

ABBREVIATED PROCESS – JUDICIAL OFFICER DETERMINATION



Match	Hollywoodbets Sharks v Emirates Lions		
Player's Club	Emirates Lions	Competition	United Rugby Championship
Date of match	03/01/2026	Match venue	Hollywood Bets Kings Park Stadium
Rules to apply	United Rugby Championship 2025/26 Disciplinary Rules		

PARTICULARS OF OFFENCE			
Player's surname	Venter		
Player's forename	Ruan	Referee's name	Christopher Allison
Offence	Law 9.13 – player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously	SELECT: Red card <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Citing <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If "Other" selected, please specify:	

JUDICIAL OFFICER DETERMINATION			
Judicial Officer's name	Rhian Williams	Date of appointment	05/01/2026
Information reviewed	Match footage Referee's report Assistant Referees' reports TMO's report Audio clip containing the oral statement from Sharks 15 Aphelele Fassi ("S15") Medical statement of Sharks' Chief Medical Officer Submissions on behalf of the Player including response to Standard Directions and still images Player's disciplinary record Player's playing schedule		
Application of Disciplinary Rule 7.6.30			
Assessment of intent – DR 7.6.30(a) and (b)			
intentional <input type="checkbox"/> reckless <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
State Reasons			
The Player had positioned himself and intended to carry out a legitimate tackle. He had not intended to make contact with his opponent's head / throat.			
Nature of actions – DR 7.6.30(c)			
In tackling S15, the Player's shoulder made forceful contact with S15's throat. Although starting from a relatively static position, the momentum from that point into contact was not, in the Judicial Officer's view, indicative of a "relatively passive" tackle.			
Existence of provocation – DR 7.6.30(d)			
N/A			
Whether the Player retaliated – DR 7.6.30(e)			
N/A			

Self-defence – DR 7.6.30(f)			
N/A			
Effect on victim – DR 7.6.30(g)			
Although S15 felt immediate pain and discomfort, the Sharks’ Chief Medical Official confirmed that S15 had been able to complete the match without further symptoms.			
Effect on match – DR 7.6.30(h)			
None, other than to reduce the Lions to 14 men for 20 minutes			
Vulnerability of victim – DR 7.6.30(i)			
S15 had been jumping for the ball and was landing at the time of contact. He might well have anticipated contact but not a blow to his throat.			
Level of participation/premeditation – DR 7.6.30(j)			
The Player fully participated. There was no premeditation.			
Conduct completed/attempted – DR 7.6.30(k)			
The conduct was completed.			
Other features of the Player’s conduct – DR 7.6.30(l)			
N/A			
Mitigating factors	A number of mitigating factors were present: acceptance that his actions amounted to foul play and warranted a red card; conduct and remorse.		
Aggravating factors	None.		
Summary of Judicial Officer’s sanctioning assessment	<p>In assessing the seriousness of the Player’s actions based on the features set out in DR 7.6.30, the Judicial Officer considered that the Player had recklessly carried out a high tackle in which the Player made contact with his opponent’s throat but without causing injury to his opponent who had been able to complete the match. The Judicial Officer determined the appropriate entry point to be the mid-range entry point, which is a 6 week suspension.</p> <p>Whilst the Player’s disciplinary record (one red card in May 2024 and a yellow card in 2025) meant that he was not entitled to mitigation for a good record, it was not sufficiently bad, in the Judicial Officer’s opinion, to justify it being taken into account as an aggravating factor.</p>		
Proposed sanction	<p>A playing suspension of 4 weeks, based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a mid-range entry point of 6 weeks; • an increase of 0 weeks for aggravating factors; and • a reduction of 2 weeks for mitigating factors. 		
Matches / dates covered	<p>10/01/2026: Lions v Lyon (EPCR) 17/01/2026: Lions v Perpignan (EPCR) 23/01/2026 : Lions v Ospreys (URC) 31/01/2026 : Lions v Bulls (URC)</p>		
Signature (Judicial Officer)		Date	6 January 2026