



## EWF Policy Female Hyperandrogenism<sup>1</sup>

### 1. BACKGROUND

Human biology, however, allows for forms of intermediate levels between the conventional categories of male and female, sometimes referred to as intersex. Usually, intersex athletes can be placed in the male or female group on the basis of their legal sex. However, as explained below, intersex female athletes with elevated androgen production give rise to a particular concern in the context of competitive sports, which is referred to as “female hyperandrogenism/congenital androgen hyperplasia .”

In general, the performances of male and female athletes may differ mainly due to the fact that men produce significantly more androgenic hormones than women and, therefore, are under stronger influence of such hormones. Androgenic hormones have performance enhancing effects, particularly on strength, power and speed, which may provide a competitive advantage in sports. This is one of the reasons why the exogenous administration of such hormones and/or the promotion of the endogenous production of these hormones are banned under the World Anti-Doping Code, to which the international weightlifting is a signatory.

Nothing in these Regulations is intended to make any determination of sex. Instead, these Regulations are designed to identify circumstances in which a particular athlete will not be eligible (by reason of hormonal characteristics) to participate EWF Competitions in the female category. In the event that the athlete has been declared ineligible to compete in the female category, the athlete may be eligible to compete as a male athlete, if the athlete qualifies for the male event of the sport.

### 2. OBJECTIVE

These Regulations are intended to help regulate standard procedures in the investigation and follow-up of a possible case of female hyperandrogenism.

### 3. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

These Regulations apply to all EWF Competitions.

### 4. SEX AND ELIGIBILITY

A. For men’s EWF Competitions, only men are eligible to compete. For women’s EWF Competitions, only women are eligible to compete.

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<sup>1</sup> IOC Regulations on Female Hyperandrogenism by Prof Arne Ljungqvist & Dr Richard Budgett; adapted for IWF & EWF by Dr. Dominik Doerr

B. Each NF shall ensure that its athletes are eligible for selection in accordance with EWF rules and regulations. As a consequence, each NF shall, as appropriate, prior to the registration of its national athletes, actively investigate any perceived deviation in sex characteristics and keep complete documentation of the findings, to the extent permitted by the applicable law of legal residence of the concerned athlete.

#### 5. THE EWF EXECUTIVE BOARD

The EWF Executive Board may sanction any breach of these Regulations, pursuant to the provisions of its rules.

#### 6. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE IOC MEDICAL COMMISSION AND AN EXPERT PANEL

The Chairman of the EWF Medical Commission (hereafter the "Chairman") can delegate one or more of the members of the EWF Medical Commission or the LOC Medical Officer to supervise doping controls and to manage and coordinate all the health and medical issues at the venues, including medical services for teams. The Chairman may also delegate part of his/her tasks to the EWF Medical and Scientific Director.

An Expert Panel shall be appointed to evaluate a suspected case of female hyperandrogenism. The experts are appointed by the EWF Executive Board for the duration of the relevant EWF Competition on the recommendation of the Chairman.

An Expert Panel for the purpose of these Regulations consists of one gynaecologist, one genetic expert and one endocrinologist. Additional specialists may be appointed to an Expert Panel.

The responsibilities of the Chairman and the Expert Panel are addressed in further detail in Section 8 below.

The experts convene and/or communicate ad hoc in the event that a female hyperandrogenism investigation is initiated.

#### 7. PERSONS WHO CAN REQUEST A FEMALE HYPERANDROGENISM INVESTIGATION

A. In order to request a female hyperandrogenism investigation, a person must be:

- i. an athlete who is concerned about personal symptoms of hyperandrogenism;
- ii. a Chief NF Medical Officer;
- iii. an EWF Medical Commission Member or LOC Medical Officer; or
- iv. the Chairman.

B. A request for a female hyperandrogenism investigation shall be made to the Chairman in the form of a written statement regarding the eligibility of an athlete, and must include:

- i. the reasons and basis for the request, including any evidence which might suggest that an athlete may have female hyperandrogenism;
  - ii. the relevant eligibility rules of EWF;
- and
- iii. the name, title, address, contact information and signature of the requesting person.

#### 8. INADMISSIBILITY AND REJECTION OF A REQUEST FOR A FEMALE HYPERANDROGENISM INVESTIGATION

Requests for a female hyperandrogenism investigation that do not satisfy the formal requirements set forth in Section 7 above, or which lack substance, shall be rejected and declared inadmissible by the Chairman. Such decisions are final and binding and not subject to any appeal. Subsequent requests which comply with the formal requirements of Section 7 above shall be considered.

The Chairman may also refer a request considered to have been made in bad faith to the EWF Executive Board, which may impose sanctions on the requesting person. The requesting person shall have an opportunity to be heard prior to any sanctions being imposed.

#### 9. PROCEDURE FOR INVESTIGATING FEMALE HYPERANDROGENISM DURING EWF COMPETITIONS

If the request for a female hyperandrogenism investigation is considered to have potential merit by the Chairman, he/she shall initiate an investigation.

A. After the Chairman has decided to initiate a female hyperandrogenism investigation, he/she shall instruct the EWF Medical and Scientific Director to proceed with the investigation.

B. At the request of the EWF Medical and Scientific Director, all relevant documents (if available) of the athlete investigated (e.g., medical history, sex hormone levels, diagnosis, treatment, current findings, etc.) shall be provided by the athlete investigated and/or her team physician. The EWF Medical and Scientific Director will then provide this information to the Chairman.

C. If the Chairman considers that no further investigation is needed based on the information provided, he/she will declare the case to be closed.

D. If the Chairman considers that the information provided (or the lack of information provided) warrants further investigation, he/she shall recommend appointing an Expert Panel (see Section 6 above) to investigate the matter further.

E. The Expert Panel may request that the investigated athlete and/or her team physician provide further information and/or that the investigated athlete undergo further examinations to determine whether female hyperandrogenism is present and can be considered to confer a competitive advantage.

F. The Expert Panel shall examine all available information and establish (i) whether the investigated athlete's androgen level, measured by reference to testosterone levels in serum, is within the male range, and if so, (ii) whether such hyperandrogenism is functional or not.<sup>2</sup>

G. The investigated athlete and team physician shall have an opportunity to be heard before the Expert Panel prior to any determination on female hyperandrogenism.

H. Should the athlete (to be investigated), the respective team physician or any relevant person of the athlete's entourage refuse to provide the requested information, or should the athlete refuse to undergo any examinations, the athlete may be provisionally suspended from the relevant EWF Competitions by the EWF Executive Board, based upon a recommendation from the Chairman.

I. The EWF Executive Board may impose further sanctions on the respective team physician and/or any relevant person in the athlete's entourage.

J. The Expert Panel shall take into consideration all of the available information, including any testimony from the investigated athlete, and shall have the following procedural options:

i. If, in the opinion of the Expert Panel, the investigated athlete does not have female hyperandrogenism, the Chairman shall close the case, and the concerned athlete shall be eligible to compete in the female EWF Competitions. Such decision in respect of IWF Competitions is final and binding and not subject to appeal. If, in the opinion of the Expert Panel, the investigated athlete has female hyperandrogenism that does not confer a competitive advantage because it is non-functional or the androgen level is below the male range, the Chairman shall close the case, and the concerned

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<sup>2</sup> There are some cases of hyperandrogenism that do not confer a competitive advantage because of nonfunctional androgen receptors.

athlete shall be eligible to compete in the EWF Competitions. Such decision in respect of EWF Competitions is final and binding and not subject to appeal.

ii. If, in the opinion of the Expert Panel, the investigated athlete has female hyperandrogenism that confers a competitive advantage (because it is functional and the androgen level is in the male range), the investigated athlete may be declared ineligible to compete in the EWF Competitions by the EWF Executive Board, based upon the opinion of the Expert Panel and the recommendation of the Chairman. The EWF Executive Board may impose further sanctions on the respective team physician and/or any relevant persons in the investigated athlete's entourage.

K. In order to help protect the dignity and privacy of the athlete concerned, requests for investigations, information gathered during investigations, results of investigations and decisions regarding a case (or potential case) of female hyperandrogenism, shall be kept confidential and not released or made public by the EWF.

Notwithstanding the above, should an athlete be declared ineligible for EWF Competitions pursuant to these Regulations, the EWF may hand the case over to the Chief Medical Officer of the relevant National Federation, subject to the informed consent of the athlete, for any follow-up, as appropriate.

L. Only decisions to declare an athlete ineligible due to female hyperandrogenism pursuant to Section 9(J)(ii), decisions for provisional suspension and decisions to sanction the respective team physician and/or any relevant person in the athlete's entourage pursuant to Section 9(I) may be appealed exclusively to the Court of Arbitration for Sport ("CAS") in accordance with the provisions applicable before such court. Such decisions shall remain in effect while under appeal.

Only the following parties shall have the right to appeal to CAS: (a) the investigated athlete or other person who is the subject of the decision being appealed; and (b) the relevant International Federation, subject to the informed consent of the concerned athlete. The time to file an appeal to CAS shall be within twenty-one (21) days from the date of communication by the IOC to the appealing party of the decision.