

## Reduced Sanction For Disgraced SA Cyclist

The SA Institute for Drug-Free Sport (SAIDS) has announced a two-month reduction in the doping sanction of cyclist [David George](#) who tested positive for EPO in 2012.

George was cleared to compete last month after he provided substantial assistance to SAIDS. The reduction was in line with the SA Anti-Doping Rules (Article 10.5.3) where an athlete provides substantial assistance to an Anti-Doping Authority. The same panel that ruled on George's initial sanction evaluated the substantial assistance submission application by the SA Institute for Drug-Free Sport on behalf of the athlete and accepted the substantial nature and quality of the assistance.

The detailed reasoned decision has been sent to the World Anti-Doping Agency, Cycling South Africa, and the UCI (the world governing body of cycling). These entities have the right to appeal the reduction in sanction if they are not satisfied that the assistance provided by the athlete did not satisfy the criteria as outlined in the Anti-Doping Rules.

George, a former teammate of Lance Armstrong, failed an out-of-competition test on August 29 for [Erythropoietin](#) (EPO). Erythropoietin has the ability of increasing the count of red blood cells and can improve the oxygen carrying capacity of the body. Announcing the positive test, SAIDS chief executive Khalid Galant said the cyclist's biological passport indicated suspicious activity and that triggered a targeted test for EPO and added that a subsequent urine test came back positive for the banned EPO drug. Galant also remarked George's [biological passport](#), which analyses the athletes blood profile indicated suspicious activity and that triggered a targeted test for EPO. EPO testing gives us a window of between 6 and 12 hours for testing because that's how long it will show up in a test.

The South African cyclist did not ask for his B sample to be tested and accepted his punishment. In a statement, George said he knows the result will ultimately be the same and this decision will be communicated to Cycling South Africa (CSA) and Drug-Free Sport shortly and according to protocol. Apologizing to his sponsors, George had remarked Cycling, as you know, has been a confusing space, and although it has given him incredible moments it has also given him experiences that no person or young athlete should have to go through.

David George represented South Africa at two Olympics, in 1996 and 2000. The cyclist won silver in the road race at the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne and bronze in the time trial in the Kuala Lumpur Games in 1998. The marathon mountain biker competed for Lance Armstrong's US Postal Service from 1999-2000. George made a successful transition from the road to mountain biking. The cyclist won the overall in the MTN Ultra Marathon series, Old Mutual Joberg2c and the BoE Sani2c stage race. George moved to the Tacconi Sport Vini Caldirola team after turning pro with US Postal in 1999 and spending two years there. The cyclist then moved to the Tacconi Sport Vini Caldirola team and then to the CCC Polsat squad. The cyclist competed with Team Barloworld between 2003 and 2005, but was initially without a pro team for 2006.