

LRLF compliance procedures & sentencing guidelines

All match under the aegis of the Lebanese Rugby League Federations shall be governed by the following procedures and sentencing guidelines.

1 Match Judiciary Panel

Every match will be assigned two 'match judiciary members' (who are not required to attend the fixture).

- Only a written report from the referee or fourth official can trigger the match judiciary panel. Any such report must be submitted to the COO or Match Official Officer on the Monday immediately following the weekend of the match in question. These officials will then trigger the judiciary
- The two judiciary members will be joined by the fourth official of the match in question to form the three-man 'match judiciary panel'. This panel must make a ruling on the basis of the report with a decision made public not later than the Wednesday immediately following the match in question
- Appeal is possible, in writing to the LRLF in a timely manner
- Particularly serious incidents can be referred to the LRLF disciplinary sub-committee at the match judiciary panel's behest

Options Available to the Panel

In relation to each charge considered, the panel has the following options:

- Charge the player through a majority ruling
- Decide there is no case to answer (in which case the panel may still send the player a warning/advice letter)
- Refer the matter to the LRLF's disciplinary sub-committee for further investigation

2 SENTENCING GUIDELINES

2.1 Underlying Principles

- Rugby League is a hard, fast, contact sport
- In a sport with high speed collisions there will be injuries and players take part with this knowledge
- Disciplinary system is not intended to sanitise the sport
- However there is no place in the game for players who jeopardise the safety of others by intentional, dangerous or malicious acts
- The disciplinary system must support and protect match officials

2.2 AGGRAVATING FACTORS

Previous Record

Violence

Retaliation

Injury caused

Incident not part of play

Other aggravating factors

2.2.1 Previous Record

- Player has record of the same or a similar offence in the past - should result in a higher penalty than would otherwise be the case.
- Player has a disciplinary record for dissimilar offences – not necessarily taken into account unless the player's record is such that it shows a general disregard for the safety and welfare of other players.

- Players who regularly commit acts of foul play – should receive ever increasing suspensions which may lead to a period suspension i.e. a player with a serious record may receive a substantially longer suspension than a player with no record for an offence of the same nature.

2.2.2 Violence

- No place for acts of intentional violence or thuggery.
- Includes head butting, vicious attacks with fists, intentional high tackles, kicking a prone opponent, an assault on an opponent from behind, gouging.
- Unprovoked violent assaults punished severely & period suspensions considered.

2.2.3 Retaliation

- When retaliation is calculated and intentional it is an aggravating factor.

2.2.4 Injury

- If the misconduct has caused injury to an opponent, this may result in a higher penalty than if no injury had occurred.
- Panels may consider the length of time an injured opponent is likely to be out of the game when passing sentence.

2.2.5 Incident not part of play

- Where an incident is not part of play i.e. off the ball or in back play then this may be an aggravating factor.

2.2.6 Other Aggravating Factors

- The panel shall be entitled to take into account other aggravating factors as they reasonably think appropriate in the circumstances of an individual case.

2.3 MITIGATING FACTORS

Previous Good Record

Provocation

Technique or Fitness in some cases

Genuine Remorse

Other Mitigating Factors

NB the fact that no injury was caused is not usually a mitigating factor

2.3.1 Previous Record

- Where a player has a good previous record this may be treated as a mitigating factor.
- Must have been playing the game for long enough to have established a good record e.g. at least two years.

2.3.2 Provocation

- An immediate reactionary retaliation to foul play by an opponent may be a mitigating plea as it may be seen as self defence.

2.3.3 Technique or Fitness

- A player who does not have the appropriate technique or fitness levels may be a danger to other players.
- Some consideration may be given to these factors when accompanied by genuine remorse and intention to resolve the problem.

2.3.4 Genuine Remorse

- Genuine remorse for the offence and formal apologies to his opponent may be mitigating pleas.

2.3.5 Other Mitigating Factors

- The panel shall be entitled to take into account other mitigating factors as they reasonably think appropriate in the circumstances of an individual case.

2.4 LAWS OF THE GAME

The International Laws of the Game on Field Misconduct offences are:

- 15.1(a) Trips, kicks or strikes another player
- 15.1(b) When tackling or attempting to tackle makes contact with the head or neck of an opponent
- 15.1(c) Drops knees first on an opponent on the ground
- 15.1(d) Uses a dangerous throw
- 15.1(e) Intentionally & continuously breaks the Laws of the Game
- 15.1(f) Uses offensive or obscene language
- 15.1(g) Disputes a decision of the Referee or Touch Judges
- 15.1(h) Re-enters the field of play without the permission of the referee or touch judge
- 15.1(i) Behaves in any way contrary to the true spirit of the game
- 15.1(j) Intentional obstruction of an opponent not in possession

Breaches of the Operational Rules which take place on field are not included in these Sentencing Guidelines.

2.5 GRADING & DESCRIPTION OF OFFENCES

All offences are graded per match for each offence. These can be accumulative.

The most common offences are listed in the sentencing guidelines with a description to assist all those concerned in referring to incidents in a standardised manner. It is accepted that there will be incidents not covered by the guideline descriptions and each sub section of the laws includes Other Offences which can be graded per match.

2.6 SENTENCING GUIDELINES

All below sentences are based on a 12-match season.

Law No	Charge	Grade	Guideline Description
15.1(a)	Trips, kicks or strikes another player		
	Trips	1	Reaction trip
		1-2	Intentional trip
	Kicks	3-4	Kicks body
		6-8	Kicks head
		3-4	Trampling
		6-10	Stamping
	Strikes	1-2	Strikes with hand, arm or shoulder – reckless
		2-3	Strikes with hand, arm or shoulder -intentional
		1-2	Strikes with elbow – dropping on player
		1-2	Strikes with elbow – ball carrier - reckless
		3-4	Strikes with elbow – ball carrier - intentional
		1-2	Strikes with elbow – tackling – reckless
		6-10	Strikes with elbow – tackling – intentional

		1-2	Strikes with elbow off ball reckless
		6-10	Strikes with elbow off ball intentional
	Strikes - knee	1-2	Raising knee in tackle
		2-3	Strikes with knee – reckless
		3-5	Strikes with knee - intentional
		6-10	Strikes with knee violent & aggressive
	Strikes - head butting	1-2	Head Butting – makes light contact
		2-6	Head butting – makes full contact
	Strikes – punching	1-2	Reaction to opponent – lashing out
		1-2	Punching – self defence
		1-2	Punching – one on one - minor
		3-5	Punching – sustained, repeated & violent
		4-6	Running in & punching – opponent off guard
	Other Striking offences	Min- Max	
15.1(b)	When tackling or attempting to tackle makes contact with the head or neck of an opponent		
	Careless	1-2	Careless (grapple, strangle tackle, flat hand off balance, Ball carrier dips, Stepped and reaching, initial contact with ball or chest, second tackler in – wrapping tackle up)
	Intentional	3-6	Intentional grapple or strangle tackle, clenched fist , intent to make contact with head, stiff arm tackle, no attempt to tackle legitimately, violent
	Other Tackling offences	Min - Max	
15.1(c)	Drops knees first on an opponent on the ground		
	Drops knees first	1-4	
15.1(d)	Uses a dangerous throw		
	Dangerous throw	1-4	Ball carrier's actions were part of problem
		1-4	Lifting & dropping player
		1-4	Throwing player into ground
	Spear tackle	3-6	Driving player into ground on head or neck
	Other Dangerous Throw	Min - Max	
15.1(e)	Intentionally & continuously breaks the Laws of the Game		
		Min - Max	
15.1(f)	Uses offensive or obscene language		
		1-2	Foul language
		3-6	Foul or abusive language towards a Match

			Official
		1-4	Questioning the integrity of a Match Official
		3-6	Verbal abuse based on race, colour, religion, gender, sexual preference, national or ethnic origin
	Other offensive or obscene language	Min-Max	
15.1(g)	Disputes a decision of the Referee or Touch Judges		
		1-2	Disputes decision
	Other disputes decision	Min-Max	
15.1(h)	Re-enters the field of play without the permission of the referee or touch judge		
		1	Leave technical area –non aggressive
		2	Leave technical area – reaching the fracas
		3-5	Leave technical area – reaching the fracas + escalating the fracas
		4-6	Entering from the grandstand area – reaching the fracas + escalating the fracas
15.1(i)	Behaves in any way contrary to the true spirit of the game		
		6-10	Gouging
		6-10	Biting
		3-5	Spitting
		6-10	Testicles – attacking
		4-6	Raking with studs
		3-5	Threatening words or actions towards match officials
		3-5	Deliberate physical contact with a match official (e.g. placing hand on arm to attract attention)
		Life	Violent and aggressive physical assault of match officials (e.g. punching)
		3-5	Use of techniques that place undue pressure on the joints of players (e.g. chicken wing or ninja scissor tackles)
		4-6	Bringing game into disrepute
		Min-Max	Other contrary behavior (running to an incident aggressive , making contact with player)
	Save where otherwise prescribed in the Laws of the Game attempted foul play will be dealt with under 15.1(i).		
15.1(j)	Intentional obstruction of an opponent not in possession		
		Min-Max	

2.7 NORMAL SUSPENSION RANGES – GUIDELINES ONLY

Players and clubs should be aware that the normal suspension ranges are guidelines only and the LRLF has the discretion to step outside of the normal ranges in the following circumstances:

- If the LRLF has previously advised the player that it will apply a higher sanction next time that Player is found to have committed a misconduct Offence; or
- If the LRLF feels that in the light of the aggravating and mitigating factors present it is appropriate to step outside of the normal suspension range.

2.8 FINES

The LRLF may impose fines. Fines are not and will not be issued instead of suspensions and will not be used in an exemplary manner.

2.9 DEFINITIONS

2.9.1 Zero Tolerance

- Defined as not tolerating racist or other “unacceptable behaviour” of any type and imposing severe penalties with no exceptions.
- Policy to be applied to player found guilty of racist behaviour on the field of play.
- Severe penalties to be applied.

2.10.2 Definitions of Intentionally (Deliberately), Recklessness and Carelessness

Intentionally (Deliberately)

A person acts intentionally with respect to a result (for example contact with the head or neck when tackling or attempting to tackle) when: (i) it is his purpose to cause it; or (ii) although it is not his purpose to cause that result, he is aware (or should be aware) that it would occur or almost certainly occur in the ordinary course of events if he were to succeed in his purpose of causing some other result (for example stopping a player).

A person who intends to harm a person and harms another person instead shall be deemed to have intended to harm the other person.

An intention need not necessarily be planned before or during a match; an intention may be formed on the spur of the moment, just before (or even during) the contact or other event (for example during a tackle).

Recklessness

(a) something is caused recklessly if the person causing the result (for example contact with the head or neck when tackling or attempting to tackle) is, or ought to be, aware of an obvious risk that acting or failing to act in a particular manner will bring about that result but nonetheless acts or fails to act in that manner where a reasonable person would not do so;

(b) a person acts recklessly with respect to a circumstance or as to a possible result of an act, if the person is, or ought to be, aware of an obvious risk that the circumstances exist, or that the result will follow, but nonetheless acts where a reasonable person would not do so.

(c) a person acts recklessly if the person is, or ought to be, aware of an obvious risk of dangers or of possible harmful results (for example contact with the head or neck when tackling or attempting to tackle) in so acting but nonetheless acts where a reasonable person would not do so.

In showing that a person has acted recklessly the panel need not show that the person intended or wished for a particular result to occur.

A person may become aware or ought to have been aware of an obvious risk just before (or even during) the contact or other event (for example during a tackle).

Carelessness

A person acts carelessly if his conduct falls below the standard expected of the ordinary reasonable player. The test is objective, based on the hypothetical player, and involves the person either doing something the reasonable player would not do, or not doing something which the reasonable player would do. It does not matter that the person was unaware that the result of

his act/omission might happen, if the reasonable player would have realised the risk and taken steps to avoid it.

In showing that a person has acted carelessly, the panel need not show that the person intended or acted recklessly in relation to the result.