



INTERPOL

INTEGRITY IN SPORT

Bi-weekly Bulletin

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Photos International Olympic Committee

INVESTIGATIONS

AIBA

Possible corruption in boxing at Rio Olympics being investigated

An investigation into possible corruption during the Olympic boxing competition at Rio 2016 is to be led by Professor Richard McLaren, the man who uncovered the full extent of Russian state-sponsored doping.

McLaren, who found that more than a thousand Russian athletes in 30 sports had been part of a sophisticated doping programme, has now been tasked with investigating potential judging and refereeing irregularities in Rio by the International Boxing Association (Aiba).

As part of his remit McLaren and his team of forensic investigators from Harrods Associates will also examine the activity of the individuals involved in the management and administration of Aiba to determine if there have been any acts of corruption.

“Boxing has a long history of questionable activities,” said McLaren. “There have been multiple past investigations into the sport that have either not been completed or acted upon. It is time for boxing to turn the page, but it cannot do so without a full accounting of any alleged misconduct.

“Our team will conduct an independent investigation into the questions surrounding corruption or manipulation of sporting results during the Rio Olympic Games, identify the persons responsible and recommend the appropriate course of action.”

A whistleblower line will also be set up, with the first part of McLaren’s enquiry due in August.

“I wish to thank Aiba for their confidence and trust and for giving us the freedom and support to conduct a thorough and comprehensive independent investigation,” he said. “They are looking to put some finality to the allegations that have plagued boxing for decades. My team has been given the independence to follow any and all leads to uncover the truth.”

There were widespread concerns before and during the Rio Games, with high-ranking officials saying before the Olympics began that many bouts, including those to decide medals, could be fixed amid fears about corruption and financial malpractice at Aiba.

One senior figure in amateur boxing said there was “no doubt” some of the judges and referees in Rio “will be corrupted”. He alleged a group of referees get together before major championships to decide how to score certain bouts.

At the time, Aiba robustly defended itself, attributing the allegations to “subjective judgments from discontented parties” and referring to them as “rumours” without “tangible proof”.

During Rio 2016, the Irish bantamweight Michael Conlan was one athlete to allege corruption after losing a controversial decision to the Russian Vladimir Nikitin. “I came for gold and I’ve been cheated. I’ll not do another Olympics. I would advise anybody not to compete for the Aiba,” Conlan said.

“At the end of the first round, it had been so easy, so comfortable, I wasn’t even out of breath. I said: ‘I’ll win this easy.’ But I was told I was down. I’ve been robbed of my Olympic dream.”

Aiba’s then president, Dr Ching-Kuo Wu, indicated the governing body would subject Conlan to disciplinary action but the fighter turned professional. Wu also vehemently denied all allegations of corruption against Aiba.

An initial in-house Aiba investigation in 2017 found no “active interference” in the results in Rio but it permanently removed all of its so-called “five-star” judges from international competition and admitted that “a concentration of decision-making power” and “an unwelcome axis of influence” affected its judging at the Games.

It is understood the investigation by McLaren is part of a range of measures being undertaken by Aiba in an attempt to return to the international sport fold after the Olympic boxing qualifying tournament for Tokyo 2020 was taken off its hands by the IOC. - Guardian

Source: 14 June 2021, *The Irish Times*

Boxing

<https://www.irishtimes.com/sport/other-sports/possible-corruption-in-boxing-at-rio-olympics-being-investigated-1.4593101>

SENTENCES/SANCTIONS

Latvia

CEDB decisions on FK Ventspils

The UEFA Control, Ethics and Disciplinary Body has announced today the following decisions:

Charges against FK Ventspils

- Fraud, bribery and/or corruption, Art. 11(2)(a) of the UEFA Disciplinary Regulations (DR) in connection with Art. 11(1) DR
- Violation of the integrity of matches and competitions, Art. 12(2)(a) and (b) DR

Decision:

The CEDB has decided:

- To exclude FK Ventspils from participating in UEFA club competitions for the next seven (7) years (i.e. up to and including the 2027/28 season) for the violation of Article 11(2)(a) in connection with Article 11(1) DR as well as Articles 12(2)(a) and 12(2)(b) DR.

Charges against FK Ventspils official Mr Nikolajs Djakins

- Fraud, bribery and/or corruption, Art. 11(2)(a) DR in connection with Art. 11(1) DR
- Violation of the integrity of matches and competitions, Art. 12(2)(a) DR

Decision:

The CEDB has decided:

- To ban Mr. Nikolajs Djakins, FK Ventspils official (i.e. sports manager) from exercising any football-related activity for four (4) years, for the violation of Articles 11(2)(a) DR in connection with Article 11(1) DR as well as Article 12(2)(a) DR.
- To request FIFA to extend worldwide the above-mentioned ban.

Charges against former FK Ventspils official Mr Adlan Shishkanov

- Fraud, bribery and/or corruption, Art. 11(2)(a) DR in connection with Art. 11(1) DR
- Violation of the integrity of matches and competitions, Arts. 12(2)(a) and 12(2)(b) DR

Decision:

The CEDB has decided:

- To ban Mr. Adlan Shishkanov from exercising any football-related activity for life, for the violation of Article 11(2)(a) DR in connection with Article 11(1) DR as well as Articles 12(2)(a) and 12(2)(b) DR.
- To request FIFA to extend worldwide the above-mentioned ban.

Source: 9 June 2021, UEFA

Football

<https://www.uefa.com/insideuefa/disciplinary/updates/026a-127a9f9dd2b4-f2173f6296c5-1000--cedb-decisions-on-fk-ventspils/#>



Malta

Hamrun Spartans to be excluded from Champions League by UEFA over past match fixing case

Maltese champions Hamrun Spartans are set to be excluded from the UEFA Champions League by Europe's footballing body over a match fixing case dating back to 2013.

UEFA decided on Wednesday that Hamrun, who were declared Maltese champions of last season's shortened campaign, had never served its European suspension, even if the match fixing case itself dates back to 8 years ago.

The case in question is from the 2012/13 season, and two committee members of the club ended up being banned from football for life after admitting to match fixing charges.

Every year, a club must apply for a licence from UEFA in order to participate in continental competitions. One is granted a licence on a number of criteria, including, for instance, financial stability, but Europe's footballing governing body has in recent years also given particular attention to those clubs returning to European competition after being involved in match fixing cases.

The club said in a statement that it is "seriously considering" to appeal the sentence before the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) subject to Articles 62 and 63 of UEFA's statutes.

If they do lodge an appeal, the verdict would have to be reached in the coming days, before next week's Champions League draw.

"The decision is obviously very disappointing for our Club because it impacts directly on our efforts to put Hamrun Spartans FC on the epitome of Maltese football", the club said, adding that it remains committed to continuing with its winning strategy as it continues to aim to be the best club on the island, both on and off the pitch.

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ADVERTISEMENT

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If UEFA's decision is confirmed, league runners up Hibernians will take Hamrun's place in the Champions League.

Mosta FC – who finished in sixth place – will enter the Conference League along with Birkirkara FC and Gzira United, after fifth-placed Sliema Wanderers – who had their own fair share of trouble during the past season – withdrew their application for a UEFA licence.

Source: 9 June 2021, *Independent Football*

<https://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2021-06-09/football/Hamrun-Spartans-set-to-be-excluded-from-Champions-League-by-UEFA-over-past-match-fixing-case-6736234175>

Riot

Riot bans two Valorant players for 3 years for match-fixing and gambling

Two competitive Valorant players have been banned from VCT competition for 36 months, after a Riot investigation discovered that they had bet against their own team and encouraged their teammates to throw the match.

Playing for Resurgence at the time, Malcolm 'Germmsg' Chung and Ryan 'Dreamycsgo' Tan, were playing against BlackBird Ignis in an Ignition Series match in September 2020.

Riot's investigation found that they "coordinated to bet against their own team," with Germmsg initiating the scheme and Dreamycsgo "providing the capital."

As a result of the investigation, the players were found to have "violated Rule 7.2.1 and 7.2.4 of the VALORANT Global Competition Policy for manipulating the outcome of a competitive VALORANT match for monetary gain."

These rules specify the definitions and punishments for both match-fixing and gambling on the outcome of matches (which team members are not permitted to do in any circumstance).

Germmsg was initially accused in a detailed Google Docs document by fellow competitor calel, titled "exposing a parasite in the Valorant Singapore community." He said "some of those matches were bettable as well. Who knows how many of these matches were fixed?"

According to Riot's investigation, the other members of the Resurgence roster did not want to throw the match or agree to the scheme, but did not inform officials about it out of fear of punishments or issues with their Resurgence contracts.

These players have been banned from VCT for 6 months – 1 year, with the reduced penalties "based on their level of culpability and their level of their cooperation with the investigation."

Source: 16 June 2021, Dexerto

eSports

<https://www.google.com/url?rct=j&sa=t&url=https://www.dexerto.com/valorant/riot-bans-two-valorant-players-for-3-years-for-match-fixing-and-gambling-1596056/&ct=ga&cd=CAEYACoUMTEzNTk3MDUwNTkzNzk5MTgwNTUyHDBIMDQ0MGlxNDE2MDUxMDQ6Y29tOmVuOIVTOKw&usg=AFQjCNG7-ti4CVMR03lh1H6WOoWy3F1ZQg>

Russia

CEDB decision on Russian match official

Following an investigation conducted by the UEFA Ethics and Disciplinary Inspectors and the subsequent disciplinary proceedings opened against Mr. Sergey Lapochkin, the UEFA Control, Ethics and Disciplinary Body (CEDB) has taken the following decision:

- To ban Mr. Sergey Lapochkin from exercising any refereeing activity at national and international level for ten (10) years, from the date when he was provisionally banned (i.e. 25 March 2021), for the violation of Article 11(2)(a) of the UEFA Disciplinary Regulations (DR) in connection with Article 11(1) DR as well as Articles 12(2)(a) and 12(2)(d) DR.

- To request FIFA to extend worldwide the above-mentioned ban.

Source: 9 June 2021, UEFA

Football

<https://www.uefa.com/insideuefa/disciplinary/updates/026a-127aa14d7de3-845a8d6b959d-1000--cedb-decision-on-russian-match-official/>

LEGISLATION

Canada

Optimism growing that Canada's bill to legalize single-game betting will pass by summer

It's not a slam dunk yet, but advocates of single-game sports betting are increasingly optimistic that the bill to legalize it will be through Parliament by summer.

The bill emerged out of the Senate banking committee last week with no amendments, meaning it only needs to pass a final vote in the Senate chamber before heading to royal assent and becoming law.

However, senators can still seek to amend the bill before a third reading vote, and other items could still clog the Senate's agenda.

"I'm cautiously optimistic," said Sen. David Wells, the sponsor of the bill in the Senate. "I never want to say this is a done deal until it's a done deal. I've seen too many times where I thought things were a given and it didn't work out that way...but I'm cautiously optimistic on what's got widespread support among my colleagues and among Canadians."

Justice Minister David Lametti tabled a government bill to legalize single-game betting last fall, but for procedural reasons the actual bill making its way through Parliament is a near-identical private member's bill, C-218, put forward by Conservative MP Kevin Waugh.

The Criminal Code currently bans wagering on a single sports event, meaning Canadians are only allowed to make parlay bets (betting on multiple events at once). In practice, however, single-game betting is easily found online through offshore companies or through the black market; the result is that up to \$14 billion is wagered annually by Canadians on single sports events in an unregulated market, according to gaming industry estimates.

Opponents of single-game betting — which used to include major sports leagues — worried primarily about its effect on match fixing, as well as the overall problem of encouraging more gambling behaviour. But in recent years, momentum has swung behind legalizing it given its huge popularity on the unregulated market, where all the same incentives exist but without any consumer protection or tax revenue that can be put into addiction programs

In its brief to the Senate, the Canadian Centre for Ethics in Sport said it supports legalizing single-game betting as long as strong safeguards are put in place. "The detection of match fixing affecting Canadian sport cannot be achieved if gambling is taking place overseas on regulated or unregulated sites," their submission said.

Read more: ...

Source: 14 June 2021, National Post

All Sports

<https://nationalpost.com/news/optimism-growing-that-canadas-bill-to-legalize-single-game-betting-will-pass-by-summer>



INTERPOL
INTEGRITY IN SPORT

BETTING

China

Crypto-related Money Laundering in China leads to Arrest of 1,100

Chinese authorities have arrested over 1,110 people suspected of crypto-related money laundering. The Ministry of Public Security claims those arrested used crypto to launder profits from internet and telephone scams.

The case involved a 1.5-5% commission charged to clients, in order to convert illegal profits into digital money via crypto exchanges. By the afternoon of June 9, reports claim that police caught at least 170 criminal groups using digital currencies in money laundering schemes. The ministry released the report via its official WeChat page.

Following the report, the Chinese Payment and Clearing Association said crypto-involved crimes are on the rise, "They have increasingly become an important channel for cross-border money laundering."

This is not the first case of China tightening its grip on crypto money laundering. In late 2020, the People's Bank of China in coordination with local authorities carried out a series of arrests of cross-border gambling. Similarly, those reports also stated those involved utilized the anonymity of crypto to partake in the illegal activities.

The Chinese case of money laundering and illegal betting comes as the issue is scrutinized across the continent. Last week the Asian Racing Federation Council on Anti-illegal Betting and Related Financial Crime, released a report on crypto and blockchain usage in illegal betting in Asia.

The latest arrests come as no surprise, as they follow China's recent pattern of crypto crackdowns. The Chinese government targets include just about every corner of the space. From trading and purchasing with digital currency, to mining, there is hardly a stone left unturned.

Within the last month alone, the Chinese government ramped up its stance against outside crypto usage. In an attempt to focus on its homegrown digital currency, the People's Bank of China banned financial service providers from crypto-related activities.

In the same week as the aforementioned ban, the government decided to severely crack down on bitcoin mining. This of course, was a huge shock, as the country leads in global mining of bitcoin.

One of the "harshesht" measures came when the government blocked crypto-related accounts on the Chinese version of Twitter. Focusing inward



Despite China's harsh stance towards outside cryptocurrencies and crypto-related services, it's a different story. Not only is China actively developing its own currency, but its also actively pushing for adoption.

Recently, the People's Bank of China (PBoC) deployed tests of the digital yuan in various regions of the country. The goal is mass adoption and normalization of digital currency. Following the regional tests, the government is preparing to hand out \$6.2 million in their digital currency to Beijing residents.

While China's tactics may seem harsh, its domestic plans are barreling forward. The country aims to have the world's most advanced blockchain technology in a few year's time.

China's continued crypto crackdown

Source: 10 June 2021, Yahoo Finance

All Sports

<https://finance.yahoo-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/finance.yahoo.com/amphtml/news/crypto-related-money-laundering-china-103435595.html>

IBIA

An Optimum Betting Market: A Regulatory, Fiscal & Integrity Assessment

The contents of this report are the result of a collaboration between H2 Gambling Capital and the International Betting Integrity Association (IBIA) to examine a range of different regulatory models for betting globally and to evaluate the relative strengths and weakness of those markets. Twenty jurisdictions were chosen representing regulatory frameworks for betting across six continents and covering differing licensing models. Consideration was also given to the necessity for, and effectiveness of, betting product restrictions, along with the cost of match-fixing to the regulated betting sector globally.

Source: 17 June 2021, IBIA

All Sports

<https://ibia.bet/an-optimum-betting-market/>

IBIA**The crypto-boom and sports betting integrity**

Cryptocurrency has rapidly taken off in recent years, both in sports betting and beyond. The International Betting Integrity Association's (IBIA) Jack Byrne (pictured) discusses what this might mean for sporting integrity and whether there may be a solution to match-fixing concerns.

Over a decade on from the inception of Bitcoin in 2009, cryptocurrencies are emerging from their infancy, becoming an increasingly used method for the buying and selling of products, from coffees to cars to yachts, as well as being able to fund recreational activities such as sports betting.

Indeed, while crypto-usership was once seemingly limited to coding enthusiasts and speculating students, it is now exploding as tech savvy Millennials are being joined by Generation Z to push the number of cryptocurrency users beyond an estimated 100 million globally.

This growth in demand, and speculation of future demand, pushed the often-volatile price of Bitcoin to a high in excess of \$60,000 in April 2021, with the total Bitcoin in circulation worth above \$1000 billion in the same month, an increase of over 200% from early 2020.

Innovation in sports betting... and in sports manipulation

New start-ups have seized on this popularity, and in sports betting the demand from customers for funding accounts through cryptocurrency has led to the rise of a parallel industry, with over 120 operators, operating outside of the licensed markets of Europe or the US, offering a bitcoin payment solution and over 25 operators offering a crypto-only 'end-to-end' service. The growth of this crypto-sportsbook market has the potential to impact the scope of sport and betting related fraud.

Technological innovation through the last two decades has revolutionised an age-old industry, and as the scope of what to bet on, how to bet, who to bet with, and the way to make financial transactions has changed, the manipulation of sporting events has also evolved.

Advancements in data gathering and real-time data transmission have been the catalyst for improving the offering to customers in recent years, with a broader range of markets and events available to bet on. And while this enhanced offering has improved the customer experience, it has also created a new opportunity for those small number of people intent on manipulating sporting events for profit.

While an athlete, official, or group of either, may be responsible for the success of any sporting manipulation, the assumed method of modern-fixing places them in a networked organisation of individuals with various responsibilities, including fixers, bettors, money launderers, agents and club officials as well as a boss.

Read more:

Source: 15 June 2021, iGB

All Sports

<https://igamingbusiness.com/the-crypto-boom-and-sports-betting-integrity/>



DOPING

France

L'Agence française de la lutte contre le dopage épinglée par un rapport préliminaire de la Cour des comptes

Dans un rapport préliminaire consulté par Libération, la Cour des Comptes a critiqué la gestion de l'Agence française de lutte contre le dopage (AFLD). Dans le viseur de la Cour : les salaires élevés dans l'agence et des prélèvements pas assez centrés, selon elle, sur le monde professionnel.

Principal surveillant de l'utilisation de l'argent public, la Cour des Comptes a mis son nez dans les finances de l'Agence française de lutte contre le dopage (AFLD). Dans un rapport préliminaire consulté par Libération, la Cour épinge sévèrement la gestion de l'AFLD.

Les salaires confortables donnés aux employés du gendarme antidopage sont notamment dans le viseur de la Cour, alors que 90 % des ressources de l'AFLD viennent du ministère des Sports. « Le niveau absolu des rémunérations de l'Agence est élevé en comparaison de ceux qui prévalent dans les autres autorités indépendantes : la personne la mieux rémunérée perçoit une rémunération brute annuelle supérieure à 200 000 euros et la moyenne des premières rémunérations brutes dépasse 130 000 euros », pointe le rapport, cité par Libération.

La Cour veut moins de prélèvements sur les sportifs amateurs

Une autre critique de la Cour pointe la stratégie de prélèvements de l'AFLD, trop peu centrée sur le monde professionnel au goût des auteurs du rapport. « Une amélioration significative du ciblage sur les sportifs coeur de cible et les sports les plus touchés serait nécessaire. La réduction des ressources consacrées au dopage des sportifs amateurs (30 % des contrôles) devrait être poursuivie. »

La Cour des comptes, qui a déjà clôturé son rapport définitif mais a décidé de ne pas le publier publiquement, recommande aussi à l'AFLD de doubler son rythme d'analyses réalisées chaque année pour passer de 12 500 à 25 000 voire 30 000.

« Des échos de presse ont fait état de données inexactes issues d'un rapport provisoire de la Cour et qui n'ont finalement pas été reprises dans la version définitive », a réagi Dominique Laurent, la présidente de l'AFLD dans un communiqué. L'Agence juge que le rapport « valide [sa] transformation en cours » et que plusieurs des recommandations ont déjà été mises en place.

Source: 17 June 2021, L'équipe

All Sports

<https://www.lequipe.fr/Tous-sports/Actualites/L-agence-francaise-de-la-lutte-contre-le-dopage-epinglee-par-un-rapport-preliminaire-de-la-cour-des-comptes/1263267>



GOOD PRACTICES

International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF)

ITTF and Sportradar extend integrity partnership

The International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF) and global supplier of sports integrity solutions, Sportradar Integrity Services have renewed their integrity partnership through to the end of 2023.

Under the terms of the agreement, Sportradar's Fraud Detection System (FDS) will be used to monitor all tournaments sanctioned by ITTF, including the World Table Tennis (WTT) events, helping the federation to identify and analyse irregular betting patterns or suspicious matches for signs of match fixing.

The extended agreement also gives ITTF access to Sportradar's intelligence and investigation services, continuing a partnership that began in 2017.

Sportradar scraps US\$10bn SPAC deal in favour of IPO

Sportradar will also provide a comprehensive risk assessment of the global betting and integrity landscape within table tennis, including the latest trends backed up by expert insights.

In 2020, Sportradar detected more than 500 suspicious matches across global sport, and has reported over 5,500 suspicious matches in the past 15 years.

Andreas Krannich, Sportradar Integrity Services managing director, said: "It is our top priority to provide our partners with an effective framework to combat match-fixing and other integrity issues, especially when considering the increased risk to global sport as a result of the challenges brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic."

ITTF secretary general, Raul Calin added: "Protecting the integrity of our events is of the utmost importance, and our partnership with Sportradar Integrity Services helps to strengthen our integrity programme. We are in a very good position to identify integrity issues in our competitions, and address any emerging risk factors threatening our sport."

Source: 18 June 2021, Sports PRO

Table Tennis

<https://www.sportspromedia.com/news/itf-sportradar-integrity-betting-fraud-detection>



Ukraine

The Table Tennis Federation of Ukraine and Sport Integrity Team Partner to Stamp out Match Fixing

The Table Tennis Federation of Ukraine (TTFU) and the Sport Integrity Team are proud to today announce their partnership in an effort to counter violations of the principles of fair play by sportsmen. As part of the partnership, the organisations have created the "Code of Ethics and Fair Play" and have launched an Ethics and Fair Play Committee, as well as a system of new "rules of the game" for table tennis players in Ukraine.

Thanks to the global rise in popularity and interest in the game, players participating in Ukrainian Table Tennis tournaments are facing increasing temptation by being offered match fixing agreements. The partnership has been formed in response to this increased pressure and will see the TTFU work collaboratively with experts from the Sport Integrity team, who have a long-standing track record of fighting against fixed-score matches and previously established the Ethics and Fair Play Committee for the Ukrainian Football Association.

The introduction of a formal Code of Ethics and Fair Play officially puts into place policies around appropriate and inappropriate conduct, to ensure that all organisers, players, umpires and officials involved in table tennis tournaments are clear on the standards which need to be upheld. The Code includes policies around disclosing conflicts of interest, the offering and acceptance of gifts and other benefits, bribery, corruption, discrimination, and many other relevant matters to ensure best practice. Beyond this, the Code sets out the process for dealing with any violations of the Code and lays out the jurisdiction of the newly formed Ethics and Fair Play Committee to uphold the policies.

Aside from this, the TTFU continues to develop approaches to regulate the market of commercial table tennis tournaments, which till now have not had one official regulatory body. As part of the federation's efforts, all major tournaments will now sign an agreement on their official member status and are included in a single calendar of sports events in Ukraine. Matches are counted towards a simplified system of national ratings, and players must confirm their status as professional athletes.

"We are confident that the processes we have put in place, as well as the creation of this Ethics and Fair Play Code and Committee will aid in our fight to counter the serious issue of match-fixing. We are a fully independent organisation and our primary objective is to develop and grow the sport of Table Tennis in Ukraine. We remain dedicated to supporting new and emerging tournaments, and work to streamline the game without imposing unnecessary regulations. I am confident that by joining forces with the Sport Integrity team and leveraging their expertise, we will create working tools to counter what threatens the essence of the sporting principle," said the President of the TTFU, Oleksandr Zats.

"The Ukrainian Table Tennis Federation is very concerned about the problem of match fixing and decided to react strongly. We are proud to work together with TTFU to stamp out dishonesty within the sport. We are confident that we will make table tennis in Ukraine a sport free from match-fixing," said Francesco Baranca, consultant at Sport Integrity Team S.r.l.

Source: 15 June 2021, PR Newswire

Table Tennis



United States

New FBI Unit Emerges Targeting Sports Corruption Including Esports

The feds appear to be getting more involved in the type of activity surrounding an interesting esports situation.

As part of a still-developing story of match-fixing within esports, details of a new Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) unit came out. The exact scope of the new unit is not yet known.

However, according to a Washington Post story, the Unit was formed in the lead up to the passage of the Rodchenkov Anti-Doping Act and will have a focus on sports corruption-related crimes.

What is the Rodchenkov Anti-Doping Act?

The Rodchenkov Anti-Doping Act was the United States' response to allegations that the Russian government had engaged in state-sponsored doping. The law sets out criminal penalties for certain individuals who commit "international doping fraud conspiracies."

The argument in favor of this legislation is that doping conspiracies harm the integrity of sport, and these effects extend beyond the competition and "clean" athletes but also harm the commercial relationships that have created a \$500 billion industry centering on sports.

Controversial criminalization of sports rules?

There have been some critiques of efforts to criminalize sports rules, in particular rules relating to doping in sport. However, as the legislation notes in its findings, the whistleblowers who came forward with evidence of state-sponsored doping by Russia lacked many protections, which would now be available to future whistleblowers.

The law effectively enables the federal government to protect whistleblowers under "existing witness and informant protection laws."

The Rodchenkov Act is named for the whistleblower, Dr. Grigory Rodchenkov. The law is narrow in its scope to apply to doping; however, it does not appear that the FBI's unit is quite so narrowly focused.

The new unit

The new FBI Unit is headed by Joseph Gillespie, according to the Post, and he will be part of the newly launched bureau Sport and Gaming Initiative.

While the broad scope of the new unit's authority appears focused on transnational sports competition, this law indeed provides a national law enforcement agency great authority both domestically and abroad.

Not just doping

The focus of the Unit will extend beyond doping conspiracies and include "an interest in potential match-fixing and gambling-related crimes."

Part of the impetus for the Unit appears to be visible in order to have a deterrent effect on international crime syndicates that may target American events.

In fact, it appears that the Unit was involved in the infamous Parlay Patz investigation.

New, but not new

The FBI's new Unit is of course not its first foray into sports corruption, as the Bureau has previously (and may still) operate a sports bribery unit that would investigate instances of sports bribery-related match-fixing.

The FBI has long investigated sports corruption, but this new unit appears more focused in scope.

Concerns with organized crime

The connection between sports corruption (usually match-fixing) and organized crime has long been cited as the reason for law enforcement's interest in sports-related crimes. Indeed, illegal bookmaking for sports betting was the impetus for the Wire Act.

Likewise, the Sports Bribery Act was passed in response to organized criminal efforts to target athletes to throw sporting events for the benefit of the fixers.

While organized criminal operations remain a concern, the new Bureau initiative appears to be putting a direct focus on sports, as opposed to concerning itself first with other organized criminal enterprises that lend to sports corruption.

Changing tides

The recognition of sports as a \$500 billion industry is significant. Following the high-profile arrests surrounding scandals involving international sports organizations, most prominently FIFA, it was clear that the federal government was taking an interest in sports corruption from an angle that differed from the past.

The Rodchenkov Act is a major step towards creating greater government oversight over the sports industry. More legislation coming?

One of the questions that arises out of the new unit is whether Congress will seek to expand the group's purview by trying to pass new legislation in the realm of sports wagering.

We saw an effort to modernize the Sports Bribery Act associated with the failed Sen. Orrin Hatch bill that went out as fast as it came in, in late 2019, but it has been relatively quiet since.

Modernizing the Sports Bribery Act?

The ill-fated Hatch-Schumer bill would have added extortion and blackmail to the activities that are covered under the 1964 Sports Bribery Act.

The proposed changes would have also prohibited wagering based on protected non-public information, as well as creating whistleblower protection that would have brought the statute more in line with modern trends across a wide area of industries of protecting those who come forward with information about wrongdoing.

More enforcement

The new FBI Unit with a focus on sports is an important addition to law enforcement's arsenal in fighting sports corruption. The rise of legal betting has only increased the value of the industry, so, therefore, makes sense that increased resources are spent protecting the industry from those who could cause reputational harm.

The regulated sports wagering market provides great advantages over the unregulated market in regards to routing out corrupt activity. However, the rise of a legal market does not mean that corrupt activity automatically disappears.

As we are now seeing in the world of esports, vigilance and enforcement remain important attributes for stopping corruption.

Source: 11 June 2021, *Legal Sports Report*

eSports

<https://www.legalsportsreport.com/51040/new-fbi-unit-sports-corruption-esports/>



ODDS AND ENDS

Congo (Democratic Rep.)

VfB Stuttgart footballer Silas Wamangituka was playing under false name and identity

German football club VfB Stuttgart say that their Congolese forward Silas Wamangituka has been playing under a false name and age.

The player's real name has been revealed as Silas Katompa Mvumpa, and he is actually 22 years old, one year older than previously thought.

Katompa Mvumpa had recently informed the club that he had been the victim of "machinations of his former agent".

The striker, who is a citizen of DR Congo, was born in Kinshasa in October 1998 and not 1999 as indicated on his false papers.

VfB Stuttgart has said that it would fully defend Katompa Mvumpa.

According to the German club, the discrepancy occurred when the player was invited to a trial by Belgian side Anderlecht in 2017.

Anderlecht were interested in signing the player, but advised him to return to DR Congo before his visa expired and return with a new application.

But Stuttgart have claimed that Katompa Mvumpa was told by an agent in Belgium that he would not be able to return to Europe if he returned to the African country.

"As Silas was very young, completely inexperienced and alone, he placed his trust in the agent, whom he knew from before in DR Congo, and subsequently became completely dependent," the club said in a statement.

"He lived in Paris with the agent who largely cut him off from the outside. Silas had neither access to his account nor his papers at this time."

Stuttgart said the agent had then changed the player's identity and provided him with papers that identified him as Silas Wamangituka -- one of his father's names -- and changed his birth year to 1999.

The German club said they were reviewing new documents from DR Congo and were in contact with local authorities about the matter.

Germany's football federation has been informed, and Stuttgart are assuming that the player still has a valid licence to represent the club.

Stuttgart have said that his change of identity was intended to cut him off from certain contacts in Congo and make him vulnerable to blackmail.

"I have lived in constant fear over the last few years and have also been very worried about my family in Congo," said Katompa Mvumpa.

"It was a hard step for me to reveal my story ... I am very relieved and I hope that I can encourage other players who have had similar experiences with agents."

"I am deeply grateful to VfB Stuttgart for all their trust and support during this time," he added.

Katompa Mvumpa scored 11 Bundesliga goals in 25 appearances last season, and joined Stuttgart from FC Paris in 2019.

Source: 8 June 2021, Euro News

Football

<https://www.euronews.com/2021/06/08/vfb-stuttgart-footballer-silas-wamangituka-was-playing-under-false-name-and-identity>

POLICY

Malta

Malta veto on sports betting rules stumbling block in Financial Action Task Force review

Malta could have to withdraw its EU veto on a sports betting convention if it is to finally get the all-clear from the Financial Action Task Force in the coming days on its Moneyval test.

A stumbling block to a final decision by the FATF, which decides whether Malta is placed on a damning list of untrustworthy financial jurisdictions, concerns an institutional deadlock imposed by the country in the Council of Europe's parliamentary assembly, over the definition of 'illegal sports betting'.

"We will probably have to bow our head and just get on with it," said a senior government source on Malta's adherence to the Macolin Convention, a Council of Europe treaty aimed at tackling the manipulation of sport.

Another government source said the Maltese government is still seeking clarifications on the issue.

The FATF is expected to take its first decision on 15 June, on the back of a report by the CoE's anti-money laundering expert committee, known as Moneyval. Two years earlier, Malta had failed the exhaustive test of anti-money laundering rules, running the danger of being grey-listed as a risky jurisdiction.

Since then, international assessors gave Malta a to-do list for the FATF to review, which include a number of reforms.

But Malta is also expected to resolve the deadlock on the Macolin rules, despite the damaging effect this might have on the remote gaming industry in Malta.

Since 2014, Malta has contested a definition in the Convention which could affect its lucrative gambling revenues. Malta has objected to the definition of "illegal sports betting" because the article in question will make illegal any sports betting activity in one state, if the applicable law of the jurisdiction of the consumer of the betting service considers it to be so.

Malta has previously said that if ratified, this would mean that licensed gaming operators in Malta could be hindered from extending their operations abroad unless they abide by the laws of the other members states.

Malta's rules on remote betting allow companies across Europe to have one licence with which to offer remote gambling to consumers. Yet these same companies could now be faced to apply for different licences in various member states, each with their own licensing costs.

There is broad agreement in Malta that its gaming industry depends on a successful licensing and regulatory framework to allow companies to use the island as a base, and offers its services globally.

Malta wants to ensure that betting companies in the EU keep enjoying this kind of free movement, where a service licensed in one member State – like Malta itself – be accepted in all others where remote gambling clients reside.

Malta has insisted that the Macolin definition only targets betting companies which are merely 'not allowed' in the jurisdiction of the consumer, something that affects legally-compliant and monitored companies in Malta.

It has also said the definition is an unnecessary intrusion into the regulation of betting.

The Malta deadlock has delayed ratification of the Macolin Convention, because the EU requires consensus to implement a Council of Europe convention. With seven Council of Europe member states ratifying the Convention – just enough for it to enter into force – and 19 states who have signed it, Malta's veto prevents the European Commission signing it on behalf of all 28 member states.

While the Convention lays down provisions to outlaw and sanction illegal betting activity in sport, Malta insists the definition of 'illegal gambling' would be regulating other sectors of the gaming industry. It also says its national laws and the Malta Gaming Authority's sports integrity unit are well equipped to fight suspicious betting together with law enforcement agencies and sporting bodies.

The Maltese have proposed that the definition of "illegal sports betting" be clarified to refer only to the manipulation of sports competitions within the context of the Macolin Convention. "Malta has aligned itself with all remaining provisions of the Convention, and only took this step in order to be in a position to sign and ratify the same Convention," the government has previously said on the impasse.

Source: 13 June 2021, Malta today

All Sports

https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/110215/malta_veto_on_sports_#.YMkjjmSpWeN



INTERPOL

INTEGRITY IN SPORT