

## Six-Year Anti-Doping Ban For Weightlifting Coach

New Zealand Sports Tribunal has suspended Daniel Milne, a [weightlifting](#) coach, from all sport for six years after he admitted to charges of trafficking and possession of prohibited substances.

In what is the first anti-doping violation of attempted trafficking in New Zealand, Milne admitted both charges before the Sports Tribunal. The ban imposed on Milne means he will not be allowed to be involved in any form of sport for the six years of his ban, either as a competitor, coach, or trainer.

The lengthy ban was applauded by [Drug Free Sport New Zealand](#) chief executive Graeme Steel who said it served as a warning to coaches who encourage or assist with doping. Steel remarked coaches are there to support and inspire athletes, not to drag them into the mire of cheating through drug use and it is unacceptable for a coach to compromise an athlete's integrity, health and sporting career in this way and he is pleased the tribunal has recognized this by delivering a tough sanction. Steel said courage of the young weightlifter in coming forward to report Milne was admirable.

The Drug Free Sport New Zealand chief executive also said it takes enormous strength of character to come forward to report someone in a position of authority, such as a coach and added this young athlete is to be commended for his bravery and in his view he is a role model for clean sport. Steel also remarked he hopes other athletes will be inspired by his conviction to do the right thing and out someone involved in doping.

Milne offered to supply [anabolic steroids](#) and other performance enhancing prohibited substances to a 19-year-old weightlifter in a December 2012 party. Milne was coaching the weightlifter and this "offer" was to help him improve his competitive performance. The Tribunal, in its judgment, said Milne held a party at his house where he showed the weightlifter some products, offered to source them for him and showed him how to use them. Milne's offer was declined by the young weightlifter and he communicated about this to another coach and this is how the Drug Free Sport New Zealand carried out investigations and referred the matter to the tribunal.

Initially, Milne denied the allegations but then admitted to two anti-doping rule violations, namely possessing and attempted trafficking (selling, giving, delivering, or distributing) a prohibited substances. It was noted by the Tribunal that there were aggravating factors including that the violations happened within an athlete and coach relationship and noted that the weightlifter was a young man who should have received mentoring and support from Milne, and this was not a one-off spontaneous mistake but reflected Milne's unacceptable attitude towards use of prohibited substances.

The Tribunal added Milne was ashamed and contrite and had made positive contributions to the sport. The tribunal stated that the fundamental attack on the integrity of all sporting contests demands that the breach is not minimized. The tribunal also noted that Milne made positive and constructive contributions to the sport over the years but regrettably a period occurred where he lost focus and sound judgement. It also added he was still a relatively young man with some personal difficulties but still with clear potential.