



INTERPOL

INTEGRITY IN SPORT

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Photos International Olympic Committee

INVESTIGATIONS

AIBA

AIBA could hand life bans to all Rio 2016 referees and judges

All 36 referees and judges who officiated at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games could be permanently banned from officiating as part of an investigation into match-fixing, it has been reported.

According to the Irish Independent, this scenario was proposed following a meeting of the AIBA Referees and Judges (R&J) Commission in Assisi this week.

The newspaper report that this has been recommended to "redeem the brand of boxing".

The decision must now be ratified by the world governing body's ruling Executive Committee.

"The AIBA Referee and Judges Commission had their meetings this past weekend in Assisi, Italy," AIBA Executive Committee member Pat Fiacco told *insidethegames*.

"It was a very good meeting with many topics including the officiating in Rio.

"All of their recommendations have been forwarded to the AIBA Executive Committee for approval as per the AIBA statutes.

"The Executive Committee will review the recommendations and then vote on them."

All 36 referees and judges used in Rio were suspended by AIBA pending an investigation into their conduct.

The findings of the investigation have never been published, however, and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) have called for more analysis.

Ireland's boxing manager Joe Hennigan claimed in a report this week that they were aware of the likelihood of Olympic boxing bouts at the Brazilian Games being fixed before they happened.

Irish bantamweight world champion Michael Conlan was involved in one of the most controversial contests of Rio 2016 after appearing to dominate a quarter-final against Vladimir Nikitin before the Russian was awarded the victory.

Other suspect results at Rio 2016 included Russia's Evgeny Tishchenko winning the gold medal in the men's heavyweight final over Kazakhstan's Vassily Levit, even though he appeared to be on the back-foot throughout.

Judging controversies are among several reasons why boxing was placed on probation by the IOC and at risk of being removed from Tokyo 2020 if concerns are not addressed soon.

"We at the time received reports from a committee established by AIBA which was dismissing these concerns," IOC President Thomas Bach said about judging suspicions last month.

"But from the fact that refereeing is part of the decision we already took in December last year, we were requesting more info and you can conclude that we are still looking into this issue.

"We want to have a satisfying explanation that the results presented to us does reflect the reality."

Source: 16 March 2018, Inside The Games

Boxing

<https://www.insidethegames.biz/index.php/articles/1062738/aiba-could-hand-life-bans-to-all-rio-2016-referees-and-judges>

Australia

Bitcoin Sports Betting Site Justbet Investigation Australian Authorities

The Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) is investigating JustBet for claiming to be registered in an Australian-owned territory, while actually being based in Costa Rica.

The popularity of online gambling continues to grow, as does the interest in cryptocurrencies, especially Bitcoin. JustBet, a sports gambling platform allegedly registered in Australia, seems to be capitalizing on this by allowing its users to bet in Bitcoin.

Members of the platform can place pre-match and live bets on a variety of sports, including fixtures in the Australian Football League (AFL), AFLX and A-League. The site also has online casino games. In addition to Bitcoin, users can also pay in US dollars.

JustBet's website looks as if it's registered by the Christmas Island Domain Administration (CIDA), as seemingly evidenced by their URL, which ends in .cx. However, according to Australia's ABC News, its IP address shows that it is actually based in San Jose in Costa Rica. In fact, the platform does not seem to be licensed by any Australian gambling commission at all.

Because of this, it is in direct violation of the country's Interactive Gambling Act. Despite this though, the CIDA has claimed that its hands are tied until authorities lodge a request or a member of the public lays a complaint. Until then, they cannot de-register the site. Tasmanian independent MP, Andrew Wilkie, was not happy with this response. He said: "The site should be shut down immediately, and the Christmas Island Domain Administration should act straight away to remedy the situation."

Wilkie, who is also a supporter of gambling reform, went on to report the platform's actions to the Sports Integrity Initiative website. This resulted in the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) launching an investigation into JustBet for breaching the country's Interactive Gambling Act.

This bit of legislation bans a range of online gambling options in the country. In addition, a spokesperson for ACMA has said that the act also bans "unlicensed regulated interactive gambling services, such as online wagering services provided without a license issued by an Australian State or Territory."

The spokesperson went on to add:

The ACMA has published a register of interactive wagering service providers that are licensed by an Australian state or territory. Interactive wagering services that are not included on this register are likely to be provided to Australian customers illegally.

Source: 11 March 2018, Bitcoinist.com

<http://bitcoinist.com/bitcoin-sports-betting-site-justbet-investigation-australian-authorities/>

India

AIFF looking into Minerva FC's accusation against East Bengal's improper approach

All India Football Federation (AIFF) on Wednesday, in a statement, confirmed that they are looking into the matter of improper approach to the members of Minerva Football Club (FC) by a rival team, before the final day of the I-League.

"We have received a letter from Minerva Punjab Football Club highlighting approach to their players and officials from other participating teams in the Hero I-League. The case is presently being handled by AIFF Integrity officer who is doing a thorough investigation into the matter and necessary action will be taken as per the regulations.", read the AIFF statement.

According to ESPN reports, the letter, which was addressed to AIFF CEO Kushal Das, I-League CEO Sunando Dhar accused goalkeeping coach of East Bengal (A Kolkata Football club), Abdul Siddiqui, of making an improper approach ahead of their match against Chennai City FC on March 2.

The letter also includes accusations against other officials of East Bengal club, who called Rohit Ramesh, owner of Chennai City and accused him of fixing his side's match with Bajaj.

The report further said that this is not the first time Bajaj made allegations of impropriety. On January 18, Bajaj had claimed an approach to two of his players to fix matches, and reported the same to the Asian Football Conference (AFC), as well as AIFF.

These allegations come at a time after All India Football Federation's (AIFF) Integrity Officer Javed Siraj, in January this year, stressed on its zero tolerance policy towards any match fixing allegations or any corruption related to the sport.

Source: 8 March 2018, Business Standard
Football

South Korea

Police Uncover Game-fixing at Starcraft Competition

Police said Thursday they have arrested an online sports betting operator and booked a pro computer gamer for fixing an eSports match.

The 26-year-old man who runs illegal sports gambling websites proposed to the 24-year-old player that he manipulates the result of a quarterfinal match at the 2017 G-STAR Starcraft tournament in Busan in November, police said.

The gamer intentionally lost 2-0 after receiving 4.5 million won (US\$4,225), and the operator raked in 15 million won via his two gambling sites, according to the police.

The two also attempted similar game-fixing at the nation's biggest Starcraft tournament, ASL5, which kicked off last month and runs until March 27, police said.

Police have booked 116 people who gambled on the sites, including seven accomplices of the site operator in the match-fixing.

Source: 15 March 2018, Korean Bizwire

eSports

<http://koreabizwire.com/police-uncover-game-fixing-at-starcraft-competition/114092>



Thailand

Players, refs, sponsors implicated in match-fixing

Prosecutors have been requested for indictments for 15 men including top-flight footballers, referees and a club director on suspicion of match-fixing in the domestic league.

Led by national police chief Chakthip Chaijinda and his assistant, Pol Lt Gen Manu Mekmok, a team of 10 officers turned up at the Office of the Attorney-General Tuesday to submit a 3,000-page investigation report to prosecutors.

Police said they decided to seek indictments against the men in connection with irregularities that occurred in Thai League T1 from July to September last year. Another man believed to be connected with the case has not been charged, they said.

The latest suspects include referee Phumarin Kamruen and linesman Teerachit Sithisuk. Eight of the 15 are either current or former players. They are Suthipong Laoporn, Narong Wongthongkham, Suwithaya Namsinlak and Seksan Chaowangthonglang from Navy; Sgt Theerachai Ngamcharoen and Thossapon Kamengkit from Si Sa Ket; Ekapan Jandakorn, a former Si Sa Ket player; and goalie Weera Kerdputsa from Nakhon Ratchasima.

Another five are believed to be financial sponsors who may have been involved in the match-fixing: Si Sa Ket team director Cherdasak Boonchu, Wallop Saman, Kittiphum Paphunga, Manit Komolwatana and Phakphum Pannikul.

All of the suspects reported to prosecutors Tuesday. The Department of Special Litigation 6, which is in handling the case, has ordered them to report to the office again on April 24.

Police carried out the probe after the Football Association of Thailand (FAT) lodged a complaint about suspected match-fixing in the Thai League, Pol Gen Chakthip said.

This is the first time police have concluded and forwarded the results of an investigation to prosecutors since the Professional Sports Promotion Act came into force in 2013.

Officers conducted the probe without fear of influence by more senior personnel, the police chief said, adding that club owners may not have known their players were cheating.

Pol Lt Gen Manu, who led the investigation, said the suspects have denied the allegations but described the report as "watertight".

Pornchai Chonwanichkul, deputy director-general of the Department of Criminal Litigation, said police and prosecutors teamed up to examine evidence, which pointed the finger at gamblers. They said they have uncovered most of the money trail in the case.

Prosecutors will look into the police report and, if it lacks weight, more probing will be done, Mr Pornchai noted.

If found guilty, the players and masterminds could be jailed for five years and/or fined between 200,000 and 500,000 baht. Referees face up to 10 years in jail, a fine of between 300,000 and 600,000 baht, or both.

Five top players, two referees, four investors and one club executive were accused in November of match-fixing.

The arrests marked the first serious crackdown on cheating in Thai football.

Source: 14 March 2018, Bangkok Post

Football

<https://www.bangkokpost.com/news/crime/1427678/players-refs-sponsors-implicated-in-match-fixing>

United Kingdom

Three people face charges over Welsh football match-fixing probe

Two sisters and a son are facing possible criminal charges over a match-fixing probe.

Sisters Hayley Hartson and Victoria Hartson De-Vulgt were interviewed by police in connection with an alleged gambling racket in the Welsh league when huge underdogs won a game 5-0.

Crown prosecutors are considering charges against 11 people over the alleged gambling racket after a flurry of big bets on the match.

The investigation was launched after favourites Port Talbot Town FC lost 5-0 to already-relegated Rhyl, who had not won in 17 matches.

Hayley, 44, and sister Victoria, 34, were among those questioned – along with Hayley's son James, 22.

Now 18 months after the arrests, South Wales Police say they have passed evidence to prosecutors to consider bringing charges.

A police spokeswoman said: "South Wales Police has submitted a file of evidence to the Crown Prosecution Service as part of an investigation into alleged match fixing of a Welsh Premier League fixture.

"The force's Economic Crime Unit commenced an investigation after receiving information from the Football Association of Wales and the Gambling Commission's Sports Betting Intelligence Unit about betting patterns on the match between Port Talbot Town and Rhyl played on 9th April 2016."

Hayley confirmed she, her sister and her son were interviewed over the alleged betting scam.

Hayley said: "We haven't been charged with anything. It is what it is.

"I haven't been charged with anything, neither has my son or my sister."

James, who works at a high-end car sales firm which specialises in leasing cars to footballers and sportsmen, lives with his mother Hayley at home in Llansamlet, Swansea.

Underdogs Rhyl stunned fans when they romped to victory by five goals in their home game – it was even more of a shock because Port Talbot had beaten Rhyl 4-0 just two weeks earlier before the return match at Belle Vue, Rhyl.

Football chiefs called in gambling experts and police to investigate the game after the shock score in the April match.

Bookies were offering between 70/1 and 100/1 against Rhyl winning 5-0 in the match.

Large sums of money were placed on Rhyl to be leading at half-time and full-time at odds of 8-1.

And the score at half time was 2-0 to the home team, and they leaked a further three goals in the second half.

Highlights of the game were shown on Welsh language channel S4C and highlights were available online.

The crowd of 293 were stunned at the dramatic victory as struggling Rhyl won the match.

Rhyl were already relegated when the teams met at their home Belle Vue Park, having won only three games out of 29 all season.

Speaking at the time of the arrests, Football Association of Wales Chief Executive Jonathan Ford said: "These arrests are as result of a thorough process of evidence gathering and close co-operation between the FAW, South Wales Police and the Gambling Commission.

"The FAW remains committed to our Integrity Education Programme which began in 2014, as well as the monitoring and reporting systems we have in place which have contributed to these arrests.

"The FAW will not bring any sporting sanctions against any individuals while the police investigation is ongoing."

In August 2016 police announced they arrested eight men aged between 20 and 48 all from the Neath, Port Talbot and Swansea area and three women aged 33, 43, and 28 all from Swansea or Port Talbot area.

Source: 13 March 2018, *Wales Online*

Football

<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/three-people-face-charges-over-14407127>

LEGISLATION

Malta

Malta seeks to consolidate gambling legislation

The Maltese Parliament has this week announced a motion that could unite all existing gambling legislation in the country under a single bill.

This singular primary Act of Parliament would be accompanied by subsidiary legislation, as well as series of technical directives and guidelines that are being consulted on by the Malta Gaming Authority (MGA).

Should the Act come into force, national regulator the MGA would publish and roll out the new guidelines.

Key points from the bill include replacing the current multi-licence system with a new setup whereby two different types of licences – B2C and B2B – would cover various activities across multiple distribution channels.

B2B licensees would be exempt from gaming tax in an effort to make Malta more attractive as a hub for B2B activities

The MGA would also have greater oversight and take on more powers under the compliance and enforcement functions in order to “better achieve regulatory objectives”.

As such, the Act would move Malta towards a more objective-based regulatory approach as opposed to an excessively prescriptive system.

Other changes would include introducing new processes for criminal and administrative justice and new obligations on operators to monitor sports betting and report suspicious bets in order to clamp down on match-fixing.

Silvio Schembri, Parliamentary Secretary for Financial Services, Digital Economy and Innovation, who presented the motion this week, said: “This Bill marks a major step in streamlining and encompassing the governance of all gaming services offered in and from Malta and across all channels under the competence of the MGA.

“The Government wants to ensure that the gaming industry continues to be run responsibly, fairly and free from criminal activity, so that the Maltese jurisdiction provides a safe and well regulated environment where the industry can also develop and innovate.”

Joseph Cuschieri, executive chairman of the MGA, who has recently been linked with a move away from the regulator, added: “This is an important milestone and we welcome this major step forward by the Maltese Government.

“This Bill contains draft proposals that aim to bridge the regulatory gap between various gaming verticals and channels, including new technologies serving as a platform to future proof gaming regulation, whilst ensuring that consumers enjoy a consistent level of protection.”

Source: 16 March 2018, *iGamingBusiness*

<http://www.igamingbusiness.com/news/malta-seeks-consolidate-gambling-legislation>

ODDS AND ENDS

Greece

FIFA: Greek clubs in danger of 'Grexit' due to violence

World football body FIFA on Wednesday said Greece's violence-ridden championship was on the "edge of a cliff" and Greek clubs faced exclusion from international competition unless authorities took rapid action.

"This behaviour has pushed us to come here to make recommendations," Herbert Hubel, head of the FIFA committee set up last July to monitor the Greek football federation, told a news conference after emergency meetings with Greek officials.

"The Grexit that looked distant is no longer impossible. Greek football reached the edge of the cliff," Hubel said.

Just last month, the government had banned fans from the four most powerful clubs -- Olympiakos, Panathinaikos, AEK and PAOK -- from attending away games because of recurring violence.

A few days later, 58 people were handed mostly suspended sentences of 30 months to 10 years in prison for their involvement in a 2011 match-fixing scandal, including a former Greece international punished for illegal betting, an active club chief and two more former club presidents.

The government announced an indefinite suspension of the top-flight league's matches on Monday. Greek football federation chief Vangelis Grammenos said they would not resume for at least another week, pending proposals by clubs on curbing the unrest.

"By March 23 there will be written pledges from all responsible parties to end violence in and outside stadiums and safeguard security," Grammenos told the news conference.

Greek football has perennially been plagued by violence and match-fixing, but a fresh crisis erupted Sunday after the owner of championship contenders PAOK stormed the pitch with a holstered gun at his belt.

Greek-Russian businessman Ivan Savvidis apologised on Tuesday, but his club faces penalties including relegation after a sports prosecutor requested disciplinary action over the incident.

Savvidis himself, who is widely seen as an ally of Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras, faces a stadium ban of three to five years in addition to a fine of at least 50,000 euros (\$62,000).

Flanked by bodyguards, Savvidis stormed onto the field in the 90th minute after a goal that would have given PAOK victory in the top-of-the-table clash was disallowed for offside.



Police were unable to locate him on Monday after a 24-hour warrant was issued for his arrest for the pitch invasion.

Once the warrant had expired, a photo of him emerged alongside a group of PAOK players, sitting at the lobby of a luxury hotel owned by Savvidis.

FIFA's Hubel on Wednesday said there had to be "a promise that all stakeholders lay down their arms, there is no place for violence."

"The aim of the game is to win, but not by force with arms, threats and blackmail," Hubel said.

Hubel met earlier Wednesday with deputy minister of sport Yiorgos Vassiliadis and Greek federation president Evangelos Grammenos to be briefed on the situation.

Tsipras has staked his political capital on resolving the crisis, insisting he would disregard any "political cost" to restore order to the league.

But Savvidis' antics have put pressure on the leftist PM, who is accused by rivals of allowing Savvidis to continue a rapid rise in the Greek business world in return for political support and help with privatisations.

Source: 14 March 2018, Chicago Tribune

Football

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/90minutes/europa/ct-90mins-fifa-greek-clubs-in-danger-of-grexit-due-to-violence-20180314-story.html>

INTEGRITY IN SPORT EVENTS

Romania

INTERPOL and IOC events in Romania aim to protect integrity of sports

BUCHAREST, Romania – INTERPOL and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) have held a series of workshops and training activities to fight competition manipulation in all its forms.

With organized crime groups looking to influence sports competitions for profit, a three-day (13-15 March) programme was carried out to focus on unregulated gambling, competition manipulation and corruption.

The event was held in close collaboration with the Romanian National Police and the Romanian Sports and Olympic Committee, for Romanian law enforcement, sports organizations, public authorities and other stakeholders.

Day 1: Focus on stakeholders

With some 70 Romanian and Moldovan officials gathered, the emphasis was placed on fostering collaboration in order to successfully develop a coordinated national approach against crimes in sport. The Council of Europe, UEFA and Sportradar contributed to a multi-stakeholder workshop highlighting the need for a consistently holistic approach.

Day 2: Investigations

Led by INTERPOL and the IOC's Olympic Movement Unit on the Prevention of the Manipulation of Competitions, a Law Enforcement Investigators Training session sought to strengthen the investigative capacity of Romanian and Moldovan officers. Exercises using real-life scenarios allowed investigators to see the benefits of operational collaboration between sports bodies, betting regulators and operators, and law enforcement.

Day 3: Reinforcing the frontlines of sport

Aimed at coaches, trainers and educators, the final session taught participants to deliver integrity training to athletes, referees and officials in their home countries. Participants learned how attempts at competition manipulation can be recognized, rejected and reported.

In his opening address, George Boroi, Secretary General of the Romanian National Olympic Committee highlighted the importance of training and awareness in protecting sport. "We all agree on the fact that something has to be done against the increasing temptations which threaten the wellbeing of our athletes, referees, coaches – in fact the whole sports world. And it all starts with education," he said.

Deputy Head of Police, Carmen Camelia Tuicu, stressed that the event offered excellent opportunities for bringing the police and sporting worlds together to ensure the safety and security of all society.

Lcrmioara Petrescu, Head of the INTERPOL National Central Bureau in Romania emphasized the importance of INTERPOL's global network and policing capabilities, and more specifically the INTERPOL Match Fixing Task Force in combatting match fixing in Romania.

This event was held under the aegis of a cooperation between INTERPOL and the IOC, in the area of sports integrity, which was formalized in a Memorandum of Understanding signed in January 2014.

Source: 19 March 2018, INTERPOL

<http://www.interpol.int/en/News-and-media/News/2018/N2018-015>

POLICY

Australia

NRL could have hands tied over extra betting revenue spend

The NRL could be forced to spend an extra \$10 million per year on its integrity unit if it is able to push through a proposal for higher betting taxes, diverting money away from grassroots and its 16 clubs due to a nondescript clause in a longstanding gambling act.

A day after Fairfax Media revealed the NRL and the country's biggest bookmakers were at loggerheads over League Central's proposal to impose an increased product fee for gambling on matches, there are questions about whether any cash will find its way to the game's junior nurseries.

The NRL stands to pocket upwards of a further \$10 million annually if it can reach agreement with some of Australia's largest wagering operators over the proposed product fee hikes, but could have its hands tied in how the money is mostly distributed.

The NSW Betting and Racing Act 1998 contains a clause that determines any integrity agreement signed under its authority between an oddsmaker and a sporting body must "set out the measures that will be used to prevent, investigate and assist in the prosecution of any match fixing or other corrupt behaviour related to betting on the sporting event".

And that any funding is "to go to the sport's controlling body for the purposes of implementing some or all of those measures".

It could conceivably mean the NRL could boast a cashed-up integrity department - which could quadruple its annual spend almost overnight - if it is able to get the green light for its proposed fee structure.

Advertisement

The NRL has greatly increased the budget for its integrity and salary cap department, which accounted for just \$450,000 back in 2012.

But that figure ballooned to almost \$3.78 million last financial year, according to its 2017 annual report. It was a 17 per cent increase on the 2016 reporting year.

Whether it would need to add many millions of dollars on top of that is doubtful given the extra staff it has already added to clean up the game's image and monitor betting patterns.

But it may be faced with no other choice.



There has been a push for the NRL to reinvest any extra income it will be able to generate from bookmakers to the struggling lower reaches of the game - or even its 16 clubs, despite their new funding agreements kicking in under the record broadcast deal this year.

It has only added another twist to the protracted talks over how much revenue the code should receive from wagering on its events.

The NRL failed to reach agreement with bookmakers over a new service fee before the start of the 2018 season, prompting it to roll over their previous arrangement. Any new accord will be backdated back to March 1.

But bookmakers are already privately preparing to scale back their promotion and scope of NRL markets if they are induced into paying higher fees, arguing rugby league is already the most heavily taxed domestic code.

The appointment of Racing NSW chief executive Peter V'landys to the ARL Commission is only likely to sharpen the NRL's focus on generating further betting revenue, given his years-long legal fight for thoroughbred racing to charge a fee it warrants as fair on bookmakers.

Yet other codes, such as AFL and rugby union, could well be the beneficiaries of the NRL's bullish stance over its wagering fee, charging lower rates and profiting from greater marketing from the likes of Sportsbet, Ladbrokes and Crownbet.

The NRL has already tried to distance its new women's competition, set to begin later this year, from the gambling industry by banning any sponsorship from wagering companies and signage at its venues.

Source: 16 March 2018, Sydney Morning Herald

<https://www.smh.com.au/sport/nrl/nrl-could-have-hands-tied-over-extra-betting-revenue-spend-20180316-p4z4s2.html>

Europe

KCOOS+ 2018-2020 - combating manipulations of sports competitions. First Steering Meeting

The Keep Crime Out Of Sport-“against manipulations of sports competitions” technical assistance project begins with a first meeting with its financial contributors and associate partners in Strasbourg on 9 March. The project builds on the previous EU-COE Joint project KCOOS, with two exceptions: it is now funded exclusively by countries and international organisations and will have a universal vocation, with regional seminars and technical assistance activities on all continents. The project will run until December 2020. Its main objectives are to promote ratification worldwide of the Macolin Convention, and to provide technical assistance to countries in the implementation of the Convention principles. For more information on being a partner or a beneficiary, find out more here.

Source: 9 March 2018, *Coe.int*

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/sport/-/kcoos-2018-2020-combating-manipulations-of-sports-competitions-first-steering-meeting>



INTERPOL

INTEGRITY IN SPORT

United Kingdom

Britain's sports integrity strategy outlined in 2018 Action Plan

The Sports Betting Integrity Forum (SBIF) has published its Sport and Sports Betting Integrity Action Plan 2018 (SBI Action Plan), outlining Britain's ongoing approach to the integrity of sport and sports betting.

Stating that "we do not believe that we have an endemic problem in Britain," the necessity to eradicate complacency and raise awareness and education in the fields of manipulation and match-fixing has been highlighted.

The SBIF, comprising senior representatives of key partners, and the Sports Betting Intelligence Unit (SBIU), a unit within the Gambling Commission which deals with reports of betting-related corruption, will continue to function as Britain's national platform, with the Gambling Commission acting as the UK's lead agency.

Working with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the lead government department for the SBI Action Plan, as well as relevant national and international bodies and law enforcement, the commission will ensure the SBI Action Plan is coordinated effectively, to ensure protection against sports betting related corruption.

One key area of focus within the latest published report is the need for sports, and licensed sports betting stakeholders, to understand their respective roles and ensure appropriate actions are undertaken.

Addressing the role of Sports Governing Bodies (SGBs) and Player Associations working under the Sports Betting Group, encapsulating a range of representatives across a number of sports, the SBIF emphasises the role of leadership and education as preventative tools.

Highlighting the need to develop an understanding of the threats to the integrity, and effective risk management, it was also noted that sports should work together in order to share best practises related to the prevention of the key issues.

Discussing the role of education amongst SGBs, Player Associations and sports bodies, several steps were highlighted which could form a key part in tackling threats to integrity.

These included the development and delivery of educational programmes, the role of sports leaders and elite athletes as role models in their sports and ensuring clear frameworks to enable sanctions are established in codes of conduct, betting roles and contractual provisions, while ensuring participants are aware of the responsibilities and implications of a breach.

In addition processes for reporting, information gathering, exchange and investigation should be clear, while policies should be established enabling relevant parties to identify and respond to match-fixing and corruption issues

Furthermore, commercial arrangements with gambling operators need to be free of conflicts of interest with regards to the prevention and deterrence of sports betting corruption, while stakeholders will ensure arrangements only exist with appropriate licensed operators, who have adequate monitoring and reporting mechanisms of suspicious betting in place.

Obligations of licensed sports betting operators also formed a key point of focus, with an action plan set out to ensure effective risk management is in place alongside its commitments under the Gambling Act 2005, to ensure that sports betting is not associated with or used to support crime.

As well as specific rules and provisions outlined in terms and conditions, the awareness of match-fixing and misuse of insider information should be raised with employees, as well as appropriate sanctions of inappropriate actions.

In addition, it was also stressed that licensed operators should "provide information on irregular betting and/or suspicious sports events quickly to the Gambling Commission's SBIU, and where possible provide the relevant SGBs with sufficient information to conduct an effective investigation."

A 2018 action plan also contains ongoing objectives throughout the year, which encompass strategies for small and medium operators, implementation of a communications plan to publicise the work of the SBIF, the hosting of workshops to promote good practice and promote sharing of knowledge and information across stakeholder groups, and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) implementation monitoring.

A refresh of the SBI Action Plan is set to follow later this year, after Britain has signed the Council of Europe's Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions (known as the Macolin Convention).

Article 13 of the Convention sets out what is expected from signatories in terms of establishing a national platform, with the key operating principles of a national platform being:

Coordinate the fight against the manipulation of sports competitions;

Identify and coordinate the actions of key partners

Collect, assess and exchange information to support the collective and individual partner's efforts.

Source: 13 March 2018, SBC News

<https://sbcnews.co.uk/marketing/2018/03/13/britains-sports-integrity-strategy-outlined-2018-action-plan/>



INTERPOL

INTEGRITY IN SPORT

United States

Sports Betting Could Complicate NCAA's Amateurism Model

The National Collegiate Athletic Association could rake in millions from the potential legalization of sports betting thanks to a proposed integrity fee circulating within pending legislation in four states.

But more money could mean more problems for the already controversy-ridden NCAA.

“Even though though it would be a huge windfall for the NCAA in terms of revenue, it’s also directly contrary to its stated purpose of the student athlete first,” Justin Sievert, founding partner of Sievert Werly LLC, which specializes in collegiate sport cases, told Bloomberg Tax.

The integrity fee, which is spearhead by the National Basketball Association (NBA) and Major League Baseball (MLB), would require sports betting venues to pay sports governing bodies, such as the NCAA, 1 percent of the total amount wagered. An estimated \$10.4 billion was illegally wagered in 2017 on the NCAA men’s basketball tournament, also known as “March Madness,” according to the American Gaming Association—so that a 1 percent cut would bring in an extraordinary amount of revenue for the NCAA.

However, an integrity fee, if adopted by states and paid to the NCAA, would add additional scrutiny to the association’s bedrock model of student-athlete amateurism.

Awaiting the High Court

States, professional leagues, and the NCAA are awaiting the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling in *Murphy v. NCAA*—New Jersey’s attempt to repeal part of its state ban on sports betting in an effort to revive the struggling Atlantic City region. The Supreme Court agreed to review the case after a lower court ruled that the partial repeal violated the federal Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act of 1992 (PASPA), which prohibits states from “authorizing” gambling related to professional and amateur sports leagues.

To get ahead of the ruling, a total of 18 states are actively considering sports betting legislation that would permit statewide sports wagering pending a potential ruling overturning PASPA, according to the American Gaming Association.

Most bills contain policy details that permit wagering at certain licensed venues and seek to establish safeguards in the industry, such as the prevention of underage gambling. However, legislation in four states—Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and New York—incorporates a 1 percent cut for sports governing bodies that sports betting operators would have to pay based on the amount wagered on a particular game. Legislation in New York would require a 0.25 percent fee.

MLB and the NBA are pushing this initiative, advocating through lobbying efforts and participating in state hearings. Representatives argue the fee is needed to help offset the costs of establishing data monitoring and other security measures to prevent match fixing. The fee also would be a source of insurance if the leagues become embroiled in any scandal due to game manipulations.

The integrity fee is also considered a royalty payment to compensate the leagues for the use of their product in sports betting venues, Dan Spillane, senior vice president and assistant general counsel for the NBA, said during a Connecticut Public Safety and Security Committee hearing on sports betting March 1.

“It is about compensating us for that value we provide, for the IP right. For those reasons we wouldn’t support a structure that isn’t a reimbursement of those,” Spillane said.

Keeping Hush

The NCAA’s official position on sports gambling has remained unchanged: the group is adamantly opposed. “The NCAA opposes all forms of legal and illegal sports wagering, which has the potential to undermine the integrity of sports contests and jeopardizes the welfare of student-athletes and the intercollegiate athletics community,” the association states on its website.

Yet the collegiate governing body has remained relatively quiet in the ongoing, state-level legislative process, denying an invitation from Connecticut’s Legislature to participate in this month’s hearing. Even in Indiana, home of the NCAA, the governing body has remained tight-lipped.

“The NCAA has been clear on their position on this issue in the past but has not been aggressive publicly at this point,” said Chris Grove, managing director of sports and emerging verticals at Eilers and Krejcik gaming, a gambling industry research firm based in southern California.

“So the question of where are they in this process and what are they waiting for, if anything, is a curious one for me,” Grove told Bloomberg Tax.

The NCAA didn't respond to a request for comment.

Opt Out, Opt In

However, in their preferred legislative model, the NBA and MLB have recommended that each sports governing body, including the NCAA, have the ability to prohibit betting on their sports and the choice to opt in or out of the integrity-fee model.

A handful of states, such as West Virginia, are swiftly pushing legislation that defies the NBA and MLB's requests by not including restrictions on the types of bets placed and denying any form of an integrity fee. West Virginia's S.B. 415 was sent to Gov. Jim Justice (R) March 3, and, if signed, would join New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Mississippi, who have already passed sports betting legislation.

In a state where NCAA games are eligible for sports betting and also part of an integrity-fee model, there most likely will be corruption, Kate Lowenhar-Fisher, a Nevada-based gaming attorney with Dickinson Wright PLLC, told Bloomberg Tax.

"For amateur players to be put in the position who don't have the lure of the multi-million dollar contracts to be playing in games where the oversight authority is getting a piece of the action, I can think of a million scenarios that could do grave damage to the integrity of amateur sports," she said.

Amateurism Woes

The model of student-athlete amateurism, where players are unpaid for their athleticism, is a core principle for the NCAA and a doctrine consistently under attack by critics who contend student athletes are exploited.

Sports gambling with the inclusion of an integrity fee "would essentially give additional arguments to people who say that the NCAA does nothing but exploit athletes and a potential example of the NCAA making money while the revenue stream doesn't trickle back down to the athletes themselves" Sievert said.

The NCAA's participation in an integrity-fee model would erode the governing body's defense dating back to the NCAA v. Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma case—that collegiate sports are a separate entity from professional sports because student athletes are unpaid, Paul Haagen, co-director of the Center for Sports Law and Policy at Duke University, told Bloomberg Tax. In the 1984 case, the court ruled that the NCAA violated the Sherman and Clayton antitrust acts by engaging in price fixing related to a football television plan.

An integrity fee "would subject them to antitrust and additional security and make it harder and harder for them to claim that this is a separate business enterprise," Haagen said.

However, the fee would generate millions in revenue for the NCAA. On average, at least \$150 billion a year is bet on sports illegally, according to the American Gaming Association. The estimated \$10.4 billion wagered on March Madness in 2017 marks a nearly 13 percent increase from 2016, when an estimated \$9.2 billion was wagered.

"Right now as it stands, I don't see the NCAA getting on the ground floor of any type of integrity fee. I just don't think that would be a move they would make based on their stances and numerous legal cases, and their overall organizational mission," Sievert said.

"I think there is a smell test problem. The NCAA doesn't need this on top of all of their issues now," Haagen said.

*Source: 8 March 2018, Bloomberg
Basketball*

CORRUPTION

Portugal

Benfica's legal chief charged in corruption probe

The head of Benfica's legal department and a computer operator at the Portuguese Justice Ministry have been charged in a corruption case involving the Lisbon club, a judicial source said.

The Benfica official, Paulo Goncalves, is suspected of "crimes of active and passive corruption, breach of court confidentiality, computer fraud and patronage," the Portuguese police said. The computer technician, Jose Nogueira Silva, is suspected of accepting bribes, embezzlement or computer fraud and violation of court confidentiality.

Both men are being detained after their arrests on Tuesday. Benfica said, in a statement on their website, that they were confident Goncalves would be able to prove that he "acted lawfully" and said they were "totally available" to cooperate with the inquiry. "This is excessive," said his lawyer Paulo Gomes on leaving the court. "In this country there are people who receive millions of euros in bribes and stay free. And this man goes to prison for receiving half a dozen tickets and a jersey."

Source: 9 March 2018, The News

Football

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/290200-benfica-s-legal-chief-charged-in-corruption-probe>

