

Disciplinary Commission (“The Commission”)

Oxfordshire Football Association (OFA)

In the matter of Mr. Mark INGRAM – Case ID: 9611758M

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 Thursday 6th December 2018.
2. The Commission members were Mr. T. Edwards (Chairman), Mr. R. Davies and Mr. P. Fisher (independent member). Mr. S. Honey was Commission Secretary & Mr. T. Kingston was an observer.

3. Mr. Ingram had been charged by OFA in respect of the following matter:-

Charge: FA Rule E3 - Improper Conduct against a Match Official (including physical contact and threatening and/or abusive language/behaviour)

with an alternative, lesser charge of:

Charge 2: FA Rule E3 – Improper Conduct against a Match Official (including abusive language/behaviour)

The charges were further detailed as follows:

“Details: Mark Ingram “the player” is charged with FA Rule E3 Improper Conduct against a Match Official (including physical contact and threatening and/or abusive language/behaviour)

The circumstances are:-

On 20th October 2018 in the North Berks League game between Berinsfield First v Long Wittenham Athletic First, “the player” having been dismissed from the field of play for Violent Conduct pointed a water bottle at the Referee and squirted water into the Referees face and said to the Referee “You fucking prick”. When told he would be reported the player said to the Referee “I couldn’t give a fuck about your report.....”

The charges had been raised following alleged misconduct by Mr. Ingram during the match between Berinsfield First and Wittenham Athletic First played on 20th October 2018 in the North Berks League.

4. The OFA received a misconduct report from the match referee, Mr. Marcus Grant, in which he reported misconduct by Mr. Ingram. In that report he stated, “...He (Mr Ingram) had a cut above his eye as a result of pushing his head into Lewis Monahan’s head (for which action he was sent off). He was trying to wash away the

*blood with water from a water bottle. As I showed him the red card he pointed the water bottle at me and then squirted me in the face with water from the bottle. As he done this he said "you f-ing prick". After he done this, I said "ok, I am going to report that too (squirting me with water). After that he then said "I couldn't give a f*** about your report" (sic).*

5. As a result of the content of that misconduct report the OFA undertook an investigation, during which it sought further information from Mr. Grant and sought observations from the Berinsfield club. No observations were received from Berinsfield.
6. The foregoing is a summary of the principal submissions provided to the Commission. It does not purport to contain reference to all the points made, 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 the members determined the matter. For the avoidance of doubt, the Commission carefully considered all the evidence and materials furnished with regard to this case.
7. At the conclusion of the investigation the charge was raised against Mr. Ingram by the OFA on 12th November 2018.
8. An on-line response to the charge raised against Mr. Ingram was received by OFA in which he entered a plea of "guilty" and indicated he was content for the matter to be dealt with by a Commission in his absence. No written response was received from Mr. Ingram. However, a statement was received from Mr. Stephen Perkins, Berinsfield FC secretary.
9. In that response dated 19th November, Mr. Perkins stated, "*.....Is this likely to incur a further ban? While I wouldn't normally comment on these in this incident I was actually stood with mark sorting his cut out, water was definitely squeezed but the ref was not even close enough for the water to have come into contact with him, words were said in frustration only. Please bear in mind that the ref only arrived 10 minutes before the game.*"
10. The Commission had convened at the OFA offices to consider the matter. All the available evidence in this matter had been supplied in advance to all its members and had been studied by them.

11. Mr. Ingram had entered a “guilty” plea in respect of the charge. For the record, after considering all the evidence, the Commission was content to accept that “guilty” plea. The Commission was therefore only to consider the sanction in this matter.
 12. Mr. Honey advised the Commission as to Mr. Ingram’s disciplinary record over the previous 5 years which showed a number of cautions, a sending off in 2016/17 for violent conduct along with the sending off for violent conduct in the game of 20th October.
 13. In respect of this breach of FA Rule E3 the Commission referred to the Disciplinary Sanctions Guidelines issued by the FA in coming to its decision. It noted there was a mandatory minimum sanction and that any sporting sanction was required to be from all football and football activity. It also noted that, due to the serious nature of the charge, that Mr. Ingram had been suspended from 12th November 2018 when the charge had been raised. At this stage of the matter the Commission also took into consideration Mr. Ingram’s early “guilty” plea.
 14. The Commission therefore unanimously determined that the following sanction be imposed in respect of the matter:-
 - a suspension for 112 days from all football and football activities, commencing on 12th November 2018;
 - a fine of £100;
 - 7 disciplinary penalty points;
- This sporting sanction is to be served first and any uncompleted suspension in respect of the sending off will commence after its completion.
15. There is a right of appeal against these decisions in accordance with the relevant provisions set out in the Rules and Regulations of the Football Association.

T. Edwards

R. Davies

P. Fisher

6th December 2018