

DISCIPLINARY DECISION



Match	Dragons RFC v Benetton Rugby		
Player's Club	Dragons RFC	Competition	United Rugby Championship
Date of match	28/02/2026	Match venue	Rodney Parade
Rules to apply	United Rugby Championship 2025/26 Disciplinary Rules		

PARTICULARS OF OFFENCE

Player's surname	Douglas		
Forename(s)	Levi		
Referee Name	Eoghan Cross	Plea	<input type="checkbox"/> Admitted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not admitted
Offence	Law 9.20 d "A player may remove the stealer/ jackler from the tackle area by pushing / driving them backwards (including grabbing by the leg/knee) but must not roll or pull or twist an opponent"	SELECT: Red card <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Citing <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	If "Other" selected, please specify:
Summary of Sanction	No Sanction		

HEARING DETAILS

Hearing date	05/03/2025	Hearing venue	Remote
Chair	Jennifer Donovan (Ireland)		
Other Members of Disciplinary Committee	Michael Ross (Ireland) Mark Curran (Ireland)		
Appearance Player	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Appearance Club	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Player's Representative(s)	James Chapron, Dragons Head of Rugby Operations	Disciplinary Officer and/or other attendees	Jude Canniffe, URC Tournament Manager.
List of documents/materials provided to Player in advance of hearing	Hawk-Eye / Broadcast Footage Referee's Report - Eoghan Cross TMO Report - Paul Haycock Report of Assistant Referee 1 - Adam Jones Report of Assistant Referee 2 Statement of Tomas Gallo - Benetton No. 1 ("B1") Statement of Giacomo Mazzon, Benetton Head of Physio Player Statement. Player response to standing directions		

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

The Referee's report stated that the TMO initiated a formal review in relation to an incident that occurred in the 34th minute of the first half. The referee stated that the player had "completed a croc roll on an opponent which was dangerous and met the yellow card threshold to send for an off field review". On review, the referee reported that the TMO decided that the action of foul play was highly dangerous and that the player had landed on the lower limb of an opponent. The referee awarded a red card on the recommendation of the TMO.

The TMO reported as follows:

"Dragons 4 croc rolled a Benetton player in the breakdown. It was highly dynamic and he landed on the lower limb of the Benetton player".

AR 1 reported that he did not see the incident live but that on review he agreed with the referee that the yellow card threshold had been met "due to the croc roll being dynamic and ending on the lower limb".

The report of AR2 outlined that "Dragons 4 entered the attacking ruck and dangerously dropped their weight onto Benetton 1 lower leg who was attempting to jackle the ball".

The broadcast footage was available, as were eight hawkeye angles from which the incident could clearly be seen. The committee's findings in relation to the footage are outlined below.

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

B1 provided the following statement:

"From what I remember I tried to contest the ball on the ground and for the first I felt an hit from the cleaner and after I felt a pain on knee when he turned me".

A report dated 02/03/2026 from the Benetton Head of Physio stated :

"Gallo sustained a trauma to his right knee. He experienced immediate pain and pain again at the end of the match, which has improved at today's evaluation. Today, the knee appears stable but slightly swollen. A return to normal activity is expected during the current week."

SUMMARY OF PLAYER'S EVIDENCE

The player, in replies to Directions and in the hearing, confirmed that he was the player named in the sending off report. He denied having committed the act of foul play set out in the sending off report.

The main points of the player's evidence were:

- That he had entered the contact square in a "north – south motion with intent to remove square";
- That his direction of force was significantly changed by his team mate, Roderigo Martinez, which caused him to move in a lateral direction;
- That he did not grab and try to twist or roll B1 and that he released B1 as soon as he realised that he was moving sideways, that the upper body of B1 was not brought sideways with him. He said that his teammate had continued to grasp B1 which caused some upper body movement.
- That it was unfortunate that he landed on the left knee of B1 but that his weight alone did not force the knee to the ground. It was also pointed that the footage showed treatment to the already strapped right knee of B1 and the medical report referred to an injury to the right knee and not the left knee on which the player had landed. B1 did not require to be removed from the field of play.

The player supported his position by reference to Clips 4 and 5 of the footage in particular. Mr. Chapron re-iterated the player's position and described what had happened as an unfortunate rugby incident.

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Committee viewed the available footage, in particular clip 5 which showed the incident from an end-on view, facing the player. We found that the player had entered the contact

squarely or in a "north-south" position as he had described. We found that the player's teammate, Rodrigo Martinez, had joined the contact from the player's left, resulting in the player moving laterally.

It was found that the movement of B1 as a result of the contact by the player, was initially straight backwards and B1 landed backwards onto his buttocks. There was some minor sideways movement of the upper body but it was found that the player had not continued to grasp or pull B1 sideways with him. B1 had a very wide stance prior to the contact and the player did land on B1's outstretched left leg as the player went to ground.

Having carefully considered the available footage and the evidence of the player, it was found that the player had discharged the burden of proof and had established, on the balance of probabilities, that the decision to award a red card against him was incorrect. We found that the player had not committed an act of foul play contrary to Law 9.20d but in reaching that conclusion we make no criticism of the on-field decision, our decision having been made with the benefit multiple viewings, without time pressure, of the various clips available and furthermore with the benefit of the evidence of the player.

The red card is therefore rescinded and the player is free to play.

DECISION

Breach admitted <input type="checkbox"/>	Proven <input type="checkbox"/>	Not proven <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other disposal (please state) <input type="checkbox"/>
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SANCTIONING PROCESS

ASSESSMENT OF SERIOUSNESS

Assessment of intent – DR 7.6.30(a) and (b)

Intentional Reckless

State Reasons

Nature of actions – DR 7.6.30(c)

Existence of provocation – DR 7.6.30(d)
Whether the Player retaliated – DR 7.6.30(e)
Self-defence – DR 7.6.30(f)
Effect on victim – DR 7.6.30(g)
Effect on match – DR 7.6.30(h)
Vulnerability of victim – DR 7.6.30(i)
Level of participation/premeditation – DR 7.6.30(j)
Conduct completed/attempted – DR 7.6.30(l)
Other features of the Player’s conduct – DR 7.6.30(l)

ASSESSMENT OF SERIOUSNESS CONTINUED

Entry point					
<u>Top end*</u>	<u>Weeks</u>	<u>Mid-range</u>	<u>Weeks</u>	<u>Low-end</u>	<u>Weeks</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>		<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 this assessment, the JO/Committee should consider World Rugby Regulations 17.19.2(a), 17.19.2(h), and 17.19.2(i) or the equivalent provisions within the Tournament Rules referred to above.

Reasons for selecting Entry Point above Top End

RELEVANT OFF-FIELD MITIGATING FACTORS

Acknowledgement of guilt and timing – DR 7.6.32(a)	Player’s disciplinary record/good character – DR 7.6.32(b)
Youth and inexperience of player – DR 7.6.32(c)	Conduct prior to and at hearing – DR 7.6.32(d)
Remorse and timing of remorse – DR 7.6.32(e)	Other off-field mitigation – DR 7.6.32(f)

Number of weeks deducted:

Summary of reason for number of weeks deducted:

ADDITIONAL RELEVANT OFF-FIELD AGGRAVATING FACTORS

Player's status as an offender of the Laws of the Game – DR 7.6.35(a)
Need for deterrence – DR 7.6.35(b)
Any other off-field aggravating factors – DR 7.6.35(c)

Number of additional weeks:

SANCTION

NOTE: PLAYERS ORDERED OFF ARE PROVISIONALLY SUSPENDED PENDING THE HEARING OF THEIR CASE, SUCH SUSPENSION SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION WHEN SANCTIONING – R 17.14.5(f) (or equivalent Tournament rule)

Total sanction	No sanction	Sending off sufficient <input type="checkbox"/>
Sanction commences		
Sanction concludes		
Matches/tournaments included in sanction		

Costs	Nil
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Signature (Chair)	Jennifer Donovan	Date	05/03/2026
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NOTE: YOU HAVE 48 HOURS FROM NOTIFICATION OF THE DECISION OF THE CHAIR TO LODGE AN APPEAL WITH THE CHAIRMAN OF THE DISCIPLINARY PANEL C/O THE DISCIPLINARY OFFICER- DISCIPLINARY RULES 8.1 (PAGE 4-28)