

Kazakh Weightlifting Federation's Chief Coach Steps Down After Doping Scandal

Alexei Ni, the chief coach of the Kazakh weightlifting federation, has stepped down from his position after the doping scandal that recently engulfed the sport. Ni helmed the national weightlifting team of Kazakhstan for over 20 years since 1994. Kazakh weightlifters participated in six Olympics Games under his guidance.

The International Olympic Committee stripped weightlifter Ilya Ilyin of Kazakhstan of two gold medals — one each from the Beijing and London Games, both in the 94-kilogram class. Ilyin is believed to be the first summer Olympic athlete to lose two gold medals for doping. Szymon Kolecki of Poland is likely to get Ilyin's weightlifting gold from Beijing while Saeid Mohammedpour of Iran could take Ilyin's 2012 gold.

Three Olympic gold medals and one silver medal were stripped of their medals in the latest round of positive doping retests from the 2008 and 2012 Summer Games. The IOC announced seven athletes from Belarus, Azerbaijan, and Kazakhstan were retroactively disqualified after they tested positive for steroids in a reanalysis of their [stored doping samples](#).

Ilyin's sanction was announced recently by the Kazakhstan Olympic Committee. In a statement, the IOC said Ilya Ilyin tested positive for [Stanozolol](#) on his Beijing sample and for Stanozolol and Turinabol in his London test. One of the biggest names in weightlifting, Ilyin said he was "shaken" and "in shock" at the news. Ilyin, the only athlete to win two Olympic gold medals for Kazakhstan, said he was considering an appeal.

The weightlifting program of Kazakhstan, which had been one of the world's most successful programs over the last decade, has been almost wiped out by retesting of samples,

The IOC also announced Oksana Menkova of Belarus was stripped of the Beijing gold medal in the women's hammer throw after her retested samples came back positive for Turinabol and Oxandrolone. Menkova was also disqualified from the London Games, where she finished seventh after testing positive for [Turinabol](#) and Stanozolol. The hammer gold medal of Menkova could now be awarded to Yipsi Moreno of Cuba, with

Zhang Wenxiu of China in line to be upgraded to silver and Darya Pchel'nik of Belarus to bronze.

The World Olympic body also announced Natalia Mikhnevich of Belarus was stripped of the silver medal in the women's shot put from Beijing after her samples were reanalyzed and tested positive for Methandienone and Stanozolol. Natalia now faces a life ban for a second doping offense as served a two-year doping ban in 2013-15. Her husband, Andrei, is already serving a life ban after he lost his 2008 bronze medal when he was caught for doping in retests of samples from the 2005 world championships.

The IOC announced sanctions on Pavel Lyzhyn of Belarus, fourth-place finisher in the men's shot put in Beijing, and Svetlana Usovich of Belarus, eliminated in the semifinals of the women's 800 meters in Beijing. The International Olympic Committee also sanctioned Boyanka Kostova of Azerbaijan, fifth place in the women's 58-kg weightlifting division in London, and Anastasia Mironchuk-Ivanova of Belarus, seventh in the women's long jump in London.