

## **Team Astana Thrown Out Of MPCC Over Doping Issues**

The [Movement for Credible Cycling](#) has thrown out the Astana Cycling team after the professional road bicycle racing team sponsored by the Samruk-Kazyna failed to comply with strict anti-doping rules of the association at this year's Tour de France.

In a statement on Friday, the MPCC said the board of directors of MPCC after hearing Team Astana representative Dmitriy Fofonov's arguments have decided to exclude Team Astana for non-compliance with article 9 of the regulations. The MPCC statement added although cortisol hormones are an allowed medicine when prescribed by a physician, the use of that medicine has frequently been abused in the history of sports [including in cycling] for the purpose of increasing the performance. It was also added in the statement that a low level of cortisol can potentially endanger the health of athletes in certain circumstances. The MPCC statement also reads that MPCC and its member teams for both reasons and with the objective to contribute to restoring the credibility of cycling have introduced that voluntary norm below which its riders will temporarily withdraw from competition.

In July, Astana rider Lars Boom started the Tour despite showing low levels of cortisone in a test conducted on the eve of the race. Low cortisol levels can be explained by the use of corticoids, anti-inflammatory drugs that are allowed out of competition but forbidden while racing unless a therapeutic use exemption is granted beforehand to a rider. Under MPCC rules, Boom should have rested for eight days but UCI regulations did not forbid him from racing. Boom later withdrew ahead of stage 10 due to illness.

Team Astana defended Boom by remarking the cortisol reading was as a result of "a long-standing and well-known application of anti-asthma therapy by the athlete." Team Astana tried to substitute Boom with another rider after the issue arose but the world governing body of cycling remarked it was too late for changes to the roster.

Commenting on the issue of Lars Boom, UCI President Brian Cookson had said Lars Boom has not broken any UCI or WADA rules, the issue of cortisol and cortisone has been referred to WADA's scientific experts and at the present moment they have not recommended us or anyone else take action to include that within our rules.

Earlier this year, Team Astana managed to retain its WorldTour license for 2015 despite many of its riders failing to clear anti-doping tests. Kazakh brothers Maxim and Valentin Iglinsky tested positive for the banned blood booster EPO. To add to the problems, three riders on the secondary Continental Tour team failed tests for [anabolic androgenic steroids](#).

In another development, MPCC said it had heard [Androni Giocattoli's](#) case and added that it heard manager Gianni Savio's arguments on the three positive cases in the past 16 months and added the squad had acted appropriately after the recent cases emerged. In June 2015, Patrick Facchini tested positive for Tuaminoheptane and the positive test of Fabio Taborre for FG-4592 came in last June and Davide Appollonio's positive for EPO in the same month.