



INTERPOL

INTEGRITY IN SPORT

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Photos International Olympic Committee

INVESTIGATIONS

Australia

NSW Police Report Reveals Crime Figures Have Infiltrated The NRL

New South Wales Police have conducted hundreds of hours of interviews over the last two years with NRL staff, players, coaches, referees, professional punters and others. They have been investigating reports of match fixing but have found something much darker. A report has been released, finding organised crime has infiltrated the game, with shady individuals offering people inside the NRL access to cocaine and sex workers in exchange for 'inside information' about teams, players and upcoming games. Strike Force Nuralda, which was set-up to look into the allegations of match fixing, thankfully found that no games had been rigged. But it wasn't for a lack of trying on behalf of the crime figures who had reportedly been trying to solicit specific details. Investigators have decided not to lay charges on any of the illegal practices they discovered, with a statement saying: "While detectives have not preferred criminal charges relating to these issues, their investigation highlighted activities and practices that are deemed as high risk for the NRL. "In light of this information, representatives of Strike Force Nuralda have recently met with the NRL and provided recommendations to ensure the integrity of the code is not compromised by the infiltration of organised crime." While the investigation began two years ago, a game between Manly and Parramatta in April last year drew a lot of suspicion and ramped up detectives' efforts. In spite of the evidence provided to the game, Chief Executive Todd Greenberg told a press conference: "I'm pleased that despite a very extensive investigation there are no charges. We've been co-operating with police continuously for the best part of two years, as we should do when allegations like this surface.

Source: Stewart Perrie, 1 November 2017, Ladbible

<http://www.ladbible.com/news/sport-news-nsw-police-report-reveals-crime-figures-have-infiltrated-the-nrl-20171031>

Germany

German Video Assistant Referee chief Hellmut Krug sacked over matchfixing allegations

BUNDESLIGA fans are demanding the end of video assistant referee (VAR) testing in Germany as the system's German league chief was replaced on Monday amidst accusations of influencing matches. The VAR is being trialled this season in Italy and Germany with football's governing body FIFA yet to decide whether it will be used at June's World Cup in Russia. In Germany, the VAR experiment has sparked controversy and debate with 'Cologne' - the centre where all scenes are reviewed - widely blamed for unfavourable rulings and a byword for a place where bad decisions are made. Judging by fans' banners at top-flight grounds around Germany at the weekend, most supporters want VAR scrapped immediately. On Monday, magazine Kicker ran the headline "Only Losers: Irritation, sanctions, wrong decisions" on its cover next to an image of a referee showing a red card. The VAR system sparked serious accusations on Sunday which ultimately cost Hellmut Krug, the head of the VAR system in Cologne, his role. Germany's biggest-selling newspaper Bild claimed Krug twice influenced penalty decisions in favour of Schalke, who he supports, during their 1-1 league draw with Wolfsburg a week ago. "I believe that we have the wrong people in Cologne," fumed Augsburg's sports director Stefan Reuter in reaction. Krug vehemently denied the accusations, but the DFB moved swiftly on Monday to remove him as head of the project. Former top referee Lutz Michael Froehlich has replaced Krug, pledging "transparency in the procedures". "For me, it is important that the referee keeps his responsible role on the field and players, as well as spectators, have confidence in him," added Froehlich. It has been a rocky few days for the DFB. Last week, the German FA called for the VAR to intervene more during matches, even if the on-field referee did not commit an obvious error, which was met with protests from the clubs. "The whole communication from the DFB is currently catastrophic," fumed Moenchengladbach's director of sport Max Eberl. "If you have a test phase and you want to adapt the entire system, that's justified, but then everyone should know it. "We should only need the video assistant in a situation which is really crucial to the game." Jupp Heynckes, coach of Bundesliga leaders Bayern Munich, agrees. "I think you should not cut out the referee too much. Only in very serious situations should video evidence be consulted," he said. "You must not dilute the football." Gladbach's coach Dieter Hecking does not expect the system to still be in use after December's winter break. "The VAR is good for football, but I dare to suggest that it will be canned in the winter break," said Hecking. "It's in a test phase, but it seems we are doing everything to ensure it doesn't have a chance." Fans complain that VAR interventions spoil the flow of the game. It often takes minutes for decisions to be made, which leads to disgruntlement at Bundesliga grounds when the ref signals that the VAR is checking a situation. The 3-3 draw between Wolfsburg and Hertha Berlin on Sunday is a good example as two first-half goals for hosts Wolfsburg were disallowed by the VAR, sat in Cologne, which incensed home fans. "There was a lot of restlessness in the game because of the video referee," said Hertha coach Pal Dardai. Former Germany international Stefan Effenberg says the Bundesliga should copy the example of American Football, where decisions in the National Football League are clearly articulated to spectators by the referee. "The NFL should be a role model. Next season, the referee should, regardless of the situation, speak briefly to the spectators," said Effenberg. "It would take maybe five seconds to calm around 70,000 people. "There have been many good decisions. Mistakes only need to be considered in terms of how to do things differently in the future." As expected, the head of the DFB is one of the few remaining fans of the system. "I still believe in the project, once everyone clearly defines their roles and then sticks to them, I'm pretty sure that this can be something very good for football," said DFB president Reinhard Grindel.

Source: AFP, 6 November 2017, FoxSports

Football

<https://www.foxsports.com.au/football/bundesliga/german-video-assistant-referee-chief-hellmut-krug-sacked-over-matchfixing-allegations/news-story/a1aba5229112b57fe0580d3b702d013e>

South Africa

SAFA investigating match-fixing claims in Sasol Women's League

SAFA insist they will speedily investigate allegations of match-fixing in the Sasol Women's League. Earlier this week Super Falcons chairman Bob Maredi told KickOff.com he suspected foul play in a Gauteng Sasol League title decider with Mamelodi Sundowns Ladies on Saturday. Maredi said there were many poor decisions from the officials in the season-finale, which had to be halted when an outraged Falcons player reportedly kicked the referee in the chest as unruly scenes unfolded at Chloorkop. SAFA have since released a statement, which reads: 'The South African Football Association (SAFA) has noted, with great concern, complaints that have been circulating on social media where coaches and players in the Provincial Women's League made allegations of biased refereeing in one of the qualification matches. 'SAFA has also received complaints from the aggrieved parties and has instituted a thorough investigation into the matter and will work speedily to get to the bottom of the issue in time for the National Championships. 'This matter will be dealt with in accordance with the SAFA statutes and regulations without any favour or prejudice to any of the parties involved. 'The intervention in this matter is part of SAFA's national integrity program, which include, amongst other elements, the following: 'We have intensified integrity training at workshops of referees and coaches. 'We have intervened broadly in the ABC Motsepe League to prevent misconduct. 'We have established strong relationships with the South African Police Services that has resulted in several ongoing police investigations and which has also resulted in the conviction and imprisonment of former match officials; 'We have established a monitoring system that sees regular interventions in vulnerable matches in all leagues. 'We have taken action against teams, clubs, match officials and staff members who violated the SAFA ethics code. 'We have established a 24hr independent anti-corruption hotline (+27 80 077 7228) where anyone can call to report corrupt practices in football. 'We have also established better coordination mechanisms with FIFA and its intelligence gathering systems. 'We understand that the stakes are quite high in the qualification stages for the prestigious National Women's Championships, but encourage all players and club officials to vent their frustrations through the SAFA platforms where the association can act immediately upon receipt of these complaints. 'Articulating their concerns through the media will not assist us in prosecuting those responsible for these violations and we caution against doing so.'

Source: 8 November 2017, KickOff.com

Football

<http://www.kickoff.com/news/80457/safa-investigating-match-fixing-claims-in-sasol-womens-league>

SENTENCES/SANCTIONS

Fifa

Fifa corruption scandal: Costas Takkas is second official sentenced

The second football official sentenced as part of the Fifa corruption scandal says he "hopes the sport learns from this case". Costas Takkas, former general secretary of the Cayman Islands Football Association, was sentenced to 15 months in prison by a US judge on Tuesday. The British citizen pleaded guilty to a part in a money-laundering conspiracy, after receiving and transmitting millions of dollars in bribes. "I should have known better," he said. "I feel big remorse. It's not in my nature to cause anybody harm. I love football." Who are the indicted Fifa officials? Takkas, who was born in Cyprus, was one of several Fifa officials first arrested in Zurich in May 2015 at the request of US authorities. The 61-year-old was detained in Switzerland while awaiting extradition to the US and has already served 10 months in custody. He was also ordered to pay \$3m restitution, shared with former Fifa vice-president Jeffrey Webb, who pleaded guilty to several charges in November 2015. Since May 2015, federal prosecutors have indicted about 40 sports and football executives linked to football in the Americas. Hector Trujillo, a former judge in Guatemala, last month became the first person to be sentenced in the investigation after pleading guilty to wire fraud and conspiracy.

Source: 1 November 2017, BBC

Football

<http://www.bbc.com/sport/football/41828837>

France

Frankie Fredericks charged with corruption by French court

Four-time Olympic silver medallist Frankie Fredericks has been charged with money laundering and corruption by the French authorities. The charges were brought by a judge who is investigating allegations of vote-buying in international sport. Fredericks, 50, was accused of accepting a bribe of \$299,300 (£230,000) from the son of ex-IAAF president Lamine Diack on the day Rio won the vote to host the 2016 Olympics. He claims the money was legitimate payment for consultancy and promotional work for athletics' governing body. Namibian Fredericks, a member of the IAAF council and a prominent figure within the International Olympic Committee (IOC), denies that it was linked to the Olympic bid. An IOC spokesperson said: "We have just been informed of the decision by the French judge. "[The chief ethics and compliance officer] Paquerette Girard Zappelli will look into the file and report to the ethics commission, which is meeting on Monday. "Like with any procedure, the right to be heard has to be respected." Fredericks won Olympic silver medals in the 100m and 200m at both Barcelona 1992 and Atlanta 1996. He also won gold in the 200m at the World Championships in 1993. Fredericks was the chair of the 2024 Olympic bid evaluation committee when the allegations were made, but stepped down in March following the accusations. He also left his position in the IAAF task force, which was responsible for evaluating Russia's return to the sport after its doping scandals. He has been provisionally suspended from the IAAF since July, when the organisation's Athletic Integrity Unit opened an investigation into the matter.

Source: 3 November 2017, BBC

Athletics

<http://www.bbc.com/sport/athletics/41864566>

Greece

Greek soccer officials to stand trial for match-fixing

ATHENS, Greece (AP) The chairman of Greek soccer club Olympiakos and 27 other businessmen and former sporting officials will stand trial on match-fixing charges, a panel of judges ruled Wednesday. The judges ordered Olympiakos chairman Vangelis Marinakis to stand trial. No date was set, and the conditions for his bail were extended. Marinakis, a prominent Greek shipowner and news media investor, denied the allegations, while criminal charges against him for fraud and blackmail were dropped. "My innocence will be established in the court proceedings that are to follow," Marinakis said in a statement. Marinakis said he would step aside as chairman until he is cleared in court, and named deputy chairman Yiannis Moralis as caretaker. The other defendants – all charged with similar offenses – include shareholders and former and current officials in several Greek clubs as well as former referees and Greek soccer association officials. Professional soccer in Greece has long been marred by fan violence and allegations of corruption, with rival club officials frequently having public spats and openly questioning refereeing decisions considered key to match outcomes. The country's current left-wing government has suspended league matches several times because of violence and attacks against match officials. Greek champion Olympiakos is currently playing the group stage of the Champions League and last week held Barcelona to a 0-0 draw in Piraeus. Marinakis took over the Piraeus club in 2010 and also owns a controlling stake in English Championship club Nottingham Forest. The Greek club is currently a surprise fourth in the standings following a string of poor results. The investigation focused on matches from 2012-15, court officials said. Criminal charges of match-fixing – formally called "unlawful influence of sporting event results" – carry a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison. The other clubs implicated include current and former officials and investors from Atromitos, Levadiakos and Veroia. The trial is expected to take place in mid-2018.

Source: AP, 8 November 2017, FoxSports

<https://www.foxsports.com/soccer/story/greek-soccer-officials-to-stand-trial-for-match-fixing-110817>

GOOD PRACTICES

Esports Integrity Coalition

Esports Group After Dota 2 Bans: Players 'Increasingly Likely' To Be Caught If Trying To Fix Matches

The lead commissioner at the Esports Integrity Coalition (ESIC) says the publicity garnered by the decision to ban two players for Global match-fixing at a recent Dota 2 tournament has had a "significant impact" as it once again draws attention to the dangers now apparent within esports. Ian Smith, the integrity commissioner of ESIC, was speaking in the wake of the news of the two-year bans for Leonid Kuzmenko and Dmitri Morozov. They were alleged to have fixed a match at the Uprise Champions Cup tournament held in September. The publicity over the case will have been beneficial, he suggested. "Because of the highly confidential nature of a lot of what we do, it makes the task impossible to talk about, at least as much as it is publicly perceived," he told Esports Betting Report. "I don't think players yet understand how increasingly likely it is that they'll be caught if they try something like this now." Sportradar investigation - Specifically in this instance, Kuzmenko and Morozov were found out after rumors surfaced about their behavior in a match at the UCC European qualifiers tournament against a team called Yellow Submarine. An investigation was undertaken by the esports integrity services team at Sportradar using the esports betting data, which remains the strongest indicator of concerns that need to be followed up and will then usually be cross-referenced against match data. ESIC is leveraging Sportradar's multi-year expertise in this area. The company's fraud detection system has been operating for many years across both traditional sports and esports and has a wide visibility across all the various betting markets. This includes Asia, where Sportradar provides the only meaningful monitoring system available, but ESIC has as yet a minimal presence. "Asia will be a major focus for ESIC in 2018," he says. "In western markets, the chances of getting caught in betting fraud relating to esports markets is pretty high now." A work in progress for esports - The task of educating the esports market further remains a work in progress. The tournament organizers are a particular area of focus as ESIC and others continue to try and drive home the importance of integrity and of the concomitant sanctions and banning measures. "Some do and some don't understand the importance of this," suggests Smith. "In my experience, most tournament organizers live at such a pace and in such a hand-to-mouth manner that they don't have the time or the inclination to really consider these issues. "Most have mercifully never experienced the reality of a match-fixing allegation or investigation. Most wouldn't have the first idea of what to do if it happened to them." Face-to-face education on esports integrity - To help with the educational effort, ESIC announced earlier this week an anti-corruption online tutorial in collaboration with Sportradar which is being made available to esports players and other participants, including organizers, so that they can build up a "foundational level awareness" of the integrity issues around esports. Smith says that education is the best deterrent to corrupt behavior. "Face-to-face education has been very successful across the top end of CS:GO, Dota 2, SC2 and League of Legends, but that only goes so far." One area where Smith said he was very pleased with the progress so far was in persuading the esports bookmakers to sign up to the ESIC approach. "These that have joined the ESIC network each contribute to a ring-fenced education fund that helps ESIC sustain and expand our efforts in that regard. "We couldn't do it without the betting operator support. Obviously, the more of them that get engaged with us, the more we can do and the better our alert network will become." Betting and regulatory partners - ESIC's betting partners include: Pinnacle, Ebettle, Betway, Unikrn, SkyBet, ESP, BlinkPool, GoGaWi.com, EsportsBetting.com. It also has agreements with the UK Gambling Commission (UKGC), the Nevada Gaming Control Board and the Malta Gaming Authority. ESIC recently requested it be included as one of the bodies that shares information with the UKGC's Sports Betting Intelligence Unit (SBIU). Although ESIC met some criteria, a recent UK government consultation document made it clear that it "appreciates the value ESIC can add" to the esports integrity area. It added that it would encourage the esports community to establish an "overarching esports governing body." Smith said ESIC already has an information-sharing agreement with UKGC, signed in May this year. He added that there was now a British Esports Federation, which ESIC supports. "They have no integrity function, however, so wouldn't be able to interact with the SBIU in any meaningful way," he added. "I would hope (and I think this is the case) that the BEF would support ESIC in that role and defer to us on matters of betting fraud and match-fixing."

Source: Scott Longley, 2 November 2017, Esports Betting Report

<https://www.esportsbettingreport.com/esic-esports-betting-fraud-detection/>

INTEGRITY IN SPORT EVENTS

Australia

Joint INTERPOL-IOC training in Australia promotes sports integrity

BRISBANE, Australia – Key stakeholders across Australia have come together to develop solid partnerships to combat competition manipulation and promote integrity in sport. A two-day (6 and 7 November) joint INTERPOL-International Olympic Committee (IOC) Law Enforcement Training to strengthen capacity for the Queensland Police discussed match-fixing and investigations into competition manipulation, evidence evaluation and information exchange between police and sports organizations. The training course was followed by a one-day partnership development meeting designed to bring together high-level actors to protect the integrity of competitions during 2018 Commonwealth Games in Australia. Exercises using real-life scenarios allowed the participants to experience first-hand how operational collaboration between sport, law enforcement and betting regulators and operators can be achieved. The meetings were held in cooperation with the Queensland Police, as part of Australia's preparations for hosting the 2018 Commonwealth Games. Additional support was provided by SportRadar, which leverages sports data to protect the integrity of competitions. Detective Superintendent Jon Wacker of the Queensland Police said: "The expertise shared by the IOC and INTERPOL's Integrity in Sport unit will provide a legacy to the Queensland Police Service to professionally address the international crime trend of match-fixing." The INTERPOL – IOC events fed into a two-day match-fixing conference organized by the Queensland Police to foster collaboration and information exchange between sports and law enforcement. INTERPOL and the IOC signed a Memorandum of Understanding in January 2014. Since then, the two organizations have worked together on a range of initiatives, including close collaboration during the Olympic Games and global capacity building. Many of the best practices developed by Australia to promote integrity in sport will be incorporated into the INTERPOL – IOC capacity building training and programmes.

<https://www.interpol.int/News-and-media/News/2017/N2017-156>

