



RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

6 August 2013

To:

Ed Morrison: Head of Professional Referee Development
Steve Leyshon: Championship Referee Development Manager
Steve Savage: Panel Development Manager
Mikel Mellick: Panel Development Manager
John Lawn: Training Workforce Development Manager
Gary Henderson: Head of Game Development
Linda Fell: Game Development Administration Officer

From:

Gerard McEvilly: Head of Discipline

Re:

Provisional suspension of Players ordered-off the field of play (or cited by a Citing Commissioner)

Dear all,

I am writing in relation to the forthcoming changes with regards to the status of players ordered-off the field of play (or cited by a Citing Commissioner in Levels 1 & 2) pending their hearing before a disciplinary panel.

As you will no doubt be aware, IRB Regulation 17.1 sets out the Core Principles that the IRB have directed shall be applied as mandatory provisions by Unions in disciplinary regulations at all levels of the Game. In particular, IRB Regulation 17.7.1 (k) provides that:

'Players Ordered-Off or cited by a Citing Commissioner shall be provisionally suspended pending the hearing of the case'.

This provision in the IRB Regulations came into force in June 2012 and has now been incorporated into RFU Regulation 19 ('Discipline') as required for next season.

As you will be aware this is a fundamental change from the position last season where a player who was ordered-off or cited by a Citing Commissioner was free to play pending the final outcome of his/her case.

Thus, from 1 August 2013 that IRB Core Principle will apply in England at all levels of the Game and players ordered-off will not be permitted to play pending a disciplinary hearing or an appeal. (You may recall that this was the position a number of years ago i.e. players who were ordered-off the field of play were suspended until they appeared before the disciplinary panel and it appears that we have now come full-circle in relation to this issue).

Due to the fact that players will be suspended pending a disciplinary hearing it is incumbent on RFU Disciplinary Panels and RFU CB Disciplinary Panels to ensure that cases are dealt with as expeditiously as possible.

Therefore, we are writing to request that you remind all referees at all levels of the Game of the forthcoming changes and to encourage them to continue to produce any sending-off reports as quickly as possible to the RFU

Discipline Department or RFU CB Discipline Secretary (and in any event within 48 hours of the conclusion of the match as required by RFU Regulation 19).

Delays in receiving such reports may lead to Disciplinary Panels not being in a position to progress cases as expeditiously as possible and may lead to players being suspended longer than is necessary.

I would be very grateful if you would please pass this letter on to all referees/Referee Societies.

Many thanks for your assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Gerard McEilly
RFU Head of Discipline