



WELWYN RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB DISCIPLINE POLICY

It is the Club's responsibility to deal with any act of indiscipline on the field of play by players, and/or any of their supporters and spectators on the touch line, or any club member who at any time uses threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour towards any other member or visitor to the club or in any way brings the club or the game into disrepute. Any member, whether player/supporter/spectator will have a right to the Club appeals procedure following any penalty imposed. **Any player/spectator supporter who appears before the County Discipline Sub-Committee is reminded that there is a levy imposed by the County Discipline Sub-Committee as detailed in section 6 which the player /spectator/supporter is liable for.**

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE

1. The following outlines the procedure to be followed where an act of indiscipline has taken place:

1.1 Player sent off (Red Cards) by the referee (Society or Club)

The Captain of the team concerned **MUST** report the name, contact detail and playing position of the player sent off, the match including the opposition and any relevant details to the Club Secretary within **24 hours** of the sending off.

In the case of **Youth Players (those who are 17 years old at the time of the offence/incident) and are playing in a club adult match the same procedure will apply.**

For players who are **17 years of age at the time of the offence/incident** and are playing in U19 (Colts) matches the coach or manager of that team **MUST** report the name, age, DoB playing position, contact details of the player concerned, the referee's name and society (if any) and the opposition and any relevant match details to the Club Secretary within **24 hours** of the incident.

This is important as it is mandatory that the Club Secretary has to report the incident in writing to the Hertfordshire County Discipline Secretary within 72 hours of the incident.

Referees (Society or Club) must in all adult matches report all players sent off to the Discipline Secretary of the County Constituent Body of the player's club on the RFU Discipline Report form. **Copies for 'Club Referees' are available from the Club Secretary.**

For all incidents involving youth players, playing in club matches at any age group below and including U18, the referee (Society or Club) should send the report form to the Club Secretary and the relevant Youth Chairman within 48 hours of the incident.

1.2 Player Sin Binned (Yellow Cards) by the referee (Society or Club)

The Captain of the team (or his representative) must report the name of any player sin binned (shown a yellow card) during a game (this relates to all teams and is irrespective of there being a Society or Club referee officiating) to the Chairman of Selectors at the selection committee meeting following the sin binning. If there is no representation from that team at the next selection meeting the Captain must inform the Chairman of Selectors by telephone. In the case of Female Players the name of the player sin binned should be reported to the Ladies Chairman who will keep a record.

A record of players being sin binned will be kept by the Chairman of selectors, any player, who in the opinion of the Discipline Sub Committee, has an excessive amount of yellow cards will be asked to appear before that Sub Committee to explain the reasons why.

In the case of **Youth Players** the coach or manager of the relevant team should report the name of the player sin binned to the relevant Youth Chairman who will keep a record.

1.3 Acts of Foul Play not Detected by the Referee/Match Officials

Any member/player who witnesses an act of foul play or bad behaviour by a player (of any club team), can report the incident giving name(s) and details of the incident to: the Club Chairman, Chairman of Selectors or Club Secretary as soon after the incident as possible. Any incident of foul play involving a member of an opposition team that has or has not been dealt with by the match official(s) and is witnessed by a Sidcup player/ member can be reported to the Club Chairman or Secretary without delay so consideration and action can be taken if appropriate.

In the case of **Youth Players** the report should be given to the relevant Youth Section Chairman.

A Citing may only occur where an act of foul play **was not detected by the match officials**. Only Unions, Constituent Bodies and Clubs may cite, not a player or a spectator. Any consideration for a Citing must be reported to the Club Chairman or Secretary immediately as there is a very short time scale and a detailed procedure that has to be followed.

1.4 Acts of Bad Behaviour by Players, Members, Spectators, Supporters or Visitors

Any member/player who witnesses an act of bad behaviour at any time by any Club Member, or visitor to the club, of whatever age, can report the matter to the Club Chairman or Secretary or any member of the Club Committee so the appropriate action can be taken.

2. THE DISCIPLINE SUB COMMITTEE

The Discipline Sub Committee will be responsible for investigating and taking action on any sending off, or any incident of foul play or bad behaviour by a Sidcup player not detected by the Match Officials and instances where a player has been sin binned an excessive number of times.

The Discipline Sub Committee will also investigate and take action on any instance of indiscipline or bad behaviour by any Sidcup member, supporter or spectator.

The Discipline Sub Committee will exercise such power in a fair and open manner with the accused always having a right to attend and put his/her case after first been given reasonable notice of the hearing and to exercise its power without prejudice.

2.1 The Discipline Sub Committee shall consist of:

The Club Chairman (who will chair the Discipline Committee), The Chairman of Selectors, The Captain of the Club, one other member of the General Committee and the Honorary Secretary.

The Discipline Sub Committee will meet within five (5) days of the act of indiscipline, offence or incident in question. Further meetings may be held if circumstances require this.

The reported player, member, supporter or spectator **MUST** attend the discipline hearing. He/she may, if they wish, be represented by one person of his/her choice.

The Committee may also receive evidence (either verbally or in writing) from any other person(s) who witnessed the incident or was involved in it.

2.2 Those present at a discipline hearing will be:

The player, member, supporter or spectator.

His/her representative.

Witness(es) to the incident.

Discipline Sub Committee members.

2.3 Procedure

The report of the incident is read to the meeting.

The player, member, supporter or spectator is invited to make his/her statement.

Witness(es) to the incident make their statement(s).

The character witness makes his/her statement.

Members of the committee may question any of those present about the incident, and/or the player, member, supporter or spectator involved.

The meeting will be adjourned while the Committee decide on what action to take. The meeting is then re convened and the results of the hearing along with any penalties are announced.

2.4 Penalties

The Club Discipline Sub Committee will have the power to decide upon one or more of the following:

a. No further punishment additional to the punishment of sending off.

b. To take no action but to leave the matter to the County Discipline Sub Committee.

c. That the player (or other, person if the enquiry is into incidents off the field of play) be cautioned or severely cautioned as to his/her future conduct.

d. A period of suspension from playing, or taking part in the administration of Rugby Union Football (within the Club context only), or both, be imposed on the player, member, supporter or spectator.

Appendix 2 at the end of the Disciplinary Procedures in the RFU Handbook prints a list of recommended sanctions from the IRB. It states the various entry points based on the scale and seriousness of the player's conduct.

e. Suspend or terminate membership of the club for such period as it thinks fit.

f. Any other penalties or suspensions as decided by the Sub Committee.

A record of any penalty awarded against any player/supporter/spectator etc, plus the reasons how that decision was arrived at by the Club Discipline Sub Committee will be kept on file for **3 years**.

This penalty can be taken into account when deciding any future penalties at any subsequent discipline hearing relating to that member within that 3 year period.

A member/player/supporter/spectator has the right to an appeal process as outlined in section 5.

3. YOUTH DISCIPLINE

The Club also has a duty to deal with all Youth Discipline matters. **Youth being a player under the age of 18 at the time of the offence, providing the player is playing in an U17 or U18 club match. Any player who has reached their 17th birthday and is playing in either an U19 (Colts) or adult match is classed as an adult and will therefore be dealt with under the procedure outlined in section 1 above.**

All players U18 years of age whether playing in age group, colts or adult rugby matches will automatically be suspended from playing, irrespective of the referee being a member of a society or a club referee, until they have appeared before a club Discipline Sub-Committee.

3.1 Player sent off (Red Cards) by the referee (Society or Club)

In the case of Youth Players the coach or manager of the relevant team **MUST** report the name, age, DoB, playing position and contact details of the player concerned, the referee's name and society (if any), the opposition and any relevant match details to the relevant Youth Chairman and the Club Secretary within 24 hours of the incident.

This is important as it is mandatory that the Club Secretary has to report the incident in writing to the Hertfordshire County Youth Discipline Secretary within 72 hours of the incident.

Referees (Society or Club) who red card a player who has reached 17 years of age (and is playing in an U19 [Colts] match) must send the report to the Discipline Secretary of the County Constituent Body of that players club.

For all incidents involving youth players, playing in club matches at any age group below and including U18, the referee (Society or Club) should send the report form to the Club Secretary and the relevant Youth Chairman within 48 hours of the incident.

All reports should be on the RFU Discipline Report form. Copies of this form for Club referees are available from the Club Secretary.

3.2 Player Sin Binned (Yellow Card) by a referee (Society or Club)

In the case of Youth Players the coach or manager of the relevant team should report the name of the player sin binned (shown a yellow card) to the relevant Youth Chairman.

A record of players who have been sin binned will be kept by the relevant Chairman. Any player who has been **sin binned twice** in a season will be asked to appear before the Youth Discipline Sub Committee.

3.3 Acts of Bad Behaviour by Players, Spectators, Supporters and Visitors

Any member/player who witnesses an act of bad behaviour at any time by any Club Member or visiting supporter/spectator, of whatever age, can report the matter to the relevant Youth Chairman who will consult with the Chairman of the Club and Secretary so the appropriate action can be taken.

3.4. Acts of Bullying

Bullying of any kind is not acceptable in any form or at any age at Sidcup Rugby Football Club. Any instances will be taken seriously, responded to promptly, and procedures followed to deal with the situation.

Rugby is a 'telling' culture and anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to report it to the Club Welfare Officer. He/she will follow the guidelines as outlined in the RFU Anti Bullying Policy.

It is the responsibility of every adult working in rugby union to ensure that everyone, adults and all young people can enjoy the sport in a safe, enjoyable environment.

4 YOUTH DISCIPLINE SUB-COMMITTEE

The Youth Discipline Sub Committee will follow the format as in section 2 above however, the age etc of the person will be taken into account in the way the hearing is conducted.

4.1 The members of the Youth Discipline Sub Committee shall consist of:

The Colts Chairman, the Junior Chairman, the Mini Chairman and one member of the General Committee. For girl players, U13 to U18, the Girls Section Representative will also attend. The Chairman of the Youth Discipline Sub Committee will be the youth representative on the General Committee and one other member will act as secretary.

The youth member should be accompanied by a parent/guardian and can be represented by an adult of his/her choosing.

4.2 Penalties

The Youth Discipline Sub Committee can impose the same penalties as for a senior player, spectator, member etc as outlined in section 2.4 a, c, d, e and f of this document however, the age and seriousness of the offence must be taken into account when deciding penalties, generally players under the age of 18 are normally suspended for shorter periods than adults.

A list of recommended sanctions for Youth players (Under 18 years of age) are outlined in Appendix 3 at the end of the Disciplinary Procedures section in the RFU Handbook.

A record of the penalty awarded against any youth player/spectator etc (if any), plus the reasons how that decision was arrived at by the Youth Discipline Sub Committee will be kept on file for **3 years**. This penalty can be taken into account when deciding any future penalties at any subsequent discipline hearing relating to that member within that 3 year period.

It is the responsibility of the Club to report the circumstances of the offence (together with the referees report if available) and the findings along with any penalties imposed, to the KCRFU Honorary Discipline Secretary. The county Discipline Sub Committee shall confirm or vary the findings of the club's Discipline Sub Committee.

A youth player/supporter/spectator/member has the right to an appeal process as outlined in section 5.

5 APPEALS PROCEDURE

5.1 Players Reported by a Match Official

Any senior male, female or youth player (who has reached their 17th birthday and were playing in an adult or U19 Colts match when the offence occurred) who has been reported by a match official has the right of appeal against the club's Discipline Sub Committees decision to the club's Appeals Sub Committee.

5.2 Non Playing Members or Players not reported by a Match Official

All other members, senior or youth or any player dealt with by the club Discipline Sub Committee for an offence not detected by a match official have a right of appeal to the club's Appeals Sub Committee.

5.3 Appeals Sub Committee

This committee will be made up by the President of the Club plus two members of the club of good character who did not sit on the Discipline Sub Committee.

Any appeal relating to 5.1 and 5.2 must be submitted to the Honorary Secretary in writing giving reasons for the appeal within 7 days of the discipline hearing. The appeal will be heard within the following 7 days.

The Appeal Committee may uphold the Discipline Sub Committee judgement, it may increase or decrease the length of any period of suspension or it may annul the judgement.

6. COSTS OF ATTENDING A COUNTY DISCIPLINE HEARING

There is a levy imposed on the **Club by the County** under County Resolution 3.3 for any player appearing before the County Discipline Committee (senior player or youth player who has reached their 17th birthday and who was playing in an adult or U19 [Colts] match)

The amount of such levy shall be as determined from time to time by the County Union.

However, it is the club's policy that this levy **MUST be paid by the individual concerned and therefore the club will invoice the player for the said amount.**

Failure to pay the club this levy will result in the player being banned from playing any further matches or use any club facilities until the levy is paid in full. If a player leaves consequent to not paying the levy they will not be entitled to a refund of their annual subscription.