

RFU DISCIPLINE HEARING

Venue: Holiday Inn, Junction2, M6

Date: 1st December 2011

Player: Phil Nilsen

Club: Leeds RFC

Match: Esher RFC v Leeds RFC

Venue: Esher

Date of Match: 19 November 2011

Panel: Judge Enright, Peter Howard and Bob Taylor

In Attendance:

Rebecca Morgan, Secretary to Panel

Phil Nilsen "The Player"

Mike Bidgood, Team Manager

The Panel was convened to consider a charge that during the 2nd minute of the second half of the match between Esher and Leeds, the Player charged into a ruck, contrary to Law 10 (4) (h).

1 The Player and his representative did not object to the composition of the Panel.

2 The Player admitted the charge.

3 The Panel viewed a DVD of the incident in which the offence was clearly visible.

4 The Panel read and considered a short Discipline Report, dated 24 November, prepared by the Citing officer, Tony Lanaway. The substance of the report was that the Player charged into a ruck, making no attempt to bind or grasp his opponent. He made contact with an opposition player, Esher number seven, Synott, knocking him out of the ruck. The incident was noted by the Citing Officer and the Player was reported.

5 The Panel heard from the Leeds Team Manager, Mike Bidgood, to the effect that the Player had represented the Leeds club in the front row for

six or seven years without incident. Mr Bidgood suggested that the Player had mistimed his attempt to bind on to the opposition player, that the actual offence charged should more properly have been entering the ruck from the side and that citing was 'at the top end of the range of reaction' for the offence.

6 The club had not held an internal disciplinary hearing as the Panel hearing had been brought forward.

7 The Panel found that the offence was intentional and not reckless. The offence was not grave and had no effect on the game. The other player was vulnerable as he would not have expected such a contact but he suffered no injury. The offence was premeditated and completed. The Panel judged that this offence merited a low end starting point, namely 3 weeks.

8 The Panel identified no aggravating features and noted that the Player had a previously unblemished record.

9 The Panel took the following mitigating factors into account; an early admission of the offence, good record and appropriate conduct at the hearing, although no remorse was indicated.

10 Accordingly, the Panel reduced the sanction by one week. The Player is banned for 2 weeks. He is free to play again on 15 December.

11 The Panel made an award of £200 costs against the Club.

12 The Player is hereby advised of his right to 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: 2nd December 2011