



6 April 2022

## FOUL PLAY REVIEW COMMITTEE NEWS RELEASE

**Foul Play Review Committee:** Michael Heron QC (Chair), John Langford and Stefan Terblanche

**Player:** Nemani Nagusa

**Team:** Fijian Drua

**Position:** No. 8

**Date of Incident:** 1 April 2022

**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 offence occurred:** 26:18

### SANZAAR NEWS RELEASE

#### **Nemani Nagusa suspended for four weeks**

The SANZAAR Foul Play Review Committee has accepted a guilty plea from Nemani Nagusa of the Fijian Drua for contravening Law 9.13 - A player must not tackle an opponent early, late or dangerously, after he was Red Carded during a Super Rugby Pacific Match on the weekend.

Nagusa has been suspended from from all forms of the game up to and including 8 May 2022.

The incident occurred in the 26th minute of the match between the Fijian Drua and Waratahs played at CBUS Super Stadium on the Gold Coast on 1 April 2022.

The SANZAAR Foul Play Review Committee of Michael Heron QC (Chairman), Stefan Terblanche and John Langford assessed the case.

In his finding, Foul Play Review Committee Chairman Michael Heron QC ruled the following:

"Having conducted a detailed review of all the available evidence, including all camera angles and additional evidence, including written submissions from the player and his legal representative, Tim North QC, the Foul Play Review Committee upheld the Red Card under Law 9.13."

"With respect to sanction the Foul Play Review Committee deemed the act of foul play merited a mid-range entry point of 6 weeks due to the World Rugby instructions that dictate any incident of foul play involving contact with the head must start at a mid-range level. Taking into account mitigating factors including the Player's good judicial record over a long career, his acceptance of foul play and his expressed remorse, the Judicial Committee reduced the suspension by three weeks. The Foul Play Review Committee was of the opinion the Player's actions, namely direct contact with the arm to the head/neck, was a particularly dangerous action that needs to receive a deterrent penalty. All Players should be aware of this via World Rugby's Head Contact Process and the need to remove this pattern of offending from the game. As such the Foul Play Review Committee added an additional week as a deterrent to this conduct."

"The player is therefore suspended for 4 weeks, up to and including 8 May 2022."

"The Player was informed of his ability to apply for the Head Contact Process Coaching Intervention. Any player who has a citing or red card upheld by a disciplinary panel for foul play involving the Head Contact Process may apply to have the final week of their sanction substituted by undertaking a coaching intervention that specifically addresses the technical tackle/contact technique-error that caused or contributed to the foul play. This intervention will be overseen by the World Rugby Coaching Intervention Expert Review Panel – a panel of expert independent coaches - and is only be available to first time offenders."

All SANZAAR disciplinary matters are in the first instance referred to the Foul Play Review Committee to provide the option of expediting the judicial process.

For a matter to be dispensed with at this hearing, the person appearing must plead guilty and accept the penalty offered by the Foul Play Review Committee.

**ENDS**

**ISSUED BY SANZAAR**