

School Failed To Tell Authorities About Doping

A Cranbrook School student is under investigation for serial steroid abuse by the police and the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority after the boy admitted to taking [performance enhancing drugs](#) while representing the private school in rowing and rugby.

However, the school failed to inform sports authorities of the year 12 student's admissions in February 2011, a day after an [Independent Schools Rowing Association](#) (ISRA) regatta. An investigation also revealed allegations the director of rowing of the school, was told about the suspected steroid abuse months before the admissions of the student but failed to act. Carroll was recently elected president of ISRA and his predecessor, Philip Winkworth, said the winning VIII crew of Cranbrook at the 2011 regatta, which included the student, should have been disqualified and remarked if you go to these regattas you have got an obligation to be clean.

The Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority and Rowing Australia only became aware of the case after being contacted by the parent of another student in the school's 2010-11 rowing squad. Cranbrook, in Bellevue Hill, had breached its obligations to report sports doping, Rowing Australia chief Andrew Dee said and they should have made us aware or ASADA aware and added it's within their role as custodians of young people to make sure they're looking after the best interests of their students. Dee called on ISRA to investigate whether there was any substance to claims Carroll failed to act on warnings about suspected steroid abuse within his squad.

A former school parent revealed they discussed such concerns with Carroll thrice, dating back to November 2010 wherein doubts were raised about the rapid muscle gain and sudden significant improvement on the indoor rowing machine, or ergometer. In February 2011 regatta in Canberra, the boy sent text messages to other squad members boasting about the "gear" he was taking.

Cranbrook headmaster Nicholas Sampson remarked it was the policy of the school that the use of illegal drugs was a very significant breach of disciplinary expectations and he defended the school's actions, saying the matter appears to have been handled well and with justified humanity. When confronted on February 28, 2011, by then Cranbrook headmaster Jeremy Madin, the student admitted having taken steroids over several months and was removed from the rowing squad and forced to admit his drug use to other members of the senior rowing squad. The student also agreed to undergo regular drug tests with a doctor, Madin said. However, the student within weeks was playing rugby for Cranbrook's first XV and later toured New Zealand with the team.

Madin, who retired in 2012, said the school's response was as always open, transparent, and frankly exemplary. Meanwhile, ASADA chief Aurora Andruska met Mr Madin and senior school management to advocate the need for anti-doping education in the curriculum. World Anti-Doping Agency president John Fahey recently called for Australian students to be taught about the dangers of performance enhancing drugs and said children were putting their health at risk by taking anabolic steroids and sports supplements.