

# 1 Discipline

It is the Club's responsibility to deal with any act of indiscipline on the field of play by players, and/or any of their supporters and spectators on the touch line, or any club member who at any time uses threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour towards any other member or visitor to the club or in any way brings the club or the game into disrepute.

Any member, whether player, supporter or spectator will have a right to the Club appeals procedure following any penalty imposed.

## 1.1 *Discipline Procedures*

The following outlines the procedure to be followed where an act of indiscipline has taken place:

### 1.1.1 **Player sent off by the referee (Society or Club)**

The Captain of the team concerned **MUST** report the name of the player sent off, the match including the opposition and any relevant details to the Club Secretary within **24 hours** of the sending off.

In the case of **Youth Players (a player under 18 years of age at the time of the offence)** the coach or manager of the relevant team **MUST** report the name and age of the player concerned, the referee's name and society (if any), the opposition and any relevant match details to the Club Secretary within **24 hours** of the incident.

**This is important as it is mandatory that the Club Secretary has to report the incident in writing to the East Midlands Discipline Secretary within 48 hours of the incident.**

Referees (Society or Club) must report all players sent off to the Discipline Secretary of the County Constituent Body of the player's club on the RFU Discipline Report form. For Club referees copies are available from the Club Honorary Secretary.

All players sent off will be automatically banned for 3 weeks by the club irrespective of than punishment applied by the East Midlands.

### 1.1.2 **Player Sin Binned (Yellow Cards)**

The Captain of the team (or his representative) must report the name of any player sin binned (shown a yellow card) during a game (this relates to all teams and is irrespective of there being a Society or Club referee officiating) to the Director of Rugby at the selection committee meeting following the sin binning.

If there is no representation from that team at the next selection meeting the Captain must inform the Director of Rugby by telephone.

In the case of Female Players the name of the player sin binned should be reported to the Ladies Captain who will keep a record.

A record of players being sin binned will be kept by the Director of Rugby, any player, who in the opinion of the Discipline Sub-Committee, has an excessive amount of yellow cards will be asked to appear before that Sub-Committee to explain the reasons why.

In the case of **Youth Players** the coach or manager of the relevant team should report the name of the player sin binned to the Youth Chairman who will keep a record.

### 1.1.3 **Acts of Foul Play not Detected by the Referee/Match Officials**

Any member/player who witnesses an act of foul play or bad behaviour by a player (of any club team), can report the incident giving name(s) and details of the incident to: the Club Chairman, Director of Rugby or Club Secretary as soon after the incident as possible.

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Any incident of foul play involving a member of an opposition team that has or has not been dealt with by the match official(s) and is witnessed by a Leighton Buzzard player/ member can be reported to the Club Chairman or Secretary without delay so consideration and action can be taken if appropriate.

In the case of **Youth Players** the report should be given to the Youth Section Chairman.

A Citing may only occur where an act of foul play **was not detected by the match officials**.

Only Unions, Constituent Bodies and Clubs may cite, **not a player or a spectator**.

Any consideration for a Citing must be reported to the Club Chairman or Secretary immediately as there is a very short time scale and a detailed procedure that has to be followed.

### **1.1.4 Acts of Bad Behaviour by Players, Members, Spectators, Supporters or Visitors**

Any member/player who witnesses an act of bad behaviour at any time by any Club Member, or visitor to the club, of whatever age, can report the matter to the Club Chairman or Secretary or any member of the Club Committee so the appropriate action can be taken.

## **1.2 The Discipline Sub-Committee**

The Discipline Sub-Committee will be responsible for investigating and taking action on any sending off, or any incident of foul play or bad behaviour by a Leighton Buzzard player not detected by the Match Officials and instances where a player has been sin binned an excessive number of times.

The Discipline Sub-Committee will also investigate and take action on any instance of indiscipline or bad behaviour by any Leighton Buzzard member, supporter or spectator.

The Discipline Sub-Committee will exercise such power in a fair and open manner with the "accused" always having a right to attend and put his/her case after first been given reasonable notice of the hearing and to exercise its power without prejudice.

### **1.2.1 The Discipline Sub-Committee shall consist of:**

The Club Chairman (who will chair the Discipline Committee), The Director of Rugby, The Captain of the Club, one other member of the General Committee and the Honorary Secretary. **In cases involving female players the Ladies Captain will also attend.**

The Discipline Sub-Committee will meet within five (5) days of the act of indiscipline, offence or incident in question. Further meetings may be held if circumstances require this.

The reported player, member, supporter or spectator **MUST** attend the discipline hearing.

He/she may, if they wish, be represented by one person of his/her choice.

The Committee may also receive evidence (either verbally or in writing) from any other person(s) who witnessed the incident or was involved in it.

### **1.2.2 Those present at a discipline hearing will be:**

The player, member, supporter or spectator.

His/her representative.

Witness(es) to the incident.

Discipline Sub-Committee members.

### **1.2.3 Procedure**

The report of the incident is read to the meeting.

The player, member, supporter or spectator is invited to make his/her statement.

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Witness(es) to the incident make their statement(s).

The character witness makes his/her statement.

Members of the committee may question any of those present about the incident, and/or the player, member, supporter or spectator involved.

The meeting will be adjourned while the Committee decide on what action to take. The meeting is then re-convened and the results of the hearing along with any penalties are announced.

### 1.2.4 Penalties

**In the case of a sending off the club has an automatic suspension from playing or administration of the club. This can be subject to appeal to the discipline sub-committee. This applies to all members and players.**

The Club Discipline Sub-Committee will have the power to decide upon one or more of the following:

- a. No further punishment additional to the punishment of sending off.
- b. To take no action but to leave the matter to the East Midlands Discipline Sub-Committee.
- c. That the player (or other, person if the enquiry is into incidents off the field of play) be cautioned or severely cautioned as to his/her future conduct.
- d. A period of suspension from playing, or taking part in the administration of Rugby Union Football or both, be imposed on the player, member, supporter or spectator.
- e. Suspend or terminate membership of the club for such period as it thinks fit.
- f. Any other penalties or suspensions as decided by the Sub-Committee.

A record of any penalty awarded against any player/supporter/spectator etc, plus the reasons how that decision was arrived at by the Club Discipline-Sub Committee will be kept on file for **3 years**.

Appendix 2 at the end of the Disciplinary Procedures in the RFU Handbook prints a list of recommended sanctions from the IRB. It states the various entry points based on the scale and seriousness of the player's conduct.

Recommended sanctions for Youth players (Under 18 years of age) are outlined in Section 3.

This penalty can be taken into account when deciding any future penalties at any subsequent discipline hearing relating to that member within that 3 year period.

**A member/player/supporter/spectator has the right to an appeal process as outlined in section 14.5.**

### 1.3. Youth Discipline

The Club also has a duty to deal with all Youth Discipline matters (**Youth being a player under the age of 18 at the time of the offence**).

#### 1.3.1 Player sent off by the referee (Society or Club)

In the case of Youth Players the coach or manager of the relevant team **MUST** report the name and age of the player concerned, the referee's name and society (if any), the opposition and any relevant match details to the relevant Youth Chairman and the Club Secretary within **24 hours** of the incident.

**This is important as it is mandatory that the Club Secretary has to report the incident in writing to the East Midlands Discipline Secretary within 48 hours of the incident.**

Referees (Society or Club) must report all players sent off over 17 years of age to the Discipline Secretary of the County Constituent Body of the players club. For players under 17 years of age a copy of the report should go to the Club Secretary and Youth Chairman.

All reports should be on the RFU Discipline Report form. Copies of this form for Club referees are available from the Club Honorary Secretary.

#### 1.3.2 Player Sin Binned (Yellow Card)

In the case of Youth Players the coach or manager of the relevant team should report the name of the player sin binned (shown a yellow card) to the relevant Youth Chairman. A record of players being sin

binned will be kept by the relevant Chairman. Any player who has been **sin binned three times** in a season will be asked to appear before the Youth Discipline Sub-Committee.

### **1.3.3 Acts of Bad Behaviour by Players, Spectators, Supporters and Visitors**

Any member/player who witnesses an act of bad behaviour at any time by any Club Member or visiting supporter/spectator, of whatever age, can report the matter to the relevant Youth Chairman who will consult with the Chairman of the Club and Secretary so the appropriate action can be taken.

### **1.4 Youth Discipline Sub-Committee**

The Youth Discipline Sub-Committee will follow the same format as in **section 14.2** above however, the age etc of the person will be taken into account in the way the hearing is conducted.

#### **1.4.1 The members of the Youth Discipline Sub-Committee shall consist of:**

The Colts Manager, the Mini and Junior Chairman, and one member of the General Committee. For girl players, U1 to U16, the Ladies Captain will also attend. The Chairman of the Youth Discipline Sub-Committee will be the youth representative on the General Committee and one other member will act as secretary.

The youth member should be accompanied by a parent/guardian and can be represented by an adult of his/her choosing.

#### **1.4.2 Penalties**

The Youth Discipline Sub-Committee can impose the same penalties as for a senior player, spectator, member etc as outlined in **section 1.2.4 a, c, d, e and f** of this document however, the age and seriousness of the offence must be taken into account when deciding penalties, generally under 17 players are normally suspended for shorter periods than adults.

**A list of recommended sanctions for Youth players (Under 18 years of age) are outlined in Appendix 3 at the end of the Disciplinary Procedures section in the RFU Handbook.**

A record of the penalty awarded against any youth player/spectator etc (if any), plus the reasons how that decision was arrived at by the Youth Discipline-Sub Committee will be kept on file for **3 years**. This penalty can be taken into account when deciding any future penalties at any subsequent discipline hearing relating to that member within that 3 year period.

It is the responsibility of the Club to report the circumstances of the offence (together with the referees report if available) and the findings along with any penalties imposed, to the East Midlands Honorary Discipline Secretary. The county Discipline Sub-Committee shall confirm or vary the findings of the club's Discipline Sub-Committee.

**A youth player/supporter/spectator/member has the right to an appeal process as outlined in section 1.5.**

### **1.5 Appeals Procedure**

#### **1.5.1 Players Sent Off by a Match Official**

Any senior male, female or youth player who has been sent off or reported by a match official has the right of appeal against the automatic 3 match ban, to the club's Discipline Sub-Committee's decision.

#### **1.5.2 Non Playing Members or Players not reported by a Match Official**

All other members, senior or youth or any player dealt with by the club Discipline Sub-Committee for an offence not detected by a match official have a right of appeal to the club's Appeals Sub-Committee.

#### **1.5.3 Appeals Sub-Committee**

This committee will be made up by the President of the Club plus two members of the club of good character who did not sit on the Discipline Sub-Committee.

Any appeal relating to 5.1 and 5.2 must be submitted to the Honorary Secretary in writing giving reasons for the appeal within 7 days of the discipline hearing. The appeal will be heard within the following 7 days.

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The Appeal Committee may uphold the Discipline Sub-Committee judgement, it may increase or decrease the length of any period of suspension or it may annul the judgement.

### **1.6 Bringing Club into disrepute**

All officials, players, coaches, parents, supporters and members are required to uphold the relevant RFU charters on fair play and sportsmanship. In all dealings where a member of the club is representing Leighton Buzzard RFC they are expected to have the highest possible standards.

This includes the publication of match reports or any other comment on officials, match officials or other clubs either on the club website, on another website, in the media or by any other means.

Any member or team found guilty of bringing the club into disrepute, through any action either at the club or while representing the club, will be subject to the penalties as outlined above and in the RFU handbook.

### **1.7 Recommended Penalties**

Player or member of the club sent off or reported by the match official – Automatic 3 Week suspension from playing or administration of the club ( or specific team) or if a non player 3 week suspension of membership. The RFU guidelines should be applied for the recommended punishments from the IRB.

Bringing the club into disrepute – 3 Week suspension from playing or administration of the club or if a non player 3 week suspension of membership.

If the offence is serious this can be altered upwards at the discretion of the discipline sub committee in line with the RFU recommendations and without reference to the East Midlands Discipline Committee.

**LEIGHTON BUZZARD RFC DEMAND THAT IT'S MEMBERS BEHAVE CORRECTLY AT ALL TIMES**