

Russia's Top Olympic Cyclist Caught Doping Before 2012 London Games

April 17, 2012



Denis Galimzyanov

One of Russia's top contenders for an Olympic medal may never make it into the London 2012 competition, as cyclist Denis Galimzyanov was suspended after testing positive for a banned performance-boosting substance.

"It's a bad, very bad surprise," Russian cycling team manager Hans-Michael Holczer told VeloNews. "I have only heard the news 10 minutes ago, but I can confirm that the team is not involved. Whatever he did was his personal choice."

The International Cycling Union said that erythropoietin, or EPO, was found in a urine sample submitted by the cyclist March 22.

EPO works by increasing the number of a person's red blood cells, thereby increasing the ability to carry oxygen throughout the body and boosting athletic performance and endurance.

According to the organization's rules, Galimzyanov has the right to request that a backup "B" sample be analyzed for the substance. If the 25-year-old cyclist fails this test as well, he could face a two-year disqualification from the sport, which would mean he could not participate in this year's Olympic games.

Galimzyanov is racing on the Russian team Katusha for the fifth season, and had been expected to be one of Russia's three entries in the July 28 Olympic road race. He is a specialist in sprinting, and was expected to do well on the course, which favors a sprint finish.

He won the Paris-Brussels race last year and finished 11th in the September road race world championship in Copenhagen.

Russian biathletes Dmitry Yaroshenko, Ekaterina Yurieva and Albina Akhatova are all currently serving two-year bans for the use of EPO as well.

Original url:

<https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2012/04/17/russias-top-olympic-cyclist-caught-doping-before-2012-london-games-a14136>