

Ex-Olympic Champion Banned For Eight Years

Italy's 2008 Olympic 50km walk champion [Alex Schwazer](#) has been banned for a period of eight years after losing an appeal in a second doping case.

The 31-year-old helped Italy won the world 50km walk team title in May after a 45-month ban for a positive test for Erythropoietin before London Olympics. The Court of Arbitration for Sport rejected his appeal after the retest of a sample given in January showed traces of anabolic steroid Testosterone.

In a statement, the CAS said all competitive results obtained by Alex Schwazer from and including 1 January 2016 are disqualified with all resulting consequences, including forfeiture of medals, points, and prizes. The CAS has imposed an 8-year period of ineligibility on him, until 7 July 2024, which almost means an end to his career.

The Olympic 50km walk champion had previously admitted to using the blood booster Erythropoietin (EPO) in 2012. He admitted to taking a flight alone to Turkey the previous September with 1,500 euros to buy the blood booster at a pharmacy. Schwazer said he disguised EPO in a box of vitamins in a refrigerator at the home of his then-girlfriend [Carolina Kostner](#) in Germany, where he was staying in July in the buildup to the 2012 Games. The Italian said he learned [how to use EPO](#) through the Internet and injected it on a daily basis in a bathroom so that Kostner was not aware of what he was doing.

Kostner told anti-doping officials that Schwazer was not in home when they came to collect samples when he was with her at the home. Carolina also told the prosecutors that Schwazer slept in an altitude chamber that is not banned by the World Anti-Doping Agency but is illegal in Italy. The figure skater was banned for 16 months by the Italian Olympic committee for assisting Schwazer evade a test and other infractions. The Italian skater was banned from competition for 16 months and fined €1,000 for her role in the Schwazer case but the expiration date of the ban was changed to January 1, 2016. Kostner would return to competitive skating with Alexei Mishin as her coach.

Carolina is the 2014 Olympic bronze medalist, the 2012 World champion, a five-time European champion (2007–2008, 2010, 2012–2013), and the 2011 Grand Prix Final

champion. Known for her speed across the ice, elegance, and interpretative refinement, Carolina spins and jumps in the clockwise direction.

Schwazer returned to competition and won the 50-kilometer event at the world championships in Rome in May.

The *Gazzetta dello Sport* reported Schwazer and the Italian federation (FIDAL) were informed a day earlier that a May 12 retest of a January 1 doping control sample showed positive traces of steroids. The retest was conducted after the athlete qualified for the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. FIDAL confirmed that the *Gazzetta* report was accurate.

Born in northern Italy, Alex Schwazer was the runner-up at the 2008 IAAF World Race Walking Cup. He went on to win gold at the 50 km walk at the 2008 Summer Olympics, setting a new Olympic record with his time of 3:37:09.