

RWC SEVENS 2009

JUDICIAL OFFICERS HEARING REPORT

Date of Hearing: Friday 6 March 2009

Name of Unions participating in the Match: Scotland v Japan

Date of Match: Friday 6 March 2009

Match Venue: Dubai Stadium

Player's Name: Roddy Grant

Player's Union: Scotland

Referee's Name: David Keane

Offence as stated in the Referee's Report or Citing Complaint: 10-4 (e)

Judicial Officer: Alan Hudson (Canada)

The Decision

1. Introduction

1.1 This hearing was convened before me to consider the citing of the Scotland player Roddy Grant in the match played at the Rugby World Cup Sevens Tournament in Dubai between Scotland and Japan on Friday March 6 2009. Mr Grant was cited by the Citing Commissioner Steven Scott for a dangerous tackle in breach of Law 10.4 (e). The Citing Report reads as follows:

"Scotland No.2 tackles Japan No. 6 from front, lifts him, twists him through horizontal, and appears to drive him head/shoulder first into the ground."

1.2 The Referee, David Keane, had issued a Yellow Card – temporary suspension – for the offence.

1.3 The incident from which this matter arose occurred while a Japanese player (the "Defending Player") was tackled in open play by Mr Grant. The Defending Player was lifted off his feet by Mr Grant and then dropped to the ground with the right side of his torso first contacting the ground.

2. Finding of Foul Play

2.1 At the commencement of the hearing, Mr Grant accepted that the tackle was dangerous but denied that he had intended to commit an act of foul play. Rather, he said, he got his feet in the wrong position and made a poor tackle.

3. Penalty

3.1 The Referee gave evidence at the hearing. He stated that Mr Grant picked up the Defending Player, lifted him past the horizontal, and did not bring him safely to the ground. Rather he fell to the ground with the Defending Player.

3.2 The Referee specifically stated that Mr Grant did not drive the Defending Player into the ground, but rather the Defending Player landed on the ground on his side, and as a result the Referee issued a Yellow Card but stated that a further sanction was not warranted.

3.3 Mr Grant's evidence was that he placed his feet "wrong" as the Defending Player ran across in front of him and he tried to get both arms around the body of the Defending Player to complete the tackle and to hold on to him.

3.4 Mr Grant said that his intention was to hold the Defending Player and fall backward which he felt would prevent any injury but he effected this poorly. He denied that he landed on the Defending Player or drove him downward.

3.5 The DVD evidence clearly shows that Mr Grant did lift the Defending Player and his left leg did extend well beyond the horizontal. Both players then fell to the ground. The Defending Player's head did not contact the ground nor did his shoulder. Rather the point of contact was to the right side of his torso. There was no driving of the Defending Player into the ground.

3.6 The Referee stated that the Defending Player was not injured and this was confirmed by a report from the Japanese team. In fact the DVD clearly shows that the Defending Player immediately got to his feet following the incident and continued in the game.

3.7 Section 10.2.4 (1) of the Tournament Disciplinary Regulations states that I may not make a finding contrary to the Referee's decision unless I am satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the Referee's reasons for his decision are wrong.

3.8 I am not satisfied that the Referee's reasons for his decision are wrong in this situation. Mr Grant did lift the Defending Player off the ground and did not get him safely back to the ground but he did not drop him, land on him, or drive him into the ground. The Defending Player's head did not contact the ground and neither did the point of his shoulder . No injury resulted.

3.9 In the result, the Citing Commissioner's Report is dismissed.

Signed by:

Alan Hudson
Judicial Officer