

Both the EPA Lady Razorbacks Rugby Club (“Club”) and Talita Falepapalangi (“Player”) have appealed a SCRFU Disciplinary Committee Decision from a March 14, 2024 hearing, arising from a report of misconduct at the 2023 Tri Tip 7 A Side Tournament on September 9, 2023.

A virtual appeal hearing was held and testimony and argument was given. Based upon the testimony and evidence, I requested additional information which has now also been received and reviewed.

I find that there is no reason to disturb the factual findings of either the Club’s or Player’s SCRFU Disciplinary Committee Decision Report. Even though there was conflicting testimony as to some facts, all of the evidence, in its totality, based upon the balance of probabilities, supports said factual findings.

Further, while I find that some of the procedural errors and irregularities alleged by the appellants to have occurred during the investigation and hearing did in fact occur, in totality, the errors do not rise to the level that would require me to overturn the findings below. No one is guaranteed a perfect process, just a fair process, and the process below was fair.

However, I find that the sanctions below were excessive based on the incident itself, and also, considering the delays in the overall process, the sanctions were unjust. Accordingly, I amend the sanctions as follows:

The Player is suspended from all rugby matches for a ten-month period beginning September 9, 2023 until July 9, 2024. The Player is also on probation for an additional ten-month period from July 10, 2024 until May 9, 2025. The Player is to confirm immediately that she understands that she must report any future allegation of foul play or misconduct occurring through May 9, 2025, to me immediately, regardless of the location or outcome of said allegations or conduct. Upon receipt of any alleged foul play or misconduct occurring before May 9, 2025, I reserve the right to alter the above sanction. To be clear, the Player may immediately resume play without any other previous sanctions remaining.

The Club is suspended from all rugby matches for a ten-month period beginning September 9, 2023 until July 9, 2024. The Club is also on probation for an additional ten-month period from July 10, 2024 until May 9, 2025. The Club is to confirm immediately that they understand that they must report any future allegation of foul play or misconduct occurring by any of its members through May 9, 2025, to me immediately, regardless of the location or outcome of said allegations or conduct. Upon receipt of any alleged foul play or misconduct occurring before May 9, 2025, I reserve the right to alter the above sanction. To be clear, the Club may immediately resume play without any other previous sanctions remaining, including competing for USAR and other championships.

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WR Judicial Officer
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