



INTERPOL

INTEGRITY IN SPORT

Bi-weekly Bulletin

28 November 2017 - 11 December 2017



Photos International Olympic Committee

INVESTIGATIONS

Australia

Police investigating match-fixing in game involving Melbourne City

Victoria Police are investigating claims a match involving Melbourne City's youth team was fixed. The match under investigation occurred in last year's National Premier Leagues Victoria 2, the competition in which Melbourne City's Under 20 team finished third. In a statement, Melbourne City said there is no suggestion the club, its players or anyone associated with the club is under investigation. The World Game understands the coach of a rival team has been questioned by police, with claims that several of his players have been arrested. A Victoria Police spokesperson said: "Detectives from the Sporting Integrity Intelligence Unit and Crime Command are investigating allegations of match fixing. "The investigation into the matter, which relates to a sporting event in Victoria last year, remains ongoing and as such it would not be appropriate to comment further at this time." It is unclear which club is under investigations. Victoria introduced laws making it an offence to corrupt a betting outcome in 2013, and used them almost immediately in the Southern Stars scandal, where players were imported from England for the purposes of fixing a number of Victorian Premier League matches. As a result of their investigation, five people were convicted and another banned from football for life. Earlier this year, the winner of the 2016 Australian Open Boys tennis competition, Oliver Anderson, pleaded guilty to breaches of those same laws in a Victorian court. But while Victoria appears to be the country's hot spot of such activity, an expert in match-fixing investigations says it is unlikely to be the only state where results are being scripted. "I'm not sure if any other state police force is actively looking into this issue," says Mike Pride, a former AFP officer who now specialises in international match-fixing investigations and works as integrity and security consultant for the Perform group. "Fixing appears to be occurring in most countries and I would not think any state in Australia would be immune. "Victoria appears to be proactive in assessing and investigating match manipulation. "As for Australia as a whole, the lack of resources and understanding make Australian sport, especially at the lower leagues, susceptible." Most states and territories now have near-identical legislation to Victoria's. Football Federation Australia (FFA) employs the Swiss-headquartered Sportradar to monitor betting markets for A-League, FFA Cup and National Premier Leagues games for signs of match-fixing, and it was Sportradar's work with Victoria Police that exposed the Southern Stars scandal. FFA also has integrity agreements with Australian betting companies to share information regarding suspicious bets. A similar agreement between Tennis Australia and local betting companies led to Anderson's case. "Large single bets at NPL2 level would trigger an alarm," says Pride. "But usually the larger bets by illegal betting syndicates are spread across many syndicate members to appear as smaller bets, to not trigger an alert." The World Game can also reveal matches from the Victorian State League have been regularly offered for betting by a bitcoin-betting site licensed in Montenegro. These games include some from the second division, including teams as obscure as the Essendon Royals and Altona City. Federal Police in Austria investigated how a practice match between clubs in the 6th and 7th tier ended up on that site earlier this year. While no betting companies in Australia open books on games at this level, regulations in Victoria, created under the direction of the FFA, permit betting on "football competitions conducted in each of the Australian states and territories by member federations of the FFA". The FFA would not say if it was appropriate that gambling be allowed on all matches at this level, which go down to at least the eighth tier of Australian football, or if these games were covered by its agreement with Sportradar. In a statement, the governing body replied it: "takes seriously the integrity of football competitions in Australia and has a regime in place with its Member Federations, police and legitimate gambling companies to mitigate against anyone who would attempt to undermine the integrity of those competitions through illegal gambling or match fixing. "FFA does not go into detail publicly around the integrity measures it has in place as to do so could undermine the effectiveness of those measures and actually assist people who intend match fixing or other illegal activity."

Source: Jack Kerr, 8 December 2017, *The World Game*

Football

<https://theworldgame.sbs.com.au/article/2017/12/08/exclusive-police-investigating-match-fixing-game-involving-melbourne-city>

Australia

Queensland man charged with harness race fixing

A 69-year-old Brisbane man has been charged over allegations of harness racing match-fixing. Police say the man rigged the outcome of harness races at Albion Park in Brisbane and Globe Derby Park in Adelaide, and fraudulently purchased harness racing horses while disqualified from any involvement in racing. The Redcliffe man was charged on Wednesday with match-fixing, fraud and receiving tainted property, and will appear in the Redcliffe Magistrates Court on January 8. He is the fourth person to be charged with match-fixing offences as part of a joint investigation by the Queensland Racing Crime Squad and the Queensland Racing Integrity Commission.

Source: *Australian Associated Press*, 6 December 2017, *Daily Mail*

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/wires/aap/article-5151021/Qld-man-charged-harness-race-fixing.html>

International Cricket Council (ICC)

Three international captains report approach by match-fixers to the ICC

The International Cricket Council (ICC) is investigating seven life cases of match-fixing, after it emerged that three international captains had been approached by potential fixers in the last month and a half. Pakistan captain Sarfraz Ahmed, who led his side to a Champions Trophy win earlier this year, informed ICC's anti-corruption unit about an approach by a potential fixer during a one-day series against Sri Lanka. Previously, Zimbabwe captain Graeme Cremer had also reported a similar approach. The identity of the third international captain is still unknown. Cremer alleged that a Zimbabwe Cricket Board member had approached him during the recent two-Test series against West Indies, to fix a part of one of the games. The incident took place before the first game on October 21, after which Cremer informed head coach Heath Streak of the same. The new general manager of the ICC's anti-corruption unit, Alex Marshall, who previously served as chief constable in Hampshire, will have fresh challenges up his sleeve as the ICC implements new rules to curb the menace of fixing. Under the new reforms, the ICC has fresh powers to seize mobile phones from players to track down assailants, and non-compliance to do the same by the cricketers could lead to them being banned for two years. There are also reports that suggest that the sum being offered to players is around the ballpark of 150,000 pounds, and the disparity in paying standards for cricketers from different countries is something that the fixers are aiming at. Former Pakistan skipper Waqar Younis had also recently said that cricket boards need to monitor the menace of fixing in franchise T20 leagues, especially at the junior levels. As the ACU investigates the cases, the identity of the third international captain could be revealed soon. While it seemed like various measures had been taken to curb the menace of fixing, reports such as these are a clear indication that match-fixing still has its ugly presence, even at the top-most level of the game. While it is easier to monitor the levels of corruption at international level, there are several women's leagues and T20 tournaments that have become new targets for fixers, especially with more matches being telecasted online. It is absolutely imperative that the ICC does enough so that upcoming talents aren't exposed to the dark and luring side of cricket in their formative years.

Source: Aadya Sharma, 5 December 2017, Sportskeeda

Cricket

<https://www.sportskeeda.com/cricket/three-international-captains-report-approach-by-match-fixers-to-the-icc>

Qatar

Huge payments linked to the 2022 Qatar World Cup investigated by Brazil and FBI

The transfer of US\$22 million made by Qatar and allegedly linked to the soccer 2022 World Cup is being investigated by the Brazilian justice ministry and the FBI, according to a report in the French news website Mediapart on Sunday. Brazilian Football Federation's former chief Ricardo Teixeira's bank statements have been investigated by Brazilian and US prosecutors. Teixeira had opened an account at Pasche Monaco, a Swiss-based facility controlled by Credit Mutuel until in 2013, according to reports. Prosecutors found that a US\$22 million payment from Qatar's Ganem Bin Saad Al Saad & Sons Group (CSSG) was made to this bank account in January 2011, shortly after Qatar was awarded the 2022 tournament. Following investigations into money laundering and fraud between 2009 and 2012, Teixeira resigned from his powerful post in 2012. He was also a member of the Executive Committee of FIFA, which participated in the vote in December 2010 that awarded the 2022 World Cup to Qatar. Teixeira is "suspected of having participated in the alleged system to buy votes for Qatar among the 22 voters of FIFA". Mediapart also reported that "In early 2013, several transfers were in effect, issued the same day from his account, to Jack Warner who was then president of the Confederation of Football [North America, Central America and the Caribbean], as well as Mohammad Bin Hammam, President of the Confederation of Asian Football and Nicolas Leoz, President of the Confederation of South America.

Source: 28 November 2017, MercoPress

http://en.mercopress.com/2017/11/28/huge-payments-linked-to-the-2022-qatar-world-cup-investigated-by-brazil-and-fbi?utm_content=buffer573d1&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

SENTENCES/SANCTIONS

Russia

Fifa removed investigator on trail of Russia World Cup chief Vitaly Mutko

Cornel Borbély, Fifa's ethics committee chairman, was investigating the alleged role of Russia's deputy prime minister for sport, tourism and youth policy, Vitaly Mutko, in state-sponsored doping when world football's ruling body abruptly removed the Swiss from his job in May. Mutko was banned this week from all future Olympic Games by the International Olympic Committee, which accepted evidence that he was centrally involved in systematic doping of athletes, but Fifa has taken no action. Formerly a Russian minister of sport, Mutko was alleged to have overseen the vast doping programmes before the 2012 London Olympics and 2014 Sochi Olympics. He is still president of the Russian football association and the organising committee for the World Cup next year. Borbély, a Zurich lawyer who chaired the investigatory arm of Fifa's ethics committee, was examining the voluminous evidence on Russia and Mutko's activities when Fifa decided at its congress in Bahrain not to renew his tenure. Mutko would be barred from football if the ethics committee agreed with the World AntiDoping Agency, its investigator Richard McLaren and now the IOC, that Mutko was directly involved in statesponsored doping. Gianni Infantino, the Fifa president, sought in March to prevent its independent governance committee barring Mutko from the Fifa council, arguing it would damage the prospects of a successful World Cup in Russia. Miguel Maduro, the Portuguese law professor who chaired that committee and maintained its decision because Fifa's rules require politically neutral council members, was also fired at the Bahrain congress. Maduro told the UK parliament's select committee for digital, culture, media and sport in September that he had been urged by Fatma Samoura, Fifa's secretary-general, to change his decision and declare Mutko eligible. "She said the World Cup would be a disaster and that as a consequence the continued presidency [of Infantino] would be in question," Maduro said. Fifa has taken no action against Mutko or Russia in nearly 18 months since Wada asked its ethics committee to investigate the findings made by McLaren in his first report, in July 2016, of Russian state doping and a systematic coverup. Borbély is understood to have contacted Wada and McLaren for the evidence but was not supplied with much material, because McLaren was conducting further investigations. In December last year, Wada published McLaren's second report, which found "an institutional conspiracy across [more than 1,000] summer and winter sports athletes, who participated with Russian officials within the ministry of sport and its infrastructure". Wada said this had been concluded from forensic testing, "based on immutable facts", not only on the evidence of the whistleblower Grigory Rodchenkov, the former head of the Moscow antidoping laboratory. Authoritative sources said that after that second report, Borbély contacted Wada again and this time McLaren did send him a substantial volume of evidence. Borbély is understood to have been examining the material, to form a view about whether he considered that action should be taken against Mutko, when his tenure was not renewed. Borbély and Hans-Joachim Eckert, the chair of the ethics committee's adjudicatory branch, were given no notice of the decision to terminate their tenures. The FA and its representative David Gill, who is paid \$300,000 a year to be a member of the Fifa council, supported the decisions to replace the ethics committee chairmen and Maduro. Borbély and Eckert warned that their removal would set back their investigations into hundreds of cases and "incapacitate" the fight against corruption. Borbély was replaced by a Colombian judge, María Claudia Rojas, and he is understood to have given her the material from McLaren. The IOC based its decision to ban Mutko and Russia from the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics on a report from a commission looking at McLaren's work, chaired by the former Swiss president Samuel Schmid. Rodchenkov gave further evidence to Schmid, repeatedly stating Mutko was central to the doping conspiracy. Fifa declined to answer questions about whether Rojas is proceeding with an investigation into Mutko, referring to the statement made after the IOC's decision, which said: "When it comes to potential disciplinary or ethical matters concerning specific individuals, it will be up to the respective Fifa bodies to evaluate them." Mutko has rejected all the allegations and did so again at last week's World Cup draw in Moscow, where Infantino sat alongside him. The FA declined to comment.

Source: David Conn, 7 December 2017, *The Guardian*

https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2017/dec/07/fifa-investigator-russia-world-cup-vitaly-mutko?CMP=share_btn_link

Singapore

Singapore citizenship of former S-League player to be stripped for match-fixing

SINGAPORE: A 43-year-old naturalised Singapore citizen will have his citizenship stripped for his involvement in match-fixing. The man has been served with a notice of proposed deprivation of citizenship under Article 133(1) of the Constitution, said the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Thursday (Dec 7). Channel NewsAsia understands that the man is Mali-born Gaye Alassane, a former S-League player. In its statement, MHA said the man obtained his Singapore citizenship by registration in 2003 through the Family Ties Scheme. "At the point of his application, there was no information to suggest that he was involved in any criminal activities," said the ministry. However, as a Singapore citizen, he became an "active and trusted member" of an international match-fixing syndicate that was "created in and took root in Singapore". MHA said he and his syndicate members used Singapore as a hub to conduct major global match-fixing activities, conspiring with them to fix games "in various countries through corruption of officials and players". He travelled to these countries to fix the matches and established relationships with foreign nationals in Singapore to draw them into his activities. The man also helped move bribe money for his syndicate into Singapore, remitted and "even personally couriered" these bribes out from Singapore to facilitate match-fixing activities. Said the ministry: "This individual's serious criminal conduct not only undermined the integrity of Singapore's financial system, but also law and order. "Witnesses were afraid of testifying against the individual and his syndicate members in open court for fear of reprisal." For having engaged in criminal activities that "prejudiced the public safety, peace and good order" of Singapore, the man was dealt with under the Criminal Law (Temporary Provisions) Act and is currently under a police supervision order, said MHA. This is not the first time a Singaporean will have his citizenship stripped. MHA said there have been previous cases of other Singaporeans – who became citizens by registration or naturalisation – who had their citizenships taken away over their criminal activities. The last time this happened was in 1987. Without naming the person, MHA said the man had committed "various serious offences such as drug trafficking". In the case announced on Thursday, the ministry is moving to strip the man's citizenship given the "seriousness and detrimental impact" of his actions. Alassane can apply for his case to be referred to a Citizenship Committee of Inquiry, which will then hold an inquiry and submit a report to the Home Affairs Minister. The minister will then decide whether to remove his citizenship. If his citizenship is taken away, Alassane will be stateless and will have to stay in Singapore on a special pass granted by the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority. He will not be able to enjoy citizenship privileges, and will not be allowed to apply for a Singapore passport. "SC (Singapore citizenship) comes with privileges and benefits, as well as duties and obligations. Individuals who have been granted SC should cherish it and not act contrary to national interests," MHA said. "Those who undertake activities that prejudice our security or PSPGO (public safety, peace and good order) deserve to have their citizenship status deprived."

Source: 7 December 2017, Channel News Asia

Football

<https://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/singapore/gaye-alassane-singapore-citizenship-s-league-player-stripped-9476702>

LEGISLATION

Cyprus

Match fixing bill voted into law

A bill on tackling match fixing was voted into law on Friday with a majority vote, hailed by Justice Minister Ionas Nicolaou. The legislation provides for the establishment of a five-member ethics committee and strict penalties for offenders. While the committee will not be able to take statements it will submit a report to the attorney general who will determine whether there can be prosecution for the case. The law defines match-fixing as an offence carrying seven years in prison and a fine up to €200,000 for those found guilty. Bribery offences concerning officials and athletes carry a five year prison sentence and a €100,000 fine. The law also allows for the return of profits made off match fixing games. A total of 26 deputies voted in favour from Disy, Diko, Citizens Alliance, Green Party and independent MP Pavlos Mylonas. Edek voted against with two votes while Akel's 15 deputies and Solidarity Movement's two MP's abstained. An amendment was also passed that includes individual matches and games organised by natural persons. Match fixing has become a scourge in Cyprus, affecting the top flight and the second division. Footballing authorities have received scores of notifications about suspicious betting, which suggests match-fixing, but no one has been brought to book to date, apart from several €50,000-fines imposed on teams. The law bans betting by athletes, club officials, referees, and members of the football association. Club officials will be banned from representing athletes. The legislation also includes provisions for protecting athletes who blow the whistle and banning termination of their contract. Nicolaou in a statement hailed the move saying he had hoped more deputies would have supported it as most suggestions were taken on board. Nonetheless he thanked the lawmakers and expressed his belief sports bodies and political parties would trust the state to properly implement the law. Akel MP Aristos Damianou said the law was not able to tackle the challenges stemming from match fixing while his counterpart Giorgos Georgiou said the law was ambiguous and sloppy. Kyriakos Hadjiyiannis, chairman of the House education committee which discussed the bill said the law gives the state more tools to fight match fixing and is an opportunity to solve problems in Cypriot football that paint an ugly picture for the game.

Source: Andria Kades, 1 December 2017, Cyprus Mail

<http://cyprus-mail.com/2017/12/01/match-fixing-bill-voted-law/>

United States

Will it be a slam dunk for the US sports betting ban?

A ban on sports betting in most US states could be overturned by a case being considered by the Supreme Court. The state of New Jersey is challenging the 1992 federal law that largely outlawed sports gambling, describing the matter as a "states' rights" issue. The case, which began on Monday, comes after New Jersey residents voted in 2011 to legalise sports betting. A group of sports leagues opposes betting on games, which they fear will encourage match-fixing. Lower courts have consistently ruled against New Jersey, saying it is within the federal government's power to limit a state's policy options. The Supreme Court opted to hear the case nevertheless amid a wider shift in American attitudes toward gambling. Before 1976, Nevada - home of the Las Vegas strip - was the only state with legal casinos outside Native American lands. But in recent years, states hungry for tax revenue in the wake of the financial crash have enacted a rash of looser gambling laws, collecting hefty levies on gambling revenue. There are now 24 states with commercial casinos - roughly double the number a decade ago. Despite the official ban, which already exempts Nevada and three other states, illegal sports betting is rife in the US. Americans place about \$154bn in illegal sports bets every year, according to the American Gaming Association. The association's president, Geoff Freeman, described the federal ban as an "utter failure" earlier this year. It says the UK is an example of a country where sports betting is commonplace. "It's time for Washington to stop depriving states of critical tax revenue and allow them to reap the rewards of a regulated market," Mr Freeman said. More than 15 states filed papers in support of New Jersey in the case. A handful have already passed laws to authorise sports betting in the event of a change. 'Times have changed' On Monday, as lawyers started arguments for the Supreme Court, some more conservative judges appeared sceptical of the existing law. The court is expected to make a decision in June 2018. "If we are successful here we could have bets being taken in New Jersey within two weeks of a decision by the court," said outgoing New Jersey governor Chris Christie after attending the court hearing. "We're prepared in New Jersey - we're ready to go." Regardless of the court's final ruling, Congress may also take up the debate amid broader discussion about online gaming and e-sports. Even some of the professional sports leagues have started to change their positions on the question of gambling. Adam Silver, National Basketball Association commissioner, supported a federal law that would create a uniform set of rules across the US. "Times have changed," he wrote in a 2014 opinion piece.

Source: Natalie Sherman, 4 December 2017, BBC

<http://www.bbc.com/news/business-42227961>

GOOD PRACTICES

Ghana

GFA to reward informants of bribery and match fixing with \$4,500

The Ghana FA is ready to reward anyone who reports issues of bribery and match-fixing in Ghana football with evidence with an amount of \$4,500 equivalent to GHC20,000. The FA in its attempt to arrest the cancerous disease of match-fixing in the Ghanaian game want to encourage people to on the look-out for perpetrators of such illegal acts. With this, many journalists could stay away from their monthly salaries as their investigations and evidence of match-fixing and bribery could earn them enough to save. The decision was made public after the 3-day summit by the Ghana FA in Cape Coast to brainstorm on the way forward for the development of the game. "We're proposing a GHC20,000 prize money for anyone who comes forward to report any case of bribery with evidence not just an allegation," Kwesi Nyantakyi said. "If a referee is approached by a club official, we are encouraging them to come forward and report the club officials for the package," he added. Kwesi Nyantakyi further explained that the attempt is to discourage people from engaging in those acts. "It is one of the things we will be doing next season to discourage corruption and to champion our crusade against corruption. We are putting aside the incentive package for anyone who will come forward to report any corrupt practices. "It is one of the ways we want to discourage people from engaging in bribery and corrupt practices. He was however emphatic that any such person must back his claim by concrete evidence and not by mere allegation.

Source: 30 November 2017, Ghana Web

<https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/GFA-to-reward-informants-of-bribery-and-match-fixing-with-4-500-605354>

ODDS AND ENDS

Ghana

FIFA officials to visit Ghana over match-fixing

The Communications Director of the Ghana FA, Ibrahim Sannie Daara, has revealed that the FA is expecting a contingent of FIFA experts in Accra in January 2018 during its congress to help handle issues of bribery and match-fixing. This comes at the back of Kwesi Nyantakyi's announcement that whistle blowers will be rewarded once they blow the cover on corruption in Ghana football to the FA with evidence. Consistently club owners and other stakeholders in the elite, second, third leagues have criticized and described the local game as full of corrupt individuals without any proof. To put a stop to these allegations, the presence of FIFA corruption experts will save the image of the local league when sanity prevails. "We have invited FIFA to deal with this situation of corruption, bribery, match fixing and manipulation. So FIFA is sending some experts in this area to educate us. Those who will be educated will be members of the ethics committee, media men, match officials and all stakeholders who are susceptible to be influenced," Daara told Starr Sports.

Source: 4 December 2017, Ghana Web

<https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/SportsArchive/FIFA-officials-to-visit-Ghana-over-match-fixing-606412>

New Zealand

New Zealand government agency to launch inquiry into integrity in sport

Sport New Zealand is considering a review into sport integrity, as concerns over doping, match-fixing, corruption and other issues grow. The Crown Entity, which is responsible for the leadership of the sport and recreation sector, confirmed its focus on the area in ministerial briefing papers for the new Labour government. The 32-page document, which was prepared for new Minister of Sport Grant Robertson, was released on Thursday. "Globally the value of sport has been undermined in recent years by doping, match-fixing and other forms of corruption," said the release. "More recently events here at home, including those which led to New Zealand Rugby's Respect and Responsibility Review, suggest there are wider integrity issues which could impact on participation that also warrant attention. These include things like player welfare and child protection, as well as wider diversity and inclusion matters." New Zealand Rugby's exhaustive review was undertaken after a series of high profile off-field incidents in the second half of 2016. There was the Chiefs' 'stripper-gate' affair – where the gravity of the incident was exacerbated by the official response to it. There was Wellington Rugby's contracting of Lois Filipo despite him facing four charges of serious assault the previous year. There was also All Black Aaron Smith's infamous toilet tryst at Christchurch Airport, and a Mid Canterbury player being arrested on a charge of sexual assault. NZR's nine-month review generated a 164-page report, which set six aspirational goals as well as a series of short, medium and long-term actions. Thursday's briefing revealed that Sport NZ is likely to commit to a wide-ranging inquiry into sport integrity. "Sport NZ is currently scoping a Review of Sport Integrity to better understand these issues and ensure both government and the sector are responding appropriately," continued the release. "In May 2018 New Zealand will take over the Oceania seat on the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Executive Committee from Australia for one year. This is an opportunity to show leadership in the region and globally on anti-doping issues."

Source: Michael Burgess, 7 December 2017, NZ Herald

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/sport/news/article.cfm?c_id=4&objectid=11955242



Russia

Russian doping: IOC bans Russia from 2018 Winter Olympics

Russia has been banned from competing at next year's Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang by the International Olympic Committee. But Russian athletes who can prove they are clean would be allowed to compete in South Korea under a neutral flag. It follows an investigation into allegations of state-sponsored doping at the 2014 Games hosted by Russia in Sochi. "This should draw a line under this damaging episode," the IOC said. The decision has been widely condemned in Russia, with some politicians urging a boycott of the Games, though other officials have welcomed the chance for 'clean' athletes to take part. IOC president Thomas Bach and his board - who made the announcement in Lausanne on Tuesday - came to the decision after reading through the findings and recommendations of a 17-month investigation headed up by the former president of Switzerland, Samuel Schmid. The Russian Olympic Committee (ROC) has been suspended but the IOC said it will invite Russian clean athletes to compete in February under the name 'Olympic Athlete from Russia' (OAR). Despite repeated Russian denials, the Schmid report has found evidence of "the systemic manipulation of the anti-doping rules and system" which back up previous allegations of government involvement in cheating in the run-up to and during the Winter Olympics almost four years ago. Bach said: "This was an unprecedented attack on the integrity of the Olympic Games and sport. This should draw a line under this damaging episode and serve as a catalyst for a more effective anti-doping system." The Games in South Korea, which start on 9 February, will now be without one of the powerhouses of Olympic sport.

Why is Russia's Olympic Committee banned? This entire investigation was instigated by whistleblowing doctor Grigory Rodchenkov, who was director of Russia's anti-doping laboratory during Sochi 2014. He alleged the country ran a systematic programme of doping and claimed he had created substances to enhance athletes' performances and switched urine samples to avoid detection. The World Anti Doping Agency (Wada) enlisted the services of Canadian law professor and sports lawyer Dr Richard McLaren to look into the allegations. The McLaren report concluded 1,000 athletes across 30 sports benefitted from the doping programme between 2012 and 2015. Wada obtained what it said was a Russian laboratory database which it felt corroborated McLaren's conclusions, while re-testing of Russian athletes' samples resulted in a host of retrospective bans and stripping of medals. Last week, another IOC commission, led by Swiss lawyer Denis Oswald, gave its full backing to evidence provided by Dr Rodchenkov.

What else has the IOC ruled? As well as the Olympic Committee ban, the IOC has also decided to ban Russia's deputy Prime Minister and former Sports Minister Vitaly Mutko from all future Olympic Games. He is currently the lead organiser for the 2018 World Cup, which is being staged in Russia next summer. In his report to the IOC executive board, Schmid says Mutko, as the then minister for sport, "had the ultimate administrative responsibility for the acts perpetrated at the time". Responding to the report, Fifa said the IOC ruling had "no impact" on preparations for the World Cup. Football's world governing body added that it "continues to take every measure at its competitions to ensure football remains free from doping" and every player will be tested next summer and "the analysis of all doping samples will be carried out at Wada laboratories outside Russia".

Other decisions: No accreditation for any official from the Russian ministry of sport for the Olympic Winter Games Pyeongchang 2018; Former Deputy sports minister, Yuri Nagornykh, is excluded from any participation in all future Olympic Games; Dmitry Chernyshenko, the former CEO of the organising committee Sochi 2014, is withdrawn from the Co-ordination Commission Beijing 2022; ROC President Alexander Zhukov is suspended as an IOC member, given that his membership is linked to his position as ROC president; The ROC is fined 15 million dollars (£11.2 million) to reimburse the costs of the investigations and to contribute to the establishment of the Independent Testing Authority (ITA); If Russia "respects and implements" what the IOC has called for, the sanctions may be lifted in time for the closing ceremony.

How can clean Russian athletes get to Pyeongchang? The IOC will allow athletes from Russia to compete individually or as part of a team in South Korea, providing they wear an OAR uniform. The Olympic Anthem will be played in any ceremony. A specialist panel appointed by the IOC will decide whether an athlete can compete by following these rules: Athletes must have qualified according to the qualification standards of their respective sport; Athletes must not have been disqualified or declared ineligible for any violation of anti-doping rules; Athletes must have undergone all the pre-Games targeted tests recommended by the Pre-Games Testing Task Force; Athletes must have undergone any other testing requirements specified by the panel to ensure a level playing field.

Action taken so far. A total of 25 Russians have so far been banned from the Olympics for life on the recommendation of the IOC commission; The first part of the McLaren report was published in July 2016, when Wada called on the IOC to ban Russia from the Rio Olympics; The IOC decided against imposing a blanket ban, instead asking individual sporting federations to rule on their participation; In total, 271 Russians competed in Rio; Russia was banned from the Paralympics and remains banned from the 2018 Winter Paralympics. Wada has not called again for the IOC to ban Russia, but recently declared that the country remains 'non-compliant' with its code. IAAF suspension for Russian athletes remains; Russia 'not to blame' for Sochi scandal; The IPC will make public its decision on the potential participation of Russian athletes at the 2018 Winter Paralympics in London on 22 December.

How has Russia reacted? President of the ROC, Alexander Zhukov, said there was positive and negative news from the IOC's decision. He welcomed the invitation for clean athletes to compete in South Korea but does not agree with the ruling that they

must compete under a neutral flag. "If, as proposed, the temporary restrictions are lifted on the last day, then on the last day Russian athletes will compete under their flag with all the athletes from the rest of the world," he told reporters in Lausanne. He said a final decision on participation is still to be made. Russian politicians and athletes were united in their condemnation of the IOC decision. The deputy chairman of Russian parliament's defence committee, Frants Klintsevich, said Russian athletes should not take part in the Olympics in 2018 if they are not allowed to compete under the national flag. "I don't know what Russia's decision will be in the end, but in my view, a great power can't go 'incognito' to the Olympics," state-owned RIA Novosti news agency reported him saying. Igor Morozov, another politician said "hybrid war" had been declared on Russia by the IOC decision. The head of Russia's speed-skating body Alexei Kravtsov said it should be down to the athletes themselves. "My opinion is that every athlete should decide for themselves whether to take part under a neutral flag or not," R-Sport reported. "But there is an admittance procedure, and that in itself is humiliating." Russian bobsleigh federation president Alexander Zubkov said on Tuesday he was "shocked" by the decision. Zubkov was stripped last month of the two gold medals he won at the 2014 Sochi Games and banned from the Olympics for life over alleged doping violations. Russian state broadcaster VGTRK has said it will not broadcast the winter Olympic games if the Russian team is not participating.

Other reaction. John Jackson, who led Great Britain's men's bobsleigh team in Sochi in 2014, and could now be awarded a bronze medal because of Russian doping bans thanked the IOC for the ruling. "I believe it is the correct decision to allow the clean athletes of Russia to compete under a neutral flag," he said. British sports minister Tracey Crouch tweeted that she was "pleased" with the announcement. "We believe that this decision goes a long way towards protecting the interests of clean athletes," said Wada vice-president Linda Hofstad Helleland. im Walden, a lawyer representing whistleblower Rodchenkov, said the decision "sends a powerful message that the IOC will not tolerate state-sponsored cheating by any nation". "Dr Rodchenkov personally agrees with the IOC's determination that innocent athletes should compete as neutrals," he added.

What could a Winter Olympics look like without Russia? The Olympics ban for Russia, who had finished top of the Sochi 2014 medal table, could potentially leave opportunities for gold, silver and bronze open to several other nations. It is not yet clear how many Russian athletes, if any, will seek to compete under a neutral flag. Other athletes are considering appeals against their doping bans. Russia were among the favourites for gold in men's ice hockey following the National Hockey League's decision to withdraw its players from Pyeongchang. At the last six Winter Games, Russian figure skaters won 14 of the 26 gold medals available and occupied 26 of the 75 podium places.

'Some concessions, but still dark day for Russia' – analysis. The punishment is unprecedented in Olympic history. This is a proud sporting superpower that uses such events to promote its image to the world. Not this time. The hosts of next year's World Cup have just become an international pariah, with the life ban given to deputy prime minister and head of Russia 2018 - Vitaly Mutko - hugely embarrassing for Fifa - an IOC member federation. Many will say the IOC should have done this 18 months ago before the Rio Olympics, and that both they and WADA should have acted more decisively years ago when reports of Russian cheating first emerged. And could the IOC have been tougher, given the scale of the cheating and the damage done to clean athletes? The fact that those athletes who meet the criteria and can take part will be called 'Olympic Athletes from Russia' seems a concession to the country. Why not just 'Neutral Athletes'? President Bach also suggested the Russian flag may be flown at the closing ceremony in South Korea. Yet this is still a dark day for Russian sport and President Vladimir Putin is now understood to be considering whether to boycott Pyeongchang 2018 altogether and forbid any Russian athletes to compete.

Source: 5 December 2017, BBC

<http://www.bbc.com/sport/winter-sports/42242007>

University of Limerick

University of Limerick research shows that 12% of athletes have played in a fixed match

More than 12% of athletes that took part in a University of Limerick study on match fixing admitted to having played in a match that was fixed. The findings of Fix the Fixing: Proactive Quelling of Sports Events Manipulation were revealed today, with more than 600 participants from across six countries taking part in the study. 15% of those surveyed said that they suspect that they have played in a fixed match, with nearly 40% of participants reporting that club officials were the most likely to instigate match fixing. Almost 15% of participants also said that they have been approached by someone in the last year who asked them to fix a match. Of those approached, 36% said they would not report it. The survey was conducted with athletes in Austria, Cyprus, France, Greece, Ireland and UK and respondents were involved in the sports of soccer, basketball, Olympic handball, volleyball, badminton, waterpolo, gymnastics, weightlifting, rugby, swimming and martial arts. Speaking at the launch of the findings, former GAA President and MEP for Ireland South Sean Kelly spoke of the need to stamp out match fixing from Irish sport. "Match-fixing is an international phenomenon often linked to criminal networks," Kelly said. "Ireland is not immune to this threat which has rocked the very foundations on which sport is based. The European Commission has been actively developing initiatives to combat match fixing; if we fail to act sport viewership, spectatorship and participation are all at risk. In Ireland we are passionate about watching sport, perhaps more than we love doing it, and people won't watch sports if they perceive them to be fixed. It is not knowing what will happen that makes sports attractive."

Source: 5 December 2017, Independent

<https://www.independent.ie/sport/other-sports/university-of-limerick-research-shows-that-12-of-athletes-have-played-in-a-fixed-match-36377776.html>