

INVESTIGATIONS

India

ICC set to identify kingpin of global fixing

Closing in on a mastermind

A mastermind is on the verge of being outed as investigators are questioning a known fixer in Delhi, Marshall told Telegraph Sport. According to the general manager, '10 to 12 people working as bookies in India can be linked to most cases of fixing in cricket.

Uva league in Punjab

The Uva T20 league, shown to be played in Sri Lanka but conducted at a ground in Sawara village in Mohali, which was first reported by The Indian Express, was mentioned by Marshall to highlight how corruptors are innovating. Ravinder Dandiwal, who allegedly also fixed tennis matches across the world, was arrested by the Punjab police for a purported link to the Uva T20 League. During the pandemic, corruptors turned their attention to players whose livelihood had been affected, including those who play club-level cricket in Europe, the report said.

Name and shame policy

Known corruptors will have their name, mugshot and aliases uploaded on the ICC website, a move which will identify corruptors faster. The ICC will also use article 2.4.9, under which known bookies/fixers or others trying to make a fast buck can be termed as 'excluded persons'. Once players are made aware of these 'excluded persons', they must steer clear of them.

Burner phones

Marshall compared use of the very latest technology by bookies/fixers to avoid being tracked. "There is an increase in using Bitcoin or other cryptocurrencies for transferring payments," Marshall said. He also mentions apps on which messages disappear and also burner phones (cheap phones with prepaid minutes of usage and bought without a contract) being used to avoid detection.

Fixers as 'team owners'

Recently this paper reported that the Indian anti-corruption unit chief Ajit Singh had asked the BCCI to find a way to curb corruption in franchise-based T20 leagues being run by state associations.

Owners with no clear source of income and chargesheets filed against owners, players and coaches is what Singh had flagged. Marshall elaborated on how fixers were the real owners and that they propped up others to be the face of the team. "In franchise leagues... people put up as owners but behind the scenes secretly they (fixers) are the real owners putting in the money..."

Source: 5 March 2021, The Indian Express

Cricket

<https://indianexpress.com/article/sports/cricket/icc-set-to-identify-kingpin-of-global-fixing-7214687/>

San Marino

Calcioscommesse: "Sei tesserati rinviati a giudizio"

In 2017, several players and even some managers of the San Marino football championship ended up under investigation. The doubts emerged after a series of anomalous bets that had flowed through the betting sites on a match between the teams San Giovanni and Virtus. The sports justice has already run its course by issuing disciplinary measures against various athletes and managers; now the criminal investigation has also reached its point. One of the suspects has been acquitted on the charges and his position dismissed, six others (players and managers) were sent to trial by the Law Commissioner. The date of the trial has still to be fixed

Source: 2 March 2021, RTV

Football

<https://www.sanmarinortv.sm/sport/calcio-sammarinese-c15/calcioscommesse-sei-tesserati-rinviati-a-giudizio-a201816>

SENTENCES/SANCTIONS

Nigeria

Two Nigerian tennis players banned for life for match fixing offences

The International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) has today confirmed that two Nigerian tennis players, Abiodun Oyegoke and Bukola Popoola have been banned for life from the sport, following an investigation into match fixing at a tournament in 2019.

The case was ruled on by Anti-Corruption Hearing Officer Charles Hollander QC and the sanctions mean that both are permanently prohibited from playing in or attending any tennis event authorised or sanctioned by the governing bodies of tennis.

Ms Oyegoke, who had a highest ITF singles ranking of 986 and Ms Popoola who was unranked as a player and at the tournament as a purported coach, were both found guilty of two breaches of the 2019 Tennis Anti-Corruption Program rules:

D.1.e. "No Covered Person shall, directly or indirectly, solicit, facilitate, or conspire to solicit or facilitate any Player to not use his or her best efforts in any Event."

D.1.k. "No Covered Person shall, directly or indirectly, solicit, facilitate, or conspire to solicit or facilitate any other person to contrive, attempt to contrive or conspire to contrive the outcome or any other aspect of any Event."

In addition, Ms Popoola was found guilty of:

D.1.c: "No Covered Person shall, directly or indirectly, solicit, accept, or conspire to solicit or accept any money, benefit or Consideration for the provision of an accreditation to an Event (i) for the purpose of facilitating a commission of a Corruption Offense; or (ii) which leads, directly or indirectly, to the commission of a Corruption Offense."

The International Tennis Integrity Agency is an independent body established by the International Governing Bodies of Tennis to promote, encourage, enhance and safeguard the integrity of professional tennis worldwide.

Source: 11 March 2021, ITIA
Tennis

United States

Sports gambler Benjamin Tucker Patz pleads guilty to threatening Tampa Bay Rays players

TAMPA, Fla. -- A sports gambler faces up to five years in federal prison for sending threatening social media messages to players with the Tampa Bay Rays.

Benjamin Tucker Patz, 24, of Napa, California, pleaded guilty Wednesday in Tampa federal court to transmitting threats in interstate or foreign commerce, according to court records. No sentencing date was immediately set.

Patz was initially charged last year. He had made numerous violent threats in 2019 against athletes and their family members through anonymous Instagram accounts, according to a criminal complaint. In many messages, Patz threatened to enter the athletes' homes and behead them or their family members, the FBI said. Some of Patz's threats also contained derogatory terms and racial slurs, investigators said.

The Tampa Bay Rays lost a home baseball game in July 2019 to the Chicago White Sox. An account linked to Patz later sent threatening Instagram messages to four players for the Rays and one player for the White Sox, according to authorities. None of the players was identified by name, only initials.

"Your family will be beheaded," said one of the messages, quoted in the criminal complaint.

Patz, who resides in New York and California, goes by the moniker "Parlay Patz." FBI investigators said they found online articles that claimed he had won more than \$1 million shortly before his arrest by wagering on sports events.

Though Wednesday's guilty plea relates specifically to the Rays threats, investigators said Patz had been sending violent messages to athletes for about a year before his arrest. After losing \$10,000 by betting on the Los Angeles Rams to win the 2019 Super Bowl, Patz sent messages to two players on the game's winning team, the New England Patriots, claiming that he would rape and murder their families, officials said.

The complaint also listed threats against players for the Atlanta Braves, the San Diego Padres, the Oakland Athletics, the Cleveland Indians, the Baltimore Orioles and the Kansas City Royals. One of Patz's accounts also threatened a player for the Swedish women's soccer team after it beat Germany in the Women's World Cup quarterfinal in June 2019, investigators said.

Source: 11 March 2021, ESPN
Baseball

https://www.espn.com/mlb/story/_/id/31040849/sports-gambler-benjamin-tucker-patz-pleads-guilty-threatening-tampa-bay-rays-players

BETTING

Malta

Italian Mafia bust implicates Malta in illegal gambling scandal... again

Malta has made headlines for all the wrong reasons once again due to its online gambling sector as a new investigation revealed a mafia group, the Santapaola-Ercolano clan, had run an illegal betting empire while basing their servers in Malta.

'Operation Double Game' by the Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) investigated some 336 individuals involved in the online gambling scheme in Sicily, Puglia, Emilia Romagna, Germany, Poland and Malta.

The criminals set up a sports betting site called RaiseBet24.com which, despite being unauthorised to operate in Italy, based its servers in Malta to bypass the rules.

They then encouraged illegal 'over-the-counter' bets in Italy which gathered more than €62 million. These illicit funds were then funnelled into companies in Italy and Germany.

OCCRP reports that this is a common *modus operandi* for the Italian Mafia. It also notes that "Maltese online gambling is an infamous cash cow" for Italian criminals. They have infiltrated the market by making deals with the owners of legitimate sites, many of whom have incorporated in Malta due to its "favourable" fiscal regime.

Malta's online gambling sector has been involved in a number of high profile cases in recent years such as Operation Beta, led by the Italian Carabinieri in 2017. This case was also linked to the Santapaola-Ercolano clan and saw 30 people arrested as a part of a clampdown on illegal gambling and money laundering.

In the same year, Benedetto Bacci was arrested along with 31 others in an illegal gambling bust. He was believed to have entered into an agreement with the Costa Nostra from Palermo. The accused had been using a Maltese company, Phoenix International Ltd, to launder the flow of cash from illegal gambling operations.

In 2018, Italian authorities seized more than €20 million in assets from a group accused of managing an illicit online gambling business on behalf of 'Ndrangheta. They seized Malta company and online gambling license holder Centurionbet and a number of bars and betting shops in Calabria.

Centurionbet allegedly entered into a commercial relationship with an 'Ndrangheta associated company. Prosecutors said they were "well aware" of what they were doing. It's reported the Maltese company made some €5 million in illicit profits from the scam.

A report published in 2018 by two Italian organisations claimed that Malta's tax regime and its geographical proximity to Italy made it an appealing option for both legal and illegal businesses.

Dipartimento Investigativo Antimafia (DIA) noted that "thanks to a privileged fiscal system and a rapid process to set up a company, in the last few years, Malta attracted large investments, even from Italian criminal organisations".

DIA reports from 2016 point to the same Santapaola-Ercolano clan and their involvement in weapon trafficking, fuel smuggling, and illicit gambling, all involving links to Malta.

Malta's gambling industry has led to problems for other EU countries. Sergio Nazzaro, journalist and adviser to the Parliamentary Anti-Mafia Commission, told the OCCRP that this issue is being exported to countries like Poland and Germany.

He added that the COVID pandemic further exacerbated the issue. And it looks set to get worse. Estimates put the global value of the online gambling industry at \$160 billion by 2026 giving ample opportunity to those looking to launder illicit funds.

In 2015, the Malta Gaming Authority said that 10 out of every 200 licenses were held by Italians. This was the same year they revoked the licences of nine companies including BetUniq, for links to the Calabrian Mafia. The OCCRP referred to Malta in 2018 as the "ATM for the Italian Mafia".

Source: 7 March 2021, *The Shift*

All Sports

<https://theshiftnews.com/2021/03/07/italian-mafia-bust-implicates-malta-in-illegal-gambling-scandal-again/>

Malta

Scandals And Mafia Allegations May Force Malta To Reconsider Its Reliance On Online Betting

In 2004, the Mediterranean island nation of Malta began its transformation from sleepy tourist spot to international gambling mecca. As Malta became the first European Union member state to regulate online betting, proponents of the legislation saw the country as a trailblazer. It could generate billions of dollars in tax revenue, with companies able to offer on-shore betting to customers across the European Union's 27 member states. By placing bets through an EU-registered sportsbook, customers received reassurance. Companies, meanwhile, benefited from tax breaks that can often only be secured offshore.

Seventeen years later, Malta—in the view of Transparency International, bilateral law enforcement agencies and several members of the European Union—is a cause for concern. Against the backdrop of the public inquiry into the assassination of journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia, Malta has been rocked by a series of scandals this month, which saw the Malta Gaming Regulator's former anti-corruption tsar charged with corruption. Meanwhile, anti-mafia prosecutors in Italy allege that the Malta Gaming Authority-licensed site RaiseBet24.com laundered \$74.2 million for the Cosa Nostra.

Scandals have been mounting since 2017. The extent to which Malta's once-attractive remote gaming license will now appeal to legitimate multinational gambling companies is—for now—unknown.

Boom To Bust

Malta's 2004 regulation of remote betting attracted numerous well-regarded multinational sports betting companies to the country, from Ladbrokes to Paddy Power, William Hill Unibet and GC Sports.

Testimony from whistle-blowers and EU officials, however, suggests that Malta's regulators were overwhelmed. In 2000, the country reported just two registered online casinos that offered a remote gaming option. By 2018, 300 companies with the same licenses were operating from the island. Today, Malta is home to roughly 10% of the gambling companies in the world. The Malta Gaming Authority issued licenses that delivered tax receipts of more than \$1.4 billion in 2019—a sum equivalent to 12% of the nation's entire GDP.

Yet this huge inflow of money has allegedly had a corrosive affect on the country's institutions.

Malta's gambling problem did not fully surface until 2017, when a series of devastating accusations against the island's institutions and politicians emerged. In May 2017, whistle-blower Valery Atanasov, who had been dismissed from the MGA, showed Reuters email exchanges that demonstrated that the regulator had broken its own rules between 2012 and 2014. Atanasov told the news agency that Malta's lax supervision of betting companies "creates conditions that allow suspicious financial operations, money laundering and other criminal practices." The same month, 150,000 documents about Maltese companies and institutions were leaked. The independent Brussels-based NGO JournalismFund.eu called "The Malta Files" a roadmap to "how the smallest EU country became a haven for global tax avoidance."

Malta had bet the house on gambling. Now it was out of control.

Continue reading..

Source: 13 March 2021, Forbes

All Sports

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/willnicoll/2021/03/13/raisebet24com-mafia-run-sports-book--caruana-galizia-inquiry-shake-malta/>

United States

Nonprofit aims to teach gamblers which betting sites are legal or not

A gambling industry group wants to teach consumers how to tell if a particular sports betting or online casino site is legal or not.

Conscious Gaming, a nonprofit group associated with an online gambling technology firm, launched its Bettor Safe campaign this week to promote the advantages of licensed gambling sites, including consumer practices, and highlight the risks of unlicensed ones, including identify theft, or the outright theft of deposits.

It also began state-specific campaigns in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, where research shows many customers are confused about what is a legal gambling site. Additional state-specific efforts are planned soon.

"This campaign comes at a pivotal moment when American sports fans are gearing up for the NCAA basketball tournament amid a pandemic that continues to push individuals online," said Seth Palansky, a vice president with the group and a former online gambling executive with Caesars Entertainment. "Now more than ever we must educate consumers and equip them with the tools to make more informed decisions about online betting."

Nationwide, 35% of individuals are unaware whether online betting is legal in their states, and many more, deceived by illegal operators, are wagering on unregulated sites, according to the American Gaming Association national trade group.

A recent survey by Conscious Gaming polled more than 500 adults in New Jersey and Pennsylvania on their habits and attitudes toward online betting. It found more than 25% of respondents in New Jersey and more than 30% of respondents in Pennsylvania were unaware if online betting is legal in their state, or responded that it was not legal.

Kevin O'Toole, executive director of the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board, called the campaign "an important resource to empower consumers."

The survey also found about 75% of New Jersey and Pennsylvania respondents could not differentiate a legal betting site from an illegal website.

The campaign's New Jersey website, for example, offers a list of all the legal sports betting web sites approved by the state Division of Gaming Enforcement.

It also offers a list of things people should look for to help determine whether a particular site is legal or not, including two New Jersey-centric logos for responsible gambling and for the gaming enforcement division.

It asks customers whether a significant amount of information is being sought during registration, saying unlicensed sites typically don't ask for as much as legal sites do.

And cryptocurrency is not legal for online gambling in New Jersey; any site that accepts it is automatically an illegal site, according to the campaign.

Conscious Gaming is an independent group created by GeoComply, whose technology is widely used in the online gambling industry to verify the physical location of a gambler to comply with state laws.

Source: 7 March 2021, Local 21 News

All Sports

<https://local21news.com/news/nation-world/nonprofit-aims-to-teach-gamblers-which-betting-sites-are-legal-or-not>

GOOD PRACTICES

INTERPOL

Media Statement – Project Closing Conference: Sports manipulations and criminal activities impacting sport

“IntegriSport Erasmus+ project (2019-2020) came to an end with its closing event organized by project co-ordination, CSCF Foundation for Sport Integrity, on Wednesday 10th March, on the topic of sports manipulations and criminal activities impacting sports. The event was hosted and opened by the Portuguese EU Presidency and included keynote speeches from the Portuguese Judicial Police, Interpol and interventions by the project partners, including national law enforcement, GLMS, University of Aix-Marseille and EU Athletes”

The EU-funded IntegriSport Erasmus+ project came to its conclusion after a journey spanning 2 and a half years, for participants of the project and key stakeholders in the domain of fighting sports manipulations. Being the first of its kind, the project was conceived as a response to limited in-depth knowledge about sports manipulations of a stakeholder not traditionally linked to sport – the national law enforcement and judicial sector.

In that way, IntegriSport Erasmus+ has served as a vehicle to raise awareness, increase cooperation, and provide support to law enforcement and judicial authorities in their fight against, not only sport manipulation, but also other related criminal activities which negatively impact sport, such as corruption, fraud, money laundering and conspiracy, among others.

The IntegriSport Erasmus+ project acted in seven countries (Cyprus, Finland, Hungary, The Netherlands, Lithuania, Portugal, The Slovak Republic) bringing together the efforts of 11 national, European and International partner organisations coordinated by CSCF Foundation for Sport Integrity, that recognise the complexity and seriousness of this phenomenon, the danger it poses to the development and credibility of sport at national and international level, and the need to cooperate closely to tackle it effectively.

This cooperation was reflected in the commitment to the Council of Europe Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions (the Macolin Convention), a fundamental text that prevails on this issue. The Convention was generally used as a framework during the execution of the project with regard to comparing national regulations and creating opportunities for international cooperation among the partners.

The closing event

The closing event served as the ideal setting during which the partners presented their experiences and learnings throughout the project, discussed success stories, exchanged best practices.

One of the key points for the success of the event was the support of the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU, who opened the event, as well as the considerable efforts made by the Integrisport’s national partner, the Ministry of Justice & Judicial Police, Portugal as a host, together with the co-ordinator CSCF – Counter Sport Corruption Foundation for Sport Integrity.

“The [Integrisport Erasmus +] project has shown that if law enforcement and the judiciary are involved in this fight, as the Portuguese Judicial Police has been, the diligent work of other sports stakeholders in the early stages can turn into effective actions”, said Ms. Luísa Proença from the Ministry of Justice- Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU.

Moreover, Mr. Luis Neves, National Director of Judicial Police – Portugal emphasised that “The Conference enhances the discussion of those present, predominantly focusing on the experience of each partner, thus providing for a holistic approach and a deep reflection on the current challenges faced in the combat against corruption and manipulation in sport”.

In addition, the event welcomed the participation of invited speakers from beyond the international partner organisations (GLMS, EU Athletes), including Interpol and the Council of Europe, as well as the presence of representatives of various organizations that currently play a key role in the development of policies that seek to strengthen and care for sport integrity on and off the playing field, such as the IOC, UEFA, and World Lottery Association (WLA), among other.

Elda Moreno from Council of Europe, also highlighted the importance of joint efforts and cooperation “The Macolin Convention provides a unique legal and cooperation framework to effectively prevent, detect and sanction the manipulation of sports competitions. Integrisport has been very effective in showing the key role that law enforcement and the judiciary play in this context”..

Norbert Rubicsek, director of CSCF and project manager of IntegriSport Erasmus+ added: “I am delighted and proud that through the Integrisport project, our Partners have achieved the main objective of Integrisport Erasmus+: to raise the knowledge of investigators, prosecutors and judges on sports manipulations and enhance their cooperation with thier national and international partners”.

Finally, it was stated that the project will continue with a new project from 2021-2022. During the event, the CSCF Foundation for Sport Integrity was delighted to confirm the continuation of the project with the announcement of IntegriSport Next. IntegriSport Next will act in six countries: Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Malta and Sweden (See link for more info), together with international partners, GLMS, FIFPro (supporting partner) and KU Leuven as the research partner.

Key points of success of Integrisport ERASMUS`+`

During the two and a half years, each of the participating organisations made a significant contribution in each of the project phases that, despite the adversities brought about by the COVID-19 crisis, were carried out successfully.

A particularly important outcome mentioned by all the Partners was that the Integrisport Erasmus+ project contributed to their fight against sports manipulations at operational and policy making levels. Internal education on the phenomenon, increasing or redefining cooperation with other national stakeholders, changing regulation and swift of priority in law enforcement.

The project had three waves of evaluation, prior to training sessions, immediately following the training sessions and then a few months after the sessions. The results overall illustrated that there was a notable increase in the knowledge of law enforcement and judiciary of the beneficiary countries in a number of areas linked to sports manipulations, including virtual currencies, investigative techniques and understanding related areas such as sports betting and national and international co-operation.

Notably, the feedback also highlighted the increase in trust by law enforcement and judiciary participants in other stakeholders, including sports federations, betting monitoring reports and an awareness of the need to work with athletes who are often a pawn in wider manipulations.

The project and its partners

The IntegriSport Erasmus+ project acted in seven countries (Cyprus, Finland, Hungary, The Netherlands, Lithuania, Portugal, The Slovak Republic) bringing together the efforts of twelve European organisations that recognise the complexity and seriousness of this phenomenon, the danger it poses to the development and credibility of sport at national and international level, and the need to cooperate closely to tackle it effectively:

Coordinator:

CSCF – Counter Sport Corruption Foundation for Sport Integrity

National Partners:

The Cyprus Police;
Finnish Centre for Integrity in Sports (FINCIS);
Hungarian National Police, Rapid Response and Special Police Services, National Bureau of Investigation;
National Tax and Customs Administration of Hungary;
The Ministry of Security and Justice of the Netherlands;
Lithuanian Sport Centre;
Ministry of Justice – Judicial Police, Portugal;
Presidium of the Police Force, Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic National Crime Agency.

Partner Organisations:

European Elite Athletes Association (EU Athletes)
University of Aix-Marseille – Sports Law Centre (Université Aix-Marseille – Centre de Droit du Sport)
The Global Lottery Monitoring System (GLMS)

Supporting Partner:

The Council of Europe

Source: 12 March 2021, CSCF Sport

All Sports

<https://cscfsport.com/media-statement-project-closing-conference-sports-manipulations-and-criminal-activities-impacting-sport/>



INTERPOL

INTEGRITY IN SPORT

IOC, INTERPOL**INTERPOL-IOC webinars implemented for entire African continent**

The IOC and INTERPOL jointly organised two more webinars on the prevention of competition manipulation for African countries, in mid-December (West-Central Africa) and at the end of January (French-speaking African countries).

This was the first time that the continent of Africa received such comprehensive training on this topic: all key stakeholders including the NOCs, law enforcement and state authorities of every African country have now taken part in this important programme. During these seminars, more than 150 participants from 20 countries got together to learn about the threat of competition manipulation, how it undermines the credibility of sport, and how to tackle it efficiently through cross-sector collaboration.

After taking part in the training, Majd Chekroun, Director of International Relations and Communications at the NOC of Morocco, said: “The IOC-INTERPOL webinar helped us to better understand the importance of taking action against the phenomenon of competition manipulation. Following the webinar, we have already started the process of implementing relevant rules as well as an awareness-raising activity in collaboration with our Virtual Olympic Academy. We will be also working closely with the key stakeholders in Morocco towards the development of a national cooperation framework. We look forward to further cooperating closely with the OM Unit PMC to achieve all our relevant goals.”

Aminatah Fofana, Secretary General of the NOC of Ivory Coast, added: “The webinar was very interesting and provided concrete information on how to deal with the phenomenon. We are already planning additional educational activities for our athletes and we look forward to further working with the OM Unit PMC.”

In early March, the IOC-INTERPOL training continued in Asia, and reached 12 countries in the South-East Asia region. More than 160 participants joined the session to learn more about the threat of competition manipulation. These educational webinars are a concrete outcome of the reframed cooperation agreement between the IOC and INTERPOL in the lead-up to the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020, and in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. More upcoming IOC-INTERPOL webinars will be held for NOCs in Eastern Europe and the Balkan countries.

Source: 10 March 2021, IOC

All Sports

<https://www.olympic.org/news/interpol-ioc-webinars-implemented-for-entire-african-continent>



United Kingdom

Police Scotland and Glasgow's Football Clubs United Against Organised Crime

Police Scotland and Glasgow's senior football clubs have teamed up to educate young players of the dangers of becoming involved with serious organised criminals – underlining the negative and adverse influence it could have on their wellbeing and their future playing careers.

Young Celtic, Partick Thistle, Queen's Park and Rangers players will have the potential dangers highlighted to them during interactive sessions delivered by experienced and specially-trained Police Scotland officers.

Chief Superintendent Mark Sutherland, Police Scotland's Divisional Commander for Greater Glasgow said:

“This programme is focussed on prevention where we will provide information and advice to players to help prevent them being exposed to the harm that those involved in serious and organised crime present.

Officers will explain to the players that these criminals will present themselves as reputable business people. They may come across as influential but the world they operate in is not glamorous. Experience elsewhere tells us that once in control of a young person they are known to use intimidation and will exploit them to get what they want, they only care about themselves.”

Players will be shown a video showing the consequences – including being drawn into drug dealing and violence – from the perspective of a former player played by an actor, who became part of the organised crime world. The scenarios depicted are based on true life experiences, with other potential pitfalls, such as match fixing, money lending and counterfeit goods, also being discussed.

Chief Superintendent Sutherland added:

“We will also advise that it is very important to be represented by a reputable agent who can be trusted to act in their best interests.

“Working with partners, this important initiative will help support the players to protect themselves and each other. It also underlines Police Scotland's commitment to the Serious Organised Crime Taskforce and delivery of the Serious Organised Crime Strategy and has been part-funded by the Scottish Government.

“Officers will emphasise the assistance available from their clubs, the Professional Footballers Association Scotland the Scottish Football Association, Scottish Professional Football League as well as family and friends.”

*Source: 2 March 2021, Police Scotland
Football*

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/news/2021/march/police-scotland-and-glasgow-s-football-clubs-united-against-organised-crime/>

INTERPOL
INTEGRITY IN SPORT

MATCH FIXING

Kenya

FKF's Otieno powerless in dealing with match-fixing, wants government help

Football Kenya Federation CEO Barry Otieno has explained the need to involve the government in taming the match-fixing scourge in the country.

Otieno said the federation can only deal with people under their jurisdiction but are powerless in punishing the people who do not fall under their provisions of power.

"If we arrest someone today on suspicion of match manipulation, there are no laws that will allow us to take him to court.

"FKF can only discipline its members on the cases of match-fixing, but not non-members. That's where the challenge is and we need the government to come up with a regulatory framework to try and prosecute them outside football. We have no powers and resources to arrest and prosecute the suspects.

"We have engaged our betting partners to try and allocate money that will go towards sensitising, detecting, informing and educating different stakeholders on manipulation.

"There's also a need to broadcast these matches. Our commercial deal with StarTimes still stands but we are pursuing our partnership with Genius Sports to see whether matches can be recorded for the sole purpose to try and identify cases of match manipulation and fair competition."

On Saturday, the FKF and Premier League clubs held a sensitisation and consultation forum that was aimed at finding ways to fight the menace. An integrity department was consequently formed and it will be headed by the former Nairobi Stima head coach Michael Kamura.

"As you are aware, match-fixing is a global menace, but FKF in partnership with Fifa and Caf have proactively decided to hold this workshop to sensitise the clubs' chairmen," added Otieno.

"These workshops are not only meant to inform, educate, prevent and detect manipulation of matches but also to develop a legal policy document which can be presented to parliament to ensure there is a legal framework that can help us mitigate and address this issue by prosecuting those involved in it."

The steps taken by the FKF and the clubs was lauded by Tusker chairman Daniel Aduda, who was among the stakeholders at the sensitisation meeting.

"The training has come at the right time given that this menace has been with us both locally and globally for a long time. But it has to be a continuous conversation because this is a problem that's not going away today," the Tusker official said.

"At the moment, there are no regulations and a legal framework that can assist the federation to fight match-fixing," Otieno said according to The Standard Sports.

Source: 14 March 2021, GOAL

Football

<https://www.goal.com/en/news/fkfs-otieno-powerless-in-dealing-with-match-fixing-wants/1ell3m05e5wrs1pjwxbtxyrwd>



Play the Game

Rising popularity of cricket in Europe has led to major match-fixing problems

Cricket is a growing sport in Europe and matches from new, small leagues are livestreamed all over the world. On the Indian subcontinent there is massive demand for betting on cricket, and match-fixers have been quick to capitalise on this new opportunity, reports Steve Menary.

How do you grow a sport without attracting the attention of match-fixers? This is a question that some European cricket federations have asked themselves since they began broadcasting their own matches on the internet and fans from far-away countries started betting on these matches.

Cricket is not a traditional sport in most of Europe but is growing due to a combination of dedicated organisers and immigrants from the Indian subcontinent, where the sport is the most popular. In countries like Germany, for example, cricket is the fastest growing sport and there are now more than 10,000 players.

Unfortunately, match-fixers have been quick to capitalise on this development and during the summer of 2020, they set to work looking to corrupt players and manipulate low level cricket games in Germany, Cyprus, Finland and elsewhere to the astonishment of hard-working European administrators.

Cricket matches in Europe are now livestreamed globally

Over the past few years, a number of developments have combined to make cricket more popular in Europe and more accessible to fans outside the European continent.

In 2018, the International Cricket Council (ICC) decided to stimulate development amongst associate members in Europe by creating an international ranking table for the shorter T20 format of the game. These matches now had a new importance that national federations could use to lobby their governments for more funding.

Within a year, bilateral T20 international matches between associate ICC members had leapt by a third. As increasing interest was essential, many federations began streaming these games live via YouTube.

At the same time, the European Cricket Network (ECN) was founded to drive development of club cricket through the European Cricket League (ECL). That also proved a rapid success and interest spread via social media.

The ECN has agreements with FanCode from India's biggest sports gaming platform, Dream 11, to broadcast games in the Indian subcontinent and the global live sports and on demand streaming service Sports Flick to broadcast to the rest of the world. The 2019 ECL was viewed on live TV and streamed in over 120 countries by 45 broadcasters.

Unregulated data scouts descended on European cricket grounds

When the corona pandemic struck last year, many sports were cancelled and betting companies lacked fixtures to offer to their customers. European cricket was quick to recover and pop-up tournaments were staged with 700 games in over 20 countries in 2020.

The plethora of pop-up tournaments in Europe and further afield prompted ICC Anti-Corruption Unit Coordinator of Investigations Steve Richardson to tweet: "Where these pop up matches are the only cricket being played it's not a question of maybe corruptors get involved, they will, simple. Sometimes some well-known ones."

Richardson's reaction was confirmed by the appearance of unregulated data scouts at European cricket matches that were being livestreamed.

The massive unregulated Asian companies that according to research by HS2 had an annual turnover from all types of betting in 2017 of USD 1.5 trillion, offering the opportunity to bet on a livestreamed Cypriot club cricket was a product to offer customers in the Indian subcontinent. But those betting companies did not want to rely on the same livestream as their customers as the basis for offering inplay betting on events during the game.

Read more

Source: 2 March 2021, *Play the Game*

Cricket

https://www.playthegame.org/news/news-articles/2021/0658_rising-popularity-of-cricket-in-europe-has-led-to-major-matchfixing-problems/

Trials of Osiris

Destiny 2's Trials Of Osiris Disabled Indefinitely Due To Match-Fixing

It looks like the troubles afflicting Destiny 2's pinnacle PvP game mode, Trials of Osiris, are going to take more than a few days to solve. Just last weekend, developer Bungie disabled Trials after match-fixing became so widespread that it threatened the overall health of the game, and the most recent update on Bungie's blog provides no timeline for when Trials will return.

What got Trials disabled was known as the "Hakke Emblem Method," and it basically allowed players to share wins in order for them to eventually guarantee the best possible loot drops. Trials of Osiris bases its reward structure on victory--the more you win, the more loot you get, so players have an incentive to win at any cost.

Unfortunately, the mechanisms for Trials are laid bare to players, leading to the possibility that clever Guardians will eventually figure out a way to game the system. It first started with players throwing matches to quickly obtain a single drop of The Messenger, a highly prized Pulse Rifle exclusive to Trials of Osiris, but then it escalated into full-blown match-fixing with the Hakke Emblem Method.

Essentially, players equip the Hakke Emblem to signal to other players that they're willing to fix the match. Then two players open chat windows and just roll a random number to determine the winner. Before the match ends, the winning team swaps to their "winning" characters so that they're credited for the victory, and then the losing team simply forfeits the match.

It's an ingenious system, but one that underscores the problems inherent in Trials of Osiris, from its reward structure all the way down to matchmaking.

With the Hakke Emblem Method running wild, Bungie was forced to disable the game mode entirely to prevent it from losing all relevance after players had fixed matches to the point where they'd acquired all the possible loot drops.

Bungie has stated in their most recent game update that they plan to address Trials' rewards and matchmaking "before the end of the year." Hopefully that schedule has been pushed forward, otherwise, we might not see Trials return for some time.

Source: 5 March 2021, The Gamer eSports

<https://www.thegamer.com/destiny-2-trials-of-osiris-disabled-indefinitely-match-fixing/>



CORRUPTION

United States

Arizona's notice of allegations from NCAA includes five Level I violations stemming from FBI bribery scandal

Arizona finally released Friday the notice of allegations it received from the NCAA, and the charges include an alleged Level I violation against embattled coach Sean Miller and an overall institutional control charge against the program. In total, the program is charged with five level I violations, according to the Arizona Daily Star, though three of them center on alleged misconduct by former assistants.

The Wildcats already took the step of self-imposing a postseason ban for the 2020-21 season, meaning the Wildcats won't compete in next week's Pac-12 Tournament or be in contention for an NCAA Tournament bid. But the depth of the alleged violations could warrant additional penalties as the program's case goes through the Independent Accountability Resolution Process (IARP).

It was expected that the Wildcats would be facing multiple level I violations after the NCAA first launched an investigation into the program in 2019 following former assistant Emanuel "Book" Richardson's arrest as part of the FBI's sting on corruption in the sport. But Friday's revelation of the school's notice of allegations provides more specifics.

The Daily Star reported that the notice of allegations includes a charge of recruiting misconduct against Richardson and former assistant Mark Phelps, who are accused of arranging a false transcript for two recruits. The NOA also alleges that Richardson accepted bribes to steer players toward an agency and that Phelps lied to investigators about asking a player to erase a message about an impermissible alone.

As for Miller, the 12th-year Arizona coach is hit with a responsibility charge for failing to demonstrate compliance. The institutional lack of control charge also reflects on his leadership of the program.

Miller addressed the situation following the school's announcement of the self-imposed postseason ban in December.

"I understand and fully support the university's decision to self-impose a one-year post season ban on our men's basketball program," Miller said at the time. "Our team will remain united and aggressively compete to win a Pac-12 championship."

The Wildcats last appeared in the NCAA Tournament at the end of the 2017-18 season and lost in the first round. They ended the 2020-21 season with a 17-9 (11-9 Pac-12) record. With a NET ranking of 47, the Wildcats would likely be on the NCAA Tournament bubble right now if eligible for the event.

Source: 5 March 2021, CBSS Sports

Basketball

<https://www.cbssports.com/college-basketball/news/arizonas-notice-of-allegations-from-ncaa-includes-five-level-i-violations-stemming-from-fbi-bribery-scandal/>

