



INTERPOL

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Photos International Olympic Committee

SENTENCES/SANCTIONS

Chile

Mauricio Alvarez-Guzman banned for life for tennis match-fixing and associated corruption offences

Chilean tennis player Mauricio Alvarez-Guzman has been handed a lifetime ban from professional tennis after being found guilty of match-fixing and associated corruption offences, which breach the sport's Tennis Anti-Corruption Program (TACP).

The 31-year old was found to have attempted to contrive the outcome of an August 2016 ATP Challenger match in Meerbusch, Germany by offering a player €1,000 to lose a set.

In addition he was found guilty of contriving the singles draw of the ITF F27 Futures tournament played in July 2016 in Antalya, Turkey by purchasing a wild card for entry into the singles competition. An intention to purchase a wild card for the doubles competition of the same tournament did not come to fruition, but still stands as a corruption offence.

The disciplinary case against Mr Alvarez-Guzman was considered by independent Anti-Corruption Hearing Officer Charles Hollander QC at a Hearing held in London on 11 March 2019.

Having found him guilty of all charges, the lifetime ban imposed by Mr Hollander means that with effect from 14 March 2019 the player is permanently excluded from competing in or attending any tournament or event organised or sanctioned by the governing bodies of the sport.

In July 2010 Mr Alvarez-Guzman reached a career-high ATP singles ranking of 1050; his highest doubles ranking of 672 came in August 2014. His current ITF World Tour ranking stands at 3059.

The breaches of the TACP he has been found guilty of are:

Section D.1.d: "No Covered Person shall, directly or indirectly, contrive or attempt to contrive the outcome or any other aspect of any Event."

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

Section D.1.g: "No Covered Person shall, directly or indirectly, offer or provide any money, benefit or Consideration to any other Covered Person with the intention of negatively influencing a Player's best efforts in any Event."

The Tennis Integrity Unit is an initiative of the Grand Slam Board, the International Tennis Federation, the ATP and the WTA, who are jointly committed to a zero tolerance approach to corruption in tennis.

Source: 15 March 2019, Tennis Integrity Unit

Tennis

<http://www.tennisintegrityunit.com/media-releases/mauricio-alvarez-guzman-banned-life-tennis-match-fixing-and-associated-corruption-offences>

Greece

OFI Crete is relegated for match-fixing

The Greek soccer federation decided on Monday the relegation of OFI Crete to the second division, and of second-tier club Aiginiakos to the third division, for fixing last year's Football League match between them. In response a firm of hardcore OFI fans threatened against the Greek national team playing its home games in Iraklio.

On November 12, 2017, OFI hosted Aiginiakos for the Football League and won 6-0. The Hellenic Football Federation (EPO) received information, including testimonies, that pointed to a manipulation of the encounter and on Monday its Ethics Committee ruled that OFI and Aiginiakos were guilty of match fixing.

The verdict, that was not published by EPO but by the clubs involved, provides for their relegation for next season, the deduction of six points from their tally next year, a fine of 300,000 euros per club, and a fine of 60,000 euros on each of the two clubs' presidents at the time along with a lifetime ban from the game.

According to the ruling there is also a 10-year ban from soccer imposed on three Aiginiakos players plus a 5,000-euro fine, while former Aiginiakos official Alexandros Machairidis got a life ban from soccer and a 20,000-euro fine.

Crucially, all decisions can be appealed and OFI stated on Monday it will immediately take the case to a second degree. This is the first time the Ethics Committee of EPO has issued a relegation verdict for match fixing.

EPO has chosen Pankritio Stadium at Iraklio as the new, permanent home of the national team, but on Monday OFI's diehard supporters warned that "unless the punishment goes only against individuals and not the club, no national team will be welcome in Iraklio. You will realize it immediately within Pankritio Stadium."

OFI and Aiginiakos will continue to play in their divisions for now, at least until their case comes to a final ruling.

Source: 5 March 2019, Ekathimerini

Football

<http://www.ekathimerini.com/238295/article/ekathimerini/sports/ofi-crete-is-relegated-for-match-fixing>



India

Supreme Court sets aside life ban on Sreesanth in IPL spot-fixing case

In what has come as a relief to former India fast bowler Sreesanth, the Supreme Court has "set aside" the life ban imposed on him by the BCCI for his alleged role in the 2013 IPL corruption and spot-fixing scandal. The apex court of the country has asked the BCCI to "reconsider" and "revisit" the length of any fresh ban, "preferably" within three months.

Under the BCCI's new constitution (registered in August 2018), all the duties earlier discharged by the disciplinary committee, made up of BCCI officials, will be performed by the ombudsman going forward. Therefore, Sreesanth's fate will now be decided by Justice (ret'd) DK Jain, recently appointed for the job.

Welcoming the court judgement, Sreesanth said he was positive about returning to the game. "The Supreme Court has given me a lifeline and it has helped me restore my dignity," he said after the court delivered the verdict on Friday. "It's a great opportunity for me to get back on the field."

The case dates back to 2013, when the BCCI disciplinary committee had penalised several players including Sreesanth on the basis of an internal probe conducted by Ravi Sawani, then head of the board's anti-corruption unit. Along with Sreesanth, then with Rajasthan Royals, two of his team-mates - Ankeet Chavan and Ajit Chandila - also received life bans for their alleged role in the spot-fixing scandal.

The BCCI action followed the arrest of Sreesanth and the others by Delhi Police for alleged promises made to bookmakers during the 2013 IPL. The charges against Sreesanth pertained to the match against Kings XI Punjab, played on May 9.

In the Friday judgment, the court was told that in "exchange" for the sum of INR 10 lakh, Sreesanth had "agreed to concede 14 or more runs in the second over" of his spell. And in order to "confirm the fix", he was "required to place a hand towel in his visible pocket while ensuring there was no such towel during the first over".

That information was extracted from a taped conversation between Jiju Janardhan, Sreesanth's close friend and team-mate at an Ernakulam club, and alleged bookie Chandresh Patel by Delhi Police on May 6, 2013, three days before the match.

Sawani, a former joint director of India's Central Bureau of Investigation, had prepared two reports - a preliminary one (based on the taped conversations mentioned above), and a supplementary one, which was prepared after questioning Sreesanth in person and taking a written undertaking from the player.

Based on Sawani's findings, the BCCI disciplinary panel, comprising then president N Srinivasan along with the two vice-presidents, Arun Jaitley and Niranjana Shah, held Sreesanth guilty of "match-fixing and non-reporting of offences" under the BCCI's anti-corruption code.

The Supreme Court was hearing the matter because earlier this year, Sreesanth had challenged last August's order of the division bench of the Kerala High Court, which had negated a judgment issued by the same court asking the board to lift the ban. The two-judge division bench had ruled that the BCCI ban could not be overturned or reduced.

Sreesanth's lawyer Salman Khurshid, a former Indian minister of external affairs, plead his case in the latest instance, and said that the BCCI had not followed the laws of natural justice while determining the sanction, and pointed out that a life ban was "excessive and maximum". Khurshid argued that Sreesanth should have been penalised with a five-year ban at the most for not reporting the approach made by bookies, an offence under the BCCI's code of conduct.

In its judgement, the court concluded that BCCI had "not violated" any principles of natural justice while determining the sanction. However, the court did point out an anomaly in the BCCI verdict, that the disciplinary committee did not "advert to the aggravating and mitigating factors" as listed under its code.

"Without considering the relevant provisions of Anti-Corruption Code, the disciplinary committee has imposed a lifetime ban on the appellant [Sreesanth] which sanction cannot be held to be in accordance with the Anti-Corruption Code itself," the court said in the 73-page judgement. "When range of ineligibility which is minimum five years, maximum life time ban is provided for, the discretion to which, either minimum or maximum or in between has to be exercised on relevant facts and circumstances."

The court also said that Sreesanth had conducted himself with dignity by not immediately challenging the original ban. Keeping that in mind, the court said the BCCI ought to review its original sanction on the player.

"The order dated 13.09.2013 of the disciplinary committee only to the extent of imposing sanction of lifetime ban is set aside. The disciplinary committee of the BCCI may reconsider the quantum of punishment/sanction which may be imposed on the appellant as per Article 6 of the Anti-Corruption Code. The appellant may be given one opportunity to have his say on the question of quantum of punishment/sanction."

Source: Nagraj Gollapudi, 15 March 2019, ESPN Cricinfo

Cricket

http://www.espnricinfo.com/story/_/id/26274063/supreme-court-sets-aside-life-ban-sreesanth-ipl-spot-fixing-case

Zimbabwe

Enock Ikope: Former Zimbabwe cricket chief banned for 10 years

Former Zimbabwe Cricket director Enock Ikope has been given a 10-year ban from the game for corruption. Ikope was found guilty of breaching three counts of the International Cricket Council's anti-corruption code. His suspension follows a 20-year ban for Rajan Nayer, a former Zimbabwe cricket official, in March 2018. The ICC said Ikope failed to cooperate with its investigation, and deleted data from his mobile phone before handing it over. The charge was linked to the 2017 West Indies tour fix attempt when Nayer offered Zimbabwe captain Graeme Cremer \$30,000 to fix the result of the two-Test series.

Source: 6 March 2019, BBC Sport

Cricket

<https://www.bbc.com/sport/cricket/47470952>

LEGISLATION

Moldova

Moldova ratifies convention of Council of Europe on manipulation in sports competitions

Chisinau, 29 November 2018 /MOLDPRES/ – The Parliament ratified today the Council of Europe Convention on manipulation in sports competitions. According to the Convention, the notion of "manipulation in sports competitions" refers to "arranged matches", illegal sports betting and sport corruption. The document aims to prevent, detect, punish and discipline about the manipulation of sporting results and improve the exchange of info at international level between the concerned public authorities, sports organisations and sports betting operators. The document recommends sports organisations and competition organisers to apply stricter rules to combat corruption in sports, tougher sanctions and disciplinary measures. The Convention also provides for measures to protect informants and witnesses. The Council of Europe Convention on manipulation in sports competitions was drawn up in Magglingen/Macolin, Switzerland, in September 2014. The convention signed 15 states at an interministerial conference.

Source: 15 March 2019, Moldpres

<https://www.moldpres.md/en/news/2018/11/29/18010707>

BETTING

Hong Kong

Hong Kong gambling den raids: 267 arrested

Hong Kong law enforcers launched raids against illegal gambling dens across the city over the weekend and arrested a total of 267 people, including 80 non-Chinese.

700 officers from the Police Force's Organized Crime & Triad Bureau and Immigration Department raided 40 game centers and illegal gambling dens in Yuen Long, the New Territories and Kowloon's Yau Ma Tei and Sham Shui Po, Sing Tao Daily reported.

They arrested 221 men and 46 women aged between 16 and 76. Of those arrested, 72 men and eight women were from Nepal, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia and Egypt, 18 of whom were asylum seekers.

Seven mainland Chinese holding two-way entry permits were also arrested.

440 electronic gaming machines, including fishing game machines, slot machines and roulette machines, were confiscated.

Officers also seized 23 card reading machines, 584 reward points cards, HK\$900,000 in cash (US\$114,654) and illegal drugs including cocaine, methamphetamine, marijuana and suspected drug paraphernalia.

Police estimated that the 440 gambling machines seized could generate monthly revenue of up to HK\$10 million (US\$1.27 million).

The bureau sent undercover officers posing as gamblers to the gaming centers to collect intelligence six months ago.

A triad society had reportedly lined up game center licensees to operate the illegal gambling dens. Gamblers had to buy cards which recorded their scores before playing the machines.

Middlemen lured customers to the game center, persuaded them to buy the cards and assisted them to exchange game points for cash, which is illegal.

The gambling syndicate controlling the centers would take around 10% to 20% commission from the exchanged amount while the middlemen could earn a basic salary of HK\$4,000 to HK\$5,000 a month, plus commission.

Source: Asia Times Staff, 12 March 2019, Asia Times

<https://www.asiatimes.com/2019/03/article/hong-kong-gambling-den-raids-267-arrested/>

United States

Department of Gaming seizes \$1 million in illegal gambling bust

The Arizona Department of Gaming seized close to \$1 million in cash during an illegal gambling bust Thursday.

The department — alongside the Phoenix and Glendale police departments — executed warrants at Lah Anh Billiards at 27th Avenue and Bethany Home Road in addition to Thanh Long Billiards near 35th Avenue and Cactus Road. Both businesses are suspected of running illegal gambling operations, according to a news release.

One of the storefronts appears to be located in a non-descript strip mall, the other a residential area. Neither business appears to have an online presence.

Officials said nearly \$1 million in cash, several illegal gambling devices and "other assets" were seized during the bust.

The case will ultimately be forwarded to the Maricopa County Attorney's Office, who will then determine whether any charges should be filed. Department of Gaming officials said they could face up to a Class 5 felony for conducting a criminal enterprise.

Source: Bree Burkitt, 8 March 2019, AZ Central

<https://eu.azcentral.com/story/news/local/phoenix/2019/03/08/1-million-seized-illegal-gambling-bust/3104946002/>

DOPING

France

Dopage : le tramadol, interdit par l'UCI, sera recherché sur Paris-Nice

Banni depuis le 1er mars, l'antidouleur préféré des cyclistes sera recherché à partir de dimanche et la première étape de Paris-Nice. « No pain, no gain » (pas de résultat sans souffrir), aiment à répéter les sportifs dans une ode à cette douleur physique qu'ils ont épousée pour toute leur carrière. Mais, a contrario, la possibilité de contenir la douleur ouvre des perspectives. D'où, parfois, le recours à des médicaments antalgiques dans le seul but d'améliorer ses performances. Le tramadol fait partie de cette classe de médicaments et serait utilisé par au moins 5 % des cyclistes. Ses effets secondaires peuvent être redoutables : on l'accuse notamment de provoquer une baisse d'attention qui entraînerait des chutes dans le peloton. Lors de sa campagne électorale, David Lappartient, le président de l'Union cycliste internationale (UCI), avait promis son interdiction. N'ayant pu l'obtenir de l'Agence mondiale antidopage (AMA) par le biais des règlements antidopage, l'UCI, sous la conduite de son directeur médical, le Français Xavier Bigard, a utilisé l'approche sanitaire et son règlement médical pour le bannir des pelotons depuis le 1er mars. Sa présence sera activement recherchée à partir de dimanche et la première étape de Paris-Nice. [...]

Source: Gilles Simon, 7 March 2019, L'Equipe

Cycling

<https://www.lequipe.fr/Cyclisme-sur-route/Article/Dopage-le-tramadol-interdit-par-l-uci-sera-recherche-sur-paris-nice/996126>



Morocco

La loi instaure des peines de prison pour dopage

Kiosque360. La guerre contre le dopage est lancée grâce à un texte de loi qui prévoit des peines privatives de liberté et une série de mesures disciplinaires à l'encontre des auteurs des faits. Les détails.

Lors d'une réunion tenue au département de la Jeunesse et des sports avec les acteurs du secteur sportif, le ministre Rachid Talbi Alami a mis l'accent sur le nouveau dispositif prévu pour muscler la lutte contre le dopage dans le sport marocain, rapporte Al Ahdath Al Maghribia du 6 mars.

À commencer par la création du Laboratoire national d'analyses des échantillons qui n'a pas encore vu le jour au Maroc. En attendant, le royaume continuera à recourir aux laboratoires étrangers pour effectuer des tests sur les échantillons recueillis auprès des athlètes et des sportifs de manière générale.

Le parlement a voté à l'unanimité cette fameuse loi 97.12 relative à la lutte contre le dopage dans le domaine sportif, dans le but d'enrayer les scandales qui ont éclaboussé particulièrement l'athlétisme marocain et protéger les sportifs.

Ladite loi prévoit une peine allant jusqu'à 6 ans de prison en cas de récidive, à l'encontre des sportifs, ou des responsables d'associations, de sociétés ou d'organismes sportifs.

L'article 53 de cette loi punit de 6 mois à deux ans de prison et d'une amende de 20.000 à 50.000 DH, ou l'une de ces sanctions, tout auteur d'une infraction à la loi antidopage, telle que mentionnée dans l'article 10 de ce texte.

Lorsque ces actes sont commis dans le cadre d'une bande organisée ou en direction d'un mineur, les châtements sont encore plus lourds: une peine de prison de 2 à 5 ans et une amende de 50.000 à 100.000 DH. En outre, celui qui n'exécute pas les sanctions définitives de l'agence sera puni de la prison d'une année à 3 ans et d'une amende de 30.000 à 60.000 DH.

Cette loi comporte plusieurs mesures disciplinaires qui varient de l'avertissement au blâme, en passant par l'annulation des résultats réalisés au cours de la compétition. Cela se traduit également par le retrait des médailles, des titres et des points obtenus dans les classements.

Source: *Ismail El Fassi, 5 March 2019, 360 Sport*

<http://sport.le360.ma/athletisme/la-loi-instaure-des-peines-de-prison-pour-dopage-65323>



Russia

Russia remains banned from international track for doping

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — Russia's doping ban from international track and field will remain in place until the Moscow laboratory data has been analyzed, a process that could lead to the country's reinstatement before this year's world championships.

The head of the IAAF's Russia taskforce, Rune Andersen, said Monday he is waiting for the World Anti-Doping Agency to finish analyzing data from the Moscow laboratory at the center of the doping cover-ups. The IAAF also wants Russia to cover the costs of years of doping investigations.

Andersen said any lifting of the ban "might be before, it might be after" the Sept. 27-Oct. 6 world championships in Doha, Qatar, adding that "WADA has committed to getting (the data) to the (Athletics Integrity Unit) as a matter of priority."

The AIU prosecutes anti-doping cases in track and field.

Any return of the team for the world championships would need Russian authorities to continue their grudging cooperation with WADA.

WADA reinstated the Russian anti-doping agency last year on condition the country turned over the lab data by the end of 2018. Russia missed that dateline but law enforcement in Moscow eventually gave WADA officials access in January. There are more than 1.5 million files, making analysis a lengthy process, though WADA has said it could be finished next month.

After that, WADA wants Russia to hand over athletes' stored doping samples for further testing if the data shows their cases were covered up.

The IAAF is the lone holdout among major sports bodies in maintaining its ban on Russia. The ban has been in place since November 2015, but the IAAF has allowed dozens of Russians to compete as neutral athletes.

Russian high jumper Maria Lasitskene and pole vaulter Anzhelika Sidorova won gold medals at the European indoor championships this month in Glasgow. Had Russia been competing as an official national team, it would have ranked fifth in the medals table.

Andersen said his taskforce was concerned Russia hadn't done enough to break from coaches who worked with doped athletes.

One notable case is that of Valentin Maslakov, who resigned in January 2015 as Russia's head coach, but is now listed on the sports ministry website as a national team coach for 400-meter runners and hurdlers.

"This runs counter to the assurances taskforce has previously received from RusAF that it is disassociating itself from the old regime," Andersen said, using an abbreviation for the Russian track federation. "The taskforce has therefore today written to RusAF and asked for clarifications."

Maslakov has not been banned from coaching and is not accused of doping athletes. However, a series of investigations and failed doping tests have shown drug use was widespread during his time as head coach.

RusAF president Dmitry Shlyakhtin said his federation's debt to the IAAF stands at \$3.22 million and is growing. He added that Russia has offered to pay the IAAF in instalments because it has lost sponsors over doping scandals.

Shlyakhtin said Russia would conduct a "serious analysis" of its reliance on coaches who worked in an era when doping was rife.

"I'm sure we will find a solution which will allow the situation to be regulated for the sake of a quick reinstatement of RusAF," Shlyakhtin said.

Source: 11 March 2019, Fox Sports
Track and Field

<https://www.foxsports.com/other/story/russia-remains-banned-from-international-track-for-doping-031119>

GOOD PRACTICES

Austria

Austrian Tennis Federation joining the Play Fair Code

After the Austrian Football Association, the Austrian Football League, the Austrian Skiing Association as well as Erste Bank Icehockey League and Admiral Basketball League (ABL), the Austrian Tennis Federation joined the Play Fair Code lately being the fifth sporting discipline and the first individual sporting discipline.

ATF President Werner Klausner said: "The manipulation of individual sports is growing. It is enormously important that we confront our young players with a forward strategy and sensitize, inform and protect them at this early stage."

The Play Fair Code will carry out prevention and awareness trainings for the ATF with the under 16 age group and above as well as with the Daviscup and Fed Cup teams and the Austrian Tennis League. Furthermore, referees and officials will be trained and sensitized.

"Tennis is the world's most easily to manipulate sport," said Play Fair Code President Günter Kaltenbrunner. "With more than 200 suspected cases worldwide and numerous actually proven manipulations - see the recent arrests of 28 professional tennis players in Spain - tennis is unfortunately the negative leader. Tennis is enormously popular in Austria. It is therefore very positive when top sports associations such as the Austrian Tennis Federation recognize the need for active prevention. Our thanks go to the entire ATF Board and in particular to President Werner Klausner."

Davis Cup player Philipp Oswald was directly affected. "Money is often a brutal bait," said the Austrian tennis pro. "When I was 22, somebody called me in my hotel room before a challenger tournament and offered me \$ 15,000 if I lost. I immediately hung up." The ATF membership of the Play Fair Code is "a great thing, because learning and understanding about the threats and consequences makes it easier to say no to manipulation."

Source: 6 March 2019, Play Fair Code

Tennis

<http://www.playfaircode.at/en/news/details/20190102-austrian-tennis-federation-joining-the-play-fair-code/>

ODDS AND ENDS

Germany

German football sponsorships could face ban, as DFB scolded for BWIN advertising

Future of gambling sponsorships in German football thrown into doubt, after regulator orders German Football Association to stop advertising Bwin. The future of gambling sponsorships in German football has been thrown into doubt after the German Football Association (DFB) received a scolding from gambling regulators. Apparently, authorities sent the DFB a strongly worded letter reminding them that it is illegal to advertise casino gambling under German law, and pointing out that their partnership with Bwin was effectively promoting casino gambling alongside the authorised sports betting. Gambling partnerships are worth millions of Euros to German football, with the DFB itself having only recently entered the extensive deal with Bwin. The letter, which was drafted by the Ministry of the Interior of Baden-Württemberg in cooperation with other authorities from other German states, emphasised that there was no doubt as to the illegality of advertising unauthorised gambling, and that if the DFB continued to promote Bwin, there was a risk of a complete advertising ban being enforced. Such a ban would cost German football clubs and the DFB dearly, and it is unclear how a solution can be found as long as gambling companies like Bwin continue to offer casino games on the same sites, and under the same branding, as their sports betting. [...]

Source: Oliver Cook, 14 March 2019, Ayo News

Football

<https://ayo.news/2019/03/14/german-football-sponsorships-could-face-ban-as-dfb-scolded-for-bwin-advertising/>

INTEGRITY IN SPORT EVENTS

San Marino

San Marino Integrity workshop: con la nuova legge sulla frode sportiva la lotta al match fixing ha un'arma in più

ROMA - Come lo scorso anno, il mese di marzo segna un momento fondamentale nel contrasto a combine e match-fixing. Pratiche che stanno assumendo caratteri sempre più preoccupanti anche a livello internazionale – come ricorda Maurizio Faraone, Comandante della Gendarmeria e Direttore dell'Ufficio Centrale Interpol della Repubblica di San Marino – tanto da portare l'Interpol a strutturare dipartimenti dedicati al contrasto delle attività illecite, sempre più terreno fertile per pratiche ed organizzazioni criminali. [...]

Source: 13 March 2019, Agipro News

<https://www.agipronews.it/scommesse/san-marino-integrity-workshop-match-fixing-sportradar-id.153135>

CORRUPTION

Qatar

Qatar 'made secret \$400m World Cup payments to FIFA' ... and then followed it up with another \$480m offer amid fears they would lose right to host tournament

- Leaked documents revealed Qatar made \$400m World Cup payments to FIFA
- Qatari state-run broadcaster Al Jazeera 'made the secret offer in a TV contract'
- A fee of \$100m was agreed to be paid if Qatar won right to host 2022 World Cup
- A further \$480m was allegedly offered to ensure Qatar retained rights to host
- It means that FIFA were directly offered close to \$1bn in total by the Qatari state

Leaked documents have revealed the state of Qatar made a \$400m offer to FIFA three weeks before world football's governing body controversially decided that they would host the 2022 World Cup.

An exclusive investigation from The Sunday Times unearthed files that showed high-ranking officials from the Qatari state-run broadcaster Al Jazeera signed a television deal making the mega-money offer.

The TV company agreed to pay fee of \$100m into a designated FIFA account providing Qatar were successful in the World Cup ballot in 2010.

Details of the unprecedented offer are set out in documents that have been leaked to the Sunday Times.

The offer represented a conflict of interests for FIFA and was also a flagrant violation of its own rules as the TV company Al Jazeera was owned by Qatar's emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani.

FIFA's rules state that no bidding countries can offer financial benefits to the governing body in connection to the vote.

However, Sepp Blatter, then FIFA president at the time, and his secretary general Jerome Valcke, completed the deal by signing it just a week after Qatar had won the right to host the 2022 tournament.

On Saturday night, the chairman of the digital, culture, media and sport committee, Damian Collins told the Sunday Times that FIFA must freeze the Al Jazeera payments and launch an investigation into the contract that 'appears to be in clear breach of the rules'.

The decision to take the World Cup to the tiny state of Qatar, who has a population of just 2.6m and is the first country from the Middle East to host the tournament, was met with widespread opposition.

There were immediate concerns whether Qatar were capable of hosting such an event with claims they did not have the infrastructure nor football traditions to hold the world's biggest sporting competition.

There were also worries the temperature in Qatar would be too high to play competitive football - the decision was only made in 2018 that the tournament will now take place over November and December.

The Sunday Times have also revealed that a second TV rights contract worth \$480m was offered to FIFA by beIN Media, the Al Jazeera's spin-off, three years after they won the bid amid Qatar's fears they would be stripped of hosting the World Cup.

It means that FIFA were directly offered close to \$1bn in total by the Qatari state.

A spokesman for beIN said the award of the FIFA World Cup television rights had been 'investigated extensively and no wrongdoing has been found concerning our involvement'.

An investigation into corruption surrounding the 2010 vote cleared Qatar of any wrongdoing.

FIFA have refused to comment on these latest allegations.

Source: Jordan Seward For Mailonline, 10 March 2019, Mail Online

Football

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/sportsnews/article-6791737/Qatar-secret-400m-World-Cup-payments-FIFA-480m-retain-hosting-rights.html>

United States

Three men sentenced to prison for role in FBI college basketball corruption case

NEW YORK - U.S. District Court Judge Lewis A. Kaplan sentenced former Adidas executive James "Jim" Gatto to nine months in prison and both former Adidas consultant Merl Code and former runner Christian Dawkins to six months in prison Tuesday in Manhattan federal court.

Five months after each defendant was found guilty on charges of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and wire fraud in the sprawling college basketball investigation, Kaplan delivered the sentences to a packed courtroom that included families of the three men.

The three-week trial ended October 24 with unanimous guilty verdicts. The proceedings were part of a larger FBI investigation into corruption in college basketball.

Prosecutors say coaches teamed up with the Adidas executive and others to trade hundreds of thousands of dollars in bribes to influence star athletes' choice of schools, shoe sponsors, agents and even tailors.

All three men are appealing, and two of the defense attorneys, Steve Haney and Mark Moore, said after Tuesday's hearing that the appeals process could take more than a year to reach a conclusion.

Gatto, Code and Dawkins will not serve any jail time until the appeals process is resolved.

The probation department had previously recommended a prison sentence of one year for Gatto and a sentence of eight months' imprisonment for Code and Dawkins, and federal prosecutors pushed for even harsher punishments.

Code and Dawkins are scheduled to stand trial for more felony charges in April.

Former Louisville head coach Rick Pitino, former associate head coach Kenny Johnson and former assistant coach Jordan Fair were all fired by Louisville after the arrests were made in connection with the "pay-for-play" scheme, which included the three defendants paying the father of elite recruit Brian "Tugs" Bowen so the player would attend Louisville, an Adidas-sponsored school.

Pitino, Johnson and Fair weren't charged in the case. Brian Bowen never played for Louisville.

NCAA President Mark Emmert has said an independent enforcement body to adjudicate major infractions cases could be in place by August.

Kaplan said he sympathized with the argument that the defendants were being punished when others who did similar things were not being prosecuted. Nonetheless, he said, "These defendants all knew what they were doing was wrong."

The judge added that he wanted to send "a great big warning light to the basketball world."

"I deeply regret my actions," Gatto said in a shaky voice.

Dawkins referenced "social dysfunction" in college basketball and said his actions were "clouded" by a "system that takes advantage of kids."

"I realize now more than ever none of this was worth it," Dawkins said.

Code said he also regretted his actions but added, "Some things really got to be changed about college basketball."

Source: Christian Red, 5 March 2019, USA Today

Basketball

<https://eu.usatoday.com/story/sports/ncaab/2019/03/05/fbi-college-basketball-trial-prison-sentences-handed-out-three-men/3067964002/>