

Review: *Restoring Trust in Sport: Corruption Cases and Solutions*

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Restoring Trust in Sport: Corruption Cases and Solutions (Routledge, 2021), edited by leading Australian scholar Dr Catherine Ordway, is a valuable and engaging addition to the literature on sport, regulation, crime and entertainment. As such it will be of interest to lawyers with a commercial or human rights focus, sports administrators, criminologists, and people who provide services in the sports sector.

In 259 pages the collection examines significant corruption cases in different sports and jurisdictions, alongside measures taken to reduce further harm or risk of recurrence. It has an international scope, with case study material from Asia, Europe, Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Inspired by the idea of ‘moral repair’, thoughtfully explored by the editor in the final chapter, it engages with salient contemporary issues such as match-fixing, whistleblowing, bribery, licit/illicit gambling, good governance at a sport and international level, and bidding for major events. Political scientists and sociologists rather than sports law specialists will appreciate the examination of loss of trust at national and international levels, including sophisticated use of on-field and off-field examples across Olympic, professional (including ‘major leagues’) and amateur sports. It represents both a substantive contribution to current debate about why corruption occurs in sport and a source of reflection on best professional practice. The analysis in each chapter is deepened by useful bibliographies that have an admirably contemporary and interdisciplinary focus.

The Foreword to *Restoring Trust in Sport* comments

Sport is a microcosm of society. Issues faced by sport very often mirror those occurring in society. There are many temptations placed in front of those engaged in sporting activities to take illicit short cuts to achieve immediate gains or gratification, while society is displaying an increasing norm to reward those who avoid or distract from the truth. Values are being sorely tested.

We are in the middle of tumultuous times in sport where principles of fair play and integrity are being challenged in the breach. Over recent years the public has been exposed to acts of corruption and fraud in sport ranging from the investigation and prosecution of many FIFA officials to the institutionalised doping programme in Russian sport, from Sandpapergate in cricket to fraud in thoroughbred horse racing. These events, and many others, have caused massive reputational damage to the sport and countries involved, and have significantly weakened public confidence in those entrusted to lead.

The book is thus timely and of particular value for critical insights regarding how these challenges might be addressed. Practical value aside, it represents a useful point of entry for scholars and administrators new to the literature and seeking to contextualise issues that are often viewed in isolation.

Ordway and Richard Lucas in Chapter 1 (‘Restoring Trust’) note

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While most of the media and academic writing is about ‘integrity in sport’, no one has adequately defined what that means. This book then focuses on trust, a topic that is more closely impacted by corruption than integrity. The fact that trust is a casualty of corruption is less spoken and written about, particularly in the sport space, and so warrants greater attention. ... The underlying driver of this book is that it should be focused on solving the threats challenging sport. While some segments of the sport ecosystem are undoubtedly business-centred, corrupt practices demean the fundamental reasons that people engage in sport: fun, friendship, health, skills development, teamwork, a sense of achievement and a host of other reasons. At its heart, corrupt leadership steals not just the money and power in sport, but undermines those values, and creates an environment of fear and distrust.

This book showcases best practice examples from around the world which can, in turn, be adapted to suit the different sports and regions where they are played. Featuring 13 women and 11 men, the contributing authors from across the globe write about sports as diverse as biathlon, sumo, rugby league, horse racing, road cycling, golf, tennis, ice hockey and, of course, the world game, football. These sports are represented in case studies from eight countries: South Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Nigeria, the Czech Republic, Great Britain, New Zealand and Australia. This is through the eyes of five professions: sport administrators, lawyers, journalists, policymakers, and law enforcement officers working together with academic scholars from nine broad disciplines: business, criminology, economics, ethics, law, political science, psychology, sociology and sport management.

Chapter Two, by Stefano Caneppele, Giulia Cinaglia and Fiona Langlois offers ‘An overview of corruption in sport around the world’, covering 230 cases of corruption in sport around the world reported in open source media in 2016 and 2017. The authors note

The study presented cross-sectional and in-depth analysis of cases of corruption in sport published in open source media throughout 2016 and 2017. The database showed that open sources can provide many pieces of information that can be strategically put together to create further knowledge about the types of corruption in sport. The most popular sports in the world, football, tennis, athletics and cricket, are also the most susceptible to corruption. Geographically, the map on corruption in sport does not necessarily indicate the countries in which such corruption is most prevalent. On the contrary, it may represent countries in which public opinion, media, sport federations and the state have acted to tackle the phenomenon. For example, the creation of special investigative police units or internal sports integrity units – which start investigations and attract media coverage – may help explain geographic and sport over-representation on the map. Conversely, countries without any reported cases of corruption should not necessarily be considered beacons of stronger integrity in sport. This is particularly the case if investigations are not carried out and media interest in sport corruption is low

Ruth Bayley and Caron Egle in Chapter Three consider Ethical leadership in Major Games procurement processes. In Chapter Four Erika Riedl discusses ‘How sport regulations are being used to restore trust following the International Biathlon Union scandal’. Victoria Jamieson and Ordway in Chapter Five discuss the exercise of discretion for social/ recreational athletes. In Chapter Six Samantha Roberts and Ordway in Chapter Six consider ‘Dominance or deceit in professional cycling: The perceived reality of Team Sky’. The inclusive nature of the collection is evident in ‘Integrity and corruption in sport: Lessons from Japan and match-fixing in sumo’ by Matt Nichol, Elisa Solomon and Keiji Kawai, Chapter Ten by Thi My Dung Nguyen and Simon Gardiner on ‘The fight against corruption in Vietnamese football: A closer look at typical corruption cases, causes and possible solutions’ and Chapter Eleven by Bob Olukoya and Aderonke Ogunleye-Bello on ‘Restoring trust in football through behavioural advocacy: A case study from Nigeria’. Chapter Eight – ‘Whistleblowing platforms as a solution to fight corruption: A model from the Czech Republic’ – by Apolena Ondráčková and Pim Verschuuren engages with internal and external integrity mechanisms.

There is much of interest for Australasian audiences. In 'Collaborative tennis investigations in Australia' (Chapter Nine) Rhys Harrison and James Moller comment

Professional tennis internationally is extremely vulnerable to corruption in the form of match fixing. For a potential corruptor to fix an outcome, or an element of a match, it only requires collaboration with one participant, even in doubles tennis. In a team sport such as football, beyond the referee or umpire, the corruptor would be required to influence several players to achieve the desired outcome. Between 2005 and 2018, international tennis commissioned two major integrity reviews. At the conclusion of each review, the tennis world was confronted with observations such as tennis is at a 'crossroads of credibility' and the risk is 'real and cannot be taken lightly'. Significant global interest in the sport of tennis contributes to the importance of protecting the integrity of tournaments. Unfortunately, it appears the concerns raised were not taken seriously enough, and the problems intensified.

They note that Australian sporting organisations have become targets for international crime syndicates, arguing that 'As a result of these attacks, the integrity of sporting competitions has been forever tarnished' and the infiltration of those syndicates into Australian sport is the greatest risk to sport in Australia. Factors that have resulted in a perfect storm of match-fixing include technological advancements in betting online and via mobile devices, globalisation of the Australian sport betting market, Australian NSOs engaging with betting operators, and Australia's geographic and time zone proximity to Asia.

In a thought provoking chapter Ordway and Liam Lenten ask 'Could conditional retirement funds restore trust following the Tandy match-fixing case in rugby league?'. They suggest that

In sports besieged by match-fixing allegations, such as tennis, cricket and association football [soccer], a range of strategies designed to strengthen the robustness of the sports and restore trust in the sporting public are being implemented. In this case study, research by economists into retirement incentives (referred to as 'conditional superannuation') in anti-doping is considered within a match-fixing setting. Conditional superannuation, or delayed retirement benefits, is proposed as one strategy to incentivise athletes to avoid engaging in a range of corrupt, criminalised behaviour, including match-fixing.

Chapter 13 by Genevieve Lim and John Young explores the notorious Fine Cotton affair, a matter of the complexities of gambling, organised crime and entrenched corruption in the horse racing industry. They argue that

With continuing technological advancement in a globalised world, corrupt conduct for gains on the gambling market will be increasingly difficult to detect and address. ... Sports controlling bodies operating in these environments face unique challenges and must work closely with law enforcement agencies and government regulators to provide the best protective measures for the integrity of their competitions. Corrupt conduct in these sports may often result in criminal as well as sporting offences. In conditions where the integrity of those government entities may be compromised, sport controlling bodies will have few avenues left open to them, but must continue to strive for thorough investigations, comprehensive rules and well formulated operational measures.

The concluding chapter, 'Restoring trust in sport', by Ordway offers an incisive examination of lessons learnt and of ethics.

University of Canberra Student Contributions