



ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIAN BOOKMAKERS

NEWSLETTER SECOND EDITION

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EKITI STATE GOVERNMENT SETS UP LOTTERY COMMISSION



Sometime in January, gaming operators in Ekiti State received “Demand Notices” for License renewal and gaming tax from the Ekiti State Internal Revenue (which has been the Agency in charge of revenue collection in the industry) and a newly-established Ekiti State Lotteries Commission. This was done without prior notice to operators. Ekiti State Internal Revenue Service (EKIRS) and the Lotteries Commission – via their demand notices to operators – demanded outrageous sums as Permit Fee, Operational Level Fee and License Renewal.

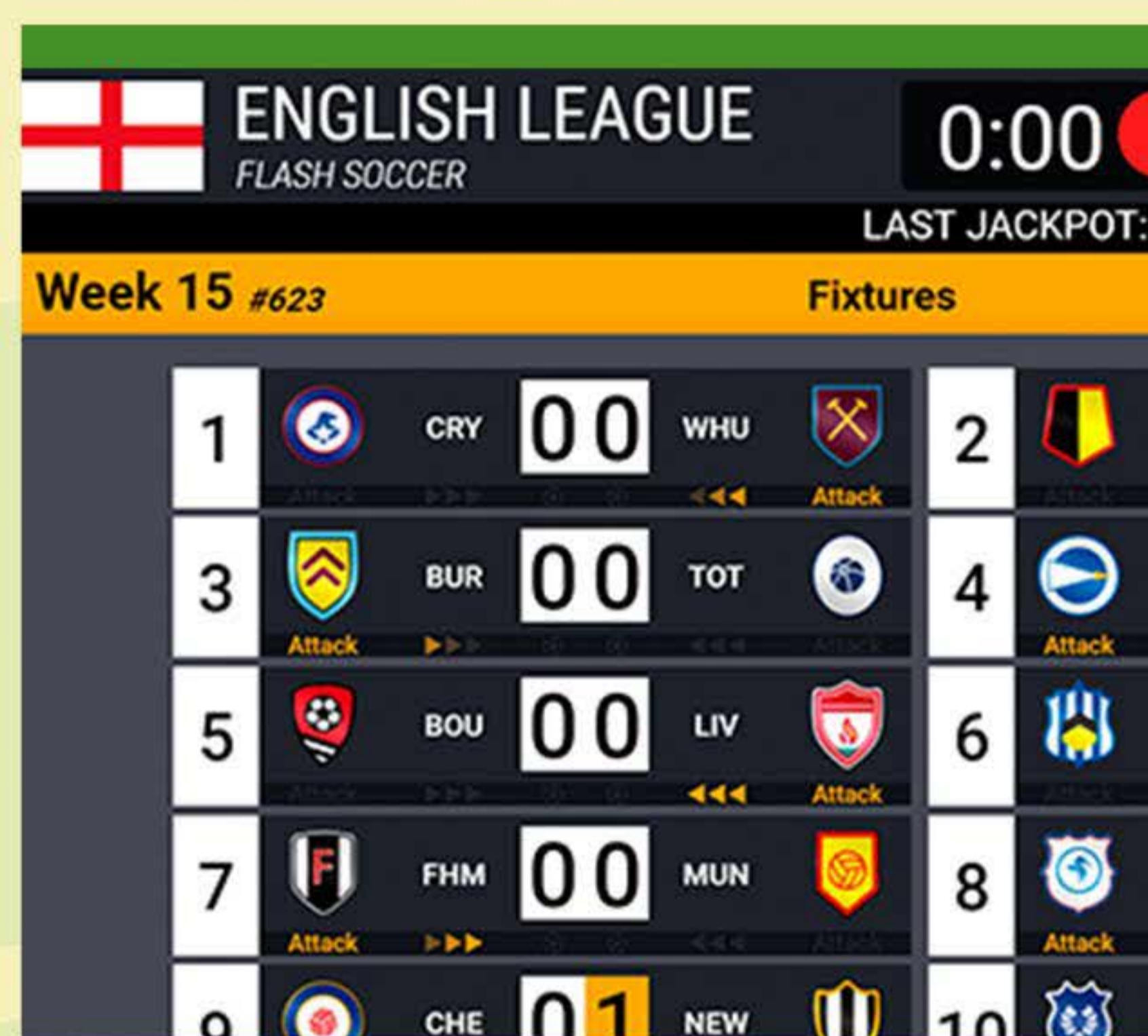
The Association has since forwarded a letter of displeasure to The Executive Chairman of Ekiti State Lotteries Commission and The Executive Chairman of EKIRS for total disregard of due process. The Association (in the letter) highlighted the unintended consequences of multiple taxation which includes loss of job to Ekiti indigenes and loss of revenue to the State if operators decide to leave the State due to unfavourable business environment.

Plan is ongoing to have a stakeholders meeting with the Ekiti State Lotteries Commission.



UPDATE ON THE COURT CASE INSTITUTED BY THE ASSOCIATION

As stated in the last newsletter, the Association – on behalf of members – instituted an action at the Federal High Court for the purpose of interpreting the law to determine “Who has the powers to regulate the gaming industry?”. The matter came up for hearing on 4 March 2021 and was adjourned till 12 May 2021 following the Respondents’ application for extension of time to file their reply.



UPDATE ON THE COURT CASE INSTITUTED BY THE ASSOCIATION

The Federal Inland Revenue service (FIRS) continues to harass gaming operators on payment of Value Added Tax (VAT) despite the stand-down order the House Committee on Governmental Affairs issued to the Agency.

The Association will continue to engage the Agency and if need be seek legal redress.

PROPOSED REVIEW OF IMO GAMING LAW

The Imo State House of Assembly is proposing a review of the Imo State Pools Betting, Gaming, Casino and Lotteries Promotion and Control Board Law 2019 to include 10% charges on daily sales as gaming tax. The Association was invited by the House Committee on Internally Generated Revenue and we have highlighted the impracticability of the gaming tax.

The Association is putting in all effort to make the lawmakers understand the strain any new form of tax will have on operators.

SBC DIGITAL AFRICA CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION 2021

The SBC Digital Africa Conference and Exhibition, held on 30 and 31 March 2021, saw various industry experts from Nigeria and other African continents share ideas on emerging opportunities and some of the challenges faced in the industry. Attendees were also able to network virtually as there were networking sessions for attendees to select their sessions of interest.

Overall, the SBC conference was a success – the industry needs more global platforms of engagement like this.