



INTERPOL

INTEGRITY IN SPORT

Bi-weekly Bulletin

14-27 November 2017



Photos International Olympic Committee

INVESTIGATIONS

Thailand

Thai football rocked by match-fixing scandal, twelve arrested including referees

The Thai FA wasted no time in arresting those suspected of match-fixing, including five players, two referees and one club director. Just weeks after the conclusion of the 2017 season of the Thai League, Thai football was shocked by the arrest of 12 match-fixing suspects on Tuesday. The Football Association of Thailand (FAT) and The Royal Thai Police have worked together to investigate the allegations of match-fixing which led to the arrests, and issued a press statement. Five of those arrested are Navy Football Club players; Suthipong Laoporn, Suvitthaya Namsinlak, Seksan Chaothonglang and goalkeeper Narong Wongthongkham, as well as Nakhonratchasima Mazda FC goalkeeper Veera Kerdpuksa. Shockingly, two of the twelve arrested are referees; Phumrin Khamruen and Theerachit Sitthisuk, and also Sisaket FC director Cherdasak Boonchu. The remaining four are believed to be the syndicate's contacts Wallop Saman, Kittiphum Paphunga, Setprasit Kamolwattana and Pakphum Punnikul. "Match-fixing has taken place for a long time. It's time we eradicate it, which is like a disease that needs to be cured," FA Thailand President Pol.Gen. Somyot Poompanmoung said during the press conference. Poompanmoung is also a former commissioner-general of the Royal Thai Police. The move has been applauded by the president of the Asian Football Confederation Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa. "FA Thailand, with its recent actions, has sent a strong signal to all criminal elements that their actions will be contested with full force. "I congratulate FA Thailand for taking a firm stand against the menace of match-fixing and am more confident than ever before, that our dedicated and joint efforts together with the law enforcement agencies can bring this scourge to an end," said Salman in a statement.

Source: *Zulhilmil Zainal*, 22 November 2017, *Goal*

Football

<http://www.goal.com/en-us/news/thai-football-rocked-match-fixing-scandal-twelve-arrested/1lclx0juk7gp01oue5blz51cn3>

Zimbabwe

ICC investigating approach during Windies, Zimbabwe series

LONDON—Cricket's world governing body, the ICC, is investigating an approach made to Zimbabwe captain Graeme Cremer to fix parts of the recent two-Test series against West Indies. Media reports yesterday said that Cremer had rejected the approach, allegedly from a former Zimbabwe Cricket board member prior to the first Test on October 21, and reported the incident to head coach Heath Streak. The matter was referred to Zimbabwe Cricket and then to the ICC who has since confirmed that its Anti-Corruption Unit was investigating. "The ICC can confirm that there is an ACU ongoing investigation in Zimbabwe and because there is an ongoing investigation, I cannot share any further details," an ICC spokesperson said was quoted as saying. The Test, played at Queens Sports Club in Bulawayo, saw West Indies win by an innings and 17 runs inside four days. Zimbabwe, however, hung on for a draw in the second Test at the same venue, leaving the Caribbean side with a 1-0 series win.

Source: *Agencies*, 16 November 2017, *New Zimbabwe*

Cricket

<http://www.newzimbabwe.com/sports-40176-Match+fixing+ICC+probes+Cremer+claim/sports.aspx>

SENTENCES/SANCTIONS

Australia

Harness racing driver charged with fixing race north of Brisbane

A leading Queensland harness racing driver has been charged with fixing a race in 2016 after a lengthy investigation by the Queensland Racing Crime Squad. It will be alleged Mathew Neilson, 35, affected the outcome of a harness race at Redcliffe on December 9, 2016. Mr Neilson received a warning after his horse, Swimriderun, raced roughly following an affected start, a stewards report showed. The Mount Cotton man is also a harness trainer and his license has been suspended following the charge. "The commission has taken this action because it has a duty to ensure the integrity of the racing industry," Queensland Racing Integrity Commission commissioner Ross Barnett said. The accused has been charged with one count of match-fixing and released on bail to appear in the Cleveland Magistrates Court on December 12. He faces a maximum penalty of 10 years' imprisonment and is the third industry participant to be charged with match-fixing since the offence was added to Queensland's criminal code in 2014. The Queensland Racing Integrity Commission said in a statement the 35-year-old driver had been a prominent participant in harness racing and finished in the top three in last year's Queensland Drivers Premierships. The latest arrest comes after another prominent driver, Barton Cockburn, was warned off all race tracks for life following his conviction in the Brisbane Magistrates Court last month after being charged with three counts of match-fixing.

Source: *Toby Crockford*, 20 November 2017, *The Sydney Morning Herald*

<http://www.smh.com.au/queensland/man-charged-with-fixing-harness-race-north-of-brisbane-20171120-p4yx4f.html>



Indonesia

Eight Indonesian basketball players and one official banned for life over match fixing

Reportedly, the players cheated to help their cash-strapped squad pay salaries. The Indonesia Basketball League (IBL) imposed a lifetime ban on eight players and one official after a match fixing scandal. The basketballers, members of Siliwangi Bandung, one of the 12 teams in the IBL, are: Ferdinand Damanik, Tri Wilopo, Gian Gumilar, Haritsa Herludityo, Untung Gendro Maryono, Fredy, Vinton Nolan Sarawi, Robert Riza Raharjo, and team official Zulhildi Faturrohman. According to ChannelNewsAsia, the players were not receiving their full pay, reason for which they decided to cheat, so gamblers could bet on the outcome of the games and the team could retrieve a cut of the proceeds. IBL director, Hasan Gozali, released a statement on the League's website, describing the players' acting as 'intolerable'. 'These penalties should be granted because they are acting intolerable,' said Hasan. Sportivity is the most important part of the sport, including basketball, and IBL will always keep this principle.' According to the statement, with heavy penalties like the ones imposed on the nine members of Siliwangi, similar things will no longer happen in the next season. 'Anyone proven to be in violation will be punished including foreign players, referees to club owners', added Hasan. The players suspension goes in accordance with the rules of the IBL. 'If there is any IBL club personnel proven to do game fixing (setting the score), then the IBL club personnel will be imposed a minimum sanction of Rp 100,000,000 (one hundred million rupiah) and may not participate in all activities of PT BBI for life. "reads the fourth chapter of the rules of implementation of the IBL. Danny Kosashi, chairman of the Indonesian Basketball Federation, which also suspended the players, but for a period between two and five years, said that the cheating was discovered through recordings of conversations. "Someone gave us recordings of conversations about the match-fixing plan. We confronted the players and they confessed," Kosasih said. Former team owner, Dennis Depriadi, spoke to AFP about the incident. "Our cash flow was in trouble because several payments [from sponsors] were not made on schedule," he told AFP. Siliwangi Bandung achieved only four victories from 14 games in their last season, becoming one of the worst-performing teams of the IBL.

Source: José Pablo Díaz, 23 November 2017, AS

Basketball

https://en.as.com/en/2017/11/23/other_sports/1511470220_360667.html

South Korea

Ex-pitcher gets suspended jail term for match fixing

UIJEONGBU, South Korea, Nov. 24 (Yonhap) -- Former baseball pitcher Lee Sung-min received a suspended jail term on Friday for his involvement in a match-fixing scheme. The Uijeongbu District Court handed down an eight-month sentence, suspended for two years, for the 27-year-old former Korea Baseball Organization (KBO) pitcher, along with 160 hours of community service. Prosecutors had earlier recommended a one-year term. Lee was charged with receiving cash in exchange for deliberately issuing a first-inning walk while pitching for the NC Dinos in July 2014. He later pitched for the Lotte Giants but remained unsigned for the 2017 season. A broker involved in the scheme, surnamed, Kim, got a one-year term suspended for two years, plus 100 hours of community service. The court said Lee argued that Kim had made false statements during trials, but noted that Kim actually risked a jail term himself by confessing to match fixing and had no grounds to testify against Lee out of spite.

Source: 24 November 2017, Yonhap News Agency

<http://english.yonhapnews.co.kr/national/2017/11/24/0302000000AEN20171124004400315.html>

South Korea

Korean MMA fighter gets 10-month jail term for taking bribe in match fixing scam

South Korean mixed martial arts fighter Bang Tae-hyun was sentenced to 10 months in prison by a local court Friday for his involvement in a match fixing scam. The Seoul Central District Court said Bang was found guilty of taking a bribe of 100 million won (\$92,160) from match-fixing brokers in exchange for throwing a bout at the Ultimate Fighting Championship event in South Korea in 2015. Three brokers who handed money to Bang also received jail terms for their misdeed. "The crime of match fixing damages the credibility of sport, and in international matches, it has a bad effect on the country's credibility as well," the court said. "Bang had an obligation to play the game fairly, but he ignored it and took an important role in the scheme. But we did take into consideration that Bang won the bout and returned the money afterwards." According to the investigative authorities, Bang agreed to lose the first two rounds against Leo Kuntz at UFC Fight Night 79 in Seoul on Nov. 28, 2015. The scam, however, didn't succeed, as the lightweight fighter apparently changed his mind at the last moment and went on to beat Kuntz in a split decision. Bang reportedly decided not to throw the match after UFC officials warned him about fight fixing following a sudden shift in betting patterns on gambling websites. The 34-year-old was first listed as the slight favorite against Kuntz, but just hours before the fight, UFC officials caught drastic changes in odds that made him the underdog and his American opponent the overwhelming favorite. Bang is no longer with the UFC, the world's largest MMA promotion. After the UFC event in Seoul, Bang fought once more in Germany last year at UFC Fight Night 93, where he lost to Nick Hein by unanimous decision. Bang became the seventh South Korean to enter the Octagon after he signed with the UFC in late 2013. He posted two wins and three losses with the US-based MMA promotion.

Source: Yonhap, 24 November 2017, The Korea Herald

<http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20171124000651>

DOPING

Russia

Winter Olympics 2018: Russian boycott would damage athletes – Wada

A Russian boycott of February's Winter Olympics would "damage athletes", says World Anti-Doping Agency (Wada) president Sir Craig Reedie. Wada said on Thursday that Russia remains non-compliant with its code, but clean Russians may compete in Pyeongchang under a neutral banner. It has been claimed President Vladimir Putin would not allow them to do so. "Boycotts, in my view, never really work. All they do is damage athletes," Reedie told BBC Sport. "The Olympic movement was plagued with boycotts 20, 25 years ago and it has got over that issue. I hope that people come and compete." The International Olympic Committee (IOC) will make the final decision on Russia's participation in South Korea from 9-25 February at its next board meeting from 5-7 December. Last year, an independent report commissioned by Wada found evidence of state-sponsored doping in the country. Wada told BBC Sport last week that the "best solution" is for Russia to "work with them" after receiving new intelligence. Russia's sports minister said their anti-doping agency (Rusada) have "fulfilled all of their obligations" to get the ban - implemented after an initial Wada report in 2015 - lifted. However, Wada says two criteria remain outstanding: granting access to the Moscow laboratory suspected to be the hub of the operation, and a public acceptance that senior sports ministry figures were complicit in an organised cover-up. Reedie said Wada and the Russian authorities "seem to have very different definitions" of what is deemed state-sponsored doping. "Their definition seems to be that state sponsored means from the very top of state down to the very bottom of state," he said. "In the western world it would be different. "If it comes down to a situation where we're one letter apart then I'm sure we could resolve that. "There would have to be a will to do it. At the moment there are still feelings that we shouldn't." Kuwait, Equatorial Guinea and Mauritius were also found non-compliant by Wada's independent compliance review committee on Thursday. What was Russia's reaction? Russian authorities have never acknowledged any involvement in doping, and President Putin has suggested the allegations were an attempt to sow discontent in the build-up to the presidential elections. Russian Olympic Committee president Alexander Zhukov, who said in September he expected the country to have a team at the Winter Games, reiterated the state's innocence and said Wada's latest judgement "cannot be accepted". "We accept the fact our national anti-doping system has failed [but] we absolutely deny a state-sponsored doping system," said Zhukov, who added that unconditional recognition of the McLaren report "is impossible". Sports minister Pavel Kolobkov said the criteria for reinstatement have a "political character". "I got the impression that the decision was made in advance," he told TASS news agency after Wada's announcement, made on the recommendation of its independent compliance review committee. "[The] committee has been inventing reasons not to reinstate Rusada; the accusations are simply a joke." Analysis - BBC sports editor Dan Roan. This is important news as it will heap pressure on the IOC to ban Russia from the 2018 Winter Olympics when it meets in early December. IOC president Thomas Bach has been weighing up a compromise, such as a hefty fine. But now the pressure to allow only Russians who can prove they are clean to compete as neutral athletes will intensify. Insiders believe that, with an election in March looming, this may mean President Putin will boycott the Games and order his athletes to stay away rather than compete as neutrals. Why were Russian athletes banned? Russia was suspended from track and field events by the International Association of Athletics Federations in November 2015 following the publication of the independent Wada report. Former sports minister Vitaly Mutko apologised for Russia's failure to catch the cheats, but stopped short of admitting the scandal had been state-sponsored. However, an independent report commissioned by Wada and completed by Canadian law professor Richard McLaren suggested senior figures in Russia's sports ministry were complicit. The report implicated the majority of Olympic sports in the cover-up and claimed Russian secret service agents were involved in swapping positive urine samples for clean ones. As a result, Wada recommended all Russian athletes be banned from competing in the Rio 2016 Olympic Games. The IOC chose not to impose a blanket ban, instead leaving decisions on whether Russians could compete to individual sporting federations. In total, 271 Russians competed in Rio.

Source: 16 November 2017, BBC

<http://www.bbc.com/sport/winter-olympics/41996128>

GOOD PRACTICES

Asian Football Confederation

New mobile app strengthens AFC's fight against match-fixing

Kuala Lumpur: The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has introduced a new AFC integrity mobile application, which will enable fans, players and officials to report possible suspicious activities or provide information concerning match-fixing or corruption to the AFC Integrity Unit. As part of efforts to expand the fight against match-fixing, the new mobile application, which was implemented in collaboration with Sportradar, will complement the new integrity section on www.the-afc.com. It has been designed to better engage with the virtual community who will now be able to report on suspicious activities through their mobile devices in real time. AFC President Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa said: "The survival of all sports, not just football, depends significantly on our ability to preserve and protect the values of fair play and honesty. Under the banner of One Asia, One Goal, the AFC has reinforced the importance to safeguard the integrity and uphold the highest professional standards in all our competitions. "Digital media and technologies have redefined how people communicate. This new mobile app will enhance our detection abilities and our intelligence network which will further strengthen our pursuit to combat match-fixing." The new application, which is free and available for download in Apple's App Store and on Google Play, will also strengthen the AFC's 360-degree approach on match-manipulation through the implementation of measures aimed at preventing, detecting and responding to match-fixing. At the prevention level, the AFC adopts the best governance principles by having a regulatory framework in place that acts to effectively prevent and respond to cases of match-fixing. Concurrently, the AFC also takes proactive measures to impart necessary knowledge and training to all potential targets of match-fixing, enabling them to recognise, reject and report match-fixing. The AFC has also taken several measures to enhance its capabilities to detect match fixing. In addition to the new app, the AFC has a long-standing partnership with market leaders, Sportradar. The agreement, which has assisted to uncover several match-fixing cases in the last year, encompasses more than 4,500 matches across Asia each year through the specifically developed AFC Monitoring System (AMS), positioning the AFC as one of the most committed sport bodies in the world on the issue of match-fixing. Speaking about the partnership, Andreas Krannich, Sportradar's Managing Director Integrity Services added: "We first signed with the AFC back in 2013 and I am delighted to see our partnership continuing to evolve year on year. We have monitored, we have detected, we have investigated, built and resolved cases side by side. This latest development - this new app - showcases our own commitment to technologically-driven developments to protect football's integrity and it underlines the AFC's forward-thinking stance to empowering its fans and stakeholders".

Source: 21 November 2017, The Asian Football Confederation (AFC)

<http://www.the-afc.com/media-releases/new-mobile-app-strengthens-afc%E2%80%99s-fight-against-match-fixing>



ODDS AND ENDS

Play the Game

Whistleblowers in sport need more support

Whistleblowing has become one of the hottest topics in discussions on sports integrity. Independent voices have been instrumental for disclosing problems of doping, corruption or other types of crime. But who should guarantee the necessary support and protection when whistleblowers are endangered? Today, it may seem obvious that a safe and functional whistleblowing regime is of utmost importance to sports integrity. During the past years, we have seen enough examples of major revelations of doping, fraud and corruption in sport to know that information from brave women and men inside sport can be effective in disclosing organised cheating, malpractice and corrupt systems that would not have been noted otherwise by relevant authorities, be it the IOC, sports organisations, WADA or national anti-doping organisations. For many scourges of sport such as match-fixing and corruption no test can be performed. And where testing is the prevailing tool, like in the fight against doping, not even the most complex analytical methods managed to detect the biggest doping scam witnessed to date: the comprehensive doping scheme in Russia. It is only through determined investigative journalists and their close cooperation with whistleblowers that the world started realising the variety of challenges inherent to the modern sport world. And in those cases where the legal authorities picked up the threads and continued the investigations, the magnitude of the problems has often come as a surprise even to the most critical observers. When for instance the FBI launched their dramatic action against 40 top officials and business partners in FIFA, based on evidence delivered by Andrew Jennings and other reporters, no one in the public had heard about the substance of the FBI case: corruption practices in the Americas worth around 200 million US-dollars. Today, Olympic leaders are holding their breath to see what will be disclosed from the unprecedented co-operation between state prosecutors in Brazil, France and Switzerland – a cooperation that will be presented in more detail during Play the Game 2017. A change in attitude. For 20 years, Play the Game has worked to highlight the dark sides of sport by encouraging freedom of speech in sports journalism and discussions on doping, corruption, harassment, discrimination etc. When Play the Game first gathered investigative journalists, experts, whistleblowers, and sports officials to discuss these issues, there was no broad recognition of the relevance. On the contrary: Sports leaders would dismiss Play the Game and our speakers as hostile sensation-makers that tried to make a living by scandalising honest sports leaders who had selflessly committed their lives to the noble cause of the youth. Today, the integrity issues are all over the public agenda and the global political discussions, and the need for better governance is recognised by even the most problematic organisation – at least in their declarations. This fundamental change in public perception of sport would not have come about without determined men and women who put their careers, their reputations and their safety at risk in order to tell the truth. Whistleblowers need better protection. While the intrinsic value of whistleblowers in sport is generally recognised by now, it goes without saying that policies and procedures must be in place to regulate the use of whistleblower information and protect whistleblowers from retaliation. Whistleblower hotlines, policies and procedures are increasingly being implemented in various sports organisations and other authorities in the area of anti-doping, match-fixing and athlete harassment. Yet, the protection of whistleblowers in sport is by and large vested in the hands of private sports organisations and/or public or semi-public authorities. They may have all the best intentions to support and protect any forthcoming whistleblower, but they are unlikely to have enough strength in cases where lives and livelihood of whistleblowers are threatened. Legal assistance and media guidance may be provided by sports or via independent initiatives like Fair Sport, but the powers and means necessary to provide long-term financial support and physical security are only available to governments and their law enforcement entities. For now, they only act to a very limited extent and only in very rare cases. Governments must play a much more active role. This is an area where governments must up their game. Sport organisations and anti-doping agencies cannot develop effective whistleblowing programmes in isolation. Law enforcement agencies should be involved and a united approach to manage endangered whistleblowers should be dealt with. Governments need to play an active role. Collaboration with sports organisations and anti-doping and integrity agencies is a fundamental necessity if protection of whistleblowers is to be credible and effective. Governments should take measures to guarantee that whistleblowers do not need to flee or in worst cases to change their identities in return for telling the truth and take measures to provide financial support at least temporarily until they are able to support themselves again. That is the least we can do if we want whistleblowers to do the right thing. Whistleblowers considering speaking up must be professionally advised to make informed decisions: Will it be worth it? What are the risks? How will life look on the other side? This is also a responsibility that should rest with law enforcement and where sport and anti-doping organisations must realise they need a helping hand. The lack of will to protect compromising information. Naturally, this will only work in situations where governments can be trusted. Often, they cannot. Or they lack the will to protect people giving compromising information. You only have to look at Yulia and Vitaly Stepanov to see the impact whistleblowing can have and where neither the governing body, IAAF, nor the Russian government succeeded in providing security. Still, closer cooperation between sport and the world's governments seems more relevant than ever. We are very far from convincing solutions, but there are signs that interest is growing. WADA has implemented a programme to protect informants, called 'Speak Up'. The IOC says it has established a whistleblower programme a few years ago, but no information on its policies, protection measures and results are shared with the public. Governments have taken a first look at how to better protect whistleblowers as this was one of the recommendations in the 'Kazan Action Plan' endorsed by UNESCO in July 2017. It remains to be seen how many countries will follow the recommendations to the necessary degree.

Source: Christina Friis Johansen, 21 November 2017, Play the Game

http://www.playthegame.org/news/comments/2017/050_play-the-game-2017-whistleblowers-in-sport-need-more-support/