

DISCIPLINARY DECISION



Match	Wales U20 v Scotland U20		
Player's Union	Wales	Competition	Six Nations U20 2025
Date of Match	March 7 2025	Match venue	Hive Stadium Scotland
Applicable rules	2025 SIX NATIONS DISCIPLINARY AND ANTI-DOPING RULES		

PARTICULARS OF OFFENCE			
Player's Surname	COTTLE	Player's Forename(s)	Tom
Player's Date of birth	25/11/2006	Referee's Name	Katsuki FURUSE
Foul play	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Admitted <input type="checkbox"/> Not admitted	Red card warranted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Admitted <input type="checkbox"/> Not admitted
Offence	9.25 A Player must not intentionally charge or obstruct an opponent who has just kicked the ball	SELECT: Red card <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Citing <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If "Other" selected, please specify:	
Summary of sanction	Three (3) weeks May be reduced to Two (2) weeks if accepted for Coaching Intervention Programme by World Rugby		

HEARING DETAILS			
Hearing date	Tuesday 11 March 2025	Hearing venue	Zoom call
Chairman/JO	Brenda HEATHER-LATU (Samoa)		
Other members of Disciplinary Committee	Valeriu TOMA Former Referee (Romania) Martyn WOOD Former International Player (England)		
Appearance Player	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Appearance Player's union	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Player's representative(s)	Andy LLOYD Performance Pathways & Talent Manager Welsh Rugby Union Group	Disciplinary Officer and/or other attendees	Tom PRICE Disciplinary Administrator/Officer Six Nations Rugby Limited Annie QUANTRILL SNRL
List of documents/materials provided to Player in advance of hearing	Formal Red Card Notice of Hearing Referee Report - Katsuki FURUSE TMO Report - Olly HODGES Players Statement - Noah COWAN No 9 Scotland Doctors Statement - Dr Neil HOWIE SRU U20 Team Doctor Players Replies to Standing Directions SNRL Disciplinary Rules for U20 World Rugby Laws of the Game Video Evidence : Broadcast Footage & Clips from TMO Review		



SUMMARY OF ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CITING/REFEREE'S REPORT/INCIDENT FOOTAGE

The Wales Player No 5 Tom Cottle was running towards the Scottish Number 9 who was in the course of kicking the ball and collided with him along his left side, with contact to the head.

The Wales player was running towards the kicker at speed and then appeared to brace himself for the imminent collision by folding his arms to his chest at the last minute, without any attempt to wrap his arms around the other Player, which resulted in direct contact with the kicker and they both fell to the ground.

The Referee stopped the play and after viewing the clips and a TMO review, applied the Head Contact Process with the TMO and considered that the tackle was late and dangerous occurring immediately after the No 9 had kicked the ball, identifying contact to the head, and issued a Red Card.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF OTHER EVIDENCE (e.g. medical reports)

The SRU Doctor examined the Scottish Player and sent him for a HIA1 assessment which he failed and he took no further part in the game. He also had a 'dead leg' from the incident requiring compression dressings and analgesia

He subsequently passed his HIA 2 and HIA 3 assessments and was deemed not to have sustained a concussion and will be eligible for selection this Friday 14 March 2025

The Player advises he also took a knee to the thigh and is undergoing treatment for a quad contusion which limited his training activities.

SUMMARY OF PLAYER'S EVIDENCE

The Player is 18 years old and still at high school in year 13 and due to sit his A levels in September 2025. He is 6 foot 6 inches, of solid build, and estimates that the Scottish No 9 player was around 5 foot eight in height and from the video evidence is of medium build.

The Player says he was running hard to either stop a 'pass back' from the No 9 to other Scottish players or to charge down the kick, and was leading the charge towards the kicker and was already committed but was too late to stop the kick and tried to pull back but was running too fast in an upright position and mistimed his run to charge down the ball, but realized too late he was going to collide so pulled in his arms to his chest instinctively to brace himself from the impact.

He was running fast to stop the ball, but he underestimated how close he was, and how he couldn't stop the momentum carrying him forward due to the speed he was running and underestimated the force which was moving. He realized the significance upon impact, as he felt the height and weight difference with the other player (whose head only reached his chest).

He apologized on and off the field and was very sorry when the No 9 was taken off for a HIA.

In the future, he would slow down and consider whether a charge down was even possible and pull out before connecting with the other player and try to understand the momentum which his height and weight carries on the field.

The Player has not played a game at a senior level and there is an indication from the Players Representative that he is likely to do so shortly.

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Disciplinary Committee finds as a matter of fact that:

1. The Player committed an act of foul play under Laws 25 insofar as he charged the Scottish Player No 9 late and dangerously immediately after the player had kicked the ball.
2. The Scottish Player underwent a HIA which he failed and he took no further part in the game at the 35th minute of the first half.
3. The Red Card was issued by the Match Referee after viewing the video clips of the incident and conferring with the Match TMO;
4. The Player admitted that he committed an act of Foul Play and admits the Red Card was warranted
5. The Player was aged 18 years at the time of the match.

DECISION

Foul play	Admitted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Determined <input type="checkbox"/> Not determined <input type="checkbox"/> Other disposal (please state) <input type="checkbox"/>
Red card warranted	Admitted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Determined <input type="checkbox"/> Not determined <input type="checkbox"/> Other disposal (please state) <input type="checkbox"/>

SANCTIONING PROCESS

References below are to provisions in the 2025 Disciplinary and Anti-Doping Rules, which form Schedule Four of the 2025 Six Nations Terms of Participation documentation.

ASSESSMENT OF SERIOUSNESS

Assessment of intent – clause 2.5.89 (a) and (b)
Intentional <input type="checkbox"/> Reckless <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
State reasons
The Players inexperience and his lack of experience resulted in his failure to appreciate the risk to the Scottish Player when he was running at speed but mistimed his actions without the ability to prevent a collision
Nature of actions – clause 2.5.89 (c)
They were instinctive but exposed him to the risk of foul play and injury to the other player

Existence of provocation – clause 2.5.89 (d)
NIL
Whether Player retaliated – clause 2.5.89 (e)
NO
Self-defence – clause 2.5.89 (f)
NO
Effect on victim – clause 2.5.89 (g)
He failed his HIA and took no further part in the game and had treatment for a quad contusion
Effect on match – clause 2.5.89 (h)
Reduced the Wales team to 13 players after 35 minutes elapsed in the first half
Vulnerability of victim – clause 2.5.89 (i)
Was in a vulnerable position given that he had just kicked the ball as well as the speed, weight and height of the Wales player
Level of participation/premeditation – clause 2.5.89 (j)
Full participation without understanding of the potential consequences of the foul play
Conduct completed/attempted – clause 2.5.89 (k)
Completed
Other features of Player’s conduct – clause 2.5.89 (l)
Inexperience and a lack of knowledge contributed to this young players choices when deciding what to do about a potential kick

ASSESSMENT OF SERIOUSNESS CONTINUED

Entry point					
<u>Top end*</u>	<u>Weeks/matches</u>	<u>Mid-range</u>	<u>Weeks/matches</u>	<u>Lower end</u>	<u>Weeks/matches</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	6	<input type="checkbox"/>	

*If top end, the JO or Disciplinary Committee must identify, based on his/her/its assessment of the seriousness of the conduct, an entry point between the top end and the maximum sanction and provide the reasons for selecting this entry point, below (see clause 2.5.90).

Reasons for selecting entry point above top end

RELEVANT OFF-FIELD MITIGATING FACTORS

Acknowledgement of foul play (and timing) – clause 2.5.91(a)	Player’s disciplinary record – clause 2.5.91 (b)
At the first opportunity after receiving the Red card Notice Apologized to the Scottish no 9 on and off the field	Clean
Youth and/or inexperience of Player – clause 2.5.91 (c)	Conduct prior to and at hearing – clause 2.5.91 (d)
Only 18 years old and still at school	Excellent Respectful, honest and responsible
Remorse (and timing if remorse) – clause 2.5.91 (e)	Other off-field mitigation – clause 2.5.91 (f)
Was remorseful and regretful for his actions and towards the other player	Texted the other Player expressing his regrets and asking for his forgiveness

Number of weeks/matches deducted: 3

Summary of reasons for number of weeks/matches deducted:
 The panel was impressed with this young man and thought he took an honest and respectful approach to a disciplinary process that was new and stressful for such a young player.
 The Panel gave him a full 50% discount on the Six-week entry point based on his early admissions, his apologetic attitude, his age and very limited experience, his clean disciplinary record and his excellent conduct during the hearing.
 The 3 week sanction may be reduced by 1 week subject to approval by World Rugby for the Players acceptance in the Coaching Intervention Programme

RELEVANT OFF-FIELD AGGRAVATING FACTORS

Player’s status as an offender of the Laws of the Game – clause 2.5.94 (a)
NIL
Need for deterrence – clause 2.5.94 (b)
NIL
Any other off-field aggravating factors – clause 2.5.94 (c)
NIL

N
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Number of additional weeks/matches:

SANCTION

NOTE: PLAYERS ORDERED OFF OR CITED ARE PROVISIONALLY SUSPENDED PENDING THE HEARING OF THEIR CASE, SUCH SUSPENSION SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION WHEN SANCTIONING – CLAUSES 2.5.14 AND 2.5.33.

Total sanction	3 Weeks (reduced to 2 weeks) if accepted for the Coaching Intervention Programme by World Rugby	Sending off sufficient <input type="checkbox"/>
Sanction commences	Wednesday 12 March 2025	
Sanction concludes	Monday 31 March 2025	
Matches/tournaments included in sanction	Wales U20 v England U20 Six Nations U 20 2025 Friday 14 March 2025 Mold v Llandudno Saturday 22 March 2025 Carmarthen Quins Saturday 29 March 2025	

Costs	NIL
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Signature (JO or Chairman)		Date	Wednesday 12 March 2025
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NOTE: THE PLAYER WILL HAVE UNTIL 4PM (GMT) ON THE THIRD DAY (EXCLUDING WEEKENDS) AFTER RECEIPT OF THE WRITTEN NOTICE OF THE DECISION OF THE CHAIRMAN/JO TO FILE AN APPEAL WITH THE CHAIRMAN OF THE DISCIPLINARY PANEL C/O THE DISCIPLINARY OFFICER – CLAUSE 2.6.4. APPEAL TO BE EMAILED TO disciplinary@sixnationsrugby.com.