



## **WRITTEN REASONS OF THE FAST TRACK TRIBUNAL**

### **IN THE MATTER OF A WRONGFUL CAUTION CLAIM BROUGHT BY:**

**Heart of Midlothian F.C. (“the Claimant”)**

**on behalf of**

**Lawrence Shankland (“the Player”)**

1. These are the written reasons for the determination made by a Fast Track Tribunal (“the Tribunal”) which convened on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024 to determine this Claim.
2. In the 60<sup>th</sup> minute of the SPFL Premiership fixture between Ross County F.C. and the Claimant, on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2024, the Player was cautioned by the Referee for the offence of B1k – commits an act of simulation as defined by IFAB Laws of the Game
3. The Claimant submitted a Claim of Wrongful Caution on behalf of the Player. In support of the Claim the Claimant provided video footage showing the incident in question as well as a written submission and written statements from the Claimant’s Manager and the Player.
4. In summary, the Claimant’s submission was that an opponent player’s right knee had made contact with the Player’s right thigh and knocked the player off balance. The Claimant stated that the Player got back on his feet and attempted to carry on playing without claiming for a penalty.
5. The Referee provided a statement confirming the act which he decided was simulation. The Referee stated that the opponent player made minimal contact with the Player’s thigh. He said that the contact was insufficient to cause the Player to fall down in the manner that he did.
6. In order for a Claim of Wrongful Caution to be upheld the Tribunal must be satisfied, on a balance of probabilities, that the Referee made an Obvious Refereeing Error in cautioning the Player.
7. An Obvious Refereeing Error, as stated in Annexe F to the Judicial Panel Protocol 2023/24, is defined as being an error at a match by a Referee or a Match Official which is clear or self-evident, or easily perceived.

8. In IFAB Laws of the Game, simulation is defined as follows:

“Simulation is when a player tries to deceive the referee by faking or exaggerating an action to get;

- a) a free kick or penalty kick;
- b) a red or yellow card for an opponent.”

9. The Tribunal considered all of the available evidence. The Tribunal viewed the video footage and carefully considered the Claimant’s written submission as well as the statements of the Referee, the Player and the Claimant’s Manager.

10. Having considered all of the evidence the Tribunal found, on a balance of probabilities, that the contact from the opponent player on the Player was insufficient to cause the Player to fall in the way that he did with both legs off the ground. The Tribunal found that the manner of the Player’s fall was inconsistent with the contact from the opponent player. The Tribunal also found that the Referee was positioned close to the Player and his opponent, had a clear view of the incident as it occurred and made his decision regarding the commission of the offence immediately and without hesitation. The video footage showed the contact between the players, the manner of the Player’s fall and the Referee’s position.

11. Having made their findings the Tribunal therefore determined that the Referee had not made an Obvious Refereeing Error in deciding that the Player’s actions constituted simulation.

12. Accordingly, the decision of the Tribunal was that the Claim be dismissed.

13. The determination of the Tribunal is final and binding on all parties and is not subject to appeal.