



# REGULATORY AND PROCEDURAL UPDATES IN SPORTS

DECEMBER 2020

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# FOOTBALL





## 1. The FIFA Council Approves New Reforms



In December 2020, the FIFA Council passed a number of remarkable landmark reforms, which include:

**I.** The approval of new rules to protect female players, as well as a regulation for coaches. The rules for female players establish a new global minimum standard – specifically relating to maternity. Similarly, better conditions have been put in place to protect coaches through the new regulation, owing to how important they are to the game. The new rules for female players and regulations for coaches (which have just been approved), were well reported in the [November edition](#) of our newsletter.

**II.** Approval of a number of amendments to the international match calendars, which include:

### **For Men's Football:**

a. Extending the CONCACAF international match windows by a day, in respect of the September 2021, October 2021, January 2022, and March 2022 calendars. This is to acco-



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-mmodate three matches to be played during each of those windows, rather than two matches.

b. Extending the UEFA international match windows for the March 2021 and September 2021 calendars, which is likewise to accommodate three matches to be played during each of the windows, rather than two.

It is important for club administrators in particular to note the extended windows above, in order not to wrongly sanction their players who return back to their respective clubs, a day later than usual.

### **For Women's Football:**

a. In respect of all confederations apart from UEFA, the blocked period for the final competitions of the confederations' championships originally fixed for 31 October – 20 November 2020, has been moved to January 17 – February 20, 2022.

b. In respect of all confederations, the original blocked period of July 4 – August 7, 2020 is moved to June 27 – July 31, 2022.

c. In respect of all confederations, the Type 1 window which was originally scheduled for June 13 to June 21, 2022, is moved by one week to June 20 to June 28, 2022. The rationale behind this is to have the Type 1 window coincide with the earliest possible start of the release period for the blocked period for confederations' final tournaments (i.e. June 27 – July 31).

d. An inclusion of new dates for the UEFA Women's EURO 2022, being July 6 - July 31 2022 date.

**III.** Approval that the exception contained in Article 19 (2) of the RSTP be extended to member associations that belong to the same territory of a country. As such, the transfer of minor players aged between 16 and 18 who move from one member association of FIFA to another will be allowed, as long as the two member associations belong to the same territory of a country.

The FIFA Council approved this amendment in light of the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union and the fact that the UK has four different member associations within the territory. This is to avoid situations where minors would not be able to complete a football transfer within the same state.





# ATHLETICS





## 1. Amendment to 'Development Shoe' Rules in International Competitions



On December 4, 2020, new changes governing development prototype shoes were approved by the World Athletics, after requests by major shoe manufacturers and the representatives of the World Federation of Sports Good Industry (WFSGI).

According to World Athletics, "Development shoe" means a shoe (i.e. spike or road shoes) which has never been available for purchase but which a sports manufacturer is developing to bring to market and would like to conduct tests with their sponsored athletes (who agree to test the shoe) on issues such as safety and performance before the shoe is available for purchase.

Such 'Development shoes' are allowed to be worn for a 12-month period in international competitions, as well as in competitions sanctioned by Member Federations where rules of the World Athletics will apply. It is important to note that the development shoes must still have met the same technical specifications just like other approved shoes before they can be used. However, in competitions where World Athletics Competition and Technical Rules are not applicable, 'development shoes' may continue to be worn without restrictions.

For more details, particularly on the conditions for the use of 'development shoes', [click here](#)





# TENNIS



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## 1. WTA Publishes Rules on Gender Participation Policy



The World Tennis Association (WTA) has published a set of rules which pertain to Gender Participation Policy.

The primary purpose of the policy is to address the eligibility of entry into and participation in WTA Tournaments, based on a player's gender and identification as a woman. The criteria stated in the policy are intended to provide players with the ability to compete on a level playing field in a safe, competitive, and friendly environment that is inclusive, fair, and free of discrimination.

The Policy can be accessed [here](#):







# ANTI-DOPING



## 1. The World Athletics Council Amends Competition Rules



The World Athletics Council on December 2, 2020, approved new amendments to Rules 31.3.5 and 31.14.4 of the World Athletics Competition Rules, which came into force on December 17, 2020.

The amendment requires that an athlete who sets a world record must submit to a doping control immediately after the event ends. Also, the performance of the athlete will not be ratified upon the occurrence of any of the following:

- I. If a doping control is not conducted; or
- II. If the doping control has not been conducted in accordance with the Competition Rules or Anti-Doping Rules; or
- III. If the doping control sample is not suitable for analysis, or has not been analyzed for events of 400 metres and above; or
- IV. If the doping control results in an anti-doping rule violation.

It is worthy to note that in the case of a relay event where a world record was achieved, each member of the relay team will be subjected to the above test. Also, where an athlete admits that he/she had used or taken advantage of a prohibited substance or technique prior to achieving the world record, such a world record will cease to be recognized pending the advice of the Athletics Integrity Unit.





## Meaning of Abbreviations

- CONCACAF- Confederation of North, Central America and Caribbean Association Football
- UEFA- Union of European Football Associations
- FIFA- Fédération Internationale de Football Association
- NBA- National Basketball Association
- WFSGI- World Federation of Sports Good Industry
- WTA- World Tennis Association
- RSTP - Regulations on the Status & Transfer of Players





# ABOUT SPORTLICITORS

We are a law firm specialized in sports law practice, covering a variety of areas such as sport governance & regulation; sports contracts; sports dispute resolution; intellectual property rights in sports; sports marketing & sponsorship; sports immigration services, amongst others.


Our firm is one of the foremost fully-specialized sports law firms in Africa. It was established based on the understanding that the African sports industry needs expert lawyers who are fully-devoted to helping sports stakeholders exploit the opportunities, and negotiate the challenges of an ever-changing sports industry.


Over time, we have provided legal services in respect of:


- Sports disciplinary matters;
- Formation of sport leagues/clubs;
- Dispute Resolution before local/international sports tribunals, and civil courts; such as matters of 'overdue payables', 'training compensation', 'solidarity contribution', tort in sport, etc;
- Advice on player management and transfers;
- Club management, employment contracts and commercial contracts, etc.

Our track record includes provision of legal services to clients such as: Fédération Internationale des Associations de Footballeurs Professionnel (FIFPRO), Myron Topclass Sport Outfit, Discovery Sport, Oghenekaro Etebo (Stoke City FC, England), Godbless Asamoah (Rivers United FC, Nigeria), Adama Coulibaly (Warri Wolves FC, Nigeria), Adeola Aminu & Chima Nwosu (Sunshine Queens FC, Nigeria), Gbagada FC (Nigeria), Geedeede FC (Nigeria), Ahmed Kone & Bobbie Ansah (Sunshine Stars FC), among others.

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