

# **DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION**

Sitting on behalf of the Gloucestershire Football Association

## **IN THE MATTER OF A VERBAL PLEA OF**

**JAMES PEARSON  
OF FC UNITED OF YATE**

**DATE OF COMMISSION: 18<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2019**

**CASE NUMBER: 9699931M**

## **DECISION & WRITTEN REASONS OF THE DISCIPLINARY COMMISSION**

### **BACKGROUND & HEARING**

The hearing took place at Gloucestershire FA HQ to hear a verbal plea for leniency regarding an incident in the match between Sportsman and FC United of Yate on 6.1.19.

### **THE COMMISSION**

The members appointed to the Commission were:

Barrie Phillips (Chairman)

Sue Henson Green (Secretary)

Geoff Endicott (Member)

Steve Francis (Independent Member)

### **THE CHARGE(S)**

The Gloucestershire Football Association charged James Pearson as follows:

**Charge 1.** FA Rule E3 – Improper Conduct against a Match Official (including physical contact and threatening and/or abusive language/behaviour)

**Alternative Charge 1.** FA Rule E3 – Improper Conduct against a Match Official (including threatening and/or abusive language/behaviour.

### **THE REPLY**

James Pearson pleaded guilty to all charges and asked to attend a hearing to enter a plea of leniency.

## **THE RULES**

Pursuant to The FA Handbook 2018-2019 Season, FA Rule E3 (1) provides as follows:

*“A Participant shall at all times act in the best interests 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”.*

Recommended punishment 182 days plus up to £150 fine, but minimum 84 days and £100 fine.

## **THE BURDEN & STANDARD OF PROOF**

Case proven by the admission of guilt from the player – James Pearson.

## **THE EVIDENCE**

In the report submitted by the referee Paul Collier, it is stated that ...

In the 85<sup>th</sup> minute following the award of a penalty against his team, the goalkeeper, Jamie Pearson made physical contact with the match official by chest bumping him, causing the match official to step backwards.

Pearson was immediately shown a red card and dismissed from the field of play. Upon being dismissed Pearson called the match official a “fucking disgrace and a fucking cheat”.

At the conclusion of the match Pearson approached the match official and again shouted at him that he was a “fucking disgrace and cheat and should never referee again”.

## **FINDINGS**

The Commission considered the evidence from the report submitted by the referee, Paul Collier and also listened and considered the content of James Pearson’s plea for leniency.

The Commission accepted that James Pearson had made contact with the match official although there was a difference of opinion as to the nature of the contact or the outcome of it.

The Commission concluded that the charges under FA Rule 3 for Improper conduct against a Match Official including physical contact and threatening and/or abusive language and behaviour is proven.

## **MITIGATION**

In his plea regarding the referee’s report, James Pearson stated that he did make contact with the referee, albeit slight. This happened when he jumped to his feet from the tackle and the referee was standing very close when the contact was made. He claims it was not intentional and on two separate occasions has apologised to the referee for the contact and abusive language. James feels he has badly let down his team mates and the two clubs he plays for and his reaction to the referee’s decision was completely out of character. He is not strong mentally and the incident has caused him a great deal of stress and he is so concerned that he cannot play the game he has put so much time into not only as a player but as a team manager. He admits his actions were wrong on the day and can only apologise and assure the commission that there will not be a repeat of this behaviour.

**PREVIOUS DISCIPLINARY RECORD**

Only 1 caution has been given in the last 5 years.

**SANCTION**

On review of the evidence, taking into account the previous good record of the player, James Pearson and his present state of health, the Commission agreed to adopt the minimum sanction for this offence.

James Pearson will be suspended for 84 days and fined £100. The £30 hearing fee will be forfeited and the club will be allocated 10 points. The suspension will take immediate effect and is back dated to 19/1/19 (the start date of the interim suspension linked to the case).

**APPEAL**

This decision is subject to appeal in accordance with the relevant FA Appeal Regulations.

Chairperson.....

Council Member.....

Independent Member.....

Date of written reasons: 19/2/19