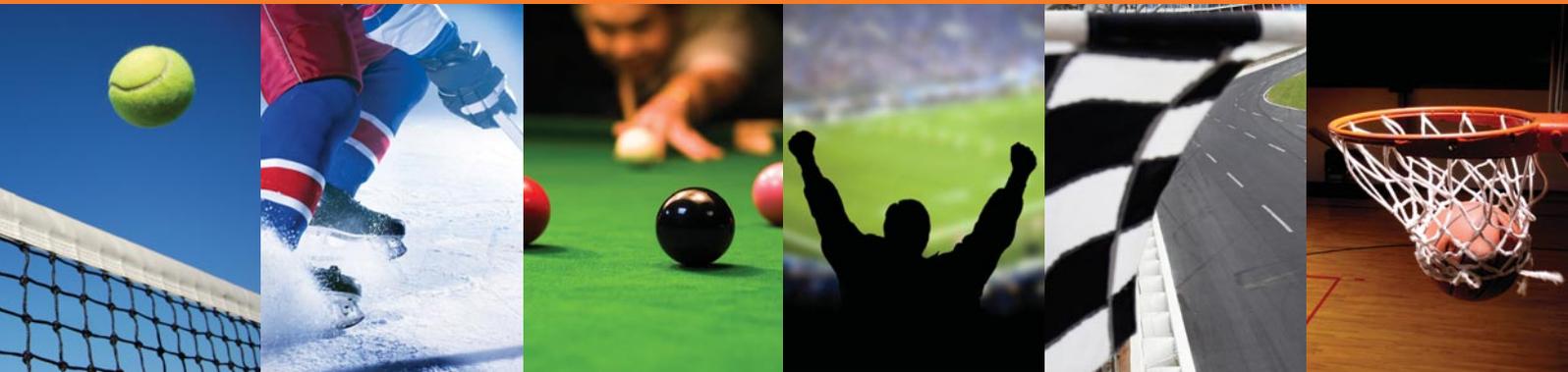


# IN-PLAY BETTING AND SPORT INTEGRITY POSITION PAPER



## INTRODUCTION

1. In-play betting, also known as in-running betting, involves the placing of bets on a particular outcome during the course of a contest. These bets can relate to a final score or a host of other outcomes, for example the number of goals/points scored, the next goal or point scorer, the number of technical infringements etc.

## IN-PLAY BETTING TODAY

2. In-play betting, which can be offered on all sports, is incredibly popular with today's consumer, currently being the most popular form of online gambling accounting for over half of all online sports gambling revenues.
3. This popularity can be explained predominantly because modern consumers are familiar with real time transactions and expect nothing less from their sports gambling providers. Indeed, today's fans see in-play betting as a way of getting more closely involved with their sport than is possible with traditional pre-match betting.
4. In-play betting benefits sports financially through the sale of sponsorship and streaming rights, which in turn helps them find new audiences and potential funding.

## IN-PLAY BETTING AND INTEGRITY

5. A range of technical and practical measures are employed by bookmakers to ensure that outcomes of in-play betting on sporting events have not been manipulated.

These include:

- a) **Identification and Scrutiny:** Licensed, regulated bookmakers invest heavily in know-your-customer technology and other security and fraud prevention software. When customers bet online, they leave an indelible "digital fingerprint" containing their identification verification, deposit and payment details as well as time-stamped details of all their betting activity.
- b) **Fraud Prevention:** Licensed and regulated bookmakers employ highly skilled personnel and systems to identify, track and trace any attempts to manipulate results. Apart from their license conditions and the regulatory requirements, it is clearly in the bookmaker's own commercial interests to do this.
- c) **Sharing information and reporting:** As with pre-match bets, in-play bets are fully documented and all betting activities can be traced, monitored and proven. Once an operator becomes aware of suspicious betting patterns, this information is shared, via ESSA – an integrity monitoring system – with other leading bookmakers. Coordinated by ESSA, each suspicious incident is then investigated and then, if necessary, passed on to the relevant sporting and law & order authorities for further investigation and, ultimately, prosecution. ESSA has relationships in place with a large number of leading sports governing bodies including FIFA, UEFA and the IOC.



6. By investing in the right technology and professional skills, bookmakers are therefore able to satisfy consumer demand and preserve an online gaming environment that protects sporting integrity. This fact has been recognised by the UK Gambling Commission, which in a March 2009 position paper found that, *“On the information currently available, the Commission does not consider that in-running [in-play] betting requires special regulatory treatment.”*<sup>1</sup>

### THE IMPACT OF IN-PLAY BETTING ON SPORT

7. Modern sport and betting enjoy a symbiotic relationship, where betting companies are able to benefit from gambling revenues and in return, sports benefit in direct financial terms through sponsorship and other channels and also indirectly, from the increased exposure.
8. This is true of all sports, from small sports to popular global sports such as football. For example, in order to enhance the appeal of their in-play betting offer, some operators acquire the streaming rights to the corresponding sporting events, allowing them to broadcast these events on their sites. This substantially contributes to the promotion of the underlying competitions and to the development of the underlying sport, not to mention presenting a direct cash injection where otherwise sports may have had to pay broadcasting partners to carry events live.

### SENSIBLE AND EFFECTIVE REGULATION

9. In-play betting is internationally established and is expected by today’s customers. There are, however, detractors of in-play betting who believe that it should be prohibited to protect sports. This belief usually results from a lack of technical understanding regarding the capabilities of modern fraud prevention systems because, as has been shown, in-play betting is no more vulnerable to fraudulent influence than pre-match betting as all fraud protections measures are equally efficient in real-time as in pre-match betting.

10. Given that in-play betting is very popular with the customers, one risk associated with any prohibition or restriction of it applying to operators based in regulated jurisdictions is the fact that it could prompt consumers to use unlicensed sites to get what they want.

11. ESSA welcomes efforts by public authorities on both the European and national levels to work to reduce the risk and impact of match fixing and corruption in sport. In this way, ESSA and its members are in regular contact with sports governing bodies and regulators, EU institutions and other international or national level stakeholders to ensure that every effort is undertaken to satisfy huge consumer demand and act as an effective counterweight to unregulated bookmakers.

12. The worlds of bookmaking and sport are completely aligned when it comes to defeating match fixers as both stand to lose out in the short and long term if the public loses faith in the fair outcome of contests. In order to prevent this outcome occurring, ESSA calls for regulation that will:

- a) Create an environment where only those operators with the highest technical standards of anti-fraud security are allowed to offer services.
- b) Ensure the correct framework exists not only to ensure that all incidents and suspicious patterns are communicated immediately and efficiently to all stakeholders but that sport governing bodies and other authorities act accordingly in the event that such information is passed to them.

13. With these safeguards in place, ESSA believes it is possible to create a model for sustainable development of sports, serving the interests of sports fans and sport itself.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Khalid Ali, Secretary General  
European Sports Security Association  
ka@eu-ssa.org  
[www.eu-ssa.org](http://www.eu-ssa.org)

1 <http://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/pdf/In-running%20betting%20position%20paper%20-%20March%202009.pdf>

