

**THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION**  
**REGULATORY COMMISSION**  
**IN RESPECT OF A CHARGE OF A BREACH OF RULE E3**  
**PAUL INCE - BLACKPOOL**

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1. These are the written reasons for the FA Regulatory Commission decision made on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> August 2013.
2. The Regulatory Commission members were Messrs Peter Clayton (Chairman), William Thompson and Alan Hardy (Football Panel member).
3. Mr Robert Marsh, FA Assistant Disciplinary Manager, acted as Secretary to the Commission.
4. The Commission considered a charge of a breach of FA Rule E3 against Mr Paul Ince, Manager of Blackpool Football Club. The charge was raised following Mr Ince's comments about the match referee in a post match interview after the match against Preston North End Football Club played on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2013. In that interview, Mr Ince made comments which called into question the integrity of the match referee and/or implied that the match official was motivated by bias thus bringing the game into disrepute.
5. Mr Ince had admitted the charge which was dealt with as an Incident of Misconduct (Schedule C) – a non standard case.
6. In the post match interview, Mr Ince stated 'I just think some of the decisions he's made, you know he was a bit of a homer in my honest opinion'. In the same interview and in the next sentence he also states '...we have a foul on our left back, Jack Robbo and he doesn't give it, like he's trying to get them a winner'.
7. In mitigation, Mr Ince submitted a video recording of decisions made by the Referee that he claimed were incorrect. In his written submission, Mr Ince stated that he was of the belief that '...Mr Madley (the match referee) or any referee would never deliberately make wrong decisions'.

The Commission viewed the video recording but concluded that regardless of whether the Referee had made mistakes or not that was not justification to question the integrity of the Referee.

8. It was accepted that the fixture was a derby and that a late goal had been conceded which eliminated Blackpool Football Club from the League Cup. It was also accepted that the interview had been conducted very shortly after the conclusion of the match and that, because of the factors surrounding the result, emotions would have been running high but this was not an excuse for the comments made.
9. The Commission were provided with details of Mr Ince's previous disciplinary record as a manager. It was noted that there were several previous breaches of FA Rule E3 for which sanction had been handed down but none in respect of media comments which was important when deciding on a sanction for this admitted charge.
10. We took account that Mr Ince had made two comments alleging that the Referee had shown bias, albeit that they were made in quick succession. We also noted that this had been designated as a non-standard case and therefore no standard penalty applied.
11. The Commission agreed that a fine and a warning as to his future conduct were appropriate and this particular breach did not warrant a touchline ban. Having considered Mr Ince's net salary and his mitigation we awarded him credit for the admittance of the charge and concluded that a fine of £3,000 was proportionate for the breach committed.
12. There is a right of appeal against this Regulatory Commission's decision.

**Mr Peter Clayton (Chairman)**

**19<sup>th</sup> August 2013**