

Football Association Independent Regulatory Commission

(the 'Commission')

**in the matter of an FA Rule E3 charge for misconduct brought by
The FA against Jamie Vardy (the 'Player') of Leicester City FC.**

Regulatory Commission Decision

1. These are the written reasons for a decision made by an Independent Regulatory Commission which sat on Monday 25th April 2015.
2. The Commission members were Mr S Ripley (Chairman), Dr M Clarke and Mr A Knight.
3. Mr P McCormack, FA Judicial Services Manager, acted as Secretary to the Regulatory Commission.
4. The Player was charged with a breach of FA Rule E3, by way of a letter dated 18th April 2016, in respect of the Leicester City FC v West Ham United FC Premier League fixture that took place on 17th April 2016.
5. It was alleged that the Player's behaviour, following being dismissed by the Referee, Mr J Moss, amounted to improper conduct.
6. The FA designated the case as a Non-Standard case as the incident occurred outside the jurisdiction of the match officials.

7. To his credit the Player admitted the charge in the FA Reply Form (C) and requested a personal hearing before a Commission.
8. In addition to the charge letter and Reply Form (C), the Commission had before them the following evidence:
- a. The Report of the Match Referee, Mr J Moss, dated 18th April 2016;
 - b. A video clip of the incident; and
 - c. A signed letter from the Player dated 21st April 2016.
9. The following 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 has carefully considered all the evidence and materials furnished with regard to this case.
10. At the Hearing The FA were represented by Mr Y Elagab. The Player was represented by Mr J Rudkin, Director of Football at Leicester City FC.
11. The Match Referee stated in his report *"in the 56th minute of the game, I sent off Mr Vardy for a second bookable offence. He became extremely angry pointing his finger at me and shouting. With other players in the vicinity I am unsure *why he shouted? He then came back a second time to*

me before eventually leaving the field of play. The FA may wish to look at this incident."

*Note: It was accepted by both parties at the Hearing that the Referee had meant to use the word 'what' as opposed to 'why' in his report.

12. Mr Elagab opened the case on behalf of The FA and highlighted that the Player had aggressively pointed very close to the face of the Referee and walked away. It was noted that the Player then turned around and walked towards the Referee and pointed again. Mr Elagab specified seven sections of the video clip, which were from numerous camera angles, that he felt the Commission would find helpful. It was reminded to the Commission that the charge against the Player was only in respect of his actions following the dismissal.

13. Previous cases in the current season of the Premier League, namely Gabriel (Arsenal) and Diego Costa (Chelsea), were raised by Mr Elagab to offer some guidance to the Commission. Mr Elagab accepted that these previous cases, nor the current case, did not set a precedent, however they may be helpful to the Commission when determining sanction.

14. In his summary, Mr Elagab also noted that this was a televised Premier League football match watched by millions around the world, which involved the team currently first in the Premier League with the Player's form having played a major part in the team's current league position. Mr Elagab added that the profile of the Player did not impact on a charge having been raised and the same would have occurred for a non-league player. In a final point, Mr Elagab mentioned that pursuant to 8.3(d) of the

Disciplinary Procedures Regulations of The FA Handbook 2015-2016 (page 327) that no more than three-quarters of any such suspension may be suspended.

15. The Player spoke to the Commission. To his credit he stated that he "regretted his reactions" and recognised that his behaviour was "unacceptable". He explained that in a very charged atmosphere he was unable to control his emotions after initially thinking he may have obtained a penalty for his side he was then sent from the field of play by the Referee. He explained that he was motivated to return to the Referee after opposition players had commented to him that they thought that he ought not to have been sent off.
16. It should be noted that the correctness of the Referee's decision, although forming the background to the incident, was essentially irrelevant to the matter at hand. The Commission was tasked with assessing the appropriateness of the Player's reaction towards the Referee after the dismissal.
17. The Commission members agreed that respect for the role of the Referee as the decision maker within the game is an important concept that must be upheld by all participants within football.
18. From the video footage the Commission could clearly see that following the Referee's decision the Player did become very angry and adopted an extremely aggressive demeanour whilst pointing at the Referee. He then walked away only to return to the Referee again in an aggressive and confrontational manner in order to make further comments to him.

19. The Player himself admitted that his reactions towards the referee were 'regrettable' and 'unacceptable' and the Commission, whilst understanding that the Player must have experienced an intense negative swing in emotion during the incident, felt that the aggressive nature of the Player's demeanour and actions towards the Referee were not appropriate. The Commission found the Player did offer genuine remorse in relation to the incident, noted he had a clean disciplinary record in respect of FA Rule E3 charges and further noted the Player admitted the charge. The Commission members were minded to give the Player credit based on these factors when determining the appropriate sanction.

20. Accordingly, having considered all the submissions, relevant rules & regulations and all other applicable factors, the Commission ordered, with immediate effect, that the Player is suspended from all domestic club football until such time as Leicester City FC have completed one (1) first team competitive match in approved competitions. In addition the Player is fined the sum of £10,000, ordered to pay £500 towards the costs of the Hearing and warned as to his future conduct. The Commission unanimously agreed that this sanction was reasonable and proportionate based on the specific facts of this case.

21. This decision may be appealed in accordance with the relevant regulations within the prevailing FA Handbook.

Stuart Ripley

Regulatory Commission Chairman

27th April 2016