



Code of Conduct on Sports Betting for Players

Prepared by EU Athletes, the European Gaming and Betting Association, the Remote Gambling Association and the European Sports Security Association

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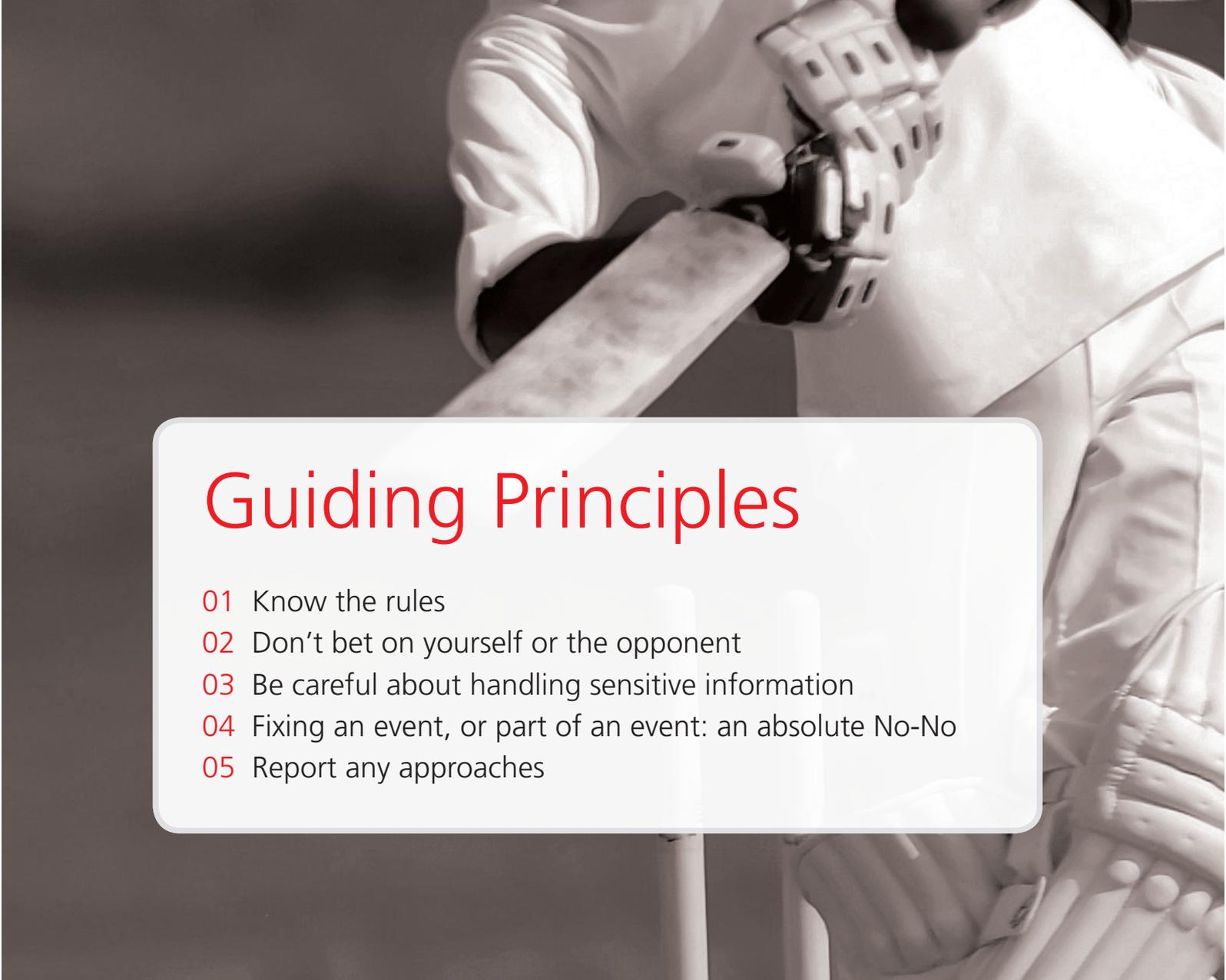
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Guiding Principles

- 01 Know the rules
- 02 Don't bet on yourself or the opponent
- 03 Be careful about handling sensitive information
- 04 Fixing an event, or part of an event: an absolute No-No
- 05 Report any approaches

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Your player association is there to help.



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1. Introduction

This Code of Conduct sets out the guiding principles and provides general advice to all athletes throughout Europe on the issues surrounding the integrity of sport and betting.

The Code of Conduct has been developed in a partnership between EU Athletes, the European Gaming and Betting Association (EGBA), the Remote Gambling Association (RGA) and the European Sports Security Association (ESSA) and will complement rules provided by national laws and/or sport specific regulations.

This Code is designed to underpin a comprehensive and proportionate education programme for athletes which will include tailored advice according to the sport and country with specific examples to help explain each situation. The Code will be reviewed regularly to ensure it maintains its relevance.

2. Guiding Principles

a) Know the rules

Ask your club, federation or players association what the rules on betting are in your sport and in your country before the start of each sporting season so that you are aware of your sport's most recent position regarding betting. Many sports and countries either have or are developing regulations on sports betting and you need to be aware of these – even if you don't bet. These rules should be explained to you in a way that is easy to understand, ideally through face-to-face meetings and supported by fact sheets and web based educational tools.

b) Don't bet on yourself or the opponent

As a professional athlete, you must not bet on any match you or your team is involved in as it would trigger a potential conflict of interest not compatible with the integrity or ethics of your sport. This includes betting on yourself or your team to win, lose or draw as well as any of the different side-bets. These might not affect the result of the match but could nevertheless have an adverse effect on the public perception of both you and your sport and may breach national laws and/or sport specific regulations.

If you bet on yourself or your opponent you risk having your image and reputation tarnished, being sanctioned or banned by your sport (possibly for life), the possibility of losing your job and even being subject to a criminal investigation.

c) Don't bet on other events within your sport

Betting on other games within your sport may also raise questions and breach rules. You are likely to know and be friends with many athletes in your sport and you should therefore give very careful consideration before you involve yourself in any betting on your sport to avoid potential problems. Again, consult your sport's rules and regulations first.

You should be aware that some sports have decided that it is easiest and best to prohibit athletes from betting on their own sport. If in any doubt, then do not bet on your sport until you have spoken to your governing body and/or players' association and you are happy that you are acting in accordance with your sport's rules.

d) Be careful about handling sensitive information

As an athlete you will have access to information that is not yet available to the general public, such as knowing that your star player is injured or that the coach is putting out a weakened side. This is considered sensitive or inside information. This information could be sought by people who would then use that knowledge to secure an unfair advantage and to make a financial gain.

There is nothing wrong with athletes having sensitive information; it is what you do with it that matters. Most athletes know that they should not discuss important information with anyone outside of your club or coaching staff. The same is true of sensitive information.

Whilst the rules of your sport may cover sensitive information, the following guidance is designed to protect you from potential problems.

- You should never swap sensitive information on you, your team or your sport for reward, gifts or favours.
- It looks suspicious if you pass on information to a person outside of your club or coaching staff, even if there is no obvious reward.¹

e) Fixing an event, or part of an event: an absolute No-No

Whatever the reason, do not seek to fix any aspect of a competition, no matter how small. Do not put yourself in a situation which would bring you, or even force you, to adversely influence the natural course of a sporting event.

There is no such thing as a quick and easy win and your actions will undoubtedly result in severe consequences for you and your team. Fixing an event, or part of an event goes against the rules and ethics of sport and when caught may lead to a criminal prosecution and a lifetime ban from that sport.

So do not put yourself at risk:

- Do not let yourself be manipulated - unscrupulous individuals might try to develop a relationship with you built on favours or fears that they will then try to exploit for their benefit in possibly fixing an event. This can include the offer of gifts, loans and support when athletes are young and trying to make it.
- If you have any concerns about anyone making offers to you then it is crucial that you tell someone in a senior position within your sport such as your federation and/or player association.

Try not to fall into too much debt to anyone or allow anyone to develop a hold over you. This may be a trigger for unscrupulous individuals to target you to fix competitions in return for money or support.

f) Report any approaches

If anyone approaches you to ask about fixing any part of a match then you should tell your player association or federation straight away. If someone offers you money or favours for sensitive information then you should also tell your federation or player association.

Any threats should always be reported. The police and national laws are there to protect you. Your club, federation or player association will help.

Some sports have regulations that require athletes to inform them immediately of any approach to influence the outcome of a competition.

3. General Advice

a) Family and friends

Your family and friends' betting behaviours or relations with unscrupulous individuals could create problems for you.

If your partner is betting on you to win or lose this could be traced back to you and will raise suspicions and could lead to you being banned from your sport.

b) Detection

Do not risk it. Remote betting operators (that is a betting service provided via the internet, mobile phone or interactive television) use sophisticated security measures that mean that all suspicious bets, and the identity of those placing those bets, can be traced and reported to sports federations or national authorities.

The European Sports Security Association (ESSA) monitors any irregular betting patterns to provide an immediate early warning to sports and bookmakers. Individual operators also have their own information sharing agreements in place which allow them to directly notify sports federations of any usual or suspicious betting patterns. Modern information technology allows regulated EU betting operators to record and trace your bets for fraud prevention purposes.

Land-based betting establishments also have security measures and are linked in to betting companies' central integrity operations.

c) Responsible betting

Underage betting is illegal. If you are under 18 (or 21 depending on jurisdiction) do not access a sports betting website or enter a land-based betting establishment (or ask anyone else to do it for you in order to place a bet).

Consider your financial situation beforehand and never wager more (money) than you can afford. If you need support or advice then ask your player association for help. Betting sites will also have details of a confidential helpline number.

d) If in doubt – tell someone

If you ever feel that something is not quite right then trust your instinct and tell someone in a senior position such as your federation or player association. And keep a record of this.

Finally, if you have any queries on sports betting issues then it is always better to ask for advice than risk falling foul of the laws. Your player association is there to help.

¹ This does not include giving media interviews.