



England
Rugby

ANTI - DOPING & ILLICIT DRUGS PROGRAMME

ANNUAL REPORT
2017/18



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INTRODUCTION

This report provides an account of anti-doping and illicit drugs programme activities in rugby union in England for the season 2017/18. It fulfils the commitment made in the season 2010/11 to report publicly in this area of RFU operations. It is presented from a professional and community game perspective to allow for a full understanding of the landscape across rugby union in England,

Anti-Doping Advisory Group

The Anti-Doping Advisory Group, who this report is published by, is responsible for advising on anti-doping policy for rugby union in England. The group brings together representatives from the professional leagues, the players' association and UK Anti-Doping. The group membership also provides expertise in sports medicine, law and anti-doping operations.

Membership:

- Dr Simon Kemp; Medical Services Director, Rugby Football Union- Chair
- Nigel Melville; Professional Rugby Director, Rugby Football Union
- Steve Grainger; Director of Rugby Development, Rugby Football Union
- Andrew Rogers; Head of Governance & Regulation, Premiership Rugby
- Richard Bryan; Rugby Director, Rugby Players Association
- Angus Bujalski; Director of Legal & Governance, Rugby Football Union
- Hamish Coffey; Deputy Director, UK Anti-Doping
- Stephen Watkins; Anti-Doping & Illicit Drugs Programme Manager, Rugby Football Union
- Jake Shelley; Anti-Doping & Illicit Drugs Programme Officer, Rugby Football Union

FOREWORD



Nigel Melville
Professional Rugby Director, Rugby Football Union and Anti-Doping Advisory Group

We are pleased to present the RFU anti-doping annual report for season 2017/18. Our mandate to protect rugby union and have drug free players means constant vigilance in the fight against doping in rugby. By publication of our report we hope to show that as a sport we are genuinely accountable for our efforts in this important area. We stand shoulder to shoulder with our partners at UKAD and World Rugby in making sure rugby union's credibility is not undermined by doping.

The support that the RFU gets from Premiership Rugby and the Rugby Players Association (RPA) is invaluable. Without their considerable voice the message would ultimately be weaker. While testing and education are vital, it is the culture of the clubs that ultimately means a clean sport.

The two Anti-Doping Rule Violations from the professional game serve as a warning that there is no room for complacency. Whether it is deliberate doping or accidental ingestion, the threat to the game remains real. As can be seen in all sports, the fight for clean sport cannot ever be deemed to be over, but the collaborative approach to managing risk within the game in England is a proactive programme from the RFU, Premiership Rugby and the players providing the best possible chance of keeping the sport of rugby union clean and fair.

FOREWORD



Hamish Coffey
Deputy Director of Operations UK Anti-Doping

With the production of the RFU's Anti-Doping and Illicit Drugs Programme Annual Report, UK Anti-Doping once again welcomes the pro-active stance taken by the RFU to tackle doping in rugby union, both in the professional and community games. It is vital for the ongoing fight for clean sport that governing bodies of sport target resources where they can make the biggest impact to protecting athletes from the threats of doping.

From April 2018, following an increase in government investment, UKAD has been able to increase the size of its testing programme. While not reflected in this report, this has been a significant step forward for the 2018-19 season. It is important to remember that testing is just one part of a successful anti-doping programme, with education also playing a significant role. Consequently, it is pleasing to see a focus on the RFU's education work within this report.

UKAD continues to work in close partnership with the governing bodies of sport to detect, deter and disrupt doping. However, as the challenges facing clean sport evolve, so must the approach to protecting athletes from the risks of doping. UKAD is developing more established relationships with other sporting and non-sporting organisations, including law enforcement and public health and education bodies and organisations.

We look forward to a continued and strengthened partnership between UKAD and the RFU as we both look to enhance anti-doping programmes in rugby union in England.

The background of the page is a blurred photograph of a professional rugby match, overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. In the center, the words "PROFESSIONAL RUGBY" are written in a bold, white, sans-serif font, flanked by two short vertical white lines. On the right side, the lower portion of a player's white kit is visible, featuring a large black "O2" logo on the shorts. The overall aesthetic is dynamic and sport-oriented.

PROFESSIONAL RUGBY



ANTI-DOPING PROGRAMME

ANTI-DOPING PROGRAMME

IN PROFESSIONAL RUGBY

739

samples collected and tested

106

samples collected and tested from junior academies

81%

of tests out of competition

14%

of samples collected were blood

2

anti-doping rule violations

1000+

players educated in face to face sessions

EDUCATION

Knowledge is the key to preventing doping decisions and the first line of defence in maintaining a clean sport. The RFU provides education to hundreds of athletes, coaches, trainers, medical staff, and other support personnel each year. Through in-person training sessions, as well as a multitude of other resources, the RFU helps ensure that players and support personnel have the tools they need to remain clean.

Anti-doping education is tailored specifically to the professional players and complements their existing knowledge. It is compulsory for all clubs in the Premiership Rugby Competition, Green King IPA Championship and Tyrells Premier 15s to organise an RFU led anti-doping seminar for their players every season. Topics include checking medications, supplement safety and using other practical tools to avoid making mistakes that may lead to an inadvertent doping violation. Looking ahead to season 2018/19 will see the introduction of an online education module which will look to both educate and test knowledge.

Wellington Festival 2018

The week provides the best young players in England with an opportunity to come together and experience a high level of rugby, as well as have fun and meet new people. The RFU's Anti-Doping Team take this opportunity to use the week to educate each academy separately. The session is run in an interactive way in small groups with players given the chance to ask any questions. For some, it will be their first formal anti-doping education. The session combines with a specific social media element to provide the young players with real life examples of the pitfalls and the consequences for their futures.



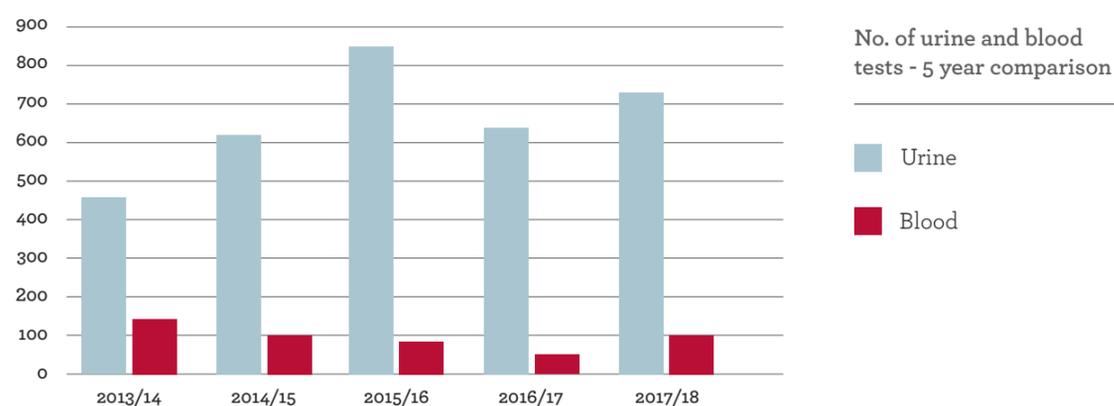
TESTING

The core testing programme this season has been at a consistent level to previous seasons. Blood, urine and biological passport samples were analysed, with samples collected both in and out of competition by multiple agencies. The testing programme is in full compliance with the WADA Testing Document for Sport Specific Analysis and strategically thought out to make best use of resources. The UKAD Test Distribution Plan forms a core pillar in delivering a comprehensive programme of blood and urine testing across rugby union in England.

While testing remains a key component of the Anti-Doping Programme, we are developing our use of intelligence, to ensure that we offer the best possible value for money in everything we do and to coordinate our limited resources to best effect. Intelligence sharing supports the RFU and UKAD in developing effective testing and investigation strategies.

Professional Rugby	UKAD	World Rugby	Six Nations	EPCR	Total
Number of tests conducted using each sample collection method					
Urine	422	172	20	25	639
Blood	44	56			100
Numer of tests conducted In Competition and Out of Competition					
In Competition	74	34	20	25	153
Out of Competition	392	194			586
Number of tests conducted at each level of rugby					
International Men's Senior*	11	61	10	0	82
International Women's Senior	-	47	4	0	51
Men's 7s	-	68	0	0	68
Women's 7s	-	35	0	0	35
England Men U20s	-	17	6	0	23
International Total	11	228	20		259
Gallagher Premiership	221	-	-	25	246
GreeneKing IPA Championship	128	-	-		128
Junior/Academy (U17/U18)	106	-	-	-	106
Total number of tests conducted					
Total tests conducted	466	228	20	25	739

*International men senior team are members of Premiership teams.



VIOLATIONS

Brandon Staples – Yorkshire Carnegie

A urine sample the player gave at training on 9 August 2017 tested positive for dehydrochloromethyl-testosterone, methandienone and stanozolol. Staples claimed the adverse result was due to a nutritional supplement he had consumed in South Africa while on holiday in May 2017, but an independent National Anti-Doping Panel did not accept his evidence. He is the first professional rugby union player to test positive for a performance-enhancing substance since 2011.

Brandon Staples was suspended for 4 years

Ashley Johnson - Wasps

The 32-year-old South African tested positive for hydrochlorothiazide on 7 February 2018 after mistakenly ingesting one of his wife's fat-stripping tablets, named The Secret, instead of his own supplement Nutrilean. Samples of the The Secret were tested by both the player himself and the RFU, with both testing positive for hydrochlorothiazide despite the drug not featuring on the product's ingredients list. An independent National Anti-Doping Panel accepted the player's evidence and imposed a reduced ban of 6 months upon the player.

Ashley Johnson was suspended for 6 months

No. of Anti-Doping Violations in the professional game - 5 year comparison





ILLICIT DRUGS PROGRAMME

ILLICIT DRUGS PROGRAMME

332

tests conducted

94%

of samples collected were hair

3 MONTHS

average detection window
per hair sample

4

illicit drugs programme violations

0

admissions of use

OBJECTIVES

Concerns about the health and welfare of players and the image and reputation of rugby in England led the RFU to develop an illicit drugs policy in partnership with Premiership Rugby and the RPA which came into effect in 2008.

The programme is run in a way that complements the anti-doping programme, consisting of out of competition tests for the four most commonly found illicit drugs: cannabis, cocaine, ecstasy and amphetamines. The testing programme utilises both hair and urine tests in order to detect illicit drug use.



Dr Simon Kemp
*Medical Services Director, Rugby
Football Union- Chair of Anti-Doping
Advisory Group*

FOREWORD

The health of rugby players remains of paramount importance to the RFU. With four violations, the RFU and its partners remain confident that the programme is protecting the image and reputation of rugby union in England as a game which does not accept use of illicit drugs.

Rugby union's profile is growing and consequently many of the players are now becoming household names; consequently it is of paramount importance that the best players in England are advocates for clean sport and healthy lifestyles. The very low incidence of positive results means that the players take their responsibility towards anti-doping and illicit drugs seriously.

Illicit drug use can have a devastating effect on a player's health and it is for this reason that programmes to protect players are so important. We must continue to educate, test, and support players in this important area.

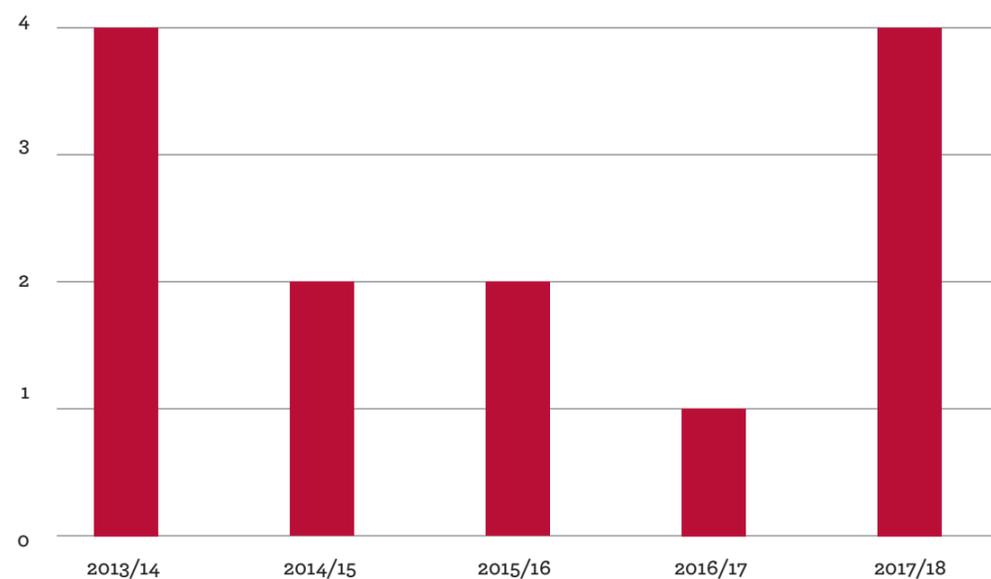
TESTING

A total of 332 urine and hair samples were collected at all Premiership clubs throughout the season. Selections are made from the squads and can be conducted both at random or targeted at individuals, with additional focus placed on previously identified periods of higher risk.

In consultation with Abbott Toxicology (the RFU's testing agency and sample analysis partner) the sample collection process has been designed to be as similar as possible to the sample collection procedure used for the anti-doping testing programme. It is important to note, however, that RFU illicit drugs tests are not WADA accredited and do not form part of the Anti-Doping Programme.

Hair testing continues to be extensively utilised as part of the testing programme, now forming the majority of sample collections. The analysis of a hair sample can detect illicit drug use over an extended period of time – in some cases up to five months.

No. of Illicit Drugs Programme Violations - 5 year comparison



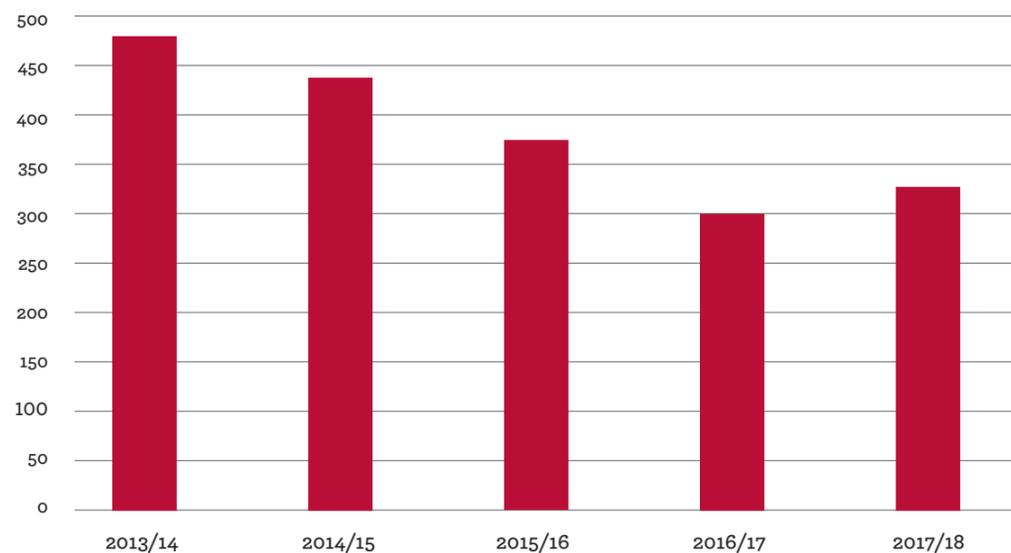
ILLICIT DRUGS PROGRAMME VIOLATIONS

The number of violations and admissions of use during season 2017/18 continues to be low with four violations and no admissions of use reported.

Strict confidentiality is maintained for all admissions of use and violations where it is a first offence. As there have been no second violations of the policy, the details of recent cases cannot be reported.

A first violation of the policy requires players to undergo a specialist assessment at the Nightingale Hospital in London for expert assessment from a consultant psychiatrist and, if necessary, follow-up treatment. The player is also required to pay a fine of £5,000 for a senior Premiership Rugby player or £1,000 for an academy Premiership Rugby player or other player under the policy. A second violation of the policy will result in loss of confidentiality, a fine of an equal amount to a first violation and a period of ineligibility set by an RFU disciplinary panel. There have been no second violations of the policy to date.

Total of Illicit Drugs Programme tests - 5 year comparison



ALERE TOXICOLOGY

As a global leader, Alere Toxicology, part of Abbott, is committed to providing innovative solutions and exceptional support to organisations seeking to detect and deter the abuse of drugs. They deliver cutting-edge testing systems and analysis services to a wide variety of industries, including government agencies, occupational health clinics, family lawyers, drug treatment and rehabilitation centres, and distributors

Find out more at: www.aleretoxicology.co.uk



COMMUNITY RUGBY

FOREWORD



Steve Grainger
Rugby Development Director, Rugby Football Union

Protecting the values and integrity of rugby remains one of our principal objectives, and battling the scourge of doping in our sport is a key part of that. The vast majority of rugby players from clubs, schools, colleges and universities across England play the game in the spirit intended. But with the ever increasing prominence of image and performance enhancing drugs in our wider society, we must redouble our efforts to educate our players, coaches and club officials of the dangers in this area.

With that in mind, there has this year been an increase in the budget for anti-doping education in the community game. We will look to increase support for community players around a healthy lifestyle and optimal diet, in order to decrease the potential risk factors for doping. We will further continue to work for greater awareness around the risks of supplement use and the role of the Informed Sport Programme to mitigate those risks.

Maintaining a clean culture in elite rugby continues to be a powerful influence in promoting clean sport throughout the recreational game. The professional attitude of our top players surrounding best practice nutrition, training and lifestyle, as well as their commitment to clean sport, continues to show that doping has no role to play in rugby and this message must be spread throughout all levels of the game.

TESTING IN THE COMMUNITY GAME

Community Rugby		Total
Number of tests conducted In Competition and Out of Competition		
In-Competition		27
Out-of-Competition		72
Number of tests conducted at each level of rugby		
National Division 1		81
Other		18
Total number of tests conducted		
Total		99

COMMUNITY RUGBY ANTI-DOPING RULE VIOLATIONS

Daniel Wells - Clifton RFC

Daniel Wells was selected for doping control following a match between London Irish Wild Geese and Clifton RFC on the 14 April 2018. He tested positive for the presence of the prohibited substances ostarine (an anabolic agent) and 4-methylhexan-2-amine (methylhexaneamine/MHA, a stimulant). An independent National Anti-Doping Panel did not accept his evidence that his nutritional supplements were contaminated.

Daniel Wells was banned for 4 years

Patrick Hillier - Cheltenham Tigers RFC

Patrick Hillier was selected for doping control after the match between Cheltenham Tigers RFC v Old Richians RFC on the 28 October 2017, he returned a positive test for a metabolite of cocaine. The player established to the satisfaction of the panel that the prohibited substance was used out of competition in a context unrelated to sports performance. An independent National Anti-Doping Panel accepted that the illicit drug use had been consumed in a manner unrelated to sport.

Patrick Hillier was banned for 2 years

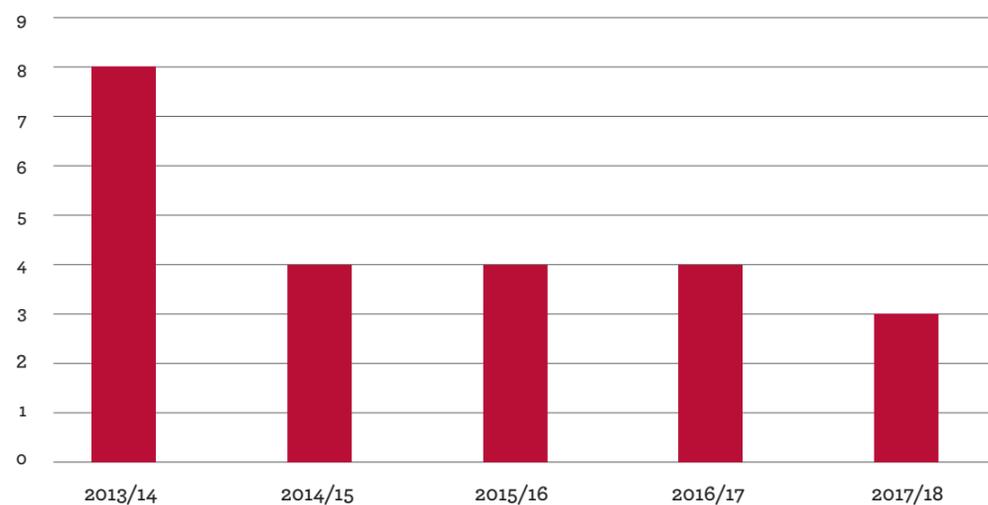
Dean Ashfield - Clevedon RFC

Dean Ashfield was tested on March 15 last year after a 46-12 Somerset Cup semi-final win over Bridgwater and Albion played in Weston-super-Mare. Three banned substances - drostanolone, trenbolone and clenbuterol - were in his urine, all of which are substances on the 2017 World Anti-Doping Agency Prohibited List. Ashfield was suspended on April 10 last year and charged with a breach of World Rugby regulation 21.2.1 - presence of a prohibited substance or its metabolites or markers in an athlete's sample. The independent National Anti-Doping Panel did not accept the player's evidence.

Dean Ashfield was banned for 4 years

COMMUNITY RUGBY ANTI-DOPING

No. of Anti-Doping Violations
in the community game
- 5 year comparison



AWARENESS & EDUCATION

The community game Anti-Doping Strategy will see the RFU increase its focus on improving awareness, enhancing education and increasing testing within the community game. The RFU's Rugby Safe initiative makes anti-doping materials such as posters and advice cards available to clubs and the wider community game with information on anti-doping alongside other relevant topics such as good nutrition and training advice. In addition, seminars are available for clubs and other bodies to organise with the RFU.

FoodforRugby.org will be enhanced in season 2018/19 but will still offer high quality expert advice for rugby players on good healthy nutrition to support the demands of playing and training for rugby, alongside a busy everyday life. It provides interactive content that is easy to access and understand to help players make good food choices to lead a healthy lifestyle. Content includes recipe ideas, menu planners, videos and quizzes. The RFU supports a Food First approach to nutrition.



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