

FIFA investigation following the McLaren report

Frequently asked questions

Updated on 13 February 2018

Can FIFA confirm that football players were identified in the McLaren report?

As mentioned on many occasions, following the publication of part II of the McLaren report in December 2016, WADA informed FIFA that 34 football samples identified in the report might potentially have benefitted from manipulation. WADA clearly set out the procedure for the handling of evidence contained in the report by the respective sports federations following a meeting in February 2017. At that time, WADA acknowledged in its [press release](#) that: "there simply may not be sufficient evidence required to sanction, with potential anti-doping rule violations, some of the individual athletes identified in the report". In addition to the material included in the McLaren report, WADA seized approximately 3,000 samples (across all sports) from the Moscow laboratory in December 2014, including 154 from football players. These samples, seized randomly, do not constitute, per se, evidence of anti-doping rule violations, but they were stored by WADA at the Lausanne laboratory and were made available for re-testing, which FIFA has requested.

Can you confirm that the Russian squad at the 2014 FIFA World Cup was identified in the McLaren report and is under investigation?

In accordance with our Anti-Doping Regulations and the World Anti-Doping Code, we cannot identify athletes who are potentially under investigation.

Nevertheless, we can confirm that all 23 players of the Russian 2014 World Cup squad were tested by FIFA through unannounced controls out-of-competition shortly prior to the start of the World Cup and 2 players per match were tested (as for any other team) in-competition. The test analysis were done at the WADA-accredited laboratory in Lausanne and all results were negative. The same in and out-of-competition procedure applied to the 23 players of the Russian 2017 Confederations Cup squad and all results were negative.

Furthermore, we can also confirm that the players of the Russian EURO 2016 squad were tested by UEFA through in and out-of-competition controls and all results were negative. In addition, UEFA has also recently conducted re-analysis on samples collected from Russian players during the EURO 2012 played in Poland and Ukraine, using the latest detection method available at WADA laboratories. All results were negative.

What action did FIFA undertake after the publication of the McLaren report to investigate potential doping cases in football?

FIFA undertook comprehensive action immediately after the publication of the McLaren report:

- Contact was established and questions were raised with Prof. McLaren to retrieve further details and discuss the approach FIFA should take.
- All the evidence disclosed in the McLaren report regarding football samples was reviewed and investigations were conducted by the FIFA Anti-Doping Unit and external legal counsel.
- FIFA requested statements from several scientific experts to expand on the findings of the McLaren report.
- Reanalysis for long-term metabolites was conducted on samples from the Russian athletes identified in the report.
- In December 2017, WADA provided FIFA with additional data from the LIMS database of the Moscow laboratory, which has led to further investigations.

- FIFA has also requested a forensic analysis (for marks indicating surreptitious opening) of a specific number of samples (selected following the criteria set by WADA) stored in Lausanne.
- As part of its investigations, FIFA also sought to contact Dr Rodchenkov via WADA and Prof. McLaren, but up until 22 November 2017, FIFA was informed by WADA that Dr Rodchenkov was not available. Following the instructions finally provided by WADA at the end of 2017, FIFA has submitted a list of 59 specific questions to Dr Rodchenkov.

Who is conducting the investigation?

FIFA's Anti-Doping Unit is in charge of the investigation, with the support of external experts, and in accordance with instructions from WADA, who has been informed of every step we have undertaken so far.

Why don't you appoint an independent investigator?

Throughout our investigation on this matter, we have been working in close collaboration with WADA. They have been informed of every action we have undertaken so far and have agreed to our approach. FIFA is following the requirements set by WADA and, in this regard, is fully transparent and open.

The first McLaren report was published in July 2016. How can you explain that you still have not sanctioned anyone despite the evidence available while other international federations have?

Sanctions cannot be imposed based on mere suspicions or limited facts. Of all the football players mentioned in the McLaren report, two U-20 female players had already been sanctioned by the Russian authorities before the publication of the McLaren report. FIFA has conducted wide-ranging investigations in close collaboration with WADA and, so far, it has not been possible to demonstrate any other anti-doping rule violation. However, our investigations remain open and should we find enough evidence to demonstrate an anti-doping rule violation by any athlete, FIFA will impose the appropriate sanction.

Why didn't you contact Dr Rodchenkov, the whistleblower and star witness who says he has evidence that football was part of the doping scheme?

FIFA is already in possession of football-related information from Dr Rodchenkov via Prof. McLaren, who passed the information on to us. This information has been assessed as part of our investigations and, so far, it has been inconclusive.

In addition, FIFA submitted several requests to contact Dr Rodchenkov to WADA and Prof. McLaren as early as spring 2017. Up until 22 November 2017, FIFA was informed by WADA that Dr Rodchenkov was not available due to his situation as a protected witness in the United States. On 22 November 2017, WADA informed FIFA and other international federations about the process to contact Dr Rodchenkov via a WADA-designated lawyer. After conducting an initial review of the large amount of new data from the Moscow laboratory provided by WADA in December 2017, FIFA submitted a list of specific questions to Dr Rodchenkov through the WADA-designated lawyer in early 2018. We are awaiting his answer.

Can you explain why you still have not conducted an analysis of the football samples seized in Moscow and stored at the Lausanne laboratory?

A standard reanalysis of all suspicious football samples has already been conducted by the Lausanne laboratory, and all results were negative.

In addition, FIFA has requested a forensic analysis (to determine whether bottles bear marks indicating surreptitious opening) to be conducted on a specific number of samples (selected following the criteria set by WADA) and asked to be given priority. The process is ongoing and FIFA has been informed by WADA that this is a lengthy analysis which includes the delivery of a detailed report for each sample, taking a number of weeks.

What anti-doping programme is in place for the 2018 FIFA World Cup? How can you ensure there will be no manipulation?

For the FIFA World Cup in Russia, every participating player will be tested in unannounced controls ahead of the competition and further systematic tests will be performed at every match.

In addition, the results of the different analyses are included in the athletes' passports together with tests from previous FIFA competitions and other international events such as the UEFA Champions League and national competitions. The Athlete Passport Management Unit reviews the data of all participating players to detect potential deviations that may indicate an abuse of performance-enhancing drugs. No Russians will be involved in the implementation of the anti-doping programme and all analysis of doping samples will be conducted at WADA laboratories outside Russia. A similar protocol was in place at the FIFA Confederations Cup held in Russia in 2017; all results were negative.

Can you guarantee that you will finalise your investigation before the World Cup? There is an impression that FIFA is deliberately delaying this process.

There has not been any delay in our investigation. Since the very first moment, FIFA has undertaken comprehensive action to determine whether football players were involved. We have been regularly informing and exchanging information with WADA about our progress and they have agreed to our approach. It is obviously in FIFA's interest that the investigations are finalised as soon as possible. However, as the recent CAS jurisprudence shows, special care and attention has to be given to the investigation to ensure that if sanctions are taken, these are solid and fully substantiated.