



8 April 2019

JUDICIAL COMMITTEE HEARING NEWS RELEASE

Hearing Details (date, time and venue): Monday 8 April 2019, 9am(SAST), 5pm(AEST), 7pm(NZST) via video-conference

Judicial Committee: Michael Heron QC - Chairman, De Wet Barry, Chris Smith

Player: Bill Meakes

Team: Rebels

Position: Centre

Date of Incident: 6 April 2019

Nature of Offence: Law 9.13: A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously. Dangerous tackling includes, but is not limited to, tackling or attempting to tackle an opponent above the line of the shoulders even if the tackle starts below the line of the shoulders

Elapsed time in match when incident occurred: 60:22

SANZAAR NEWS RELEASE

Bill Meakes issued a Warning

A SANZAAR Judicial Committee Hearing has found Bill Meakes of the Rebels guilty of contravening Law 9.13: A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously, after he was cited during a Super Rugby match at the weekend. The Judicial Committee did however find that the Red Card threshold had not been met for the offence, and subsequently issued a Warning.

Meakes contravened Law 9.13: A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously, in the 66th minute of the match between the Rebels and Sunwolves at AAMI Park, Melbourne on 6 April 2019.

The SANZAAR Judicial Hearing held via video conference on Monday 8 April 2019, 9am(SAST), 5pm(AEST), 7pm(NZST) was heard by Michael Heron QC - Chairman, De Wet Barry, Chris Smith.

In his finding, the Judicial Committee Chairman Michael Heron QC ruled the following:

"Having conducted a detailed review of the available evidence, in particular a video showing a close up of the incident, and hearing from the player himself and considering submissions from his legal representative, Tim North QC, the Judicial Committee upheld the citing of an act of foul play under Law 9.13."

"The Judicial Committee however found that the act of foul play did not meet the Red Card threshold due to amongst other factors the fact that the initial point of contact appeared to have been below the shoulder line and subsequently rose up post the initial contact. Further to that point, there was no clear evidence of forceful contact with the head of the Player's opponent after the initial contact. It was decided that while the citing was warranted, in that based on the evidence available to the Citing Commissioner at the time there had likely been

contact between the Player's shoulder and his opponent's head, the more thorough investigation conducted by the Judicial Committee presented evidence from the Sunwolves team doctor and further video angles that established the fact forceful head contact could not be proved. The actions of the Player in tackling an opponent who was vulnerable having just kicked the ball, and tackling at the shoulder line and rising above the line of the shoulders were dangerous and as a result a Warning would be issued to the Player."

"The player is free to resume playing immediately."

ENDS