

## **Cyclist Michael Rasmussen Cooperates with Anti-doping Authorities**

*The Danish professional cyclist Michael Rasmussen has confessed to Anti Doping Denmark and the NOC and Sports Confederation of Denmark about his extensive use of doping for many years, and a case will now be opened against the rider by the Doping Commission.*

Following a dialogue with Anti Doping Denmark, Michael Rasmussen has decided to cooperate with the anti-doping authorities and tell everything about his experiences with doping. In this context, interrogations of Michael Rasmussen have been conducted last week in Amsterdam and this week in Copenhagen. Rasmussen has confessed to have used doping throughout most of his career, including in 2007 when he wore the yellow jersey in the Tour de France and when he was unavailable for out-of-competition testing in the crucial period prior to the race.

According to Michael Rasmussen, his use of doping has taken place continuously from 1998 to 2010. The prohibited substances include, among others, EPO, cortisone, hormones, and blood transfusions. The Doping Commission of the NOC of Denmark now opens a doping case against Rasmussen, and the case will be raised before the independent panel (the Doping Tribunal of the NOC) when all conditions are met. Within a few days, Michael Rasmussen will receive a temporary suspension.

### **International cooperation**

The interrogations of Michael Rasmussen have taken place in a groundbreaking cooperation between the national anti-doping organisations of Denmark (Anti Doping Denmark and the NOC and Sports Confederation of Denmark), The Netherlands (Dopingautoriteit) and the USA (USADA) and WADA.

I would like to thank our colleagues from the US and the Netherlands and WADA for excellent cooperation," says Lone Hansen. "The investigations of doping cases have improved very much recently, and this case is an excellent example of the implications of the work initiated by USADA's investigation."

In 2008, Michael Rasmussen was sentenced to two years suspension with effect from July 2007 for evasion and whereabouts failures. The minimum sentence for a second violation of the antidoping rules is 8 years suspension. However, article 10.5.3. of the World Anti Doping Code and the Danish National Anti-doping Rules state that *an anti-doping organization may suspend a part of the period of ineligibility imposed where the athlete has provided substantial assistance to an anti-doping organization which results in the anti-doping organization discovering or establishing an anti-doping rule violation by another person. No more than three-quarters of the otherwise applicable period of ineligibility may be suspended.*

Having evaluated Rasmussen's statements, it is the opinion of the anti-doping authorities that Rasmussen has offered "substantial assistance" and accordingly the preconditions for a reduced sanction are met. The NOC's Doping Commission therefore intends to prosecute Michael Rasmussen before the Doping Tribunal, requesting a suspension of 8 years, but reduced by three quarters to 2 years,

starting on 1 October 2012, i.e. from after Rasmussen participated in his last race.

### **Comments**

"I am obviously disappointed to learn that Michael Rasmussen was doping throughout most of his professional career," says Lone Hansen, CEO of Anti Doping Denmark. "But on the other hand I would like to express my satisfaction over the fact that Rasmussen has decided to cooperate with the anti-doping authorities hereby providing us with valuable information, not only about other doping offences, but also giving us valuable insights into an otherwise secret part of professional cycling."

Morten Mølholm Hansen, Director of Development of the NOC and Sports Confederation of Denmark and Board Member of Anti Doping Denmark, says: "We often hear that we should leave the past and concentrate on the future. But the knowledge we have received through the interrogations of Michael Rasmussen will be extremely important for our future work to detect the use of doping and to prevent doping in the future. It is also an important message to young athletes who might consider doping that you cannot hide behind a negative test result forever, you will get caught eventually. It also sends a signal to the entourage and support personnel connected to the athletes that we now have new tools in our efforts towards a clean sport."