EyeDetect + Polygraph Exonerate Olympian of Doping Accusation

"EJ completely won back his reputation, and EyeDetect played a key role in this by confirming he was 100% innocent."

James Michael Lafferty
Olympic Coach

CEO, Fine Hygienic Holding

BACKGROUND

Filipino Ernest John "EJ" Uy Obiena (born 1995) is the world's No. 2 ranked pole vaulter (2023). He made his Olympic debut at the 2020 Tokyo games and qualified for the 2024 Paris Olympics.

EJ currently holds the Philippine national pole vaulting record (which he has broken numerous times) and the Asian record, being to date the only Asian in history to clear the hallowed 6.0 meters mark.

While training in Dubai in October 2023 with his Olympic coach, James Michael Lafferty, EJ's reputation was suddenly in question after an unfounded doping accusation posted on social media by Anais Lavillenie, the wife of former world record holder and French Olympic gold medalist Renaud Lavillenie.

CHALLENGE

Despite EJ passing 34 anti-doping tests conducted by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), with 11 of those tests occurring in 2023, Mrs. Lavillenie posted in October on the Vaulter Magazine Facebook page, "Obiena doped…" She later deleted this post, but the damage was done. Numerous news outlets published the story, which included EJ vehemently stating Mrs. Lavillenie's accusation was 100% false.

"I didn't do anything to enhance my performance illegally," said EJ in a virtual press conference. The Obiena camp moved quickly to refute Anais' claim and prove EJ innocent.

EYEDETECT IMPLEMENTED

The Lavillenies had no idea what was to happen next. Coach Lafferty is also the CEO of Fine Hygienic Holding, a Converus customer since 2020 who uses EyeDetect lie detection technology for screening job candidates and for internal investigations. "We decided to fight it hard. And so, we first went on the attack," said Lafferty. Here's what they did:

- Released the WADA test results (to the extent allowed). WADA is a highly respected, international independent agency leading a collaborative worldwide movement for doping-free sport.
- Had the company's polygraph expert Hester du Plessis administer a polygraph and EyeDetect test to EJ, who easily passed both tests. This was the first time an athlete had taken both tests. NOTE: Using two independent lie detection methods provides an outcome confidence of up to 99% (that you have the correct answer).
- Challenged Mrs. Lavillenie to take an EyeDetect test — which was refused.
- Secured a Paris attorney specializing in defamation and libel. This attorney said they had an "open-and-shut case." Plus, EyeDetect and polygraph are both admissible as supporting evidence in French courts.

RESULTS

After reading the reports of the evidence presented at a press conference, Mrs. Lavillenie issued an apology letter, but it was incomplete. It failed to fully absolve EJ. Nor did it exonerate his technical coach, Vitaly Petrov. To counter Mrs. Lavillenie's delay tactics in issuing the proper apology, additional pressure was applied via the press, which now reported on pending legal actions. Within hours, the Obiena camp received a satisfactory apology letter (see right).

Thanks to EyeDetect and polygraph validating the 34 WADA anti-doping test results, EJ was exonerated of this false allegation.

"I knew he was innocent all along," said Lafferty.

EJ added, "I accept this. She admits she was wrong and she admits what she did was wrong. This fact, alongside all other facts, makes it clear. I am a 100% clean athlete. This for me closes this matter."

Anais LAVILLENIE
France

Tuesday 24 October 2023, France

Dear Ernest John OBIENA,

I would like to offer publicly my sincere apologies for writing untruthful words on Vaulter Magazine's Facebook post about you and your coach Vitaly Petrov.

I made a stupid amalgam that I should never have done and written, I admit, and that's why I deleted the comment after the fact but the damage was done. I am sincerely sorry.

I am aware that I have disrespected you and your coach and I deeply regret my act.

Thank you for understanding my apologies for my unacceptable behavior. Good luck for you training.

Sincerely,

Anais LAVILLENIE

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