

# RFU SHORT JUDGMENT FORM



Match (home)	Ealing Trailfinders Women	Vs (away)	Saracens Women
Club's Level	1	Competition	Premiership Rugby Women
Date of Match	25/11/2023	Match Venue	Trailfinders Women

Particulars of Offence			
Player's Surname	Harrison	Date of Birth	14/04/1998
Forename(s)	Zoe	Plea	Admitted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not Admitted <input type="checkbox"/>
Club name	Saracens Women RFC	RFU ID No.	364081
Type of Offence	Citing		
Law 9 Offence	9.27 - Acts Contrary to Good Sportmanship		
Sanction	1 week suspension from playing		

Hearing Details			
Hearing Date	28/11/2023	Hearing venue	Papers
Chairmen/SJO	Daniel Gore	Panel Member 1	
Panel Member 2		Panel Secretary	Oliver Norris
Appearance Player	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Appearance Club	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Player's Representative(s):		Other attendees:	
Conflict of Interests	Conflict raised <input type="checkbox"/> No conflict raised <input type="checkbox"/>	Conflict of Interests	Conflict raised <input type="checkbox"/> No conflict raised <input type="checkbox"/>

List of documents/materials provided to player in advance of hearing:			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Charge Sheet	<input type="checkbox"/> Red Card report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Player Statement	Video footage Yes
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Citing report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Club Statement	<input type="checkbox"/> World Rugby Head Contact Process
Other (Please list below)			
RFU Submissions.			



The Citing Report states:

'TF had a scrum in the centre of the field just outside their own 22m line. They retreated in the scrum legally and TF8 picked up the ball from the base and carried hard forward. As TF8 is tackled, the ball is offloaded to TF12 who makes a line break. S10 turns and chases to attempt to make the tackle and reaches out her arms. In this reaching to make the tackle the left hand of S10 grabs the hair of TF12. The head of TF12 visibly jerks back due to the grip of S10 on the hair of TF12 and this grab enables her to make the tackle with the right arm of S10 wrapping around the waist and top of thighs of TF12 to finish the tackle. The grip upon the hair of TF12 was not released immediately and it did effect the tackle contributing to the the action of taking the ball carrier to ground. Therefore the incident is cited under law 9.27 contrary to the spirit of good sportsmanship - hair pulling or grabbing.'

This report corresponds with the video footage.

No medical report was provided by Trailfinders Women.

The Player's written statement:

'We are defending a scrum in Ealing's 22m. Our scrum is dominant and we are progressing forwards as a defensive line. I see the referee initially raise his arm to signal a penalty advantage to us, so as fly half I am running toward the scrum in case we can play quickly, before noticing the referee withdraw the advantage as Ealing play away. As they break, I notice I am unable to effect the first tackle, as my centre comes across and completes the tackle. I therefore realise there is a gap in our defensive line as they offload and I have to turn quickly to make a tackle. I realise I am unable to set and complete a tackle as I have been taught, so I attempt to grasp E12's jersey from behind, below her shoulder. She is travelling at speed and I initially miss her jersey and slip off. In an attempt to re-grasp her jersey, I realise that I inadvertently grab her hair. This was never my intention as I was expecting to grasp her jersey. This all happens in less than two seconds – I only realise once I feel the resistance on her hair, when I then immediately let go and make a legal tackle around the waist which brings E12 to ground. I apologised to E12 and am thankful that the hair grab does not result in any injury.'

The submission on behalf of the Player did not address the incident itself other than to suggest that it was a low-range incident.

Findings of Fact

The Player accepted the charge.

Decision

Breach admitted

Proven

Not Proven

Other Disposal (please state below)

## SANCTIONING PROCESS



Assessment of Seriousness

Assessment of intent - Ref 19.11.8

PLEASE TICK APPROPRIATE BOX

19.11.8(a) Intentional

19.11.8(b) Reckless

Reasons for finding as to intent:

This was initially a reactionary incident once the victim had made a line break beyond the Player but there was a slight pause before the hair was released once it was gripped and it did result in the Player being able to complete the tackle. That slight pause was not sufficient to consider this an intentional act.

Nature of actions - Reg 19.11.8(c)

Grabbed the hair of her opponent and pulled it back to prevent that opponent from continuing a line break, caused the opponent to be tackled to ground from behind.

Existence of provocation - Reg 19.11.8(d)

N/A.

Whether player retaliated - Reg 19.11.8(e)

No retaliation.

Self-defence - Reg 19.11.8(f)

N/A.

Effect on victim - Reg 19.11.8(g)

No injury reported or obvious from the video footage but the victim was stopped while running at speed and taken to ground from behind.

Effect on match - Reg 19.11.8(h)

No effect on the match, the Player was awarded a yellow card and play resumed.

Vulnerability of victim - Reg 19.11.8(i)

Victim had made a clear line break and was running at speed so would not have been expecting to have her hair pulled back to stop her momentum and take her to ground from behind.

Level of participation/premeditation - Reg 19.11.8(j)

Full participation and no premeditation.

Conduct completed/attempted - Reg 19.11.8(k)

Conduct completed.

Other features of player's conduct - Reg 19.11.8(l)

N/A.

Assessment of Seriousness Continued

Entry point

<u>Low-end</u>	<u>Weeks</u>	<u>Mid-range</u>	<u>Weeks</u>	<u>Top-end*</u>	<u>Weeks</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	

\*If Top End, the JO or Panel should identify, if appropriate, an entry point between the Top End and the maximum sanction and provide the reasons for selecting this entry point, below.

In making the above assessment, the Panel should consider the RFU Practice Note as set out in Appendix 5 to Regulation 19. Significant weight should be given to RFU regulation 19.11.8(a), 19.11.8(h) and 19.11.8(i).

Reasons for selecting entry point:

Taking into account all of the relevant factors in this incident and the submissions on behalf of the Player and from the RFU, a low-end entry point is appropriate in the circumstances. Some thought was given by the Single Judicial Officer as to whether the speed at which the victim was running and the danger to that player caused by the sudden stopping of that momentum from behind by the hair could have merited a higher entry point, but the lack of any clear and apparent injury, or follow up medial report from the victim's club, means that it is appropriate for this incident to result in a low-end entry point.

Relevant Off-Field Mitgating Factors - Reg 19.11.10

Acknowledgment of the commission of foul Play & timing - Reg 19.11.10(a)	Player's disciplinary record - Reg 19.11.10(b)
Player accepted the charge and acknowledged guilt at the earliest opportunity.	Good disciplinary record according to the submission by Saracens Women.
Youth and/or inexperience of player - Reg 19.11.10(c)	Conduct prior to and at hearing - Reg 19.11.10(d)
N/A.	Player accepted the charge and agreed for the matter to be dealt with on paper.



Remorse and timing of Remorse - Reg 19.11.10(e)	Other off-field mitigation - Reg 19.11.10(f)
Clear remorse shown in the immediate moments following the incident and from the Player's written submissions.	N/A.

Number of weeks deducted: 1

Summary of reason for number of weeks deducted:
Taking into account the early acceptance of the charge, the Player's clear remorse and her good disciplinary record, full mitigation of 50% can be applied.

Additional Relevant Off-Field Aggravating Factors - RFU Regulation 19.11.13
Player's status as an offender of the laws of the game - Reg 19.11.13 (a)
N/A.
Need for deterrent to combat a pattern of offending - Reg 19.11.13(b)
N/A.
Any other off-field aggravating factor that the disciplinary panel considers relevant and appropriate - (including poor conduct prior to or at the hearing) Reg 19.11.13 (c)
N/A.

Number of additional weeks: 0

Games for meaningful sanctions:

The Player is suspended from playing or any match day activities for the following match:

02.12.2023 Vs Harlequins.

Sanction

**NOTE:** PLAYER ORDERED OFF ARE PROVISIONALLY SUSPENDED PENDING THE HEARING OF THEIR CASE, SUCH SUSPENSION SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION WHEN SANCTIONING

Total sanction	1 week	Sending off sufficient	
Sanction commences	30.11.2023		
Sanctions concludes	02.12.2023		
Free to play	04.12.2023		
Final date to lodge appeal	01.12.2023		
Costs (please refer to Reg 19, Appendix 3 for full cost details)	£125		

Signature (JO or Chairman)	Daniel Gore	Date	30/11/2023
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**NOTE:** YOU HAVE THE RIGHT OF APPEAL AGAINST THIS DECISION AS SET OUT IN REGULATION 19.12 OF THE DISCIPLINARY REGULATIONS. YOUR ATTENTION IS SPECIFICALLY DRAWN TO THE TIME LIMIT AND DIRECTIONS/REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO AN APPEAL SET OUT IN REGULATION 19.12.9

ANY PERSON SUSPENDED UNDER THESE REGULATIONS IS REMINDED THAT UNDER RFU REGULATION 19.11.16 THE SUSPENDED PERSON MAY NOT PLAY THE GAME (OR ANY FORM THEREOF) OR BE INVOLVED IN ANY ON-FIELD MATCH DAY ACTIVITIES ANYWHERE WHICH INCLUDES (BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO) ACTING AS WATER CARRIER/ RUNNING ON A TEE ETC