

Monday, May 19, 2008

**PRESS RELEASE**

## **TENNIS GOVERNING BODIES TO IMPLEMENT ALL RECOMMENDATIONS OF INDEPENDENT TENNIS INTEGRITY REVIEW**

The four Grand Slams, the International Tennis Federation (ITF), ATP and Sony Ericsson WTA Tour have today published the full findings, and accepted the recommendations, of the independent *Environmental Review of Integrity in Professional Tennis*. The Review concludes that professional tennis is neither systematically nor institutionally corrupt. The Review's findings have been welcomed by the governing bodies, who will start the process of implementing all 15 recommendations contained in the report, including the creation of a global tennis Integrity Unit and co-ordinated Anti-Corruption Programme.

Led by Ben Gunn and Jeff Rees, leading sports integrity experts, the comprehensive review was launched in January 2008, following and complementing work already under way by tennis governing bodies to create a common set of integrity rules, procedures and sanctions across the professional tennis industry. Its remit was to identify the nature of potential threats to the integrity of professional tennis; consider the regulatory resources and policies necessary to combat current and foreseeable threats and to report recommendations on next steps for the sport's governing bodies.

The Review followed a detailed consultation process that involved 95 stakeholders from the sport including players, officials, sponsors, media and representatives of betting organisations. Together with its principal assessment that professional tennis is not institutionally or systemically corrupt, it also concludes that no evidence of a link to organised crime exists.

Ben Gunn commented: "We applaud the governing bodies for taking bold and decisive measures to meet the challenges they face. Their decision to accept the recommendations outlined, underpinned by an agreement to introduce a uniform Anti-Corruption Programme, will help to maintain and enhance the integrity of a global sport enjoyed by millions."

Jeff Rees added: "The findings of this Review clearly demonstrate the need for having an Integrity Unit. The aim to rid any uncertainty or implication of corruption in tennis is fundamental to the reputation and future standing of the game and is fully supported by all international tennis bodies."

The Review identifies five potential threats to the sport, namely corrupt practice by players and others in respect to gambling; breaches of the rules in relation to tanking; violation of credentials; misuse of inside information and illegal or abusive behaviour towards players. The Review also concludes that, as in many sports, some players are vulnerable to corrupt approaches and there are people outside tennis who seek to corrupt those within the sport.

The Review also identified 45 professional tennis matches played in the past five years that had unusual betting patterns that require further review to ascertain if they affected the integrity of professional tennis or if there were other tennis reasons for the outcome of the matches.

With these findings in mind, the Review has outlined the following recommendations to encourage a more focused anti-corruption culture for the sport. The four Grand Slams, ITF, ATP and Sony Ericsson WTA Tour have accepted and will implement all 15 recommendations outlined in the Review:

1. A uniform Anti-Corruption Programme to be agreed by the Tennis Authorities;
2. An Anti-Corruption Programme to focus on 'prevention' and 'detection' and be supported by an education programme which identifies threats to professional tennis and the action to address them;
3. The creation of an Integrity Unit;
4. The Director of the Integrity Unit to prepare an intelligence strategy; an investigation strategy; and a user requirement for a computer database;
5. The current ban on players betting to be reiterated and maintained;
6. The current ban on tournament representatives betting to be reiterated and maintained;
7. Officials to examine those matches that players take part in over and above those necessary to achieve ranking points;
8. A review of current accreditation for all Grand Slam, ITF, ATP and Sony Ericsson WTA Tour tournaments;
9. Only players and essential tournament personnel to have access to the players' locker room;
10. The term 'insider information' to be defined for tennis;
11. The creation of an 'integrity module' to assess threats and recommendations made in this Review and used for education and awareness;
12. A single hearings tribunal for all disciplinary cases involving integrity issues to be established;
13. Any player caught cheating to continue to be punished by lengthy suspension, and if appropriate, up to a life ban;
14. A co-ordinated media strategy for integrity issues to be established;
15. The Professional Tennis Authorities to consider seeking the support of other sporting bodies for the development of legislation creating income streams from selling sporting rights and/or the creation of a right to bet.

The four Grand Slams, ITF, ATP and Sony Ericsson WTA Tour, through the joint Anti-Corruption Programme, will now start the process of implementing the 15 key recommendations. A Steering Committee will oversee this process and a formal progress review and update will be forthcoming during Roland Garros. The governing bodies intend to have the Tennis Integrity Unit in place this season and will make further announcements in due course.

At the same time, in order to enhance and expand the Anti-Corruption Programme, the governing bodies will turn to public bodies and authorities for help in combating the threat of corruption. To this end, the governing bodies will create a Working Group comprising representatives from each stakeholder to develop an effective global approach to the issue of integrity.

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**Notes to editors:**

1. A full copy of the report is available from <http://www.itftennis.com/abouttheitf>
2. The Review has been carried out in parallel with a full Regulatory Review of professional tennis which will be published in due course.

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