

DISCIPLINARY DECISION



Match	Scotland v Japan		
Player's union	Japan	Competition	2021 Women's Autumn Internationals
Date of match	14/11/2021	Match venue	DAM Health Stadium, Edinburgh
Applicable rules	World Rugby's regulations (WRR) 17, 18 and 20, as supplemented by the 2021 Autumn Nations Series Disciplinary Rules (DR)		

PARTICULARS OF OFFENCE			
Player's surname	Sato	Player's forename(s)	Yuna
Player's union	Japan	Player's date of birth	11/09/1998
Referee's name	Nikki O'Donnell, England.	Citing Commissioner's name (if applicable)	N/a
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	9.13 Dangerous Tackle	SELECT: Red card <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Citing <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If "Other" selected, please specify:	
Summary of sanction	6 weeks mitigated to 3 weeks. Subject to a further reduction of 1 week on successful completion of Coaching Intervention Programme.		

HEARING DETAILS			
Hearing date	16/11/2021	Hearing venue	Zoom call
Chairman/JO	Jennifer Donovan, Ireland.		
Other Members of Disciplinary Committee	Valeriu Toma (ex-referee, Romania) Rob Vickerman (ex-player, England)		
Appearance Player	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Appearance union	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Player's representative(s)	Hiroyuki Komyo – Legal Council for JRFU. Lesley McKenzie – Head Coach. Keiko Asami – Team Director. Aya Nakajima – Team Manager.	Disciplinary Officer and/or other attendees	Belina Armstrong – 6 Nations. Kenji Nagoshi – Translator. Kozue Etsuzen – Translator.
List of documents/materials provided to Player in advance of hearing	Referee Report and email– Nikki O'Donnell, England. AR2 Report – Francesca Martin, Wales. TWO Report – Claire Hodnett, England. Statement of Rhona Lloyd, Scotland No. 14. Medical Report, Dr. Carrie McCrae, Scotland Team Doctor. Player's Response to Standing Directions. Hearing Confirmation Letter.		

	2021 ANS Disciplinary Rules World Rugby Head Contact Process. World Rugby HCP Application Form World Rugby Laws 17-20. Match footage.
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SUMMARY OF ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CITING/REFEREE’S REPORT/INCIDENT FOOTAGE

The Report of the Referee and TMO indicate that the player made an upright tackle on an opponent resulting to direct contact to the head of a Scotland player. Both felt that there was no mitigation and a red card issued. The match footage clearly shows the incident as described in the sending off reports. The players shoulder makes contact with the face of the victim player and the victim player’s head can be seen to snap backwards on impact.

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

The victim player confirmed that she was not injured in the tackle and that she had received an apology from the player immediately after the match. The Scotland team Doctor confirmed that there was no evidence of injury and that the player was permitted to play on.

SUMMARY OF PLAYER’S EVIDENCE

The player accepted that the tackle was an act of foul play in breach of Law 9.13 and did not seek to challenge the red card. She did not disagree with any aspect of the sending off reports. The player said that she had intended to tackle at ball height but got her timing wrong. She confirmed that she had left the pitch without argument on receiving the red card and that she had apologised to the victim player at the earliest opportunity. Application was made on the player’s behalf to permit the player to apply for inclusion in the Coaching Intervention Programme. The team coach felt that as a young, inexperienced player, the player would benefit from the programme.

FINDINGS OF FACT

It was found, and the player admitted, that the player carried out a dangerous tackle in breach of Law 9.13 and that the tackle resulted in direct, forceful contact with the head of the victim player. The Committee found that this act was reckless but not deliberate. This victim player was uninjured and remained on the field of play for the remainder 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

ASSESSMENT OF SERIOUSNESS

Assessment of intent – WRR 17.18.1(a)-(b)
Intentional/deliberate <input type="checkbox"/> reckless <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
State reasons
The committee accepted the player’s evidence that she had not intended to tackle the victim player in the manner in which she did and that the offending was reckless.
Nature of actions – WRR 17.18.1(c)
An upright tackle resulting in direct contact between the shoulder of the player and the face of the victim player.
Existence of provocation – WRR 17.18.1(d)
None
Whether Player retaliated – WRR 17.18.1(e)
N/a
Self-defence – WRR 17.18.1(f)
N/a
Effect on victim – WRR 17.18.1(g)
Victim was uninjured and played on.
Effect on match – WRR 17.18.1(h)
Nil save the player’s team being reduced to 14 players for the remainder of the match (approx. 60 mins)
Vulnerability of victim – WRR 17.18.1(i)
Victim was on her feet and not in a particularly vulnerable position.
Level of participation/premeditation – WRR 17.18.1(j)
No premeditation, full participation.
Conduct completed/attempted – WRR 17.18.1(k)
Tackle completed

Other features of Player's conduct – WRR 17.18.1(l)
N/a

ASSESSMENT OF SERIOUSNESS CONTINUED

Entry point					
<u>Top end*</u>	<u>Weeks/matches</u>	<u>Mid-range</u>	<u>Weeks/matches</u>	<u>Low 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 (WRR 17.18.2).

Reasons for selecting entry point above top end
n/a

RELEVANT OFF-FIELD MITIGATING FACTORS

Acknowledgement of guilt and timing – WRR 17.19.1(a)	Player's disciplinary record/good character – WRR 17.19.1(b)
Player accepted the red card in her replies to Standing Directions. She did not seek to argue with any aspect of the sending off report.	The player has a clean disciplinary record.
Youth and inexperience of player – WRR 17.19.1(c)	Conduct prior to and at hearing – WRR 17.19.1(d)
The player is young and is inexperienced at international level. The match in which the incident occurred was her 4 th cap.	Excellent
Remorse and timing of remorse – WRR 17.19.1(e)	Other off-field mitigation – WRR 17.19.1(f)
Immediate apology made	N/a

Number of weeks/matches deducted:

<p>Summary of reason for number of weeks/matches deducted: The committee found that the player met all of the criteria for mitigation and that she was entitled to full mitigation. The committee approved the players request to apply for the Coaching Intervention Programme.</p>

RELEVANT OFF-FIELD AGGRAVATING FACTORS

Player's status generally as an offender of the Laws of the Game – WRR 17.20.1(a)
N/a – no previous disciplinary issues
Need for deterrence – WRR 17.20.1(b)
N/a
Any other off-field aggravating factors – WRR 17.20.1(c)
NO

Number of additional weeks/matches: 0

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 – WRR 17.12.5(f) and 17.13.7.

Total sanction	3 weeks subject to further 1 week reduction on successful completion of Coaching Intervention Programme	Sending off sufficient <input type="checkbox"/>
Sanction commences	16/11/2021	
Sanction concludes	09/01/2022 (or midnight 12/12/2021 if Coaching Intervention Programme successfully completed)	
Matches/tournaments included in sanction	Ireland v Japan 20/11/2021; Tokyo Sankyu Phoenix v Risho University 12/12/2021; Tokyo Sankyu Phoenix v Yokohama TMK & Others (collaboration team) 08/01/2022	
Costs	Nil	

Signature (JO or Chairman)	Jennifer Donovan	Date	16/11/2021
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NOTE: THE PLAYER WILL HAVE 48 HOURS FROM THE DATE OF RECEIPT OF THE WRITTEN DECISION TO FILE AN APPEAL WITH THE ADMINISTRATOR – DR 6.2(a). TO BE EMAILED TO disciplinary@6nations.net.