



Topic Area 3: MATCH-FIXING IN SPORT



LESSON PLAN/GUIDE



Australian Government
Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority



Australian Government
National Integrity of Sport Unit



Unit 1: INTRODUCTION TO MATCH-FIXING IN SPORT

Level: Adaptable for Years 9 through 12.

Subjects: The following Unit aligns to key knowledge statements in:

- Some senior Legal Studies curriculum (effectiveness of laws/rules).
- Some senior Physical Education curriculum.

Teacher Notes

The Lesson Plan/Guide for this Topic, and others in this Topic series, provides background information, resources and ideas to assist teachers in developing a lesson (or series of lessons), which addresses the key concepts articulated in relevant areas of the curriculum.



Teachers should introduce the two Units within this Topic by providing an introduction using the **lesson overview** below and highlight the **learning objectives** to be achieved. The teacher should then introduce some of the **key questions** that will be investigated and choose some of the activities (and relevant resources) to examine and explore these further. The **extended learning activity** can be used as a homework or take-away activity and **further resources** can be provided for students who wish to delve deeper into the topic. Learning time for each Unit will be determined by how many activities the teacher wishes to analyse and discuss.

LESSON OVERVIEW

In recent years, illegal activities such as match-fixing, illegal gambling and the use of inside information for betting purposes have become more prominent integrity issues in sport.



Match-fixing involves the manipulation of an outcome or contingency by competitors, teams, sports agents, support staff, referees and officials and venue staff. It can include the deliberate fixing of the result of a contest, an occurrence or points spread within a contest, deliberate underperformance, withdrawal (also known as 'tanking', 'manipulation' and 'experimenting'), an officials deliberate misapplication of the rules of the contest, interference with the play or playing surface, or abuse of insider information to support a bet placed.

It is argued that match-fixing hollows out sport as it destroys the one aspect that is essential - the uncertainty of outcome. It is trust and belief in this uncertainty that draws many people to sport, and without it, totally comprises the meaning and integrity of sport. In this Unit, students will gain an insight into the nature and extent of this issue, and discuss the implications for those who engage in such illegal activity and those who monitor and protect against it.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand what match-fixing entails and those who are vulnerable.
- Awareness of the extent of match-fixing and results manipulation in sport.
- Recognise the harm to sport posed by match-fixing and other corrupt activities.
- Analyse how the different elements of the National Policy on Match-fixing in Sport protect Australian sport.
- Evaluate Australian sports' readiness to address match-fixing and illegal gambling issues.



KEY QUESTIONS

1. How would you define 'match-fixing'?
2. What is the extent of match-fixing in world sport today?
3. What are some of the factors that may increase the potential vulnerability of sports to match-fixing?
4. What are the implications for those who engage in match-fixing in sport?
5. What is the National Policy on Match-fixing in Sport? How does it protect Australian sport?
6. Who are some of the different agencies that work together domestically and internationally to share information and best practices to protect against illegal betting and match-fixing?
7. Are national sporting organisations suitably prepared to tackle the issue of match-fixing?
8. Is match-fixing the biggest threat to the integrity of sport in the 21st Century?



ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

1. Read the article '*Match-fixing in sport*¹ and discuss whether sport is less or more ethical now.
2. Read the Australian Crime Commission report '*Threats to the Integrity of Professional Sport in Australia*² and list the main reasons a sport may become vulnerable to match-fixing.
3. The National Policy on Match-fixing in Sport³ has been endorsed by all Australian Sports Ministers - what does the policy include?
4. The National Integrity of Sport's [Keep Sport Honest](#)⁴ online course is designed to help understand what match-fixing is, its consequences, how to recognise it and report it. Complete the four modules and quizzes.
5. Match-fixing allegations have recently rocked the tennis world. Watch the ABC Four Corners Program '*Bad Sport*⁵ and discuss as a class some of the main factors for match-fixing to occur and some of the solutions discussed. What other sports are prone to match-fixing?



6. As a class, debate the following statement from former Director of Ladbrokes betting agency in the UK, Patrick Jay, who previously worked as the Hong Kong Jockey Club's Director of Trading:
*"Be aware of the problem, understand how big it is, don't think you're an unsinkable ship; think that you know the problem is here - it's on your doorstep, you've had the issues with Southern Stars, you've had the issue with cricket match-fixing, you've had issues with Aussie Rules. If you do not take it seriously, sport will be destroyed."*⁶
 - a. Try to come up with a consensus of opinion as to whether Australian sport is aware and prepared for the dangers.
7. What if a criminal who has a well-earned reputation for violence tells a player that they must fix a match or they will harm his or her young family? Does the integrity of sport supersede the risk to the lives of other people? Discuss and debate.

Extended Learning Activity: THE BIG FIX



The most prominent case of match-fixing in Australia to date was reported in September 2013 and involved players and staff engaged with the Southern Stars FC, a football club in the second-tier Victorian Premier League. Sportradar, the internet betting integrity monitoring agent, detected irregular betting patterns associated with at least five Southern Stars games, which were characterised by 'unusually poor play' by some of the players.⁷

Victoria Police subsequently charged six people with match-fixing offences, including the coach, four players (all from the United Kingdom) and a Malaysian national. The latter acted as liaison between the coach and players and a betting syndicate based in Hungary and Malaysia. The syndicate is reported to have made an estimated \$2million on the five thrown games played between 21 July and 13 September 2013.⁸

Watch the ABC's *'The Big Fix'*,⁹ and list the mistakes made and lessons learned for Australian sport in this match-fixing incident.

FURTHER RESOURCES

- [Six charged over soccer match-fixing scandal](#)¹⁰
- [Match-Fixing: Working Toward an Ethical Framework](#)¹¹
- [A Sure Bet to Fix Sport](#)¹²
- Match-Fixing - The Biggest Threat to Sport in the 21st Century?" Carpenter, K. *International Sport Law Review*. Issue 2, (2012).
- ASC Clearinghouse for Sport - [Match-Fixing and Illegal Sports Betting](#)¹³





Unit 2:

ILLEGAL GAMBLING, ORGANISED CRIME AND MATCH-FIXING

Level: Adaptable for Years 9 through 12.

Subjects: The following Unit aligns to key knowledge statements in:

- Some senior Legal Studies curriculum (effectiveness of laws/rules).
- Some senior Physical Education curriculum.

LESSON OVERVIEW

The sports wagering market, both globally and domestically, has burgeoned over the past decade, with thousands of online bookmakers now offering betting markets on a vast and increasing array of sports. However, a number of issues have been identified that pose threats to the integrity of sport.



Advancements in communications and technology allow gamblers to place bets, not only on match results, but also on whether particular 'outcomes' will occur during a sports match or competition. These betting options known as 'exotic bets', 'spot bets' or 'micro betting' can increase the risk of unethical behavior and the potential for corruption or exploitation of the gaming industry.

With the world gambling industry turning over more than a trillion dollars a year, organised crime networks are exploiting vulnerable sports to fix matches or manipulate elements of the sporting fixture and launder money. Criminals develop associations with individuals who can influence a sporting contest or provide inside information that would enable them to profit from the sporting contest. Those who have bribed players to do these actions can then make millions from gambling on these crooked outcomes, with the bets staked with illegal bookmakers based in other parts of the world and operating outside the jurisdiction of the local sports authorities.

In this Unit, students will explore the scale and different elements of illegal gambling, organised crime and match-fixing in sport. They will develop an understanding of how collaboration and information exchange between domestic sporting organisations and betting agencies, and international collaboration between NISU and like agencies are working to prevent this illegal activity.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Establish the relationship between professional sport and wagering industries and how illegal gambling can corrupt sport.
- Raise awareness of the link between organised crime and sport, and the potential for unethical and illegal behaviour.
- Describe some of the different illegal activities that have plagued sport in recent times.
- Understand how collaboration and information sharing between sports, betting agencies and international organisations is working to prevent illegal and corrupt activities in sport.



KEY QUESTIONS

1. What is the size of the sports betting market in Australia?
2. How does the gambling dollar corrupt sport?
3. How does organised crime infiltrate professional sport in Australia?
4. What is 'spot fixing' and why is it such a serious issue in sport?
5. What is 'courtsiding'? Have there been any examples of this activity in Australia?
6. What is 'tanking'? Can you name some recent examples of this activity in world sport?
7. What is 'honey-trapping' and how can this lead to integrity issues?
8. Describe what a 'ghost match' is?
9. Describe how NISU works with sports betting agencies to protect against illegal activity in sport.



ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

1. Watch the 7.30 Report 'Australian sport faces its blackest day'.¹⁴ Has Australian sport plunged deeper into darkness since?
2. Read the *Australian Racing Guide* fact book¹⁵ and discover the size of the sports betting market in Australia.
3. Review the article 'How the gambling dollar is corrupting sport'.¹⁶ List some of the ways the integrity and purity of Australian sport is being undermined.
4. Read the ACC report 'Threats to the Integrity of Professional Sport'¹⁷ and review how the conditions necessary for organised crime to infiltrate professional sport, such as associations between criminal individuals and athletes, have developed, or are being cultivated.
5. Read this article 'Australian professional athletes risk of blackmail as part of match-fixing by organised crime figures'¹⁸ and discuss the issue of 'honey-trapping'.
6. Research what 'spot fixing' is and discuss why it is viewed as such a serious issue in sport.
7. The term 'courtsiding' refers to the practice of spectators at games relaying information to people overseas, in order to take advantage of broadcasting time delays to manipulate betting. Can you find any examples where this practise has occurred in Australian sport?
8. The newest weapon in the armory of the match-fixer is a ghost game - a fictitious fixture designed to defraud bookmakers and rip off honest punters as part of a global betting market. Research and find some examples of where this practise has occurred.
9. Criminals are now using club sponsorship as a way of increasing their influence. FIFA's Head of Security, Ralf Mutschke, said:



*"We are seeing criminal groups who use the sponsoring approach to infiltrate clubs in football. We get a lot of information from different regions of the world of suspicious people offering money to get into the clubs."*¹⁹

Discuss and debate the following question: Should a sporting club accept sponsorship money from a business owner with a 'dubious' background and associations if it means it will save the club from bankruptcy?

Extended Learning Activity: LOSING TO WIN



It's the final match in the 'round-robin' stage of your world championships competition. You know if you win the match you will play against the stronger opponents in the next round, but if you were to somehow lose the match you would avoid the tough match up and have a far greater chance of progressing through to the finals. Your captain and coach explain the situation to you and ask you to "tone it down a bit" and "save your best for the next match".

You are a bit concerned as your sport's code of conduct says 'you must use your best efforts to win a match at anytime' and not conduct yourself 'in a manner that is clearly abusive or detrimental to the sport'. Maybe it's not an issue - after all, players in various sports let points go all the time to save energy for later on.

The whistle blows for the game to start. Do you:

A: Give it your best for every point.

B: Take it a little bit easier than you normally would.

- Ask students what they would do.
- Ask students to tell how their decision matches up with their values and beliefs and their sense of purpose of what sport should be.
- Ask generally - Is there a 'right or moral' action here?

FURTHER RESOURCES



- [The Size and Increase of the Global Sports Betting Market](#)²⁰
- [Gaming: advertising live odds banned in NSW to curb online sports betting](#)²¹
- [Match-fixing and Sports Betting](#)²²
- [Sports Betting and Corruption: How to preserve the integrity of sport](#)²³



Endnotes

- 1 https://www.nzherald.co.nz/sport/news/article.cfm?c_id=4&objectid=10669906
- 2 <https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20151020084507/https://www.crimecommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/Threat%20s%20to%20the%20integrity%20of%20professional%20sport%20in%20Australia%20JULY%202013.pdf>
- 3 www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/national-policy-on-match-fixing-in-sport
- 4 <https://elearning.sport.gov.au>
- 5 www.abc.net.au/4corners/stories/2016/02/01/4395832.htm
- 6 www.abc.net.au/am/content/2014/s4003179.htm
- 7 <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-09-22/soccer-clubs-obvious-match-fixing-sparked-questions-from-rival/5761204>
- 8 www.aic.gov.au/publications/current%20series/tandi/481-500/tandi490.html
- 9 www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2013/s3850031.htm
- 10 <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-09-22/soccer-clubs-obvious-match-fixing-sparked-questions-from-rival/5761204>
- 11 www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00948705.2015.1037767?journalCode=rjps20
- 12 www.huffingtonpost.com/chris-eaton2/a-sure-bet-to-fix-sport_b_7216418.html
- 13 www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/knowledge_base/organised_sport/sport_integrity/match-fixing_and_illegal_sports_betting
- 14 www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2013/s3685762.htm
- 15 Australian Racing Board Limited 2011, *Australian Racing Fact Book: A guide to the Racing Industry in Australia*, Australian Racing Board, Sydney.
- 16 www.theage.com.au/comment/gambling-sponsorship-unbalances-regulatory-framework-20160403-gnx1p9.html
- 17 <https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20151020084507/https://www.crimecommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/Threat%20s%20to%20the%20integrity%20of%20professional%20sport%20in%20Australia%20JULY%202013.pdf>
- 18 'Australian professional athletes risk of blackmail as part of match-fixing by organised crime figures', *Daily Mail*, (January 2015) at: www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2888410/Professional-athletes-risk-blackmailed-match-fixing-billion-dollar-organised-crime-operations.html
- 19 <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/06/29/uk-soccer-matchfixing-idUKKCN0P920S20150629>
- 20 <https://www.sportsbettingdime.com/guides/finance/global-sports-betting-market/>
- 21 www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2015/nov/09/gaming-advertising-live-odds-banned-in-nsw-to-curb-online-sports-betting
- 22 www.clearinghouseforsport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/649235/Match_Fixing_October_2015.pdf
- 23 <http://www.sporidiinfo.ee/est/g22s355>