

**WORLD RUGBY**

**U 20 TROPHY 2015**

**DECISION OF THE INDEPENDENT JUDICIAL OFFICER**

Held at the Sana Reno Hotel, Avenida Duque De Avila, Lisbon  
On Wednesday 13th May 2015

**In respect of:**

Lorenzo Surraco (“The player”)

**And**

A Citing Complaint by Maurizio Vancini (FIR, Italy) in respect of an alleged act of foul play contrary to Law 10.4 (a) of the Laws of the Game namely striking another Player with a hand, arm or fist in the U 20 Trophy match between Uruguay and Georgia played at Jamor Stadium, Lisbon on 12 May 2015 (“the Citing Complaint”).

Judicial Officer appointed to hear the case:

Jean Noel Couraud (France) (“The Judicial Officer”)

**Decision of the Judicial Officer:**

(i) The Player having accepted that he committed the act of foul play (law 10.4(a))(striking another Player with a hand, arm or fist) for which he had been cited, the Judicial Officer upheld the Citing Complaint against the Player.

(ii) The Player is suspended from taking part in the game of rugby up to and including Sunday 14 June 2015. The Player is free to resume playing rugby on Monday 15 June 2015.

(iii) The judicial Officer made no award for the costs.

**Introduction.**

The Judicial Officer was appointed by Mr Tim GRESSON the Chairman of World Rugby’s independent Disciplinary Panel pursuant to the Disciplinary Programme (“TOP”) contained in the World Rugby U 20 Trophy 2015 (The “Tournament”) Terms of Participation.

The Judicial Officer was appointed to consider the Citing Complaint against the Player arising from the U 20 Trophy match between Uruguay and Georgia played at Jamor Stadium, Lisbon on 12 May 2015.

In addition to the Judicial Officer, the following persons were present at the hearing:

- The Player
- Mr Juan Manuel Garcia, Team Manager Uruguay
- Mr Gustavo Zerbino, Head of Delegation Uruguay
- Mr Juan Baldomir, Coach Uruguay
- Mr Ben Rutherford, Disciplinary Officer, World Rugby
- Mr Patrick Lloyd, World Rugby

### **Preliminary matters and procedure.**

At the commencement of the hearing the Judicial Officer confirmed the identities of all present.

The Player confirmed that he had received the relevant papers and the footage of the incident.

The Judicial Officer outlined the procedure to be followed to determine the matter. The Player and all present agreed to proceed on that basis.

The Judicial Officer established that there were no preliminary issues to be argued by any of the parties.

The Player advised that he admits an act of foul play contrary to Law 10 .4 (a).

The Judicial Officer explained that as the Player had admitted an act of foul play, he would now hear the case and to what sanction, if any, should be imposed.

### **The Citing Complaint**

The narrative of the citing report read as follows:

*“After a forward pass in proximity of touch line / Uruguay team bench – n° 18 U starting to fight with Georgian players forming a brawl where several players are involved . n°18 U strikes multiple punches n°17 G to face”*

### **Evidence supporting the Citing Complaint**

The video footage showed:

- U 18 strikes G 2 just after the incident between U 10 and G 2 ( U 10 and G 2 were order off for this incident)
- U 18 runs back with G 17 and strikes five punches to G 17 ;

## **Player's defense**

The Player said that he was extremely sorry for what that occurred and that he was remorseful.

## **Sanction**

The Judicial Officer thereafter invited the Player and the Disciplinary Officer to make submissions as to sanction.

The Judicial Officer noted that the offence of 10.4(a) was listed within the World Rugby recommended sanctions for offences within the playing enclosure (found at Appendix 3 of the TOP) as follows:

- Low End, 2 weeks.
- Mid Range, 5 weeks.
- Top End, 8+ weeks.
- Maximum sanction, 52 weeks..

Applying his findings to the criteria under TOP 11.10.2, The Judicial Officer determined that:

- *The offending was intentional and deliberate;*
- *The Player action was grave;*
- *The Player stroke five punches to G 17;*
- *There was no provocation;*
- *The Player retaliated;*
- *There was no element of self-defence;*
- *There was no effect upon G 17. There was no injury to G 17;*
- *G 17 was not vulnerable;*
- *The offending was premeditated and complete.*

In these circumstances, this offending can be assessed as at the top end of the scale of seriousness.

The entry point for low end offending under law 10.4(a) is 8 weeks. The Judicial Officer then considered the "off field" issues and in doing so looked at whether there were any aggravating or mitigating factors.

In assessing aggravating factors as required by TOP 11.10.4, the Judicial Officer considered that there were no aggravating factors.

With reference to TOP 11.10.5, the Judicial Officer considered that the following were mitigating circumstances to take into account in determining the appropriate period of suspension.

The Player admitted he had committed an act of foul play.

The Player has a clean disciplinary record.

The Player is young and inexperienced.

The Player's conduct at the hearing was very good.

The Player demonstrated remorse

In those circumstances, the Judicial Officer felt that he was entitled to reduce the sanction by a period of three weeks.

The Judicial Officer determined that the appropriate sanction was the imposition of a period of suspension of five weeks.

It was necessary for the Judicial Officer to consider what the precise dates of the suspension period should be having regard to the provision of TOP 11.10.11 and disciplinary regulations.

The Player is expected to play three matches in the U 20 Trophy.

In addition to the three U 20 Trophy matches referenced above, in order to make the suspension effective, as set out in the referenced disciplinary rules, the suspension will be effective for the Player's two club fixtures on 6 and 13 June 2015.

Accordingly in this case, the Player is suspended from taking part in the game of rugby up to and including Sunday 14 June 2015.

The Player is free to resume playing rugby on Monday 15 June 2015. This represents five weeks of suspension.

### **Appeal**

1. The player and the Disciplinary Officer are reminded that TOP 11.13 provides a right of appeal against this decision.

### **Costs**

The Judicial Officer made no award for the costs.

Dated 14<sup>th</sup> May 2015

Jean Noel COURAUD  
Judicial Officer