

The Facts

4. The caution report recorded as follows :

“As a maul drove forwards D6 made contact with a Nottingham player driving him away from the maul into the ground. As he was getting to his feet, I clearly saw D6 throw a clenched fist into the upper body area of the N player. I was the opposite side of the field to the incident and unable to see where the punch made contact due to the body angle of the players. I reported the incident to the Referee and a second yellow card was awarded to D6. The N player received medical attention and continued to play on.”

The Player’s Case

5. The Player agreed with the caution report description, which he supplemented by clarifying that he had tackled the ball carrier, who unknown to him had offloaded the ball. The contact had therefore been longer than the ball carrier seemed to deem necessary and a scuffle started on the floor with his opponent punching him a couple of times. He retaliated by punching once, his fist connecting with the shoulder of the opponent. He confirmed that the opponent did receive medical attention, but this was for an injury caused by the tackle as the players came to ground and not as a result of the strike.

Entry Point

6. The Panel noted that there was one punch only and this was to the body. The incident was seen from the far side of the field by the Assistant Referee and the Player was entitled to the benefit of the doubt when he stated that he had acted in retaliation, and the punch caused no injury. The Panel characterised the offending as at the lower end of the scale and, in accordance with Disciplinary Regulation Appendix 2, the appropriate entry point is sending off sufficient and the Panel so determines.

Costs

7. Costs assessed at £200.00 are ordered to be paid by the Player/his Club.

Right of Appeal

8. The Player was advised of his right of appeal as set out in Disciplinary Regulation 11.

Antony Davies

Antony Davies,

Chairman

15th October 2009