

**THE NATIONAL COUNTY FA SERIOUS CASE PANEL**

*Sitting on behalf of Berks & Bucks Football Association*

**A NON-PERSONAL HEARING**

*of*

**DAVEY DRYSDALE  
(CASE ID: 10497323M)**

**DECISION AND REASONS**

## Introduction

1. On 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021, the Football Association convened a National CFA Serious Case Non-Personal Hearing on behalf of Berks & Bucks FA to adjudicate on disciplinary charges levied against Mr Davey Drysdale.
2. The following panel member was appointed to hear this matter:  
Mr Richard Stubbs, member of the National CFA Serious Case Panel
3. By charge letter dated 24<sup>th</sup> September 2021 Mr Drysdale was charged in relation to alleged misconduct towards a match official at a match between MK Benfica v MK Galaxy on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2021, in which Mr Drysdale played for MK Benfica.
4. Mr Drysdale is charged with:
  - 4.1. A breach of FA Rule E3.1 – Improper Conduct Against a Match Official (including threatening and/or abusive language/behaviour)
5. It is alleged that following full time, after Mr Drysdale had been shown a red card during the match, he threatened the referee, stating “don’t think I won’t knock you out”.
6. By online response dated 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021 Mr Drysdale accepted the charge and asked for the matter to be dealt with in his absence through a non-personal hearing.
7. I therefore have to determine the appropriate sanction.
8. The applicable FA Rule E3.1 states:

*“A participant shall at all times act in the best interest of the game and shall not act in any manner which is improper or brings the game into disrepute or use any one, or a combination of, violent conduct, serious foul play, threatening, abusive, indecent or insulting words or behaviour.”*

## **The Evidence**

9. I was provided with a match report from the referee, Mr Tom Davison, dated 19<sup>th</sup> September 2021 in which he stated that having sent off Mr Drysdale he called him “shit” and told him to “suck my mum”. Mr Davison states that he also threatened to punch and fight him.
10. By email dated 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 Mr Davison provided further information and stated that other comments included “watch your fucking self bruv, don’t think I would [sic] knock you out.” Mr Davison states that the behaviour was threatening in that Mr Drysdale walked towards him and was pointing but that he did not come into physical contact and stayed a good 10 yards or so away.
11. Whilst Mr Drysdale has admitted the charge, he has not provided any evidence in response to it.

## **Sanction**

12. I considered the relevant rules under FA Rule E3.1, Disciplinary Regulations 40, 41 and the Sanction Guidelines issued by the FA.
13. The recommended bracket of suspension period from all football activities for threatening or abusive behaviour towards a referee is between 56 and 182 days with an entry point of 112 days with a fine of up to £100 with a mandatory minimum of £50.
14. The offence has been admitted by Mr Drysdale and in my opinion the appropriate starting point is the recommended suspension with mitigating and aggravating features then to be considered.
15. I have had regard to Mr Drysdale’s record and this matter is the only misconduct offence on it; I therefore treat Mr Drysdale’s record as a mitigating factor. I also consider that the early guilty plea is a mitigating factor.

16. Mr Davison indicates that he thought Mr Drysdale was trying to act big when he wasn't really and although he describes the behaviour as threatening he confirms that Mr Drysdale remained a good 10 yards or so away. It does not appear that Mr Drysdale had to be pulled away or removed from the situation and it appears that it was for a relatively short period.
17. I therefore consider find that the mitigating features outweigh any aggravating features in this case and consider that a sanction of below the entry level sanction is the appropriate one in this case.
18. I therefore consider that taking into account all of the circumstances and applying the sanction guidance for threatening and/or abusive behaviour towards a match official, the appropriate sanction is:
- i. A 70 day suspension from all footballing activity, to run from the end of the period of the 3 match suspension imposed on Mr Drysdale for the red card Mr Drysdale received in the match itself;
  - ii. A £70 fine;
  - iii. 6 penalty points; and
  - iv. Completion of the relevant online education course, details of which will be provided by the FA, prior to the end of the suspension imposed above, failing which Mr Drysdale will remain suspended until such time as he does complete the education course.
19. There is a right of appeal against this decision in accordance with the relevant provisions set out in the Rules and Regulations of the Football Association.

Mr Richard Stubbs

30<sup>th</sup> September 2021