

Clean Sport Initiative FAQ's

Q: What is the AuSable River Canoe Marathon Clean Sport Initiative?

A: The Clean Sport Initiative is a pioneering project in marathon canoe racing being led by the AuSable River Canoe Marathon in collaboration with the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA).

Q: What is the goal of the Clean Sport Initiative?

A: The Clean Sport Initiative has been created for two reasons:

- To protect the integrity of our event and the sport of marathon canoe racing by helping maintain a fair field of play
- To help ensure the health, safety, and well-being of our athletes/competitors

Q: Who/What is the United States Anti-Doping Agency (USADA), and why were they chosen as the Clean Sport Partner?

A: USADA is the national anti-doping organization for Olympic, Paralympic, Pan American, and Parapan American sport in the United States.

USADA was chosen as our partner for the Clean Sport Initiative for several reasons. Most notably, they are widely regarded and respected as the gold standard in the global anti-doping movement. USADA leads efforts to protect clean competition and athlete safety through athlete education, scientific research, testing, and results management.

Q: What is USADA's role in the Clean Sport Initiative?

A: As the administrators of our new anti-doping initiative, USADA will provide education, resources, testing, and results management for the 78th AuSable River Canoe Marathon.

Q: Why has the Clean Sport Initiative been created?

A: The Clean Sport Initiative is a concept that has been on the master strategic plan of AuSable Marathon organizers since the late 80's – early 90's. In fact, during a portion of that time period, onsite substance testing capabilities were in place at the finish line in the event of an official protest due to an accusation of substance use during competition.

The implementation of a more robust clean sport education and testing program has been considered multiple times since then. Many factors, including the cost of implementing clean sport policy and testing, have contributed to the ability (or inability) to implement a more robust clean sport education and testing program until now.

In July of 2025, AuSable Marathon competitors were invited to participate in an anonymous survey gauging their concerns about substance use in canoe racing and inviting them to provide specifics regarding which substances they were concerned about. Survey results demonstrated that implementation of anti-doping education and testing is a priority amongst respondents. As the sport of marathon canoe racing grows and competition becomes more intense, maintaining a level playing field for all competitors – and helping to ensure their safety – is paramount, and non-negotiable.

Additionally, elevating the AuSable Canoe Marathon and the sport of marathon canoe racing to the next level means continually evaluating and improving our practices in the best interests of our athletes, spirit of competition, the paddling community, and our sponsors.

Currently, the ARCM is regarded by many as the premier canoe race in North America. Elevating the event to the level of other major world-class endurance competitions – not just canoe races – means executing at the same level as those other world-class competitions, especially from a clean sport perspective.

Q: Is the ARCM the only canoe race implementing Clean Sport Initiative testing this year?

A: As of today, the ARCM is the only race within the Triple Crown of Canoe Racing that has confirmed it will be testing competitors as a part of the Clean Sport Initiative. However, the other two races in the Triple Crown – the General Clinton Canoe Regatta and Classique de Canots de la Maurice - have formally committed to reciprocally recognizing and enforcing across all three events any sanctions imposed by USADA.

Q: How will testing results impact other races in the Triple Crown circuit? (General Clinton Canoe Regatta and Classique de Canot de la Maurice)

A: The General Clinton Canoe Regatta and Classique de Canots de la Maurice have committed to reciprocally recognizing and enforcing across all three events any sanctions imposed by USADA. For example, this means that if USADA imposes a one-year ban for an athlete as a result of an infraction, that athlete would be banned from participation at all three races of the Triple Crown during the one-year ban.

Q: Will we know ahead of time when testing will be completed?

A: Any selected athletes will receive no-notice testing, with notification taking place immediately before doping control takes place.

Q: Will we know how many individuals or teams are being tested?

A: Selection criteria will not be shared in advance of testing to preserve the integrity of the doping control process.

Q: Who will have access to my testing results, list of medications, shared medical history, etc.?

A: The information we collect from you with your consent is primarily seen by USADA staff and sharing is restricted to what is needed for anti-doping and legal obligations. Please refer to USADA's [Privacy Policy](#) for more information about the information we collect about you and to whom we disclose your information. USADA does not sell your personal information. Members of the AuSable River International Canoe Marathon, Inc. will not be permitted access to any medical records associated with your test.

Q: Do I receive a copy of the paperwork completed during my test session?

A: Yes. Following sample collection, you will receive a copy of the documentation completed during your test session. If your test was conducted using our electronic system, the documentation will be provided via email. If your test was conducted using paper forms, you will receive a carbon copy for your records at the conclusion of the session.

Q: Will I receive notification of results of my test, and how are testing results communicated?

A: You will be notified of your test results. Results are typically communicated via email and are generally available within 6–8 weeks.

Q: What are the potential impacts/sanctions in the event of a positive result?

A: A positive test can have several consequences. You may also face a period where you are not allowed to compete in future events. The length and type of sanction depend on things like the substance

involved and the circumstances of the case (for example, whether it appears to have been intentional or not).

ARCM prize money will be withheld for any athlete that is tested by USADA until final results are received from USADA. Upon receipt of final results, prize money will be issued to athletes by the ARCM committee.

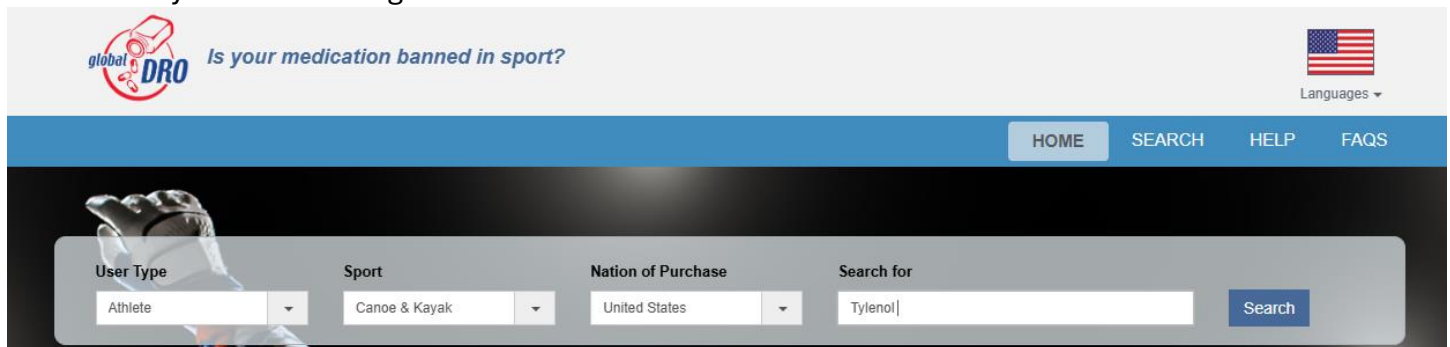
Any athlete found by USADA to have committed an anti-doping violation will have their name and finishing time removed from the official results and prize money will not be issued.

Q: Where can I find out what substances are included in the ‘Prohibited List’?

A: The Prohibited List can be found at: [2025-04-PFL-Prohibited-List.pdf](#)

Additionally, you can go to USADA’s [Global DRO](#) resource at: <https://www.globaldro.com/home/index>

Select United States for Sport Nationality, User Type: Athlete, Sport: Canoe & Kayak, and search for the medication you are checking.



If you have additional questions, please contact:
Drug Reference Line:

Toll-Free Phone: [\(800\) 233-0393](tel:8002330393)
Email: drugreference@USADA.org

TUE-Specific Questions:

Phone: [\(719\) 785-2045](tel:7197852045)
Email: tue@USADA.org

Q: How do I know if a substance is prohibited completely or just during competition?

A: After searching your medication, [Global DRO](#) will display the information on in-competition and out-of-competition prohibited status,



Tylenol 325mg Liquid Gel Capsule

Status According to the WADA Prohibited List

✓
In Competition
Not Prohibited

✓
Out of Competition
Not Prohibited

Q: What if I am taking a medication that is listed on a ‘Prohibited List’?

A: If you are taking a medication that is on the Prohibited List, talk with your doctor and tell them you are subject to anti doping rules. USADA recommends that athletes should compile the notes needed for a TUE in case a retroactive TUE ever becomes necessary in the future.

In this program, most athletes will only need to submit a retroactive TUE if they are tested and a prohibited substance is found in their sample. If you are unsure or have questions, please fill out the TUE Pre-Check Form, found here: [Therapeutic Use Exemptions | U.S. Anti-Doping Agency](#)

Always declare all medications on your doping control form at the time of testing, including any prohibited medications you are taking. If a prohibited medication is found and you do not qualify for a TUE, it can still lead to a potential anti doping rule violation.

Q: Are ARCM athletes really being held to the same substance use standards and testing guidelines as Olympians?

A: No. ARCM athletes are not being held to the same standards as Olympic, WADA-code compliant athletes and/or programs.

The ARCM’s anti-doping arrangement with USADA utilizes the Premier Sport Policy and PFL Prohibited List. Notably, the Premier Sport policy treats THC differently than the World Anti-Doping Code, although it is still prohibited in-competition.

Q: Can’t the ARCM just request that the USADA make changes to the ‘Prohibited List’ and adopt an ARCM-specific set of testing guidelines?

A: USADA prohibited substance lists are guided first and foremost by athlete health and safety. While an alternative list could theoretically be developed, it would require a complex and resource-intensive process. At present, every client tested by USADA either uses the WADA code/list or the Premier Sport policy/list. There are currently no other entities using any type of à-la-carte Prohibited List through USADA.

Q: Why are there some substances on the ‘Prohibited List’ that are legal for use in the state of Michigan?

A: There are many substances on the “Prohibited List” – both prescription and non-prescription – that are legal for use in the state of Michigan. As previously stated, part of the focus of the Clean Sport Initiative is ensuring the health and safety of our competitors. Some substances – both legal and non-legal, both prescription and non-prescription - can both pose health risks and provide an unfair performance-enhancing effect, especially in the context of ARCM competition, which involves non-stop overnight paddling for 14–19 hours, overnight navigation through darkness and deep water, and significant fatigue.

Q: Why are cannabinoids on the ‘Prohibited List’?

A: Cannabinoids are prohibited in-competition under the Premier Sport policies because they are treated in line with international anti-doping standards, which consider three main factors when deciding whether to ban a substance: 1) its potential to enhance performance, 2) the health risks it may pose to athletes, and 3) whether its use is consistent with the spirit of sport.

Reviews of marijuana and other cannabinoids have highlighted concerns around athlete health and safety, as well as their fit with the spirit of sport. In light of those concerns, cannabinoids remain prohibited in-competition under the Premier Sport policies.

Cannabidiol (CBD) is treated differently. CBD itself is not prohibited in-competition, but many CBD products can contain other cannabinoids that are prohibited, so athletes who choose to use CBD still face a risk of an adverse test if their product is contaminated or inaccurately labeled.

Q: What happens when a cannabinoid is found in my urine under the Premier Sports anti-doping rules?

A: Any cannabinoid finding is reviewed under Article 7.1.9 of the Premier Sports Anti-Doping Policy as an Atypical Finding. That review determines whether USADA has evidence that the Athlete intentionally used the prohibited substance for performance-enhancing purposes, in which case USADA would then pursue the result as a potential anti-doping rule violation.

Q: How long before a competition do I need to stop using marijuana or cannabinoids?

A: The time it takes for marijuana or cannabinoids from some type of cannabis or hemp product to be completely eliminated from the body depends on many factors, including the dosage/strength used, how often you use it, your weight, your overall metabolism, liver function, general health, and whether you are on other medications. Many cannabinoids accumulate in fat, and for chronic users, they can take weeks or months to clear completely from the body. An athlete who uses marijuana or other cannabinoids should work with their doctor to understand how long it may take for these substances to leave their system and to make a plan that keeps them within both health and anti-doping requirements.

Q: Can I get a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE) for marijuana?

A: It may be possible to receive a TUE for medical marijuana or other cannabinoid medications when they are medically necessary and meet the strict criteria used in the Premier Sport anti-doping program. These criteria include having a clear, well-documented diagnosis, no reasonable permitted alternative, and use that fits within the applicable TUE rules and standards.

If you believe you may need a TUE for marijuana or another cannabinoid medication, you should work with your doctor to gather supporting medical documentation and then follow the TUE application process described in the event’s anti-doping materials. All applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and are not automatically approved.

In this program, most athletes will only need to submit a retroactive TUE if they are tested and a prohibited substance is found in their sample, as long as they meet the medical and policy requirements. If you are unsure or have questions, please fill out the [TUE Pre-Check Form](#).

Q: I am not competing for first place or even the top ten or top twenty; am I still subject to Clean Sport Testing?

A: Potentially, yes.

Q: I do not wish to be subjected to clean sport testing. What are my options?

A: For the 78th AuSable River Canoe Marathon in 2026, all registered athletes will be subject to being part of the testing field for clean sport. If you participate in the ARCM and are selected for clean sport testing but elect to decline doing so, it will result in disqualification of the individual and the team.

Q: Will ARCM athletes incur any costs or fees associated with clean sport testing?

A: No. ARCM competitors will not incur any costs or fees associated with clean sport testing, regardless of whether they are selected for testing or not.

Q: I have a concern that a competitor may be using a substance that is on the prohibited list. What should I do?

A: If you have a concern about an ARCM athlete using a substance on the prohibited list, visit www.USADA.org/playclean for more information. If you wish to report that concern, you can:

Text: 87232

Call: 877.752.9253

Email: playclean@usada.org

Traditional mail: USADA 5555 Tech Center Drive, Suite 200, Colorado Springs, CO 80919

For additional ARCM Clean Sport Resources, please refer to the ARCM Clean Sport website at: <https://www.ausablecanoemarathon.org/paddlers/clean-sport/>

Additional USADA Premier Sports Resource Card: [USADA-Premier-Sports-Education-Resource-Card.pdf](#)