

# Anti–Doping Report

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CONCACAF BUILDING UP ITS ANTI-DOPING EFFORTS IN COLLABORATION WITH FIFA 24

Anti-doping is one of FIFA's central pillars to ensure that the game of football remains about sporting excellence, passion and team spirit. This annual Anti-Doping Report gives an overview of the respective efforts FIFA has made in the field of anti-doping by providing a quantitative overview of its testing and sharing further information about accompanying anti-doping activities.

In 2023, the anti-doping programme mainly focused on FIFA's flagship competition in women's football, the FIFA Women's World Cup<sup>™</sup>, which saw an unprecedented increase in the number of tests carried out per participating team.

At the same time, FIFA also expanded its testing capacities into the 2023 editions of the FIFA youth tournaments (the FIFA U-17 World Cup<sup>™</sup> and the FIFA U-20 World Cup<sup>™</sup>), by stepping up out-of-competition doping control testing and therefore ensuring a level playing field for the up-and-coming and aspiring footballers.

In a key effort to ensure clean football within FIFA tournaments, FIFA focused on strengthening its collaboration with local anti-doping entities, specifically the National Anti-Doping Organizations (NADOs). During the FIFA Women's World Cup Australia & New Zealand 2023<sup>™</sup>, the FIFA U-17 World Cup Indonesia 2023<sup>™</sup> and the FIFAe Finals 2023 in Saudi Arabia, FIFA's doping control officers conducted testing, with respective NADO officials and doping control officers assisting them in the sample collection process as well as providing support regarding sample transport to the respective laboratories accredited by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). During these collaborations, FIFA made sure to provide educational workshops and webinars on the correct application of the sample collection procedure as well as using the paperless doping control form programme. As a result, FIFA leaves a lasting legacy on the respective host countries' anti-doping landscape, boosting the knowledge and international experience of the NADOs involved. FIFA also assists the six football confederations in the implementation of their anti-doping programmes. A particularly noteworthy example of this assistance is that FIFA signed a new agreement with Concacaf in 2023 to expand its programme. This has already resulted in a tremendous increase in testing numbers within Concacaf competitions compared to 2022.

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FOREWORD

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**Adverse analytical finding**: a report from a WADA-accredited laboratory that establishes the presence of a prohibited substance or method in a collected sample.

Atypical finding: a report from a WADA-accredited laboratory or other WADA-approved laboratory that requires further investigation as provided by the International Standard for Laboratories or related technical documents prior to the determination of an adverse analytical finding.

Blood passport: a blood sample collected from a player that serves to build up a biological passport for a particular player, which allows an anti-doping organisation to monitor the longitudinal effect of the possible use of prohibited substances or methods.

Confederation: a group of member associations that are recognised by FIFA as belonging to the same continent (or assimilable geographical region).

Doping control: all steps and processes involved in checking for prohibited substances or methods, from test distribution planning to the final lodging of an appeal, and everything in between, such as the provision of whereabouts information, sample collection and handling, laboratory analysis, therapeutic use exemptions, results management and hearings.

In-competition: the period commencing at 23:59 on the day before a match in which the player is scheduled to participate through to the end of the match and including the sample collection process relating to it.

Member association: a football association recognised as such by FIFA. A total of 211 member associations are currently affiliated to FIFA.

National Anti-Doping Organizations (NADO): organisations designated, by their country or government, as the primary authority, at national level, for the anti-doping programmes in a country.

Out-of-competition: a period when doping control tests are not in-competition.

DEFINITIONS

Prohibited List: a list published and annually updated by WADA identifying prohibited substances and methods.

Prohibited substance/method: any substance or method that is prohibited in sport as described in the Prohibited List.

**Sample**: any biological material collected for the purposes of doping control that can be analysed by a WADA-accredited laboratory. FIFA collects urine, blood and blood-passport samples during a doping control.

Test: the parts of the doping control process involving test distribution planning, sample collection, sample handling and sample transport to a WADA-accredited laboratory.

Therapeutic use exemption (TUE): a document attesting to a player's condition that requires the use of a prohibited substance or method for valid medical reasons. The player must obtain a TUE in accordance with the rules stipulated in the FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations.

WADA: the World Anti-Doping Agency.

World Anti-Doping Code (WADA Code): a code published by WADA that is the core document harmonising anti-doping policies, rules and regulations within sports organisations and among public authorities around the world. As a signatory to the WADA Code, FIFA must conduct its anti-doping efforts in compliance with it.



## **METHODOLOGY**

This report covers FIFA's anti-doping efforts from 1 January to 31 December

2023.

The underlying data has been extracted from the Anti-Doping Administration and Management System (ADAMS), which has been developed by WADA in order to coordinate worldwide anti-doping activities among all the signatories to the WADA Code.

The FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations establish a shared responsibility between FIFA, its 211 member associations and the six confederations to conduct anti-doping tests. As a consequence, FIFA mainly conducts testing during its own competitions, such as the FIFA Women's World Cup, while the confederations and member associations are required to conduct doping control tests for competitions at confederation or national level respectively. Due to a recent change to the WADA Code, however, the confederations are no longer allowed to operate as a testing authority on their own. Therefore, every doping control test conducted by the confederations automatically has FIFA as a testing authority listed within the relevant data. For the purpose of this report, however, only doping controls from confederations in connection with the FIFA World Cup 26<sup>™</sup> qualifiers have been considered and are represented in the sections below.



### OVERALL TESTS AND COLLECTED SAMPLES



### **TOTAL NUMBER OF TESTS**

From 1 January to 31 December 2023, a total of 1,592 doping control tests were conducted in seven different FIFA competitions<sup>1</sup> (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Total number of tests conducted per competition



<sup>1</sup>For technical reasons regarding the sample collection entities involved, the FIFA Women's World Cup Australia & New Zealand 2023 and all the confederation qualifying tournaments for the competition are seen as two different competitions.



#### Figure 2: Total number of samples by sample type

### TOTAL NUMBER OF SAMPLES

The total number of samples collected as part of those tests was 2,616, consisting of 1,581 urine samples, 475 blood samples, 449 blood-passport samples and 111 dried blood-spot samples. It should be noted that this overview does not take into account the number of partial urine samples that did not meet the testing criteria and, as a result, the respective players who had to be asked to provide an additional urine sample. It does, however, include players who had to be asked to give an additional urine sample in case the first sample did not meet the requirements regarding the specific gravity of the urine (Figure 2).

Figure 3: Distribution of in-competition and out-of-competition tests in 2023



#### **TIMING OF TESTS**

As the WADA Prohibited List sets out different rules for different types of prohibited substances, it is paramount that tests are carried out in the context of anti-doping programmes during a competition (commonly referred to as "in-competition") and during the period leading up to a competition or between matches during a competition ("out-of-competition"). In particular, it should be noted, that due to the new definition in-competition, of short periods of out-of-competition time frames can occur even during a competition. Such periods are, of course, also counted as out-of-competition tests. Of the total 1,592 doping control tests, 970 were conducted in-competition, while 622 were out-of-competition (Figure 3).

Figure 4: Number of tests by gender



### TEST DISTRIBUTION BY GENDER

This reporting period saw seven competitions being played, only one of which was with female players competing (the FIFA Women's World Cup Australia & New Zealand 2023). Nevertheless, because of the high level of testing at the FIFA Women's World Cup Australia & New Zealand 2023, there is a fairly equal distribution of samples collected from male and female players. In total, 860 tests were conducted on female players and 732 on male players (Figure 4).

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#### **MOST-TESTED MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS**

In total, 74 member associations were represented by at least one of their national teams in the competitions taking place during the reporting period (Figure 5). As such, at least one player of each team had to undergo a doping control test. Figure 6 shows the top ten national teams per number of tests conducted. The numbers are influenced by how many teams from the same member association qualified for or participated in FIFA competitions. Tests conducted at the two editions of the FIFA Club World Cup™ (the FIFA Club World Cup Saudi Arabia 2023™ and the FIFA Club World Cup Morocco 2022™) are not counted because players represented their clubs at that competition rather than their national team.

Figure 5: Location of member associations subject to doping controls



Figure 6: Top ten most-tested member associations by number of tests



### ANALYSIS CARRIED OUT BY WADA-ACCREDITED LABORATORIES

For the analysis of samples, FIFA can count on the valuable collaboration of 32 different WADA-accredited laboratories around the world, each one specially equipped to detect the possible presence of prohibited substances or methods. The analysis of the 2,616 samples was carried out by 13 different laboratories (Figure 7).



Figure 7: Total number of samples analysed by WADA-accredited laboratories

#### **TOTAL NUMBER OF ANTI-DOPING RULE VIOLATIONS**

Out of the 2,616 samples collected, only one of them resulted in an adverse analytical finding, which was justified due to the fact that that player was in possession of a valid therapeutic use exemption (TUE) for the detected substance. Furthermore, two additional samples resulted in an atypical finding, which led to further investigation. Following the guidelines put in place by WADA regarding this scenario, the conclusion was reached to not put forward the two atypical findings as adverse analytical findings and to close those cases accordingly.

### FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND 2023<sup>TM</sup>





### **PLAY-OFF TOURNAMENT**

The Play-Off Tournament for the FIFA Women's World Cup Australia & New Zealand 2023 determined the final three qualification spots for the tournament. Held from 18 to 23 February 2023, it was used as a test event for Aotearoa New Zealand in the lead-up to its hosting of the Women's World Cup. The tournament featured ten teams split into three groups, with the winner of each group qualifying for the final tournament.



Figure 8: Distribution of in-competition and out-of-competition tests

Type of test • Out-of-competition • In-competition



In addition to the play-off tournament, some additional friendly matches were scheduled, which had no bearing on qualification.

During that period, a total of 62 doping control tests were conducted. Figure 8 also shows the distribution of in-competition and out-of-competition tests conducted. Figure 9 shows a breakdown of the sample types that were collected.

Figure 9: Distribution of tests by sample type





#### **FINAL TOURNAMENT**

FIFA implemented a robust anti-doping testing programme for the FIFA Women's World Cup Australia & New Zealand 2023, not just during the play-off tournament (highlighted above) but also for the tournament itself. FIFA developed a test distribution plan based on an analysis of doping risks in football. The plan was shared and agreed with WADA and consisted of a dynamic, intelligence-based testing programme. In addition, the participating teams were instructed to share their whereabouts information starting from February 2023 until the end of the tournament. This provided FIFA with their exact location and schedule whenever the teams were together.

The regular tests were complemented by FIFA's use of the athlete biological passport programme in ADAMS, under which all test results, including those from confederations and NADOs collected at the main international football events as well as in national competitions, are gathered in the athlete's passport in ADAMS. The athlete biological passport programme features a haematological module (through blood) and a steroidal module (through urine), which FIFA's Athlete Passport Management Unit, composed of independent experts, continuously reviews to detect potential deviations that may indicate an abuse of performance-enhancing drugs. This applied to all participating players at the FIFA Women's World Cup.



Figure 10: Distribution of tests by sample type

Please note that the points below give an overview only of tests for which FIFA was the testing authority within the meaning of the WADA Code. In addition to FIFA's own testing efforts, each confederation, NADO and the respective football associations were contacted by FIFA to seek their assistance in testing the athletes in the lead-up to the tournament.

The breakdown of tests conducted by FIFA in the lead-up to and during the FIFA Women's World Cup Australia & New Zealand 2023 is as follows:

During the reporting period, a total of 860 tests were conducted (including the numbers from the aforementioned play-off tournament). During all those tests, a total of 849 urine samples, 423 blood samples, 417 blood-passport samples and 63 dried blood-spot samples were collected (Figure 10). Figure 11 shows the ages of those players tested during the reporting period.



Figure 11: Age distribution of tested players





Following the strategy established in FIFA's test distribution plan, the goal was to test every player participating in the FIFA Women's World Cup Australia & New Zealand 2023 at least once. This led to a large number of out-of-competition tests (550 in total), which translates into 64% of the tests done during the out-of-competition period and 36% during the in-competition period (310 in total) (Figure 12). Moreover, the players that reached the semi-finals were, on average, tested three times as of January 2023, and some of them tested up to seven times under the testing authority of FIFA only.

All samples collected were analysed at WADA-accredited laboratories, with most of the analyses – particularly of all the samples collected during the competition – carried out at the laboratory in Sydney/Gadigal, Australia.

Out of all those tests, one urine sample resulted in an adverse analytical finding for a prohibited substance. However, upon an initial review, it was confirmed that this adverse analytical finding was justified by the player's valid TUE for this prohibited substance. The case was therefore not brought forward as a possible anti-doping rule violation and closed accordingly.



### FIFA CLUB WORLD CUP MOROCCO 2022™





The winners of the six continental confederations, as well as the Moroccan league champion (Wydad Casablanca), qualified for the FIFA Club World Cup Morocco 2022. The competition was held in Tangier and Rabat from 1 February to 11 February 2023. Following the routine in-competition procedure described in the FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations, two players per team were selected for doping control to provide urine and blood samples after each of the eight matches. Additionally, two out-of-competition missions were carried out. Altogether, 36 urine samples and eight blood samples were collected and analysed at the WADA-accredited laboratory in Lausanne, Switzerland.

None of the samples resulted in an adverse analytical finding for prohibited substances or methods.



### FIFA U-20 WORLD CUP ARGENTINA 2023™





The FIFA U-20 World Cup Argentina 2023 was held from 20 May to 11 June 2023. Indonesia had originally been set to host the competition but was stripped of the competition on 29 March 2023, which resulted in effectively only six weeks to reorganise the competition. As such, all doping controls were conducted solely with FIFA doping control officers, without being paired and supported by local doping control experts.

During in-competition tests, the players were asked to provide a urine sample after their respective matches. All the players were target selected, amongst other parameters, based on their respective testing history and following further evaluation of their performance during the competition.

As a result, a total of 224 tests were conducted, which yielded a total of 224 urine samples, eight blood samples and eight blood-passport samples. Sixteen of the urine samples were collected out-of-competition, while the remaining 208 were collected after the tournament's matches. The 240 individual samples were all analysed at the WADA-accredited laboratory in Salt Lake City, the USA.

One of the samples resulted in an atypical finding for testosterone. However, a follow-up test and subsequent analysis did not confirm the atypical finding and there was therefore no case brought forward regarding a possible anti-doping rule violation according to the WADA Code.



### **FIFAe FINALS 2023**





The 2023 e-competitions saw three different tournaments, all being staged in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, between 6 and 19 July 2023: the FIFAe World Cup 2023™, the FIFAe Club World Cup 2023™ and the FIFAe Nations Cup 2023™. In each of those tournaments, the FIFA doping control officer in charge would draw eight athletes from the pool of participants to undergo urine sample collection. After that, all further selections were made using targeting methods. In total, 52 doping control tests were conducted, 12 during the FIFAe World Cup 2023, 20 during the FIFAe Club World Cup 2023 and 20 during the FIFAe Nations Cup 2023 (Figure 13). In total, 52 urine samples were collected. None of the collected samples resulted in a positive finding for prohibited substances or methods.

#### Figure 13: Distribution of tests between the three e-tournaments





### FIFA U-17 WORLD CUP INDONESIA 2023<sup>™</sup>





The FIFA U-17 World Cup Indonesia 2023 was held from 10 November to 2 December 2023. For in-competition testing, the players were asked to provide a urine sample immediately after their respective matches. Additionally, from the quarter-finals onwards, dried blood-spot samples were also collected from the selected players. All the players were target selected, amongst others, based on their respective testing history and following evaluation of their performance during the tournament.

All in all, 244 doping control tests were conducted, which yielded a total of 244 urine samples, eight blood samples, eight blood-passport samples and 48 dried blood-spot samples. Thirty-six of the samples were collected out-of-competition, while the remaining 208 were collected after the tournament's matches (Figure 14). The urine and blood samples were all analysed at the WADA-accredited laboratory in Doha, Qatar, while the dried blood-spot samples were shipped to and analysed at the WADA-accredited laboratory in Lausanne, Switzerland (Figure 15).

Figure 14: Distribution of in-competition and out-of-competition tests

Test type 🛛 In-competition 🕒 Out-of-competition



This tournament marked the most stringent out-of-competition testing in the history of the FIFA U-17 World Cup with a total of nine individual out-of-competition doping controls conducted on participating teams. At seven of the nine out-of-competition tests, four target-selected players were asked to provide both a urine and a dried blood-spot sample. Additionally, for the two finalists (Germany and France), four players per team were asked to provide urine and blood samples.

FIFA also cooperated with the Indonesia Anti-Doping Organization (IADO) in the lead-up to and throughout the tournament, with the Indonesian doping control officers receiving comprehensive training and assisting FIFA's doping control officers during all in- and out-of-competition testing. In the lead-up, a two-day doping control officer workshop was conducted, focused on the applicable regulations and best practices regarding the sample collection procedures. Out-of-competition testing immediately followed to ensure that the knowledge gained was put into practice by the Indonesian doping control officers. The workshop and support were very well received. In return, FIFA was able to benefit from the IADO's logistical experience of transporting doping control samples within and out of Indonesia, therefore making the testing programme more efficient.







### FIFA WORLD CUP 26<sup>™</sup> QUALIFIERS





Although still being more than two years away as of this report's release, qualification for the FIFA World Cup 26 has already begun, with the first three matches played on 7 September within CONMEBOL. For this reporting period, qualification matches have only been played in three of the six confederations (the AFC, CONMEBOL and CAF).

Within CONMEBOL, in-competition doping control tests have been carried out at 20 matches so far, resulting in 80 urine samples being collected. Although, due to the fact that CONMEBOL is a delegated third party of FIFA under the World Anti-Doping Code, these tests were conducted with FIFA acting as the testing authority.

Within the AFC qualification, nine in-competition doping control tests have been carried out during the relevant reporting period. For CAF, four in-competition doping control tests have been carried out. In both instances, FIFA provided logistical and administrative support as well as doping control material.

All in all, 132 urine samples have been collected (Figure 16). So far, there have been no adverse analytical findings.





### **FIFA CLUB WORLD CUP** SAUDI ARABIA 2023<sup>™</sup>





The winners of the six continental confederations, as well as the 2022-23 Saudi Pro League champions (Al-Ittihad), gualified for the FIFA Club World Cup Saudi Arabia 2023. The competition was held in Jeddah from 12 to 22 December 2023. Following the routine in-competition procedure described in the FIFA Anti-Doping Regulations, two players per team were selected for doping control after each of the eight matches to provide urine and blood samples.

Additionally, four out-of-competition doping control tests were conducted, which yielded 16 urine samples and 16 blood samples.

Altogether, 44 urine samples, 28 blood samples and 16 blood-passport samples were collected and analysed at the WADA-accredited laboratory in Doha, Qatar (Figure 17).

None of the samples tested positive for prohibited substances or methods.



Figure 17: Distribution of in-competition and out-of-competition tests

28 (63.64%)

### CONCACAF STRENGTHENING ITS ANTI-DOPING EFFORTS IN COLLABORATION WITH FIFA



As part of its ongoing efforts to strengthen its testing presence and expand on its anti-doping activities, FIFA has established a new partnership with Concacaf aimed at increasing the overall doping control tests conducted at various Concacaf competitions as well as providing anti-doping education to the respective member associations.

Overall, the frequency and volume of testing increased in 2023 compared to previous years and can be expected to continue to grow in 2024. Concacaf has implemented a new testing programme at various major international and club tournaments, including the 2022-23 Concacaf Nations League Finals, the 2023 Concacaf Gold Cup and the 2023 Concacaf Central American Cup. The 2023-24 Concacaf Nations League and future competitions will also benefit from this newly established testing presence.

In total, 333 urine samples were collected in 2023 from all competitions (Figure 18) – eight times more than the previous year (Figure 19).



## FURTHER SUPPORT FOR CONFEDERATIONS





FIFA also provided support to its anti-doping counterparts at the AFC, CAF and CONMEBOL. Representatives of the FIFA Anti-Doping Unit organised and participated in accreditation workshops aimed at familiarising doping control personnel with FIFA's paperless doping control system (MODOC), as well as teaching them about the TUE process and doping control testing strategies.

At the CONMEBOL meeting on 24 November 2023, its participants were informed about the latest medical developments in football. FIFA's most recent testing efforts at the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 and the FIFA World Cup 2022<sup>™</sup> were presented, as well as best practices in the TUE application and granting processes.

The CAF workshop, which took place on 5 and 6 December 2023 in Johannesburg, South Africa, was attended by 41 doping control officers.<sup>2</sup> The main focus of this workshop was to provide the doping control officers with the opportunity to gain practical knowledge of the MODOC system while revisiting the intricacies of the sample collection process.

A series of workshops were held in preparation for the AFC Asian Cup Qatar 2023, including the introduction of MODOC at the AFC's flagship tournament. A variety of online webinars were held, where the medical personnel, who acted as on-site doping control officers, gained insight into the inner workings of MODOC. In addition, the collection of dried blood-spot samples was introduced as a tool to increase the chance of ensuring clean football at all AFC tournaments. The support concluded with an on-site workshop in Doha, prior to the tournament in January 2024.<sup>3</sup> In addition to these efforts, MODOC was also thoroughly presented to all the AFC doping control officers during the AFC Medical Conference in Doha (2-6 March 2023).



<sup>2</sup> www.cafonline.com/news/caf-doping-control-officers-workshop-officially-underway-in-johannesburg/. <sup>3</sup> www.the-afc.com/en/about\_afc/legal/sports\_medicine/news/afc\_medical\_officers\_workshop\_new\_innovative\_approach\_and\_ clinical\_skills\_towards\_safety\_of\_players\_asiancup2023.html.

#### **13. FURTHER SUPPORT FOR CONFEDERATIONS**

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