



INTERPOL

INTEGRITY IN SPORT

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Photos International Olympic Committee

INVESTIGATIONS

India

BCCI's Anti-Corruption Unit to investigate UPCA bribery scandal

A Hindi news channel in Uttar Pradesh telecast an alleged phone conversation between Akram Saifi, an executive assistant of Shukla, and cricketer Rahul Sharma in which Saifi is heard seeking favours in "cash and kind" to ensure Sharma's selection.

The BCCI's Anti-Corruption Unit today said it will launch a probe into an alleged bribery scandal unearthed by a sting operation, which claimed that a member of IPL Chairman Rajeev Shukla's personal staff sought bribes to facilitate selection of players.

A Hindi news channel in Uttar Pradesh telecast an alleged phone conversation between Akram Saifi, an executive assistant of Shukla, and cricketer Rahul Sharma in which Saifi is heard seeking favours in "cash and kind" to ensure Sharma's selection in the state team. Shukla is currently the Uttar Pradesh Cricket Association (UPCA) Secretary.

"We have taken note of the sting and will examine the entire matter. We will be asking the channel for the audio and also examine the player involved. Until we speak to the people involved, it is difficult to say anything as of now," BCCI's ACU chief Ajit Singh told PTI.

Sharma has never played for India and has not been a part of the state team either. He has alleged that Saifi sought bribes and other favours to ensure his selection in the team.

He has also accused Saifi of issuing fake age certificates. Saifi has denied all the charges. "We are open to any inquiry. We follow a very transparent selection process at the UPCA. I can't comment on the conversation between the two as it is their personal matter," said UPCA's Joint Secretary Yudhveer Singh, dismissing the charges of corruption in selection.

"I have checked about Rahul Sharma and found out that he has never even been a part of the state probables. He has no credibility," he added. Shukla has not yet reacted to the allegations while the BCCI sought to steer clear of any association with Saifi even though it admitted that his salary is paid from the Board's funds.

"The BCCI only allocates funds for its office-bearers' personal staff. They are free to appoint people of their choice as executive assistants and their salaries come from this fund. However, the Board has got nothing to do with these staffers," a top Board official said.

"We only provide funds to the office-bearers to keep personal staff. Who they hire is their concern and the staffers report to them, not to the Board," he added.



Former India player and UP captain Mohammad Kaif said the allegations have stunned him and demanded a probe into the matter. "Shocked to hear about the extent of corruption in UP Cricket. Young talent being curbed by corrupt agents asking for favours. Hope @ShuklaRajiv ji ensures a fair investigation and justice to the young talent & helps restore UP Cricket. I stand by all those who have been exploited," he tweeted.

Kaif, who recently retired from all cricket, had captained UP to its maiden Ranji Trophy title in the 2005-06 season.

Source: 19 July 2018, Mid-Day

Cricket

<https://www.mid-day.com/articles/bccis-anticorruption-unit-to-investigate-upca-bribery-scandal/19621158>

Italy

Parma and Chievo Verona may face retroactive Serie A relegation for different offences

Parma and Chievo Verona both face uncertainties over their involvement in Serie A next season after the Italian FA's (FIGC) sports tribunal suggested punishments which would effectively see them relegated.

Both clubs have been subjects of separate investigations with Parma accused of attempted match-fixing for a game against La Spezia in Serie B last season, while Chievo face punishment for falsely accounting the transfers of 30 players with Cesena.

In the case of Parma, the prosecutor has suggested a deduction of two points for the 2017-18 season which, if confirmed, would see them drop behind Palermo in the final standings and consequently surrender promotion to the Sicilians.

Furthermore, their forward Emanuele Calaio -- whose WhatsApp messages to Spezia players prior to their fixture at the end of last season which Parma won 2-0 to secure promotion have been viewed as an attempt to manipulate the game -- will be banned for four years if the prosecutor's suggested sentences are upheld.

As an alternative, Parma could start the upcoming Serie A season with a deduction of six points.

The sports court is yet to pass its final judgement, although history -- such as the 2006 Calciopoli scandal -- suggests they will show more leniency, thus not jeopardising Parma's place in Serie A next season.

Chievo's situation is more complex, on the other hand, with even a more lenient sentence potentially seeing them relegated to Serie B.

They finished only five points above the relegation zone last season and if the court decides to dock more than that number of points, Crotone would likely be reinstated to the top flight.

Chievo on Tuesday night issued a detailed statement distancing themselves from the accusations that they knowingly inflated the value of players exchanged with Cesena by up to 9,000 percent to gain a financial advantage in their accounts.

In a 12-page statement defending themselves, they claimed that the FIGC's tribunal had miscalculated the figures and that the "correctness of the accounts of Chievo Verona" cannot be doubted, and that they "reject all accusations."

A final judgement is due before the Serie A fixtures are announced next week, on July 26.

Source: Ben Gladwell, 18 July 2018, ESPN

Football

<http://www.espn.com/soccer/italian-serie-a/story/3568928/parma-and-chievo-verona-may-face-retroactive-serie-a-relegation-for-different-offences>



South Africa

Prison time likely for fixing kingpin Bodi and six others

Potential prison sentences lie in wait for not only kingpin, Gulam Bodi, but for the six other players - Alviro Petersen, Thami Tsolekile, Lonwabo Tsotsobe, Jean Symes, Pumi Matshikwe and Ethy Mbhalati - who were implicated in the South African domestic match-fixing scandal of 2015.

According to recent reports in the South African media, Bodi appeared on nine charges of corruption in Pretoria's Commercial Crimes Court on Friday, being released on R3000 bail until his next court appearance on August 22. He was charged under a little known act - The Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act - which makes provision for the prosecution of corrupt behaviour within sporting events.

In January 2016 Bodi was suspended by Cricket South Africa (CSA) for 20 years for his part in contriving to fix matches in the 2015 edition of the RAM SLAM Challenge, South Africa's premier T20 competition. Staggered over the course of that year, four other players (Tsolekile, Symes, Mbhalati and Matshikwe) were all banned by CSA for their contravention of CSA's anti-corruption code. They received suspensions ranging from 12 years (in Tsolekile's case), to 10 (in the case of Mbhalati and Matshikwe) and seven in the case of Symes.

In December 2016 Petersen was banned for two years for his contravention of the code while, six months later, his former Lions and Protea teammate, Tsotsobe, was banned for eight.

A source close to the investigation by the Hawks, South Africa's elite crime-fighting unit, said they believed it was highly unlikely that Bodi alone would be singled out for a prison sentence. "I think it very likely that they exercise their jurisdiction and that they pursue charges against the other implicated players. Bodi's legal team will justifiably point out that it is prejudicial to single him out, so I think they'll go after all of them if they've invested this much."

The source was also of the view that Bodi will in all likelihood turn state witness, conceivably softening his sentence, with a deal being struck because the State needs someone to come forward with evidence and, having been intimately involved, Bodi was the most likely candidate.

There is also the possibility that new evidence could come to light - or has already come to light - in the course of the Hawks' investigation, although such evidence would be minimal, given that CSA initial investigation was exhaustive.

Cricbuzz understands that approximately 95% of all evidence has been gathered by CSA's anti-corruption unit, but that the threat of prison time has a way of concentrating the mind. "People here [in South Africa] don't want to go to jail," said the source. "It terrifies them. So who knows, perhaps new evidence will come to light?"

The possibility of new evidence coming to light is supported by the example of the three Pakistani players - Salman Butt, Mohammad Amir and Mohammad Asif - who were implicated in the spot-fixing scandal in the Lord's Test of 2010. Their evidence changed fundamentally when Scotland Yard entered the scene and they were suddenly faced with the possibility of jail time. The three, as well as Mazhar Majeed, a book-maker, were prosecuted in November 2011 and given jail terms ranging from six to 32 months.

The source warned, however, of the delicacy of the situation. "These are difficult, clandestine investigations. The onus is on 'beyond reasonable doubt' rather than 'on the balance of probabilities' but the fact that Bodi saw his day in court suggests to me that the Hawks are committed now to not just sitting back but to taking action.

"These investigations have taken up a huge amount of time and resources. I don't think this is suddenly going to go away."

If prison terms do finally come the way of the seven, it will be a watershed moment in South Africa for the influence of the law in matters of corruption in sport. Although on the statute book since 2004, The Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act hasn't been exercised until now.

All seven players banned by CSA have struggled to varying degrees since. Tsolekile was coaching privately in the Western Cape, while Tsotsobe returned to the Eastern Cape after his spell playing cricket in Gauteng. He was known to be dabbling in the diesel business.

Source: Luke Alfred, 14 July 2018, Cricbuzz

Cricket

<https://www.cricbuzz.com/cricket-news/103126/prison-time-likely-for-south-africa-domestic-cricket-fixing-kingpin-gulam-bodi-and-six-others>

Spain

Signs of Possible Match-Fixing in Wimbledon Men's Doubles

WIMBLEDON, England — For the second time at a tennis major, a doubles match involving the Spanish player David Marrero has been flagged for suspicious betting behavior, a possible sign of match-fixing.

A men's doubles match at Wimbledon last week — Marrero and Fernando Verdasco's loss to João Sousa and Leonardo Mayer — was reported to anticorruption investigators after a bookmaker observed suspicious betting.

Pinnacle Sports observed "a series of bets from accounts with a history of wagering on suspicious matches" in the hour before the match in question began. It was first reported by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

Sam Gomersall, sports integrity manager for Pinnacle, said the late shift in odds which these wagers created was a "clear indication" of suspicious activity.

The ABC report did not name the players in question, but Pinnacle confirmed to The New York Times that the suspicions were raised by Marrero's doubles match. Pinnacle also said that this was the lone match to be flagged for suspicious activity at either Wimbledon or last month's French Open.

Neither Marrero nor Verdasco could be reached for comment. Though monitoring of betting markets is often used to detect possible match-fixing, such data alone is not enough to lead to a conviction.

Marrero previously attracted suspicion over unusual betting patterns during the 2016 Australian Open, when such abnormally large bets were placed against Marrero and his partner Lara Arruabarrena in a first-round mixed doubles match that Pinnacle suspended betting 13 hours before it began. The pair lost the match, 6-0, 6-3.

Later during that tournament, tennis governing bodies announced they would create an independent review panel to assess the Tennis Integrity Unit's effectiveness. The panel's interim report came out in April. Its primary recommendations related to the lower levels of the professional ranks, where match-fixing is considered more endemic.

The T.I.U.'s biggest conviction to date came weeks later, with immediate implications at the Grand Slam level.

Hours before the French Open draw in May, 84th-ranked Nicolás Kicker became the highest-ranked player (at time of conviction) to be found guilty of a match-fixing offense by the Tennis Integrity Unit, and he was removed from the tournament. A month later, Kicker's penalty was announced as a \$25,000 fine and six-year ban, with three of the years suspended on a probationary basis.

When the draw was made for Wimbledon this year and betting was opened on the match, Sousa and Mayer started out as 17/10 underdogs, implying a 37 percent chance of winning. The odds drifted in their favor, slowly at first and then quickly. In a 45-minute stretch shortly before the match began, last-minute wagers pouring in moved Sousa and Mayer from roughly 7/9 to 4/9, or from a 56.5 percent chance of winning to 69 percent.

As the late money had seemed confident they would, Sousa and Mayer won the match, 7-6(6), 6-4, 6-7(7), 6-1.

Because unforced errors are a common part of any tennis match, reviewing video of the match is generally inconclusive. Marrero did serve for the first set up 6-5, but a series of unforced errors by him and Verdasco put the match back on serve. In the ensuing tiebreak, Verdasco hit consecutive double faults.

Marrero saved a match point with a dive volley in the third-set tiebreak, but the pair lost the fourth set quickly, in 27 minutes.

Wimbledon directed inquiries about the match to the Tennis Integrity Unit. Mark Harrison, spokesman for the group, said that "as an operational matter the TIU will not be making any comment," keeping in line with the group's refusal to confirm or comment on any specific match or person possibly under investigation.

"We do publish match alert statistics periodically, but they are anonymized in terms of the players and matches involved," Harrison said.

Source: Ben Rothenberg, 11 July 2018, New York Times
Tennis

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/11/sports/tennis/match-fixing-wimbledon-mens-doubles.html>

SENTENCES/SANCTIONS

Colombia

Robert Farah suspended and fined for facilitating betting offence

Colombian tennis player Robert Farah has been suspended for three months and fined \$5,000 for facilitating betting by promoting a gambling website on social media.

The full period of ineligibility is suspended on the basis that no further breaches of the Tennis Anti-Corruption Program (TACP) are committed within the three months.

In February 2018 Mr Farah posted a Tweet endorsing an online betting company, in contravention of Section D.1.b of the TACP, which states that:

No Covered Person shall, directly or indirectly, solicit or facilitate any other person to wager on the outcome or any other aspect of any Event or any other tennis competition. For the avoidance of doubt, to solicit or facilitate to wager shall include... appearing in commercials encouraging others to bet on tennis.

When contacted by the Tennis Integrity Unit Mr Farah removed the post, apologised for his error and co-operated fully with the investigation.

The case was adjudicated by independent Anti-Corruption Hearing Officer Ian Mill QC, who accepted that the player had made an honest mistake, which would not be repeated.

Mr Farah, 31, is currently ranked 16 in doubles and has a career-high singles ranking of 163 achieved in June 2011.

The Tennis Integrity Unit is an initiative of the Grand Slam Board, the International Tennis Federation, the ATP and the WTA, who are jointly committed to a zero tolerance approach to corruption in tennis.

Source: 13 July 2018, Tennis Integrity Unit

Tennis

<http://www.tennisintegrityunit.com/media-releases/robert-farah-suspended-and-fined-facilitating-betting-offence>

Thailand

Thai court indicts 15 in football match-fixing scandal

A Thai court on Monday indicted 15 players, a referee and a linesman for involvement in match-fixing in the domestic football league last year.

The announcement follows a lengthy investigation which saw many of the accused arrested and released on bail.

The Attorney General's office said in a statement the 15 were charged with "violating sport laws, gambling laws and criminal codes".

The penalties could range from one to ten years in jail or up to 600,000 baht (\$18,000) in fines.

All have denied the charges and a court will convene to gather evidence in September, the statement said.

It did not mention the specific clubs.

In November the Football Association of Thailand (FAT) said a dozen people had been accused of "receiving money or benefits in order to throw a game" or influencing others to throw a game or manipulate the score.

But it said more could be swept up in what the national police chief called a "historic" investigation for the sport.

The FAT released the details of the probe days after the end of the football season, after noticing an unusual number of last-minute goals involving one football club.

Thais are football-mad and the boss of the FAT, a former police chief, vowed to clean up the sport when he took office.

Police said at the time that the most paid to players and officials to fix a single game was the equivalent of around \$27,000.

Thai league football was once notorious for match-fixing but in recent years the league has professionalised.

Source: Pulse News Agency International by AFP, 16 July 2018, Pulse

Football

<https://www.pulse.com.gh/sports/football/thai-court-indicts-15-in-football-match-fixing-scandal-id8622387.html>

GOOD PRACTICES

World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA); International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS)

WADA and ICSS strengthen intelligence and investigation capacities through cooperation agreement

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) announces that the Agency has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS), which is aimed at coordinating efforts to better fight doping activities, trafficking of doping substances and match-fixing. The ICSS is an independent, non-profit organization, which partners with multiple sectors to address some of the most prominent challenges facing the world of sport today such as safety, security, integrity and governance.

The purpose of the co-operation between the ICSS and WADA is to support enforcement of national and international anti-doping measures referred to in the UNESCO International Convention against Doping in Sport, as well as match-fixing with each organization focusing on their respective mandates, authority and expertise. The support shall be limited to anti-doping measures and match-fixing that are directed towards the prevention and suppression of doping activities and trafficking of doping substances, when the latter constitute ordinary law crimes.

WADA Director, Intelligence and Investigations, Gunter Younger said: “As is the case with WADA’s other international cooperation agreements, this MOU strengthens WADA’s network and therefore the Agency’s capability for more robust intelligence and investigations. The MOU will also involve both parties encouraging the implementation of relevant legislation in all countries to enable partners to fight efficiently against the trafficking of doping substances, match-fixing and other forms of sports corruption.

ICSS Director, Capacity Building and Education and Director of the Sport Integrity Unit, Dale Sheehan said: “The ICSS mission to help safeguard sport and to work for integrity and fair play across all sport is greatly advanced through international cooperation with those who work to combat corruption in sport. Our Sport Integrity Unit will use this working agreement with WADA to expand our intelligence network and strengthen our capacity to investigate.

This MOU with WADA brings joint expertise together and is a significant step forward for the ongoing success of our Sport Integrity Hotline which has been set up to provide an independent, international platform for those wanting to report wrongdoing in sport.

We welcome this cooperation and the ICSS is proud to be of support and service to the excellent work of WADA.”

WADA also encourages informants and whistleblowers to come forward and report suspected doping violations via the Agency’s Speak Up! platform. Launched in March 2017, the platform has already generated over 300 reports.

Source: 17 July 2018, World Anti-Doping Agency

<https://www.wada-ama.org/en/media/news/2018-07/wada-and-icss-strengthen-intelligence-and-investigation-capacities-through>

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ODDS AND ENDS

United Arab Emirates

ICC: Four captains reported fixing approaches in 2017-18

Four captains of international cricket teams reported approaches to the Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) between June 1, 2017 and May 31, 2018, International Cricket Council (ICC) has revealed.

In its annual report, the ICC mentioned that it conducted 18 investigations between June 2017 and May 2018, 17 of which were launched after the arrival of ACU General Manager Alex Marshall on September 1 last year.

“There has been a pleasing increase in the number of players having the confidence to approach the ACU with reports of suspicious activity. Four international captains reported approaches during 2017-18 and every avenue was explored,” the ICC said in the report.

Out of 18 investigations, five have been concluded while charges were brought in four cases, claimed the governing body. “There were five disruptions — where individuals who are not directly involved in cricket have their corrupt activities disrupted — and 13 investigations remained ongoing as at May 31, 2018. Two of the investigations were media stings, one investigation exonerated a groundsman and several players whilst the other is ongoing,” the report said.

Tough challenge

With Twenty20 leagues mushrooming around the world, ICC conceded that the challenge to root out corruption from the game is bigger than ever. “These leagues range from well managed — in anti-corruption terms — global events through to those organised entirely for the purposes of corruption. The most obvious example of the latter is the Ajman All Stars event which took place in the UAE in early 2018. Going forward, it is intended to set minimum standards in anti-corruption to cover all the new T20 leagues across the world because it is not possible to police every one of those matches in person,” stated the report further.

The ICC said that over the course of 2017-18, a total of 1468 players, support staff and match officials have been educated at 12 international events — six ICC global events including 2017 Champions Trophy and the Women’s World Cup.

Source: 20 July 2018, Sportstar Live Cricket

<https://www.sportstarlive.com/cricket/icc-four-captains-reported-fixing-approaches-in-2017-18/article24464896.ece>



MATCH FIXING

Perform Group | Starlizard Integrity Services | TXODDS

Match-fixing: 397 matches show suspicious betting patterns in 2017

July 10 – A total of 397 matches in 2017 showed suspicious betting trends – 32 of those matches were friendlies, including international friendlies. Perhaps even more worryingly is that 62 youth matches showed signs of being fixed, according to a new football betting monitoring report.

The report – compiled by the Perform Group, Starlizard Integrity Services and TXODDS – analysed 54,757 matches in more than 500 competitions and across 90 countries, and gives a sobering snapshot of the trends in match-fixing.

What is most concerning is the volume of matches fixed against the number of cases that are investigated and lead to sanctions, leaving the football market wide open to match manipulation and match-fixers with more than 90% certainty they will get away with their crimes.

Football has, inadvertently, created what looks like near perfect conditions for organised crime and money laundering where matches can easily be fixed, the returns are huge and where dirty money can be washed clean and multiplied with very little fear of prosecution.

The report finds that the bulk of suspicious matches take place in Europe and Asia, with Europe leading the way with 241 matches compared to 71 in Asia.

In terms of percentage of total matches fixed by region, Asia is ahead of Europe with 1.34% showing suspicious betting activity compared to 0.75% in Europe.

The disproportionately high number of friendly games fixed – including international friendly matches – of 1.2% against 0.73% of all games, suggests a need to tighten and improve player education and for federations to become more vigilant.

The growing trend of match-fixers targeting youth football is concerning with the apparent ease they have manipulated 62 matches. This accounts for 16% of the total of suspicious betting on matches, a starkly higher percentage than the 8% of the data that was made up of youth games. Just taking this statistic on its own screams out for a need to act to safeguard the future integrity of the game.

The report breaks out the matches showing suspicious betting activity by tier within the football pyramid, where tier 1 is international matches with high maximum stakes per bet. The bulk of suspicious betting activity is in the lower tiers where the players are lower paid and more susceptible to the match-fixer's proposition. The pre-condition of all match-fixing is that there is liquidity in the betting market. The report does not name the leagues where match-fixing is likely most prevalent.

See the report at <http://www.performgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Suspicious-Trends-in-Global-Football-Report-2018.pdf>

Source: Paul Nicholson, 10 July 2018, *Inside World Football*

<http://www.insideworldfootball.com/2018/07/10/match-fixing-397-matches-show-suspicious-betting-patterns-2017/>