

Zwift Performance Verification Board Decision



Case Number:	0109
Name:	Lizi Duncombe

Event:	Zwift Racing League – Women’s Qualifier #2 (rider provisional finish position: 4)
Date:	17 September 2020

Details:	
<p>1. In the Zwift Performance Verification Board decision “0098 – Duncombe”, dated 20th September, the Board decided to annul the result of the rider in the above race due to a breach of the Technical requirements for the event. In summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) As well as recording power data from their trainer via Zwift, the event required riders to use a crank or pedal based powermeter as a secondary source of power data, recorded on a separate device such as their cycle computer. This is known as “dual-recording”.b) The rider did not fully dual-record their race – the secondary powermeter recording they submitted to ZADA only contained 90 seconds of data from their warm-up.c) The Board judged that this may have just been an inadvertent mistake by the rider, but nonetheless without an independent recording of the rider’s efforts it was not possible to verify their performance in the race and their result was therefore annulled.	
<p>2. Shortly after the rider submitted their first dual-recording file to ZADA, they uploaded a different dual-recording FIT file to ZwiftPower. This second new file showed a dual-recording of the race labelled as coming from the rider’s Garmin and of their Assioma pedal based powermeter.</p>	
<p>3. Zwift emailed the rider to enquire about this second file and received the following response from them:</p> <p><i>“The [first dual-recording file] was the warmup file which saved before before I started the garmin again. When I charged my garmin after the race it then uploaded the race file which I sent a couple of hours later which managed to get the whole race before the battery died”</i></p> <p>Explicitly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) The rider claimed that the original file sent to ZADA was not from the race (and by implication, should not have been used by ZADA as the basis for attempting to verify their performance, and subsequent annulment of their result).b) The rider claimed that this new file was from the race and recorded by their Garmin.	
<p>4. As noted in point (2) above, initial examination of this new second dual-recording FIT file showed it contained a “Device Type” label of “Garmin Edge 820”, and power values approximately 1% lower than the power values recorded by Zwift of the trainer – this is consistent with what might normally be expected from a dual-recording.</p>	
<p>5. Further examination of this new second dual-recording FIT file however showed a number of anomalies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) It contained a “Version ID” label of “562”. This number is given to FIT files produced by Zwift. FIT files produced by a Garmin Edge 820 use a value of “1250”, and examination of multiple other dual-recording files from the rider from different races show they all contain values of “1250”.b) It contained a “Device Timestamp” label of “6th Jan 2015 14:08”. This value is given to FIT files produced by Zwift. FIT files produced by a Garmin Edge 820 use a value of the time of the recording, and examination of multiple other dual-recording files from the rider from different races show they all contain values of the current time of the recording.	

- c) It contained GPS co-ordinates for the ride. This would be expected for a Zwift generated FIT file, but a Garmin recording a pedal based powermeter would have no knowledge of the location in Zwift of the rider's virtual avatar and would therefore be impossible for it to produce.
 - d) The power values contained in the file were all different from the Zwift recorded FIT file by the same percentage. For example, at every point in time when the Zwift recording recorded a value of 297 Watts, the second FIT file sent by the rider showed exactly 294 Watts. The correlation between the power recorded by Zwift from the trainer, and the power recorded by the Garmin from the pedals was mathematically perfect (i.e. Correlation Co-efficient: $R=1.00$). In any real-life scenario, for the trainer and powermeter to be perfectly correlated across every single data point from rest to maximal sprint power, is impossible.
6. In order to give the rider the opportunity to put their side of the case forward, Zwift shared all the points above with them, and they were asked for their response. The rider gave multiple replies over several days including:
- a) On Monday 21 Sept at 13:05 BST, the rider stated that the second recording was actually from their Garmin but was of their trainer not their pedal powermeter.
 - => This however is inconsistent with the evidence in points (5a), (5b), (5c) and (5d) above, all of which would only occur in a Zwift generated file, not a Garmin generated one.
 - b) On Monday 21 Sept at 20:25 BST, the rider stated that they were a professional athlete and had nothing to gain from cheating, and that they did not have the technical capability to do so.
 - => This however is inconsistent with the high profile broadcast nature of the event, and the fact that there are many very simple to use online tools that can edit the labels and power values in FIT files without requiring any technical knowledge.
 - c) On Thursday 24 Sept at 22:57 BST, the rider stated that the file must have become corrupted, and offered their "100% guarantee that this was not an attempt of me to cheat".
 - => This however is inconsistent with the fact that the file showed no evidence of corruption, only that very specific values in the files differed in a very specific way that made it appear that a file that can only have been generated by Zwift, had instead been generated by a Garmin.
7. Notably, at no point did the rider admit any fault, show any remorse or offer any plausible explanation as to how a file that had been generated by Zwift, came to be marked as being generated by a "Garmin Edge 820", or have power data values that exactly differed from the Zwift file by a fixed percentage.

Decision:

- The Performance Verification Board consider that it is beyond reasonable doubt that the rider did not correctly dual-record their ride, and therefore that the original judgement of annulling the result of the race for breaching the Technical requirements of the event should stand.
- The Board further consider that it is beyond reasonable doubt that the FIT file provided by the rider as evidence of them having dual-recorded their ride was edited after the event.
- The Board consider that it is beyond reasonable doubt that this was a deliberate action to fabricate evidence to try to overturn the original decision by Zwift to annul the rider's result in the race.
- Pursuant to Appendix B of the Zwift Cycling Esports Rules and Regulations, the Board has therefore decided that a Tier 3 sanction ("Bringing the sport into disrepute" – "Fabrication or modification of any data") shall be applied, and the rider shall receive a six month suspension from Zwift Cycling Esports events.

This suspension shall be back-dated to the point when the edited file was submitted to Zwift, and therefore run from 20 September 2020 to 19 March 2021 inclusive.

Signature:	
Name:	Dr George Gilbert Chair, Zwift Cycling Esports Commission
Date:	9 October 2020