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Whitlock appeal thrown out

British Olympics chiefs have rejected an appeal by banned pole vaulter Janine Whitlock to be allowed to take part in the Athens Games this summer.

Whitlock tested positive for the anabolic steroid methandienone prior to the 2002 Commonwealth Games and is suspended from competition until July.

A British Olympic Association bylaw rules her out of taking part in any Olympic Games.

But a BOA independent appeals panel has rejected her appeal against the rule.

BOA chief executive Simon Clegg said: "As always, cases before the BOA's appeals panel are considered on the merits of the individual circumstances.

"In this instance the panel unanimously decided against allowing Janine Whitlock's appeal.

"There is no doubt that Janine has considerable athletic potential but this decision means she will not be able to be selected for Team GB in Athens or beyond."

However Whitlock, who has always insisted a sports drink was spiked, still retains a possible glimmer of hope in the shape of shot putter Carl Myerscough.

Myerscough, who is also serving a life ban from the Olympics after serving a two-year suspension for steroid abuse, is considering an appeal at the Court of Arbitration in Sport and possibly the High Court.

It is understood Myerscough's lawyers will argue the shot putter is being unfairly punished as his international rivals are allowed to return to Olympic competition after serving bans.

Should he succeed in overturning the BOA's ban, that could open the way for Whitlock to compete in Athens.

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