

**In the Matter of a Notice of Major Offense of Alleged Corruption Offenses under the
TENNIS ANTI-CORRUPTION PROGRAM**

Joshua Muhire
(hereinafter “Muhire” or the “Covered Person”)

- and -

International Tennis Integrity Agency
(hereinafter the “ITIA”)

Representing the Covered Person: Self- Represented

Representing the ITIA: Alistair McHenry, TYR
Rebecca Dodds, TYR

Anti-Corruption Hearing Officer,
Tennis Anti-Corruption Program Diana Tesic
(hereinafter “AHO”)

DISPOSITON SUMMARY

The orders found at the end of this Decision are repeated here for the convenience of the reader.

ORDERS

- (I) Joshua Muhire, a Covered Person as defined in Section B.10. and B.27 of the TACP 2024, is liable for Corruption Offenses pursuant to the following sections of TACP 2023:
 - i. 1 charge under Section D.1.b
 - ii. 1 charge under Section D.1.d.
- (II) Pursuant to the TACP and Guidelines the sanctions imposed on the Covered Person for these breaches of the 2023 TACP are a ban from Participation in any Sanctioned Event for a period of two and half (2.5) years in accordance with Section H.
- (III) The above ordered suspension shall commence on and is effective commencing from the date of this Order. The period begins on the 24 February 2025 and ends on the 23 August 2027.
- (IV) Under Section H.1.a.(i) a fine of \$5,000 USD is imposed. A payment plan may be agreed between parties for payment of this fine.

A. Parties:

1. The International Tennis Integrity Agency (“ITIA”) is the independent body responsible for enforcing the Tennis Anti-Corruption Program (“TACP” or “the Program”) across professional tennis worldwide. It is responsible for investigating and prosecuting cases of alleged corruption offenses in professional tennis.
2. Mr Joshua Muhire (the “Covered Person” or “Mr Muhire”) is a professional tennis player from Rwanda. At the material time, he was a “Covered Person” within the meaning of the TACP. He was charged by the ITIA with having committed certain corruption offenses during a professional ████████ tennis match held at an ████████ tournament in ████████ ████████ on ████████ September 2023.
3. Diana Tesic holds the appointment as the Anti-Corruption hearing Officer (“AHO”) under the TACP.

B. Procedural History

4. The alleged Corruption Offense took place on ████████ September 2023. Therefore, under Section K.5, the matter will governed substantively by the TACP 2023. The Notice of

Major Offense was issued in 2024 and therefore the TACP 2024 govern the procedure by which the matter is heard.

5. On 13 September 2024, the ITIA issued a Notice of Major Offense (“Notice”) to the Covered Person, Mr Muhire, alleging a Corruption Offense under the 2023 TACP. The Notice was sent simultaneously to an Anti-Corruption Hearing Officer, Ms. Diana Tesic, in accordance with TACP Section G.1.a.
6. The Notice charged Mr Muhire with one breach of the Tennis Anti-Corruption Program which occurred during a [REDACTED] match played at the [REDACTED] tournament in [REDACTED] on [REDACTED] September 2023:
 - a. Facilitation of Betting (D.1.b TACP) *“No Covered Person shall indirectly or directly, solicit or facilitate any other person to wager in the outcome or any other aspect of any Event...”*
 - b. Contriving (D.1.d TACP) *“No Covered Person shall indirectly or directly, contrive or attempt to contrive the outcome or any other aspect of any Event.”*
7. The Covered Person did not respond within the deadline pursuant to G.1.b TACP 2024 but did request a hearing, which was confirmed during a directions call on 18 October 2024 via Microsoft Teams.
8. Attending the call were the AHO, Mr Muhire, and Ms Jodie Cox on behalf of the ITIA. During that call, no objections were raised to the AHO’s jurisdiction or appointment. The Parties agreed on the procedure to be followed, as reflected in Procedural Order No. 1 (“PO #1”) which included *inter alia* the deadlines for the Parties’ submissions, production of documents and hearing procedure. The Procedural Order is supplementary to the carrying out of the arbitration process under the TACP.
9. The ITIA fully complied with all deadlines established in PO #1. It made full disclosure of documents on 25 October 2024, filed its written brief and witness statements on 8 November 2024.
10. The Covered Person failed to submit any written submissions, witness statements, or other documents by the deadlines.
11. A one-day virtual hearing took place on 9 December 2024, as scheduled. During the hearing, the ITIA presented its witnesses, who were subject to cross-examination. The Covered Person had the opportunity to present evidence and make oral arguments.
12. In attendance at the hearing were:

AHO

Diana Tesic

For the ITIA

Alistair McHenry (Counsel)
Rebecca Dodd (Counsel)
Jodie Cox (Counsel)
Denys Gee (Witness)

Mark Swarbrick (Witness)

For Mr Muhire	Joshua Muhire (Self Represented)
ITIA Secretariat	Ben Rutherford
Observer	Stuart Miller (International Tennis Federation)

C. Background Facts

13. The charges against Mr Muhire concern a [REDACTED] match played at the [REDACTED] tournament in [REDACTED], on [REDACTED] September 2023. Mr Muhire, [REDACTED] played against [REDACTED].
14. The ITIA alleged that suspicious betting patterns emerged in relation to the [REDACTED] game of the [REDACTED] set of this match. Two Italian-based betting accounts placed four identical high-stake bets for Mr Muhire's team to lose that specific game to love.
15. The betting data reveals that the first pair of bets (each of €102) was placed before the start of Game [REDACTED] and a second pair (each of €80) was placed shortly after Mr Muhire's first double fault in that game. These bets represented the only documented wagering activity on Game [REDACTED] with no other bets recorded on that specific outcome.
16. During that [REDACTED] game of the [REDACTED] set, while serving, Mr Muhire committed four consecutive double faults, resulting in the loss of the game to love.
17. Following an integrity alert issued by the International Betting Integrity Association (IBIA), the ITIA initiated an investigation. Evidence was gathered, including:
 - a. Highly irregular betting activity on the specific outcome of losing the [REDACTED] game of the [REDACTED] set to love.
 - b. Account histories for the two Italian-based bettors.
 - c. Video footage showing four consecutive double faults by Mr Muhire in that single game.
 - d. Statistical analysis and testimony from the ITIA's Betting Liaison Officer confirming that the probability of four consecutive double faults is extremely low and that the bets placed were highly targeted and suspicious.
18. The Covered Person, in his interview with the ITIA's investigator Denys Gee and at the Hearing, offered various explanations, including tiredness, sunny conditions, and a supposed tactical decision to serve out wide. He denied any wrongdoing and asserted that he had never received money, nor had he been approached by anyone, to fix any aspect of a match.

D. The Applicable Law and Jurisdiction

19. It is undisputed that the applicable rules are TACP 2023 with regards to the alleged Major Offenses and the TACP 2024 with regards to the procedure.
20. No party has objected to the appointment of the AHO, undersigned, to hear this matter. She has been properly appointed and seized of the matters in dispute.
21. No other matters relating to jurisdiction or the arbitrability of these matters have been raised by any party.

E. Position of the Parties

22. The AHO has thoroughly reviewed all the evidence and the written and oral submissions from both parties. Below is a summary of the key contentions presented by the parties. Any evidence or submissions not explicitly mentioned are still considered in the AHO's overall analysis

The ITIA

23. On 8 November 2024, the ITIA filed its brief. The ITIA alleged that Mr Muhire deliberately contrived the [REDACTED] game of the [REDACTED] set to facilitate betting, in breach of: Section D.1.b of the TACP, which prohibits facilitating or encouraging others to bet on tennis; and Section D.1.d of the TACP, which prohibits failing to use best efforts to win a match or part thereof.
24. The ITIA relied on the following evidence:
 - a. Two bettors placed identical, maximum-stake bets on the [REDACTED] game of the [REDACTED] set to be lost to love by the Respondent and his partner. Both accounts were linked to Italian IP addresses, and one account had been created the day before the match.
 - b. The bets were timed. The first pair was placed just before the game commenced, and the second pair immediately after the first double fault was served. The ITIA's experts have explained that the specificity, timing, and high stakes of these bets are clear red flags that strongly indicate a pre-meditated attempt to manipulate the match outcome.
 - c. The Respondent served four consecutive double faults during the game, a statistically improbable event. The ITIA's expert, Mark Swarbrick calculated that four consecutive double faults occur in approximately 1 in 10,000 service games. His performance in other games of the match showed no similar errors, and his serving was otherwise competitive.
 - d. The ITIA's Expert witness, Mark Swarbrick, testified that the alignment between the betting activity and gameplay anomalies were highly suspicious and indicative of prior knowledge.

- e. The ITIA submits that Mr Muhire's oral explanations during the hearing—citing factors such as fatigue, the sun's glare, and an alleged tactical decision [REDACTED] [REDACTED] are inconsistent with the objective evidence, such as the match footage. Further, [REDACTED], during [REDACTED] interview with the ITIA, denied advising [REDACTED].
25. As to the Sanction, the ITIA submitted that Mr Muhire be suspended from Participation in any Sanctioned Event for three years (with an option to adjust upward to three and a half years based on aggravating factors) and be fined US\$5,000.
26. In line with the Sanctioning Guidelines ('the Guidelines'), the ITIA submitted that the Charges against Mr Muhire should be categorised as B2. The ITIA notes that when applying the Guidelines, the AHO "*retains full discretion in relation to the sanctions to be imposed in accordance with the TACP and may apply or depart from the guidelines in accordance with the circumstances of the case.*"
27. The ITIA submits that this categorisation reflects a medium level of culpability coupled with a material impact on the integrity and reputation of tennis. The ITIA argued the following in defence of same:
 - a. The targeted and statistically improbable occurrence of four consecutive double faults in [REDACTED] strongly suggests premeditation and deliberate manipulation.
 - b. The specific betting activity—two identical maximum-stake bets placed before the game and two placed immediately after the first double fault, with one account being brand new—indicates that the bets were not random but deliberately arranged.
 - c. Mr Muhire's repeated non-cooperation (failure to submit written evidence and delays in responding to ITIA communications) is viewed as an aggravating factor that should warrant an upward adjustment from the starting point.
28. With regard to Impact, the ITIA submitted that Mr Muhire's actions have a significant and adverse impact on the sport. By deliberately manipulating the outcome of a match, he undermines the unpredictability and fairness that are essential to tennis. This form of score manipulation not only damages public confidence but also directly assaults the integrity and reputation of the sport, which the ITIA considers to be a material impact. Such offenses, by their very gravity, warrant a suspension period longer than six months.
29. Although the ITIA does not have direct evidence that Mr Muhire personally received financial benefits, it notes that the betting activity he facilitated, four targeted maximum stake bets, succeeded due to the contrived outcome. The ITIA suggests this could have yielded significant winnings for the bettors, potentially €2,866. The ITIA argues that such a level of targeted betting is indicative of a material financial gain for those involved, thereby reinforcing the conclusion that his actions had a material impact.
30. Therefore, the ITIA submits that while the starting point for a B2 offense is a three year suspension and the category range is six months to five years. The ITIA further seeks an uplift of six (6) months citing non-cooperation with the deadlines as an aggravating factor and the lack of mitigating factors. Mr Muhire's case should be categorised as B-2

and appropriate starting point for Mr Muhire's sanction is therefore (i) 3.5 year ban from tennis and (ii) \$5,000 fine, which includes the €2,866 of winnings.

The Covered Person

31. In the absence of any written submissions from Mr Muhire, his position has been conveyed entirely through his oral testimony during the hearing. His submissions can be summarized as follows:

- a. Mr Muhire attributes the occurrence of four consecutive double faults in ██████████ ██████████ to natural factors affecting his performance. He explains that he was extremely tired, having played a ██████████ match immediately prior to the ██████████ match, which adversely impacted his serving.
- b. He asserts that the bright, sunny conditions on the day of the match contributed significantly to his difficulties. Despite wearing a cap, he contends that the sun's glare impeded his vision during his serve, leading to errors.
- c. Mr Muhire maintains that double faults can occur naturally during play, even at the professional level, and that the occurrence of such errors is an inherent part of tennis. He argues that his overall performance in the match, where his serve was effective in other games, indicates that the errors in ██████████ were isolated and unintentional.
- d. Mr Muhire indicated that ██████████ suggested that he serve wide in order to open the court. He acknowledges that this tactical suggestion was part of the conversation ██████████ and contributed to his decision-making at that time, which lead to the double faults.
- e. He categorically denies any involvement in match-fixing or corruption. Mr Muhire asserts that he did not receive any money, nor was he approached by any individual with a proposition to fix the match. He states that the betting activity observed was coincidental and unrelated to his on-court performance.

32. As to the Sanction, Mr Muhire's submissions are founded on his assertion of innocence and his modest financial resources. He argues that, in the absence of any proven corrupt conduct, no sanction should be imposed, and if a sanction is deemed necessary, it must be adjusted to reflect his limited income which is approximately ██████████ per year.

F. Applicable Provisions of the 2023 TACP

33. Sections H of the 2023 TACP read as follows:

"H.1 The penalty for any Corruption Offense shall be determined by the AHO in accordance with the procedures set forth in Section G, and may include:

H.1.a. With respect to any Player, (i) a fine of up to \$250,000 plus an amount

equal to the value of any winnings or other amounts received by such Covered Person in connection with any Corruption Offense; (ii) ineligibility from Participation in any Sanctioned Events for a period of up to three years unless permitted under Section H.1.c; and (iii) with respect to any violation of Section D.1, clauses (c) – (p), Section D.2 and Section F, ineligibility from Participation in any Sanctioned Events for a maximum period of permanent ineligibility unless permitted under Section H.1.c.

G. Evidence and Burden of Proof

34. A substantial body of evidence was submitted by the ITIA in support of its allegations against Mr Muhire. The ITIA's evidence primarily consists of interview transcripts, a betting alert provided by a single operator, detailed scorecards, point-by-point data, streaming video footage, and the expert witness statements of Mr Mark Swarbrick (Betting Liaison Officer) and Mr Denys Gee (investigator). Mr Muhire provided oral testimony at the hearing, with no written submissions.
35. The AHO notes that there is no direct evidence linking Mr Muhire to the betting accounts, and there is no evidence of any payment or tangible benefit being exchanged between him and the bettors, or any communication to that extent. The ITIA's case is largely inferential and the evidence in this matter is predominantly circumstantial. In reaching her conclusions the AHO has considered that the absence of direct evidence linking Mr Muhire to communications with the bettors or any form of payment remains a limitation that must be balanced against the totality of the evidence.
36. While the TACP permits a finding of a corruption offense based on reliable circumstantial evidence, such evidence must meet the preponderance of the evidence standard as required by Section G.3.a. of the 2024 TACP which provides that "*The ITIA (which may be represented by legal counsel at the Hearing) shall have the burden of establishing that a Corruption Offense has been committed. The standard of proof shall be whether the ITIA has established the commission of the alleged Corruption Offense by a preponderance of the evidence.*" That is, it must be shown that it is more likely than not that the offense was committed.
37. The AHO has carefully evaluated the probative value and reliability of the inferential evidence and examining whether a plausible innocent explanation exists for the anomalies observed, as required under the preponderance standard.

H. Decision

38. The AHO has carefully considered all the facts, allegations, legal arguments and evidence submitted by the Parties in the present proceedings. Reference is made in this Decision only to the evidence and submissions considered necessary to explain the reasoning.
39. On 12 September 2023, during the [REDACTED] game of the [REDACTED] set in a [REDACTED] match at the [REDACTED] tournament in [REDACTED], Mr Muhire committed four consecutive double faults while serving resulting in a 0-40 loss of that game. This performance contrasts sharply with his competitive serving in other games of the match—Games [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] of the [REDACTED] set

showed no double faults, and he recorded only one in the [REDACTED] set. The ITIA alleges this anomaly reflects deliberate contrivance (Section D.1.d) to facilitate betting (Section D.1.b), tied to four targeted bets placed by two Italian accounts on that specific outcome.

40. The ITIA's case rests on circumstantial evidence. There is no direct proof, such as communications or payments, which links Mr Muhire to the bettors. As described above in paragraph 36, the AHO has assessed the evidence's cumulative weight, testing Mr Muhire's explanations against objective data provided.
41. First, the AHO agrees that the betting activity is highly suspicious. Two accounts wagered €364 total (€102 each before [REDACTED] began and €80 each after the first double fault), precisely predicting a "to love" loss. Expert Mark Swarbrick testified that such targeted bets on a low-tier doubles match, among 60 matches across [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] tournaments available that day, are improbable without foreknowledge. Notably, one of these betting accounts was newly established. This in itself is a recognised red flag in match fixing.
42. Second, Mr Muhire's four consecutive double faults are statistically extraordinary. Mr Swarbrick estimated a 1 in 10,000 chance of this occurring naturally in a service game, a stark outlier given Mr Muhire's otherwise competent serving. Mr Muhire defends this as unintentional, citing fatigue from a prior [REDACTED] match, sun glare despite a cap, and a tactical choice to serve wide. These explanations however, falter under scrutiny. His effective serving in adjacent games undermines fatigue or environmental claims and [REDACTED], [REDACTED] contradicting the tactical excuse.
43. The AHO cannot find any credible sporting rationale that would account for the sudden, isolated collapse of Mr Muhire's serve in [REDACTED]. Consistent with prior rulings under the TACP, the server's inherent control is highly probative in assessing deliberate match manipulation even when direct evidence is lacking. The server's control over pace, serve placement and direction of play amplifies the inference of intent to make a fix. In other words, the strategic advantage inherent in serving allows a player wanting to fix a match to intentionally alter their performance to achieve the desired fix. As such, making uncharacteristic errors is probative of manipulation especially when aligned with the timing and pattern of suspicious betting.
44. The precise correlation between the bets and Mr Muhire's performance, four double faults delivering the exact "to love" loss wagered on, tips the balance beyond coincidence. Considering the absence of direct evidence, the AHO has given Mr Muhire the benefit of plausible innocent explanations. The AHO recognises that tennis players, being imperfect humans, can make mistakes; however, the convergence of statistically improbable four double faults in a service game (1 in 10,000), targeted betting (€364 staked), and inconsistent defenses outweighs natural variance.
45. Therefore, in light of the foregoing, the AHO finds that it is more likely than not that Mr Muhire intentionally contrived [REDACTED] outcome (Section D.1.d), thereby enabling the bets' success (Section D.1.b), even without proven personal gain. This conduct constitutes a breach of Section D.1.b of the TACP 2023 (facilitating, encouraging, and/or promoting tennis betting) and Section D.1.d of the TACP 2023 (contriving or attempting to contrive the outcome of an Event).

46. Accordingly, I find Mr Joshua Muhire liable for the corruption offenses as charged.

Application of the Sanctioning Guidelines to the Facts of this Case

47. The TACP is designed to eradicate corruption in tennis and to act as a robust deterrent against match manipulation. In assessing the appropriate sanction, I have carefully considered both the aggravating factors and any mitigating circumstances.
48. The ITIA has submitted that the evidence places Mr Muhire within the B2 offense category, for which the starting point is a three-year suspension. The ITIA has proved that it is more likely than not that Mr Muhire contrived the outcome of a █████ game in one match. This suggests a low to moderate planning and therefore the AHO finds that the culpability falls within between the B and C categories, skewing more towards B.
49. In terms of impact categorisation, the offense undermines the integrity, but involves no proven financial gain, categorising it as a 2 category for impact. Therefore the AHO finds that Mr Muhire sanction categorisation falls between a B2 and C2 and a sanctioning range of starting at six (6) months to three (3) years.
50. In considering the aggravating factors, the ITIA contends that Mr Muhire completion of his TIPP training and therefore was aware of the rules prohibiting match manipulation should be considered an aggravating factor. The AHO disagrees. The TIPP is a baseline requirement for all tennis players and it's mandatory nature makes it an unfair basis for increased punishment. However, the AHO does consider Mr Muhire's failure to cooperate with deadlines and communication from the AHO, together with his lack of written submissions, aggravating factors.
51. The mitigating factors considered by the AHO are i) no prior offenses, ii) no direct evidence of payment, corrupt approaches or communication with bettors and iii) Mr Muhire is self-represented and did cooperate at the hearing and with questioning despite the earlier challenges.
52. In light of these considerations, the AHO finds that the mitigating factors entail a reduction from the ITIA's request of three (3) year suspension to two (2) years. However, I find that the aggravating factors require an uplift of six (6) months. Therefore, the AHO finds that a two and a half (2.5) year participation ban from any Sanctioned Event is both reasonable and proportionate to the offense committed. Additionally, a fine of US\$5,000 is warranted, reflecting the targeted betting gains involved and the need to deter similar conduct in the future.
53. Accordingly, I impose the following sanctions on Mr Joshua Muhire:
 - a. A suspension from Participation in any Sanctioned Event for a period of two and half year (2.5) years, commencing on 22 February 2025 and expiring on 21 August 2027; and
 - b. A fine of US\$5,000 to be paid in accordance with the applicable provisions of the TACP.
54. Based on the above findings, the AHO makes the following orders:

ORDERS

- (V) Joshua Muhire, a Covered Person as defined in Section B.10. and B.27 of the TACP 2024, is liable for Corruption Offenses pursuant to the following sections of TACP 2023
- i. 1 charge under Section D.1.b
 - ii. 1 charge under Section D.1.d
- (VI) Pursuant to the TACP and Guidelines the sanctions imposed on the Covered Person for these breaches of the 2023 TACP are a ban from Participation in any Sanctioned Event for a period of two and half (2.5) years in accordance with Section H.
- (VII) The above ordered suspension shall commence on and is effective commencing from the date of this Order. The period begins on the 24 February 2025 and ends on the 23 August 2027.
- (VIII) Under Section H.1.a.(i) a fine of \$ 5,000 USD is imposed. A payment plan may be agreed between parties for payment of this fine.
- (IX) This Decision shall be publicly reported in full as prescribed in Section G.4.e of the 2024 TACP.
- (X) Under Section G.4.d, this Decision is “full, final and complete disposition of the matter and will be binding on all parties.”
- (XI) The Decision herein is appealable under Section I of the 2024 TACP to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (“CAS”) in Lausanne, Switzerland. Under Section I of the TACP the deadline for filing an appeal with CAS must be made within a period of “twenty business days from the date of receipt of the decision by the appealing party.
- (XII) Under Section I of the 2024 TACP the suspension ordered herein shall remain in effect while under appeal unless CAS orders otherwise.

Dated at Belgrade, Serbia this 24th day of February 2025



Diana Tesic, Anti-Corruption Hearing Officer