DECISION of the FEI TRIBUNAL
dated 16 October 2019

Positive Anti-Doping Rule Violations:

1. Case: 2017/BS33 – 8 MINUTE

   Horse/Passport/NF: 8 MINUTE/104BW22/UAE  
   Person Responsible/NF/ID: Khalifa Ali Khalfan AL JAHOURI/UAE/10093885  
   Trainer/NF/ID: Ali Khalfan AL JAHOURI/UAE/10014750  
   Event/ID: CH-M-YJ-E 120 Valeggio sul Mincio (ITA)/  
   2017_CH_M_0002_E_YJ_01_01  
   Date: 22 – 24 September 2017  
   Prohibited Substance(s): Nandrolone, Stanozolol and 5A-ESTRANE-3B,17A-DIOL

2. Case: 2018/BS05 – HLP GADAFI

   Horse/Passport/NF: HLP GADAFI/105AP09/UAE  
   Person Responsible/NF/ID: Daiana CHOPITA/ARG/10107027  
   Trainer/NF/ID: Ali Khalfan AL JAHOURI/UAE/10014750  
   Event/ID: CEI2* 120 – Abu Dhabi, Al Wathba (UAE)/  
   2017_CI_1830_E_S_01_01  
   Date: 23 December 2017  
   Prohibited Substance: Trometamol

3. Case: 2018/BS06 – JLB NOCHE

   Horse/Passport/NF: JLB NOCHE/104KB96/UAE  
   Person Responsible/NF/ID: Waad Nadim BOU MOGHBAY/UAE/10113241  
   Trainer/NF/ID: Ali Khalfan AL JAHOURI/UAE/10014750  
   Event/ID: CEI2* 120 – Abu Dhabi, Al Wathba (UAE)/  
   2017_CI_1830_E_S_01_01  
   Date: 23 December 2017  
   Prohibited Substance: Trometamol

I. COMPOSITION OF PANEL

   Mr. Chris Hodson QC, chair  
   Ms. Harveen Thauli, member  
   Mr. Cesar Torrente, member
II. DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE FROM THE LEGAL VIEWPOINT

1. Articles of the Statutes/Regulations which are applicable:

Statutes 23rd edition, effective 29 April 2015 ("Statutes"), Arts. 1.4, 38 and 39.

General Regulations, 23rd edition, 1 January 2009, updates effective 1 January 2017, Arts. 118, 143.1, 161, 168 and 169 ("GRs").

Internal Regulations of the FEI Tribunal, 2nd edition, 1 January 2012, and Internal Regulations of the FEI Tribunal, 3rd Edition, 2 March 2018 ("IRs").

FEI Equine Anti-Doping and Controlled Medication Regulations, 2nd edition, effective 1 January 2016 ("EADCMRs").


FEI Code of Conduct for the Welfare of the Horse.


3. Justification for sanction:

GRs Art. 143.1: “Medication Control and Anti-Doping provisions are stated in the Anti-Doping Rules for Human Athletes (ADRHA), in conjunction with The World Anti-Doping Code, and in the Equine Anti-Doping and Controlled Medication Regulations (EADCM Regulations).”

GRs Art. 118.3: “The Person Responsible shall be the Athlete who rides, vaults or drives the Horse during an Event, but the Owner and other Support Personnel including but not limited to grooms and veterinarians may be regarded as additional Persons Responsible if they are present at the Event or have made a relevant Decision about the Horse. In vaulting, the lunger shall be an additional Person Responsible.”
EAD Rules Art. 2.2.1: “It is each Person Responsible's personal duty, along with members of their Support Personnel, to ensure that no Banned Substance enters into the Horse’s body and that no Banned Method is Used. Accordingly, it is not necessary that intent, fault, negligence or knowing Use on the part of the Person Responsible, or member of his Support Personnel (where applicable), be demonstrated in order to establish an EAD Rule violation for Use of a Banned Substance or a Banned Method. However, in accordance with the definition of Attempt, it is necessary to show intent in order to establish an EAD Rule violation for Attempted Use of a Banned Substance or a Banned Method.”

EAD Rules Art. 7.6.1: “At any time during the results management process the Person Responsible and/or member of the Support Personnel and/or Owner against whom an EAD Rule violation is asserted may admit that violation at any time, waive a hearing and may agree with the FEI on the Consequences that are mandated by these EAD Rules or (where some discretion as to Consequences exists under these EAD Rules) that have been offered by the FEI. The agreement shall be submitted to the FEI Tribunal for approval and, where approved by the FEI Tribunal, the final agreement shall state the full reasons for any period of Ineligibility agreed, including (if applicable), a justification for why the flexibility in Sanction was applied. Such agreement shall be considered as a decision for the case and will be reported to the parties with a right to appeal under Article 12.2.2 and published as provided in Article 13.3.”

ERs Art. 800: “(...) 3. For the purpose of this Codex, the “Trainer” is defined as the person who is in charge of the preparation of the Horse both physically and mentally for Competition.

4. Prior to the Event, the Trainer is responsible for the conditioning of the Horse for the Competition which involves the exercise programme, nutrition of the Horse, seeking appropriate Veterinary care and the administration of therapeutic substances under Veterinary advice. (…)”

III. DECISION

1. Parties

1.1 The Support Personnel or the Trainer (“Trainer”), Mr. Ali Khalfan Al Jahouri, was the registered trainer for the horses in all three cases at the time of the events. The administering NF of the Trainer is the National Federation of the United Arab Emirates (“UAE-NF”).
1.2 The Fédération Equestre Internationale (the “FEI” and together with the PR, the “Parties”), is the sole IOC recognised international federation for equestrian sport. The FEI is the governing body of the FEI equestrian disciplines (Dressage, Jumping, Eventing, Driving, Endurance, Vaulting, Reining, Para-Equestrian).

2. Preliminary Decision

2.1 The Trainer was Provisionally Suspended on 10 January 2018; on 30 November 2018 he applied for the Provisional Suspension to be lifted and the Preliminary Hearing Panel issued a Preliminary Decision on 21 December 2018 which decided to maintain the Provisional Suspension of the Trainer. The relevant parts of the Preliminary Decision read as follows:

"7.8 It follows from Article 7.4.4 (iii) with regard to exceptional circumstances that "This ground is to be construed narrowly and implied only in truly exceptional circumstances”. One of the reasons brought forward by the Trainer was that he should not have been provisionally suspended in the first place, and that the circumstances of the cases changed such as the lifting was warranted. As previously outlined, the Preliminary Hearing Panel finds that the imposition of the Provisional Suspension on the Trainer was within the EAD Rules, and further that the FEI has – under the EAD Rules – also the possibility to request for the lifting of the Provisional Suspension if it believes that there are conditions which warrant such lifting.

7.9 Furthermore, the Preliminary Hearing Panel has taken note of the Trainer’s arguments with regard to the delays in notifying him of an alleged violation. The Preliminary Hearing Panel takes note in this respect that the Trainer has been notified two (2) months after the PR’s notification in the 8 MINUTE case. According to the Trainer this delay raised issues as to whether the Support Personnel, as opposed to the PR, has to establish the source of the Prohibited Substance.

7.10 The Preliminary Hearing Panel believes, at best for the Support Personnel, that each case may depend on the circumstances, but it does not need to make a definitive ruling. The Preliminary Hearing Panel is of the opinion that before it can make a ruling on exceptional circumstances it needs to know all the circumstances - for example the degree of negligence or the possibility of deliberate action - so that one issue can be judged against the other.
In this case, the Preliminary Hearing Panel finds it cannot lift the Provisional Suspension without being able to make a finding as to source. As outlined further below, because of the contradictory evidence so far adduced by the Parties no clear source is shown and the scientists are at odds. On that basis, and given the submissions of the FEI as to its practice in charging Support Persons in endurance cases, the making of the charge appears justified and the provision of Substantial Assistance may or may not be a ground for reduction of the suspension depending on the gravity of the final findings. (…)

The Preliminary Hearing Panel finds that – at this stage in the proceedings – neither the PR or the Trainer have established that their explanations of the source of the Nandrolone are more likely than not. The Preliminary Hearing Panel therefore finds that the PR and/or Trainer have not – on a balance of probability, as required under the EADCMRs – established how the Nandrolone entered the Horse’s system.

As a result, the Preliminary Hearing Panel finds therefore that, so far, none of the requirements of Article 7.4.4 of the EAD Rules for the lifting of the Provisional Suspension have been met.”

3. Further proceedings

3.1 On 8 January 2019, the FEI Tribunal Chair nominated a panel for the case at hand, and on 12 January 2019, the PR accepted the constitution of the panel, whereas the FEI did not bring any objections within the deadline provided.

3.2 On the same day, the Tribunal proposed to hold a joint final hearing for the present case, as well as for the case concerning the PR, which has been charged by the FEI for the same rule violation. (Case 2017/BS33 8 MINUTE).

3.3 On 28 January 2019, the FEI informed the Tribunal that the final hearing was cancelled in agreement with the Parties, as the Parties were close to reaching an Agreement for both cases, the case at hand and the case of the PR.

3.4 On 31 January 2019, the Trainer informed the Tribunal that – the tentative agreement between Parties – if approved, would result in his suspension fully served. The Trainer requested the lifting of the Provisional Suspension with immediate effect. On the same day, the FEI confirmed that it did not oppose to the lifting of the Provisional
3.5 On 31 January 2019, the Tribunal referred the Parties to Article 7.4.6 of the EAD Rules, and requested the Trainer to provide it with the “new evidence” pursuant to this Article prior to (i) either deciding on another Preliminary Hearing, if so requested by the Trainer; or (ii) deciding on the lifting of the Provisional Suspension based on (solely) the new evidence provided.

3.6 On 1 February 2019, the FEI requested the lifting of the Provisional Suspension of the Trainer for several reasons, among others that the Trainer established that he bore No Significant Fault/Negligence in accordance with Article 10.5.2 of the EAD Rules.

3.7 On the same day, the Tribunal informed the Parties as follows:

“The panel notes that the Support Personnel was charged under Article 2.2 of the EAD Rules. Article 2.2 is a strict liability offence. The panel has no explanation as to the source, and the panel is presently unable to understand how the Support Personnel has established No Significant Fault or Negligence for the alleged rule violation.

Therefore, unless further evidence in this respect is provided, the panel cannot lift the Provisional Suspension.”

3.8 On 7 February 2019, the FEI informed the Tribunal that "further to the request of the Trainer in the case 8 MINUTE to lift the provisional suspension on provisional measures at CAS, the CAS has decided to lift the provisional suspension as of today.” The Tribunal notes that it appears that the CAS regarded the mutual consent of the parties as sufficient for the suspension to be lifted.

3.9 On 17 May 2019, the panel requested the Parties to keep the panel up to date on the proceedings in the merits of the case(s) to be decided by the FEI Tribunal. However, neither party responded to the Tribunal’s request.

3.10 On 9 October 2019, the FEI informed the Tribunal that the Parties had reached an agreement in the context of the cases 2017/BS33 8 MINUTE, 2018/BS05 HLP GADAFI and 2018/BS06 JLB NOCHE and submitted the Agreement (together with the Case Summary and the Full Reasoning for the Agreement, as well as the Annexes outlined throughout this Decision) to the Tribunal for approval and incorporation into a Decision of the Tribunal in accordance with Article 7.6.1 of the EAD Rules.
4. Agreement between Parties

4.1 On 9 October 2019, the Parties reached the following Agreement:

*** Quote***

2. NOW, THEREFORE, THE PARTIES HAVE AGREED (SUBJECT ONLY TO THE APPROVAL OF THE FEI TRIBUNAL) TO THE FOLLOWING TERMS FOR DISPOSAL OF THE ANTI-DOPING PROCEEDINGS:

2.1 Mr Al Jahouri waives his right to a final hearing.

2.2 The FEI agrees that the charges against Mr Al Jahouri in connection with the case 2017/BS33 are withdrawn.

2.3 Since Mr Al Jahouri was provisionally suspended from 10 January 2018 until 7 February 2019, the parties agree that Mr Al Jahouri has thus already served the entirety of his period of ineligibility for the violations of the two remaining cases 2018/BS05 and 2018/BS06.

2.4 The parties agree that each party will bear its own legal and other costs incurred in connection with these proceedings.

2.5 The terms set out in this Agreement have been agreed as a full and final settlement of cases 2017/BS33, 2018/BS05 and 2018/BS06 and all claims relating to the subject-matter of these proceedings. Accordingly, any and all other claims for relief that any party might otherwise have made against another in relation to the subject-matter of these proceedings are released and discharged unconditionally, and they may not be pursued in any form hereafter.

2.6 Notwithstanding the foregoing, the FEI may refer to and take account of the sanction imposed (in cases 2018/BS05 and 2018/BS06) pursuant to this Agreement for the purpose of Article 10.8 (Multiple Violations) of the FEI Equine Anti-Doping Rules in relation to any future violation by the PR of the EADCM Regulations within 10 years of the date of this Agreement.

2.7 This Agreement is made in accordance with Article 7.6.1 of the EADR and is subject to the approval of the FEI Tribunal. The parties hereby request that the FEI Tribunal issues a Decision incorporating the terms of this Agreement. The parties acknowledge and agree, pursuant to Article 13.3 of the EADR, that the Decision will be made public by the FEI.
2.8 The Decision will be communicated to the legal persons with a right
of appeal in accordance with Article 12.2 of the EADR. Each of the
parties to this agreement hereby waives its/his rights to appeal
against or otherwise challenge this Decision in any forum.

***End Quote***

4.2 Furthermore, the Parties submitted the following Case Summary and
Reasoning:

"1 WHEREAS:

1.1 Mr Ali Khalfan Al Jahouri, FEI ID 10014750, is a 44-year-old
equestrian athlete and horse trainer from the United Arab Emirates
who was, at all material times, the registered Trainer of the three
relevant horses: 8 Minute, HLP Gadafi and JLB Noche (the
“Horses”).¹

1.2 The Trainer in Endurance is defined as the person who is in
charge of the preparation of the horse both physically and mentally
for competition.² Due to the specificities of the discipline of
Endurance, where Trainers take relevant decisions about the horse or
have been present at the event, a registered Trainer is regarded as
an additional Person Responsible for the rule violation.³

1.3 On 23 September 2017, in-competition samples were collected
from 8 Minute⁴. Subsequent analysis of those samples revealed the
presence of Nandrolone and its metabolite.

1.4 On 23 December 2017, in-competition samples were collected
from HLP Gadafi⁵ and JLB Noche⁶. Subsequent analysis of those
samples revealed the presence of Trometamol.

¹ Case 2017/BS338 Minute, Case 2018/BS05 HPL GADAIFI, Case 2018/BS06 JLB NOCHE.
² Art. 800 of the Endurance Rules. (also in the 2017 version)
³ For the purpose of this Codex, the “Trainer” is defined as the person who is in charge of the
preparation of the Horse both physically and mentally for Competition.
⁴ Art. 118.3 of the General Regulations, 23rd edition, 1 January 2009, which provides as follows:
⁵ See Art. 118.3 of the General Regulations, 23rd edition, 1 January 2009, which provides as follows:
⁶ the Owner and other Support Personnel including but not limited to grooms and veterinarians may
be regarded as additional Persons Responsible if they are present at the Event or have made a
relevant Decision about the Horse...
⁷ 8 Minute, FEI ID: 104BW22.
⁸ HPL GADAIFI, FEI ID: 105AP09.
⁹ JLB NOCHE, FEI ID: 104KB96.
1.5 On 10 January 2018 the FEI notified Mr Al Jahouri of the adverse analytical findings in relation to the Horses and alleged a violation of Article 2.2 of the 2016 Equine Anti-Doping Rules (the “EADR”), on the basis that Mr Al Jahouri was the registered Trainer of the Horses (the “Notification Letter”). The Notification Letter provisionally suspended Mr Al Jahouri with immediate effect. (Exhibit 1-3)

**Cases 2018/BS05 HPL GADAFI and 2018/BS06 JLB NOCHE**

1.6 The source of the Trometamol was determined to be a product called Endurance, which did not list Trometamol as an ingredient. Trometamol was listed as a Banned Substance at the time of the sample collection but was subsequently reclassified as a Controlled Medication.

1.7 The manufacturer of the product Endurance confirmed that Trometamol has historically been included in Endurance to act as a “buffer” and that it was not included on the ingredients label of the product because it was an inactive ingredient (being used merely as a buffer).

1.8 It was also confirmed in the two cases 2018/BS05 and 2018/BS06 that it was administered to the Horses by Sohail Saeed, who is the assistant to Dr Alejandro Echezarreta, a veterinarian employed by Al Wathba Stables. The administration of Endurance took place under the supervision of Dr Echezaretta during the veterinary check prior to the Horses being transported to the Events. (Exhibit 6)

1.9 For those two cases, the parties agree that the source of the positive finding of Trometamol was established.

1.10 The Trainer is the person who is in charge of the preparation of the Horse both physically and mentally for competition. Prior to the Event, the Trainer is responsible for the conditioning of the Horse for the competition which involves the exercise programme, nutrition of the Horse, seeking appropriate veterinary care and the administration of therapeutic substances under veterinary advice. The Trainer as additional PR was responsible for allowing the use of a product containing prohibited substance.

1.11 Further on Article 2.2.1 EADR states: "It is each Person Responsible’s personal duty, along with members of their Support Personnel, to ensure that no Banned Substance enters into the Horse’s body and that no Banned Method is Used. Accordingly, it is not
necessary that intent, fault, negligence or knowing Use on the part of the Person Responsible, or member of his Support Personnel (applicable in this case), be demonstrated in order to establish an EAD Rule violation for Use of a Banned Substance or a Banned Method.”

1.12 Although, the Trainer had delegated some of his responsibility to a third person, he is still responsible for the care of the horse and responsible for having procedures in place to prevent a positive finding. Despite this responsibility the Trainer failed in his duties of utmost caution and it was concluded that the he bore no significant fault and negligence for those two violations.

1.13 Based on these facts, the FEI reached settlements with the PRs at stake and such settlements were approved by the FEI Tribunal. (Exhibit 4-5)

1.14 Thus, the FEI considers that Mr Ali Khalfan Al Jahouri (as an additional Person Responsible):

(a) had a duty to ensure that no Banned Substance entered into the Horses’ bodies;
(b) that he failed in that duty;
(c) but that, in the circumstances, he bore no significant fault or negligence for the two Trometamol-related violations.

1.15 The parties agree that the final ineligible period for these two rule violation shall be one (1) year,\(^7\) corresponding to the duration of the Provisional Suspension already served by Mr Ali Khalfan Al Jahouri.

**Case 2017/BS33 - 8 Minute**

1.16 The remaining violation therefore relates to case 2017/BS33 - 8 Minute.

1.17 The parties acknowledge and agree that Nandrolone and its metabolite were present in the Horse 8 Minute. Despite the fact that Mr Ali Khalfan Al Jahouri invested significant efforts, resources, and money in trying to identify the source of the prohibited substance, he could not establish, by a balance of probabilities, the source of the Nandrolone.

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\(^7\) Mr Ali Khalfan Al Jahouri served 1 year and 27 days Provisional Suspension.
1.18 The parties acknowledge and agree that the Person Responsible for the Horse 8 Minute, Mr Khalifa Ali Khalfan Al Jahouri, FEI ID: 10093885, has accepted the violation and agreed to be sanctioned with a two (2) year ineligibility period. (See settlement in the PR case, Exhibit 7)

1.19 The FEI provisionally suspended Mr Ali Khalfan Al Jahouri from the date of the notification letter of 10 January 2018, until 7 February 2019 further to a notification of a violation of article 2.2 of the EADCMRs (Use or Attempted Use of a Banned Substance or a Banned Method. Thus he was provisionally suspended for a period of one (1) year and 27 days until the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) ordered the lifting of the Provisional Suspension on 7 February 2019. The FEI therefore lifted the Provisional Suspension of Mr Ali Khalfan Al Jahouri on 7 February 2019.

1.20 Based on the case file and the available evidence and information in this specific case, the FEI acknowledges and agrees that Mr Ali Khalfan Al Jahouri had procedures in place at his stables regarding the roles and responsibilities of the veterinarians, the purchase and use of medications and feed administration. (See witness statement of Dr. Alejandro Echezarreta in Exhibit 6)

1.21 The FEI hereby confirms that there is insufficient evidence to prosecute a case against Mr Ali Khalfan Al Jahouri under article 2.2 (Use or Attempted Use of a Banned Substance or a Banned Method).

1.22 While “Use” is defined as “The utilization, application, ingestion, injection or consumption by any means whatsoever of any Banned or Controlled Medication Substance or a Banned or Controlled Medication Method.”, and while the presence of Nandrolone and its metabolite are confirmed in the horse 8 Minute, the FEI has insufficient evidence that Mr Ali Khalfan Al Jahouri was actually involved in the doping violation or used Nandrolone on the Horse in this specific case.

1.23 Given the uncertainty as to the potential outcome of the case (both at FEI and CAS levels) regarding the available evidence in this specific case to prosecute on the basis of article 2.2, given the potential time, delays and costs for all parties to have a final outcome/decision, given that Mr Ali Khalfan Al Jahouri agrees to withdraw his appeal to CAS on the merits, and agrees not to open legal proceedings against the FEI to seek the payment of any damages, the FEI has agreed that the charges of case 2017/BS33 are
withdrawn against Mr Ali Khalfan Al Jahouri.”

5. Jurisdiction

5.1 The Tribunal has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to the Statutes, the GRs and the EAD Rules.

5.2 As a member of the UAE National Federation, the latter being a member of the FEI, the Trainer was bound by the EAD Rules.

5.3 Further, Article 7.6.1 of the EADCMRs allows for agreements between parties.

5.4 As a result, the Tribunal finds that it has jurisdiction to issue this Decision.

6. Approval of Agreement

6.1 Having reviewed the Case Summary, the Full Reasoning for the Agreement and terms of the Agreement, the Tribunal has real difficulty in reconciling it with the history of this case, and the submissions hitherto made to it, some of which are outlined throughout this Decision.

6.2 Most importantly, the Tribunal notes that during the Preliminary Hearing the Parties disputed at length regarding the source of the Nandrolone, as the main issue at stake for the lifting of the Provisional Suspension of the Trainer. Furthermore, the FEI on its side repeatedly argued that the strict liability rule applied to the Trainer. Nor did the Trainer dispute this.

6.3 The Tribunal notes that in the Agreement the FEI now asserts that there is insufficient evidence to prosecute a case against the Trainer under article 2.2 (Use or Attempted Use of a Banned Substance or a Banned Method). Furthermore, the FEI abandons the repeated submission that strict liability applies in the circumstances of this case. The FEI accepts that the Trainer’s practices excuse him from liability. The Tribunal regards it as unfortunate that it should have taken nearly two years for the Parties to have reached that conclusion.

6.4 The Agreement in respect of cases 2018/BS05 HLP GADAFI and 2018/BS06 JLB NOCHE is uncontroversial, except that there is no reasoning clearly explaining the conclusion expressed in para 1.12 of the Case Summary above. However, to end this matter, the Tribunal is prepared to give its approval for all three cases.

6.5 Therefore, and in accordance with the mutual consent of the Parties, the
Tribunal hereby directs the Parties to fully comply with all the terms of the Agreement, and to revise the results, including team results if applicable, of the Event accordingly. Further, this Decision shall terminate the present cases 2017/BS33 8 MINUTE, 2018/BS05 HLP GADAFI, and 2018/BS06 JLB NOCHE with regard to the Trainer.

7. Decision

1) The Tribunal rules that the Agreement executed by the FEI and the Trainer, Mr. Ali Khalfan Al Jahouri, concerning the cases 2017/BS33 8 MINUTE, 2018/BS05 HLP GADAFI, and 2018/BS06 JLB NOCHE is hereby ratified by the Tribunal with the consent of the Parties and its terms set out in Article 4 above are incorporated into this Decision.

2) This Decision is subject to appeal in accordance with Article 12.2 of the EAD Rules. The Parties however agreed to waive their right to appeal, as set out in Article 4 above.

3) This Decision shall be published in accordance with Article 13.3 of the EAD Rules.

IV. DECISION TO BE FORWARDED TO:

a. The Trainer: Yes

b. The President of the NF of the Trainer: Yes

c. Any other: No

FOR THE PANEL

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Mr. Chris Hodson QC, FEI Tribunal panel chair