

BUCS MISCONDUCT CASES DECISIONS 2023-24

UPDATED | SEPTEMBER 2024

To aid transparency of BUCS's disciplinary processes, upon the conclusion of initial, full and final Misconduct/Disciplinary Hearings, BUCS publishes a summary of each case, including the findings and penalties imposed. Published cases do not carry the names of any institution/Playing Entity or individuals involved.

This document contains summaries of all Misconduct Cases ruled on in the 2022-23 season to date. Where there is a gap in the numbering, this will be because of a REG 5 charge having been withdrawn before it was ruled on.

Please note:

- A. Whilst these case summaries may be helpful for institutions/Playing Entities to refer to when considering whether to submit an REG 5, and the BUCS Disciplinary Panel will refer to previous cases of a similar nature when making a ruling, it is important to note that every case is different and so however similar cases may seem, no specific outcome is guaranteed.
 - B. The rules and regulations stated herein are valid at the time of publication and remain subject to future review and potential amendments.
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Sport: American Football

Regulation(s): REG 5

Summary of the Charge:

It is alleged that Institution A have breached REG 5 due to the conduct of representatives of Institution A at the BUCS American Football Premier South fixture that took place between Institution B Open 1 and Institution A Open 1 on Sunday XXXXXX.

Following the final whistle, witnesses have alleged that there were physical altercations initiated by Institution A players and two physical assaults against Institution B students.

Decision:

Based on this evidence, and the admission by Institution A that certain of their players were involved in aggressive action both within and outside the field of play, the panel concluded that Institution A are in breach of Reg 5.

In considering what sanctions should be imposed, the panel noted that the only player ejected during the match was an Institution A player, and that the report to BAFRA named only Institution A players and not any Institution B player. However, the panel also considered that Institution B was not entirely blameless: in particular, the messages on the white board were at the least childish and the publication of the picture at least foolish, and their players' participation in the jostling and fighting, whilst perhaps difficult to avoid entirely, exacerbated the situation.

The panel considered that Institution A should be subject to an immediate financial penalty and a suspended sanction.

After discussion, it was agreed to impose:

- a £500 penalty (this being at the lower end of the possible penalty range set out in Appendix 11 of BUCS Disciplinary Sanction Guidelines)
- a deduction of 8 points in the event that Institution A American Football team is found to be in breach of Reg 5, in either the 24/5 or 25/6 seasons, such deduction to apply in the year in which such breach occurs.

In addition, the panel felt that Institution A should review its approach to educating its players and coaching staff on BUCS regulations, and notably what constitutes a possible breach of Reg 5 and the implications thereof. Institution A is encouraged to seek the guidance of BUCS as to what constitutes best practice in similarly sized and resourced institutions, in particular how the message can be got across to all team members. After such a review, Institution A must report to BUCS the steps taken and the changes implemented.

Further Matters

1. Both institutions expressed concern as to the time that had elapsed between the incident and the hearing taking place. The chair acknowledged this as an issue and BUCS explained that steps were being implemented to address this, so that matters taken to appeal in future should be dealt with rather more expeditiously.
2. Having been informed of the sanctions, Institution A asked what could be done to protect their team in future matches from being “wound up” by the opposition with knowledge that a further breach would result in a points deduction. BUCS indicated that whilst it would not be feasible to have a BUCS official present as an observer, officials from both institutions should confer prior to the fixture to agree a protocol to ensure this did not occur: for example, reiterating to team members the existence and implications of Reg 5 for both teams, arranging for the presence of independent observers etc.
3. Institution A asked about the procedure to be followed if they were to appeal the decision. BUCS referred them to the relevant regulations.
4. Institution A asked whether there were any time limits on their ability to lodge a Reg 5 complaint against Institution B in respect of its players’ aggression and provocation. BUCS explained that no specific time limit is imposed but the longer between the incident and the complaint the greater the justification needed to explain the delay.

Sanction(s):

- A fine of £500 pounds to be imposed on SGS
- Implement a suspended sentence for the entire club for the next two seasons (i.e. 24/25 and 25/26). If any further breach of REG 5 is committed by any of Institution B’s American Football teams within the designated period, the responsible team will face an 8-point deduction for that season.
- An educational initiative on REG 5 will be encouraged for Institution B’s players and coaching staff, with a requirement to report back to BUCS on this training.

Sport: Badminton

Regulation(s): REG 5 – Misconduct and Bringing BUCS into Disrepute, **Reg4** – Individual Eligibility

Summary of the Charge:

On [REDACTED], Institution A informed the BUCS Executive about concerns raised by other member institutions regarding the potential fielding of ineligible players in their men's and women's badminton 1st teams during the 2023-24 season. In response, Institution A initiated an internal investigation. The BUCS Executive requested ongoing updates and advised Institution A that if ineligible individuals were identified, appropriate action would be taken as per REG 4.6.

Two days later, Institution A sought clarity on REG 4 through an email to the BUCS Executive. Following information received from member institutions, the BUCS Executive contacted Institution A a day later, emphasizing the need for a thorough investigation. An email was sent to Institution A, reiterating the possibility of disciplinary action if ineligible players were found.

Institution A submitted a document summarising the concerns, investigation steps, and findings, revealing that they had fielded one ineligible player, [Name Redacted], in five fixtures. [Name Redacted] did not meet the requirements of REG 4.1 at the time of these fixtures. The BUCS Executive responded with follow-up questions.

This misconduct charge is raised in accordance with REG 4.6, leading to a Disciplinary Panel to determine appropriate disciplinary action under REG 5 for allowing ineligible participants to represent the institution. The document provided by Institution A to the BUCS Executive serves as supporting evidence, with information related to other individuals, not deemed ineligible, redacted.

Decision:

The Panel, acknowledging that Institution A had indicated a willingness to concede walkovers in respect of the matches in which [Name Redacted] had played whilst ineligible, confirmed that this sanction would be imposed.

The Panel noted and approved the steps Institution A had described being taken to improve its education of team members internally with regard to eligibility and also recommended that Institution A clarify distinctions between alumni participation, BUCS involvement, and BUCS eligibility criteria. Institution A will be required to confirm to BUCS when all the education improvements have been implemented.

A suspended sanction was deemed unnecessary.

Institution A raised concerns about the consequences of relegation, explaining that there could be potential repercussions of relegation on the integrity of the badminton competition. The concern was that the Premier Tier competition might become less competitive due to Institution A's absence, while the Institution A team might be too strong for the league below. Institution A proposed an alternative solution under which the team would begin next season with negative points in the league. The Chair acknowledged Institution A's concerns about relegation but indicated the Panel's limited authority. BUCS acknowledged the suggestion for future consideration but stated that it could not currently be applied in this instance.

Ultimately, the Panel thanked Institution A for their cooperation and acknowledged their efforts to address the issues raised. The decision was made to impose retrospective walkovers, clarify educational processes, and forego further sanctions, considering Institution A's proactive approach to rectifying the situation.

Institution A expressed gratitude for the Panel's time.

Sanction(s):

- Walkovers to be retrospectively added to all league fixtures in the season.

Sport: Basketball

Regulation(s): REG 5 – Misconduct and Bringing BUCS into Disrepute

Summary of the Charge:

It is alleged that Institution A have breached REG 5 due to the conduct of spectators and Institution A Men's 2 players on the sideline at the Northern Tier ■ fixture that took place between Institution A Men's 1 and Institution B Men's 2 on ■.

A player on the Institution B team was subject to racist remarks and monkey noises from the Institution A spectators and players on the sideline.

The referee was made aware of the incident and stopped the game immediately and reprimanded the fans.

Decision:

After thorough review and careful contemplation of the evidence and viewpoints presented, the Panel's verdict leaned towards a non-racial interpretation of the sounds, concluding that Institution A was not in breach of Regulation 5. However, recommendations for general spectator training, particularly for the individual identified as making the noises on this occasion, were discussed.

The Chair explained that the Panel found itself in a situation where there wasn't any independent evidence that substantiated the claim made. The Institution B team interpreted the sound in a particular way, whereas Institution A interpreted it in another, and the Panel could not conclusively find that Institution B's interpretation was correct. Therefore, the Panel concluded that the sounds could not be considered definitely racist or intended to be racist.

The Panel expressed appreciation for Institution A's thorough investigation and their willingness to adhere to the recommended course of action and thanked Institution B for raising their concerns.

Both institutions thanked the Panel for their time and acknowledged the decision.

Sanction(s):

- Recommendations: Provide Training to Spectators, in particular, to the spectator whose noises had resulted in this complain

Sport: Football

Regulation(s): REG 5 – Misconduct and Bringing BUCS into Disrepute

Summary of the Charge:

It is alleged that Institution A have breached REG 5 due to the conduct of spectators on the sideline at the Western Tier 1A fixture that took place between Institution A Men's 2 and Institution B Men's 1 on ■.

The Institution B team witnessed their player [Name Redacted] being struck on the head by an opposition fan who had run down the touchline about 20 metres in a large group to confront their players. The fan reached over the barriers to strike [Name Redacted], who had his back turned to the fan as he was trying to break up a disagreement between two players (one from each team). None of the Institution B players at any point tried to interact with the fans, and remained on the pitch the entire time, while the fans attempted to touch, push, and punch them from behind the barrier.

Decision:

The Panel felt that Institution A could have conducted a more thorough investigation. The Chair clarified that the responsibility for such incidents falls on the institution regardless of whether they had taken appropriate action against the individuals concerned, although the taking of such action should be considered in determining what further sanctions might be appropriate.

Furthermore, the Chair noted that while Institution A claimed uncertainty regarding the occurrence of a punch, the video evidence appeared clear. The Panel unanimously agreed that it was highly probable that a punch had indeed been thrown.

Considering possible sanctions or courses of action, the Chair outlined the Panel's conclusions: the breach of REG 12 was irrelevant, while the breach of REG 5 had been acknowledged and confirmed by Institution A. It was emphasized that training enhancements were crucial, not only for spectator behaviour but also for educating team members about the consequences of REG 5 breaches.

The Panel leaned towards imposing a suspended sanction on the team to deter future misconduct. The Chair explored the option of sanctioning the club as a whole, given the perceived lack of depth in the investigation.

Institution A returned to receive the decision. The Panel reiterated the irrelevance of REG 12 and mandated improvements in training, emphasising a whole-club approach. They highlighted the clarity of the video evidence and imposed a two-year suspended sanction on Institution A, with a 12-point deduction for any future breaches of REG 5.

Sanction(s):

Enhance the training programme to include a specific focus on spectator behaviour and to ensure that club members are fully aware of the implications of Reg 5. Submit the updated training programme to BUCS as evidence of your commitment to fostering a positive and respectful environment within the club.

Implement a suspended sentence for the entire club for the next two seasons (i.e., 24/25 and 25/26). If any further breach of REG 5 is committed by any of Institution A's football teams within the designated period, the responsible team will face a 12-point deduction for that season.

Sport: Football**Regulation(s):** REG 5 – Misconduct and Bringing BUCS into Disrepute, **Reg4** – Individual Eligibility**Summary of the Charge:**

Institution A is charged with a breach of REG 4 under REG 4.6 for allowing an ineligible participant – [Name Redacted] – to represent the institution in seven of their women's football 1st team's BUCS fixtures (five league fixtures, two knockout competition fixtures) during the 2023-24 season.

Decision:

The Panel criticised the anonymous, late-season allegations against four Institution A players as inappropriate and detrimental to fair competition. They commended Institution A's transparent and proactive investigation and urged improvements in player education on BUCS regulations to prevent future issues. The Panel recommended stricter verification processes, acknowledging limitations due to reliance on university admissions.

The results involving ineligible players were changed to voluntary walkovers, which did not affect Institution A's league position. Despite the standard fine for such breaches, the Panel decided to suspend the £200 fine for two seasons, conditional on no further violations.

For the three wrongly implicated players, the Panel requested BUCS collaborate with Institution A to restore their reputations. Institution A agreed to work on best practices and appreciated the Panel's leniency and understanding.

Sanction(s): Walkovers will be retrospectively applied to all affected league fixtures for the season. The resulting outstanding fines of £200 will be suspended.

Sport: Hockey

Regulation(s): REG 5, REG 4

Summary of the Charge Institution A is facing a misconduct charge under BUCS Regulation 4 (REG 4) for fielding an ineligible player in their Men's Hockey 1st Team during a fixture against Institution B Men's [REDACTED] Team on [REDACTED]. The institution admitted the breach, acknowledging that the player in question was an alumnus, thus violating eligibility requirements outlined in REG 4.1 and REG 4.2. Despite conceding a walkover to Institution B, the charge necessitates disciplinary action, and a hearing is pending. The charge report outlines the violation, the circumstances leading to its discovery, and the institution's response. Additionally, the institution provides information about its small union structure, limited staffing, and challenges in overseeing multiple student groups, emphasising the inadvertent nature of the breach and expressing intentions to reinforce regulatory compliance in the future.

Decision:

After further review of the evidence and viewpoints presented, the Panel acknowledged that the breach had been disclosed to BUCS by the institution and that some sanctions had been imposed on the team, but these were felt to be inadequate in the circumstances.

Accordingly, it was decided that sanctions should include a walkover for the remaining season (one match, against Institution B), and a two-year suspended sentence in the event of any potential future breaches of Reg 4. Institution A would also be required to review the training programme on BUCS regulations for its committee and team members and to seek guidance from BUCS on the minimum training processes appropriate for an institution of its size.

Sanction(s):

- A walkover for the remaining BUCS season match against Institution B.
 - A suspended sentence of 2 years: in the event of a breach of Reg 4 in the 24/25 or 25/26 seasons, the team would be removed from BUCS competitions for the remainder of that season and the following season.
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Sport: Hockey

Regulation(s): REG 5 – Misconduct and Bringing BUCS into Disrepute

Summary of the Charge:

It is alleged that the crowd present at the game encroached upon the field of play on multiple occasions, causing disruptions that necessitated officials to stop play repeatedly to address encroaching spectators. This persistent issue throughout the game led to frustration and forced our team to limit their space on the pitch, thereby constraining the field of play. Players were also concerned about the proximity of spectators, altering their usual style of play to prevent potential injuries. The opposition spectators, described as 'rowdy,' targeted Institution A players with continuous shouting and intimidation throughout the game. The situation escalated as alcohol consumption increased, prompting an official to pause the game and instruct spectators to cease shouting and vacate the pitch.

Multiple members of the Institution A team observed at least one Institution B player (Number X) consuming alcohol during the first half of the match when they were substituted off the field. This player later rejoined the game in the second half, violating Regulation 5.1.2. While explicit photographic evidence is unavailable, there are multiple witnesses to substantiate this breach.

Decision:

It was apparent that at least until recently, Institution B clubs have been subject to few regulations, and training on BUCS regulations has been sporadic at best. The Panel leaned towards imposing a 12-point suspended sanction on the hockey club, covering all three teams, with a recommendation that Institution B should communicate this decision to other clubs within the organisation as a means of encouraging better behaviour. Additionally, they mandated training for all Institution B clubs, including social members, and requested that this training plan should be shared with BUCS as it progresses.

Moreover, the Panel strongly recommended implementing a dry site policy around the sports pitches at Institution B.

Sanction(s):

- To enforce the existing policy of keeping spectators behind the fence.
- A strong recommendation to explore the implementation of a dry site policy at Institution B's playing area.
- Implementation of a thorough training programme for all committee members along the lines already proposed, ensuring that this training is disseminated to other club members. The training plan should be shared with BUCS once it is developed.
- Imposition of a suspended sentence covering the entire hockey club for the next two seasons (i.e., 24/25 and 25/26). If any further breach of REG 5 is committed by any of the Institution B hockey teams within the designated period, the responsible team will face a 12-point deduction for the season during which the breach occurs. It is recommended that this sanction is notified to all other Institution B sports clubs.

Sport: Hockey**Regulation(s):** REG 5**Summary of the Charge:**

Allegations have arisen regarding a breach of Regulation 5.1 by Institution A, specifically pertaining to incidents involving the Institution A Men's 3 hockey team during fixtures against Institution B Men's 5 and the Institution A Women's X hockey team against Institution B Women's X on [REDACTED].

According to statements from Institution B Women's X players, during halftime, Institution A men disrupted Institution B's team talk with disruptive behaviour, including jeering and mocking, and threw

a rubber dildo onto the field. They further engaged in sexually explicit and derogatory chants towards Institution B players, leading to discomfort and embarrassment among both teams. The behaviour was described as unprecedented and highly inappropriate for university-level sportsmanship.

Additionally, Institution B Men's X players reported disruptive conduct from Institution A men, including verbally abusive language directed at specific players. Examples include shouting derogatory remarks and targeting individual players with offensive language.

In summary, the allegations involve disruptive behaviour, sexualised chants, and verbal abuse directed towards Institution B players by the Institution A Men's X hockey team during the fixtures. These incidents have raised concerns regarding the conduct and sportsmanship of Institution A's hockey team during BUCS competitions.

Decision:

Given the severity of the incident, the Panel proposed implementing a suspended sentence for Institution A Men's Hockey Club, encompassing all teams, to ensure accountability and deter future misconduct. This entails a 12-point deduction for any further breaches of regulations, applicable to the entire Men's Hockey club. The Panel deliberated extensively on the potential impact of such a sanction, weighing the necessity of accountability against the potential consequences for players not directly involved in the incident.

The Chair emphasised several key points. Firstly, there exists a clear distinction between acceptable banter and unacceptable abuse, particularly when it extends beyond the play itself (i.e., during halftime). Secondly, the Panel noted that the captain of the men's team had seemingly sought to distance himself from the offences (on the basis that he was reaching into his bag at the time) and expressed disappointment with the inadequacy of the apology received, especially noting its belated arrival just two days prior to the hearing and that it had been written by one team member only.

Sanction(s):

Enhance the training programme to include a specific focus on spectator behaviour and appropriate conduct during matches and events. Submit the updated training programme to BUCS as evidence of your commitment to fostering a positive and respectful environment within the club.

Request a further, more comprehensive letter of apology from Institution A to Institution B, to be issued by the team captain on behalf of the entire team.

Implement a suspended sentence for the entire men's hockey club for the next two seasons (i.e., 24/25 and 25/26). If any further breach of REG 5 is committed by any of Institution A's teams within the designated period, the responsible team will face a 12-point deduction for that season.

Sport: Hockey

Regulation(s): REG 5

Summary of the Charge:

It is alleged that Institution B has breached REG 5 due to the conduct of individuals on their Women's X team at the Hockey Northern Tier X fixture that took place between Institution A's Women's X and Institution B Women's X on [REDACTED].

The formal complaint against Institution B follows incidents regarding the conduct of individuals on the team towards a player on Institution A's team.

The complaint is being raised in relation to the fixture that took place in February. However, it is noted that there were issues of the same nature in the previous fixture between both teams, following which an apology was sent from Institution B. Unfortunately, the same player has been subjected to the same type of behaviour, this time from the captain, goalkeeper, and a spectator. This clearly indicates that the previous apology was ineffective and that no meaningful steps have been taken to address the issue within the club. Therefore, under REG 5.1.1 (specifically Violent, threatening, abusive, obscene, or provocative conduct or language), we formally request that a Regulation 5 investigation be imposed against Institution B and that BUCS conducts an investigation with appropriate sanctions being applied.

Decision:

The Panel concluded that there was a clear breach of BUCS regulations. The apparent ignorance of both BUCS and National Governing Body (NGB) regulations, along with the spectator issue, compounded the problem. The lack of communication between the Sports Union (SU) and the club was astonishing, and it was surprising that the team did not raise concerns about this lack of communication.

While there was an element of anti-transgender sentiment despite Institution B's protestations to the contrary, the main issue appeared to be a lack of understanding of BUCS regulations and the relevant regulations of both the Welsh and English hockey governing bodies. The Chair noted that the fault seemed to lie as much with the Union as with the club. The Panel was inclined to levy a fine on the Sports Union. BUCS explained that Institution B is a small institution, and a hefty fine might be counterproductive, affecting their overall operating budget.

The Chair enquired about the league Institution B plays in and the number of games they participate in. BUCS explained that Institution B plays at the bottom tier, with entry numbers varying each season. Following discussion, the Panel decided on a fine and a nine-point deduction, suspended for two seasons. Additionally, Institution B would be required to review their training on BUCS and national regulations pertaining to hockey, ensure proper dissemination, and report back to BUCS on these measures.

Sanction(s):

- Institution B Sports Union will be fined £750.
- A suspended sentence will be imposed for two years (i.e., 2024-25 and 2025-26). If a breach of a similar nature occurs in either of these two seasons, the team will be deducted 9 points for that season.
- Institution B must review their training on BUCS and national regulations pertaining to hockey, ensure proper dissemination of this information, and report back to BUCS.
- Institution B is also required to issue separate apologies to Institution C and Player X.

Sport: Lacrosse

Regulation(s): REG 5

Summary of the Charge:

It is alleged that Institution D has breached REG 5 due to the conduct of individuals at the lacrosse [REDACTED] fixture that took place between Institution's As' Men's 1 and Institution B Men's 1 on [REDACTED].

The formal complaint against Institution B Men's Lacrosse Team follows incidents of racial abuse, homophobic abuse, threats of violence, verbal abuse, and harassment which took place on [REDACTED] 2023 at 14:00, [REDACTED].

Decision:

The panel upheld the charge and deemed Institution B to be in breach of Regulation 5 due to the abusive language, behaviour, and lack of respect for the officials that players on the Institution Men's lacrosse 1 team displayed during the fixture.

The panel noted that some of the alleged language could not be confirmed as occurring or as racist or homophobic, and therefore the sanctions are based on the admitted language used.

Sanction(s):

- Institution B is required to complete a full review of the education and training delivered to the committee and club members. They must also review the method of information dissemination from committee members to the wider club. As part of this review and improvement of the training, Institution B is required to address the importance of showing respect to officials. Institution B is also recommended to consult with BUCS regarding best practices.
- A suspended sentence will be applied to the Institution B men's 1 lacrosse team. This means that should there be a proven breach of REG 5 by the Institution B men's 1 lacrosse team within the remainder of the 23/24 season or during the 24/25 season, the team will be banned for the remainder of the season in which the breach occurred and the following season.
- Additionally, a fine of £500 will be imposed.

Sport: Rugby League

Regulation(s): REG 5 – Misconduct and Bringing BUCS into Disrepute

Summary of the Charge:

It is alleged that Institution A has breached REG 5 due to the conduct of spectators at the Northern XX BUCS Rugby League fixture that took place between Institution A Men's 1 and Institution B Men's 1 on [REDACTED].

It is alleged that significant abuse was directed at Institution B player X from the Institution A sideline after he made an error leading to a try. The abuse is alleged to have included offensive language and a racial slur. The player felt singled out based on his race, leading to emotional distress. Despite the Institution B coach raising concerns with the referee, the referee dismissed the allegations, stating he couldn't act without hearing it himself. Additional evidence from the player and Institution B's coach supports the claims of abuse, with the coach threatening to pull his players from the game if it continued. The incident is deemed disappointing and concerning due to the alleged racial nature of the abuse and the referee's response.

Decision:

Upon careful consideration, the Panel finds Institution A guilty of a breach of REG 5 for the use of abusive language. The specific comment alleged by Institution B to be racist, "you fucking n***er," was not explicitly acknowledged in X player statement but was present in the charge sheet.

The Panel recognizes that Player X, as the only person of colour in the Institution B team, faced considerable abuse, with at least one comment possibly being of a racist nature. However, the Panel could not determine this beyond reasonable doubt due to the poor quality of the audio evidence and the lack of confirmation from the player himself regarding the precise nature of the comments. A fine of £750 has been imposed on Institution A for the breach of REG 5. No suspended sentence is applied due to the insufficient clarity on whether the abusive language originated from a spectator, player, or team member.

The Panel commends Institution A for their proactive investigation and recommends ongoing education for staff, players, and members. The Chair also passed on Institution B's appreciation to Institution A for their swift response and action taken upon receiving the complaint.

Sanction(s):

- Institution B will be issued a £750 fine by BUCS.

Sport: Rugby Union

Regulation(s): REG 4

Summary of the Charge: Institution A faces a misconduct/disrepute charge for breaching REG 4 by fielding an ineligible player, identified as an alumnus, in a Men's Rugby Union fixture against Institution B on [REDACTED]. The breach was promptly reported to BUCS on [REDACTED], accompanied by an internal investigation. This led to the voluntary withdrawal of the team from the league, with the team conceding walkovers for subsequent matches. Institution A has submitted comprehensive evidence, including an admission statement, emails to Institution B and BUCS, and documentation of training, demonstrating their commitment to regulatory compliance.

Decision:

Institution A has faced a misconduct/disrepute charge for breaching REG 4 by fielding an ineligible player, identified as an alumnus, in a Men's Rugby Union fixture against Institution B. The breach was reported to BUCS on [REDACTED], and the team voluntarily withdrew from the league, conceding walkovers for subsequent matches. Institution A provided comprehensive evidence, including an admission statement, emails, and documentation of their training processes, demonstrating their commitment to compliance.

After a thorough review, the Panel decided that no further sanctions were necessary. The Chair acknowledged that Institution A has demonstrated excellent adherence to regulations despite limited resources. The Panel commended Institution A for their high training standards, noting them as some of the best experienced by the Chair. The Panel expressed confidence in Institution A's ability to maintain these standards and encouraged them to continue their exemplary practices. Institution A expressed gratitude for the Panel's time and consideration.

Sanction(s):

- No sanctions

Sport: Tennis

Regulation(s): REG 5

Summary of the Charge: Institution A is facing a misconduct charge for a breach of REG 5 due to the conduct of Player X during a Men's 1 tennis fixture against Institution B.

Institution B's captain, Player Y, reported that Player X displayed aggressive behaviour, used explicit language, and made derogatory remarks towards him. The situation escalated when Player Y confronted Player X, creating a tense and uncomfortable atmosphere. The Head Coach of Student Performance Tennis at Institution B, supported Player Y's account, describing Player X's behaviour as threatening and bullying. The Head Coach noted that Player X had been flagged as a potential problem before the match and emphasized that this was the second instance of a Institution B player feeling unsafe around him. The coach highlighted the unprecedented and unacceptable nature of Player X's conduct within the BUCS competition environment.

Decision:

Institution A has been found in breach of REG 5 due to the unacceptable conduct of Player X during a Men's 1 tennis fixture against Institution. The Panel acknowledged that the evidence was circumstantial and considered that Player Y exuberance might have contributed to Player X's behaviour. Nonetheless, Player X's actions were deemed unacceptable and constituted a breach of REG 5.

Panel's Findings and Sanctions:

1. **Sanction:** The Panel decided to support the steps that Institution A had already taken, which included addressing the incident internally. Additionally, the Panel imposed a suspended sentence: Institution A will face suspension from future BUCS competitions if any further breach by a member of the team occurs.
2. **Institutional Accountability:** The Panel emphasised that while individual responsibility is important, the focus was on institutional accountability. The Panel does not have the authority to penalise individual players but stressed the importance of institutional measures to prevent future breaches.
3. **Commendation:** Institution A's proactive measures in response to the incident were commended. The Panel acknowledged these actions and affirmed their adequacy, reinforcing the importance of maintaining high standards.
4. **Future Considerations:** The Chair advised Institution A that the decision to select Player X for the upcoming match against Institution B is ultimately up to them. However, the Chair suggested it might be wise to reconsider his participation in light of the incident.

Institution B acknowledged the decision, reiterating that they do not believe the entire team was at fault but emphasised the importance of individual responsibility.

Institution A accepted the Panel's decision and acknowledged the guidance provided regarding future conduct and team selection.

Sanction(s): The Panel issued a suspended sentence for Institution A's Men's Tennis 1st team. If there is a repeat of such behaviour, resulting in a further finding of a breach of REG 5, during the remainder of the current season (2023-24) or the following season (2024-25), the Men's 1st team will be suspended for the rest of that season and the following season. The purpose of this sanction is to affirm and give weight to the steps taken by Institution A in addressing the incident.
