

UK LAWYERS FOR ISRAEL



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By email: a.hines-randle@bwfbadminton.org

23 September, 2018

Dear Mr Hines Randle,

Re: FZ FORZA Junior International 2018

UK Lawyers for Israel is an association of lawyers combatting anti-Israel and antisemitic activity.

We are writing following the above Badminton World Federation Event, which took place on 1-4 August 2018 in Dnipro, Ukraine.

In a doubles match at this event, Saudi Arabian players, who were drawn against an Israeli player and a Ukrainian player, refused to play or engage in any way with their opponents.

As you may be aware, the problem of discrimination against Israeli players has become an important issue in world sport, with the following events raising concerns at the highest levels:

- October 2017 Judo Grand Slam Abu Dhabi - Israeli athletes forced to compete without a flag, anthem or nation
- December 2017 International Chess Federation (FIDE) championship in Saudi Arabia - Israeli players barred from entering the country
- April 2018 Taekwondo World Junior Championships, Tunisia - Four Israeli athletes prevented from competing

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In July 2018, following these breaches of international sports law, regulations and ethics, and following representations from organisations including ourselves, the International Judo Federation announced the suspension of further tournaments in Abu Dhabi and Tunis until government guarantees are given to ensure free and equal participation of all nations.

This is the backdrop to the unpleasant events in Dnipro.

The International Olympic Committee is taking a keen interest in these developments and we have been in correspondence with IOC Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer, Pâquerette Girard-Zappelli, about the situation.

Given that Badminton is an Olympic Sport and is therefore bound, at all levels, to follow the Olympic Code, our need to refer this matter to the IOC will depend on whether there is a satisfactory outcome to this correspondence.

The Dnipro incident

Max Grinblatt, an Israeli player, and his Ukrainian doubles partner were due to play two players from Saudi Arabia in the semi-final on 3 August 2018 at the BWF sanctioned Forza Junior International in Dnipro, Ukraine.

The Saudi Players arrived on court, in their kit and ready to play, and took part in the coin toss; the match was therefore in progress.

At this point the Saudi players refused to shake hands with their opponents and walked off court. This was all captured on video, a copy of which was given to the Saudi media. That video can be viewed here -

<http://observers.france24.com/en/20180808-saudi-badminton-players-handshake-israeli>

It has been suggested that the maker of the video was the Saudi team coach. There is no sign of any coaching or team staff on court. As a result the match was forfeited to the Ukrainian-Israeli pair.

This action breached numerous rules and regulations of Badminton, as listed below and particularised in the attached schedules.

Players

The Saudi Arabian Players breached the following rules of Badminton, as set out in detail in Appendix A:

Players Code of Conduct	
Code of Ethics	3
Withdrawal	4.1.1
Model Competitor	4.2
Conduct	4.2.3
Best efforts	4.2.6, 4.2.7, 4.2.17
Integrity	4.7.1

Code Of Conduct In Relation To Betting, Wagering And Irregular Match Results	
Failure to Complete/ Use Best Efforts	3.1.1, 3.1.2

Coach and/or other officials

The Coach of the Saudi players and/or other officials of their team appear to have breached the following rules of Badminton, as set out in detail in Appendix B:

Coaches and Educators Code of Conduct	
Code of Ethics	3
Team Manager	4.4
Role model	4.14
Code of Conduct in Relation to Betting, Wagering and Irregular Match Returns	4.24
Conduct Contrary to the Integrity of the Sport	4.26.1

Code Of Conduct In Relation To Betting, Wagering And Irregular Match Results	
Best Efforts	3.1.8
Contriving outcome	3.1.17
Reporting	3.1.24

Member

The players, coach and team officials responsible for these breaches were there under the auspices of their Member Federation, the Saudi Badminton Committee (SBC).

Under the Junior Tournament Regulations, the Member Federation (SBC) is responsible for all the breaches by players and team staff set out in Appendices A, B and C. The relevant regulations are:

JUNIOR TOURNAMENT REGULATIONS	
Members' Responsibilities for Tournaments and Players	1.4, 1.4.5, 1.5, 1.5.1

As a result, the SBC appears to be liable for the following breaches:

Player's Code of Conduct	
Code of Ethics	3
Withdrawal	4.1.1
Model Competitor	4.2
Conduct	4.2.3
Best efforts	4.2.6, 4.2.7, 4.2.17
Integrity	4.7.1

Code of Conduct in relation to Betting, Wagering and Irregular Match Results	
Failure to Complete/ Use Best Efforts	3.1.1, 3.1.2
Best Efforts	3.1.8
Contriving outcome	3.1.17
Reporting	3.1.24

Coaches and Educators Code of Conduct	
Code of Ethics	3
Specific Provisions for Conduct	4.4
Role model	4.14
Code of Conduct in Relation to Betting, Wagering and Irregular Match Returns	4.24
Conduct Contrary to the Integrity of the Sport	4.26.1

In summary, the SBC appears to be responsible for breaches of at least 18 provisions of the BWF rules.

Under clause 4.1 of the BWF Judicial Procedures¹ you may initiate an investigation or a disciplinary process based on information received on allegations of a breach of BWF Statutes.

This letter and the accompanying schedules identify numerous apparent breaches of BWF Statutes and we respectfully ask that they be fully investigated.

In the light of this please clarify:

¹ http://system.bwf.website/documents/folder_1_81/Statutes/CHAPTER-3---JUDICIAL-PROCESSES/Section%203.1%20-%20Judicial%20Procedures%20-%2022052018.pdf

- Were you already aware of this incident?
- Has an investigation or disciplinary process been initiated?
- If yes, has it been completed and has the outcome been announced? Has there been any action taken against the Saudi players, coach or SBC?
- If not, can you assure us that an investigation and disciplinary process will be commenced? Please inform us of the nature and timescale of any planned investigation and/or disciplinary process.

Since you are a member of the Olympic family and the IOC has taken an interest in ending discrimination of this sort we will await your response before communicating further with the IOC.

Yours sincerely,



Jonathan Turner
Chief Executive