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## Kickboxer banned for human growth hormone possession

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The Oceania Muaythai Federation's decision to impose a two-year sanction on 2008 International Sport Kickboxing Association's welterweight world champion, Andrew Keogh for the possession and use of human growth hormone (hGH) was today welcomed by the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority (ASADA).

On 18 December 2008, Queensland Police executed a search warrant at an address in Brisbane where they discovered Mr Keogh in possession of hGH. Mr Keogh pleaded guilty to the charge of possessing dangerous drugs in the Brisbane Magistrate's Court on 21 January 2009.

Following an investigation by ASADA, the matter was referred to the Oceania Muaythai Federation as a violation of anti-doping rules.

On 19 February 2010, the Oceania Muaythai Federation imposed a two year period of ineligibility against Mr Keogh for the possession and use of hGH.

Mr Keogh is banned from taking part in recognised sports until midnight on 19 February 2012.

Outgoing ASADA Chair, Richard Ings said that through a combination of investigations and testing ASADA has a comprehensive capability to detect and sanction athletes abusing hGH.

Since 2006, a number of athletes have been sanctioned for the possession, use or attempted use of hGH, including: Matthew Eather (rugby league); Andrew Wyper (cycling); Mark Roland (cycling); and Rhommel Pardilanan (bodybuilding).

The serious health consequences associated with the misuse of hGH is a prime reason the substance is listed as prohibited, both in-competition and out-of-competition, under the World Anti-Doping Code.

One of the most common side effects of hGH misuse is an overgrowth of bone and connective tissue that leads to a change in facial appearance, such as a protruding jaw and eyebrow bones. Misuse can also lead to abnormal growth of the hands and feet, the possible development of cancers, and a shortened life expectancy.

Human growth hormone displays anabolic properties that increases muscle mass and power. hGH leaves the system quickly when compared to substances like anabolic steroids.

-ENDS-

**Media note:** The World Anti-Doping Code (the Code) categorises hGH as 'S2: peptide hormones, growth factors and related substances'. The substance is prohibited under the Code and athletes in possession, using or attempting to use this prohibited substance potentially face serious penalties, including a lifetime ban for second offences.

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