I N T E R N A T I O N A L S K A T I N G U N I O N

Communication No. 1530

Procedure for Certificate of Medical Exemption due to High Hemoglobin Concentration

The ISU Council, implementing the current ISU Communication regarding Procedures for Blood Testing, has adopted the following decision in respect of the possibility of granting a Medical Exemption in case of naturally high values of hemoglobin.

The ISU is aware that it is possible to have a physiologically congenital higher hemoglobin level than that seen in the normal population due to genetic variation (familial polycythemias). The reasons for this condition are varied.

If an athlete can demonstrate they have this physiologic congenital elevation in their Hemoglobin level, a "Certificate of Medical Exemption" will be issued. When a Certificate of Medical Exemption is granted the athlete would not be withdrawn from competition when their Blood Testing results demonstrated this previously documented elevation. This Certificate of Medical Exemption would include a statement of set hemoglobin limits that are specific for that individual. If the athlete has subsequent Blood Test results, which are above the specific limits set out in the Certificate of Medical Exemption, they could then be withdrawn from competition.

In order to aid the athlete in the process of providing the data that is required for an application for a Certificate of Medical Exemption, the following medical work-up is required. Either **Option A** or **Option B** is acceptable to establish that the athlete has a stable, high, hemoglobin concentration by obtaining the following blood tests, that should include at least the following variables: hemoglobin concentration, hematocrit, % reticulocytes, MCV and RDW and any further variables requested by the Medical Advisors at the time of review of the application.

Option A:

a. Nine (9) blood samples must be drawn over a 3 week period;

b. Prior to the beginning of the 3 week investigation period the athlete must inform the ISU Secretariat of their intent to apply for a "Certificate of Exemption" in order that the laboratory to be used can be approved by the ISU;

c. The blood draws must be no less than 24 hours apart and no more than 96 hours apart for each blood sample;

d. The athlete should not have exercised for 2 hours prior to the blood being drawn;

e. At least 2ml of blood must be drawn on K2- or K3-EDTA blood tubes labeled with bar coded labels (the labels will be provided by the ISU). All the blood samples will be analyzed on the same machine, preferably an Advia-120 Hematology analyzer calibrated with the Sports Calibration procedure. For any questions, contact the ISU Secretariat.

f. Please note the ISU may authorize out-of-competition testing with additional blood and/or urine sampling during this investigation period.

Option B:

a) Six (6) blood samples must be drawn over a 2 week period under the same conditions specified under Option A paragraphs b) to f) above;

b) Establish a high Hemoglobin concentration in biologically related relatives by obtaining a single blood sample from two or three biologically related relatives:

   i) One (1) blood sample each must be drawn from one or both biological parents;
   ii) If possible, at least one (1) sample from another biologically related brother, sister, grandparent, aunt or uncle;
   iii) At least 2ml of blood must be drawn on K2- or K3-EDTA blood tubes. The samples will preferably be analyzed on an Advia-120 Hematology analyzer calibrated with the Sports Calibration procedure.
   iv) The identity, data and the relationship to the athlete must be submitted within this 2 week investigation period.

c) Both the athlete and family members must provide satisfactory identification to the accredited laboratory to confirm their identity.

Once complete, the results of the analysis of the athlete's blood samples under Option A or the athlete's and family members' blood samples under Option B (preferably the export data file from the Advia 120 machine) are to be mailed (on disk or by email) to the ISU (International Skating Union, Chemin de Primerose 2, CH-1007 Lausanne, Switzerland, along with identification of the athlete and/or family member with the sample ID number/s and sample date/s.

The ISU, upon review by the ISU Medical Advisors, will assess the data provided and render a decision as to whether a Certificate of Medical Exemption is granted or whether further Investigation is required.

Milano **Ottavio Cinquanta**, President

September 23, 2008

Lausanne **Fredi Schmid**, General Secretary