

RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

DISCIPLINARY HEARING

Venue: The Holiday Inn, Bloomsbury, London

Date: 21st November 2011

JUDGMENT

Player: Patrick Read

Club: Southend RFC

Match: Redingensians RFC v Southend RFC

Venue: Redingensians RFC

Match Date: 5th November 2011

Panel: Philip Evans (Chairman), Dr Julian Morris & Peter Budge

Attending: Player did not attend

Chris Green (Director of Rugby, Southend RFC)

Secretariat: Rebecca Morgan (Discipline Administrator, RFU Discipline Department)

PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1. Mr Green did not attend the hearing but had notified the RFU that he intended to plead guilty to the charge he faced and that he would be represented by Mr Green.

THE CHARGE

2. Mr Reed was charged with verbal abuse of a match official, contrary to Law 10(4)(s). The particulars of that offence were that on the 5th November 2011 he verbally abused the referee during the 4th minute of the second half of the match.

THE FACTS

3. The referee Mr Qutteineh reported that the game had been a fractious one in which three yellow cards had been earlier issued. Two of these were for technical offences and one for a matter of retaliation. In describing the relevant incident he said it took place five metres from the Southend goal line near the posts. The Southend hooker (Mr Reed) had failed to release a tackled player. A penalty was awarded to Redingensians and Mr Reed was shown a yellow card. Mr Reed protested his innocence and was reminded that Southend were

already on a general warning for “red zone” offences, he then told the referee to “fuck off”. He was called back by the referee and sent off.

4. After the game he made a sincere apology to the referee. The Southend coach also apologised on behalf of the club and told the referee the matter was out of character for Mr Reed.

MITIGATION

5. Mr Green told the panel that Mr Reed had always played his rugby at Southend since he had been a junior and reiterated his good character. The panel were told Mr Reed had nothing recorded on his disciplinary record. He has pleaded guilty to the offence.
6. The panel went on to assess the seriousness of the offence. Having considered the matters set out at 19.11.9 of the RFU regulations the panel concluded this matter was at the low end of seriousness and that there were no aggravating features. The entry point was therefore 6 weeks.
7. Having considered the mitigation, in particular the player’s character, his timely plea of guilty, commendable apology and obvious remorse the panel felt it appropriate to reduce his suspension by 3 weeks.
8. The player is therefore suspended for a period of 3 weeks. Southend had convened their own disciplinary hearing and had suspended the player pending the decision of this panel. The suspension will therefore run from the date of that hearing and Mr Reed will be available to play again on the 6th December.
9. Costs are payable in the sum of £80.

APPEAL

10. The player has the right to appeal this decision by providing written notice to the RFU Disciplinary Manager within 14 days of this notice