

**SPORT DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTRE OF CANADA (SDRCC)
CENTRE DE RÈGLEMENT DES DIFFÉRENDS SPORTIFS DU CANADA (CRDSC)**

Citation: AB v. Hockey Canada, 2026 CASDRC 25
No. SDRCC ST 26-0066
Date of Decision 2026-05-20

AB
(Claimant)

and

HOCKEY CANADA (HC)
(Respondent)

and

HOCKEY MANITOBA
(Affected Party)

Appearances:

For AB:	Nicole Fredrickson (counsel)
For Hockey Canada:	Adam Klevinas (counsel)
	Cristy Cooper (counsel)

Before:

Jeffrey J. Palamar (Arbitrator)

REASONS FOR DECISION

I. Introduction and Background

1. This is an appeal from the December 17, 2025, decision (the “Decision”) of Adjudicator Gabriel Van Loon in his capacity as Adjudicator under Hockey Canada’s “Maltreatment Complaint Management Policy” (the “Policy”).
2. At the relevant time, the Claimant was a minor and a member of a hockey team within a certain league which was governed by Hockey Manitoba.
3. Hockey Canada is the national governing body for amateur hockey in Canada, and oversees the management and structure of programs in Canada from entry-level to high performance teams and competitions.
4. On May 25, 2024, Hockey Manitoba submitted a complaint to Hockey Canada with allegations of misconduct against the Claimant (the “Complaint”).

5. The Complaint was administered by the Independent Third Party ("ITP") pursuant to the Policy.
6. The Claimant was subject to codes of conduct applicable to the Manitoba High School Athletic Association (the "MHSAA") and Hockey Manitoba which included the Hockey Manitoba Code of Conduct Policy (effective date April 1, 2023), the Hockey Manitoba Social Media and Networking Policy, the applicable High School Hockey League's Social Media Policy, the MHSAA's Sportsmanship Policy, and the Hockey Canada Dressing Room Policy (the "Codes").
7. In accordance with the Policy, the ITP determined that the Complaint would be administered under Process 2. This meant that an Investigator was appointed, who then produced a report (the "Report").
8. The parties were given an opportunity to make submissions regarding the Report. The Adjudicator then considered these submissions and the Report, and on December 17, 2025, in the Decision held that on the balance of probabilities the allegations were substantiated, and the Claimant had violated the Codes.
9. As a result, the Adjudicator imposed the following (the "Sanction");

Suspension: The Claimant had already been suspended on an interim basis since in March 2024. The Claimant was further suspended for an additional period, effective as of the date of this Decision and ending December 31, 2028, from any Hockey Canada sanctioned activities in any capacity including but not limited to any program, activity, event or competition sponsored by, organized by, or under the auspices of Hockey Canada, such activities including but not limited to, coaching, volunteering, spectating, entering dressing rooms or stands or hallways in any arena hosting Hockey Canada sanctioned events, tournaments, camps, practices and games effective as of the date of the Decision. The Claimant was permitted to attend and participate fully in tryouts during this period.

Warning: An official written warning to the Claimant, including a formal notice that he has committed a violation of the Codes and that more severe sanctions will result should he engage in any further violations of a similar nature.

10. On December 26, 2025, the Claimant filed a Request with the Sport Dispute Resolution Centre of Canada (the "SDRCC"), asking that the Sanction be set aside or substantially reduced in the interests of fairness, proportionality, and natural justice.
11. On January 13, 2026, Hockey Canada filed its Answer, asking for the Sanction to be upheld.

12. On or about February 20, 2026, the parties agreed to nominate me as Arbitrator.
13. On March 3, 2026, we held a preliminary meeting during which the parties confirmed;
 - a) they accepted the jurisdiction of the SDRCC;
 - b) they accepted my jurisdiction;
 - c) the April 1, 2025, version of the Canadian Sport Dispute Resolution Code (the "SDRCC Code") applied;
 - d) the case would proceed by way of documentary review; and
 - e) they agreed with a proposed timeline for written submissions.
14. In the days that followed the parties both advised they did not wish me to have the Report before me for consideration.
15. In due course I received and reviewed the parties' written submissions, and so now issue my decision. In it I have summarized and paraphrased the most relevant portions of the submissions made to me. While I do not refer specifically to everything provided, in making my decision I have in fact carefully considered it all.

II. The Claimant's Position

16. The Claimant said that the standard of review should be one of reasonableness, as affirmed in *Canada (Minister of Citizenship and Immigration) v. Vavilov* (2019) SCC 65.
17. In *Vavilov*, the Supreme Court of Canada held that administrative decisions are presumed to be reviewed based on a standard of reasonableness, and that subject to legislation that dictates otherwise, or where the law requires correctness to be applied, a reasonableness review is the starting position of any administrative review.
18. In undertaking a reasonableness review, an arbitrator should "consider the outcome of the administrative decision in light of its underlying rationale in order to ensure that the decision as a whole is transparent, intelligible and justified."
19. Such review focusses on the decision "actually made" and the justification for it, rather than making a determination of what the reviewer would have done had they been in the place of the original decision maker.

20. Previous SDRCC appeals have applied Vavilov in this way, including *Jackson v Hockey Canada*, 2024 CASDRC 59 and *Barch v Hockey Canada*, 2023 CASDRC 49. That approach should apply here.

21. Section 5, paragraph 42 of the Policy states that:

Prior to determining sanctions, the Adjudicative Chair or the Adjudicative Panel, as the case may be, will consider factors relevant to determining appropriate sanctions which may include:

- a. The severity of the Violation;
- b. Where applicable, the nature and duration of the Respondent's relationship with the Complainant, including whether there is a Power Imbalance;
- c. The Respondent's prior history and any pattern of inappropriate behaviour;
- d. The respective age of the individuals involved;
- e. Whether the Respondent poses an ongoing and/or potential threat to the safety of others;
- f. The Respondent's voluntary admission of the offense(s), acceptance of responsibility, and/or cooperation in the investigative and/or disciplinary process of Hockey Canada;
- g. Real or perceived impact of the incident on the Complainant, Hockey Canada and/or its Members or the sporting community;
- h. Circumstances specific to the Respondent being sanctioned (e.g. addiction; disability; illness);
- i. Whether, given the facts and circumstances that have been established, continued participation in Hockey Canada-sanctioned programming is appropriate;
- j. A Respondent who is in a position of trust, intimate contact or high-impact decision-making may face more serious sanctions; and/or
- k. Other mitigating and aggravating circumstances.

22. Section 5, paragraph 44 of the Policy states that:

The adjudicative panel may apply the following sanctions, singularly or in combinations:

- a. Verbal or Written Warning – A verbal reprimand or an official, written notice that an Organizational or Member Participant has committed

a Violation and that more severe sanctions will result should the Organizational or Member Participant be involved in other Violations;

b. Education – The requirement that an Organizational or Member Participant undertake specified educational or similar remedial measures to address the Violation(s);

c. Probation – The requirement that an Organizational or Member Participant be placed under some form of supervision or monitoring for a certain period of time while participating in any program, activity, event, or competition sponsored by, organized by, or under the auspices of Hockey Canada. Should any further Violations occur during the probationary period, this will result in additional disciplinary measures, likely including a period of suspension or permanent ineligibility. This sanction can also include loss of privileges or other conditions, restrictions, or requirements for a specified period;

d. Suspension – Suspension, either for a set time or until further notice, from participation, in any capacity, in any program, activity, event, or competition sponsored by, organized by, or under the auspices of Hockey Canada. The reinstatement of a suspended Organizational or Member Participant may be subject to certain restrictions or contingent upon the Organizational or Member Participant satisfying specific conditions imposed by the Adjudicative Chair or Adjudicative Panel and noted at the time of suspension;

e. Eligibility Restrictions – Restrictions or prohibitions from some types of participation but allowing participation in other capacities under strict conditions;

f. Permanent Ineligibility – Ineligibility to participate in any capacity in any program, activity, event, or competition sponsored by, organized by, or under the auspices of Hockey Canada for the remainder of the Organizational or Member Participant's life;

g. Other Discretionary Sanctions – Other sanctions may be imposed, including, but not limited to, other loss of privileges, no contact directives, or other restrictions or conditions as deemed necessary or appropriate.

23. The Claimant challenged the proportionality and fairness of the Sanction and claimed it was excessive and disproportionate. He argued the Adjudicator had failed to provide a balanced and individualized sanctioning analysis by failing to fully consider:

a) the length of the Claimant's interim suspension;

b) the rehabilitative and restorative action undertaken by the Claimant;
and

c) the Claimant's age at the time of the events giving rise to the Sanction.

24. The Claimant was placed on an interim suspension in March 2024.
25. The 21 months between when the interim suspension was imposed and when the Sanction was issued served in substance as a form of sanction. By issuing the Sanction, the Claimant was subjected to a further 36 months of ineligibility. Should the Sanction remain in place until December 31, 2028, the Claimant will have been suspended for a total of 57 months.
26. The Decision did not fully consider this additional 21-month interim suspension. The cumulative effect of both the interim suspension and the Sanction exceeds what is necessary to achieve proper disciplinary outcomes.
27. In Party X v Hockey Canada 2025 CASDRC 26 Arbitrator Roberts considered the time the minor players were already suspended in contemplating their sanction, and determined it was more appropriate to impose a probationary period, as opposed to a further sanction of ineligibility.
28. In the spring of 2024 and well prior to the Sanction of December 2025, the Claimant completed some rehabilitative and restorative work with his high school, demonstrating improved maturity and understanding of the psychology and impacts of hazing.
29. In an email dated April 29, 2024, the principal of the Claimant's high school summarized the Claimant's progress;

...the Claimant undertook rehabilitative and restorative action to improve his behaviour, undertaking such efforts before the Complaint was formally filed on May 25, 2024.
30. The Decision did not fully consider this rehabilitative and restorative action.
31. When assessing the respective ages of the individuals involved, the Adjudicator had stated he was "not aware of the specific ages of the Respondent and the affected players" but acknowledged that the events giving rise to the Complaint occurred within a high school context.
32. By acknowledging that the events contemplated in the Decision occurred within the context of high school sport, and that the Claimant was a player and not a coach or other individual that could reasonably be presumed an adult, it was implied that the Complaint involved minors.
33. The Claimant argued that as a minor, the Sanction should emphasize rehabilitation and the long-term impact of the Claimant's participation should have been carefully weighed.

34. Instead, the Sanction reflected a punitive approach (particularly when considered alongside the overall length of the suspension) that was inconsistent with the Claimant's age, stage of development, and prospects for meaningful reform.
35. The Claimant contended the Decision merely acknowledged and did not fairly or proportionately consider these factors when determining the Sanction. As a result, the Sanction was excessive and disproportionate.
36. The Claimant stated that any suggestion he was unable to accept responsibility, as shown by displaying minimal cooperation during the disciplinary process or being evasive in answering the Investigator's questions, must take into account the fact he had acted as he did pursuant to legal advice received at the time. The Claimant acknowledged this explanation was not raised earlier but said this was due to a lack of understanding of the administrative process and its intersection with other legal proceedings at the time.
37. Overall, the Claimant was merely exercising procedural rights based on legal advice received at the time, and this should not be held against him. He also did not refuse to participate in the investigation, despite advice to the contrary.
38. The Claimant has respected and has continued to respect the terms of the Sanction, demonstrating cooperation with the disciplinary process.
39. The Claimant requested:
 - a) the Sanction end on June 30, 2026, and that a probationary period be in effect until December 31, 2028; or, in the alternative,
 - b) the Sanction end on August 31, 2026, and that a probationary period be in effect until December 31, 2028; or in the further alternative,
 - c) such further relief as I deemed just and appropriate.

III. The Respondent's Position

40. The Respondent opposed any reduction in the Sanction.
41. It agreed with the Claimant that the applicable standard of review was that of reasonableness. Subsections 8.5.2(c) and (d) of the SDRCC Code provide that "When assessing a review of a finding of violation, the Safeguarding Panel shall apply the standard of reasonableness" and "When assessing a review of a sanction imposed, the Safeguarding Panel shall determine whether it is unreasonable having regard to the purposes of sanction under UCCMS Sections 7.3 and 7.4."

42. Pursuant to Sections 8.3 and 8.5.2 of the SDRCC Code, this is not a redetermination of the Investigation. It should proceed similarly to a judicial review and in line with the applicable SDRCC Code provisions and case law, as a review of the Decision to ensure that it is a “fair, reasonable and lawful decision.”
43. As per the Supreme Court of Canada in Vavilov, this should be a “robust form of review”. I “must consider the outcome of the administrative decision in light of its underlying rationale in order to ensure that the decision as a whole is transparent, intelligible and justified”. I “must focus on the decision the administrative decision maker actually made, including the justification offered for it, and not on the conclusion [I] would have reached in the administrative decision maker’s place.”
44. The Respondent urged me to adopt the approach of Arbitrator Skratek in Greco v. Hockey Canada 2024 CASDRC 42. Particularly, the Respondent said the Adjudicator in our case had appropriately weighed the relevant factors in making his determination as to the Sanction, and had properly analyzed the possible sanctions set forth in the Policy. The Sanction was justified, and fell within a range of possible and acceptable outcomes.
45. The Respondent said that the Claimant had not satisfied his burden to demonstrate the Adjudicator’s determination of the Sanction was tainted by any serious shortcoming. As a result, I should not interfere.
46. The Respondent agreed with the Claimant that the factors and available sanctions outlined under Section 5 of the Policy are intended to offer a balanced and individualized sanctioning analysis. It claimed however, that such an analysis was reflected in the Decision.
47. The Respondent noted how the Adjudicator’s Decision summarized the factual findings of the Report that were relied on by the Adjudicator. These findings were based on the Investigator’s interviews with the Claimant and seventeen separate witnesses, as well as the Investigator’s review of related evidence provided by the parties and witnesses.
48. The Respondent highlighted the following findings of the Investigator:
 - a) During the investigation process, the Claimant generally appeared evasive and did not cooperate with the Investigator. It was concluded that the Claimant was “not motivated to take responsibility for his actions that resulted in the allegations against him”.
 - b) The Claimant was a veteran player who not only participated in the “assigning” of rookie players to perform tasks for the Team’s veterans, but he also coordinated the process and was himself “assigned” a rookie.

- c) The Claimant participated in spankings given to rookie players who did not perform tasks as requested.
 - d) The Claimant was a “ringleader” or “coordinator” in the spanking of the bare buttocks of rookies at [Tournament A] which was described as an initiation process for rookies. This event involved players being made to take their pants down, lie on a bed in a hotel room, and be spanked by veterans.
 - e) The Claimant was implicated in the purchase of a “sex kit” during [Tournament B], and in the showing of the kit during the bus ride home and taking pictures of it. The Claimant was implicated by multiple player witnesses as participating, and in some cases leading, the hazing of rookies using the sex kit in a Team hotel room. This involved players being assault with components of the sex kit, including a whip/paddle, blindfold, and handcuffs.
 - f) The Claimant was implicated in threatening violence against rookie players.
 - g) The Claimant was implicated in having posted inappropriate images or content relating to his teammates; specifically, he posted a number of sexualized images relating to the spanking incidents as well as images of a sexual nature clearly intended to intimidate the rookie players.
 - h) The Claimant engaged in name-calling of rookie players.
49. Paragraph 10 of the Policy created a presumption that an investigative report was determinative of the facts related to a complaint;
- The presumption will be that the investigation report is determinative of the facts related to the Complaint. This presumption may be rebutted where a Party who does not agree with the findings of the report can demonstrate that there was a significant flaw in the process followed by the investigator or can establish that the report contains conclusions which are not consistent with the facts as found by the investigator. In situations where the presumption is rebutted, the Adjudicative Panel shall determine to what extent the investigation report will be accepted as evidence and to what extent a witness or Party may be required to give fresh evidence at a hearing. The Adjudicative Panel shall take a trauma-informed approach to all such determinations.
50. If the challenging party did not demonstrate one of these two errors, then an adjudicator was bound to accept the investigator’s findings.
51. As noted in paragraph 49 of the Decision, the Adjudicator provided the Claimant the opportunity to comment on or refute the Report, but he declined to do so. As a result, the Adjudicator properly found that the presumptions had not been rebutted, and so was required to accept the facts as determined

by the Investigator in the Report. These are the facts on which the Sanction was properly based.

52. Before assessing and determining possible sanctions, the Adjudicator undertook an independent assessment of the relevant Code of Conduct requirements and the directions outlined in Section 5, paragraph 42 of the Policy, which sets out the factors relevant to determining appropriate sanctions.
53. He then considered each individual factor, applying them to the relevant factual findings. The Adjudicator expressly considered that:
 - a) The combined extent of the violations, including Sexual, Physical and Psychological Maltreatment, pointed to a more serious sanction.
 - b) The age difference between rookie players and senior players in a high school context would be “moderate”, however, there was a well understood power imbalance between older and younger players on a team.
 - c) The Claimant did not appear to take responsibility for his actions (though it was not possible to evaluate any ongoing and/or potential threat to the safety of others effectively on the available information). In any event, the Claimant did not appear to accept responsibility for his actions and cooperated minimally with the disciplinary process.
 - d) The impact of the incidents was significant. The fact that the hazing was pervasive and over the course of an extended period indicated that it was a series of incidents with a fair degree of notoriety.
 - e) Although the Claimant did not create or enact the broader concept of hazing and was “caught up in a culture which could be described as toxic and outdated”, he was both an active participant and appeared to be leading the more malicious activities.
54. The Adjudicator concluded that the “sum total of the incidents in which the [Claimant] participated were significant”, and that the “potential impact of his actions on the recipients of the abuse could be significant and long lasting”.
55. The Respondent emphasized how the ITP had determined as of March 2024, that the Claimant should be prohibited on an interim basis from participating in any Hockey Canada sanctioned activities pending the completion of the ITP process. The ITP had noted that such sanction was “not imposed lightly” and “imposed if there is concern for safety of the Complainant or others and are used sparingly”.
56. The Respondent said that here, this exceptional remedy was deemed appropriate after receiving and considering written submissions from the

Claimant's mother, and in light of "the seriousness of the allegations raised, and the risk of harm to other Hockey Canada participants".

57. The Respondent asserted the Adjudicator had proper regard for both the Claimant's interim suspension and his age, as well as the other factors deemed relevant to sanctioning under Section 5 of the Policy. As a result, the Sanction was not excessive and disproportionate and the Claimant had failed to prove his case for appeal.
58. The Adjudicator expressly acknowledged how the Claimant had already served a period of suspension pursuant to an interim suspension in force since March 2024.
59. The Adjudicator acknowledged that a finding of Sexual Maltreatment of a minor carried a presumptive sanction of permanent ineligibility. However, in view of the factors outlined in Section 5, and in particular the age and developmental stage of the Claimant and the lack of a position of trust, he determined that a less stringent sanction was appropriate.
60. The Adjudicator also specifically acknowledged how the Claimant had already faced other repercussions related to the complaint, noting how he and others affiliated with the Team

have been subject to widespread scorn as a result of the allegations and the repercussions of the hazing incidents at the base of this Complaint. I have taken into account the public nature of the response to the hazing in considering appropriate sanctions against the [Claimant]. This consideration also weighs in favour of less stringent sanctions.

61. In the spring of 2024, the Claimant had participated in a school-based rehabilitative and restorative program. While the progress report was positive, it remained that as of the fall of 2025, the Investigator had found the Claimant to be "evasive" in his answers, and it was "clear from the Report that the [Claimant] was not motivated to take responsibility for his actions that resulted in the allegations against him".
62. As a result, the program undertaken in the spring of 2024 clearly had not had the long-term desired effect of causing the Claimant to take accountability for or understand the full consequences of his behaviour.
63. Presented with direct evidence of the Claimant's demeanour and credibility as of the fall of 2025, immediately before the Decision was rendered, there was no valid reason for the Adjudicator to credit the Claimant for any rehabilitative and restorative actions back in 2024.
64. The Decision therefore reasonably stated how the Claimant did not appear to accept responsibility for his actions, and "cooperated minimally with the disciplinary process".

65. The Claimant did not dispute the Investigator's findings of fact – including the criticisms of the Claimant's demeanour and lack of accountability – despite being invited to do so by the Adjudicator. The Claimant cannot do so now in this process.
66. The Respondent disputed that the suspension (even when considered cumulatively with the interim suspension) exceeds what was necessary to achieve the appropriate disciplinary outcome.
67. It was open to the Adjudicator to order the Claimant be subject to a lifetime ban from participation. The findings against the Claimant were serious, and included Physical, Psychological, and Sexual Maltreatment involving minors. For the reasons detailed in his Decision the Adjudicator exercised discretion and imposed a lesser sanction.
68. The Adjudicator plainly was aware of and had regard for the fact that the Claimant himself was a minor when the conduct occurred. This was a key factor in the Adjudicator's decision not to apply the presumptive sanction of permanent eligibility, which would otherwise have followed a finding of Sexual Maltreatment against minors.
69. In imposing the Sanction he did, the Adjudicator explained how the sanctioning factors including the combined extent of the violations, the apparent power imbalance, the Claimant's failure to accept responsibility for his actions, the impact of the conduct, and the fact that the Claimant was both an active participant and appeared to be leading the more malicious activities, all weighed in favour of a serious sanction (even if not the most serious possible sanction of a lifetime ban).
70. Overall, the nature and duration of the conduct support the conclusion that the Sanction was entirely reasonable and appropriate in the circumstances.

IV. My Analysis

71. The process provides for a fair and thorough investigation with the Investigator determining the facts and providing a Report.
72. The Adjudicator considers the Report along with submissions from the parties. Based on the finding of facts as set out in the Report or as successfully challenged by the parties, and the submissions, the Adjudicator is then required to determine whether a violation has occurred and if so, what sanctions ought to be imposed.
73. The available sanctions in the Policy range in severity from verbal or written warning all the way through to "permanent ineligibility", along with "other discretionary sanctions".

74. Permanent ineligibility means being ineligible to participate in any capacity in any program, activity, event, or competition sponsored by, organized by, or under the auspices of Hockey Canada, for the remainder of the participant's life.
75. Other discretionary sanctions include but are not limited to other loss of privileges, no contact directives, or other restrictions or conditions as deemed necessary or appropriate.
76. Any sanctions imposed are required to be proportionate and reasonable. In determining sanctions, the Adjudicator is required to consider various factors relevant to that determination.
77. The decision of the Adjudicator may be appealed to the SDRCC.
78. According to the Supreme Court of Canada in *Vavilov* this appeal:
 - a) is not to be a redetermination of things and should proceed as would a judicial review; and
 - b) is to be a "reasonableness review", to so ensure the Decision was "fair, reasonable and lawful".
- b) Also according to the Supreme Court of Canada in *Vavilov*:
 - a) a reasonableness review is a "robust" form of review and I must consider the Decision's outcome in light of its underlying rationale to ensure that as a whole, it is "transparent, intelligible and justified"; and
 - b) if the Decision falls within a range of reasonable outcomes, I ought not to disturb it even if I would have arrived at a different conclusion.
79. According to Arbitrator Peterson in *Barch v. Hockey Canada*, the applicable standard of reasonableness does not mean I must agree with the Decision but I must determine whether the outcome and reasons outlined by the Adjudicator are justifiable in the circumstances. An otherwise reasonable outcome cannot stand if reached on an improper basis. The onus lies on the Claimant to show that any shortcomings or flaws are "sufficiently central or significant to render the decision unreasonable."
80. According to Arbitrator Roberts in *Bui v. Tennis Canada*, 2020 CASDRC 11, the Adjudicator must have "considered the facts and governing scheme relevant to the decision as well as any past practices". As such, the Claimant must satisfy me there are "serious shortcomings" in the Adjudicator's decision.

81. According to Arbitrator Roberts in Jackson v. Hockey Canada, this is not a “do over”. It is not to be a reconsideration of the arguments or processes that led to that Decision, simply because the Claimant is dissatisfied.
82. The Claimant challenged the proportionality and fairness of the Sanction and claimed it was excessive and disproportionate. He argued the Adjudicator had failed to provide a balanced and individualized sanctioning analysis by failing to fully consider:
 - a) the length of the Claimant’s interim suspension;
 - b) the rehabilitative and restorative action undertaken by the Claimant; and
 - c) the Claimant’s age at the time of the events giving rise to the Sanction.
83. Respectfully, as noted above and as would be further objectively demonstrated by a more comprehensive review of the 21-page Decision of the Adjudicator, it is clear the Adjudicator did in fact consider all of these factors. He did undertake a thorough and reasonable review of all the considerations cited in the Policy as relevant to sanctioning, and applied them when making his decision. His reasoning and ultimate decision on the Sanction stands up to the required “robust review”, and is transparent, intelligible and justified.
84. I fully understand the Complainant would have preferred the Adjudicator to have applied these factors differently, but that is different than not having considered them. Further, while it is possible a different adjudicator might well have applied them differently the issue is not whether some other person sitting in that role would have come to a different conclusion. Rather, the issue is whether the Decision itself is justifiable as falling within a range of reasonable outcomes. Again, respectfully, it clearly does.
85. By any fair measure the misconduct was very significant. The very fact of the interim suspension confirms this, as it was imposed due to safety considerations. The Sanction imposed was clearly intended to supplement that interim suspension. While lengthy, it still resulted in far less than a permanent prohibition. In the overall context this was a reasonable and balanced response from the perspective of punishment, while all the same allowing a reasonable timeline and opportunity for rehabilitation.
86. This was of course delivered in the context of the Report. As of the fall of 2025 the Investigator had found the Claimant to be “evasive” in his answers. Further, it was “clear from the Report that the [Claimant] was not motivated to take responsibility for his actions that resulted in the allegations against him”.
87. It may well be the Claimant conducted himself in the investigation based upon advice he had received. If so, that was a conscious choice he made that

came with the risk it could lead to these conclusions being fairly drawn. The Claimant again made a conscious choice not to try and rebut in the context of the process leading to the Adjudicator's Decision.

88. The fact that the Claimant has respected and continues to respect the terms of the Sanction, demonstrating cooperation with the disciplinary process, is certainly positive, yet what one would expect.
89. However, taking that into account along with the voluntary and proactive rehabilitative and restorative work in the spring of 2024, coupled with the passage of time (and ongoing opportunity for reflection and education, and the acquisition of insight and maturity) we can hope the Claimant is able to move forward and make a successful return to the sport.
90. For the above reasons, I conclude that the Decision (including the Sanction) is reasonable. I deny the Appeal.
91. I sincerely thank the parties for the thorough, thoughtful, and helpful manner in which they presented their cases.

Signed in Winnipeg, Manitoba, this 20th day of May, 2026.

Jeffrey J. Palamar, Arbitrator