

ROUTLEDGE FOCUS

# INTERNATIONAL SPORTS BETTING

Integrity, Deviance, Governance and Policy

Edited by  
Jean-Patrick Villeneuve and  
Martial Pasquier



# International Sports Betting

Sports betting has become a truly global phenomenon, facilitated by new communication technologies. As a result, the development of deviances, from match-fixing to money laundering, has accelerated. This new reality has numerous implications, for both the regulation of this billion-dollar industry and the very integrity of sport, sport financing and betting operations.

Written by an international team of academic researchers and industry professionals, *International Sports Betting* explores the central concepts of integrity and deviance, governance and policy, as well as perennial issues linked to the gambling sector, such as regulatory responsibilities and the fight against gambling addiction. Unlike other treatments of the gambling industry, the book offers a multi-disciplinary sociological and managerial critique that goes beyond a traditional focus on law and regulation.

This is fascinating reading for any student, researcher or practitioner working in the areas of sport business, international business, international regulation, policy studies or gambling studies.

**Jean-Patrick Villeneuve** is Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Communication Sciences, Associate Professor and Director of the Institute for Public Communication at the Università della Svizzera italiana, Switzerland. He also has appointments in Canada (ENAP), France (University of Pau) and China (UIBE). He currently sits on the Independent Expert Panel of the Open Government Partnership.

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and Policy**

**Edited by Jean-Patrick Villeneuve  
and Martial Pasquier**



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# Introduction

## Sports betting: a series of transversal challenges

*Jean-Patrick Villeneuve and Martial Pasquier*

Gambling is historically linked to divination: the desire to know and anticipate future events. The possibilities to gamble have since greatly evolved; from the relatively simple game of dice played by Roman soldiers to the current online sports betting offer. That said, the fundamental logic is unchanged: the desire to wager on the occurrence or not of a future event.

This particular activity has a transversal role in society: it is an economic sector, a popular form of entertainment, a source of financial revenue for states and much more. It is when coupled with another important social activity, sport, that gambling takes on its most diverse, complex and involved nature.

This short collection of contributions presents some of these transversal logics of sport betting. Each of the chapters addresses specific and central questions. Jean-François Savard approaches the topic from a regulatory perspective, examining the way in which territories limit and control the possibilities to gamble. Lea Meyer traces the finality and objectives of the organisations allowed to operate under the given regulation of a territory or state. Dawn Aquilina discusses the issue of sport deviances, specifically the development of match-fixing schemes to ensure specific outcomes and therefore guarantee a winning bet. Jack Anderson looks at the use of revenues derived from betting schemes by organised crime. Finally, Linda Hancock considers the addictive nature of gambling, notably for young players in the context of slack regulation of sports betting advertising.

The framework that limits and controls the provision of gambling services in a specific context can take several forms. While few national regulations ban gambling outright (Pakistan, for example), none gives it a completely free hand. Most jurisdictions, depending on their history, culture, society and institutional construct, find different arbitrages



to allow some aspects of gambling, while banning others. The ‘*maître d’oeuvre*’ of this regulation is in some instances local while in other jurisdictions national. At times regulations cover all forms of gambling and in others differentiates among them.

In Chapter 1, Jean-François Savard takes Canada as an example of the development of regulatory frameworks. He positions the importance of the political form, federalism, and its impact on the regulation of sports betting. He identifies different models of regulation used in the Canadian context, differentiating between ‘joint venture’ approaches, where private contractors operate, ‘charitable’ approaches, where charitable and religious organisations are active and ‘government ownership and controls’, where public corporations are the main actors. With the multiplication of regulatory models within the same country, Savard poses the question of regulatory fragmentation and its consequences, notably the coherence of the Canadian model. This contribution provides a grid to better understand and analyse the various options to the necessary regulation of sports betting.

In Chapter 2, Lea Meyer addresses a related issue to that of regulation: the way in which sport-betting providers define their role and objectives in a given regulatory environment. While private sector organisations strive for profit in a marketplace of products and services, public institutions have had to provide broader and more multiverse definitions of their objectives. That central question of the nature of organisations, is posed in the decidedly mixed environment of sports betting where organisations, public or private, will offer products that are not only similar but in many instances exactly the same, i.e. the offer of a bet on a specific game. Far from focusing exclusively on financial returns, Meyer posits that six elements, ranging from stakeholder dimensions to social issues and public values, are essential for defining the performance of sports betting providers. She posits that responsible gaming is, and must be, central. She addresses these categories by looking at the cases of the Belgian and Norwegian lotteries. These underline why regulation is essential in the field of sports betting, linking it to Savard’s contribution, but also presenting some of the key deviances a broader definition of performance must necessarily address.

Dawn Aquilina, in Chapter 3, looks at one such deviance, the fixing of sport matches, i.e. the act of ‘illegally influencing the course or the result of a sporting competition in order to obtain an advantage for oneself or for others’ (Brasseur, 2012: 6). Her chapter considers the causes and consequences of match-fixing from the point of view of sport itself. By looking at two highly mediatised and betting-intensive sports, tennis and snooker, she brings into focus several elements that

enable deviances to emerge in the first place. Match-fixing jeopardises first and foremost the integrity of sport: the fact that the outcome of any sport event can be known in advance defeats the very purpose of it taking place. This insidious development touches upon the very heart of what sport is in modern society: entertainment and business, but also a social symbol, a way of connecting increasingly diverse societies and territories. It is for that reason that match-fixing has been labelled one of the most serious and insidious threats to sport. Reporting and prosecuting have been the main approaches used to address this challenge. But, as Aquilina underlines, educating players and other stakeholders in sport is a precondition for restoring trust and faith in sports as an essential social activity.

The development of match-fixing would not have taken its current dimension if it were not for the active involvement of criminal organisations. In Chapter 4, Jack Anderson addresses the use of sports betting by criminal organisations to launder the benefits of crime. Starting by defining what exactly is meant by money-laundering, the chapter then presents the now long-standing interest organised crime has in gambling, notably through the analysis of the 1950s US Senate Special Committee to Investigate Organised Crime in Interstate Commerce, better known as the Kefauver Committee. Moving from the political realm to the sport realm, the 2009 report on money-laundering through football, published by the multilateral Financial Action Task Force is analysed to identify the vulnerabilities of sport in this sector as well as the almost seamless integration of criminal logics within sports betting. Anderson's analysis comes to a clear conclusion: the challenges raised by the money-laundering of the benefits of sports betting activities and the corollary match-fixing deviances, cannot be solved by sport alone. He presents three key recommendations to enable sport to more effectively address the issue in collaboration with other stakeholders.

The last, and for many the essential problem related to sports betting, is the addictive nature of the activity and the ensuing development of problem gambling; especially with the development of new online technologies that facilitate remote betting. In Chapter 5, Linda Hancock addresses the protection of young players in the Australian context of controversies over sports betting advertising during broadcast sporting events. The protection of players from the potentially addictive nature of gambling has been integrated in all regulatory frameworks. The digitisation of sports betting offers have made betting possibilities more numerous and flexible, offering gambling opportunities 24 hours per day and from any location imaginable. The challenge of protecting players, especially minors,

is heightened in such an environment. Hancock analyses the sports betting advertisement reforms implemented in Australia through the use of a corporate political activity framework. The case study shows that the current environment, with the multiplication of advertising forms and platforms, is ‘messy and difficult to regulate’ and the ‘enforcement is complex and untested’. The compromises reached in the Australian case for the advertisement of sport-betting offers, points to the underlying transversal nature of sports betting. The issue of player protection had to be negotiated with other actors and by taking into account other dynamics, more financial and economic than social. The example illustrates the ongoing power of vested financial and political interests over public interest concerns about the creeping expansion and promotion of new forms of gambling and the potentially damaging impact on young people.

# 1 **Canada's regulatory framework for sports betting**

## **A fragmented reality**

*Jean-François Savard*

A century ago, most forms of gambling were unlawful in Canada, and considered vices (Campbell & Smith, 1998). But the regulatory framework has greatly evolved since 1892, when the Criminal Code first declared a complete ban on gambling activities (Azmier, Jepson & Patton, 1999). Over the years, periodic amendments were made to the Criminal Code that slowly eroded this blanket ban. Minor adjustments between 1892 and 1969 facilitated the gradual expansion of gambling activities (Campbell & Smith, 1998): charitable gambling was permitted in 1900, pari-mutuel betting on horse racing in 1910, and gambling events at agricultural fairs and exhibitions in 1925 (Azmier et al., 1999). In 1969, the Criminal Code was substantially amended to allow federal and provincial governments to enter the field of gambling (Azmier et al., 1999). Provincial governments established their own activities, which considerably altered the gambling landscape. At the same time, the federal government created Lotto Canada and the Sports Pool Corporation – primarily to fund the upcoming Summer Olympics, held in Montreal in 1976 (Osborne & Campbell, 1988).

But in 1979, facing strong opposition from the provincial governments, the conservative federal government agreed to cease Lotto Canada activities; and it formally transferred all such powers to provincial legislatures. This agreement took several years to be enforced: it was rejected in 1980 by the newly elected liberal government. Only in 1985, when a conservative government was again in power, was the arrangement formalised (Osborne & Campbell, 1988). According to Osborne and Campbell, Parliament 'divested the federal government of any capacity to conduct lotteries', leaving the provinces with 'sole jurisdiction over lotteries and other specific gaming operations' (Osborne & Campbell, 1988: p. 24). In exchange for the federal government relinquishing its responsibilities for gaming regulations, operations and