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Tennis

Investigations –

General

Logistical Issues

(Document)

[Redacted]

**Independent
Review
of Integrity
in Tennis**

APPENDIX

TENNIS INVESTIGATIONS – GENERAL LOGISTICAL ISSUES

Appendix D

Introduction

When comparing an investigation into corrupt practice in World Tennis alongside that of one from British Horseracing, there are many common denominators in the approach that would be adopted. The most obvious one is that the objective of an investigation into corrupt betting in either of the two sports, the primary objective is to link the betting corrupters to those inside the sport.

Whilst the objective is straightforward, achieving that aim is more problematic. In general terms there are five primary avenues of evidence in investigating corruption in horseracing:

- A
- Betting evidence (both documentary and expert evidence);
 - Evidence from watching the event;
 - Telecommunications evidence (itemised billing and data from telephone handsets);
 - Evidence from interviews with suspects and witnesses;
 - Expert analytical evidence linking all of the above (both documentary and expert evidence);

In general terms, it can take anywhere from nine months to two years (or in some cases even longer) to conclude an investigation that involves all of the above five strands.

Since we took on an advisory role on the investigation into the Tennis match involving Davydenko and Arguello we have found that the five primary avenues for investigating corruption in tennis are the same. However, there are a number of factors that have the potential to make a tennis investigation more complex, specifically taking account of the Davydenko/Arguello match:

- Tournaments are in locations World-wide in this case, Sopot in Poland;
- Players are based in different countries in this case, Russia and Argentina;
- The Officials overseeing the match are from other Countries, in this case the umpire was from India;
- The bet was struck in London;
- Those betting live in Russia.

The Investigation

Stage One:

- Carry out detailed analysis of betting records;
- Overlay the betting spreadsheet over the Umpire's score sheet to take account of betting during play;

- Prepare initial interviews with Players, Officials and Witnesses.

Stage Two:

- Set up interviews with players that take account of tournament schedules and, ^{in various parts of the world} ~~in this case, interviews took place in three locations in mainland Europe.~~
- Took into account the need for interpreters, ~~in this case, Russian, German and Spanish were used.~~
- At interview request telephone records and forensically examine handsets.
- Set up interviews with match day officials, taking into consideration the logistical issues of location and language barriers and schedule.

Stage Three:

Prepare and undertake interviews with the account holders involved in the suspicious betting patterns.

- ^{Look into time from the various} ~~In this case, the [redacted] Account Holders refused an invitation to meet on neutral location for interviews;~~
- ^{check [redacted] who may refuse to assist.} ~~[redacted] unable to facilitate interviews;~~
- ^{As a last resort, telephoned all of the Account Holders to ask for an explanation on their betting on this match - refused to co-operate.}

Stage Four:

Initial interviews completed.

- Transcribe interviews into English (time consuming and expensive);
- Translate data from handsets into English (again time consuming and expensive);
- Analysis telephone records when received (not straightforward as usually foreign service providers);
- Analysis data from telephone handsets.

Stage Five:

Consider further interviews ^{to check/explain evidence already obtained}

- [redacted]
- [redacted]

Summary of Findings

As a result of [REDACTED] specifically information received from the betting industry and intelligence obtained from telephony records, it is clear from the results of the analysis that the ATP, and to a much lesser degree the WTA, have a problem with their players either 'throwing' matches or those close to the players misusing inside information for betting purposes in the knowledge that a player is unlikely to win a match.

To date, we have been able to identify three main groups of bettors who are of concern, they are known as:

- A 'Russian'
- A 'Northern Italian'
- A 'Sicilian'

Further analysis of betting records show that all three have created suspicious betting patterns on many matches over the past 4 years, by either backing or laying players at odds far removed from what they actually should have been.

There are also smaller groups of account holders whose accounts have yet to be analysed and these are:

- Argentinean;
- French; and
- Austrian

The Russian Group

There are 11 accounts of concern in the Russian group, all based either in Moscow or St Petersburg and linked by computer sharing and betting patterns. The main match of concern is the Davydenko v Arguello match of 02/08/07. There are 4 other matches (all ATP) involving Russian players that appear from the betting patterns to be suspicious. All the matches listed below were deemed by the Belfair integrity team to be suspicious

The following matches were all played in 2007 and 3 were 2nd round matches and one was a quarter final:

[REDACTED]: 5 of the linked Russian accounts backed Davydenko and laid [REDACTED] to win a total of £47,347.

[REDACTED]: 3 of the linked accounts won a total of £55,002 by laying [REDACTED] and backing [REDACTED]; £6,917 of the total profit was won by the accounts backing [REDACTED] to win 2-0 in sets.

[REDACTED]: 7 of the linked accounts won a total of £102,892 by laying [REDACTED] and backing [REDACTED].

██████████ - ██████████: 8 of the accounts laid ██████████ and backed ██████████ for a combined profit of £66,724; £10,587 of the total came from backing ██████████ to win by 2 sets to love.

The accounts primarily bet 'in play' - when the match is in progress.

The WTA match between ██████████ and ██████████ played on ██████████ is also highly suspicious when looked at in detail.

When 3 or more of the Russian accounts trade on the same match there is a pattern of at least one Russian player being involved. There is no doubt that these accounts are in receipt of inside information, at the very least, regarding Russian players.

These accounts are unsophisticated in the way they bet on suspect matches as they are happy to take all prices available, regardless of how the match is progressing, and at times it appears that the suspect accounts are almost fighting with each other to get their money down.

As a result of enquiries conducted by Investigators into the Russian Belfair account holders, Belfair were not happy with the contact we made and sought to prevent enquiries taking place. Of the account holders who were contacted the enquiries were inconclusive. Some denied knowing others even where there was clear evidence of computer sharing on the betting. This creates even greater suspicion to their activity.

The Northern Italian Group

There are 6 main accounts of concern in this group. The group favour matches involving Argentinean and/or Spanish players. The most profitable match for this group was the Arguello v ██████████ match from ██████████ and there are at least 28 other matches that appear, from the initial betting patterns, to warrant further investigation. Most of the 29 were 1st round matches in non high profile ATP tournaments.

This group usually bet into the set betting markets as well as the straight win market. There is also a pattern of the player who goes on to win the match losing the 1st set.

The following matches all featured suspicious betting patterns (the player in **bold** being the losing player):

- ██████████ - Arguello v ██████████: profit made by linked Northern Italian accounts - £73,889.
- ██████████ v ██████████ - combined profit: £61,443
- ██████████ v ██████████ - combined profit: £54,962
- ██████████ v ██████████ - combined profit: £54,942
- ██████████ v ██████████ - combined profit: £35,033
- ██████████ v ██████████ - combined profit: £32,310
- ██████████ v ██████████ - combined profit: £32,290

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[REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £30,130
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £28,352
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £27,791
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £25,643
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £24,928
 [REDACTED] v **Vassallo Arguello** - combined profit: £24,005
 [REDACTED] v Vassallo Arguello: combined profit: £22,441
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £20,556
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £17,796
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £16,737
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £16,719
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £15,932
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £15,887
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £14,980
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £13,889
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £12,726
 [REDACTED] v **Starace** - combined profit: £11,802
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £11,120
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £11,087
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £10,774
 [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] - combined profit: £10,393

There is only one suspect WTA match to add to the list. This was when [REDACTED] lost to [REDACTED] on [REDACTED]

This group of accounts are more sophisticated than the Russian group when it comes to betting on suspect matches but although this group appear to be much more organised than the Russians they still heavily skew the Betfair markets when trading on suspect matches.

The way these accounts traded on some of the suspect matches would strongly suggest that both players in the match were involved in the conspiracy.

The players that stand out in the list and should be investigated are:

[REDACTED]

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The Sicilian Group

There are 10 main accounts of concern in this group all based in and around [REDACTED], Sicily. The accounts are linked and are believed to have placed bets through computers at the [REDACTED] where an ATP tournament was held in recent years.

There are 12 matches involving this group that warrant further investigation. The top match in the list being Vassallo Arguello v [REDACTED], played at the [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] where the accounts won a combined total of £257,988. Of the 12 matches, 9 were 1st round, 2 were in the 2nd round and one was a quarter final match.

The betting patterns on some of these matches are nothing short of remarkable, for example when [REDACTED] beat [REDACTED] by 3 sets to love on [REDACTED] the suspect accounts backed the odds of [REDACTED] to win 3-0 into a shorter price than that of [REDACTED] just to win the match. This is completely unheard of and is akin to a football team being a shorter price to win a match 2-0 than to just win the match.

There is no doubt that these Betfair account holders knew the result of this, and many other matches before a ball had been struck.

In the [REDACTED] v Vassallo and [REDACTED] v Vassallo matches the accounts appeared to know exactly how games would pan out and backed the winning players at odds so far short of where they should have been that it made the betting markets on the matches completely farcical and obvious to anyone with any betting analysis experience that the result was almost certainly a foregone conclusion.

This group also plays on the set betting markets. There are no suspicious WTA matches in the list of 12.

The 12 matches are as follows (loser in **bold**):

| | | |
|------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| [REDACTED] | -Arguello v [REDACTED] | - combined profit: £257,988 |
| [REDACTED] | -Arguello v [REDACTED] | - combined profit: £129,001 ✓ |
| [REDACTED] | - [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] | - combined profit: £75,935 |
| [REDACTED] | - [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] | - combined profit: £41,084 |
| [REDACTED] | -Starace v [REDACTED] | - combined profit: £37,139 |
| [REDACTED] | - [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] | - combined profit: £26,597 |
| [REDACTED] | - [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] | - combined profit: 19,786 |
| [REDACTED] | - [REDACTED] v Arguello | - combined profit: £19,331 |
| [REDACTED] | - [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] | - combined profit: £17,674 |
| [REDACTED] | -Bracciali v [REDACTED] | - combined profit: £16,528 |
| [REDACTED] | - [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] | - combined profit: £10,059 |
| [REDACTED] | - [REDACTED] v [REDACTED] | - combined profit: £9,640 |

The players from the above list that definitely should be investigated are:

Martin Vassallo Arguello (Argentina) -

[REDACTED]

Potito Starace (Italy)

[REDACTED]

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Conclusion

The above information, in its entirety, relates to Betfair. It is likely that fixed odds betting companies, particularly those in mainland Europe could add further intelligence to suggest that corruption in tennis is much more prevalent than the above suggests. It is already known that a number of Italian Tennis Players have been disciplined recently for being involved in illegal betting.

ESSA