

Case Study

Name: Matt Stevens
Country: England
Position: Prop
Team: Bath



Matt Stevens, the Bath and England prop forward, tested positive for benzoylecgonine and methylecgonine, metabolites of **cocaine**, following a Heineken Cup match against Glasgow Warriors in December 2008.

The talented young prop was capped 32 times for England but was banned for two (2) years by an ERC Judicial Committee after testing positive and later admitting to a sustained period of illicit drug abuse. Stevens was suspended until 18th January 2011.

Stevens accepted full responsibility for his actions and in a sincere statement to the Judicial Committee expressed deep regret for the harm he had caused his friends, family, team-mates and the wider rugby community.

England Team Manager Martin Johnson said, "Matt chose to take a banned substance and will now have to accept the consequences. He has admitted that he has a problem and is seeking help. We support him in that but all rugby players must understand that they are responsible for their actions and that includes lifestyle choices."

About Cocaine

- Cocaine is a stimulant that has been classed as a Prohibited Substance by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) since 1st January 2004.
- Cocaine is only prohibited in-competition (i.e. on match day) however the residue of cocaine can be found in the body several days after its use or administration.
- The sanction for testing positive for cocaine is an automatic two (2) year ban for a first offence and an eight (8) year to life ban for a second offence.

Doping Violation:

- Tested positive to benzoylecgonine and methylecgonine, metabolites of **cocaine**.

Consequences:

- Two (2) year ban from rugby, including playing, training and acting in any official capacity within the sport.

Stevens says:

- "Like any drugs problem you don't know it is happening...If nothing else I hope that I serve as an example of how not to behave and of the utter foolishness of messing with drugs."
- "I am ashamed and deeply sorry for the embarrassment and dismay I have caused the England Team and Management, my team-mates at Bath, and my family and friends...I thought I was bullet-proof, but it is very humbling to know that I'm not."

Headlines:

- *'Bath prop's career in tatters after failing dope test and admitting recreational use.'*
- Daily Telegraph
- *'Ban Costs Stevens £500k.'*
- Daily Mail

