

DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION

On behalf of the Essex County Football Association

Correspondence Hearings

of

**MOHANNAD ALI
(Northbrooks FC)
Case ID: 9570135M**

THE DECISION AND REASONS OF THE COMMISSION

Warning: This document may contain offensive language. Any reference to participants under the age of 18 has been redacted

Introduction

1. On 30th September 2018 Northbrooks FC played in a match in the Harlow and District Sunday League (the match).
2. A report was forwarded to Essex County Football Association (“Essex FA”) by the match referee. This contained allegations of misconduct by Mohannad Ali
3. Essex FA commenced an investigation into the allegations and raised charges

The Charges

4. Mohammed Ali was charged under FA Rule E3 – Assault on a Match Official.
5. The details of the charge against Mohannad Ali were contained in the charge letter *“after dismissing Mohammed Ali After two incidents of dissent he walked towards me shouting “fuck off, fuck off again you pussy, keep fucking off” he then spat in my direction. The spit landed just in front of my foot. He then left the field of play”*.
6. The relevant section of FA Rule E3 states: Offences against Match Officials:-
“Assault: acting in a manner which results in injury to the Match Official. This includes spitting at the Match Official (whether it connects or not)”.

Documentation

7. Essex FA included within the charge letter the following evidence they intended to rely on:
 - (i) A report from the match official, Thomas Whay, dated 30th September 2018.

The Reply

8. Mohannad Ali responded to the charge pleading guilty

The Commission

9. The Discipline Commission members appointed by the Essex County Football Association were:
Mr Wayne Deller (Chairman)
Mr Danny Coyle (Essex FA Council Member)
Mr Andy Schooler (Independent)
10. Mr Robert Craven, of the Essex FA Governance Team, acted as Secretary to the Commission.
11. The Commission took place at the Essex County Football Association Headquarters on 9th November 2018, commencing at 8:00pm and finishing shortly before 8:25pm.
12. The Commission had received no additional documents prior to the hearing.
13. There were no submissions provided to the Commission. However the absence, in these reasons of any particular point, or submission, should not imply that the Commission did not take such point, or submission, into consideration when it determined the matter. For avoidance of doubt, the Commission have carefully considered all the evidence and materials furnished with regard to this case.
14. The match official had been clear in his original misconduct report and had received no additional requests from the ECFA for details and clarity.

Standard of Proof

15. The Commission reminded itself that the burden of proving a charge falls upon the County FA.
16. The applicable standard of proof required for this case is the civil standard of proof namely, the balance of probability. This standard means the Commission would be satisfied that an event occurred if it considered that, on the evidence, it was more likely than not to have happened.

Findings

17. From the documentation that we read there was no doubt that there was a confrontation between the match official and Mohannad Ali.
18. The Commission were satisfied that there had been a clear assault on the match official and no dissenting submission had been entered.
19. Having carefully considered such documentation as had been submitted the Commission members:
 - (i) unanimously concluded that the charge against Mohannad Ali under FA Rule E3 – Assault on a Match Official was proven by the player’s own admission.
20. The Commission determined that the level of sanction was to be in the Mid range.

Sanction

21. The Commission considered the relevant rules and The FA’s Sanction Guidelines. In relation to these cases this was a minimum sanction of a 5-year suspension.
22. The Commission carefully considered the guilty plea made by Mohannad Ali as mitigation and further noted that there was no previous discipline record for this player
23. The Commission unanimously agreed that Mohannad Ali is to be suspended for a period of 7 years with 5 years suspended pending any further assault charge during the first 2 years of the suspension at which point the remaining 5 years would be enacted.
24. The decision of the Commission is subject to the right of appeal under the relevant Rules and Regulations of The Football Association.

Signed

Mr Wayne Deller (Chairman)
Mr. Danny Coyle
Mr. Andy Schooler
Tuesday 20th November 2018