

WRITTEN REASONS OF THE FAST TRACK TRIBUNAL



IN THE MATTER OF A WRONGFUL DISMISSAL CLAIM BROUGHT BY:

Rangers FC

on behalf of

Jack Harkness.

1. These are the written reasons for a Determination made by a Fast Track Tribunal which convened on Thursday 13th April 2023 to deliberate this Claim.
2. In the 49th minute of the Lowland League fixture between Rangers FC and University of Stirling FC on Saturday 8th April 2023, the player was dismissed from the field of play by the Referee for A4 - Denying the opposing team or an opponent a goal or a goal scoring opportunity.
3. The Claimants submitted a Claim of Wrongful Dismissal on behalf of the player. In support of this Claim, the club submitted video footage showing the incident in question and written submissions.
4. In order for a Claim of Wrongful Dismissal to be upheld, the Fast Track Tribunal must be satisfied, by way of evidence submitted and upon the balance of probabilities, that the Referee made an Obvious Refereeing Error in dismissing the player.
5. In summary, the Claimant's submission was that the player made a genuine attempt to win the ball. The player is seen extending his right leg in an attempt to win the ball. Although mistimed resulting in the foul, the player made a genuine attempt to play the ball. Therefore the decision should have been to award a penalty to University of Stirling FC and issue a yellow card to the player.
6. The Referee provided a statement explaining the act which he decided was a sending off offence was perpetrated by the player making a challenge with his upper body, by pushing his arm into the back of his opponent, followed by a leg around the side of his opponent's body. Due to the pushing nature of the challenge this cannot be deemed to be a genuine attempt for the ball.
7. The Fast Track Tribunal viewed the video footage of the incident and carefully considered the written submissions from the Claimants. It also considered the definition from Laws of the Game in relation to denying a goal or an obvious goal-scoring opportunity to an opponent whose overall movement is towards the offender's goal by an offence punishable by a free kick, and where a player commits an offence against an opponent within their own penalty area which denies an opponent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, and the referee awards a penalty kick, the offender is cautioned if the offence was an attempt to play the ball; in all other circumstances (e.g. holding, pulling, pushing, no possibility to play the ball etc.) the offending player must be sent off.
8. Having considered all the evidence, the Fast Track Tribunal decided that the Claimants had successfully demonstrated that an Obvious Refereeing Error had occurred. The Fast Track Tribunal did not see evidence of a push, and consequently felt that the player had made a genuine

attempt to play the ball within his own penalty area, but having not played the ball he committed an offence punishable by the award of a penalty kick.

9. The Determination of the Fast Track Tribunal was that the Claim be partially upheld, and the sending off offence and original sanction should be reduced to the cautionable offence of B1e - Denies an opponent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity as defined by Law 12.
10. The Determination of the Fast Track Tribunal is final and binding on all Parties and is not subject to Appeal.