



INTERPOL

INTEGRITY IN SPORT

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Photos International Olympic Committee

INVESTIGATIONS

Greece

Greek Football Giants Olympiacos Threatened with Relegation

A new scandal is brewing in Greek football. Following allegations of match-fixing Olympiacos are threatened with relegation and Olympiacos' owner Evangelos Marinakis may face a life-long ban from the sport.

Altogether 15 individuals and the two clubs, Olympiacos and Atromitos, are accused according to the provisions of Article 27 of the Code of Conduct of the Hellenic Football Federation (EPO) about "fixing the result of a match for betting purposes".

The allegations by the investigative department of EPO's Ethics Committee are now forwarded to the judicial department of the same committee.

The allegations are centered on a 2015 match between Olympiacos and Atromitos which the Piraeus club won 2-1.

Among the persons accused are Evangelos Marinakis, owner of Olympiacos as well as Nottingham Forest, Giorgos Spanos who owns Atromitos, former EPO president Giorgos Sarris and vice-president Aristidis Stathopoulos, three more former EPO officials, six former referees and refereeing officials and former Atromitos manager Ricardo Sa Pinto.

If found guilty, Marinakis will have to relinquish control not only of Olympiacos but also of Nottingham Forest.

Source: 26 April 2020, Greek Reporter

Football

<https://greece.greekreporter.com/2020/04/26/greek-football-giants-olympiacos-threatened-with-relegation/>



SENTENCES/SANCTIONS

Spain

Prison for nine of the eleven accused in the 'Osasuna Case'

The Second Section of the Provincial Court of Navarra has notified the ruling of the so-called "Osasuna Case". The first conviction for the crime of sports corruption in Spain sentencing 9 of the eleven accused to between 8 years and 8 months and one year in prison of the Os Osasuna case'. The most serious sentence is that imposed on former manager Ángel Vizcay, on whom he imposes a total of 8 years and 8 months in prison. The court acquits Diego Maquiritain, former manager of the Osasuna Foundation, and footballer Jordi Figueras. The sentence, which can be appealed to the Supreme Court and which has been handed down in less than two months since the trial ended, unanimously condemns Ángel María Vizcay, Miguel Archanco, Juan Antonio Pascual, Jesús Peralta, Sancho Bandrés, Cristina Valencia, Albert Nolla, Antonio Amaya and Xabier Torres and acquits Diego Antonio Maquiritain and Jordi Figueras.

The penalties imposed for crimes of misappropriation, falsehood in a commercial document, accounting falsehood and sports corruption range from the total of 8 years to 8 months in prison imposed on Ángel M. Vizcay Ventura and that of one year in prison to which the two footballers, Antonio Amaya and Xabier Torres, are sentenced for the crime of sports corruption.

The most serious sentence is that imposed on former manager Ángel Vizcay whom the Second Section of the Provincial Court condemns:

- For a continuous crime of misappropriation to 4 years and three months in prison and 12 months of fine with a daily fee of forty euros.
- For two crimes of falsehood in a commercial document in ideal competition with a crime of false accounting to the penalties of 2 years in prison and 9 months of fine with a daily fee of forty euros for each of them.
- To a prison term of 5 months, in addition to eleven months of special disqualification to practice as manager or similar in a sports association and a fine of three hundred twenty-five thousand euros for a crime of sports corruption.

The sentence totals 8 years and 8 months in prison.

The sentence condemns former President Miguel Archanco Taberna and former director Jesús Peralta Gracia:

- A sentence of three years and eight months in prison and a nine-month fine with a daily fee of forty euros for a continued crime of misappropriation.
- A sentence of two years in prison and a nine-month fine with a daily fee of forty euros for a crime of falsehood in a commercial document in ideal competition with a crime of accounting falsehood.
- A penalty of one year in prison and two years of disqualification from exercising managerial or similar position in any sports association and a fine of nine hundred thousand euros for a crime of sports corruption.

Total penalties with 6 years and 8 months.

The then vice president of the board of directors, Juan Antonio Pascual Leache is imposed:

- A sentence of three years and six months in prison and a fine of nine months with a daily fee of thirty euros for a continued crime of misappropriation.
- A sentence of two years in prison and a nine-month fine with a daily fee of thirty euros for a crime of falsehood in a commercial document in ideal competition with a crime of accounting falsehood.
- A penalty of one year in prison, two years of disqualification from exercising managerial or similar position in any sports association, in addition to a fine of nine hundred thousand euros for a crime of sports corruption.

The total sentence is 6 years and 6 months.

The Hearing acquits the treasurer of the board of directors, Sancho Bandrés of the crime of sports corruption and condemns him for misappropriation and falsehood by imposing on him:

- A sentence of three years and six months in prison and a fine of nine months with a daily fee of forty euros for a continued crime of misappropriation.

– A sentence of two years in prison and a nine-month fine with a daily fee of forty euros for a crime of falsehood in a commercial document in ideal competition with a crime of accounting falsehood.

The prison sentence is 5 years and 6 months.

To the real estate agents Cristina Valencia and Albert Nolla each of them is sentenced to nine months in prison and a six-month fine with a daily fee of thirty euros for a crime of falsification in a commercial document.

Lastly, the two former Real Betis players, Antonio Amaya and Xabier Torres, are condemned for a crime of sports corruption, each sentenced to one year in prison and two years of disqualification from the activity of professional soccer and nine hundred thousand euros fine.

The sentence also imposes on the convicted the obligation to indemnify Club Atlético Osasuna in the amount of 2,340,000 euros amount to which the irregular outflow of funds amounts during the 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 seasons of the club, to which is added in the case of Messrs. Archanco and Peralta an amount of 1,000 euros and 2,600.80 euros respectively for the improperly received per diems and 600,000 euros in the case of Mr. Vizcay for a loan with an unknown destination returned from the club's accounts. Likewise, Mr. Vizcay must indemnify Mr. Archanco in the amount of 5,000 euros for the moral damage derived from the falsification of his signature.

The three magistrates of the Second Section of the Provincial Court impose greater penalties on the then manager of the club Ángel María Vizcay, by including in his sentence for the continued crime of misappropriation the loan of 600,000 that he obtained from an individual. They also consider him solely responsible for the crime of falsehood committed in the 2013/2014 season with the preparation of the false contract with the Portuguese entity Flefield and the creation of three simulated invoices to balance the mismatch of the aforementioned season. The sentence also proves that the manager Mr. Vizcay falsified said contract, stating in it a signature that appeared to be that of the former president Mr. Archanco.

However, they conclude that it is appropriate to benefit Mr. Vizcay with respect to the crime of sports corruption, applying the analog mitigating confession in this sentence. The three magistrates consider that the statement made by the then manager of the club before the Professional Football League and maintained in the act of trial has been decisive in order to investigate the facts and support the conviction for this crime. Based on this, they reduce their sentence for this crime to the aforementioned of five months in prison and eleven months of disqualification.

The penalty imposed on the former president of the Board of Directors, Miguel. A. Archanco and former director Jesús Peralta for the continued crime of misappropriation includes the improper perception of diets by both.

It is the first sentence issued in Spain that condemns the crime of sports corruption. The Audience understands that It has been proven that the convicts, members at that time of the Board of Directors, agreed to give priority to the former Real Betis players, Srs. Amaya and Torres in order to alter the results of the sports competition, paying a total of 650,000 euros to encourage their victory against Real Valladolid on matchday 37 of the 2013/2014 season to win the match against Osasuna on matchday 38.

Source: 24 April 2020, Sports finding

Football

<https://sportsfinding.com/prison-for-nine-of-the-eleven-accused-in-the-osasuna-case/31873/>

Tennis Integrity Unit

French tennis official Anthony Pravettoni suspended and fined for betting on tennis offences

French tennis official Anthony Pravettoni has been suspended for eight months and fined \$5,000 for betting on tennis offences. Three months of the suspension and \$4,500 of the fine are suspended on condition that he commits no further breaches of the Tennis Anti-Corruption Program (TACP).

On that basis he will serve a five month suspension, effective from 9 April 2020, and pay a fine of \$500.

A Tennis Integrity Unit investigation found that between 24th February and 27th August 2019, Mr Pravettoni placed 42 bets on professional tennis matches, none of which he officiated in.

Independent Anti-Corruption Hearing Officer Ian Mill QC considered the case and imposed the suspension and fine. As a result Mr Pravettoni is prohibited from officiating in, or attending, any sanctioned event organised or recognised by the governing bodies of the sport for a period of five months effective from 9th April 2020.

All betting on tennis by match officials and other Covered Persons is strictly prohibited, as per Section D.1.a of the TACP, which states:

“No Covered Person shall, directly or indirectly, wager, conspire to wager or attempt to wager on the outcome or any other aspect of any Event or any other tennis competition.”

Source: 14 April 2020, Tennis Integrity Unit

Tennis

GOOD PRACTICES

Malta

The Malta Gaming Authority signs Data Sharing Agreement with the International Cricket Council

The Malta Gaming Authority (MGA) has recently established a data-sharing agreement with the International Cricket Council (ICC). The ICC is the international governing body of cricket and is made up of over 100 national governing bodies from around the world. The ICC governs and administrates the sport, stages ICC global events, oversees playing regulations and through the Integrity Unit coordinates action against corruption and match fixing. This agreement will facilitate the sharing of information between the two parties, in fulfilment of the requirements at law.

The MGA's Sports Integrity Manager, Antonio Zerafa stated that, "This data sharing agreement with the ICC represents the Authority's on-going commitment of combatting match-fixing and other types of manipulation in sports. In fact, this agreement will allow the MGA and the ICC to share crucial data related to the process of detecting, preventing and investigating activities related to manipulation of sports competitions."

Source: George Miller, 20 April 2020, European Gaming Cricket

<https://europeangaming.eu/portal/malta/2020/04/20/68879/the-malta-gaming-authority-signs-data-sharing-agreement-with-the-international-cricket-council/>



INTERPOL

INTEGRITY IN SPORT

Tennis Integrity Unit, Tennis Integrity Supervisory Board

Tennis Integrity Supervisory Board reaches decisions on Return to Tennis campaign, naming of new integrity organisation and anti-doping integration

The Tennis Integrity Supervisory Board (Board) met by video conference on 31 March 2020 to review and progress the ongoing work of the Tennis Integrity Unit (TIU).

The Board was briefed on reporting and intelligence that indicated a heightened level of corrupt activity at the entry levels of professional tennis in early 2020, prior to the suspension of all tennis in March. This was evidenced by an increase in match alerts for the first quarter of the year (38 v 21 in 2019) and confidential information received from tennis and betting sources.

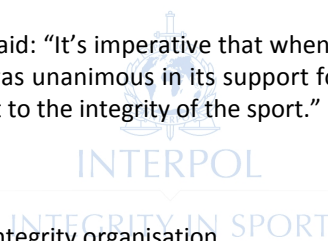
Return to Tennis campaign

In recognition of the unique circumstances created by the Coronavirus pandemic, the Board approved a proposal by TIU management to develop a cost effective Return to Tennis education and awareness campaign. This will inform and support players, officials and tournament personnel about the potential integrity risks posed.

This is in addition to the ongoing monitoring, investigation and enforcement of the sport's anti-corruption code by TIU investigators and intelligence specialists.

All governing bodies supported this pre-emptive approach and will collaborate with the TIU on the project, with immediate effect.

Jennie Price, the independent Chair of the Board, said: "It's imperative that when tennis is able to resume, everyone involved is aware of the potential integrity risks. The Board was unanimous in its support for a Return to Tennis campaign to inform and protect the players, and to guard against the threat to the integrity of the sport."



Progress on creation of a new independent tennis integrity organisation

Work towards establishing a new independent tennis integrity organisation with its own legal identity is well advanced. The Board resolved that the new company will be called the International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) and will become operational from 1st January 2021. At that time, the ITIA will replace the current TIU, with staff becoming employees of the new company.

Integration of the Tennis Anti-Doping Programme

The Board decided that plans to integrate the Tennis Anti-Doping Programme (TADP) within the new ITIA from January 2021 should continue, but on a delayed timeline. This decision recognises that, in the prevailing extreme circumstances, the overriding need is for full focus to be maintained on the anti-corruption programme, until the tennis calendar is fully restored. In the meantime, planning for the transition of the TADP into the ITIA will continue.

Source: 16 April 2020, Tennis Integrity Unit

Tennis

<https://elinkeu.clickdimensions.com/m/1/84431288/p1-b20107-d1fbbe6534e246aa90cea6466b507e24/1/84/1fcf5a2e-fa23-463a-8712-996faf5e098c>

ODDS AND ENDS

Australia

"Me ofrecieron 100.000 dólares por perder en primera ronda del Open de Australia 2009"

Sergiy Stakhovsky, ex número 31 del ranking, eleva las acusaciones de amaños hasta la categoría de los Grand Slams. Stakhovsky, durante un partido ante Melzer, en Wimbledon 2013. REUTERS

"En el Open de Australia de 2009 me ofrecieron 100.000 dólares por perder ante Arnaud Clement en primera ronda". La revelación de Sergiy Stakhovsky sacudió a este lunes a un tenis paralizado por la pandemia. Y es que el ucraniano, verdugo de Roger Federer en Wimbledon 2013, eleva a la categoría de los Grand Slams una lacra que hasta ahora sólo parecía salpicar a los torneos Challengers y Futures.

"La oferta me la hicieron llegar dos personas que se hacían llamar inversores", reveló el ex número 31 del ranking ATP, en declaraciones a una radio ucraniana. Aquel 20 de enero de 2009, tras casi tres horas y media de tenis, Clement remontó (6-3, 2-6, 4-6, 6-2, 6-1) para apuntarse el triunfo.

Más de una década después, Stakhovsky aún guarda un amargo recuerdo de aquel funesto episodio. "Si me hubiese encontrado con esa gente cuando salí de la pista les habría golpeado con la raqueta", rememora el ucraniano, que nunca suele refugiarse en las medias tintas ante los micrófonos.

"¿Podéis proteger a mi familia?"

Según su testimonio, nada más acabar aquel partido en Melbourne Park curso una reclamación en la Unidad de Integridad del Tenis (TIU), donde le pidieron que identificase a los implicados. "Entonces les tuve que parar los pies y les dije: '¿Estáis listos para proteger a mi familia?'. Porque puede que aquellos dos personajes sólo fueran peones, pero quienes estuvieran por encima serían más peligrosos". Según Stakhovsky, la respuesta de la TIU fue que "no podían garantizarme nada".

Por aquel entonces, Stakhovsky reunía las condiciones idóneas para ser atrapado por las redes de amaños. Con 23 años recién cumplidos, sólo había disputado un partido de Grand Slam (derrota ante David Ferrer en Wimbledon 2008) y podía verse tentado por esos 100.000 dólares, una cantidad tres veces superior al premio por alcanzar la segunda ronda (31.000 dólares).

Source: 14 April 2020, El Mundo

Tennis

<https://www.elmundo.es/deportes/tenis/2020/04/13/5e9495ba21efa0bf098b4627.html>



MATCH FIXING

ECB

Cricket match-fixers actively targeting players during lockdown

layers around the world have been warned to remain vigilant of approaches from match-fixers despite coronavirus having put the sport on hold.

The last elite-level professional match took place behind closed doors on 15 March in the Pakistan Super League, before its semi-finals and final were postponed, and since then players globally have been in lockdown waiting for a resumption.

Such a lull in on-field activity might suggest a drop-off in potential fixing approaches from the criminal underworld but Alex Marshall, head of the International Cricket Council's anti-corruption unit in Dubai, insists this does not necessarily follow.

"Covid-19 may have put a temporary stop on the playing of international and domestic cricket around the world but the corrupters are still active," Marshall said.

"As a result, our work with members, players, player associations and agents continues. We are seeing known corrupters use this time, when players are on social media more than ever, to connect with them and try to build a relationship that they can exploit at a later date.

"We have reached out to our members, players and their wider networks to highlight this issue and ensure they all continue to be aware of the dangers of approaches and do not let their guard down while there is no cricket being played."

As well as players spending more time interacting with fans on social media at present, Marshall's team are mindful the drop in income could make some of the less well-paid professionals more vulnerable.

James Pyemont, the ECB's head of integrity, added: "There will always be someone to make something out of a crisis and view it as an opportunity. We have to be confident we can withstand that pressure and we're confident our players will do the right thing. The time is now to show this is a robust system."

April would typically be a quiet month for the ICC's anti-corruption team, with no international cricket staged and the IPL – now suspended indefinitely – policed by India's in-house anti-corruption unit since last year.

The investigative work continues, however, and a number of cases are expected to be progressed in the coming weeks. These are believed to include the three United Arab Emirates players – Mohammed Naveed, Qadeer Ahmed and Shaiman Anwar – who were charged with a combined 13 counts of breaching anti-corruption rules last October.

Marshall revealed in January that his team was looking into 50 cases of potential wrongdoing in the sport – including intelligence gathered during last year's World Cup in the UK – and sifts through around 1,000 pieces of evidence a year.

Shakib Al Hasan is the most high-profile cricketer serving a ban under the ICC's anti-corruption code, with the Bangladesh captain accepting three charges of failing to report approaches from Deepak Aggarwal, a suspected bookmaker, last October.

A veteran of 338 international appearances, Shakib engaged in Whatsapp conversations with Aggarwal before matches in the Bangladesh Premier League, an international tri-series and the IPL between 2017 and 2018, but denied passing on inside information.

A two-year ban, with 12 months of it suspended, was the result, meaning Shakib is free to resume his playing career on 29 October.

Source: 18 April 2020, *The Guardian*

Cricket

https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2020/apr/18/match-fixers-targeting-cricketers-lockdown-icc-warning?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

International Cricket Council anti-corruption unit (ACU)**Match-fixers 'still very much alive'**

HE Covid-19 pandemic may have wiped out all sporting events worldwide but it doesn't mean match-fixers are eradicated.

International Cricket Council anti-corruption unit (ACU) senior investigator Colin Tennant disclosed: "The pandemic has not halted the activities of fixers who are very imaginative.

"They can easily adapt their strategy to ensure things are in place when everything gets back to normal," said Tennant during an Anti-Corruption Webinar course involving 67 representatives of the Malaysian Cricket Association (MCA) on Wednesday.

He said match-fixers have been known to use social media to reach out to players and entice them into acts of corruption.

"We have seen fixers using contacts on WhatsApp and Facebook to try to put people more at ease.

"We have reports about sponsorship deals or opportunities to play in a particular league.

"They will pay for you to travel and meet them, all expenses paid.

"This should set off alarm bells," added Tennant, who spoke about the methods match-fixers use to entice players into their traps.

National coach Bilal Asad said: "Corruption is not an accident. It is the result of human arrogance, greed and indifference to those who are its victims. It is a crime.

"This briefing regarding the three Rs — Recognise, Reject and Report — was helpful.

"We need to be careful when dealing with strangers who approach us.

"Rejecting offers or gifts is the best way to keep away from trouble and reporting it is the only way to clean the sport."

National women's team captain D. Winifred Anne said: "The session taught us how to react if someone or an organisation tries to approach us and offer expensive gifts or money.

"We understand that we have to report to the management if approached by fixers," she said.

Source: Jugjet Singh, 24 April 2020, New Straits Times

Cricket

<https://www.nst.com.my/sports/others/2020/04/587034/match-fixers-still-very-much-alive>



Pakistan**PCB looks at legislation to criminalise match-fixing menace**

Lahore, April 15 (IANS) The Pakistan Cricket Board has asked the government to frame a law that would criminalise match-fixing and spot-fixing in cricket.

"I have already spoken to the government about this because other cricket playing nations like Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka have enacted laws that make match-fixing a criminal offence," PCB chairman Ehsan Mani said in a podcast shared on their social media handles.

The PCB had closely followed the procedure adopted by the Sri Lankan board, Mani said, while legislating its law against match fixers.

"We are studying their procedure closely and we also want corruption acts in cricket to be considered a criminal act," he said.

But until and unless this is put in place, the PCB would continue to follow the existing ICC Anti-Corruption Code which allows players to return to cricket again after completing a ban period and rehabilitation process.

"I will not talk about individuals but right now players who have completed bans and undergone rehab have the right to play again and it applies to everyone," he said.

Recently, former Pakistan captain and decorated commentator Ramiz Raja has said tainted players like left-arm pacer Mohammed Amir should not be allowed to play.

Pakistan batting great Javed Miandad had also said that cricketers involved in match-fixing should be hanged.

Recently, left-handed opener Sharjeel was offered another chance to play for the national team after completing a two and a half year ban for spot-fixing in the Pakistan Super League.

Source: 15 April 2020, Outlook

Cricket

<https://www.outlookindia.com/newscroll/pcb-looks-at-legislation-to-criminalise-matchfixing-menace/1803011>



Sweden

Dickson Etuhu Banned from Swedish Football for Five Years for Match-Fixing Attempt

Dickson Etuhu, the 37-year old Nigerian professional football player who in November 2019 was found guilty for match-fixing by a Swedish court, has been banned from football in Sweden for 5 years.

The former Manchester City player was flagged by a fellow team member for attempting to influence the outcome of a game between AIK, the team Etuhu joined as a free agent in 2014, and IFK Gothenburg in May 2017.

The Approach

After AIK's first choice goalkeeper was out of the game with an injury, reserve goalkeeper, Canadian-born Kyriakos Stamatopoulos, was approached by Etuhu and another player, former IFK Rössjöholm Alban Jusufi, and offered SEK2 million /£160,000/ to underperform during the game. Instead, the former Canada keeper reported the bribery attempt and the match got flagged and postponed.

The Sentence

Etuhu denied any involvement but a lengthy investigation followed and in November last year the court found the player guilty of attempting a match-fixing. The Nigerian international was fined and ordered to serve a period of probation avoiding being sentenced to prison time. His lawyers announced they would appeal the decision before a supreme court.

The Ban

The Swedish Football Association /SVFF/ has now taken action and served both Dickson Etuhu and Alban Jusufi with 5-year bans from any official football-related activities in the country.

"The Disciplinary Board has decided to suspend two people because they have deliberately tried to persuade a football player to underperform in one of the team's matches. Through their actions, these people have violated the anti-match fixing regulations, and they are therefore suspended for five years. The ban includes training, competing or performing any assignments in any sports."

Official SVFF Statement

The SVFF disciplinary board elected to impose the 5-year ban having in mind two factors. First, it related to the top football division in the country and stirred huge media attention. Second, the perpetration was only an attempt to match-fixing and did not deserve the maximum possible 10-year ban penalty.

Player Career

Etuhu, who had a lengthy career in England with Preston, Norwich, Sunderland, Fulham, and Blackburn, before moving to Sweden in 2014, switched clubs shortly after the bribery attempt became public and investigated, to IFK Rössjöholm.

Dickson Etuhu was also involved in another incident during his career in England, this time on the pitch. In 2005, during his third season with Preston, the Nigerian player's erratic form resulted into him moving to Norwich midway through the season, on loan.

Having no clause to prevent him from playing against the parent club, his first match for the Canaries turned out to be at Carrow Road against Preston. During that game, Etuhu went clumsily into a challenge and broke the leg of Adam Nowland, an injury that put an end to the footballing career of the new Preston addition in midfield, the area where earlier Etuhu lost his starting place in the Lilywhites squad.

Match-fixing is an issue that has been tormenting bookmakers in Sweden for years, with the latest from gaming and sports betting company Svenska Spel, asking for sharper regulatory measures to help eliminate such practices.

Source: Simon Deloit, 19 April 2020, *Gambling News Football*

<https://www.gamblingnews.com/news/dickson-etuhu-banned-from-swedish-football-for-five-years-for-match-fixing-attempt/>

United Kingdom

Moses Swaibu: 'I realised I was someone who could make a difference'

Moses Swaibu remembers the first time he was offered a bribe like it was yesterday. A tall and elegant central defender who had come through Crystal Palace's youth system, the 19-year-old was taking the first steps of his senior career in League Two with Lincoln when he and two teammates were summoned to another player's hotel room at close to midnight on an away trip.

"He put money in front of us and said: 'I want you guys to lose and that's how much I'm willing to pay,'" Swaibu says. "It was a wad of cash worth €60,000 but we all said we weren't interested. The next day no one who had been in the room said anything on our morning walk and it turns out we were all on the bench anyway. That was the last I heard.

"It was my introduction to that world," he adds, more than 10 years on. "I will always remember seeing that amount of money in front of me and knowing I couldn't say anything because of loyalty to my teammates and him being the type of person that he was ... I'd been playing street football just a few years ago so I was thinking to myself: 'Is this normal?' There was no form of education to help you. I was put in a situation with a teammate who I trusted and believed in."

In 2015 Swaibu served four months of a 16-month sentence after being found guilty of conspiracy to commit bribery following an investigation into match-fixing and an alleged betting syndicate. After being released by Lincoln in January 2011, he dropped out of the league and admits he has only himself to blame for the way things unravelled. He was playing for Bromley during the period of his offences.

In prison Swaibu formulated an idea to run workshops to ensure other young players do not make the same mistakes. Since 2019 he has used these to advise young players on how to deal with potential pitfalls, including betting, match-fixing and spot-fixing.

"Being in the cell for 23 hours a day made me realise how important it is to be humble but also how privileged I had been. It was probably one of the best lessons that could have ever happened to me. In my childhood I had a tough and difficult upbringing and I was involved in things I'm not proud of. When I came out I thought to myself: 'How am I going to be a better person for myself, for my family and obviously for my kids?'

"I realised I was someone who could make a difference, so I started writing down ideas for when I came out to see how we could stop this happening to other young players.

"Within two days of my release I was contacted by Gordon Taylor and Simon Barker from the PFA and when I told them my idea they said: 'We're here to help.' It took a while – you have to realise if someone is in my position and has been convicted then other people are going to be like: 'Woah, hold on a minute.' But I've always been determined to make this happen."

The workshops – instigated jointly by the PFA, Football Association and Premier League as part of the FA's integrity programme – are compulsory for top-flight academies. Swaibu initially featured in a short film telling his story but now he attends and answers questions.

"Players that engage in our sessions are made well aware of the rules and that is why the change has been so significant. In my day there wasn't any education around – who could I turn to? Not my teammates or even my manager.

"I didn't realise the impact it had until I got feedback from some of the players. I was surprised at some of the questions they were asking given they were at such a big club. They were asking what were the right things to do in certain situations and asking me about my career and why it went wrong.

"They were really engaged. I may not have played top-level football but I can relate to them because we all have come from the streets and hearing what I have been through can help them to make the right decisions."

Swaibu is also heavily involved in his local community having established a mentorship programme designed to provide disadvantaged young players with support and training equipment. He has not played since November 2013 when he was with non-league Whitehawk, after a lifetime FA ban. "I was done with football anyway. At 24 I'd had enough."

Enthusiastic and passionate about his new calling, Swaibu is willing to talk openly about the mistakes he has made. At Lincoln he achieved notoriety after being arrested for stealing a cooked chicken from Tesco before being arrested at the same store for allegedly stealing a newspaper. The charges were dropped but Swaibu believes he was targeted by police because of some of the company he had been keeping.

"A close friend was arrested for some other charges and the police thought I was involved in that. There was one time when we were about to play an FA Cup tie and I was called by the chairman and told my house was going to be raided by the police. I'm happy to admit my life off the pitch wasn't as professional as it should have been."

Swaibu believes his departure from Lincoln began his rapid decline. He met two men posing as agents when he joined Bromley. "That was when the whole conspiracy started. The people who were claiming to be agents were actually match-fixers. We knew

that, they knew that and we all got arrested. It was naivety. But if I hadn't seen what I saw when I was 19 I would have just ignored it.

"There is no real form of governance in non-league football and it will always be a much bigger threat. If you have clubs that pay wages under the table or sometimes struggle to pay salaries then if you are offered the chance to make some quick money you are more likely to do it.

"Only 1% of players at academies make it to the Football League and the other 99% trickle down through the system so there is an obvious danger some could be targeted. Football is a bubble and if you've been wrapped up in that since a young age then you are going to think you are owed specific things, even if you drop out of the league."

Source: Ed Aarons, 16 April 2020, The Guardian

Football

<https://www.theguardian.com/football/2020/apr/16/moses-swaibu-make-a-difference>



INTERPOL

INTEGRITY IN SPORT

United States

Sportsbooks struggling, Vegas embraces esports betting despite match-fixing concerns

Before covid-19, casinos in Las Vegas would have laughed at the prospect of an esports-centric betting operation. But now, searching for alternative events amid the sports-less coronavirus pandemic, Las Vegas has warmed to the idea.

This week, a month after traditional sports across the country shut down due to the virus, the Nevada Gaming Control Board (GCB) approved bets on four different esports series, adding to the slowly growing betting options for competitive gaming. Adding betting options is critically important to casinos in the current climate given their floors have been closed due to the virus, shuttering table games and forcing gambling to app and online formats.

As the regulatory government body that oversees America's gambling capital, the Nevada GCB serves as a barometer for much of the sports betting world. After first approving bets on Counter-Strike: Global Offensive's ESL Pro League Season 11 in North America and Germany, the board then opened up an ESL Dota 2 event and eNASCAR. This week, the biggest esports leagues in the country opened up as well. The League of Legends Championship Series in North America, the League of Legends European Championship and Overwatch League are now available for gambling in Las Vegas, as is the Call of Duty League, which was approved Thursday. While mainstream sports fans may not be familiar with those leagues, they're probably more likely to hear about their upcoming competitions than some of the other live sporting events being considered by sports books.

"In terms of what sports are left, there's Russian table tennis and Japanese sumo wrestling," said Joe Asher, the CEO of William Hill, a leading sportsbook. "We were talking about Nicaraguan baseball, there's some soccer in Belarus."

Compared to the gambling jackpot that is March Madness, sumo wrestling and Belarusian soccer are couch change. Esports, with a steadily growing audience, particularly in the age 18-34 demographic, offers an intriguing alternative, but casinos are proceeding with caution.

The slow growth for esports betting interest in Vegas has to do both with the approval process for adding offerings to sports books and the uncertainty from casinos and oddsmakers around what is still a fledgling field, where machines necessarily filter the actions of players before results play out on screen.

"Each state has to approve an esports wager," said Seth Schorr, CEO of Fifth Street Gaming and Chairman of the Downtown Grand Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. "Nobody can just approve all esports. There would be cheating, there would be no integrity. Right now you have to get approval for each match, which is pretty cumbersome, so the next phase in esports betting will be regulators getting comfortable."

Schorr has been pushing esports betting forward in Vegas for five years. He worked with Asher to get William Hill into ESL's Counter Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO) back in 2017, but esports were never a primary focus of the sportsbook. Now, William Hill is looking into esports more — even if it remains hesitant to take big bets.

Alex Ovechkin and Wayne Gretzky to square off in NHL 20 for coronavirus relief

"The amount we will allow people to bet on esports is much smaller [than traditional sports]," Asher said. "We wouldn't think anything of someone betting a million bucks on the Super Bowl. For esports, we won't go anywhere close to that. We take smaller stakes to help guard against any issues with the integrity of the event. When one individual sitting at home can determine the outcome of the event, that does limit the amount of money sportsbooks are willing to accept."

For an example on how stringent those caps could be, Asher said the maximum amount William Hill would accept on a bet for the winner of the ESL Pro League: North America in CS:GO would be "a few thousand dollars."

Esports bookmaking? Globally, it's already a billion-dollar gambling industry

Some oddsmakers believe even that relatively small amount could expose casinos to significant liability, however. Someone who knows how the esports system works can still stretch betting limit restrictions into a decent payday, according to Billy "Krackman" Krakomberger, a professional sports handicapper and founder of Krackwins, highlighted in Showtime's "Action" documentary series.

"Hypothetically, I could bet \$1,000, and then I come back and bet another \$1,000," Krakomberger claimed. "If I were to know the outcome, or if I know someone is dumping, I can get down five or six grand on one event just at one sportsbook."

A recent scandal has also brought attention back to match fixing — an issue with which esports grappled in its earlier days.

In China, Wang “WeiYan” Xiang, a player for the Rogue Warriors in the League of Legends (LoL) Pro League, was exposed for match fixing. Images leaked of Xiang talking about match fixing in two March matches in which Xiang’s team won one and lost the other.

A few days after the second match, Riot Games, the developer of League of Legends and operator of its esports leagues, suspended Xiang for two years and fined his team 3 million RMB (\$425,000).

How the League of Legends World Championship became the Super Bowl of esports

“Match fixing is definitely an issue [in China],” said Rahul Sood, the CEO and founder of Unikrn, an esports betting company backed by Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban, among other investors. “But match fixing is not an issue in League of Legends as a whole. This was just a strange situation and the punishment wasn’t even high enough. It should have been a lifetime suspension.”

Esports’ history with match fixing is long. In 2010, multiple players for the game StarCraft: Brood War were found tied to a match fixing scheme that ended in a trial. Five years later, another scandal hit StarCraft II. This time, Lee “Life” Seung Hyun, a previous world champion, was sentenced to 18 months in jail for match fixing. Outside of South Korean StarCraft, leading CS:GO team IBUYPOWER was embroiled in its own match fixing scandal for throwing a game against NetGearGuides.

“Match fixing has historically been more prominent in esports than sports,” said Rod “Slasher” Breslau, a longtime esports journalist. “But that was mostly because, back then, those players weren’t making much money. When you aren’t making a full-time amount of money, and definitely not tens of millions like sports athletes, you are more tempted to go down this dark road and have match fixing.”

Being a professional esports player has only recently become a truly lucrative profession. The average LCS salary is now above \$300,000 before prize pools, according to Chris Greeley, commissioner of the LCS. With prizes for Fortnite and Dota 2 eclipsing \$30 million for one event and teams reportedly paying upward of \$40 million for spots in the Overwatch League, the money in esports has increased substantially. That includes player contracts, leaving less incentives to fix matches.

In addition, the industry is better at monitoring suspicious bets. The scandals in 2015 in part led to the creation of the Esports Integrity Coalition in 2015, now the Esports Integrity Commission (ESIC). The commission oversees almost every major third-party esports tournament organizer.

Riot’s esports plans for Valorant won’t mirror League of Legends — at least for now

“The ESIC proactively monitors the global betting on ESL matches and investigates any unusual or suspicious betting and has the power to prosecute alleged breaches of the anti-integrity code,” said Ian Smith, the commissioner of the ESIC.

For the Nevada GCB to approve esports bets, the agency must be comfortable with the degree of fair play. The ESIC and GCB have had an agreement in place since 2017 and the recent approval of Riot Games’s and Activision Blizzard’s esports leagues acknowledges solid integrity standards as well. While the regulated sportsbooks that dominate Las Vegas are still figuring out esports strategies, esports figures to be the only action in town for a while, until traditional sports can return.

Source: Mitch Reames, 17 April 2020, *The Washington Post*

eSports

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/video-games/esports/2020/04/17/vegas-esports-betting/>

CORRUPTION

India

Indian players aware, quick to report: BCCI anti-corruption chief

The threat of online corrupt approaches does not cause much anxiety to BCCI's head of Anti Corruption Unit (ACU) Ajit Singh, who says Indian players are well aware of the modus operandi of fixers and are quick to report anything suspect.

The ICC ACU head Alex Marshall, in an interview to 'The Guardian', said that prolonged lockdown and players using various social media platform could lead to corrupt approaches being made and people need to tread carefully. Singh said BCCI ACU is in control.

"...we have made our players aware about the way people approach you and modus operandi through social media. We have told them 'look this is how they (potential fixers and bookies) would approach you'," the veteran IPS officer told PTI in an interaction.

"(They will) try and behave like a fan and then try to meet you through someone who may be your acquaintance," he added.

"Somehow these elements try and touch base with players. Most of them (India players), whenever it happens, they do report to us that I have got a contact."

Most of the top players, with millions of followers, have been very active online with Q and A sessions on Twitter, interactive chats on Instagram and Facebook live.

So, is the BCCI's ACU team tracking the online content?

"Whatever can be tracked online, we do that. But obviously the physical verification part of going out and checking locations is out of question in times of a lockdown," he spoke about practical problems.

"But if something comes to our notice, it automatically goes into our database and once lockdown is over, we will verify those if the need arises."

Singh said the easiest aspect of tracking social media content is that it doesn't require too much manpower.

"A few men who know their jobs can do it pretty well," the former DGP of Rajasthan said.

But Singh said that, in his two year stint, all current India players have been honest and upright, very aware about their responsibilities.

"We are not adversaries of players. The players and ACU are one team. It's the people who are trying to corrupt the games, they are the ones we need to track down."

He said that both tracking social media and physical verification of corrupt approaches has its own set of challenges.

"Those who were trying to corrupt the players with physical presence and those using fake IDs on social media handles, converge at some point," he said.

"Either it's the same person with a fake ID who tries to approach the player or uses someone on his behalf. So there is a pattern of convergence. One has to follow both the lines," he added.

Singh said even former players have approached the ACU when they have found something unusual.

"There have been things coming from current players and also retired players. There has been information coming from them. Things that they doubted, which look suspicious.

"Any information is useful. Even if it's a false alarm, it raises the awareness level of the players as well as the skills of the team investigating it," the retired top cop said.

There are some structural plans for the BCCI's ACU which will only materialise once normalcy returns after the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Every zone will have a zonal head as it had been said earlier. A few zones don't have zonal heads, so we will fill those posts," he said.

Source: 19 April 2020, The Week Cricket

<https://www.theweek.in/news/sports/2020/04/19/indian-players-aware-quick-to-report-bcci-anti-corruption-chief.html>