

RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

DISCIPLINARY HEARING

At: Holiday Inn, Junction2, M6

On: 31st Jan 2011

JUDGMENT

Player: Thomas Grimmatt

Club: Rugby Lions

Match: Rugby Lions v Hull Ionians

Venue: Rugby

Match Date: Saturday 22nd January 2011

Panel: HHJ Sean Enright, Geoff Payne and John Brennan.

Secretariat: Bruce Reece-Russel and Brenda Parkinson.

Charge and Plea

1. Thomas Grimmatt ("the Player") of Rugby Lions FC was charged with striking an opponent with his knee contrary to Law 10(4)(a) during the course of a match played between Hull Ionians and Rugby Lions on 22nd January 2011.

Finding

2. The player admitted the charge in absence.

Facts

3. The Panel considered a report from the referee, DVD footage of the incident, a letter from the Player to the Panel dated 26 January 2011 and a minute of Rugby Lions' disciplinary hearing.
4. The incident may be summarised as follows. Following a line out, the Rugby Lions pack drove a maul forward at speed. As Hull Ionians' pack retreated, a number of players from both sides became detached from the main body of the maul. The "maul" between this group of players disintegrated some distance in advance of the ball. After a certain amount of posturing the situation escalated to the point that blows were exchanged between players on both sides. Immediately thereafter, players from both sides flooded towards this group of players and joined in. At its height, the brawl involved just about every

forward on both sides and one or two of the backs. For his part, the Player ran towards a Hull Ionians player and kned him twice in the back. Having done so, he retreated, at some speed. The Hull Ionians player suffered no apparent injury. The referee dismissed him from the field of play.

Entry Point

5. The Panel considered the players conduct justified a mid range entry point. Its determination of the seriousness of the conduct was based on the following evaluation of the criteria set out at RFU Regulation 19.8.2.5. The Player's conduct was: (a) intentional and deliberate; (c) as set out above; (d) no injury; (e) sending off; (f) he attacked the victim from behind; (g) the player acted with others in the heat of the moment; (h) the conduct was completed.

Aggravating Features

6. There were no aggravating features.

Mitigating Features

7. The player pleaded guilty at the first opportunity. He had hitherto an unblemished record. The player expressed his contrition to the panel in writing.

Sanction

8. The Panel sanctioned the Player by imposing a 4 week suspension, being half the recommended sanction for a mid-range offence on account of his timely guilty plea, record and remorse. The period of suspension is to run from Thursday, 27 January 2011, that being the date upon which the Player was suspended for 3 weeks by Rugby Lions' disciplinary committee. The Player will be free to play again on Thursday, 24 February 2011. The Player was ordered to pay £80 on account of costs.

Right of Appeal

9. The player is reminded of his right of appeal. Any such appeal must be lodged with the RFU Disciplinary Office not later than 10am on the 14th day following receipt of this judgment.

Signed: Sean Enright, Chairman.

Date: 31st January 2011