

## **London Olympic Champion Faces Life Ban**

Asli Cakir Alptekin of Turkey, who returned from a drugs ban to win the women's 1500m under a cloud of suspicion at the 2012 [London Olympics](#), faces a lifetime ban after she was being charged with another offence.

The Turkish athlete, who was given a ban of two years in 2004 after a positive drugs test at the world junior championships, has been charged on the basis of abnormal blood values from her biological passport. At the 2012 Olympic Games, she beat her compatriot Gamze Bulut to give Turkey its first-ever athletics gold medal. Maryam Yusuf Jamal of Bahrain was third and Tatyana Tomashova of Russia fourth behind Alptekin at the 2012 London Olympics.

The doping scandal comes as Istanbul is bidding for the 2020 Olympics, competing against Tokyo and Madrid.

In another development, the International Association of Athletics Federations has announced that another Turkish athlete, the double European 100m hurdles champion Nevin Yanit, also faces a ban after multiple positive findings in both in-competition and out-of-competition tests. A two-time European champion in the outdoor 100m hurdles, Yanit, won the 60m hurdles gold at the European indoors in Goteborg, Sweden, in March in 7.89s. Alina Talay of Belarus was second, followed by Veronica Borsi of Italy and Derval O'Rourke of Ireland. Yanit finished fifth in the London Olympics 100m hurdles final.

Both Yanit and Alptekin have been charged with anti-doping rule violations by the IAAF and have been suspended and the case of these athletes have been referred to the Turkish federation for adjudication and Cakir faces an automatic life ban for a second doping offence.

The president of the Turkish Olympic Committee, Ugur Erdener, said we fully support all authorities in this ongoing investigation. Erdener also said the IOC can be totally assured" of the country's adherence to World Anti-Doping Agency rules. Erdener added that doping is a major global issue and Turkey is ready to fulfill its responsibilities in helping to eradicate it from world sport. The Turkish Olympic Committee president also added that the TOC will continue to intensify our own efforts to root out cheats in Turkish sport and any athlete found to have cheated will be punished to the full extent of Turkey's comprehensive and rigorously enforced anti-doping legislation.

The ban on Cakir will hardly raise eyebrows in athletics, despite her denying the [use of performance enhancing drugs](#) when she was questioned immediately after her London success.

British middle-distance runner Lisa Dobriskey, who finished 10th in the women's 1,500m final behind Alptekin who served a two-year suspension for doping after the 2004 junior world championships, voiced concern that she was not competing on a level playing field. She also added at that time that I'll probably get into trouble for saying this but I don't believe I'm competing on a level playing field and also remarked that she thinks the blood passport is catching people but she think these Games came too soon. Dobriskey also remarked that people will be caught eventually and she would be keeping her fingers crossed anyway.