

Greek sprinter Katerina Thanou rejects IOC hearing offer

Katerina Thanou will not take up the International Olympic Committee's offer to speak for herself at a hearing into whether she should be allowed to compete in Beijing.

The IOC has claimed the right to decide on the Greek sprinter's eligibility following its decision to bar her from the Athens Games when she and her training partner missed a drug test.



Troubled times: Greek sprinter Katerina Thanou may be banned from competing in Beijing after missing a routine drugs test *Photo: AP*

The IOC's disciplinary commission has invited Thanou to address them in person before a recommendation on action is made to the executive committee.

Charges involve "disrepute and prejudice caused to the Olympic Movement" and also over the issues surrounding regarding an ongoing perjury trial in Greece over her and Kenteris' involvement in the alleged motorcycle accident that prevented them from meeting the drug testers in Athens.

The controversy overshadowed the opening of the 2004 Olympics and the court case over the motorbike accident has been further delayed to next year.

Thanou is still in Greece with the rest of the athletics squad and her lawyer, Nikos Kollias said the IOC "appears to have a personal vendetta" against her.

He said: "Thanou will not attend

the committee hearing and neither will her legal team. We will send a memo instead.

"We are being asked to answer charges that are vague. They should at least tell us which exact rules she is accused of breaking.

"Being called to a hearing without being able to prepare counter-arguments is contrary to all legal procedure.

"The IOC has no jurisdiction to judge the court procedure in Greece. There is no conviction there, and in

all likelihood she will be acquitted."

After the Athens Games, Thanou, 33, and Kenteris were banned for two years by the International Association of Athletics Federation for missing three out-of-competition drug tests.

The IOC has still to decide if Thanou should be given the 100 metres gold medal from the Sydney Olympics, where she was second to the now banned Marion Jones.

By Tom Knight



Greek holiday sex attack warning

Greece has the highest number of rapes reported by British tourists, according to figures obtained by Newsbeat.

In 2007, British officials dealt with a higher number of sexual assaults per head than anywhere in the world with Brit on Brit rape the biggest problem.

They're worried many go unreported and it could be "the tip of the iceberg".

The Foreign Office says the figures are so high because of big resorts that attract thousands of young people out for the clubs and the cheap booze.

Eighteen-year-old Helen from north London is out in Zante on the Greek Island of Zakynthos for the first time.

She said: "The drinks are so cheap. You get into the clubs for free and you buy one drink and get three shots free.

"It's great, it doesn't cost hardly anything to go out." Laganas, like Malia in Crete, Cavos in Corfu and other Greek resorts, is packed with bars and clubs.

It's all about clubbing, getting a good tan and letting yourself go.

Helen's friend Tori is out here too.

She said: "Boys are out here for a laugh, aren't they? "They love the girls and they're out here for sex." Helen adds: "But the girls come out here for the sex too, they're just as bad as the boys."

Dangerous behaviour

Dr Renesis, from the state hospital in Zante, has seen similar pictures for real.

It's part of his job to examine women who claim they've been raped.

Safety leaflets and posters are being handed out in Greek clubs

He said: "All through the night we work with drunk people and most of them are British.

"Drink kills people, rapes people and destroys the face of England in Greece.

"We don't like rape and we don't like our tourists to be raped."

He puts the problem down to binge drinking, saying 90% of the women he sees are British.

"The girls never remember because they're too drunk," he added.

"I ask them how many boys were involved and they don't remember.

"I ask them if they've had sex and they don't remember. I ask them if they used a condom and they don't remember."

Bolsover man found 'murdered' on Greek holiday island



A BOLSOVER man who disappeared two months ago has been found dead on a mountain on Kos - sparking a murder inquiry on the Greek holiday island.

Sixty-year-old Stuart Crane went missing just days before he was due to fly home from the holiday isle.

Greek police say they have

launched a murder inquiry because his tickets, luggage and passport were found at his hotel - without the £1,500 he had on him.

It is also been reported that he vanished after ringing home in a confused state saying he had fallen, banged his head and lost his memory.

Mirror.co.uk reported on Wednesday that the father-of-three failed to return to his hotel the next day, leaving his luggage and passport behind.

His son Tony told mirror.co.uk: "I knew someone had done something dreadful to him when he disappeared.

"People like dad don't simply vanish. Climbing mountains and hiking weren't his thing. He would never have gone off into the hills on his own."

Police are awaiting the results of a post mortem examination.

Skeleton of Canaanite soldier found

A BRITISH Museum team has found the skeleton of a Canaanite soldier that dates back to 1800 BC in the southern Lebanese port city of Sidon, the mission's supervisor said. Claude Serhal, whose team has worked in Sidon for the past decade, said the whole skeleton was found, carrying a spear in one hand. Small items of pottery, the oldest of their kind found in Lebanon, were also unearthed.

The pottery have been linked to items found on the Greek island of Crete, he said. The Sidon excavations, going down several layers, show the different civilisations which have passed through Lebanon, making it one of the most important archaeological sites in the Middle East, said Mr Serhal.