

Doping Samples From 2006 Turin Olympics To Be Retested

The International Olympic Committee will retest doping samples from the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin with the eight-year deadline approaching in a bid to catch any drug cheats who may have escaped detection at the time.

The statute of limitations for Turin expires in February 2014. The Turin samples are stored at the doping laboratory in Lausanne, Switzerland and they include urine and blood samples.

The international Olympic body has been storing samples for eight years since the Athens Games to allow for retesting when new methods are made available. Samples will be retested with more advanced techniques to search for banned substances that could not be found in 2006, IOC medical commission chairman Arne Ljungqvist said and added that any positive tests would result in athletes being retroactively disqualified and stripped of any medals. The IOC is presently in consultation with the World Anti-Doping Agency on how many samples to retest and what all events to target. Endurance events like cross-country skiing are considered the most open to doping abuse while Ljungqvist said no samples are immune.

Ljungqvist said we could see from the retests of the Athens Games that there are good reasons for going back to Torino with methods that were not available then. The IOC last year retested samples from the 2004 Summer Olympics in Athens and caught five athletes who were retroactively stripped of their medals for using [anabolic steroids](#), including men's shot put winner Yuriy Bilonog of Ukraine. The International Olympic Committee in 2010 re-analyzed some Turin samples for insulin and the blood-booster CERA but all those tests came back negative. During the Turin Games, there was only one positive test with Russian biathlete Olga Pyleva stripped of a silver medal after testing positive for a banned stimulant but the games were hit by a major doping scandal when Italian police on a tip-off from the IOC raided the lodgings of the Austrian cross-country and biathlon team and seized blood-doping equipment. Four athletes received life bans from the IOC after no athlete from Australia testing positive initially.

CERA retests from the 2008 Beijing Olympics led to five positive cases that included the stripping of Bahrain runner Rashid Ramzi's gold medal in the 1,500 meters.

Ljungqvist said the IOC is discussing with WADA what to do and how much we do, just like we did with Athens and the joint effort was confirmed by WADA director general David Howman. Leaders of WADA last year criticized the IOC for not retesting more of the 3,000-plus samples from the Athens Olympics; the international Olympic body re-analyzed about 100 samples. Officials of the

IOC are hopeful to wrap up the Turin retesting process, including any disciplinary procedures, before the next [Winter Games in Sochi](#), Russia, in February 2014.

Meanwhile, the International Association of Athletics Federations has also conducted retesting of doping samples and recently announced that six athletes from Russia and Belarus, including three gold and two silver medalists, had been caught for doping in retests from the 2005 track and field world championships in Helsinki.