



Guidance for Match Officials on Reporting of On and Off Field Incidents

Introduction

The RFL Compliance Department investigate around 250 On and Off Field incidents within Rugby League per year. The RFL uses a team of six investigators to carry out these investigations. A number of these are relatively minor investigations, completed by a sole investigator quickly with a clear recommendation to the Compliance Manager for further action. Others are more complex, requiring significant periods of investigators time and often a referral to an Operational Rules Tribunal.

Purpose of Match Officials Reports

Match Officials are often the best witnesses to an incident. Match Officials have a reputation within the sport for honesty, integrity and impartiality. Where an incident involves allegations by a Complainant that are disputed by the Defendant, the best available evidence will often come from RFL Match Officials or Match Commissioners.

Value

The value of a good Match Officials report to the Compliance Department cannot be overstated. If the report is detailed, accurate and honest it can often save the Compliance Department from needing to instruct an investigator, allows a matter to be dealt with in days rather than weeks and provides the RFL the opportunity to show that its Match Officials are efficient and impartial.

A promptly drafted report is also beneficial before a Tribunal Hearing. In any hearing before an Operational Rules Tribunal, the Chairman will consider that the best evidence is that which was gathered as close to the time of the incident as possible. The Chairman is likely to prefer the content of a report created by a Match Official a couple of hours after a match, to the content of a witness statement provided to an investigator weeks after the incident has occurred, when people's memories have faded or become impaired by outside distractions.

Assistance

The following should be in the Match Officials report:

- Details of the match (e.g. venue, kick off time, date and competition).
- A description of the incident, including where possible, the words used by the people involved in quotations (e.g. Smith said "you nasty cheating scumbag").
- Whether you believe there were any witnesses to the incident, and if they can be identified (e.g. the incident was also witnessed by the Match Commissioner Fred Jones and Touch Judge Barry Brown).
- Whether you reported the incident to anybody at the time of the incident (e.g. I reported the incident to the Chief Executive Officer of the Home Club).
- Any other details you consider relevant (e.g. I have come across this problem at this ground before, and discussed it with the Ground Safety Officer).



RFL (Governing Body) Ltd
Registered address:
Red Hall, Red Hall Lane, Leeds, LS17
8NB
Registered No. 5835638

RFL is the trading name of The Rugby
Football League Ltd which is wholly
owned by RFL (Governing Body) Ltd.
Registered address: Red Hall, Red Hall
Lane, Leeds, LS17 8NB
Registered No. 3845473