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Sports law in 2019&2020 - key issues to watch

Liya Akzhanova, Partner of GRATA International and as a member of the Editorial Board of LawInSport.com, wrote a short summary of her highlights.

First, she provided some insights what she thinks have been the key sports law cases and developments of 2019.

2019 was a year for developing the anti-doping framework in Kazakhstan in order to comply with the requirements of the IOC and WADA. In particular, the newly enhanced framework strengthens the administrative liability of persons who have prescribed banned drugs to an athlete. The overarching sanctions are now as follows:

- ▶ disqualification;
- ▶ refund of the received cash rewards;
- ▶ cancelling a monthly allowance which is paid to athletes and coaches (sports pension);
- ▶ cancelling a monthly cash allowance to athletes, coaches and club managers.

The anti-doping the framework also contains provisions for the withdrawal of compensation paid to members of national teams who have suffered sport injuries at international sports competitions; the removal of sporting performance ranks, categories, qualifying categories; the withdrawal of accommodation for champions and prize-winners of Olympic, Paralympic and Deaflympic Games; and the exclusion of athletes and coaches from the structure of national teams.

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As a new year begins, Ms. Akzhanova wants to take the opportunity to identify and provide some insights for the year 2020.

Kazakhstan Premier League regulatory changes

The start of the 2020 Premier League in Kazakhstan will be marked with the amendments to the recently adopted Premier League Regulations. The amendments put the residents of Kazakhstan on equal status to the residents of Eurasian Economic Union[2] (EEU, consisting of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia) and returns the concept of the "overseas player" into the Regulations. An overseas player is classed as any football player who is not a resident of Kazakhstan or any of the EEU member states. Pursuant to the Regulations, the Premier League's teams must now include at least 12 spots for local players, no more than 8 spots for overseas players, with the remaining 10 positions held by players of any of EEU country at the discretion of the club. In respect to starting team restrictions - no more than 6 overseas players are allowed on the playing field. Similar changes have been implemented for the First League clubs: not less than 18 spots must be filled by local players, 3 spots to overseas players, and the remaining 9 filled at the discretion of the club by either citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan or EEU countries. It will be interesting to see the effect that this has on performance in the domestic leagues and the National team.

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