



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

London, 19 June 2020

### **Venezuelan match official Armando Alfonso Belardi Gonzalez suspended and fined for corruption offences**

Venezuelan match official Armando Alfonso Belardi Gonzalez has been suspended for two years and six months and fined \$5,000 after being found guilty of committing breaches of the Tennis Anti-Corruption Program (TACP).

\$4,000 of the fine is suspended on condition that he commits no further breaches of the TACP.

The disciplinary case was adjudicated by independent Anti-Corruption Hearing Officer (AHO) Prof Richard McLaren who, after considering the evidence obtained by a Tennis Integrity Unit (TIU) investigation, found that Mr Gonzalez had:

- failed to report two approaches he received in 2018 soliciting him to become involved in a corrupt scheme to manipulate match scores entered into his PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) device. Although he did not act on the approaches, his failure to disclose them to the TIU constituted a corruption offence
- failed to fully co-operate with a TIU investigation into the allegations against him

As a result of the sanction imposed, and with effect from 18 June 2020, he is prohibited from officiating in or attending any tennis event authorised or sanctioned by the governing bodies of tennis, for the duration of the two years and six months ban.

Mr Gonzalez, 40, has been a Bronze Badge chair umpire since March 2013.

The relevant Sections of the 2018 and 2019 TACP covering the offences are as follows:

*Section D.2.b.i: "In the event any Related Person or Tournament Support Person is approached by any person who offers or provides any type of money, benefit or Consideration to a Related Person or Tournament Support Person to (i) influence or attempt to influence the outcome of any aspect of any Event, or (ii) provide Inside Information, it shall be the Related Person's or Tournament Support Person's obligation to report such incident to the TIU as soon as possible."*

*Section F.2.c: "If the TIU believes that a Covered Person may have committed a Corruption Offense, the TIU may make a Demand to any Covered Person to furnish to the TIU any object or information regarding the alleged Corruption Offense, including, without limitation, (i) personal devices (including mobile telephone(s), tablets and/or laptop computers), (ii) access to any social media accounts and cloud storage held by the Covered Person (including provision of user names and passwords); (iii) hard copy or electronic records relating to the alleged Corruption Offense (including, without limitation, itemized*

*telephone billing statements, text of SMS and WhatsApp messages received and sent, banking statements, Internet service records), computers, tablets, hard drives and other electronic information storage devices, and (iv) a written statement setting forth the facts and circumstances with respect to the alleged Corruption offense. The Covered Person shall furnish such information immediately, where practical to do so, or within such other time as may be set by the TIU....”*

The Tennis Integrity Unit is an initiative of the ATP, WTA, ITF and Grand Slam Board, who are jointly committed to a zero tolerance approach to betting-related corruption in professional tennis.

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