

Decision Reached in Doping Case Against American Dressage Rider

FEI Tribunal Rules Against Courtney King-Dye.

September 23, 2008

The Fédération Equestre Internationale, the governing body of international equestrian sport, has issued its decision in the positive medication case involving the horse Mythilus ridden by American dressage rider Courtney King-Dye during the 2008 Olympic Games in Hong Kong. The horse was sampled at the Olympic Games on August 19, 2008 and tested positive for Felbinac. Felbinac is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) used to reduce inflammation and pain and is banned under FEI rules.

At a preliminary hearing held during the Olympic Games on August 22, 2008 it was decided to maintain a provisional suspension for King-Dye until the final decision of the case. A hearing in the case was held at the FEI headquarters in front of a Tribunal on September 7, 2008. Before and during the hearing King-Dye presented testimony and legal arguments, and the United States Equestrian Federation (USEF) requested that if a decision was made against King-Dye, the U.S. dressage team would not have to forfeit its fourth place finish at the Olympic Games.

However, the FEI Tribunal did not rule in King-Dye's favor. Mythilus and King-Dye are disqualified from the Games, and all medals, points and prize money won at the Olympic Games by them are forfeited. As a result of the ruling, the USEF's request was denied as well: The U.S. Olympic dressage team with its remaining two competitors—Steffen Peters and Debbie McDonald--lost its fourth place finish. Additionally, King-Dye received a one-month suspension.

While the Tribunal did not accept the arguments from King-Dye or the USEF, it found King-Dye and the U.S. dressage team veterinarian to be credible and believed that neither--nor anyone on King-Dye's behalf or related to the USEF--had knowingly administered the medication to the horse. According to a statement released by the FEI, "The Tribunal also considered the type of substance involved and its therapeutic applications, the fact that the same substance may not be considered as a doping substance, the specific circumstances relating to the horse's hospitalization in Hong Kong and the possibility of contamination, the excellent stable management practiced by the US team and measures placed to try and ensure that no horse with prohibited substances participates at the Olympic Games, the efforts made by [King-Dye] and the USEF to determine the source of the positive finding, the impeccable record and reputation of [King-Dye], [King-Dye's] cooperation in the investigation and the hardship already caused to [her] including the fact that the U.S. dressage team has lost its fourth place at the Olympic Games."