U.S. Olympic weightlifter at over 105 kilograms.

Mendes was the protégé of renowned weightlifting coach John Broz who lived and trained during his competitive career with legendary Bulgarian superheavyweight Antonio Krastev, who recorded a world record snatch of 216 kilograms in 1987.

The 21-year-old Mendes who was a U.S. Olympic hopeful in weightlifting tested positive for human growth hormone (HGH). The prospective medal favorite in the super heavyweight division at the London Olympics confessed to using the drug after testing positive in two tests administered in February, according to the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) in a statement.

Graduated from Del Sol High in Las Vegas, Patrick Mendes accepted a two-year ban, which commenced on March 19. His positive test results for HGH were the result of two separate samples collected on February 7, 2012, and February 27, 2012 as part of USADA’s Out of Competition Testing Program. The samples of Mendes were tested at the WADA-accredited Sports Medicine Research & Testing Laboratory (SMRTL), located in Salt Lake City, Utah. Human Growth Hormone is prohibited under the USADA Protocol for Olympic and Paralympic Movement Testing and the International Weightlifting Federation (“IWF”) Anti-Doping Policies, both of which have adopted the World Anti-Doping Code.

The weightlifter admitted his use of HGH and accepted a period of two years of ineligibility that began on March 19, 2012, the day he accepted a provisional suspension. As a result of the sanction, Mendes is also disqualified from all competitive results obtained on or subsequent to February 7, 2012, the date the first blood sample was collected, including forfeiture of any medals, points, and prizes.

USADA CEO Travis T. Tygart said the case demonstrates yet again that the human growth hormone testing works to stop this dangerous drug from being used in sport and added that the agency is pleased that Mendes chose to admit his use of HGH and accept the sanction.

With this suspension, the weightlifter become only the second U.S. athlete found using human growth hormone, the first being minor-league baseball player Mike Jacobs, who tested positive under the program instituted by Major League Baseball last summer.

In another development, 19-year-old Olympic weightlifter Joshua Gilbert of Las Vegas, Nev. from “Average Broz’s Gymnasium” tested positive for the diuretic furosemide at the 2012 National Weightlifting Championships that was held in conjunction with the U.S. Olympic Trials as part of the Arnold Sports Festival in Columbus (Ohio) on March 2, 2012. Joshua Gilbert was suspended for a period of three years for his anti-doping rule violation from the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA).