



INTERPOL

# INTEGRITY IN SPORT

## Bi-weekly Bulletin

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Photos International Olympic Committee

## INVESTIGATIONS

### China

#### Match fixing allegations hit StarLadder Dota 2 Minor qualifiers

Match fixing scandals have been a bane of esports' existence, and Dota 2 hasn't been immune to this. The latest example is an eruption of controversy around a series between Newbee and Avengerls.

Facing off in a series in the Chinese qualifiers to the StarLadder Season 3 Minor, a number of fans and pro players are crying foul about Avengerls's performances during their 2-1 series loss. They are honing in on a devastating comeback loss sustained by Avengerls in the second game of the series, which saw the team make a number of misplays that resulted in a Newbee victory. This was followed by discussions regarding the betting lines for the game, which seemingly favored Newbee despite Avengerls leading.

Though fans will often wildly speculate that a match was fixed when a dramatic comeback occurs, the Newbee vs. Avengerls was different as multiple Chinese Dota 2 legends chimed in.

The most notable example of this is former Newbee captain and current EHOME coach Zhang "xiao8" Ning stating he will "eat shit on stream" if it turns out the match was not fixed. The International 2012 winner Chen "Zhou" Yao also spoke out, questioning the legitimacy of the game.

Parsing whether these questions are valid is difficult. Teams punting seemingly guaranteed wins is a reality at all levels of Dota 2, both casual and professional. Other factors can come into play with the qualifier's online setting, such as lag and communication issues.

There were however some strange misplays in the game. Without additional information, it is almost impossible to speculate on whether one player or the whole team would have been in on the fix.

Match fixing a problem in Dota 2, League of Legends, and CSGO

Match fixing has been an unfortunate constant in every major esports title. The most high profile examples of this came in South Korean StarCraft: Brood War and StarCraft 2. Multiple scandals arose in the game's pro scene, which saw a slew of top players banned and some hit with legal action.

With the rise of esports globally, more events have created more opportunities for potentially shady dealings. Dota 2, League of Legends, and Counter-Strike: Global Offensive have all seen match fixing scandals occur, with the majority involving teams or players betting against themselves and then intentionally losing to guarantee a winning bet.

Different stakeholders have taken different approaches to combating this, which has typically seen these incidents play out in smaller events in recent years. Should these suspicions prove to be true, a match fixing scandal in the qualifiers of a Dota Pro Circuit event would be one of the largest in years.

Though match fixing is a serious problem in esports, it remains uncertain whether Avengerls' loss was anything other than a late stumble by an unproven team. It is also unclear whether Valve, StarLadder, or anyone else involved in organizing the tournament qualifier has plans to investigate the matter.

Source: 19 February 2020, Win.gg

eSports

<https://win.gg/news/3877/match-fixing-allegations-hit-starladder-dota-2-minor-qualifiers>

## Cyprus

### Cyprus Called Hub of European Soccer Match-Fixing Scandal

NICOSIA – Cyprus, where soccer was called rotten by one team owner and referees have had their cars blown up, is the center of European-wide corruption and match-fixing in the sport, the Spanish news operation said in an extensive report.

According to the report, surveillance carried out by Spanish law enforcement found that ringleaders of match-fixing were getting intelligence from their Cyprus link, AEK Larnaca's attacking midfielder, Jorge Larena.

That came after information in the report linked the corruption and match fixing to an attempt to kill retired Serbian soccer player Darko Kovaevi in Athens in January and as Spanish police arrested more than 50 players, managers and other players involved in manipulating the results of matches in the Spanish second, third and fourth divisions.

A source speaking to El Confidencial said: "It has been found that the situation is much bigger than intervening with players to score money from bets. In Cyprus, corruption exists within the institutions. They determine titles, entire championships and the participation of teams in European leagues, and pay out large sums of money to betting companies to make profit."

In January, the president of top-flight club Omonia Nicosia blasted what he called "rot and corruption" in Cypriot soccer, claiming he's been approached with offers to "buy off" a match, referees, and even players.

Stavros Papastavrou said that some offers even specified the "going rate" or the price tag for a championship or a cup.

He refrained from identifying who approached him, but he said "they have names and we know where they're from." He said their identities would be revealed to authorities after "convincing" assurances for the whistleblower's safety.

Papastavrou said his club will send a report on what ails Cypriot soccer and its hierarchy to soccer's European governing body UEFA – also fighting an image of being corrupt – and will provide a truncated copy to Cypriot police and the national soccer federation because his club didn't feel they can be "trusted" to keep its contents confidential.

He also offered a reward ranging from 5,000 to 25,000 euros (\$5,500 to \$27,500) to anyone willing to step forward this season with evidence of corruption and match-fixing.

Papastavrou said 18 months into his tenure as Omonia's chief executive have dispelled his earlier perception that suggestions of widespread corruption in the sport were "exaggerated and overblown."

He said he has since learned about match-fixing, paying off players to under-perform, and of the country's underworld that's "particularly active" in the sport but so far hasn't followed up with providing anymore information.

The source who spoke to the Spanish site said the heads of all involved teams which won certain titles as a result of agreed upon deals are aware of corruption, as they are also apparently benefitting from it.

UEFA had sent several notices suggesting foul play in Cypriot soccer but has done nothing about it other than highlighting suspicious betting activity, conducted mostly in Asian sports wagering markets.

Ayia Napa team Chairman Dimitris Masias, a former football referee, and a 33-year-old current referee Andreas Constantinou, were remanded for eight days after witnesses had come forward with match fixing allegations after a recent game between second division Ayia Napa and Othellos Athienou, said Kathimerini Cyprus.

Masias allegedly approached a player of an opposite team and offered 10,000 euros (\$10,805) to fix the game for Ayia Napa but the rival refused and said "may the best win" with Masias then replying, according to a witness, that he would approach referees then.

During the match in question, refereed by Constantinou, three Othellos players were expelled from the game starting at the 80th minute, with Ayia Napa finally scoring a 96th minute penalty and winning 1-0, a windfall for bettors who backed that club.

Both Masias and Constantinou are facing multiple charges including conspiracy to commit a felony, fraud conspiracy, and various sports-related offenses but nothing has happened to them yet as Cypriot soccer continues to operate under a shadow of suspicion.

After officials were granted access to the suspects' telecommunications data, which added new names to the list of statements the police will be seeking, their

Source: 19 February 2020, National Herald

<https://www.thenationalherald.com/286790/cyprus-called-hub-of-european-soccer-match-fixing-scandal/>

## Myanmar

### FIFA and AFC visit Myanmar to investigate match-fixing scandal in world cup qualifying match: MFF

Officials from the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) and Asian Football Confederation (AFC) are visited Myanmar to investigate match-fixing scandal in a world cup qualifying match between Kyrgyzstan and Myanmar, said Zaw Zaw, Chairman of Myanmar Football Federation (MFF).

The game was hosted by Kyrgyzstan and Myanmar team was defeated by the host team 7-0. The FIFA and AFC doubted the match is played to a completely or partially pre-determined result.

Zaw Zaw said, "It is regularly that FIFA initiated the investigation in matches where goal margin is big. We helped them in investigation. FIFA always performed investigations like that."

Fans criticized Myanmar's national team for humiliating defeat and the then Myanmar head coach Montenegrin Miodrag Radulovic was sacked. There were rumours of match-fixing in some Myanmar National League matches in 2017 and the MFF formed a special commission to investigate match-fixing as there was rumour came out that a match of Ayeyawady United FC in AFC Cup competition is included in match-fixing. However the MFF didn't announce the decision in public.

"The investigation about match-fixing is carried out around the world. We cannot make an announcement if we cannot be sure. According to the rules and regulations, they investigate people what they want. If we found who is responsible for it, we will make an announcement. If not, we will not announce," he said.

"It is not related to us and they have their procedures," said Zaw Zaw responding to a question about whether the MFF can announce the outcome of the investigation or not.

Sources said officials from the FIFA and AFC met eight players, who played the match, individually and questioned them by showing videos and facts. At the present, the investigation is finished.

*Source: 18 February 2020, Eleven Myanmar*

<https://elevenmyanmar.com/news/fifa-and-afc-visit-myanmar-to-investigate-match-fixing-scandal-in-world-cup-qualifying-match>



## Spain

### De Badajoz a Chipre: la Policía halla llamadas sobre una mafia que atenta contra árbitros

La UEFA ha pedido ayuda a la Policía española para tratar de neutralizar el mayor foco de corrupción del fútbol europeo: el amaño de partidos en Chipre, zona cero de las apuestas ilegales. Las autoridades locales decidieron el pasado 20 de enero suspender temporalmente las principales ligas del país después de que estallara una bomba en el coche de un árbitro. No hubo heridos, pero el incidente ilustra la escalada de violencia que está viviendo el fútbol chipriota por la infiltración de las organizaciones criminales especializadas en los amaños deportivos.

La bomba, la enésima colocada en la isla contra un árbitro en la última década, está probablemente relacionada con la manipulación de tres partidos de Segunda División y dos de Copa, pero el fenómeno corroe ya todas las categorías del fútbol de ese país y ha saltado a otros territorios, como Grecia, donde el 6 de enero fue tiroteado en plena calle el exdelantero de la Real Sociedad Darko Kovacevic. La UEFA cree que el Servicio de Control de Juegos de Azar de la Policía Nacional española tiene las claves para detener este tsunami.

Jorge Larena, a la izquierda, celebra un gol con AEK Larnaca en octubre de 2018 en un partido de Europa League. (Reuters)

Jorge Larena, a la izquierda, celebra un gol con AEK Larnaca en octubre de 2018 en un partido de Europa League. (Reuters)

Según han confirmado a El Confidencial fuentes del Ministerio del Interior, el máximo organismo del fútbol en el continente europeo se ha dirigido a esa unidad de la Policía para solicitarle las diligencias de las operaciones Pizarro y Cortés, dos actuaciones dirigidas por el Juzgado de Instrucción número 1 de Zafra (Badajoz) que se saldaron en febrero y junio de 2018, respectivamente, con la detención de más de medio centenar de jugadores, representantes e intermediarios por su presunta implicación en la adulteración de encuentros de Segunda, Segunda B y Tercera División.

#### ADVERTISING

La trama también había empezado a actuar en el extranjero. Las escuchas telefónicas permitieron descubrir que los cabecillas del grupo tenían un contacto en Chipre que les facilitaba datos de partidos amañados en ese país. Esa es la parte que interesa a la UEFA. El enlace de la red era Jorge Larena, un exjugador del Atlético de Madrid (2001-2006) que en el verano de 2015 fichó por uno de los grandes conjuntos chipriotas, el AEK Larnaca, el club más importante de la ciudad donde explotó el coche bomba el 17 de enero. Larena permaneció en la plantilla de este equipo hasta julio de 2019, cuando colgó las botas.

Bomba colocada el pasado enero en Larnaca (Chipre) en el coche de un árbitro de 33 años.

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La vinculación del fútbol chipriota con el crimen internacional es conocida desde hace años, pero las conversaciones interceptadas entre Pizarro y Cortés y otras pruebas recabadas por los agentes de la Sección de Control de Juegos de Azar, responsable también de la operación Oikos con epicentro en el SD Huesca, afloraron la existencia en ese país de una red que llegaba a los despachos más nobles de todos los estamentos del fútbol. “Lo que se ha descubierto va más allá de simples jugadores dejándose goles para ganar algo de dinero con las apuestas. Lo que hay en Chipre es una corrupción institucional, al más alto nivel, en la que los clubes, los árbitros y hasta los organismos oficiales reparten triunfos, torneos completos y clasificaciones para disputar las competiciones europeas, y luego mueven grandes cantidades de dinero en las casas de apuestas para rentabilizar esos amaños”, explican fuentes próximas a la investigación.

La Policía Nacional dispone de elementos para sustentar esa acusación. Sus pesquisas cuestionan la limpieza de cuatro partidos disputados en el último tramo de la temporada 2017-18, según ha podido confirmar El Confidencial. En todos participó el equipo de Jorge Larena. Se trata de la ida de unas semifinales de la Copa de Chipre disputada por AEK Larnaca-Apoel FC el 18 de abril de 2018 y que acabó 2-0; de un partido de Primera División jugado cuatro días después por los mismos equipos, de nuevo en casa del AEK Larnaca, con resultado final de 1-3; del partido de vuelta de la anterior eliminatoria, en casa del Apoel FC, que se jugó el 25 de abril de 2018 y terminó 1-2, y por último, la final de la Copa, disputada por AEK Larnaca y Apollon Limassol FC el 16 de mayo de 2018 y que acabó con victoria para los primeros por 2-1.

Operación de la Policía Nacional en Extremadura contra los amaños en Segunda B y Tercera División. (EFE)

Operación de la Policía Nacional en Extremadura contra los amaños en Segunda B y Tercera División. (EFE)

Probablemente, sea el sistema de adulteración del fútbol más sofisticado descubierto hasta ahora, y las pruebas están en el juzgado de Zafra. Las fuentes preguntadas explican que “todos los indicios apuntan a que los máximos responsables de los equipos que disputaron esos cuatro partidos habrían pactado que el AEK Larnaca ganaría la copa de Chipre, que otorga plaza para jugar la UEFA Europa League la temporada siguiente; el Apoel FC se llevaría el campeonato de Liga, que permite disputar la Champions League, y el Apollon Limassol FC quedaría en las primeras posiciones de la competición regular, que dan igualmente acceso a la Europa League”.

La información llegó a España antes de los partidos y varios de los implicados en la trama Pizarro-Cortés hicieron pronósticos. Se estima que ganaron, junto a los partidos de ligas españolas manipulados por esta misma red, un mínimo de 840.000 euros. La

cifra es considerable, pero está muy lejos del dinero que se mueve en Chipre. Tanto como para atentar contra un árbitro.

De hecho, a pesar de la suspensión de las principales ligas del país como respuesta a ese ataque, en los días siguientes fue posible seguir apostando a partidos de categorías inferiores. Y la suspensión indefinida de la Primera División solo duró en realidad una semana. La Sección de Control de Juegos de Azar de la Policía Nacional ya ha remitido sus diligencias a la UEFA.

*Source: 18 February 2020, El Confidencial*

[https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2020-02-17/bombas-arbitros-apuestas-policia-entrega-uefa\\_2457079/](https://www.elconfidencial.com/espana/2020-02-17/bombas-arbitros-apuestas-policia-entrega-uefa_2457079/)



INTERPOL

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## Spain

### Spanish police charge football agent Ramadanani & others with financial crimes, instigated by Football Leaks

Spanish authorities have charged football agent Abdilgafar Fali Ramadanani and his associates with money laundering and offences against the public purse, as part of an ongoing police operation, dubbed Lanigan.

The charges against Ramadanani, police say, stem from reports published by The Black Sea and European Investigative Collaborations (EIC) network during the Football Leaks project of 2016, which revealed that the German-born Macedonian Ramadanani and his football agency were orchestrating fictitious transfers via network of European clubs he secretly controlled.

The Ministry of the Interior stated in a press release that its operation continues to develop in the Balearic Islands, where Ramadanani resides, and many other Spanish cities, like Barcelona, Madrid, Malaga, Seville and Valencia.

The investigation is being led by agents from Spain's Central Operational Unit (UCO) of the Guardia Civil, the National Office for the Investigation of Fraud (ONIF) of the Tax Agency, and Europol, which have sent international letters rogatory to as-yet undisclosed countries, and made fifty requests for documentation from companies, football clubs, and law firms in relation to the probe.

The requests made so far are to Spanish teams that conducted deals with Ramadanani: Real Madrid - related to Jovic, Atlético de Madrid, Málaga, Levante, Sevilla, Betis, Almería, Sporting de Gijón, Celta and Mallorca .

The charges were announced only weeks after self-confessed Football Leaks source, Rui Pinto, appeared in court in Lisbon and was charged with various crimes related the disclosure of financial crimes and mismanagement in football and beyond. Pinto was also the source for the recent Luanda Leaks project of ICIJ, which exposed millions of euros in questionable payments Isabel dos Santos, daughter of the former Angolan leader, and the richest woman in Africa, made from the state oil company to her own companies.

Ramadanani, one of football's biggest agents, and has been involved in many high-profile transfers, among them Neymar to Paris Saint Germain, Luka Jovic to Real Madrid, and a good number of players from Eastern Europe to clubs such as Mallorca and Fiorentina.

The Spanish investigation focuses on the purchase, in 2017, of two luxury homes in the municipality of Calvià, near Palma de Mallorca. They were carried out, said the Ministry of the Interior, by "two players' agents linked to one of the representation agencies with the highest turnover in Europe." The agents named are Fali Ramadanani and his partner, Nikola Damjanac, a Serbian goalkeeper, who played for Partizan in Belgrade and Fluminense in Rio de Janeiro.

Their company, Lian Sports, based in Malta, is the third largest football agency in the world, according to Forbes magazine, behind the Stellar Group of Jonathan Barnett, Gareth Bale's agent, and Gestifute, the agency of Jorge Mendes, Cristiano Ronaldo's representative. The Black Sea also published reports, in 2018, about questionable deals of Mendes in Turkey.

Forbes estimates that Lian Sports has contracts worth \$777 million and has earned \$78 million in commissions. Both Ramadanani and his wife, Heike Sabine Ramadanani, and the Damjanac couple, are among those under investigation. As is a fifth person whose identity has not been disclosed.

EIC's Spanish partner, infoLibre, learned that Fali Ramadanani lives in one of the houses, while the other is the registered office of Majorca Aleksa Terza SL, a company dedicated to the "sale and purchase of real estate on its own behalf," whose administrators were Nikola Damjanac and his wife Sanja. The company was created in December 2013 and liquidated in July 2018, according to the official company registry.

The Spanish UCO, however, believes that the real owner of the villa registered to Damjanac's limited company is Ramadanani himself. They estimate that the value of the main property, where Ramadanani resides, is about €7 million.

Agents carried out an "exhaustive follow-up" on the origin of the cash used by Ramadanani and Damjanac to buy the two properties, and it is this arm of the investigation which led them to make allegations of their involvement in a "criminal organisation." The Interior ministry stated that the details of Ramadanani's and his associates' alleged financial fraud was known only because of documents disclosed by Football Leaks, in 2016, as part of investigations into Ramadanani's questionable dealings with Cypriot club, Apollon Limassol, the Belgian Royal Excel Mouscron, and others from Serbia.

Back in December 2016, The Black Sea and EIC revealed that Apollon hired players who never actually played for the team, but which were instead immediately sold to other clubs for a hugely increased price. The Cypriot team operated as a "bridge club", a practice sanctioned by UEFA. Football Leaks identified at least seven players from Serbia and Romania who passed through Apollon but never played for the team. One of them never even set foot on Cyprus. Another is Luka Jovic, currently with Real Madrid, who transferred from Apollon to Benfica in 2016.

The Spanish police claimed that Ramadani and his associates exerted control over several of clubs that provided the defendants with “great benefits for their enrichment,” but risked causing “great economic damage” to the clubs themselves. It also said that the tax evasion deprived various states of rightful revenue, and that the schemes with the clubs might constitute a criminal organisation, but the latter fell outside the scope of its investigations.

According to the Interior Ministry’s statement, Ramadani and Damjanac funnelled more than €10 million into Spain to buy the Calvià homes, as well as yachts, and “sustain a high standard of living”. The laundering operation was aided, they said, by a firm of tax advisors in Malta, where Fali Ramadani's agency, Lian Sports, has its tax domicile.

The investigation focus on a possible money laundering offence, based on a report by Sepblac, Spain's financial intelligence unit. In addition, the Macedonian agent is charged with a crime against the Spanish tax agency. The UCO considers that since he lives in Spain for more than half of the year, he is a Spanish resident and must pay taxes to the Spanish treasury; instead he pays a large part of his taxes in Cyprus, a territory with a much more lax taxation system.

The police raids took place last Tuesday, once Ramadani arrived in Spain. The players' agent is expected to testify before Judge Tardón at the Audiencia Nacional on Thursday. The judicial proceedings remain secret for the time being.

\*Update: We originally stated that "The arrests were announced only weeks after self-confessed Football Leaks source, Rui Pinto, appeared in court in Lisbon and was charged with various crimes related the disclosure of financial crimes and mismanagement in football and beyond." The defendants were charged, not arrested. This was an error on our part.

Opening image: Pini Zahavi (left) and Fali Ramadani (right) with Austrian agent Frank Schreier. Source: Facebook

Source: 25 February 2020, *The Black Sea*

Football

<https://theblacksea.eu/stories/football-leaks-2018/spanish-police-charge-football-agent-ramadani-others-financial-crimes-instigated-football-leaks/>



## Switzerland

### PSG president Nasser Al-Khelaifi charged in relation to corruption probe involving two other officials

PSG president Nasser Al-Khelaifi has been charged by the Swiss Attorney General in connection with a three-year corruption investigation allegedly involving ex-FIFA secretary general Jerome Valcke and a third businessman.

The alleged offences against Al-Khelaifi, who is chairman of BeIN media group, are not to do with his ownership of French champions PSG or his involvement as a member of the UEFA executive committee.

Swiss federal prosecutors say they have filed an indictment charging Al-Khelaifi with inciting Valcke to commit aggravated criminal mismanagement.

Al-Khelaifi released a statement claiming the charge "will be proven completely groundless and without any substance whatsoever".

"After an exhaustive three-year investigation, where I have fully and openly co-operated with the Public Prosecutor in Switzerland, I am pleased that all charges of bribery in connection with the 2026 and 2030 World Cups have been dropped," Al-Khelaifi said.

"As I have said vehemently and repeatedly for three years, the charges have not - and have never had - any basis whatsoever, either in fact or law. It is now - finally - indisputable fact that the 2026 and 2030 agreements were negotiated at arms length and without any improper influence in any form.

"After the most forensic public, private, lawful and unlawful scrutiny of all my dealings, I have been cleared of all suspicions of bribery and the case has been dismissed definitively and conclusively.

"While a secondary technical charge remains outstanding, I have every expectation that this will be proven completely groundless and without any substance whatsoever, in the same way as the primary case."

Al-Khelaifi says he has asked the Swiss authorities to open a criminal investigation into the case against him, claiming it's been "characterised by constant leaks".

He added: "While I have co-operated with all authorities during the legal process, the three-year investigation has been characterised by constant leaks, misinformation and a seemingly relentless agenda to smear my reputation in the media - completely irrespective of the facts and the notion of due process.

"For that reason, I have requested the relevant Swiss authorities to open a criminal enquiry into the conduct of the investigation. I also reserve the right to take action against certain media who for three years have repeatedly published factually-unsupported and highly damaging articles, often based on illegally-sourced and - quite remarkably in some cases - faked and fabricated materials, to satisfy their narrative of my supposed guilt."

## Charge list

Al-Khelaifi: inciting Valcke to commit criminal mismanagement.

Al-Khelaifi is accused of allowing Valcke exclusive use of a villa.

Valcke: Accepting bribes, aggravated criminal mismanagement (several) & falsification of documents.

An unnamed person has also been charged with incitement to commit criminal mismanagement & bribery.

Al-Khelaifi is accused of allowing Valcke exclusive use of a villa in Sardinia. It helped Valcke save between €900,000 and €1.8m (£754,000-£1.5m) in rent which was then failed to be disclosed.

Valcke charged with three offences

Valcke has been charged with three offences

Valcke has been charged with three offences

Valcke has been charged with three offences: accepting bribes, several counts of aggravated criminal mismanagement and falsification of documents.

Prosecutors say, at the end of January, FIFA informed them in writing they had reached an 'amicable agreement' with Al-Khelaifi and a partial agreement with Valcke, who is no longer a FIFA executive.

Football's world governing body had withdrawn their criminal complaint in relation to bribery allegations in connection with the award of media rights for the World Cups in 2026 and 2030.

The OAG says FIFA's withdrawal had no impact on Thursday's indictment.

Source: 20 February 2020, Sky Sports

Football

<https://www.skysports.com/football/news/11820/11938417/psg-president-nasser-al-khelaifi-charged-in-relation-to-long-running-investigation-involving-two-other-officials>

## SENTENCES/SANCTIONS

### Laos

#### AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Committee bans two Laos players for life

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Disciplinary and Ethics Committee has taken tough action on match manipulation by banning two Laos national team players, Khampheng Sayavutthi and Lembo Saysana, from taking part in any football related activities for life.

They were found to have committed offences under Article 66.1 of the AFC Disciplinary and Ethics Code – 2018 edition. Both players were found guilty of conspiring to manipulate the result of an international match between the Hong Kong and Laos national teams on October 5, 2017.

In order to protect the integrity of the ongoing investigation, no other details will be disclosed.

The latest sanction demonstrates that the AFC is fully committed to its zero-tolerance policy on match-fixing and that its regulations provide for tough sanctions for match manipulation.

The Lao Football Federation (LFF) has been informed of the decisions and the AFC will request FIFA to extend the bans world-wide in due course.

Source: 26 February 2020, AFC Media Release

Football

<https://mailchi.mp/the-afc/afc-media-release-262020-afc-disciplinary-and-ethics-committee-bans-two-laos-players-for-life?e=6d9cd23444>

### Oman

#### Oman cricketer gets 7-year ban for match-fixing

Hong Kong - Oman's Yousuf Abdulrahim Al Balushi has been banned for seven years for match-fixing, the International Cricket Council said on Monday.

Al Balushi admitted the four charges against him, which stem from the men's Twenty20 World Cup qualifiers held in the United Arab Emirates last year.

The 29-year-old attempted to fix games and tried to enlist a team-mate to help him, the ICC said.

"This is a very serious offence where a player attempted but failed to get a team-mate to engage in corrupt activity in high profile games and this is reflected in the severity of the sentence," said ICC integrity general manager Alex Marshall.

"Without Mr Balushi's admission of guilt and full cooperation throughout our investigation, the ban could have been significantly longer."

Source: 24 February 2020, AFP - Sport24

<https://m.sport24.co.za/Cricket/oman-cricketer-gets-7-year-ban-for-match-fixing-20200224>

### Portugal

#### Five jailed in Portugal over football match-fixing

LISBON:Portuguese authorities on Friday jailed five people involved in fixing second-division football matches as part of an illegal betting ring supplied by funds from Malaysia.

Second-tier club Leixoes were also deemed guilty of "active corruption" and excluded from competition for two years, according to the ruling from the Central Criminal Court in Lisbon.

A businessman, a member of Porto's main supporters group and a former player were handed sentences ranging from five-and-a-half years to six years and nine months for arranging to fix several matches during the 2015-16 season.

Two other intermediaries also received custodial sentences of more than five years, the threshold at which they cannot be suspended under Portuguese law.

At the end of a trial which started in February 2018, 19 other defendants were handed suspended sentences, including several footballers accused of throwing games.

Source: 28 February 2020, AFP

Football

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/621926-five-jailed-in-portugal-over-football-match-fixing>

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## LEGISLATION

### Cyprus

#### New laws to be drafted against match fixing

Justice Minister Giorgos Savvides announced a series of measures aimed at tackling match-fixing and corruption in football on Tuesday after a meeting with several party leaders, members of the ethics and sports protection committee and police chief Kypros Michaelides.

Among the main decisions at the meeting were the establishment of a legislative committee tasked with drafting a new set of laws against match-fixing and the increase of a special police committee that will deal with match-fixing reports.

Savvides said he will reconvene with the party leaders in two months.

“The meeting was a success,” Savvides said. “The government and all the political parties in our country share the common goal of rooting out match-fixing and corruption in football.

“We decided to increase the number of police officers who will be dealing with match-fixing to 13. They will analyze all reports they will receive, so that we can properly investigate every possible case. This is a hugely important decision”.

He said a decision was also taken to set up a legislative committee to come up with new and stricter laws to help clear up all the issues.

The government, he said, is working on a major project aimed at creating a common law on all sports-related matters and issues.

Savvides did not disclose any information on the ongoing investigation into match-fixing.

“We have to tread carefully, as, for each case we look into, there is presumption of innocence.

“In order for someone to be arrested and detained, we must have very strong evidence of the wrongdoings. That’s why I cannot talk about ongoing cases.

“Today’s meeting had a wider scope and was intended to try to find a broader general solution to the issues. Hence the presence of multiple party leaders,” Savvides said.

Disy’s Giorgos Georgiou stressed that his party would assist and co-operate collectively with the government, other parties and competent bodies.

“Zero tolerance and clarity of intent are a must,” he said. “We must all take responsibility in acknowledging and addressing the issues together.”

Akel leader Andros Kyprianou said the time was right for such a meeting and for a comprehensive law that would tackle all issues related to corruption and match-fixing in football.

On February 5, Akel published a proposal for set of rules that would apply to all sports organisations in Cyprus and an impartial outfit to which the Cyprus Football Association (CFA) should report directly.

Today, the Akel leader said that “the most important thing coming out of the meeting was to see that all parties share the same goal.”

Diko’s Michalis Damianos said football has been facing serious problems for a very long time.

“The fact that the underworld has penetrated the sport should be dealt with swift justice. That’s why establishing stricter measures and giving more power to the authorities is now of paramount importance.”

Source: 28 February 2020, Cyprus Mail

<https://cyprus-mail-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/cyprus-mail.com/2020/02/25/new-laws-to-be-drafted-against-match-fixing/amp/>

## BETTING

### United States

#### Ten Defendants Charged With Illegally Conducting Multi-Million Dollar Sports Gambling Business

CHICAGO — Ten defendants have been charged in federal court with conspiring to illegally conduct a multi-million dollar sports gambling business in the Chicago area.

VINCENT DELGIUDICE, also known as “Uncle Mick,” directed an operation that accepted wagers from as many as 1,000 gamblers on the outcome of professional and amateur sporting events, according to a nine-count indictment returned Wednesday in U.S. District Court in Chicago. Delgiudice paid a service fee to a foreign sportsbook for use of its platform, and recruited gamblers to place wagers on a website, [www.unclemicksports.com](http://www.unclemicksports.com), according to the charges. Delgiudice sometimes communicated with representatives of the sportsbook via an anonymous, end-to-end encrypted messaging application to ensure their communications remained secret, the indictment states.

The indictment alleges that Delgiudice also recruited several individuals to work on behalf of his gambling operation. These agents enlisted new gamblers and worked with Delgiudice to collect or pay out cash depending on the outcome of wagers, the indictment states. Delgiudice paid the agents a commission based on a percentage of losses incurred by the gamblers they recruited, the charges allege.

A law enforcement search of Delgiudice’s residence in Orland Park seized more than \$1.06 million in cash; silver bars and jewelry valued at \$347,895; and gold coins valued at \$92,623. The indictment seeks forfeiture of these items, as well as Delgiudice’s residence. It also seeks a personal money judgment against Delgiudice of \$8 million.

The indictment was announced by John R. Lausch, Jr., United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; Emmerson Buie, Jr., Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago office of the FBI; and Kathy A. Enstrom, Special Agent-in-Charge of the IRS Criminal Investigation Division in Chicago. The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Ankur Srivastava, Terry Kinney, and Abigail Peluso.

The FBI’s Integrity in Sport and Gaming Initiative (ISG) is designed to tackle illegal sports gambling and combat threats of influence from criminal enterprises.

The indictment charges Delgiudice, 54, with one count of conspiracy to conduct an illegal gambling business, one count of conducting an illegal gambling business, one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering, and six counts of money laundering.

The indictment charges eight alleged agents of Delgiudice’s operation with one count of participating in the gambling conspiracy and one count of conducting an illegal gambling business: MATTHEW KNIGHT, also known as “Sweaters” and “McDougal,” 46, of Mokena; JUSTIN HINES, 40, of Algonquin; KEITH D. BENSON, 49, of Lemont; TODD BLANKEN, 43, of Cary; NICHOLAS STELLA, 42, of Chicago; MATTHEW NAMOFF, 23, of Midlothian; CASEY URLACHER, 40, of Libertyville; and VASILIOS PRASSAS, 37, of Chicago. The tenth defendant, EUGENE DELGIUDICE, also known as “Gino,” 84, of Orland Park, allegedly assisted in the collection or paying out of cash to gamblers recruited by Vincent Delgiudice. Eugene Delgiudice is charged with one count of participating in the gambling conspiracy and one count of conducting an illegal gambling business.

Arraignments in federal court in Chicago have not yet been scheduled.

The public is reminded that an indictment is not evidence of guilt. The defendants are presumed innocent and entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. Each money laundering count carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in federal prison, while the other counts in the indictment are each punishable by up to five years. If convicted, the Court must impose reasonable sentences under federal statutes and the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines.

Source: 20 February 2020, United States Department of Justice

<https://www.justice.gov/usao-ndil/pr/ten-defendants-charged-illegally-conducting-multi-million-dollar-sports-gambling>

## INTEGRITY IN SPORT EVENTS

### IMFTF

#### E-sports: keeping crime out of video game competitions

SINGAPORE – An INTERPOL Task Force has called for greater global action to protect the integrity of sports competitions.

INTERPOL's Match-Fixing Task Force (IMFTF) is a global team of sports manipulation investigators who share information, intelligence and best practices globally to prevent corruption in a wide range of sports disciplines.

High on the agenda this year's meeting was the protection of e-sport integrity, a discipline involving multiplayer video game competitions often hosted in stadiums to accommodate the large audiences they attract.

With profits in the millions of euros, match manipulation is becoming an increasingly attractive and lucrative area of activity for criminal networks around the world.

#### E-sports: keeping crime out of video game competitions

Watching and playing sport transcends differences in language, culture and beliefs. But the manipulation of sporting competitions by organized syndicates is a serious threat to the integrity of sport.

#### E-sport manipulation alert

The 11th IMFTF meeting brought 52 law enforcement officials from 29 countries, as well as football, cricket, rugby, e-sport and betting stakeholders, to INTERPOL's Global Complex for Innovation in Singapore.

Round table discussions saw delegates create a global detection and alert system for suspicions of e-sport manipulation, such as extraordinary surges in betting activity or the deposit of unusually large sums on a bet just ahead of e-sport matches.

#### Reducing the risk

INTERPOL's match-fixing expert team presented a new dedicated INTERPOL criminal information system project - called ETICA - to collect information on corruption in sport and help police share intelligence on the organized crime groups involved in match fixing.

Using false identities to create betting accounts is a growing threat to sport competition integrity. By using INTERPOL's database of stolen and lost travel documents, law enforcement officers around the world can check an ID document against 84 million records in seconds.



Private closed-door sessions gave police officers an opportunity to share intelligence on real and new cases as well as on the use of cryptocurrencies, offshore companies and web monitoring tools detected during national investigations.

As part of efforts to plan security for the forthcoming Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Euro 2020 football tournament, delegates also saw how INTERPOL has helped countries prevent and investigate match manipulation at sporting events last year, including the FIFA Women's World Cup and the South East Asian Games.

The 11th INTERPOL Match Fixing Task Force Meeting took place at INTERPOL's Global Complex for Innovation in Singapore from 10 to 12 December 2019.

Source: 18 February 2020, INTERPOL

<https://www.interpol.int/News-and-Events/News/2020/E-sports-keeping-crime-out-of-video-game-competitions>

## Portugal

### Integrisport Erasmus+ Awareness Raising Session Organized in Portugal

A 2-day Integrisport Erasmus+ Project Awareness Raising Session on combating the manipulation of sports competitions for the Polícia Judiciária and the Prosecution Service of Portugal, took place in Lisbon on 18-19 February 2020. The training was co-organised by Polícia Judiciária and CSCF-Foundation for Sport Integrity under the framework of the European Union's Erasmus+ Programme.

During the event, police officers and prosecutors discussed and exchanged ideas on good practices for fighting sport manipulation with the representatives of the invited Portuguese and international stakeholders.

Internationally recognized experts in the field of combating sports manipulations from various organizations also contributed to the success of the event through in-depth presentations. Experts included representatives from Polícia Judiciária, EU Athletes, Global Lottery Monitoring System (GLMS), CSCF-Foundation for Sport Integrity, as well as Interpol Integrity in Sport unit, the Institution of Sport and Youth of Portugal, the Portuguese Olympic Committee, Portuguese Football Federation and Betting Regulation and Inspection Service of Portugal.

Mr. Claudio Marinelli, the representative from Interpol's Integrity in Sport, Anti-Corruption Office recognized that tackling match-fixing and other crimes in sport requires national and international cooperation between sport, public authorities, betting regulators, the gambling industry and law enforcement: INTERPOL helps bring all these stakeholders together to tackle crimes in sport.

The Council of Europe's Convention on Manipulation of Sports Competitions and the importance of multidisciplinary cooperation on the fight against sport manipulation was introduced by the Institution of Sport and Youth of Portugal and CSCF-Foundation for Sport Integrity.

As Mr. Luís Neves, National Director of Polícia Judiciária said: "The fight against ... manipulation of sports results is a priority of the economic and financial crime unit of Polícia Judiciária".

"Although Polícia Judiciária have concluded some very successful cases on match fixing, we need to keep one step ahead of the criminals. Integrisport Erasmus+ is a very important project for Polícia Judiciária and the Portuguese stakeholders to be able to gain more knowledge and extend their cooperation at national and international level in order to tackle sport manipulation and clean up sport even more efficiently." – he added.

Mr. Norbert Rubicsek, director of CSCF and project manager of Integrisport Erasmus+, said: "In order to fight sport manipulation effectively, law enforcement agencies and judicial authorities need to have an in-depth, targeted understanding on sport manipulation and the perspectives of other stakeholders. These are the main objectives of Integrisport Erasmus+.

The Integrisport Erasmus+ awareness raising sessions in each partner country give law enforcement officers and judicial authorities the possibility to better understand and tackle the dangers of sport manipulation to sport and the society."

Source: 19 February 2020, IntegriSport

<https://www.integrisport.org/integrisport-erasmus-awareness-raising-session-organized-in-portugal/>

## Portugal

### The topic of Manipulation of Competitions in the heart of POINTS national workshop organised by NOC Portugal (COP)

On 17 February, the third national workshop of the POINTS (Single Points of Contact for Sports Integrity) project took place in Portugal, in the headquarters of the Portuguese Olympic Committee (COP). The meeting brought together international experts from the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the office of the European Olympic Committees (EOC) in the European Union (EU), INTERPOL and Portuguese Judiciary Police (PJ) as well as SPOCs from national federations for a day of work around the manipulation of sports competitions. Another aim of the meeting was to introduce the work done by COP in the field of integrity and in the frame of the POINTS project.

The morning session was dedicated to European and international actions while the afternoon was focusing on the Portuguese situation. José Manuel Araújo, Secretary General of the COP, opened the session by highlighting the importance of the issue and to ensure that “athletes are aware of the risks and consequences” before stressing that “making an effort to ensure good governance and maintaining fair competition is absolutely essential”. General Director of the COP, João Paulo Almeida, praised the work done in the POINTS project and called for the application of “zero tolerance” in cases of manipulation.

As associated partner, the International Olympic Committee is deeply involved in the POINTS project and Evangelos Alexandrakis, NOCs Contact Manager in the Olympic Movement Unit on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions presented the IOC strategy and stressed the importance of such a project for National Olympic Committees. He added that the IOC considers the work done by the COP in the area of integrity in sport as “an inspirational model”, as it is “a good practice in terms of activating the National Olympic Committees, with support for the federations and an extended programme, with many actions”. Valentin Capelli, project manager, presented the work achieved within the POINTS project stressing that the project “works on the development of good governance and integrity projects and not only on the manipulation of sports competitions”. He added that it is essential “for sport organisations to move into practice” in the way they view this issue. On his side, Claudio Marinelli, from INTERPOL, addressed the Research Network created by INTERPOL and the IOC and argued that “criminal and disciplinary investigations can work in parallel”. Success depends on mutual recognition and respect. Understanding the differences will help define the parameters of cooperation.

Following a presentation of good practices by Rute Soares, from the Portuguese Football Federation (FPF) a round table on the “Implementation of an Integrity Programme” took place between the different speakers. The cooperation between sport organisations and public authorities as well as the role of Single Points of Contact can play in establishing integrity strategies were discussed.

The second part of the day was dedicated to the work engaged at Portuguese level with a presentation made by Joana Gonçalves, project manager in COP, of the new Integrity strategy developed by the Olympic Committee. To conclude the day, two case studies related to Competition Manipulation were discussed, creating inspiring exchanges within participants on the way to react to different cases. The POINTS national workshops will continue in March with meetings in Croatia and the Netherlands

Source: 18 February 2020, EU Points Project

<http://www.points-project.com/2020/02/20/noc-portugal-cop-successfully-organised-points-national-workshop/>