

Former UEFA Man Appointed To Lead Anti-Doping Unit

Mike Earl has been appointed by [World Rugby](#) as its Anti-Doping General Manager, the sport's governing body said in a statement.

Earl will head the Dublin-based organization's anti-doping unit. Previously, Earl has spent 15 years working in the field for UEFA, the Football Association, and the UK National Anti-Doping Organization.

In a statement, World Rugby chairman Bernard Lapasset remarked [doping](#) is a major threat to the integrity of sport and World Rugby is a committed and active federation in the fight to protect clean sport. Lapasset added this appointment in a critical area expands our capability, ensuring the highest possible standards of testing and education as our sport continues to reach and grow in new markets worldwide.

Lapasset also said we announced a 28 per cent increase in our annual education and testing funding in 2015. He also remarked this record anti-doping investment, with participation levels increasing at unprecedented rates, represents a proactive and pragmatic approach to protect our sport and ensure a level playing field. The World Rugby chairman added it focuses on the intelligence-based testing supported by our biological passport program and increased face-to-face and online education across multiple languages.

The World Rugby in a statement said it was committed to ensuring the highest standards of education in order that players at all levels of the sport make the right choices with regards to nutrition and participation. The statement also reads that education remains a critical deterrent and it is mandatory for players, coaches and medical practitioners participating in World Rugby events. The World Rugby statement added it would also implement educational programs at lower levels of the game and in school rugby.

During last year's [Rugby World Cup](#) 2015 testing program, 468 samples were taken across all 20 participating nations with no adverse findings.

Recently, Ryan Watkins was suspended from all sport for four years following an Anti-Doping Rule Violation by UK Anti-Doping (UKAD). Watkins tested positive for the anabolic

steroid Nandrolone and the stimulant Methylhexanamine following an in-competition test on 18 August after a pre-season friendly between Maesteg Harlequins RFC and Bridgend Ravens RFC. He is banned from 12 September 2015 to midnight on 11 September 2019.

UKAD Director of Legal, Graham Arthur said Ryan Watkins deliberately ingested Nandrolone and Methylhexanamine without any consideration for his responsibilities as an athlete and added by making this conscious choice to dope, Watkins has chosen to cheat his team mates, the opposition and his sport.

Few days back, UK Anti-Doping suspended Shaun Cleary from all sport for two years following an Anti-Doping Rule Violation. The hooker for Maesteg Harlequins RFC tested positive for Benzoylcegonine (a cocaine metabolite) following an in-competition test on 18 August after a pre-season friendly between Maesteg Harlequins RFC and Bridgend Ravens RFC. At that time, Graham Arthur said Cleary used cocaine three days before he played and cocaine was still in his system when he played. The UKAD Director of Legal then remarked cocaine is banned from sport and Athletes are solely responsible for what is in their system, regardless of whether there is an intention to cheat or not. Sportspeople have to be aware that using cocaine at any time will put them at great risk of breaking the anti-doping rules and receiving a long ban.