

RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

DISCIPLINARY HEARING

VENUE: Offices of the Judge Advocate General, Royal courts of Justice, London.

DATE: 4 April 2011

Player: Neil BRIGGS

Club: Sale Sharks

Match: Northampton v Sale

Venue: Northampton

Date of match: 2 April 2011

Panel: His Honour Judge Blackett (Chairman), Jeremy Summers and Philip Evans ("the Panel")

Secretary: Bruce Reece-Russel

To consider: The sending of the Player for having received two yellow cards (one for a technical offence) contrary to Law 10.4(m)

PRELIMINARY ISSUES

- 1) The Player did not object to the composition of the Panel.
- 2) Having considered the papers and the match recording the Panel determined that it was not necessary to hear submissions from or on behalf of the Player.

PLEA

1. The Player admitted the charge.

EVIDENCE

2. The Panel considered: -
 - a) The Yellow Card Reports.
 - b) The match recording.
3. The Player had received a temporary suspension by way of a team warning for a technical offence in the first half of the match.
4. He then received a second yellow card for an incident of foul play that had occurred in the fourth minute of the second half, and was accordingly dismissed from the field of play. The report in respect of this second temporary suspension read as follows:

Following a Sale try a number of Northampton and Sale players became involved in a minor fracas in front of the Northampton posts. The Sale Sharks hooker, Neil Briggs, ran from a distance in excess of 5 meters and charged into the back of Northampton number 4.

5. The incident had not been seen by the Referee but had been detected by an Assistant Referee who recommended the issue of a yellow card.
6. The footage was viewed and was consistent with the Assistant Referee's report, although it was possible that the Player had in fact made contact with one of his own team rather than an opponent.
7. The offending caused no injury and did not materially add to the minor fracas that the Player had joined.
8. Appendix 2 to RFU Regulation requires a disciplinary panel to categorise a sending off resulting from two yellow cards as either Low End in which case the sending off shall be sufficient or Top End in which event the low end entry point for the more serious of the two offences shall be applied.
9. In all the circumstances the Panel determined that this offending should be viewed as being at the Low End of the scale of seriousness and the Player is accordingly free to continue playing with immediate effect.

COSTS

10. The Player and/or his Club are ordered to pay costs of £75.00 as prescribed by Appendix 3 to RFU Regulation 19.

Jeremy Summers

On behalf of the Chairman

4 April 2011