

Football Association Regulatory Commission (the 'Commission')

**In the matter of a charge of Misconduct brought by The FA against Nikita Parris (the
'Player') of Manchester City WFC (the 'Club')**

Regulatory Commission Decision

1. These are the written reasons for a decision made by an Independent Regulatory Commission which sat on 3rd September 2015.
2. The Commission members were Mr S Ripley (Chairman), Mr G Farrelly and Mr P Barnes.
3. Mr R Marsh of the FA Judicial Services Department acted as Secretary to the Regulatory Commission.
4. In an Extraordinary Incident Report Form relating to the Notts County Ladies FC v Manchester City WFC, FA WSL fixture which took place on 23 August 2015, the Referee, Mr Aaron Bannister, stated *"10 minutes after the game had finished, I was in the match officials changing room when I heard a knock on the changing room door. I answered "come in". Nikita Parris (who was wearing the number 17 shirt for Manchester City Ladies FC) stormed into the room and shouted "you've had a fucking shocker referee!" She then left the room whilst shouting down the corridor towards the Manchester City Ladies changing room."*
5. The events set out in the statement of the Referee were directly corroborated by both the Assistant Referee, Lee Hible and the Fourth Official, Michael Brownsett in their Extraordinary Incident Report Forms.

6. There was also corroborating evidence given by the second Assistant Referee, Ashley Royston although he said that he had heard the Player shout *"referee you were fucking wank"*.
7. The Player was subsequently charged by The FA with misconduct for a breach of FA Rule E3 in that it was alleged that her language and behaviour after the game amounted to improper behaviour.
8. The matter was designated by The FA as a Non Standard Case due to the unusual nature of the reported behaviour.
9. The Charge was admitted by the Player in the 'Disciplinary Proceedings: Reply Form (NS)' signed and dated 27 August 2015 and the Player elected for the case to be dealt with at a Paper Hearing.
10. The Commission also saw a letter from the Club signed by Gavin Makel and dated 23 August 2015. In the letter, on behalf of the Player, Mr Makel stated that the Player, whilst accepting that she entered the Match Officials' changing room and made comments around the performance of the Referee, could not recall using the alleged inappropriate language.
11. The Commission did not accept that the alleged language had not been used and would have given the Player more credit if she had fully acknowledged the charge.
12. The Commission felt that the sanction should reflect the premeditated nature of knocking on the referee's door and verbally abusing him, ten minutes after the final whistle. This was not a case of an angry remark being uttered in the heat of the moment whilst walking back to a dressing room.

13. The Commission members were informed by Mr Marsh that the Player had no previous record of misconduct and for this she was given credit.
14. The Commission noted that if this was a standard case the standard penalty for the admitted offence would have been a £250 fine and a 1 match playing ban. The Commission considered the breach to be more serious than that of a standard case.
15. The Commission considered a starting point of a 2 match playing ban and a fine of £400 but gave credit to the Player for her admission and her clear previous misconduct record. Taking into consideration all of the circumstances the Commission felt that a fine of £300 and a 1 match playing ban was an appropriate sanction in this non-standard case.

Stuart Ripley

Regulatory Commission Chairman

7th September 2015