SEMINAR “FIGHT AGAINST MATCH-FIXING”

Date: 10 April 2014

Place: Helsinki (Finland)

Participants: cf. appendix

Main issues raised during the seminar:

Level of match-fixing risk and awareness:

- The match-fixing risk in Finland is considered by most of the participants as quite low (but a few participants think that it is quite high).
- According to participants, awareness about match-fixing issues still has to be improved even if the country has organised several workshops and education programmes on that issue. “The awareness of sport manipulation is weak compared to doping”, according to a survey presented by Lauri Tarasti.

Who has to fight against match fixing?

- In Finland, public authorities determine a general framework for sport. They respect the autonomy of sports organisations, but sometimes set up a general framework to be adopted by sports federations.
- At the moment, Finland is thinking about the best way to supervise sport manipulation: Ministry of Education and Culture, Anti-Doping Agency FINNIDA, new commission, new independent unit under public law. A report suggests establishing a special unit, the General Ethical Commission for Sport (set up by the Ministry of Education and Culture).
- The proposed tasks of this Commission could be: International cooperation, national coordination, recommendations (regarding manipulation but also ethical issues), education programmes (in cooperation with FINNIDA), etc.
- Football fights against match fixing and has started developing its own tools, mainly through the player's union. Federations seem to be used accepting public intervention in case of public order risks (for instance intrusion of organised Crime within sports structures).
- The Sports Confederation didn’t adopt common rules at the moment but tries to gather common views among national federations.
- The idea to develop new strong measures to protect sports integrity and to share information in an international cooperative way is seen as important by all participants. Finland supports the idea of an international convention to fight match fixing and played an essential role in the negotiations (Harri Syväsalmi, Director of the Sports Division of the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture,
is the Chairman of the drafting group of the international convention to combat the manipulation of sports competitions).

**Sports betting:**

- Many participants had a good knowledge about betting.
- In Finland, there is a monopoly for both land-based and online sports betting (Veikkaus).
- Finland has legislation in place against illegal betting, including provisions prohibiting advertising for illegal operators. Nevertheless, the fight against illegal operators is not very active: no IP or payment blocking.
- For many participants, sports betting is part of the problem, not only in Finland but at an international level.

**Measures to protect sports integrity:**

- Participants give overwhelming support to education and information measures, clearly named as the first priority in the fight against match-fixing.
- Since 2013, football implemented an education programme through the Player’s Union (in cooperation with FIFPro):
  This programme includes:
  o Face-to-face sessions in the cloakrooms;
  o The “Red Button” system (a report system downloaded on mobile phones). This system allows security (through a secret code to log in), confidentiality and anonymity. 1.300 players have already downloaded the Red Button¹.
- There is a good cooperation between the different stakeholders (public authorities, sports organisations and Veikkaus) regarding alerts in case of suspicious betting patterns. The National Bureau of Investigation is involved when there is a possibility of “fix”.
- In Finland, there is no specific criminal offence for sports fraud at this time. Today, prosecutors use all the existing possibilities, and first of all the “fraud or bribery in business” offence. Regarding the issue of match fixing and the concept of the new Ethics Commission, some experts nevertheless suggested to introduce an offence dedicated to sport fraud.
- According to some participants, the supervision of sport manipulations needs specific tools (very different to doping): oral evidence, telephone discussions and messages, bank accounts, email, previous follow up, etc.
- International cooperation is a key issue for many participants.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Existing (Yes / No)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Betting: Fight against illegal betting</td>
<td>NO (Only advertising ban has been implemented)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Betting: Authorised list of bets</td>
<td>YES (Types of bets / List of bets authorised by the betting regulatory authority: Ministry of Interior)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Betting: Other restrictions (pay out, stakes)</td>
<td>YES (Stake limits per day on Live betting, daily limit on deposit)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sport: Education programs</td>
<td>YES (Football)</td>
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¹ In a survey conducted by the Player’s Union, to the question: « Would you ever confidentially report an approach to fix or any suspicions you have of match fixing?”, 57% of the respondents answer “Yes”, 8% answer “No”.
Betting prohibition for sport actors

- Every federation has its own rules (football and ice hockey have already defined some rules);
- The Sports Confederation defines responsible guidelines and sanctions;
- Ethical policy worked out by the Sports Confederation.

Conflicts of interest: Disclosure of inside information

YES (At least football)

Integrity officer

YES for the Sports Confederation and for 5 “big” sports federations (including football, floorball, handball, etc.) through Svenska Spel’s sponsorship (helps to raise awareness)

Sport: Prohibition to control betting operators

Non applicable (Veikkaus has a monopoly for sports betting and is state-controlled)

Criminal offence & Sanctions

NO (Use of “fraud or bribery in business” offence)

Betting: Prohibition to control sports when bets are offered

Non applicable (Veikkaus has a monopoly for sports betting and is state-controlled)

Contract between sport and betting

NO

Intelligence and monitoring

YES (Through ELMS)

Next steps and recommendations:

- Finland may possibly look into the 5 following priority items:
  - Implementation of an enhanced multi-stakeholders coordination at a national level, for example through a General Ethical Commission for sport, gathering Sports Confederation / National Olympic Committee, public authorities and Veikkaus. It could be interesting to set up conflicts of interest rules for sports actors (prohibition to bet on their own sport/competition).
  - Appointment of an “integrity officer” in each “big” sports organisation.
  - Implementation of education programmes focusing on face-to-face (players, referees) and “train the trainers”, not only for football (at least for the 5 main Finnish sports, including ice hockey, floorball, handball).
  - Effective fight against illegal betting at a national level (including black list of illegal operators, IP and/or payment blocking).
  - Development of enhanced cooperation between sports organisations and Veikkaus about betting expertise and betting related risks.
APPENDIX
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