

**IN THE CONSOLIDATED MATTER OF PLYMOUTH ARGYLE FC and
WYCOMBE WANDERERS FC IN RESPECT OF
CHARGES PURSUANT TO FA RULE E20(A)**

BEFORE A FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION REGULATORY COMMISSION

Venue:	Wembley
Date:	15 th February 2016
Participants:	Plymouth Argyle FC (PA) and Wycombe Wanderers FC (WW)
Match & Competition:	Football League 2 – PA v WW
Date of Match:	30 th January 2016
Regulatory Commission Members:	Mr P Powell – Chairman Mr Malcolm Clark Mr Gareth Farrelly
The Secretary to the Commission:	P McCormack
In attendance:	Martyn Starnes (CEO) PA Kelly Francis (Club Secretary) WW Gareth Ainsworth (Manager) WW
Representatives:	Jonathan Back (Club Secretary) for PA Andrew Howard (Chairman) for WW Yousif Elagab (Advocate) for The FA
Charges:	Breach of FA Rule E20(a) in respect of the Participants failure to ensure its players and/or officials conducted themselves in an orderly fashion during and/or following the Match.

1. Plymouth Argyle FC (PA) and Wycombe Wanderers FC (WW) have been charged with a breach of FA Rule E20(A), namely a failure to ensure their players and/or officials conducted themselves in an orderly fashion during and/or following the Match.
2. PA and WW admitted their respective charges but asked for a Personal Hearing.
3. The Commission carefully considered the written reports of the Referee, Mr Philip Gibbs, and the Assessor, Mr Craig Cox, and the Fourth Official, Mr Simon Knapp.
4. The Commission also noted the letter (by email) of apology and mitigation from Mr Back on behalf of PA and letter from Ms Francis

on behalf of WW and statements from Mr Ainsworth, Mr Dobson and Mr Doherty of WW.

5. There were two charges against PA and WW as there were two incidents i.e. in the 41st minute and after the final whistle. The Commission had had an opportunity to view the video of the two incidents over the weekend preceding the Hearing and the video was watched again several times at the Hearing during which both Participants carefully and helpfully explained, by way of mitigation, the involvement of their players and, in the case of the second incident, officials and/or players.
6. However, the charge had been admitted and therefore the Chairman asked for the record of both Participants to be read to the Commission. Mr McCormack confirmed that during the current season and previous five seasons PA have been fined for breaches of FA Rule E20(a) as follows:-
 - September 2011 - £1,000
 - February 2013 - £1,000
 - February 2015 - £1,000
7. Mr McCormack also explained, first, that this was a “non standard” case as there were two incidents in the Match, therefore a repetitive nature of the reported conduct, and in addition PA had a previous charge for breach of E20(a) proven within the last 12 months, and secondly, had this been a “standard” case where the charge (as here) had been admitted the fine would be £1,000 for each charge.
8. In the case of WW, Mr McCormack confirmed that during the current season and previous five seasons WW have been fined for breaches of FA Rule E20(a) as follows:
 - February 2011 - £9,000
 - October 2014 - £1,000
9. In the case of WW this was “non standard” because of two incidents in the same Match, therefore a repetitive nature of the reported conduct.
10. Taking all the above into account in respect of PA, the Commission decided upon a fine of £3,000. In particular this was due to PA’s recidivism within the preceding 12 months, the repetitive nature of the incidents and the club’s disciplinary record. However, it was noted that the fine could well have been much more than £3,000 because of the Club’s disciplinary record but was limited to £3,000 because of the mitigation adduced.
11. The Commission took the view that the second incident was initiated by the WW Manager (Mr Ainsworth) refusing to shake the hand of the PA Manager and, in addition to the first incident, deemed a fine for the sum of £2,500 to be appropriate in the particular set of circumstances, having considered all the mitigating and aggravating factors.

12. In addition both Participants were warned as to their future conduct and each ordered to pay £250 towards the costs of the Commission.

13. Each Participant has a right of appeal against this decision in accordance with the relevant appeal regulations.

Peter Powell
Chairman

18th February 2016