



London, 10 July 2020

Tennis Integrity Unit Briefing Note: April – June 2020

International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) to assume responsibility for bringing disciplinary charges from January 2021

The June meeting of the Tennis Integrity Supervisory Board has agreed that the International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) will become responsible for making charging decisions in future corruption cases. Under the current process, four PTIOs (Professional Tennis Integrity Officers) representing the sport's governing bodies, make those decisions, which are then referred to an independent hearing officer to take forward.

The Board decision to transfer that responsibility to the ITIA is a further and significant move towards the organisation's operational and legal independence from the ATP, WTA, ITF and Grand Slams.

A senior legal counsel is currently being recruited to perform the new role, in consultation with the CEO and Senior Director-Investigations. Referral to independent Hearing Officers will continue to be part of the process.

With effect from January 2021, the ITIA will replace the TIU as the independent integrity organisation for professional tennis.

Privately organised tennis tournaments generate 24 suspicious match reports during lockdown

Privately organised tennis tournaments staged during the lockdown of professional tennis between April and June, resulted in 24 suspicious matches being reported to the TIU by regulated betting operators.

Suspicious betting on tennis during the lockdown is seen as a firm indicator that corruptors remain active, and are likely to increase their focus on the sport when professional tennis resumes in August.

In addition to the 24 Level 1 reports, one match played at a WTA \$125k tournament in 2019 has been retrospectively classified as a match alert, following review by the TIU.

Tennis Integrity Unit delivers first combined anti-corruption and anti-doping education in preparation for Return to Tennis

The Tennis Integrity Unit's Education department has delivered a series of *Return to Tennis* webinars to prepare the sport for the integrity challenges that may await upon the resumption of the professional game.

The initiative was developed to address the exceptional circumstances created by the global Coronavirus lockdown. With reduced playing and earning opportunities and months of inactivity, the risks associated with betting-related corruption and doping violations are believed to have increased.

A series of bespoke webinars delivered by TIU Education, in partnership with the TADP (Tennis Anti-Doping Programme) provided guidance and information to equip players to recognise and manage the risks associated with the resumption of tennis. These include anticipated renewed activity by corruptors targeting players and others who may be financially vulnerable. On the anti-doping front, advice and updates were provided for testing, Covid-19 health issues, supplements and medications.

The series of 10 player Education webinars, which included language translation options, was made available to all professional players. It is being followed by similar *Return to Tennis* sessions designed for match officials and tournament personnel during July.

The joint initiative from the sport's anti-corruption and anti-doping bodies is the first instance of a combined approach being taken to player education. This will become a standard practice when the TADP – currently administered by the ITF - joins the International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) at an appropriate date, to be confirmed.

Project Egypt

TIU Education has also been working closely with the President and Executive Team of the Egyptian Tennis Federation (ETF) to develop a bespoke integrity education strategy for Egyptian tennis. The strategy forms part of their response to corruption sanctions imposed on a number of prominent domestic players in recent times and will deliver a comprehensive prevention programme to raise awareness and educate the Egyptian tennis community. To signal the launch of this initiative, more than 140 players, coaches, officials and federation staff attended a webinar co-hosted by the TIU and ETF. The webinar provided an overview of the integrity landscape in tennis and the Tennis Anti-Corruption Program rules.

USTA National Tennis Centre awarded ITF Gold Level status

The United States Tennis Association's National Campus in Orlando, Florida has become the second National Tennis Centre (NTC) to receive ITF Gold Level status, following the French Tennis Federation's national training centre in Paris. The accreditation process includes a nine-point set of Integrity standards and best practice policies developed by TIU Education for NTCs to adopt.

Disciplinary decisions – April to June 2020

Between April and June 2020 five individuals - three players and two match officials - were subject to disciplinary sanctions for breaches of the Tennis Anti-Corruption Program. Among them, former Egyptian player Youssef Hossam, became the 27th individual to receive a lifetime ban from the sport for match fixing offences:

- <https://www.tennisintegrityunit.com/media-releases/french-tennis-official-anthony-pravettoni-suspended-and-fined-betting-tennis-offences>
- <https://www.tennisintegrityunit.com/media-releases/youssef-hossam-banned-life-multiple-match-fixing-and-corruption-offences>
- <https://www.tennisintegrityunit.com/media-releases/venezuelan-match-official-armando-alfonso-belardi-gonzalez-suspended-and-fined-corruption-offences>
- <https://www.tennisintegrityunit.com/media-releases/tunisian-tennis-player-majed-kilani-banned-seven-years-and-fined-7000-after-conviction-match-fixing-and-associated-corruption-charges>
- <https://www.tennisintegrityunit.com/media-releases/brazils-perti-vesantera-banned-five-years-and-fined-15000-after-conviction-betting-facilitating-and-non-reporting-charges>

These sanctions have previously been announced by the TIU and are included here as a retrospective record.

More information

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