

RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

DISCIPLINARY HEARING

At: Holiday Inn, Brighouse, Leeds

On: 22 February 2010

JUDGMENT

Player: Harry Hannan

Club: Harrogate RUFC

Date of Match: 16 January 2010, 23 January 2010 and 30 January 2010

Panel: Mike Hamlin, (Chairman), Dr Barry O'Driscoll and Peter Rhodes

In attendance: Mike Cowling – Disciplinary officer of Harrogate RUFC
Harry Hannan – Player

To consider: The player having received 3 yellow cards for foul play on the above dates contrary to Law 10(4)(K).

EVIDENCE AS TO FACT

The panel has considered the following:-

1. The reports of the 3 incidents on the above dates.
2. Oral submissions from Mike Cowling and the player.

The player had received a yellow card on 16 January 2010 in the match between Loughborough Students and Harrogate, for a late charge on a kicker contrary to Law 10(4)(N); a yellow card on 23 January 2010 in the match between Harrogate and Preston Grasshoppers, for a punch; and a yellow card for a dangerous tackle contrary to Law 10(4)(E) in the match between Hull and Harrogate on 30 January 2010.

The facts as per the reports were briefly as follows:-

First Offence

“Play was approximately on the half way line in the centre of the field, Loughborough Students were in possession of the ball and the ball was passed to a Loughborough Students player who put an up and under into the air. After he had kicked it the player tackled the Loughborough kicker the tackle was not high and it was not a dangerous tackle other than it was very late. The Harrogate hooker used both arms to wrap the kicker, the tackle was not high and it was not a dangerous tackle other than it was very late. This was in my view an intentional late tackle and a yellow card was issued. The Loughborough Students player remained down for approximately 30 seconds however he continued to play in the game and appeared to be unaffected by the incident.”

Second Incident

"The player and 17 and Preston Grasshoppers no. 6 were involved in an off the ball fight while play moved 40 metres down the field. On recommendation by the assistant referee both players were issued with yellow cards."

Third Incident

"Harry Hannan dangerously tackled a Hull player above the shoulders with his trailing arm. No injury was caused."

Mike Cowling confirmed that a disciplinary hearing had been held on 1 February. The player had been suspended for one week for the period 1 February 2010 to 9 February 2010 and had missed the Macclesfield game. He had subsequently played one game for Harrogate and another game for Leeds Carnegie Academy.

The player admitted the allegation. In respect of the first offence he admitted that he was late with his tackle, he was going to charge down the ball but did not pull out and in his own words "admitted he could have done".

In respect of the second incident he had, with his colleagues rucked the Preston Grasshoppers No.6 out of a ruck legitimately, the Preston Grasshoppers No.6 stood up and hit him and he retaliated. They swapped punches a few times and accordingly the assistant referee intervened and they were both issued with yellow cards.

In respect of the third offence, Harrogate were defending, an opposition player stepped inside and went past the Player, he was approximately the same height and by way of reflex the Player put his arm out which caught the player above the shoulders. The victim player was not injured.

In accordance with the regulations the panel undertook an assessment under paragraph 8.2.5 to 8.2.8 in relation to the entry point. The entry point for totting up 3 foul play yellow cards within the season is low entry one week and top entry the lower end of the range for the most serious of the yellow card offences. In this case the lower end of the range for all 3 offences for which he received a yellow card was 2 weeks.

The panel took into account the following:-

1. Two of the offences were reckless and the punching incident intentional but produced by an opponent who struck him first.
2. None of the yellow card offences resulted in any effect on the game or injury to any player.
3. In the first and third offence the opposing players were vulnerable to a certain extent. There was no pre meditation in respect of any of the offences.

The panel noted that the player was only 18 years of age. He was clearly a talented player. The panel were concerned that he had received 3 yellow cards on 3 consecutive Saturdays. Taking into account the circumstances of the 3 yellow cards and the above the panel were satisfied just that the appropriate entry point in the circumstances was a low entry point.

The player had not only played for Harrogate but was also playing for Leeds Carnegie Academy. He had played for Yorkshire Schools and England Schools. He had an exemplary record. He was a very young man playing adult rugby. He was still

18 years of age and of very limited experience in adult rugby. He behaved appropriately at the hearing and indeed impressed the panel with his conduct. He acknowledged the folly of his actions and was remorseful and had been receiving from the Harrogate coaching staff on one and one tuition and how not to react when provoked and also to control his reflexes.

SANCTION

The player is therefore suspended for a period of 1 week. The club having suspended the player for one week for the period 1 February 2010 to 9 February 2010, the player is free to carry on playing. The player was however on behalf of the panel warned as to the consequences of his actions and the need to control himself. He was clearly a talented player but needed to be very careful as to his future conduct.

COSTS

The panel makes an Order for costs in the sum of £150 against the player/club.

RIGHT OF APPEAL

The player is reminded of his right of appeal and the procedure on appeal as set out in RFU Disciplinary Regulation 12.1.1.

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Signed: ***Mike Hamlin***
 Chairman

Dated: **25 February 2010**