

Issue 7

# touchline

The journal of sport & risk with an international perspective

**XIX Commonwealth  
Games in focus**

**Prozone -  
Ruining Sport?**

**World cup 2018 and  
2022 - race to be hosts**

**Risk Management  
Focus - Part II**

# Sportscover Makes it Two Wins in a Row at the Insurance Awards

Sportscover has been named Underwriting Agency of the Year for the second consecutive year at the 2010 Australia and New Zealand Insurance Industry Awards dinner held on Thursday 12th August, 2010. This award category, which was first introduced in 2009, is sponsored by Lloyd's.

Chris Nash, CEO of Sportscover said, "We are extremely proud to have won this award for the second year in succession. It means a great deal to us to be recognised by our industry through this accolade. This is a tribute to our staff for their continued hard work, and to our broker network and clients for their tremendous support in helping us attain this great achievement."

The ANZIIF Awards are held every year and recognise the leaders in the industry in categories which include general insurance company of the year, insurance leader of the year, large broker of the year and small - medium broker of the year.

Joan Fitzpatrick, CEO of ANZIIF congratulated the winners saying they are well-deserving of the recognition achieved at an industry-leading occasion.

"The Awards highlights the professionalism and excellence of the Australian and New Zealand insurance industry. It is important to take one night to celebrate the best and brightest, who have contributed so much to our industry," Ms Fitzpatrick said.

"The winners announced this evening are a standard bearer for the industry's professionalism and we are very proud of them," she said.



**Sportscover - Underwriting Agency of the Year 2009 & 2010**

## Sportscover's Great Sports Photo Competition

Thanks to all of you who submitted entries in the **Sportscover's Great Sports Photo Competition**. We received some excellent action shots and it was extremely difficult to choose our top three photos - but here they are!

Congratulations to our three winners, but well done and thanks to everyone who submitted a photo as you made it a very close contest.

**1st Place: Winning A\$500 and prime position on the cover of this edition of Touchline, first place is awarded to Liz Filmer for her wake boarding action picture. Congratulations Liz, what a great photo!**

**2nd Place:** Kevin Duleavy's great rugby kick photo wins A\$350.

**3rd Place:** Goes to Ron Moss for this football photograph (bottom right). Ron wins A\$150.

Thank you to all of the entrants and keep an eye on future editions for the other great photos from our entrants!

Touchline will run another photo competition next year. We look forward to receiving more of your stunning entries.



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## Contents

2 • Sportscover makes it two wins in a row at the insurance awards

Editor's Comment • 3

## Insight

- 7 • Spain receives economic boost from World Cup win
- 7 • World Cup insurance cover topped £6.2 Billion
- 8 • Expert calls for rugby scrums to be banned in schools
- 9 • English and Egyptian squash players dominate world rankings
- 9 • Backpacker sues after lake accident

## Feature Articles

- 4 • Is the use of Prozone ruining the entertainment value of sport?
- 10 • Who will win the race to host the 2018 and 2022 World Cups?
- 14 • Focus On: XIX Commonwealth Games
- 13 • **World Sports News Roundup**
- 16 • **Sports Shorts**
- 18 • **Focus on Risk Management**

## On Track:

- 6 • F1 teams ban 'F-duct' device
- 6 • Pentathlon switches to laser guns for London 2012 Games
- 6 • London 2012 cuts £27.3m from budget
- 6 • UK Sport and Sport England to merge
- 6 • GB Volleyball Funding ceases
- 6 • Mini set for return to Rally Championships

## Corruption in sport – it's just not cricket.

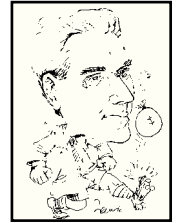
The allegations surrounding Pakistan captain Salman Butt and bowlers Asif and Amir are serious for them, for cricket and sport. They are alleged to have bowled three no-balls on purpose at pre-determined times during the fourth Test at Lord's to facilitate betting coups.

Unfortunately this is not the first time that corruption and cricket have been linked together. Way back in 1817 a Surrey cricketer, William Lambert, was banned from playing at Lord's for life because of a match fixing scandal. More recently, in 2000 South African captain Hansie Cronje confessed to taking bribes. Cronje was banned for life from professional cricket but died in a plane crash in 2002.

Since cricket began there have been numerous cases of cricketers being involved in taking bribes, providing match information to bookies and betting irregularities. Questions still remain about the amazing turnaround in January this year when Australia were floundering only to come back and win by 36 runs over Pakistan after a number of dropped catches and strange field placements. Some observers believe that the corruption runs so deep in cricket that there is no real attempt by the authorities to get to the bottom of it for fear of what will be uncovered.

However, it is not only cricket that is tainted by corruption. In fact, corruption is the biggest problem in the sports world according to journalist Jens Weinreich, author of the book 'Corruption in sports'. He believes that corruption is all over sports, pointing out that historically 95% of corruption is never discovered.

The Pakistan allegations also occurred in the same week that the National Rugby League was probing a plunge on an unusual points-scoring option in the recent game between Canterbury and North Queensland. And the great appeal of football is based on a belief that the playing field is truly level and that even the rank outsiders can win through on the day. Yet last November



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police in Germany, Britain, Austria and Switzerland cracked down on a match-fixing ring in what Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) called the biggest betting scandal in Europe. In May, Michel Platini, President of UEFA, called for an international police task force to fight corruption in sports, especially in football.

The potential for corruption in sport is huge. It is not only about match-fixing or providing inside information on the state of pitches or players, but also stadium construction and bidding for large competitions like the Olympics and World Cup. It is also clear that betting is now an integral part of sport. The sums of money that are involved are huge and growing rapidly and that inherently increases the risk.

Corruption can only take place if there is someone either within the sport or who has influence over the sport that is prepared to take a bribe. The sports authorities around the world must take on the responsibility to tackle corruption risks within their own organisations at regional, national and local levels and make sure that those involved are dealt with severely. Criminal proceedings and life bans from the sport for the perpetrators are a minimum requirement in order to make others think twice.

The more corruption in sport is uncovered, the more likely it is that an upset or any 'against the odds' win will be looked on with suspicion. Whether it is a dubious penalty; several missed catches; a couple of double faults; a quick knockout... was it just luck... or other more sinister reasons?

September 2010

## Is the use of Prozone ruining the entertainment value of sport?

*Prozone – the technology that analyses every aspect of team and player performance via a range of interactive platforms is increasingly being used by more and more sports and clubs. But are the results a beneficial technological advance or contributing to a less exciting viewing spectacle?*

**Chris Hootton** explores the pro and cons of ever greater analysis of every aspect of player performance in sport.

For those of you that, like me, are proud Englishmen with a perennial optimism that England will succeed in a major international football tournament, the England v Germany World Cup game was a severe disappointment. Remember how comprehensively outplayed our insipid lions were by the young enterprising Germans? But, did you also recognise that England had more shots, twice as many crosses, more corners, more penalty area and final third entries, and more successful passes?

Funny how statistics can be misleading isn't it? And to think many of the biggest clubs in the world swear by this technology.

Prozone is a now ubiquitous system that trains eight cameras on every player on the field and tracks their movements every 10th of a second, recording an average of 2,500 actions per game, to provide in depth statistics on everything from passing patterns and mapping runs to fitness levels, referee's contributions and even highlighting transfer targets.

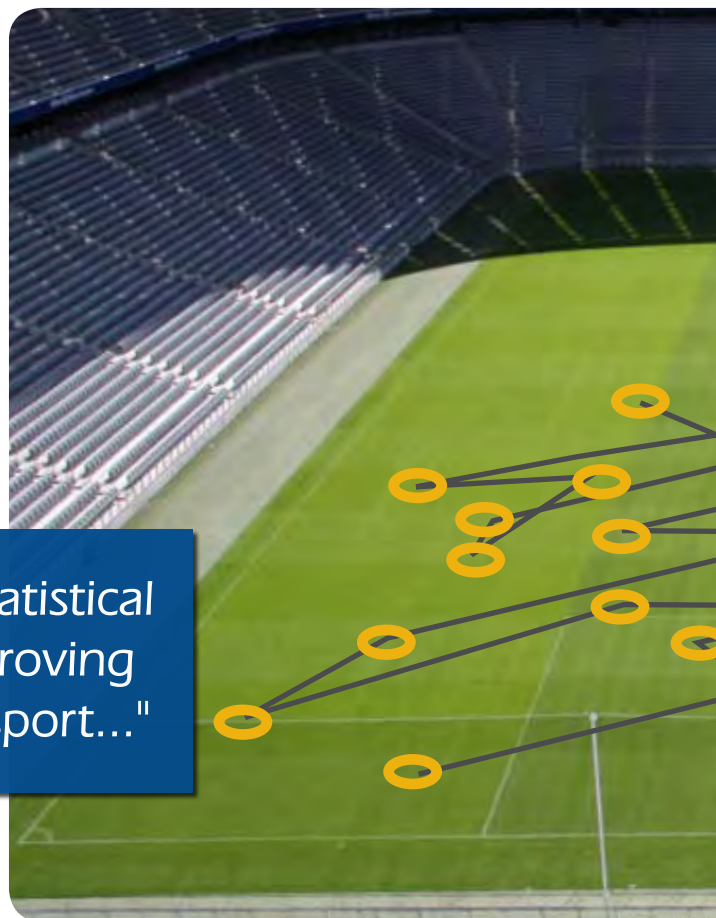
It is easy to see the benefits of statistical analysis when reviewing performances and preparing set piece routines, but has Prozone had a positive affect on football?

Many teams at the top level now subscribe to the Prozone product, which is justifiable when the pressure to succeed in a multi-million pound industry now takes the game far beyond a recreation sport.

Matches that pitch the top teams against one another increasingly end as stalemates as a result of the time spent drafting tactics to prevent the opposition from playing. The utilisation of Prozone is more often used to hamper teams rather than create, highlighting a team's key passer for example and then blocking his distribution routes throughout the game. If you look back to the past footballing greats, how many of these legends would shine in today's premier league when hounded by Javier Mascherano clipping away at their heels for 90 minutes?

In recent years there has been a growing interest in the lower levels of football in this country – many believe it to be more exciting and unpredictable owing to the air of mystery still surrounding the opposition. We occasionally witness this excitement on the global stage when previously unknown players mark their arrival at world cups, but where is the fun in seeing a winger face a defender who's already second guessed every change of direction because he's seen the Prozone patterns?

This is perhaps the crux of the argument. The game is about the fans after all (the wage payers) so any technology that inhibits the scoring of goals is surely to the detriment of the game? This is maybe why more fans have taken up supporting teams from the lower leagues; this however, could also be attributable to a more down to earth approach rather than the fantasy bubble at the top



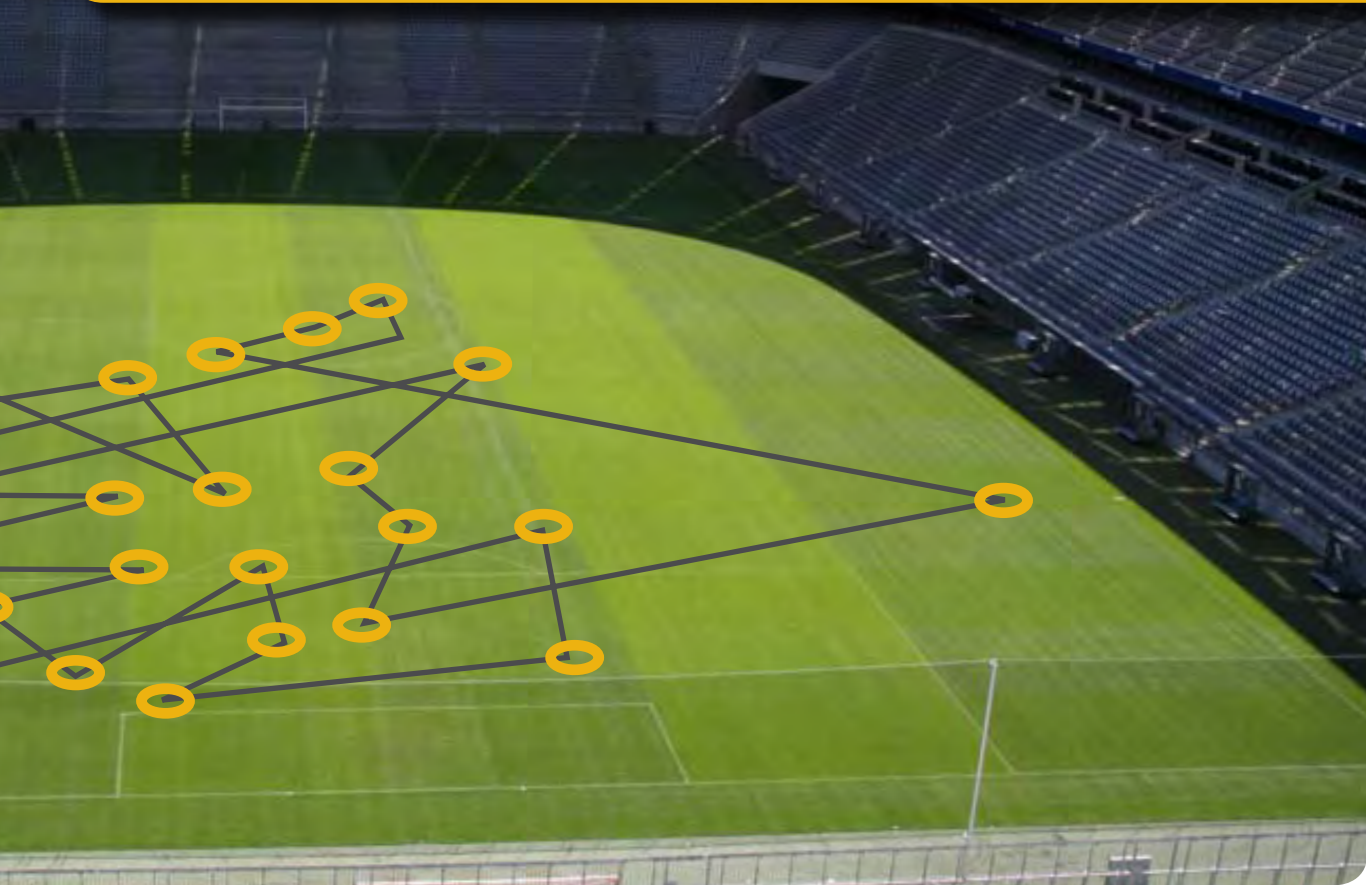
"Perhaps these statistical services are improving the standard of sport..."

level. It is difficult to argue against Prozone though when you consider the pressure weighing upon teams to achieve results – whether that be at the cost of beautiful football or otherwise.

Prozone is not just limited to focusing on the players on the pitch, referees contributions have come under scrutiny in recent seasons – most notably when Sir Alex Ferguson claimed Alan Wiley was 'unfit' to referee (in reference to Wiley's position on the field to make a decision) following some contentious decisions during Manchester United's match against Sunderland in 2009. Contrary to Fergy's comments however, the Prozone analysis revealed that Wiley had covered more distance during the game than all but four United players. The statistics showed that Wiley was an average of 17.7 metres from the ball throughout the game; Elite referees in England are allowed an average of up to 20 metres.

Perhaps these statistical services are improving the standard of sport then? Clearly there is benefit to analysing opposing tennis players' weakest areas of the court, or the left back incapable of playing the offside trap or the batsman who cannot cope when his corridor of uncertainty is attacked. Yet computers cannot





pick the team, it still comes down to the temperament of the flesh and sinew and more importantly the grey matter of the sportsman that walks out over the white line every weekend to carry out his manager's instructions. This is what, despite the millions paid in wages, allows Joe Public to relate – that acknowledgement that the players are still fallible humans.

However, by the same virtue, Prozone and Opta stats have become a guilty pleasure for many fans (there must be a reason for the ill fated Capello index!). The same punters who harp on about the romance of the game love to have stats to hand to defend/chastise their under/overrated players when engaging other 'experts' in the pub. Pundits love a stat as well; it is truly a sight to behold when Andy Gray is in full flow at half time playing with an array of touch screens, manipulating a smiling James Milner up and down the screen to highlight his versatility. And never try to come between Alan Hansen and his technology on Match of the Day when he's mid-rant trumpeting how there's 'nothing there for you' if you leave the perilous yellow shaded area unoccupied.

A extreme view would suggest that the Sam Allardyce or Rafa

Benitez fastidious approach to preparing a team based on statistical analysis is removing the romance from football. Mind you, it is also worth remembering that this is a profession and any technological betterment should be welcomed – we may still never see goal line technology introduced.

One has to remember that not every team can be challenging for the title every year and it is often the cultured Berbatov's or Di Canio's that make it worthwhile for the average fan travelling half way across the country to follow our beloved teams, something stats don't take into account.

"An extreme view would suggest that ... statistical analysis is removing the romance from football."

# on track

QUICK NEWS TO KEEP YOU IN THE FAST LANE

## F1 teams ban 'F-duct' device

The F1 teams have decided to ban the controversial 'F-duct' aerodynamic device pioneered by McLaren this year.

The device, which increases a car's speed down the straights, has since been adopted by Ferrari and BMW Sauber but will no longer be allowed in 2011.

It was controversial because some teams felt it contravened the rule that bans movable aerodynamic devices.

The system - which McLaren actually call a 'J-switch' within the team - works by channelling air through a hole in the monocoque in the cockpit area through the car and on to the rear wing. This increases the airflow on to the wing and makes it 'stall', ie stopping it creating downforce.

The system is only used on the straights, where the reduction in downforce on the car reduces drag and makes the car able to reach a higher top speed. It is operated by the drivers, who are able to open and close the hole at will.



## London 2012 cuts £27.3m from budget

London 2012 Olympic organisers have revealed that they have met government targets by cutting £27.3m from the event budget while keeping the project on schedule. The UK's coalition government ordered the cuts as part of its measures to reduce the national budget deficit.

It is thought that the efficiency with which the ODA has made the cuts whilst keeping the project on track could lead the way to further slimming of the 2012 budget.

The Olympic Delivery Authority has confirmed that the overall cost of staging the Games is now £9.4bn.

## GB Volleyball Funding ceases

The 2012 Olympic hopes of the Great Britain's women's volleyball team and men's beach team are in doubt following the announcement that funding will cease from 1 October.

Training programmes could be shelved, jeopardising the team's chances.

The Great Britain volleyball programme is the largest of any team sport and consists of indoor volleyball for both men and women, beach volleyball for men and women, and Paralympic volleyball for men and women.

All six teams have automatic host-country qualification for the London Games.

Volleyball was one of eight sports that had its London 2012 funding slashed because of a £50m budget shortfall. British Volleyball, the game's governing body, saw its pre-Beijing 2008 budget of £4.3m slashed to £2.2m for the years up to the London Olympics. As a result it has decided to concentrate its available budget on the men's indoor volleyball, women's beach volleyball and sitting volleyball programmes.

## Pentathlon switches to laser guns for London 2012 Games

Laser guns will replace traditional air pistols in the modern pentathlon at the 2012 London Olympics after a successful trial at the inaugural Youth Olympics held in Singapore.



The technology will reduce the cost of the shooting element of the five-event sport by two thirds, while the improved safety could mean new venues are used.

Klaus Schormann, President of world governing body the UIPM, said: "We will have laser shooting for London. We can now hold competitions in parks and shopping malls."

He added: "Based on this new technology, all countries in the

world can compete in our sport. Safety issues will no longer be a big concern."

The new technology, which first appeared at June's World Cup final in Moscow after years of testing, has also been backed by the sport's honorary president, Prince Albert of Monaco. "It is a great improvement to the sport," he stated.

"They [the laser guns] will be easier to carry around and to take on aeroplanes. It's the way of the future."

The switch to laser technology is the second major alteration to the sport since the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Modern pentathlon has already merged its two final events, running and shooting, to create a combined run-shoot finale.

The three other events that make up the sport are swimming, fencing and show jumping.

## UK Sport and Sport England to merge

The Government has announced that it is to merge UK Sport and Sport England, the two bodies who distribute National Lottery funding, in the latest move to cut costs and increase transparency.

Jeremy Hunt, culture secretary said that the merger can 'create a more effective structure to deliver sport success and a wider legacy from the 2012 Games.'

UK Sport is the body that funds Olympic athletes and aims to develop promising talent whilst Sport England funds grassroots sports - providing facilities and coaching.

The two bodies have been provided with nearly £800m in the run-up to the 2012 Games.

The merger is unlikely to take place before the London 2012 Olympics.

## Mini set for return to Rally Championships

Mini is set to make a comeback on the international rally circuit from 2011 - marking a return of one of the sports most famous names.

Owners BMW confirmed that Mini will compete at selected rounds of the FIA World Rally Championship (WRC) and the involvement is planned for several years.

The car that Mini will use is the Countryman WRC, which is being developed by Prodrive, in close cooperation with MINI, and is based on the production model.

# Spain receives economic boost from World Cup win

The historic Spanish World Cup triumph is also likely to be more than just a football win for Spain. The 1-0 extra time win over the Dutch will spur Spain's economic growth following the complete mood swing that has overtaken the country.

Research has shown that countries that win the World Cup receive a significant economic boost from the overwhelming "feel good" factor that envelops the country. It couldn't have come at a better time for Spain which was one of the group of EU countries nicknamed the PIGS (Portugal, Ireland, Greece, Spain) which



were close to economic collapse as a result of the Global Financial Crisis.

Economists predict that the euphoria generated by the win could lift Spain out of crisis and propel the country to an economic growth of 0.7 percent by the end of the year.

The burst of excitement has temporarily overshadowed the gloomy economic reality that Spain is facing today. The economy shrank 3.6 percent in 2009 and is set to shrink another 0.4 percent in 2010. The unemployment rate is as high as ever, reaching over 20 percent.

Before the World Cup, many economists predicted Spain's collapse to be similar to that of Greece, but with a lot more repercussions, since it is the European Union's fifth largest economy.

The good news is that all those woes may be healed by the magic wand of soccer.

"It generates confidence in our country, here and abroad, and that will also be good for GDP," Spain's Finance and Economy Minister Elena Salgado told reporters, saying that the World Cup "is good" for the country.

Miguel Angel Fraile, who is the head of the Spanish Commerce Confederation, representing around 450,000 retailers, said that "consumption will certainly rise, but we don't know by how much," according to an AFP interview.

"When a society is happy, that always has repercussions on consumption," he said.

After the last World Cup 2006 in Germany, ABN Amro Bank did a study—called "Soccernomics"—on how the world's biggest soccer competition affected the participants.

"A World Cup winner enjoys an average economic bonus of 0.7 percent additional growth, while the losing finalist suffers an average loss of 0.3 percent compared to the previous year," said the "Soccernomics" report.

According to statistics in the report, the 1986 World Cup winner—Argentina—recorded a stunning 7.1 percent economic growth. Germany (the 1990 winner) posted a 5.7 percent growth, Brazil (1994 and 2002 winner) posted 5.9 and 2.7 percent growth, respectively. The previous winner in 2006—Italy—posted a 2 percent economic growth for the rest of the year.

The reasons for higher economic growth of the winning countries are centred around higher consumer spending, increased tourism, and a presence of a "feel-good" factor that gives confidence to consumers. Consumers will certainly buy sports merchandise, souvenirs, clothes, and other goods and services.

Spain, being the third most visited country by tourists in the world—after United States and France—is feeling rejuvenated after the win as a more confident tourism industry welcomes tourists to its famous places such as Barcelona, Madrid, Seville, and of course the islands of Mallorca and Ibiza.

"There are many good things in Spain, but the most important is football," said the coach of Spanish national team, Vicente del Bosque. "Football is the locomotive for all things in the country."

## World Cup insurance cover topped £6.2 Billion South Africa

Insurance coverage for the 2010 World Cup held in South Africa in June and July was insured for over £6.2 billion, with FIFA, national teams and broadcasters all taking out insurance policies.

The stadiums and the training facilities were insured for at least £3.2 billion, and other business ventures attached to the World Cup make up an additional £3 billion of insurance.

Chris Nash, underwriter at Sportscover, told the BBC: 'Competitions, offers, prizes, sponsorship, broadcast rights - it's impossible to know how many there are, but all companies with these financial implications need coverage'.

This coverage did not include the cost of policies which apply to players in the event of injury.



## Expert calls for rugby scrums to be banned in schools

Rugby scrums should be banned in schools to protect children involved in a sport which is “not safe enough” for them, an expert has warned.

Professor Allyson Pollock, director of Edinburgh University’s Centre for International Public Health Policy, called for the ban after research into child injuries was carried out during 190 rugby matches at five schools. There were 37 injuries recorded, with 20 taken to accident and emergency.

However, former Gloucester, England and Lions prop Mike Burton has rejected calls for a ban saying, “The IRB have been very responsible in the way that they have managed injury prevention especially with youngsters.”

During an interview on BBC Radio Gloucestershire, he continued, “In schools there’s a special rule applied to the scrum where they keep the heads level with the hips. They’re not allowed to do any

lowering or moving at an angle and later on in life when props develop they learn the skills and their strength develops”.

The study stated that the tackle was the “commonest phase of play causing injury” with the head and face the most injured body part, along with sprains or ligament damage.

Prof Pollock, one of the study’s authors, said: “High tackles and scrums should be banned. The sport is not safe enough for school children and not enough is being done to protect the safety of children. If youngsters were coming back from school trips with these rates of injuries it would be enough to trigger a major inquiry”

“We know that most injuries occur in tackles and the scrum so there have got to be much greater safety measures in these areas.”

She said moderating play may change rugby, but it was better to have a safe game than a dangerous one.

But Burton also questioned one of the other recommendations in the report, the call for high tackles to be banned as well as scrums.

“It says the high tackle should be banned, well high tackles already are banned,” said Burton. “Here we have a professor saying all these things and she’s not really thought it through, I’m very concerned about that.”

In the 193 matches played by 470 children in Scotland

between January to April last year, the injury incidence during the match play was 10.8 injuries per 1,000 player hours.

Out of 37 rugby injuries amongst the youngsters, 29 were sustained by children aged between 14 and 17 and eight in the 11 to 13 age group.

A spinal injury was admitted overnight in hospital and the 19 other injuries seen at accident and emergency were discharged without admission.

Eight of the injuries resulted in time off school. Five of those injured were off school for one day, one was off for three days, one for five days and the spinal injury caused the youngster to be “off school long-term”, the research said.

The study, published in the Journal of Public Health, also said a rugby injury surveillance system in Scottish schools should be “strongly encouraged”.

Professor Pollock said, “Concussion is under-reported because it’s not being monitored properly. Repeated concussions may have severe long-term consequences,” warning that teachers and coaches have a duty of care towards children.

The Scottish government helped to fund the research.

A government spokeswoman said: “We initiated preliminary work around this study and we will now look closely at the findings of the research.

“While the Scottish government is fully supportive of school rugby, it’s very important we have accurate data about injuries sustained on the pitch to ensure that young people are not being exposed to disproportionate risks.”



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- Windsurfing
- Gymnastics
- Handball
- Keep Fit
- Rowing
- Sailing
- Triathlon
- Volleyball
- Water Polo
- Badminton
- Soccer (Individual)
- Hillwalking
- Hockey
- Lacrosse
- Netball
- Orienteering
- Racquetball
- Running
- Squash
- Tennis
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# English and Egyptian squash players dominate world rankings

Eight out of the top ten ranked men's squash players are from England and Egypt.

Egypt's Ramy Ashour has reclaimed the world number one ranking following his victory in the Cathay Pacific Sun Hung Kai Financial Hong Kong Open at the end of August.

The 22 year-old from Cairo gained number one ranking in January but was ousted by England's Nick Matthews in June this year. However, the top seed, who arrived in Hong Kong with five successive PSA World Tour titles to his credit, crashed out in the quarter finals leaving Ashour to gain top ranking.

Despite Matthews losing number one spot in the new world rankings six England players are in the men's top 15, and three women are in the top 10. There are 5 Egyptian men in the top 15 and three women in the top 15.

England also claimed six titles at the 2010 World Masters Squash Championships in Cologne, Germany.

Over the last 15 years England's squash players have "won everything", according to national coach David Pearson.

This success comes at a time of bitter disappointment for squash, which was overlooked by the International Olympic Committee for a place in the Games programme, with rugby sevens and golf preferred.

The sport is part of the Commonwealth Games programme, though and governing body England Squash and Racketball has its eyes firmly fixed on "bringing back a bagful of gold medals" from Delhi in October.

Communications coordinator Madeleine Bird attributes success at squash's elite level to a "thriving set up" from the junior squads up to elite players.

"We've got some really good coaching guys in place with eight regional centres across England - the coaches spot players to watch and develop," she said.

"We want to introduce squash to 122,000 children between 2008-2013 - for them to become regular players. It's a pretty ambitious figure."

Sport England statistics show that 500,000 people regularly play squash in England and that there are 900 affiliated clubs and 4,500 squash courts across the country.

## Backpacker sues after lake accident

A backpacker is suing the State and tourist operator for failing to warn him of the dangers after being injured running down a sand dune and tumbling into a popular Fraser Island lake in Australia.

Irishman Evan Joseph Kelly, 25 sustained severe spinal injuries when he ran down a sand dune several times before falling head-first into the lake after a visit to Fraser Island's Lake Wabby in 2007.

He applied this month for leave to sue the State Government as well as a backpacker hostel and a 4WD company in the Supreme Court in Brisbane.

He claims the Environmental Protection Agency, despite being aware of the dangers associated with tourists running down the dune, failed to properly warn of the risks or take precautions to minimise them.

He also claims Pippies Beach House, a backpacker hostel at Rainbow Beach, and Safari 4WD Hire, despite being aware of the danger, encouraged tourists to visit the lake, run down the dunes and swim in the lake without advising of the risks or warning of the lake's variable depth.

Mr Kelly had been in Australia on a three-month holiday with three friends when he joined a self-drive tour of Fraser Island on the day he was injured.

Mr Kelly had spinal surgery at Brisbane's Princess Alexandra Hospital, after an X-ray showed a spinal fracture. He was diagnosed with C6 incomplete tetraplegia.

He returned to Ireland after a month in the hospital. He now walks with crutches and uses a wheelchair for distances.

Mr Kelly had been an electrician for six years before the accident, but has been unable to continue that work since and now works a few hours a week in his father's office.

Last year, Su Chul Jang from South Korea, who became a quadriplegic after he ran down a sand dune and dived into Lake Wabby in 2006, filed a claim against tour company Fraser Escape 4x4 Tours Pty Ltd and the State.

## Who will win the race to host the 2018 and 2022 World Cups?

*The dust has barely settled on the World Cup in South Africa but already attention has turned to which countries will host the 2018 and 2022 World Cups. The decision for both tournaments will be announced by Fifa on 2 December. Here we give our verdict on the front runners as the race to land the greatest prize in sport heats up.*

# 2018 2022

**2018 Contenders:** Belgium and Netherlands (joint bid), England, Russia, Spain and Portugal (joint bid) and USA.

**2022 Contenders:** As above plus Australia, Japan, South Korea and Qatar

### The minimum requirements are:

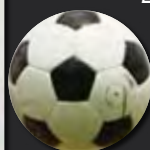
12 stadiums with minimum capacities of 80,000 for the opening match and final and others capable of holding a minimum of 40,000 and satisfactory infrastructure and facilities including high standards of TV broadcasting, telecommunications technology, transport and accommodation.

### Analysis of 2018 and 2022 bidders:

#### Belgium and Netherlands

**Fifa World Ranking:**

*Belgium - 48, Netherlands - 2*



**Main Stadium:** *Belgium*  
- King Baudouin Stadium,  
50,000 approx (Brussels)  
*// Netherlands* - Feyenoord  
Stadium (de Kuip), 51,000  
approx (Rotterdam)

**Last World Cup hosted:** n/a

**Chance of winning:** Low for both tournaments – small venues and joint bid.

A joint bid has been made by Belgium and the Netherlands to host a World Cup for the first time. These countries successfully teamed up to host Euro 2000. However, Fifa President Sepp Blatter has stated “As long as we have single-country bids which provide all the necessary guarantees, we will reject co-hosting bids.”

That seems to count out the bid as there are other countries who can host the tournament in their own right. Also, as far as stadiums go, they do not meet the criteria. The King Baudouin Stadium (formerly known as Heysel) in north Brussels was used for the opening game of Euro 2000 but has a capacity of just over 50,000. The Feyenoord Stadium, which hosted the Euro 2000 final, also comes up short at 51,577.

#### England

**Fifa World Ranking:** 7

**Main Stadium:** Wembley, 90,000 (London - pictured page 13)

**Last World Cup hosted:** 1966

**Chance of winning:** Has all the requirements therefore Joint favourites for 2018 with Russia but unless USA win 2018, no chance for 2022.

Originally installed as favourites, the bid has not gone as smoothly as hoped. In May the campaign suffered a major blow when bid team head Lord Triesman quit following claims that he had accused Spain and Russia of bribery. However, things appear to be back on track when Franz Beckenbauer, the former German captain and member of the Fifa committee bolstered England's bid by saying that the country could stage the event ‘tomorrow’ because of its superior infrastructure of stadia and fans.

Then Fifa President Sepp Blatter gave England's 2018 World Cup bid a huge boost, declaring that it would be ‘easy’ to host the tournament in the country.

He said: ‘The easiest way to organise the World Cup is to go to England. Everything is there – fans, stadiums, infrastructure – it's easy.’

It will be 52 years since Bobby Moore lifted the Jules Rimet trophy at Wembley by the time 2018 comes around, but it looks quite likely that the then England captain will get his chance to lead the team out on home turf to equal that feat.





## Russia

**Fifa World Ranking:** 16

**Main Stadium:** Luzhniki Stadium, 78,000 approx (Moscow)

**Last World Cup hosted:** n/a

**Chance of winning:** First time bidder and good stadia mean very good chance for 2018, but if England win 2018 no chance for 2022.

Russia is the major contender to England, but there are vast distances between stadia - there are nine time zones – so travel and infrastructure issues could count against it.

It can offer plenty of top-class venues with Moscow alone containing eight stadiums, the biggest of which is the Luzhniki Stadium, which holds 78,360.

Should England triumph in 2018, then Russia would be immediately ruled out of the running for 2022, given Europe would not be allowed to stage the tournament twice in a row.

Russia was visited recently by the international governing body's inspection team, led by the president of the Chilean football federation, Harold Mayne-Nicholls. Following the visit Fifa warned Russia that they must begin building their stadiums and infrastructure immediately if they are to host the finals in 2018 or 2022.

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin told Fifa during its inspection that his country will waive visa requirements for participants if it wins hosting rights, an idea the delegation warmly received.

A strong bid which could win through for 2018.

## Portugal and Spain

**Fifa World Ranking:**

*Portugal - 8, Spain - 1*

**Main Stadium:** *Portugal - Estadio da Luz, 62,000 (Benfica) // Spain - Santiago Bernabeu, 80,000 approx (Madrid)*

**Last World Cup hosted:** *Spain - 1982*

**Chance of Winning:** Low for both tournaments because a joint bid.

The issue of joint bids is a big sticking point for Fifa.

Still, Portugal and Spain would be strong contenders if joint bids are considered. Both countries have the stadia and infrastructure to host the tournament. Spain hosted the World Cup in 1982 and the European Championship in 1964, while Portugal hosted the 2004 European Championship.

Spain's biggest stadiums are Barcelona's Nou Camp (98,772) and Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu (80,354), and seven other football grounds throughout the country exceed a 40,000 capacity.

Portugal built seven modern stadiums from scratch and renovated three others for Euro 2004 as well as upgrading the country's transport infrastructure.

Benfica's Estadio da Luz is the country's biggest venue, with a 62,000 capacity for international games, while Sporting Lisbon's Estádio José Alvalade and FC Porto's Estadio do Dragao each hold 52,000.

## United States of America

**Fifa World Ranking:** 18

**Main Stadium:** Rose Bowl, 91,000, (Pasadena)

**Last World Cup hosted:** 1994

**Chance of winning:** Probably a European bid will win 2018 but good chance for 2022

USA 94 was hailed as a huge success with average attendances of nearly 69,000 even though high temperatures during games and awkward kick-off times for European television audiences were definite minus points.

Massive television and marketing opportunities mean it will be a strong contender this time around as well and the impact of David Beckham's time in Major League Soccer with LA Galaxy should not be underestimated in terms of boosting the profile of the sport.

The US says it has 25-35 stadiums that would be capable of hosting matches.

The Rose Bowl in Pasadena, California, which hosted Brazil's victory over Italy in the 1994 final, has not been refurbished but holds 91,000.

However, the US is still waiting for "soccer" to truly capture the nation's imagination and having hosted the tournament within the last twenty years may mean that there are more likely winners for the 2018 tournament.



# Analysis of 2022 bidders:

## Australia

**Fifa World Ranking:** 20

**Main Stadium:** Melbourne Cricket ground, 100,108 (Melbourne - pictured below).

**Last World Cup hosted:** n/a

**Chance of winning:** Sporting pedigree and quality venues give high possibility of winning

Australia's government has pledged significant funding and already has a strong track record organising big sporting events, such as the 2000 Olympics, the 2003 Rugby World Cup and the 2006 Commonwealth Games.

The country has never held a football World Cup before which will work in its favour. Stadium-wise, Australia has some huge facilities, although most are based around the oval field used for Aussie Rules football or Cricket.

The giant Melbourne Cricket Ground would potentially stage the final as it can hold over 100,000 spectators. The ANZ Stadium in Sydney was the venue for the Olympic track and field events in 2000 and holds 83,500, so it would be in contention for the opening game and final.

Beckenbauer said that Australia's chances to host the World Cup in 2022 could be strong if 2018 went to Europe. "I think they have a good chance because the World Cup has never been to Australia. Australia's a beautiful country, a beautiful continent."

Enough said!

## Qatar

**Fifa World Ranking:** 98

**Main Stadium:** Qatar Khalifa International Stadium, 50,000 (Doha)

**Last World Cup hosted:** n/a

**Chances of winning:** Summer heat and small stadia mean next to no chance

Qatar is looking to become the first Arab country to host the World Cup finals after unsuccessful attempts in the past from Egypt, Morocco and a joint bid from Tunisia and Libya.

The country failed in its attempt to host the 2016 Olympics but successfully hosted the 2006 Asian Games. It will also host football's Asian Cup in 2011

The Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium is the home ground of club side Al-Saad and, despite the fact it only has a capacity of 18,000, it is where the national team play because of the intimidating atmosphere that it can generate.

The Qatar Khalifa International Stadium in Doha is an impressive venue but still only holds 50,000, while there are also two 25,000-capacity grounds but far more would need to be built if the country was to hold the World Cup.

This might make Fifa less inclined to go for Qatar especially considering the country only has a population of just over 1.3m people.

But the idea of playing the tournament in the June desert heat, when temperatures regularly top 40C, will probably provide an insurmountable obstacle.

## Japan

**Fifa World Ranking:** 32

**Main Stadium:** International Stadium, 72,000 (Yokohama)

**Last World Cup hosted:** 2002

**Chance of Winning:** Low as too soon after 2002 co-hosting.

The fact that Japan co-hosted the World Cup seven years ago with South Korea makes it unlikely that the competition will return there so soon.

The country also bid for the 2016 Olympics, but lost out to Rio De Janeiro. The plans to build a new 120,000 capacity stadium as well as renovate the National Stadium in the capital, Tokyo, were based on a successful Olympic bid.

At present, Japan's biggest venue, the International Stadium in Yokohama, falls 8,000 seats short of Fifa's requirement of 80,000 for the final.

Japanese Football Association president Motoaki Inukai had been quoted as saying: "We will definitely need the success of the 2016 Tokyo Olympics bid. If they don't win it, it will be physically impossible for us to host the World Cup."

That seems to rule out Japan as a contender

## South Korea

**Fifa World Ranking:** 44

**Main Stadium:** Seoul World Cup Stadium, 64,677, (Seoul)

**Last World Cup hosted:** 2002

**Chance of winning:** Low as too soon after co-hosting the event in 2002.

As with Japan, South Korea's co-hosting of the World Cup with Japan in 2002 means that it will be an uphill battle to convince Fifa that they should host it again so soon. However the staging of the 2002 tournament for which they built 10 new stadiums all of which can hold more than 40,000 people, does mean that they have the majority of the facilities they would need.

The Seoul World Cup Stadium holds 65,000 while the Daegu World Cup Stadium, the country's biggest, can accommodate 68,000. Despite the fact neither hold the required 80,000, there should be little problem building another stadium or expanding an existing ground.

It could have been a real contender but for the fact that the Australian bid is probably a stronger bid for Asia Pacific.

**So the battle is between either England or Russia for the right to hold the 2018 tournament and Australia or USA to stage 2022. We will find out on 2 December!**



# World Sports News Roundup

## USA: *Death raises issues over amateur fight management*

The management of mixed martial arts tournaments in the US has been brought into question following the death of an amateur kickboxer in July.

Adrienne Simmons, 34, who practised Muay Thai kickboxing, was taking part in the International Kickboxing Match sponsored by the International Kickboxing Federation in Florida hotel when she was hit with a left hook that knocked her unconscious.

The fight was stopped and a doctor attended. She was taken to a hospital where she was treated for two days before dying.

While the local police ruled that Simmons' death was an accident, the coach of her opponent, Lindsay Scheer, said there was no on-call ambulance for the fight. According to witnesses including her boyfriend, she was lucid during the hour it took for medical assistance to arrive.

Simmons' boyfriend, Chike Ajuda, commented on the delays that may have cost the female kickboxer her life, "There was no paramedics or ambulance on site, which there should be at any fight. This was a huge fight with 200 people - a huge capacity for something to go wrong of this nature," Ajuda told WFTV. "There was no one on site, so it took, from what I understand, 30 minutes before she was placed on gurney and ready for transport... So it was about an hour before she was prepped for surgery."

Simmons had been fighting her third match in two days, ESPN reported.

## Brazil: *FIFA criticises Brazil 2014 plans*

FIFA has criticised Brazil's preparations for the 2014 World Cup with general secretary Jerome Valcke questioning the country's priorities.

'The red light has been switched on for Brazil which is not meeting deadlines. It's incredible how late Brazil is, and I'm talking about all the stadiums. A lot of deadlines have passed and nothing has happened. Brazil is not on the right path,' said Valcke.

Brazil, which hosted the 1950 tournament, was awarded the event unopposed in 2007.

Brazil plans to host the 32-team tournament in 12 different cities, but many are criticising its plans due to an apparent lack of transport options.

## Singapore: *Bid For Youth Olympics*

The IOC reveal that up to 17 countries have expressed an interest in hosting the 2018 Summer Youth Olympic Games.

The United States and countries from Africa have confirmed their interest in hosting the Games.

IOC executive director for the Olympic Games, Gilbert Felli, confirmed discussions have taken place: 'We have had discussions with the USOC (United States Olympic Committee) and some cities in the United States who have the idea for the winter or summer Games.'

IOC President Jacques Rogge stated that the first summer Youth Olympics, held in Singapore this August have been a success: 'We've been very pleased with the organisation, the competition and the non-sport activities.'

The inaugural Winter Youth Olympic Games will be held in Austria, in 2012 with the next Summer Youth Olympics taking place in Nanjing, China in 2014.

## South Africa: *Tri-Nations*

New Zealand sealed the 2010 Tri-Nations title in dramatic fashion after two very late tries set up an enthralling win over South Africa in Johannesburg.

The hosts had led 22-17 up until the 78th minute when All Blacks skipper Richie McCaw scored a controversial try in the corner to level the scores.

Israel Dagg secured the title when he latched on to Ma'a Nonu's pass.

The loss was a bitter blow for South Africa captain John Smit on his 100th Test appearance at the FNB Stadium.

## USA: *Most Expensive Hair in the world on a man!*

Pittsburgh Steelers Pro Bowl safety Troy Polamalu may have just become the man with the most expensive hair in the world. Head & Shoulders has revealed that it has insured Polamalu's massive curls for US\$1 million with Lloyd's of London in an effort to protect the locks of the shampoo brand's new spokesman.

Polamalu has reportedly not trimmed his three-foot long locks in the last eight years and takes some 45 minutes before each game to set it. Polamalu, who is of Samoan descent, said it is important in their culture to take care of one's hair as it "is a sign of power and strength."

## Bahrain: *Grand Prix will revert to original F1 track layout for 2011*

The Bahrain Grand Prix will revert to its original track layout for the 2011 race in March.

The track was lengthened and had a new loop of corners added for the 2010 race which opened the season, but the layout was widely criticised as "boring".

The 2010 race marked the 60th anniversary of Formula One racing.

"It was important for us to celebrate this momentous occasion by doing something very unique and different," the circuit's acting chief executive Sheikh Salman Bin Isa Al Khalifa said.

## Germany: *David Rudisha breaks 800m world record*

Kenya's David Rudisha broke the men's 800m world record in a time of one minute 41.09 seconds at an IAAF World Challenge meeting in Berlin on 22 August.

The previous record of 1:41.11 was set by Denmark's Kenyan-born Wilson Kipketer in Cologne in 1997.

With the help of a pacesetter, Rudisha hit the 400m mark in 48.65sec and he maintained his pace to the finish.

"I feel great but I am also dreaming of becoming the first to run under 1:41," the 21 year old told BBC World Service.

"I have been running fast and I now have the world record but I have not won any major championships yet."

## England: *Host for 2013 Champions Trophy*

The International Cricket Council has confirmed England will be the host of the 2013 Champions Trophy.

The event began as the 'ICC Knockout' in 1998 before changing to a round-robin format in 2002.

Following the criticism of the prolonged 2007 World Cup in the Caribbean, there was a revised Champions Trophy format in 2009 where the top eight nations were divided into two groups of four and the top two from each played in the semi-finals.

The 2009 tournament was held in South Africa and was won by Australia. England has held the competition once before – in 2004 – when the hosts were beaten by West Indies in the final.

## Focus On: XIX Commonwealth Games 3-14 October 2010

With the 19th Commonwealth games only weeks away, Touchline is focusing on this major international sports showcase which will feature many of the world's top athletes. Not without its controversy, the Commonwealth Games will be held in Delhi and will be the largest multi-sport event conducted to date in India and the first time the Games have been held on the Indian sub-continent. The opening ceremony is scheduled to take place at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Delhi.



### History

The Commonwealth Games have been held every four years (except for 1942 and 1946 due to World War II) since they began back in 1930 in Hamilton, Canada.

Often referred to as the 'Friendly Games', only single competition sports were included until the introduction of the team sports of cricket (50 over game), hockey (men and women), netball (women) and rugby 7's (men) at the 1998 Games in Kuala Lumpur. In Delhi, hockey, netball and rugby 7's will again feature.

The 2002 Games in Manchester also saw for the first time at any multi-sport event in the world, a limited number of full medal events for elite athletes with a disability (EAD).

In 2000 the CGF took on the added responsibility of the Commonwealth Youth Games, open to athletes 18 years of age. The 2011 Commonwealth Youth Games will be held in the Isle of Man.

Glasgow (Scotland) has been awarded the right to host the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

### Nations Participating

#### Africa

Botswana, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, The Gambia, Uganda, Zambia.

#### Americas

Belize, Bermuda, Canada, Falkland Islands, Guyana, St. Helena.

#### Asia

Bangladesh, Brunei, India, Malaysia, Maldives, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka,

#### Oceania

Australia, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Norfolk Island, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.

#### Caribbean

Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & The Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, Turks & Caicos Islands.

#### Europe

Cyprus, England, Gibraltar, Guernsey, Isle of Man, Jersey, Malta, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales.

### Past Venues for the Commonwealth Games

2006 Melbourne, Australia

2002 Manchester, England

1998 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

1994 Victoria, Canada

1990 Auckland, New Zealand

1986 Edinburgh, Scotland

1982 Brisbane, Australia

1978 Edmonton, Canada

1974 Christchurch, New Zealand

1970 Edinburgh, Scotland

1966 Kingston, Jamaica

1962 Perth, Australia

1958 Cardiff, Wales

1954 Vancouver, Canada

1950 Auckland, New Zealand

1938 Sydney, Australia

1934 London, England

1930 Hamilton, Canada



## New Delhi Games – Trials and tribulations

With only weeks left to the commencement of the 2010 Commonwealth Games, dark clouds are hovering over the event – in more ways than one. The Games have turned into a major challenge for authorities in the country for various reasons and the recent flooding from monsoonal rains is not helping.

During the last year there have been numerous reports of shoddy workmanship leading to dangerous structures, massive cost overruns and missed completion dates. Many Commonwealth Games venues in New Delhi have yet to be completed and even those that are may not be up to standard. According to an Australian Associated Press (AAP) report, “The Indian government has missed a deadline to certify all Commonwealth Games sporting venues are structurally sound and safe.”

Allegations of corruption have also mired the games preparations forcing Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to order investigations. The cost of the event has risen over 17.5 times from its first budget estimate and the Central Vigilance Commission, the government’s anti-corruption watchdog, has identified 16 projects where financial irregularities are suspected.

There has also been widespread concern over security issues. Hardly a good advert for one of the world’s major sporting events.

And now worried over the spread of dengue fever in Delhi, 24 countries have written to the Commonwealth Games Organising Committee seeking information about the situation and measures being adopted to check the disease ahead of the event. The city has reported over 1,000 cases of dengue this year until now and mosquito breeding has been detected in many Games sites. Officials cited stagnation of water at various Games related construction sites as one of the main reasons for the spread of the disease this year.

However, at least the authorities have moved to improve the air quality in Delhi for the Games by closing the Indraprastha Coal Based Power Plant.

### The Commonwealth Games consists of 17 Sports:

**Aquatics, Archery, Athletics, Badminton, Boxing, Cycling, Gymnastics, Hockey, Lawn Bowls, Netball, Rugby Sevens, Shooting, Squash, Table Tennis, Tennis, Weightlifting, Wrestling.**

### An anachronistic irrelevance?

But it is perhaps more of a concern that some of the top athletes are not attending and major sports figures are openly questioning the continued relevance of the games.

Former Indian cricket captain Bishen Bedi has called on athletes to boycott the Games as a result of the delays and the controversy over corruption which has engulfed organisers and Dawn Fraser recently raised the spectre of a 1972 Munich Olympics-type attack, urging athletes to consider boycotting the Games and questioning their relevance.

Neither seems to have galvanised support for a wholesale boycott by nations but worryingly a number of top athletes will be missing from the event. Olympic champion Sir Chris Hoy, Jessica Ennis, Australia’s “Golden Girl” Stephanie Rice and Usain Bolt, the undisputed star of the Commonwealth, will not be there. The inclusion of tennis on the schedule at this year’s Commonwealth Games hasn’t exactly seen the big names flocking to Delhi to compete, and there is little surprise that Andy Murray, Lleyton Hewitt and Samantha Stosur will be missing tennis’ Commonwealth debut.

Does this signify that there is a growing disinterest by athletes and spectators toward the Commonwealth Games? Are the games perceived to be a second rate event?

Even in India the Games are, apparently, a hard sell. According to AAP, by the end of August only two percent of tickets had been sold – around 50,000 tickets from a total of 2.3 million available. The television networks are trying hard to increase the anticipation and excitement without any appreciable effect.

However, the Games still provide great sporting moments and there are still a large number of top class athletes who will do what is necessary

to get the opportunity to compete for their country at a major sporting event. Despite the many issues, most athletes are looking forward to the event and showing what they can do. And why shouldn’t they be? To represent your country at one of the premier sporting events in the world is a tremendous achievement.

England’s triple jump 2009 world champion, Phillips Idowu said “I’m looking forward to going out and defending my title; it’s great to pull on an England vest...”

Tom Daley, 16, Britain’s diving world champion, will be one of England’s most high-profile participants, in a 45-strong swimming team to compete against the likes of world number two swimming nation Australia, the re-emerging Canadian team and a strong South African squad. And whether it is squash, hockey, gymnastics, boxing or any of the other sports, you can be sure that some of the best athletes and teams in the world will be competing for gold at the Games.

However, the organisers have a duty to the athletes, the Commonwealth Games and to India to make sure that the Games go ahead on schedule, are played out safely in high quality facilities and are feast of sporting triumphs. An unsuccessful Delhi Games will only intensify the relevance debate and could herald the beginning of the end for the Commonwealth Games.



# Sports Shorts

## FIFA.com attracts record visits

FIFA.com attracted over a quarter of a billion visits as the world engaged online with the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa. FIFA, through its web and Twitter feeds, aimed to deliver the World Cup through a digital medium to a wider audience than ever before.

Over 220,000 people followed FIFA's official tweets on Twitter, while the 5million members of the FIFA.com club swapped 120m virtual stickers and made over 1m comments on the website as they debated the main points of the tournament.

Over the course of the tournament's 31 days FIFA.com attracted over 250million visits – approximately 150million unique users, triggering seven billion page views: 410m of those page views were recorded in a single day - when England and the USA played simultaneously and FIFA.com technicians reported a throughput of 1m hits per second at the height of the activity.

FIFA.com had three times more unique users than in 2006 and exceeded forecasts for page impressions by 1.5bn.



## New funding deal agreed for Football League

A new 3 year deal has been agreed between the English Premier League and Football League which will see funding for Football League clubs rise to £372m - or £124m a season.

The parachute payments that are given to clubs relegated from the top flight will rise from £32m over two years to £48m over four years.

The deal distributes some of the income generated by the Premier League to the smaller clubs - £2.2m per Championship club, £335,000 per League 1 club and £225,000 per League 2 club.

Premier League chief Richard Scudamore said the extra revenue would make a 'huge difference' to Football League clubs and that one of the main reasons was to allow clubs to plan for their financial future with a greater degree of certainty.



## Doctor warned over Bloodgate Incident

The doctor at the centre of the rugby "Bloodgate" scandal has been given a warning by the General Medical Council's (GMC) disciplinary panel.

Wendy Chapman cut the lip of Harlequins rugby player Tom Williams to cover up a bogus blood injury and later lied about her role in the event.

The GMC ruled that Dr Chapman's fitness to practise was not impaired, despite her actions. But it said her actions were not in the best interests of her patient. She was suspended by the GMC last September and could have been struck off at the hearing in Manchester.

The incident occurred during the 2009 Heineken Cup quarter-final in which Harlequins were losing 6-5 against Irish side Leinster. Dr Chapman has admitted cutting the lip of Harlequins rugby player Tom Williams. Williams' supposed injury meant a specialist goal kicker could come on to the pitch as a substitute for Harlequins in the dying minutes of the game. However, Leinster held on to win the match.

The GMC panel was told how Williams became "extremely panicked" after he bit into a fake blood capsule and was challenged about the authenticity of his "injury". He then asked Dr Chapman to cut him and she agreed, the panel was told.

The GMC disciplinary panel said the warning would be published on the List of Registered Medical Practitioners (LRMP) for a period of five years.

Williams was initially barred from the game for 12 months, a ban that was reduced to four months after he admitted using the capsule.



## Cyclist Da Ros's ban reduced

Cyclist Gianni Da Ros's 20 year doping ban has been cut to four years after the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) agreed the punishment was excessive.

CAS said that, although Da Ros had used and supplied banned drugs, it had not been established that he had attempted to administer them to another rider.

A four-year ban is in line with the standard suspension provided by the World Anti-Doping Code.

The 23 year old Italian is free to race again from March 2012.

Da Ros was suspended by his Liquigas team after he was arrested on training duty with Italy's national track cycling team in March 2009.

He was one of a number of riders and team staff caught up in an investigation into drug-trafficking by the Milan state prosecutor.

Fellow cyclists Davide Lucato, who admitted buying banned drugs for Da Ros, and Albinio Corazzin were subsequently banned by the Italian National Olympic Committee (Coni) for eight and two years respectively.



## Woman paralysed at Pole dancing class

A woman has been paralysed after performing a routine move during a pole dancing fitness session.

Debbie Plowman, from York, England, was performing a manoeuvre known as cross ankle release when she fell, breaking her neck and severely damaging her spinal cord. The cross ankle release requires the dancer to hang upside down, with ankles crossed and back arched.

Mrs Plowman was upside down just a foot above the ground when she fell on her head and was knocked unconscious.

The mother-of-two is unable to move since the accident nine months ago. She requires a ventilator to help her breathe and can only communicate through a computer that tracks her eye movements.

According to reports, she is expected to remain in hospital in six months and it could take up to three years for doctors to know whether she can regain body movement.





# Sports Shorts

## Six dead in China amusement park accident



### Spurs signs innovative shirt sponsorship deals

Tottenham Hotspur has signed an innovative new shirt sponsorship agreement with Autonomy Corporation PLC that sees the infrastructure software company become the club's shirt sponsor during Premier League games only. The club has also signed a deal under which specialist bank and asset management firm Investec will become its second shirt sponsor for Champions League and domestic cup competitions for the next two years.

The Autonomy deal is worth £20m, and the Investec deal is believed to be worth £5m over two years, although the club has not disclosed the value.

The move to split the shirt sponsorship between league matches and cup competitions is understood to have been the idea of club chairman Daniel Levy. However it remains to be seen how many fans will fork out for both shirts.

The club is also looking for a naming rights sponsor for its proposed new stadium.

Other Premier League clubs will bear new sponsors on their shirts this season with Liverpool agreeing a deal with £80m four-year deal with Standard Chartered and Aon Corporation's deal with Manchester United also beginning.



### Mayor of London unveils £4m sport fund

Mayor of London Boris Johnson has launched a new £4m fund aimed at projects in the capital that use sport to tackle a range of social issues, as well as increasing participation in sport.

The new fund aims to help turn around the lives of local communities through sporting activities as well as aiming to increase participation.

Funding applications are open until 1st October 2010 and will provide winning projects with £50,000 - £250,000 over the next two years.

The first bidding round is open from 23rd August and applies to £2m of the fund.

AT LEAST six people died and 10 were injured in an amusement park accident in the southern Chinese city of Shenzhen.

The China Daily said the accident happened about 4:45 pm local time in the state-run Overseas Chinese Town East amusement park, after the malfunction of a rocket launch simulator that allowed passengers to experience double gravity.

The simulator was divided into 11 cabins, each of which accommodated four people.

Yantian district publicity official Xiao Wenhong confirmed the six deaths and

said five of the 10 injured were in serious condition.

"There was a power cut when the accident happened, and I smelt something burnt. We managed to open the door to escape before firefighters arrived to rescue others," said one patron.

"I heard a bang and then lost consciousness," said another injured rider, commenting from his hospital bed.

The theme park, which covers nine square kilometres, includes attractions such as Swiss-style houses, golf courses, spas and themed hotels.



### "Hurricane" Higgins laid to rest

The funeral of the former world snooker player Alex Higgins has taken place in his home city of Belfast. Past and present stars of the game, including Stephen Hendry, Ken Doherty and Joe Swail joined mourners in St Anne's Cathedral to remember his life.

Hundreds more people gathered outside the cathedral to pay their respects.

The Dean of Belfast, Houston McKelvey, who led the service described him as a person of prodigious talent at his chosen sport. He said the player had encountered two of the greatest temptations possible - fame and fortune, and had found it difficult to cope with both.

The 61 year old died last month after a long battle with throat cancer.

Higgins won the snooker world championship twice, in 1972 and 1982. A controversial figure, he was banned from five tournaments and fined £12,000 in 1986 when he head butted UK Championship tournament director Paul Hatherell.

In 1990 Higgins was banned for the rest of the season after he punched a tournament director at the World Championship. Despite his numerous fights and rows with referees, he continued to play the game regularly and appeared at the Irish Professional Championship in 2005 and 2006.



# FOCUS on Risk Management

In this, our second article on risk management, James McIntyre, Senior Associate at DLA Phillips Fox in Brisbane, Australia, follows up on the last edition of Touchline by reviewing Australian case law for decisions relating to playing surfaces. The lessons learned should be heeded by all sports clubs and associations around the world.

## Letting players keep their eyes on the ball (instead of the pitch)

With the change of season, clubs and players will be looking back on the past football season while others start preparing for the cricket season. Tony Greig will be probing the Melbourne Cricket Ground's deck with his car keys highlighting the perils for tailenders in the fourth innings. However, there are a multitude of other perils on sporting arenas to be mindful of in good risk management.

In *Bartels v Bankstown City Council*<sup>1</sup> the New South Wales Court of Appeal noted that soccer was fast moving and highly competitive, requiring split second decisions and was not a game which gave players any great opportunity to watch their footing as they move about the field. These comments are applicable to almost any field sport and it is useful to have an overview of the approaches adopted by the courts and identify strategies that

Soccer: "...not a game which [gives] players any great opportunity to watch their footing..."

ground owners and clubs can adopt to allow players to keep their eyes on the game rather than the playing surface.

## Can a player consent to the risk of injury arising from the state of the pitch?

In *Hadland v the Council of the City of Blacktown*<sup>2</sup> the New South Wales Court of Appeal considered whether an amateur cricketer who suffered an injury to his nose while playing in a district competition had voluntarily accepted the risk of injury arising from playing on the pitch.

The Court was satisfied that the Council had been negligent by failing to respond to complaints regarding the state of the pitch from the plaintiff's cricket club.

The Court rejected the Council's argument that the plaintiff had voluntarily accepted the risk of injury. Although the plaintiff had sufficient knowledge and appreciation of the risk of injury, as captain of the team, he was aware that the rest of the team wished to play and was concerned that the match may have been forfeited if he declined to play. Consequently, the plaintiff was under 'moral pressure' to play and this could not be regarded as a voluntary acceptance of risk. The decision illustrates the difficulty in raising a defence of voluntary acceptance of risk, particularly in team sports where an individual's desire to ensure their own safety might be overborne by a desire not to let down teammates.

The decision in *Hadland* involved an abnormal risk arising from a defect in a pitch and can be contrasted with the High Court's

decision in *Woods v Multisport Holdings Pty Ltd*<sup>3</sup> which relates to the inherent risks of a particular sport.

In *Woods*, the plaintiff suffered a serious eye injury while playing indoor cricket. He alleged that the venue failed to provide any signs warning of the risk of serious eye injury or to provide him with proper eye protection while playing indoor cricket.

The High Court upheld the trial judge's findings that it was not reasonable to expect the venue to provide protective equipment when the rules of the sport did not provide for the use of such equipment, no protective equipment had been designed for the game and the use of protective helmets may have created its own risk of injury in the event of collisions between players. Similarly, the High Court found that the failure to provide a warning was not negligent as the risk of a player being struck in the face by a ball was so obvious a warning was not reasonably required.

## Proper systems of inspection are the starting point for protection

The *Bartels* case and *Abazovic v Australian Capital Territory*<sup>4</sup> both involved claims by players who fell into depressions on the playing field. In both cases, the relevant local authority was able to provide evidence of formal systems of inspection that satisfied its duty to take reasonable care to ensure the safety of players using

the fields. In particular, in *Bartels*, the New South Wales Court of Appeal noted that, in view of the financial constraints upon local authorities, it would not be reasonable to expect local authorities to keep all playing surfaces to the quality of the Sydney Football Stadium, Sydney Cricket Ground or an Olympic stadium. The Court observed that the best that the local authority could do was to implement a system which was likely to result in holes being found and the fact that some holes might escape attention did not of itself mean the system had not been followed or was deficient.

In *Bartels*, the Court of Appeal also considered whether the clubs involved in the match were liable but found that the clubs had acted reasonably in relying upon the Council's system of inspection and the pre-match inspections carried out by referees.

However, as seen in *Williams v Latrobe Council*<sup>5</sup>, the presence of a system of inspections is not a silver bullet which will provide local authorities or clubs

with a guaranteed defence against liability claims arising from the state of the pitch. In *Williams*, the plaintiff suffered a left ankle injury when his left foot landed on a cover placed over an irrigation tap pit which was not set flush with the surface of the surrounding ground. The local authority which leased the ground required the club to complete a facility inspection sheet at least 24 hours before the ground was used and the Northern Tasmanian



1 [1999] NSWCA 129  
2 [1997] NSWCA 133.

3 [2002] HCA 9.  
4 [2003] ACTSC 15  
5 [2007] TASSC 2.



Football League required clubs to complete a match day checklist prior to the start of the first match of the day. The checklist was to be signed by a representative of each competing club. The facility inspection sheet included questions as to whether the oval's surface was fit for its purpose and whether water tap holes were covered.

Although members of the Latrobe club conducted the inspections required by the Council and the Football League, the Court found these inspections were not sufficiently rigorous to reveal whether the cover was level with the surrounding soil.

The East Devonport club (the opposing team) was also found liable as it had not inspected the ground, despite the League's requirement that representatives of both teams check the pitch. The judge held that a reasonable club would have conducted the inspection required under the match day checklist and would have detected the height difference that caused the injury.

The Court also found that the local authority had breached its duty of care by failing to adopt the procedure it had implemented at other grounds under its control. This procedure involved removing the irrigation tap covers during the football season (as they were not used during the season), filling in the hole with soil, levelling it sowing grass upon it.

### Training for coaches and officials

The Queensland Court of Appeal decision in *Lanyon v Noosa's District Junior Rugby League Football Club*<sup>6</sup> illustrates how a system of inspections, combined with training for officials and coaches can provide protection against liability for injuries arising due to an uneven playing surface. In that case, the plaintiff had been coaching a junior rugby league team when he stepped into a depression and injured his left ankle. Club officials had inspected the ground two days before the accident to check that it was in a fit state for that night's training and they did not find the hole in which the plaintiff fell.

The plaintiff had received training in player safety, including the need to see that the playing area was safe for training by conducting an inspection of the ground. The plaintiff conceded that he had not carried out any 'particular inspection' of the ground on the night of the accident.

The Court concluded that the club's system of requiring coaches to be accredited through a process which involved instruction in player safety, including the need to inspect the ground was an adequate response to the risk of a hole in the playing surface endangering the users. The fact that the hole escaped attention

<sup>6</sup> [2002] QCA 163.

did not of itself mean that the system in place was not followed or was deficient.

The Court also noted that it would be unreasonable to expect a volunteer organisation like the defendant to have the ground free of all unevenness and to produce a surface of the kind suitable for lawn bowls or croquet. Accordingly, the Court dismissed the plaintiff's claim and concluded that the defendant was entitled to rely on the requirement that coaches inspect the grounds prior to and on the day of the accident.

### The scoreboard – lessons learned

The following key points emerge from these decisions:

- 1 The defence of voluntary assumption of risk may protect against inherent risks but will not assist against a defective playing surface where the club or ground owner was or should have been aware of the defect. Clubs and ground owners will also need to demonstrate that the injured player fully understood the risk and voluntarily accepted the risk and did not feel pressured to play to avoid disappointing teammates.
- 2 Owners and managers of sportsgrounds need to consider whether the change in sporting seasons and hence sports played brings about a change in the risks arising from the use of the ground which requires them to modify the ground, e.g. by covering irrigation holes (*Williams v Latrobe Football Club*).
- 3 A system of regular inspections by the owner and users of the ground is only the starting point for management of risks arising from the ground.
- 4 Clubs need to ensure that the playing surface is inspected at regular and short intervals and before every training session or match.
- 5 The inspections need to be thorough rather than superficial (*Williams v Latrobe Football Club*) and documented.
- 6 Sporting clubs should educate officials and coaches (e.g. through the accreditation process discussed in *Lanyon*) in the need to check that playing areas are safe for training and matches and the conduct of pre-training and pre-match inspections.
- 7 When a defect is found, steps must be taken to bring the surface back to reasonably safe playing condition. This will always be a subjective test but as long as sensible efforts are made at the time, the courts are likely to look favourably upon this.



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Good luck to all the athletes competing  
in the 2010 Commonwealth Games

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