

Disciplinary Commission (“The Commission”)

On behalf of Amateur Football Alliance (AFA)

In the matter of Ugo Eganamba (1347577)

(Case number 10394987M)

Hearing Summary including written Reasons

1. This is a hearing summary and includes written reasons for the decision of the Disciplinary Commission which sat on the 21st June 2021 on the above matter, linked with one other case (10397030M) via WebEx

2. **The Commission appointed were:**

Mark Freedman (Chair)
Ronnie Robinson (Wing)
Anthony Mercer (Wing)
Deryll David AFA (Secretary)
Melanie Armstrong AFA (observation only)

Also in attendance were:

Ugo Eganamba (Defendant)
Neil Jenkins (Referee)
Romario Maloney (Witness)
Tunde Salpatrier (Captain Old Parms 5th XI)
Sam Collins (AFA Witness)

3. The following is a record of the important points, which the commission considered and is not intended to be, and should not be taken to be, a word for word account of the hearing.

The commission considered all the evidence that was presented to the panel.

4. Ugo Eganamba has been charged with: **FA Rule E3- Improper conduct (not including threatening and/or abusive language/behaviour).**

Details of the charge are as follows:

Old Pegasonians First v Old Parmiterians 5th 01/05/2021

Mr. Eganamba is hereby charged with misconduct for breach of FA Rule E3 in respect of the above fixture. Having reviewed the evidence presented to the Association, it is deemed that towards the end of the second half of the game he refused to let his team, Old Parmiterians fifths, continue with the match, which is contrary to FA Rule E3.1.

As a consequence of Mr Eganamba’s actions the match was subsequently abandoned.

5. Ugo Eganamba has denied the charge and requested a personal hearing.

The commission had before them:

- Investigation reports from AFA
- The charge sheet
- Report from Neil Jenkins (Referee)
- Email and Witness statements from:
 - Sam Collins, Old Pegasorians (OP)
 - Andrew Hogen, OP
 - Tunde Salpétrier 5th XI Captain Old Parmeterians (Old Parmes)
 - Francis Mariani, Secretary (Old Parmes)
 - Ugo Eganamba, Manager (Old Parmes 5thXI)
- Picture of injured player

6. The Referees report stated that

I had to abandon this match after 84 minutes as Parmeterians V's coach said his team would not continue with the match. The score at the time of the abandonment was 2-0 to Pegasorians. This happened after a clash of heads between two players very close to the touchline where the Parmeterians bench was. I cautioned the Pegasorians player for a clumsy challenge, but it was not in any way reckless. Unfortunately, the Parmeterians player sustained a head injury in the collision. The coach started shouting at me, claiming his players were not being protected. He then said his side would refuse to continue with the game. He was acting very erratically. The match had until that point been largely uneventful, with the exception of a red card I had issued to Parmeterians no. 7 Nnanna Olioli for violent conduct – he had put both his hands around a Pegasorians player's throat. I had stopped the game previously on 3 occasions to check that players were OK after collisions, and, incidentally, had also disallowed a goal by Pegasorians for excessive contact with the Parmeterians goalkeeper. The coach's claims that his players were not protected are nonsensical.

All the players then gathered round the coach to see what was going on. The Parmeterians players were obviously surprised by their coach's decision, and many of them apologised to me for their coach's actions. The one exception was their no. 7, Nnanna Olioli, who followed me around and started to abuse me with foul language and to threaten me.

Despite this provocation I asked the Parmeterians coach if he needed me to call for medical help for his injured player. He said he had called an ambulance and told me to go away (not using quite those words).

I waited for approximately 15 minutes with players from both sides on the far side of the pitch from the coach. Two medics arrived. I spoke with them briefly to introduce myself as the match referee and to warn them that the team coach was acting in an abusive and threatening way. I left them in charge of the injured player, and I then left the ground.

In my view the actions of the Parmeterians coach and of their player Nnanna Olioli were completely unacceptable and require severe sanction.

7. There was a delay in starting due to technology problems with Ugo Eganamba. He was unable to get his video working on his laptop. He had sound and was happy to start the hearing.

Sam Collins was called first as he had to go for a covid test.

In his statement he said:

With 5 minutes left there was a challenge for a high ball where their player was left needing attention. The player who made the challenge received a yellow card which was fair. However, their manager took exception to this and decided to take his team off the pitch. This wasn't a result of their player being in pain and needing attention. Only after 5 minutes when he realised this did his reasoning for taking his team off change to because of this. The manager and the player who was sent off showed disgraceful behaviour after this. They were threatening the referee and swore at him a number of times. On multiple occasions I was worried for the referees safety and had to stand in the way of their team and the referee. When they had abandoned the game the manager confronted the referee on several occasions which was disgraceful behaviour.

He went through his statement and Ugo asked how far he was away from the incident that caused the game to be abandoned.

He answered "that playing central midfield he was close but went to get the ball."

He then came over to see if he could help. He said "he didn't see the players face but he was on the pitch." He heard Ugo shouting at the referee but couldn't be sure what was said.

When asked who caused the match to be abandoned he said "Ugo called his players off the pitch".

Ugo was still having technology problems and was not able to ask anymore questions.

8. At this point we had to decide if we could carry on.
Ugo logged back in on his phone with a better signal (sound & video) and said he was happy to continue.

9. Neil Jenkins (Referee) was asked about the timeline between the clash of heads and the abandonment of the game.

He stated that after the clash which he deemed careless at worst he cautioned the Old Pegasonians player, the injured player was still on the pitch but sitting up. He tried to see if any help was needed but was told to go away. He thought it took about 15 minutes for medical help to arrive. This was heavily disputed by Ugo.

Neil was asked by the panel if the player was moved so the game could restart.

He was adamant this was not the case. He said "the player was still on the pitch receiving treatment when Ugo called them off".

When asked what caused the game to be abandoned he answered " The Manager (Ugo) told his players to come off the pitch as they were not being protected".

Neil sent his best wishes to the injured player and his condolences to Ugo over the loss of his mother.

10. Ugo started his defence by pointing out that we all have a duty of care to help anyone suffering such an horrendous injury. As he was first aid trained his only concern was to his player. He was upset that the referee did not show enough concern and was walking away from the pitch.
He admitted he called some of his players over to help because the people on the side were in shock about what had just happened.
He maintained the referee did not come over to offer any assistance.
He said he shouted at the referee “what are you going to do” but could not remember everything he said. He did admit to telling the referee “We are not going to play on” but claimed this was because of the treatment to the injured player.
The Panel asked what caused the game to be abandoned. Ugo explained that events lead to the abandonment and the referee losing control.
Ugo was asked if his two witnesses could give us anymore information or provide anything new.
He didn’t think so and it was his decision not to call them.
Ugo agreed he had been given a fair hearing and was given every opportunity to put his case to the commission.
11. The burden of proof is on the County. The applicable standard of proof is the balance of probability. The balance of probability standard means that the commission is satisfied an event occurred if the commission considers that, on the evidence, the occurrence of the event was more likely than not.
12. The Commission went through all the evidence that was available to them. They found the referee to be a creditable witness and was very consistent in his answers. Both the referee and Sam Collins said Ugo caused the game to be abandoned by calling his players off the pitch.
Ugo was unsure what had been said and if he had told his players not to continue. The commission were satisfied from the report of the referee and the statement from Sam Collins that Ugo Egenamba actions caused the game to be abandoned.
13. The commission found the charge proven. This was a unanimous decision.
14. In mitigation Ugo stated he was the only person with first aid training and his only concern at the time was the treatment of his injured player.
15. Ugo Egenamba had no previous disciplinary record.
The commission deemed this to be a medium level of seriousness.
The sanction guideline indicated 1/2 matches £10-£30

16. The commission ordered that Ugo Egenamba be:

- **Ordered to serve a 1 match Ground ban;**
- **Fined the sun of £20.00;**
- **Old Parmiterians be issued with 10 penalty points.**

17. There is a right to appeal these decisions, in accordance with FA Regulation.

Mark Freedman
Ronnie Robinson
Anthony Mercer

22 June 2021