

## **Football Association Regulatory Commission**

### **In the Matter of a Sanction on Ian Holloway of Crystal Palace FC for an Incident of Misconduct**

#### **Reasons for Regulatory Commission Decision 28 August 2013**

1. The Regulatory Commission members were Mr. R Burden (Chairman), Mr. M Kearns and Dr. M Clarke.
2. Mr. R Marsh of the FA Disciplinary Department acted as Secretary to the Regulatory Commission.
3. Mr Holloway had been charged with misconduct for a breach of FA Rule E3 in respect of his language and/or behavior in or around the match officials' changing room following the fixture Crystal Palace FC v Tottenham Hotspur FC played on 18 August 2013, amounted to improper conduct.
4. Mr Holloway had accepted the charge but had written to the FA to explain the circumstances and offer some mitigation regarding sanction.
5. The Regulatory Commission had access to the following evidence:
  - A note from Mr Marsh that Mr Holloway's record showed, since 2010, 4 previous breaches of FA Rule E3 regarding improper conduct.
  - A Report from the Match Referee, Mr M Clattenburg.
  - A report from the Assistant Referee, Mr S Beck
  - An email from the Assistant Referee, Mr S Child.
  - An email from the Fourth Official, Mr M Jones.All the above reports and emails were dated 19 August 2013
  - An email dated 20 August 2013 from the Match Delegate, Mr J Morton.

- A letter dated 23 August 2013 from Mr Holloway in which he accepted the charge but also set out an explanation for his behavior, together with an apology and a request for leniency.
  - An article by Brian Moore, submitted by Mr Holloway.
  - An article, headed “Sportingintelligence” submitted by Mr Holloway.
  - An extract from the PGM’s notes on the application and Laws of the Game and disciplinary control, submitted by Mr Holloway.
  - A video of incidents from the fixture.
6. In Mr Clattenburg’s report, he said that, on being invited into, and entering, the officials’ dressing room, Mr Holloway had become very aggressive during a discussion regarding a penalty that had been awarded to Tottenham Hotspur FC.
  7. Mr Clattenburg went on to report that Mr Holloway was ushered out of the dressing room by Mr Morton but, about a minute later, entered the room again, this time uninvited, and continued to shout and act aggressively before calming down and having a more reasonable discussion.
  8. Mr Beck’s report confirmed Mr Clattenburg’s description of the events.
  9. Mr Child’s report also confirmed Mr Clattenburg’s report but added that Mr Holloway had acted aggressively towards him (Mr Child) and had jabbed a finger towards Mr Child’s face calling Mr Child a “fucking disgrace”.
  10. Mr Child’s note said that Mr Holloway had called Mr Jones a “fucking liar”. These incidents took place during Mr Holloway’s first visit to the dressing room.
  11. Mr Jones’ and Mr Morton’s reports also added confirmation to the other reports.

12. In his letter, Mr Holloway explained that he had waited the mandatory 30 minutes before knocking on the officials' door and was invited inside their room after 8 minutes.
13. He said that he had asked for the officials' views on the penalty decision. Having heard it, Mr Holloway still felt strongly that the penalty should not have been given and that the officials had made an error in an incident involving Mr Dobbie of Crystal Palace FC
14. Mr Holloway admitted that he was agitated during his discussions, that he had pointed his finger at Mr Clattenburg and his Assistant and that there was an "apparent misunderstanding" between Mr Holloway and Mr Jones in which Mr Holloway had accused Mr Jones of telling lies. Mr Holloway also appeared to suggest that Mr Jones had accused Mr Holloway of telling lies.
15. Mr Holloway admitted re-entering the dressing room but said that this was only after he had composed himself after previously having to leave the room almost in mid-conversation.
16. The Regulatory Commission was advised by Mr Marsh that had the case been designated as a standard case then the sanction for this offence under Rule E3 in the Premier League, where the charge is admitted, is a 1 match touch line ban and a £8000 fine should we have found it included abusive or insulting language. However, this case had been designated as non-standard by the FA due to a previous charge against Mr Holloway last season and the unusual nature of the alleged offence. The standard penalty did however provide us with a useful indication as to a relevant and consistent sanction for this type of offence.

17. Since the case had been designated as a non-standard case we therefore had the power to order such a sanction as we deemed appropriate for the offence.
18. On discussing the evidence, we were concerned that this was the fifth occasion since 2010 that Mr Holloway had committed an act of improper conduct which on this particular occasion was language and/or behavior towards Match Officials. We were disappointed that the sanctions for these previous offences had not had a deterrent effect on Mr Holloway. We felt that his record alone justified an increase in the standard sanction.
19. Clearly, Mr Holloway's behavior was unacceptable, but we were also concerned that Mr Holloway had, uninvited, re-entered the officials' dressing room. We were not convinced that Mr Holloway had calmed down prior to re-entering the dressing room.
20. We concluded that the issues set out in 18 and 19 above fully justified an increase in both areas of the sanction and we decided that the sanction should be a 2 match touch line ban and a £10000 fine.
21. Both parties have a right of appeal against this decision.

Roger Burden (Chairman)

31 August 2013