

18 November 2024

**DECISION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TENNIS INTEGRITY AGENCY  
PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 7.14 OF THE 2024 TENNIS ANTI-DOPING PROGRAMME**

**I. Introduction**

1. The International Tennis Integrity Agency (the **ITIA**) is the delegated third party, under the World Anti-Doping Code (the **Code**), of the International Tennis Federation (the **ITF**), the international governing body for the sport of tennis and signatory of the Code. Under the delegation, the ITIA is responsible for the management and administration of anti-doping across professional tennis in accordance with the 2024 Tennis Anti-Doping Programme (the **TADP** or the **Programme**), which sets out Code-compliant anti-doping rules applicable to players competing in Covered Events.<sup>1</sup>
2. Daniil Savelev (the **Player**) is a 23-year-old tennis player who is a national of and resident in the Russian Federation. He has achieved a career-high ITF ranking of 168. By virtue of, amongst other things, his ranking and participation in Covered Events in 2024, the Player was bound by and required to comply with the TADP.
3. The ITIA charged the Player with the commission of anti-doping rule violations under Article 2.1 and/or Article 2.2 of the TADP (copied below), and subsequently proposed certain Consequences based on its analysis of the degree of Fault that the Player bears for those violations:

*“2.1 The presence of a Prohibited Substance or any of its Metabolites or Markers in a Player’s Sample, unless the Player establishes that such presence is consistent with a TUE granted in accordance with Article 4.4.”*

*“2.2 Use or Attempted Use by a Player of a Prohibited Substance or a Prohibited Method, unless the Player establishes that such Use or Attempted Use is consistent with a TUE granted in accordance with Article 4.4.”*

4. The Player has admitted the anti-doping rule violations charged and acceded to the Consequences proposed by the ITIA.
5. In such circumstances, TADP Article 7.14 provides that:

*“7.14.1 At any time prior to a final decision by the Independent Tribunal, the ITIA may invite the Player or other Person to admit the Anti-Doping Rule Violation(s) asserted and accede to specified Consequences [...]*

*7.14.2 In the event that the Player or other Person admits the Anti-Doping Rule Violation(s) asserted and accedes to Consequences specified by the ITIA [...], the ITIA will promptly*

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<sup>1</sup> Any term in this Decision that begins with a capital letter and is not otherwise defined in this Decision has the meaning given to it in the TADP.


*issue a reasoned decision confirming the commission of the Anti-Doping Rule Violation(s) and the imposition of the specified Consequences [...], will send notice of the decision to the Player or other Person and to each Interested Party, and will Publicly Disclose the decision in accordance with Article 8.6. [...]*

*7.14.3 Any decision issued by the ITIA in accordance with Article 7.14.2 that an Anti-Doping Rule Violation has been committed [...] will address and determine (without limitation): (1) the factual basis of the decision that an Anti-Doping Rule Violation was committed; and (2) all of the Consequences to be imposed for such Anti-Doping Rule Violation, including the reasons for imposing the Consequences specified, and in particular the reasons for exercising any discretion not to impose the full Consequences available under this Programme.”*

## **II. The Player's commission of anti-doping rule violations**

6. On 3 July 2024, while competing at the ITF World Tennis Tour M15 tournament held in Hillcrest, South Africa from 1 to 7 July 2024 (the **Event**), the Player was required to provide a urine sample for drug testing pursuant to the TADP. The sample he provided was assigned reference number 1427057 and split into an A sample and a B sample, which were sealed in tamper-evident bottles and transported to the WADA-accredited laboratory in Montreal (the **Laboratory**) for analysis. The Laboratory detected in the A sample the presence of Meldonium. Meldonium is a metabolic modulator prohibited at all times under Section S4 of the 2024 WADA Prohibited List in the category of Hormone and Metabolic Modulators. It is a non-Specified Substance. The Player did not have a Therapeutic Use Exemption permitting Use of Meldonium.
7. The Adverse Analytical Finding reported by the Laboratory in respect of the A sample was considered by an independent Review Board in accordance with TADP Article 7.4. The Review Board did not identify any apparent departures from the applicable sample collection or sample analysis procedures that could have caused this Adverse Analytical Finding, and therefore decided that the Player had a case to answer for breach of TADP Article 2.1 and/or TADP Article 2.2.
8. Accordingly, on 20 August 2024, the ITIA sent the Player a pre-charge Notice explaining that Meldonium was present in his sample collected on 3 July 2024 at the Event and that he may therefore have committed Anti-Doping Rule Violations under TADP Article 2.1 (*Presence of a Prohibited Substance*) and/or TADP Article 2.2 (*Use of a Prohibited Substance*). The ITIA's Notice requested a response by 3 September 2024. Given that Meldonium is not classified as a Specified Substance under the TADP, the Player was further informed that he would be subject to a mandatory provisional suspension under TADP Article 7.12.1, effective from 20 August 2024. The Player was informed of his right to apply to the Chairman of the Independent Panel for the prevention/lifting of such provisional suspension.
9. On 22 August 2024, the Player replied, notifying the ITIA that he admitted the Use of Meldonium but stated that he was given tablets of Meldonium by his father in error, without his knowledge.
10. On 27 August 2024, the B-sample analysis took place, confirming that the sample contained Meldonium. This was reported to the Player on 9 September 2024.
11. The Player and his father were interviewed by ITIA investigators on 17 September 2024. The interviews were conducted separately but simultaneously. In his interview, the Player stated that he had attended a sports nutrition facility in Tashkent, Uzbekistan in August 2023 in order to have

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physical tests and to get a personalised programme for medications/supplements. The Player stated that he purchased the supplements and medications which were recommended to him and performed checks on them using the RUSADA website.<sup>2</sup> When staying at his parents' house, the Player stored his supplements and medications in the family medicine cabinet (with no separation between his products and the general family medication). The Player's medication was not labelled with his name and many of his products were in loose blister packs (rather than in the labelled product boxes).

12. While at his parents' house between 13 and 17 May 2024, the Player stated that his father prepared five days' worth of medicines/supplements (as recommended to him by the Tashkent facility) for him. He claimed his father put the tablets in a pill tray and the Player ingested the tablets without checking that his father had put the correct medications in the pill tray.
13. In his interview on 17 September 2024, the Player's father stated that he has mistakenly put tablets of Meldonium into the Player's pill tray, thinking that they were another supplement which the Player had been advised to take. The Player's grandmother had used Meldonium which is why it was present in the family medicine cabinet.<sup>3</sup> The Player's father claimed that the tablets were very similar (white, oval and a similar size) and in loose blister packs, rather than in the labelled boxes which is why he made the mistake.
14. The ITIA also made follow up enquiries with the Laboratory to ascertain whether the Player's explanation and dosing pattern/exposure to Meldonium was consistent with the concentration detected in his sample. The Laboratory confirmed that the Player's explanation was plausible.
15. The ITIA conducted further interviews with the Player and his father on 17 October 2024 to investigate certain points further.
16. On 28 October 2024, the ITIA formally charged the Player with the commission of Anti-Doping Rule Violations under TADP Articles 2.1 and/or 2.2. TADP Article 2.1 is a strict liability offence that is established simply by proof that a Prohibited Substance was present in the sample, i.e., the ITIA does not have to prove how the substance got into the Player's system or that the Player took the substance intentionally (or even knowingly).
17. On 29 October 2024, the Player replied to the Charge Letter, continuing to admit that he had committed the TADP Articles 2.1 and/or 2.2 Anti-Doping Rule Violations with which he was charged.

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<sup>2</sup> The Player confirmed that he did not check each listed ingredient on the RUSADA website, rather, he searched the brand name of each product. He also did not make any checks on Global DRO or Informed Sport.

<sup>3</sup> The Player stated that he was not aware that his grandmother had used Meldonium and hence that it was in the medicine cabinet.

### III. Consequences

#### A. Period of Ineligibility

##### (i) How Meldonium got into the Player's system

18. During the course of correspondence, and interviews, with the ITIA, the Player admitted that he took Meldonium tablets by mistake after his father had confused the medicines in the family medicine cupboard, putting Meldonium tablets in his pill tray instead of a, similar looking, supplement he had been advised to take.

##### (ii) TADP Article 10.2

19. This is the Player's first doping violation.
20. TADP Article 10.2.1 specifies that a TADP Article 2.1 violation that is '*intentional*' and is a first offence attracts a mandatory four-year ban. If the Prohibited Substance in question is classified as a non-Specified Substance (as here), TADP Article 10.2.1 also specifies that the player has the burden of proving that the violation was not '*intentional*'. If the player can do so, then TADP Article 10.2.2 provides for a two-year period of Ineligibility, subject to mitigation. TADP Article 10.2.3 explains that in this context "*the term 'intentional' is meant to identify those Players or other Persons who engage in conduct that they knew constituted an Anti-Doping Rule Violation or knew that there was a significant risk that the conduct might constitute or result in an Anti-Doping Rule Violation and manifestly disregarded that risk*". The jurisprudence is clear that what counts in this context is what the Player actually knew, not what he should have known.<sup>4</sup>
21. The Player claims that he was not aware, at the time he took the tablets, that he was, in fact, taking Meldonium rather than the supplement he thought (the tablets are similar in size, shape and colour). The ITIA is satisfied that the Player has rebutted the presumption of intentional Use. Therefore, the starting point for the period of Ineligibility here is two years.

##### (iii) TADP Article 10.6

22. TADP Article 10.6.1 provides for reductions in the period of Ineligibility for Anti-Doping Rule Violations under Articles 2.1 and 2.2 based on No Significant Fault or Negligence on the part of the Player.
23. In assessing the degree of fault, the ITIA has, again, considered what steps the Player could have taken to mitigate the risk of exposure to Prohibited Substances, here, Meldonium. The ITIA considers that the Player did not take any material steps to mitigate his risk. For example, (i) he kept his supplements and medications in the same cupboard as his family's medication (without checking what other medications were stored there), (ii) the Player's medications and supplements were not clearly labelled, and some were not stored in their boxes so were mixed with the family medication in loose blister packs which were not easily and clearly identifiable, and (iii) he did not do any checks on the products his father put in the pill tray, either while his father was distributing the tablets, or before he consumed them (rather he relied on his father to

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<sup>4</sup> [ITF v Sharapova](#), Independent Tribunal decision dated 6 June 2016, para 68, not challenged on appeal, [Sharapova v ITF](#), CAS 2016/A/4643.

administer his medications, despite the responsibility being on the Player). The ITIA has therefore determined that there should be no reduction in the degree of fault attributed to him.

24. The ITIA has determined that the Player should be subject to a two-year period of Ineligibility, backdated to 20 August 2024 to give the Player credit for time served while provisionally suspended, in accordance with TADP Article 10.13.2. Therefore, the Player's period of Ineligibility will expire at midnight on 19 August 2026 (subject always to the requirement that the Player be available for Testing during his period of Ineligibility in order for her to be deemed to have satisfactorily served his period of Ineligibility, failing which 2024 TADP Article 10.16.1 will apply and the Player will not be eligible for reinstatement until he has made himself available for Testing (by notifying the ITIA in writing) for a period of time equal to the period of Ineligibility remaining as at the date the Player first stopped making himself available for Testing).

**(iv) TADP Article 7.14**

25. TADP Article 7.14.2 states that *"In the event that the Player [...] admits the Anti-Doping Rule Violation(s) asserted and accedes to Consequences specified by the ITIA [...], the ITIA will promptly issue a reasoned decision confirming the commission of the Anti-Doping Rule Violation(s) and the imposition of the specified Consequences (as applicable), will send notice of the decision to the Player [...] and to each Interested Party, and will Publicly Disclose the decision in accordance with Article 8.6."*

**B. Disqualification of results**

26. The Player's results in the Event are automatically disqualified in accordance with TADP Articles 9.1 and 10.1 (including forfeiture of any medals, titles, ranking points and Prize Money received as a result of participation in that event).
27. The Player did not compete in any further tournaments before the date of his provisional suspension and so it is not necessary to consider whether any further results should be disqualified.

**C. Costs**

28. Each party shall bear its own costs of dealing with this matter.

**D. Publication**

29. In accordance with TADP Article 8.6, this decision will be publicly reported by being posted (in full and/or summary form) on the ITIA's website.

**E. Acceptance by the Player**

30. The Player has accepted the consequences proposed above by the ITIA for his Anti-Doping Rule Violations, and has expressly waived his right to have those consequences determined by the Independent Tribunal at a hearing.

**IV. Rights of appeal**

31. This decision constitutes the final decision of the ITIA, resolving this matter pursuant to TADP Article 7.14.

32. Further to TADP Article 13.2.1, each of WADA and RUSADA has a right to appeal against this decision to the CAS in Lausanne, Switzerland, in accordance with the procedure set out at TADP Articles 13.8 and 13.9.
33. As part of this resolution of the matter, the Player has waived her right to appeal against or otherwise challenge any aspect of this decision (both as to the finding that the Player has committed an Anti-Doping Rule Violation and as to the imposition of the Consequences set out above), whether pursuant to TADP Article 13.2 or otherwise. However, if an appeal is filed with the CAS against this decision either by WADA or RUSADA, the Player will be entitled (if so advised) to exercise her right of cross-appeal in accordance with 2024 TADP Article 13.9.4.

Issued Decision of the ITIA

London, 18 November 2024

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The logo consists of two horizontal parallel lines, one above the other, centered under the word 'trust.' in the tagline.