

Former Figure Skating World Champion Banned

[Carolina Kostner](#), one of the most decorated female figure skaters in the world, has been banned by the Italian anti-doping tribunal for 16 months. This was after the Italian figure skater was found guilty of assisting her then-boyfriend and Olympic race walking champion Alex Schwazer in covering up his doping.

The Italian Olympic Committee's anti-doping prosecutor had earlier recommended that Kostner should be banned for four years and three months. The prosecutor changed his recommendation following a change in the World Anti-Doping Agency's code from the beginning of 2015. He requested a suspension of two years and three months but the Italian anti-doping tribunal decided on a sanction of one year and four months and a fine of 1,000 euros (\$1,150).

The 27-year-old Kostner had already announced her decision to take off from competition this year but a long ban could have ruled her out of the 2018 Olympics in Pyeongchang.

Kostner admitted lying to anti-doping officials when they arrived in 2012 at her home looking for Alex Schwazer so that they could collect a sample for a drug test. The figure skater told them that Schwazer was not around. She now says that she never covered for Alex as she had no idea what he was doing.

Italy's Olympic committee was seeking a heavier penalty for Carolina. The Italian Olympic Committee's anti-doping prosecutor had recommended that the former figure skating world champion be banned for four years and three months. The request by prosecutor was made as part of a widespread doping inquiry that set off when Alex Schwazer tested positive for [Erythropoietin](#) (EPO) in 2012.

After the verdict, Carolina will be prevented from competing, coaching, or appearing in shows that are sanctioned by the [International Skating Union](#) (ISU). Her ban is not backdated and the 27-year-old will not lose any of her medals. The ban starts immediately and ends on May 15, 2016.

Giovanni Fontana, Kostner's lawyer, said he would be appealing to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) in Lausanne. Fontana also remarked that Carolina cleared up

all the doubts there were to clear up and he thinks the anti-doping prosecutor was very satisfied on all accounts. The lawyer also remarked that Carolina is extraneous from the entire case and she did not cover up anything for anyone. Carolina exited by a backdoor and did not speak with reporters. Fontana said that his client is used to a completely different type of attention and that's why we thought that after four hours she should rest up a bit.

Schwazer admitted to using EPO, the blood-boosting hormone, and announced his retirement from the sport. The Italian race walker, who won the 50-kilometre walk at the 2008 Beijing Olympics, also admitted to consulting with Lance Armstrong's banned sports doctor, Michele Ferrari. Schwazer was banned by CONI for 3 ½ years in April 2013. The ban imposed on Schwazer may be extended by three months, taking his suspension to April 2016. After caught doping, Schwazer admitted that he purchased EPO and lied to Carolina about storing the banned substance in their fridge.