



INTERPOL

INTEGRITY IN SPORT

Bi-weekly Bulletin

22 June 2021 - 5 July 2021



Photos International Olympic Committee

INVESTIGATIONS

Cyprus

Police raid Doxa's offices in match fixing probe

Police raided the offices of football team Doxa Katokopias on Wednesday evening to look for evidence regarding a case of suspected match fixing, money laundering and conspiracy.

The raid follows the accusations made by Omonia president Stavros Papastavrou in September 2020 which concerned Doxa's president Costas Christodoulou.

Papastavrou at the time told reporters that Christodoulou told him that Omonia could sign Nigerian goalkeeper Francis Uzoho by paying Spanish team Deportivo La Coruna €200,000 as well as another €200,000 to him in 'black money'.

The Omonia president reported the incident to the Sports and Ethics Committee, which, in turn, told the police.

Christodoulou on Thursday commented on the police raid and claimed the police are targeting the wrong person and the wrong club.

"These events represent the downfall of football," he told Ant1 news channel.

"I think football is a game that should only be played on the pitch. The police raid is just a way other clubs found to intimidate us, but they will not succeed," Christodoulou concluded.

Police confiscated documents and computers during the raid.

Source: 1 July 2021, Cyprus Mail

Football

<https://cyprus-mail.com/2021/07/01/police-raid-doxas-offices-in-match-fixing-probe/>

France

Sizikova files defamation lawsuit after French Open arrest amid match-fixing allegations

July 2 (Reuters) - Russian tennis player Yana Sizikova has filed a lawsuit for defamation after she was arrested amid match-fixing allegations at this year's French Open, her lawyer told Reuters on Friday.

Sizikova was taken into police custody after a doubles match at Roland Garros over allegations related to last year's tournament.

"She filed the lawsuit for defamation and slanderous denunciation with the Paris prosecutor's office," Frederic Belot said.

Sizikova had been released one day after being taken into custody after French prosecutors had opened an investigation into "fraud in an organised group" and "active and passive corruption" over alleged match fixing in a women's doubles match at the French Open in September, 2020.

The investigation related to a match between Romanian pair Andreea Mitu and Patricia Mari and Sizikova and American Madison Brengle. The Romanians won the match before being knocked out in the third round.

Belot had explained last month that it was alleged Sizikova and her doubles partner lost a service game on purpose, with the Russian serving double faults.

Source: 2 July 2021, Reuters

Tennis

<https://www.reuters.com/lifestyle/sports/sizikova-files-defamation-lawsuit-after-french-open-arrest-amid-match-fixing-2021-07-02/>

SENTENCES/SANCTIONS

Congo (Democratic Rep.)

FIFA bans former Congo and CAF boss Omari for a year for \$66,000 graft

Constant Omari, for years one of African football's most influential as well as controversial figures, has been suspended by FIFA for a year for breaking its ethics code.

Last week, after 18 years at the head of Congolese football, Omari called it a day and stepped down from the post after a career marked by claims of shady dealing and corruption.

Now we know why. We also know why he was barred last January from standing for election for the FIFA Council.

Omari, former first vice president of the Confederation of African Football who for a brief period ran the entire show when Ahmad Ahmad was kicked out, was found by FIFA to have received benefits from Lagardere during negotiations between the French media company and CAF.

In early 2019, Omari oversaw an amendment to the billion-dollar deal that CAF had made with Lagardere Sports in 2015. He is believed to have received in the region of €66,000, which FIFA has requested he pay as a fine.

Omari entered into a plea bargain arrangement with FIFA and in a statement FIFA said: "A formal investigation against Mr Omari was opened on 7 January 2021."

"[It] concerned certain benefits accepted and received from Lagardere Sports, in relation to the negotiations that he conducted for an agreement between CAF and Lagardere Sports in connection with the commercialisation of certain TV rights licenced to the LCS company and to the collection of the latter's outstanding debt.

"The negotiations, which were led by Mr Omari on behalf of CAF, resulted in contractual provisions that were particularly detrimental to CAF, causing significant financial damage to the confederation."

"In this respect, the receipt of benefits created a conflict of interests that detracted from Mr Omari's ability to perform his dues to CAF with integrity and in an independent and purposeful manner."

Omari, a one-time FIFA reform official and key ally of FIFA president Gianni Infantino in his 2016 election campaign, was arrested in 2018 on suspicion of corruption and held for 24 hours in a public prosecutor's office in Congo. Officials suspected him of embezzling money given to the federation by the government to fund the Congo national team but no charges were ever pressed.

At a press conference last week in Kinshasa, Omari insisted he was leaving "with my head held high." Six days later and it has been hung in shame.

Source: 24 June 2021, Inside WF

Football

<http://www.insideworldfootball.com/2021/06/24/fifa-bans-former-congo-caf-boss-omari-year-66000-graft/>



Korea (Rep. of)**Ex-KBO pitcher charged with match fixing**

Former professional baseball pitcher Yun Sung-hwan was charged with match fixing on Friday, a development that adds to the ex-star's legal troubles following an earlier arrest over illegal gambling charges.

Prosecutors in Daegu, 300 kilometers southeast of Seoul, said they have established fresh charges against Yun, accusing him of fixing a game last year in exchange for 500 million won (US\$443,380) in cash.

According to prosecutors, Yun was asked to give up a walk in the first inning of a game and then allow a certain number of runs before the fourth inning.

Prosecutors believe Yun illegally gambled away the 500 million won he pocketed from the fixing scheme.

Yun was first arrested on June 3 on illegal gambling charges. Prosecutors also began looking into match-fixing suspicions and found enough evidence to charge Yun.

The series of legal issues marks a spectacular fall from grace for Yun, who pitched 15 seasons in the Korea Baseball Organization (KBO) for the Daegu-based Samsung Lions.

Yun is the Lions' franchise leader with 135 career wins, which put him eighth overall in KBO history. He won four straight Korean Series championships with the Lions, starting in 2011. The right-hander recorded two wins each in the 2012 and 2014 Korean Series.

Yun was cut by the Lions after the 2020 season.

The KBO dealt with a massive match-fixing scandal in 2016, leading to multiple players facing a range of penalties.

Source: 25 June 2021, Yonhap News

Baseball

<https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20210625008600315>



Singapore

S'pore professional gamers suspended for match-fixing, betting against own team in regional tournament

SINGAPORE - Several professional gamers here have been banned for match-fixing and betting against their own team in a regional tournament held last year.

Six players, including five from the Singapore team Resurgence, were handed bans of between six months and three years last week by tournament organiser Valorant Esports.

One of the players was found to have made \$3,000 worth of illegal bets against his own team, and tried to pay off other members in his team to keep quiet after they lost.

Resurgence had competed in the Valorant Ignition Series' Epulze Royal Sea Cup held last year.

The tournament was part of a larger international competition for the first-person shooter game Valorant, and saw Resurgence play against the Japanese team BlackBird Ignis.

The match, held on Sept 22 last year, saw the Singapore team lose 0-2.

As the loss resulted in Resurgence being kicked out during the group stage, they did not get any part of the US\$25,000 (\$\$33,600) prize pool.

Allegations of match-fixing had surfaced online in April this year, with leaked screenshots of chats and bets by Resurgence player Malcolm Chung, who goes by the user name Germmsg.

According to the screenshots, he purportedly placed \$3,000 in bets on an illegal online gambling site, wagering that his team would lose 0-2 to BlackBird Ignis.

After the loss, he also allegedly told an unknown person that he was "not even trying" during the matches, and that he was safe as long as his team manager did not have any suspicions about what was going on.

The players were suspended on April 22 after the allegations surfaced online.

In a statement last week, Riot Games, which owns Valorant, said Mr Chung had initiated the scheme, roping in fellow competitive gamer Ryan Tan, who goes by the user name dReamy.

Mr Tan, who is currently a full-time national serviceman, was not part of Resurgence, but had provided Mr Chung the money for the bets. Both men have been banned from participating in Valorant competitions for three years.

After the bets were placed, Mr Chung told four members of his team about his plan to lose. But he kept it from one other member of the six-player team.

Riot Games said the four others did not want to lose, but hid what they allegedly knew from officials as they were concerned about penalties and risking their professional gaming career contracts.

The four were identified as Mr Justin Wong Chong Cheng, Mr Sengdala Jamnalong, Mr Du Min Yeo and Mr Benedict Tan, who respectively went by the user names Boplek, Jabtheboy, Mortdecai and Benaf.

Mr Wong and Mr Jamnalong have been banned from participating in Valorant competitions for a year each, while their two other teammates were handed bans of six months each.

Mr Chung had purportedly tried to pay off his teammates after the loss, but they rejected him. The team disbanded a month after the tournament.

Riot Games said the bans were handed out based on the level of culpability and cooperation during investigations.

"Competitive integrity is a top priority for Riot Games and we aim to uphold this quality in all of our e-sports tournaments," a spokesman for the American video game developer, publisher and e-sports tournament organiser told The Straits Times.

"We want to provide our professional teams with a fair and transparent environment to compete both regionally and globally, so we take any violation of our rules of play very seriously."

Source: 23 June 2021, The Straits Times

eSports

<https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/spore-professional-gamers-suspended-for-match-fixing-and-betting-against-own-team-in>

INTERPOL is not responsible for the content of these articles. The opinions expressed in these articles are those of the authors and do not represent the views of INTERPOL or its employees.

LEGISLATION

Canada

Canada's Single-Game Sports Betting Bill Receives Royal Assent, Becomes Law

A bill that will make it legal in Canada for provinces to offer single-game sports betting is now law after the legislation received a ceremonial and final approval.

The Senate of Canada was informed Tuesday night that Bill C-218, the Safe and Regulated Sports Betting Act, received royal assent from the country's chief justice and current government administrator, Richard Wagner. The House of Commons was then advised of the move through its official record.

Wagner's approval is the final step in the legislative process, as it follows both the appointed Senate and the elected House passing identical versions of Bill C-218.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his cabinet will now have to set a date for the legislation to come into force, which will be done with a legal instrument called an order-in-council.

On that day, Canada's provinces and those they license could offer single-event sports betting on everything except horse racing, pari-mutuel wagering on which will remain under federal oversight.

It has been a long and winding road for C-218, a private member's bill that was first introduced in February 2020 by Conservative MP Kevin Waugh. The bill amends Canada's Criminal Code to make it legal for provinces or their licensees "to conduct and manage a lottery scheme in the province that involves betting on a race — other than a horse-race — or fight, or on a single sport event or athletic contest," its summary says.

The legislation faced an uphill climb from the start because it was not a government bill. It was also not the first bill to try to end Canada's longstanding single-game betting ban, as previous pieces of legislation aimed at expanding wagering options beyond parlays and the ponies failed to make it across the finish line in Parliament.

One such bill, C-290, was introduced in 2011 and was passed by the House of Commons in 2012. However, the legislation ran into opposition from professional sports leagues, languished in the Senate, and then died there when a federal election was called in 2015.

This time was different, though. And, ultimately, it was enough to help pass a single-game sports betting bill into law, providing an opportunity for provinces to try to regulate the billions of dollars in solo-event wagering activity already estimated to be happening in Canada.

"This is the third legislative attempt to get a bill passed, and it finally worked," said New Democratic Party MP Brian Masse, who sponsored single-game betting legislation in the past, in a June 24 press release. "The two previous times it started as just an NDP bill and we built cross-party support over time but it never got over the goal line."

Change in the weather

Waugh drew an early number for the order to introduce a private member's bill, which he used for C-218. The bill also got a boost from a shift in public and political support.

One driving force has been the spread of legal sports betting in the United States following a 2018 decision by its Supreme Court.

States that have legalized include some that are bordering Canada and that compete with their northern neighbor for tourism and hospitality dollars. The Canadian gaming industry saw single-game sports betting as a way to level the playing field and to give the sector a boost as the COVID-19 pandemic recedes.

"Single-event sports betting is not a cure-all, but it can be an important part of any plan to support our gaming and sports industries," Waugh said last November. "It can provide not only a significant new source of revenue for sports leagues, but it will drive increased interest in individual games and events."

Previous efforts to bring in single-game wagering in Canada have also been opposed by professional sports leagues, such as the National Hockey League, which spoke out against C-290. According to the league, that bill would have jeopardized the integrity and the public's trust in professional sports.

Yet with C-218, some of the legislation's most influential supporters were the leagues. In June 2020, the commissioners of the NBA, NHL, MLB, MLS and CFL all said they supported the kind of tweak that C-218 would make.

“Though the NHL had previously opposed single-event sports wagering, for the reasons we stated publicly on the record, the reality is that the landscape in North America has changed,” said Keith Wachtel, the league’s chief business officer and senior executive vice president of global partnerships, during a House committee meeting in March. “Our experience in the United States since 2018 has demonstrated that a well-regulated marketplace that both advances and protects the interests of relevant constituencies can be established in a safe and responsible manner.”

The legalization of single-game sports betting not only had the support of the leagues this time but the blessing of the federal Liberal government as well.

In November 2020, Justice Minister David Lametti introduced legislation that proposed to decriminalize single-event sports betting. The bill, C-13, wound up stalled in the House of Commons due to the progress made by C-218.

The idea, however, was supported by Prime Minister Trudeau and others in his cabinet. Trudeau even voted in favor of the second reading of C-218 in February 2021, and then gave a big smile.

“This is a demonstration of what Canadians send parliamentarians from all parties to do, work together to achieve solutions for everyone,” the NDP’s Masse said.

C-218 was passed by the elected House of Commons in April after a slight tweak, which ensured betting on horse racing would remain regulated by a federal agency. The appointed Senate then began its work, putting the legislation through a similar review process.

Some senators had concerns about the bill, particularly in connection with the specter of match-fixing and the legislation's potential effect on Indigenous gaming rights. Two amendments were proposed at the third-reading stage related to those concerns, which, if they had been adopted, would have required the legislation to go back to the House of Commons.

One amendment would have amended the Criminal Code to specifically allow for an Indigenous council or government to run a “lottery scheme,” including sports betting, under an agreement with the federal government.

Such an amendment had been sought by the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke, which owns Sports Interaction. According to the Mohawk, C-218 will put them at a disadvantage, as the Criminal Code makes no mention of Indigenous gaming rights, while extending legal cover to the provinces. This could scare away potential partners and undermine their business, the council warned.

“It is the right thing to do,” Manitoba Sen. Marilou McPhedran said during a June 21 debate on the amendment. “If it requires the bill to return to the other place, so be it. We’re beholden to the responsibility to provide sober second thought, not to the gaming calendar of the day.”

The amendment dilemma

While a return to the House would not have necessarily spelled the end for C-218, it certainly would have increased the chances.

One such threat was due to the federal Liberal government lacking a majority of seats in the House of Commons, forcing it to work with other political parties or risk an election. Moreover, rising COVID-19 vaccination rates and falling infection numbers have been increasingly stirring talk about a potential election, which would spike any bills that haven’t been passed.

The House of Commons adjourned last week until September 20, and the Senate has now adjourned until September 21. If C-218 had not passed both chambers in identical form before those recesses, it could have been left hanging over the summer.

“I’m concerned that any amendment, if adopted at this late date, would delay this bill for an unknown period of time,” Saskatchewan Sen. Brent Cotter said during a June 21 debate on C-218.

Supporters of C-218 argued the amendments were either unnecessary or beyond the scope of the bill. Existing provisions in the Criminal Code could be used to address any attempted match-fixing, they said, while responsibility for gaming lies with the provinces, which can work out agreements with Indigenous entities.

“Currently, there are no provincial safeguard regulations pertaining to single-event sports betting given the underground nature of existing operations,” said Sen. David Wells, C-218’s sponsor in the Senate, during a June 17 debate. “This makes it more likely that minors will participate in betting and more challenging to detect match-fixing.”

Those and other arguments proved persuasive enough for enough senators. C-218 was passed by the Senate on June 22, unamended, by a vote of 57-20 in favor of the legislation.

A royal approval

The Senate's approval left royal assent, which was granted on Tuesday by Canada's top judge. An order-in-council will now need to be issued giving the exact date C-218 comes into force.

The provinces will then decide what exactly single-game betting will look like within their respective borders. Ontario, for instance, is eyeing an internet gaming market that could allow private-sector firms to compete against one another for business and bets, while others may opt for something more restrictive.

"It is the provinces, through the provincial gaming regulators, who will work to ensure sports wagering is delivered with the proper level of control and oversight," said Paul Burns, president and CEO of the Canadian Gaming Association, during a June 2 Senate committee meeting.

There are various rules expected to be outlined by the provinces, Burns said, such as which sports can be bet on and who can wager.

At the very least, though, the legal sports betting that Canadians currently enjoy could soon be expanded to include single-game bets.

"In conclusion," Burns said, "only by regulating single-event sports wagering can we be sure that consumers are protected, that athletes and sports are protected, that the economic benefits stay in the provinces in which they are generated and that Canadian businesses can compete on a level playing field."

Source: 30 June 2021, Covers

All Sports

<https://www.covers.com/industry/canada-sports-betting-royal-assent-2021>

United States

New Jersey fixed-odds betting bill passed by both houses

A bill to legalize fixed-odds horse racing within New Jersey has been approved by unanimous votes in both the state's Senate and Assembly.

Referred to as the Fixed Odds Wagering Act, the legislation will allow customers to place fixed-odds horse racing bets through official license holders approved by the New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement, rather than only pari-mutuel bets.

The bill was first passed by the Assembly last month, with 74 votes in favour, none against and one abstention. It then when to the Senate, where it was amended before being passed by a 40-0 margin. Because of this amendment, it then returned to the Assembly for final approval, which it received with a 71-0 vote.

Under the bill, license holders will be obligated to pay a share of their revenue (determined by the operating board) to the standardbred or thoroughbred permit holder.

Any person on the state's self exclusion list that places a bet will not be able to collect any winnings, and any operator that allows a person on the self-exclusion list to do so could be fined up to \$5000 and have their license suspended.

Money obtained from such wagers is to be deposited into the State General Fund for use by the Legislature to the Department of Human Services, who will look to provide funds for problem gambling treatment and prevention programs in the State.

The bill said: "The horse racing industry is economically important to this State, and the general welfare of the people of the State will be promoted by the advancement of horse racing and related projects and facilities in the State.

"It is the intent of the Legislature, by authorizing fixed odds wagering, to promote the economic future of the horse racing industry in this State, to foster the potential for increased commerce, employment, and recreational opportunities in this State and to preserve the State's open spaces."

The bill will now head to Governor Phil Murphy to be signed into law.

The introduction of fixed-odds horse racing wagering will only add to New Jersey's gaming revenue, which experienced a 290.4% year-on-year increase last month.

Source: 22 June 2021, IGB

All Sports

<https://www.igbnorthamerica.com/new-jersey-fixed-odds-betting-bill-passed-by-both-houses/>

BETTING

Austria

Austrian authorities raid 17 illegal gambling venues

The venues were described as bars and restaurants, which are connected together with what the authorities called an “almost perfect advance warning system”.

This, Austria’s Ministry of Finance said, was the reason given for carrying out the raids simultaneously, in order to prevent one venue from warning others.

Most of the venues are located in covert locations such as closed alleyways, with personal access control, according to the Ministry.

Access to the venues was granted voluntarily to police, meaning they were not required to force entry.

Officers found as many as 17 gaming machines in each of the venues, five of which had the devices screwed to the floors, which therefore needed to be removed with the fire brigade’s assistance.

The Ministry of Finance said that the operation was preceded by intensive preliminary investigations and evaluations, and that those responsible for the venues behind the scenes are currently being sought with a full investigation underway.

“The record of the night of action is impressive,” said finance minister Gernot Blümel.

“A total of 91 devices were confiscated and transported away by the financial police. I congratulate my colleagues in the financial police on this blow against the gambling mafia and on their professional work.”

Two other illegal gambling venues were shut down by the financial police in February, in the Vienna districts of Donaustadt and Rudolfsheim-Fünfhaus.

In January, the Ministry of Finance had reported an increased number of illegal gaming devices seized by police in 2020, despite law enforcement’s day-to-day operations being disrupted by the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

Source: 23 June 2021, iGB

All Sports

<https://igamingbusiness.com/austrian-authorities-raid-17-illegal-gambling-venues/>



Korea (Rep. of)**Police arrest 17 operators of illegal sports gambling sites**

BUSAN, June 28 (Yonhap) -- Two illegal sports gambling rings, together worth 900 billion won (US\$797 million), have been busted, leading to the arrests of 17 suspects, the Busan police agency said Monday.

The agency said its cybercrime investigation team has apprehended 38 people and put 17 of them under arrest for having illegally operated sports gambling sites. Seventeen users of the gambling sites were also booked on charges of violating the National Sports Promotion Act, it said

Police are still tracking down one of the main culprits in his 40s, who fled abroad and has been placed on Interpol's most wanted list.

The fugitive is suspected of having operated an illegal sports gambling site in South Korea from March 2016 until recently, which was worth 800 billion won and had about 3,300 members, after installing servers in Vietnam, China and other foreign countries.

He is accused of having taken illegal profits while managing employees through various teams in charge of member management, currency exchange, bulletin board management and others.

According to the police, the fugitive helped one of his co-conspirators set up an independent online gambling site in 2018 by handing over operation know-how and a cash remittance service.

The co-conspirator is accused of having operated an illegal sports gambling site worth 100 billion won for about 1,800 members from June 2018 to March last year, police said.

The large-scale arrests came after police investigators raided the offices of the two gambling sites and the residences of their operators.

Police said they seized cash and real estate worth 8.12 billion won from the arrested suspects. The confiscated articles included 1.95 billion won in cash and three apartments and two detached houses, all in the capital area, police said, adding the properties appear to be bought with illegal profits.

Source: 28 June 2021, Yonhap News

All Sports

<https://en.yna.co.kr/view/AEN20210628003400315>



Transparency International

Size of illegal market highlighted at Euro 2020

The UEFA European Championship (Euro 2020) has re-highlighted the plight of governments and authorities in their battle against illegal online gambling.

A study from Transparency International estimated the illegal sports betting market is around \$500 billion dollars globally, dwarfing the regulated sports betting market – which recorded only \$74 billion in legal revenue in 2019. Though one needs to take the illegal numbers with a rather large grain of salt, due to the difficulty in gathering reliable data.

When looking at the wider illegal gambling market, including illegal casinos, estimates bring the total illegal gambling market somewhere between \$1.3 to \$3 trillion dollars.

According to the research firm, around 80 percent of this \$500 billion in illegal betting occurs in Asia, where the majority of jurisdictions have either highly restrictive gambling laws or ban the activity altogether – driving people to bet with foreign, unlicensed operators.

Over the last few weeks, Asia's governments have been doubling their efforts to crack down on illegal betting during this year's Euro 2020, which runs from June 11 to July 11, 2021.

Earlier this month, Thailand's Prime Minister expressed concern about the expected rise in illegal gambling during the Euro 2020 soccer tournament, urging the police and Ministry of Digital Economy and Society to step up surveillance. Thai are keen football fans and authorities regularly launch major campaigns to crackdown on illegal gambling during key tournaments.

On Monday, Malaysian police arrested 51 suspected bookies involved in football betting on Euro 2020 in a series of raids between June 10 and June 26. Johor police chief Datuk Ayob Khan Mydin Pitchay said the syndicate was detected using social media applications such as WhatsApp, WeChat and Telegram to find players and take bets.

Meanwhile, police in Hong Kong broke up a multi-million dollar triad run gambling ring during the tournament – which had reportedly taken more than HK\$3.4 billion (\$438 million) in illegal bets in just the first four months of the year.

Last Euro 2016, more than 4,100 people were arrested globally for their involvement in illegal betting, with police raids conducted in China, France, Greece, Italy, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam as part of Operation SOGA VI by Interpol.

It's an issue that has propelled the growth of match-fixing and corruption of sports tournaments held in Asia, a subject which will be discussed in an Asia Gaming Brief's deep dive on Asian tournaments and integrity, releasing over the next few weeks.

Source: 29 June 2021, AGB

All Sports

<https://agbrief.com/headline/size-of-illegal-market-highlighted-at-euro-2020-infographic/>



DOPING

International Weightlifting Federation

Investigation alleges doping corruption in weightlifting

A culture of alleged corruption among international weightlifting officials was detailed Thursday in an investigative report of covered-up doping cases for athletes who won Olympic and world championship medals.

Three of the sport's longtime leaders — former International Weightlifting Federation president Tamás Aján, vice president Nicolae Vlad and executive board member Hasan Akkus — were charged with a range of complicity and tampering offenses under the World Anti-Doping Code.

Alleged misconduct for a decade up to 2019, including 146 unresolved doping cases, was laid out in a 50-page document. The investigation was run by the International Testing Agency, which manages anti-doping programs for Olympic sports.

Reasons for the failures to prosecute some doping cases ranged from “chaotic organizational processes” and errors to “outright negligence, complicity, or — at worst — blatant and intentional cover-ups,” ITA investigators wrote. A total of 29 cases cannot be prosecuted due to destroyed evidence or expiring statute of limitations.

Aján and Vlad were implicated in allowing a woman from Vlad's home country, Romania, whom they knew was implicated in doping offenses, to compete and win a silver medal at the 2012 London Olympics. The lifter, Roxana Cocoș, was stripped of her medal years later when retests revealed her steroid use.

The ITA has proposed lifetime bans for Aján and Vlad, while Akkus has been offered a four-year ban. If they don't accept the bans, the ITA will prosecute the charges at the Court of Arbitration for Sport's anti-doping tribunal.

Vlad was a gold medalist at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics and longtime ally of Aján at the IWF.

Aján was ousted after 20 years as IWF president in the fallout of the allegations first aired by German broadcaster ARD in January 2020.

The ITA report gave “significant credit” to the German program for its “robust investigative journalism.”

The documentary “The Lord of the Lifters” alleged financial and anti-doping misconduct and led to an initial IWF-appointed investigation last year by Richard McLaren, the Canadian law professor who uncovered much of the Russian state doping scandal.

Now 82, Aján also resigned his honorary membership of the International Olympic Committee last year. He had been a full member for 10 years until 2010 and took part in choosing Olympic host cities, including Beijing, Sochi and Rio de Janeiro.

Vlad continues to be an IWF vice president and an influential figure as the governing body prepares to elect Aján's successor. Akkus heads weightlifting's European governing body.

Weightlifting's place at the 2024 Paris Olympics is at risk with the IOC warning it wants to see reforms and the sport cleaned up.

IWF interim president Michael Irani said in a statement that the investigation showed “just how dark the dark days of our sport were.”

“To all those athletes who were cheated of the opportunity to compete fairly, I would like to offer the IWF's unreserved apology,” said Irani, who previously served on Aján's executive board.

The ITA investigation also detailed how weightlifting officials evaded World Anti-Doping Agency scrutiny over several years.

Now 82, Aján also resigned his honorary membership of the International Olympic Committee last year. He had been a full member for 10 years until 2010 and took part in choosing Olympic host cities, including Beijing, Sochi and Rio de Janeiro.

Vlad continues to be an IWF vice president and an influential figure as the governing body prepares to elect Aján's successor. Akkus heads weightlifting's European governing body.

Weightlifting's place at the 2024 Paris Olympics is at risk with the IOC warning it wants to see reforms and the sport cleaned up.

IWF interim president Michael Irani said in a statement that the investigation showed “just how dark the dark days of our sport were.”

“To all those athletes who were cheated of the opportunity to compete fairly, I would like to offer the IWF’s unreserved apology,” said Irani, who previously served on Aján’s executive board.

The ITA investigation also detailed how weightlifting officials evaded World Anti-Doping Agency scrutiny over several years.

Source: 24 June 2021, *The Indian Express*

Weightlifting

<https://indianexpress.com/article/sports/sport-others/investigation-alleges-doping-corruption-in-weightlifting-7374558/>

INTEGRITY IN SPORT EVENTS

ICC

ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021 to move to UAE and Oman

The International Cricket Council (ICC) today confirmed that the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup 2021 will be staged in the UAE and Oman due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation in India. The BCCI will remain the hosts of the event, which will now be held in Dubai International Stadium, the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi, the Sharjah Stadium, and the Oman Cricket Academy Ground, from 17 October to 14 November 2021.

Acting ICC CEO Geoff Allardice said: “Our priority is to deliver the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup 2021 safely, in full and in its current window. Whilst we are incredibly disappointed not to be hosting the event in India, the decision gives us the certainty we need to stage the event in a country that is a proven international host of multi-team events in a bio-secure environment. We will work closely with the BCCI, the Emirates Cricket Board and Oman Cricket to ensure fans can enjoy a wonderful celebration of cricket.”

BCCI Secretary, Jay Shah, said: “The BCCI made every effort to stage the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup in India and provide its passionate fans with a reason to cheer after a long period of gloom. However, the prevailing pandemic situation in the country meant that the health and safety of everyone concerned was fraught with risk should a tournament of this stature be held across the country. The BCCI will continue to host the tournament, which will now be held in the UAE and Oman and work closely with the ICC to make it a memorable event.”

President BCCI Sourav Ganguly said: “The BCCI is looking forward to hosting the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup 2021 tournament in UAE and Oman. We would have been happier hosting it in India but considering the uncertainty due to the Covid 19 situation and the importance of a world championship, the BCCI will now continue to host this tournament in UAE and Oman. The BCCI is looking forward to creating a spectacle.”

Vice President Emirates Cricket Board, Khalid Al Zarooni said: “Emirates Cricket Board is honoured that the BCCI (Board of Cricket Control India) and the ICC (International Cricket Council) have entrusted us with staging and delivering the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup. The UAE’s reputation as being a safe country in which to host high-profile sporting events is a strong compliment to our government’s unwavering commitment to implementing and monitoring effective health practices during the pandemic. Having hosted a number of high-profile tournaments in recent months our team is well-prepared and ready to mobilise to ensure the success of the T20 World Cup.”

Oman Cricket Chairman, Pankaj Khimji said, “It is indeed a great moment for Oman Cricket to be selected as a venue/host of the forthcoming ICC Men’s T20 World Cup. We shall leave no stone unturned to exceed the requirements of BCCI and ICC. Oman will certainly extend a very warm welcome to all the teams, officials and media in October.”

Source: 29 June 2021, ICC

Cricket

<https://www.icc-cricket.com/media-releases/2180451>

POLICY

IOC

Monitoring of sports betting at Tokyo 2020

Numerous awareness-raising measures of how to prevent competition manipulation have been put in place and pushed to Olympic delegations before they leave for Tokyo. But how will the Olympic events be monitored during Games time? How can intelligence be gathered about irregular betting patterns that may hint at potential competition manipulation? And should some sports be more closely observed than others? Here is a quick overview of what will be in place.

Prior to the postponement of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020, the Olympic Movement Unit on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions (OM Unit PMC) had conducted a thorough assessment of the 33 sports on the Tokyo 2020 programme in relation to the risks of potential competition manipulation linked to sports betting. The findings were shared with the International Federations. Since the postponement, the OM Unit PMC has conducted updates on this initial assessment. The aim was to look into the evolution of the sports betting industry, the impact caused by the global pandemic, and the related risks of potential competition manipulation in a specific sport.

Here are some observations. During the early phase of the global pandemic in 2020, most sports competitions across all Olympic sports, including international competitions, domestic leagues, etc. were either suspended or cancelled because of the health restrictions due to the pandemic. Only a few sports competitions were held in some countries during that period. However, those few sports competitions attracted more attention than ever in terms of sports betting coverage, due to the lack of other ongoing sports events. This phenomenon could be seen until some major sports events resumed in the third quarter of 2020.

And what is in place for the Olympic Games? Sports betting on all Olympic competitions has been monitored since the Olympic Games Beijing 2008, and Tokyo 2020 will be no exception. The OM Unit PMC, via its platform IBIS and with its partners – namely Sportradar, the International Betting Integrity Association (IBIA), the Global Lottery Monitoring System (GLMS) and major regulating authorities around the world – will monitor sports betting on all Olympic competitions at this summer's Olympic Games. The 24/7 monitoring will be carried out remotely at the Olympic House in Lausanne (Switzerland). The OM Unit PMC will retain a direct link to all IFs in order to flag any breach of the Olympic Movement Code on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions (OM Code PMC). It is equipped to carry out a preliminary investigation and assist with the set-up of a Disciplinary Commission if necessary. In addition, the IOC will cooperate closely with various law enforcement authorities to address any cases where collective and joint follow-up is appropriate and necessary.

Source: 29 June 2021, IOC

All Sports

<https://olympics.com/ioc/news/monitoring-of-sports-betting-at-tokyo-2020>



INTERPOL

INTEGRITY IN SPORT

Malta

Malta placed on FATF rogue list following litany of AML discrepancies

Malta has been placed on a greylist of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) – the global AML and anti terrorist financing unit of the G7.

The EU member state has previously faced international criticism regarding issues such as the Panama Papers scandal, which saw Maltese government figures implicated in establishing offshore companies encountered little legal action, as well as controversy surrounding the sale of national passports.

Malta joins 19 other countries considered financially untrustworthy and classed as having ‘strategic deficiencies’ by the anti-money laundering and terrorist financing organisation including Albania, Myanmar, Syria and Zimbabwe.

Speaking at a press conference, President of Malta, Robert Abela, commented on the FATF’s decision: “While I consider this decision unjust, we will continue the reform process because we are acting with conviction and believe in good governance.

“We remain committed to making whatever reforms are needed while preserving the national interest. We will never be uncooperative or obstructive but will intensify our resolve to fight money laundering and the financing of international terrorism.”

Abela – who previously attempted to boost Malta’s monetary security by strengthening the country’s anti-financial crime unit, the Financial Intelligence and Analysis Unit – has been joined in his criticism of the FATF’s decision by opposition leader Bernard Grech, who described the move as a ‘national punishment’.

Additionally, both the government and the Malta Gaming Authority (MGA) have consistently defended the island’s financial security policies and infrastructure, arguing that Maltese authorities are capable of countering illegal betting in cooperation with sporting bodies and law enforcement.

Maltese authorities have good reason to be concerned by the FATF’s ruling, as both the gambling sector and financial services play a key role in the country’s economy, and so a decision deeming the island’s infrastructure to be monetarily unsound could have severe impacts.

Gambling, in particular, plays a key role in the country’s economic structure, supporting over 9,000 jobs both directly and indirectly, generating €700 million annually and accounting for 12% of national GDP.

The announcement closely follows last week’s revelation that Malta could have to withdraw its veto of the signing of the Macolin Convention, a Council of Europe sports safeguarding and anti-corruption initiative, in order to pass the FATF’s financial safety Moneyval test.

If fully ratified, the convention would prevent licenced gaming operators in Malta from extending commercial operations overseas unless following the laws of the other member states, as part of a wider international restriction of the betting industry.

As well as facing oversight from the FATF, the Italian ADM and police anti-corruption task force was heavily critical of Malta’s regulatory oversight in 2019, after its ‘Glassia Investigation’ uncovered that several white-label igaming operators in the country had laundered millions of euros for Calabrian organised crime groups.

During 2019, the MGA revised its licensing conditions to align with new high-risk industry compliance standards established by EU’s Fourth Anti-Money Laundering Directive.

Implementing changes, the MGA would establish its new AML Unit, tasked with undertaking due diligence of new licensees and providing tougher monitoring of licensed operators AML and compliance duties servicing diverse European online gambling jurisdictions.

Source: 27 June 2021, SBC News

All Sports

<https://sbcnews-co-uk.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/sbcnews.co.uk/sportsbook/2021/06/25/malta-placed-on-fatf-rogue-list-following-litany-of-aml-discrepancies/amp/>