



**YOUR TRIBE IS CALLING**



**2014  
METRO-WEST  
JUNIOR FOOTBALL  
TRIBUNAL SYSTEM**

## INTRODUCTION

The guiding principles of the Tribunal system are:

- To improve efficiency of the Tribunal process by introducing a system whereby players can accept penalties without having to appear before the Tribunal
- To promote the transparency and certainty of the process by introducing a table of offences
- To achieve greater consistency in the reporting process by introducing an Incident Review Officer which all reports will go through

## HOW THE SYSTEM WORKS

### 1. A report or referral is lodged

A report is the responsibility of the Umpires officiating at MWJFL matches. Reports are referred to the Incident Review Officer. The Incident Review Officer will assess all reports and referrals made by: Umpires, MWJFL Executive, and President of a competing club.

### 2. Incident Review Officer decides if a reportable offence has occurred and the offence level

Following assessment of all reports, or referrals, the Incident Review Officer will consider whether a player is to be charged with a reportable offence, taking into account three factors:

- Conduct (whether the conduct was intentional, reckless or negligent).
- Impact (whether the impact was severe, high, medium or low).
- Contact (whether the contact was high or to the groin or the body).

Once each factor above has been confirmed, the Incident Review Officer will allocate the Level of Offence via the chart, categorising the Level of Offences.

For example, if a player is reported for striking, the Incident Review Officer will assess the report and, following the processes outlined in the guidelines, will decide on the level of conduct, impact and contact.

For the purposes of this following example, the Incident Review Panel decided the contact was reckless, the impact high and the contact to the body. This equates to a level three offence.

From the Table of Offences – a Level 3 striking offence equates to 225 demerit points. These are the base points and are subject to change in the following circumstances:

- Player has been suspended in the previous Three MWJFL years - Points Loaded
- Player has a good record in the past Three MWJFL years - Points Deducted.
- Player enters an early guilty plea - Points Deducted.

In some cases, a charge will go directly to the Tribunal, which will allocate demerit points at its discretion.

The player is notified of the level of the offence and, other than in cases referred directly to the Tribunal, he has the option to take an early guilty plea or to contest the charge at the Tribunal.

## Grading of Offence

The following table has been constructed to clearly show the consequences of a player's guilt and to provide clear levels of charges. The Incident Review Officer will assess the levels of the offence based on three factors: conduct, impact and contact. It prescribes the level of seriousness of an offence on a scale of 1 to 5 (column headed Level). The level then leads to a set number of demerit points which will determine the sanction

<b>Conduct</b>	<b>Impact / Circumstance</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Level</b>
Intentional	Severe	High/Groin	Tribunal Discretion
Intentional	Severe	Body	5
Intentional	High	High/Groin	5
Intentional	High	Body	4
Intentional	Medium	High/Groin	4
Intentional	Medium	Body	3
Intentional	Low	High/Groin	3
Intentional	Low	Body	2

Reckless	Severe	High/Groin	5
Reckless	Severe	Body	4
Reckless	High	High/Groin	4
Reckless	High	Body	3
Reckless	Medium	High/Groin	3
Reckless	Medium	Body	2
Reckless	Low	High/Groin	1
Reckless	Low	Body	1

Negligent	Severe	High/Groin	5
Negligent	Severe	Body	4
Negligent	High	High/Groin	4
Negligent	High	Body	3
Negligent	Medium	High/Groin	3
Negligent	Medium	Body	2
Negligent	Low	High/Groin	1
Negligent	Low	Body	1

## Offences – Demerit Points

Reportable Offence	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Striking	80	125	225	325	425
Kicking	125	250	325	425	550
Charging	125	225	325	425	550
Rough Conduct	125	225	325	425	550
Bumping or making forceful front on contact when the player has his head down over the ball	125	250	325	425	550
Tripping	80	125	225	325	425
Misconduct (Kneeing, Stomping, Head butting or contact using head, Eye gouging, unnecessary contact to eye region or face)	125	225	325	425	550
Any other act of serious Misconduct	<p>INCIDENT REVIEW PANEL (will determine appropriate points)</p> <p><b>Referring to Tribunal (Page 7)</b> The Incident Review Panel may refer any matter to the Tribunal if it considers it appropriate to do so, based on the circumstances of the offence, any suspected mitigating factors or any other unusual features of any report.</p>				
Contact with umpire					
Behaving in an abusive, insulting, threatening or obscene manner towards or in relation to an umpire					
Attempt to Strike / Kick / Trip					
All other offences					

## Points – Matches

Number of Points	Suspension (Matches)	Consequences
< 100	0	The player is reprimanded but not suspended from playing but carries the allocated points for three MWJFL years and they will be added to any future points allocated within three MWJFL years.
100 - 199	1	The player is suspended from playing in his next match, after which his total points are reduce by 100. He carries the balance of the points for three MWJFL years. The residual points will be added to any future points allocated within those three MWJFL years.
200 - 299	2	The player is suspended from playing in his next 2 matches, after which his total points are reduce by 200. He carries the balance of the points for three MWJFL years. The residual points will be added to any future points allocated within those three MWJFL years.
300 - 399	3	The player is suspended from playing in his next 3 matches, after which his total points are reduce by 300. He carries the balance of the points for three MWJFL years. The residual points will be added to any future points allocated within those three MWJFL years.
400 - 499	4	The player is suspended from playing in his next 4 matches, after which his total points are reduce by 400. He carries the balance of the points for three MWJFL years. The residual points will be added to any future points allocated within those three MWJFL years.

## HOW POINTS ARE CALCULATED

### Addition of Points

A player will receive additional loading for each match that he has been suspended over the past 3 years, only up to a maximum of 5 games.

Number of Matches Suspended in Previous Three MWJFL Years					
	1 Match	2 Match	3 Match	4 Match	5 Match
% Loading	5%	10%	15%	20%	25%

### Deduction of Points

15% of base points will be deducted if the player has not been found guilty of any reportable offense within the last Three MWJFL years.

A further 15% of base points will be deducted for a player who pleads guilty to an offence.

\*Any additions will be added to the total base points first, before any deductions are made.

\*A deduction of 15% for a good record will be made from the base points.

\*A deduction of 15% for a guilty plea will be made from the base points

\*Total deductions will then be taken from the base points after any additions  
(Please refer to the example below)

\*Points carried over from any previous offences in the past three MWJFL years are added after any additions or deductions

### Examples

James Smith has been reported, pleaded guilty and found guilty by the MWJFL tribunal for striking.

The Tribunal declare that the offence was intentional; the contact was high and the impact medium.

This indicates a level 4 offence for striking resulting in 325 Points.

Mr Smith has not been suspended for any matches in the previous 3 years therefore he will not receive any additional points.

Mr Smith has not been found guilty of a reportable offense in the past three years therefore will receive a 15% reduction.

Mr Smith pleaded guilty therefore receives a further 15% reduction

- Base Points = 325
- No Additional Points for suspension in last 3 years = 325 points
- Deduct 15% for good record: 15% of 325 = 48.75 points
- Deduct 15% for guilty plea: 15% of 325 = 48.75 points
- $48.75 + 48.75 = 97.5$  points to be deducted from base points
- $325 - 97.5 = 227.5$  points

James Smith would be suspended for 2 Matches with 27.5 points carried over for 3 MWJFL years.

*Please note a MWJFL year is calculated retrospectively from the round in which the player has been found guilty. For instance, where a player has been found guilty of a reportable offence in round 10 in 2013, a MWJFL good behaviour record of 3 years shall be the period commencing from and including round 10 of season 2010.*

## **CONTESTING AT THE TRIBUNAL**

If a player pleads guilty but contests the level of the charge at the Tribunal and is successful, he will still receive a 15% reduction for the guilty plea.

If a player pleads guilty but contests the level of the charge at the tribunal and is unsuccessful, it is at the discretion of the Tribunal as to whether the player receives 15% reduction for the guilty plea.

Circumstances where the player may not receive the 15% reduction:

- Contesting the level of charge is manifestly inappropriate
- Contesting two or more factors and being unsuccessful on one of those factors

## **Other Competitions**

In the case of a MWJFL registered player incurring a suspension in another competition, for any period within the previous three MWJFL years, the player shall not be entitled to the 15% deduction for his good record in the MWJFL competition.

Example: Player Jackson was suspended for two matches in the NEJFL in 2012 and he has no other prior offences in his MWJFL career. If reported in the MWJFL he will not qualify for a 15% reduction for a good record.

## **Referring to Tribunal**

The Incident Review Officer may refer any matter to the Tribunal if it considers it appropriate to do so, based on the circumstances of the offence, any suspected mitigating factors or any other unusual features of any report.

Example: A player is charged with a Level 5 strike (425 points). The Incident Review Officer is not satisfied the sanction according to the Table of Offences – Demerit Points is sufficient. It refers the charge to the MWJFL Tribunal.

## **DEFINITIONS AND GUIDELINES**

### **Conduct**

This is a reference to the act which is the subject of the charge, the alleged illegal act.

The Tribunal will first consider whether the act was **Intentional**.

An **Intentional** act is one that is deliberately committed against Rule 19.2.2 of the Laws of Australian Football, and such other Rules dealing with regulating the conduct and discipline of players and officials pursuant to the SANFL Rules and Regulations ("SANFL Rules").

E.g. Player X intentionally strikes Player V. It is a breach of Rule 19.2.2. X wanted to hit V. He did it intentionally.

He is guilty of **Intentionally** striking

If it has not been proved to be intentional the tribunal will consider whether the act was **Reckless**.

A **Reckless** act is one committed where the offender realises that there is a real likelihood that the act will be contrary to Rule 19.2.2 of the Laws of Australian Football and the SANFL Rules and he goes ahead and does the act.

E.g. Player X attempts to spoil a mark but is so far behind he realises that there is a real likelihood that he will hit Player V in the head rather than the ball. He goes ahead and does the act with that realisation.

He is guilty of **Reckless** striking.

If it has not been proved to be reckless the tribunal will consider whether the act was **Negligent**.

A **Negligent** act is one committed where a reasonable person in the position of the offender would have realised that there is a real possibility that the act will be contrary to Rule 19.2.2 of the Laws of Australian Football and the SANFL Rules and he goes ahead and does the act.

E.g. Player X attempts to spoil a mark but is so far behind that a reasonable player in his position would have realised that there is a real possibility that the act will be contrary to the Laws of Australian Football

He is guilty of **Negligent** striking even if he did not realise it himself.

If there is a reasonable possibility that the player was blameless, i.e. that the illegal contact was merely an accident, i.e. he didn't intend it, he didn't realise it might occur and no reasonable person in the circumstances would have realised it might occur, he would not be guilty of any offence.

### **Impact / Circumstance**

This deals with the circumstance of the offending and the circumstance surrounding the offending.

- E.g.
- Was there premeditation?
  - Was the incident in play or behind play?
  - How hard was the blow?
  - Were there multiple blows?
  - Was the act intended to have an effect on the result of the game?
  - Was damage to the other player intended?
  - What was the extent of the damage to the other player?

There are four categories of impact – severe, high, medium and low.

Low impact requires more than just negligible impact. Most reportable offences require at least low impact and a collision or incident involving negligible force will not ordinarily result in a charge.

In determining the level of impact regard shall be had not only to the impact between the offending player and the victim player, but also the result of the impact to the victim player as a result of such impact and the result on the match.

For example, where a victim player as a result of the impact from the offending player is pushed into the path of a fast-moving third player, the impact to the victim player may be classified as high or severe, even though the level of impact between the offending player and the victim player was only low or medium.

## **Contact**

Generally it is intended to provide that contact to the more sensitive areas of the body to damage is treated more seriously.

Under the Level of Offences table, contact can be classified as high, groin or body contact.

High contact is not limited to contact to the head and includes contact above the shoulders. There may be a correlation between contact and impact to the extent that, for example, a strike to the stomach will be classified as body contact but its impact will be classified towards the high end of the scale if the effect was to reduce the player's ability to participate in the match.

Contact to the groin shall include contact to the crease or hollow at the junction of the inner part of each thigh with the trunk together with the adjacent region and including the testicles.

In classifying contact, regard will be had to the point of contact and where contact is both high and to the body, the Tribunal will classify the contact as high.

Contact shall be classified as high or to the groin where a player's head or groin makes contact with another player or object such as the fence or the ground as a result of the actions of the offending player. For example, should a player tackle another player around the waist and as a result of the tackle, the tackled player's head made forceful contact with the fence or the ground the contact in these circumstances would be classified as high, even though the tackle was to the body

## **Injury**

The MWJFL and the MWJFL Tribunal can inquire and receive information as to the nature and extent of any injury suffered by a player in relation to a reportable offence. The nature and extent of injury may be a relevant factor in determining the level of impact, point of contact and in some instances, the nature of the conduct. Clubs must provide a medical update if so requested.

## **Prior History**

Clubs and players should be aware that the sanctions applicable to players found to have committed a reportable offence are significantly affected by a player's prior history.

Players should be aware of the compounding consequences which apply in the event that they are subsequently found guilty of a reportable offence and suspended.

## **Charges in the alternative**

The Incident Review Officer will generally not charge a player for a specific offence and another offence in the alternative.

The Tribunal may allow charges to be amended at any time during the hearing before the Tribunal and the Incident Review Officer expects that those rules will apply to ensure that in an appropriate case, based on the evidence before the Tribunal, a charge will be amended if necessary. To avoid any doubt, the power to amend a charge includes the power to substitute another charge.

## **Mitigation**

In determining a level to be given to a reportable offence, the Incident Review Officer will not take into account any provocation or whether a player was acting in self-



defence. Ordinarily those are matters which would be relevant to any sanction to be imposed and while the Tribunal will generally apply the level classification of the Incident Review Panel and the prescribed points consequences, there is power in exceptional and compelling circumstances for the Tribunal to substitute another outcome, if it is appropriate in all the circumstances to do so.

### **Direct reference to the MWJFL Tribunal**

Where the Incident Review Officer determines on the basis of the evidence before it that it is not able to determine with sufficient certainty, the relevant factors set out in the Categorising the Level of Offences table in respect of any reportable offence, or for any other reason, the Incident Review Officer may refer the matter to the MWJFL Tribunal,

The Incident Review Officer may also refer a matter to the Tribunal if it considers it appropriate to do so based on the circumstances of the offence, any suspected mitigating factors or other unusual features of any report such as a king hit 'off the ball' on an unsuspecting opponent.

### **Dangerous tackles**

The application of a tackle may be considered rough conduct which is unreasonable in the circumstances. In determining whether the application of a tackle constitutes a Reportable Offence, without limitation, regard may be had to:

- whether the tackle consists of more than one action, regardless of whether the player being tackled is in possession of the ball;
- whether the tackle is of an inherently dangerous kind, such as a spear tackle;
- whether an opponent is slung or driven into the ground with excessive force.

### **Yellow and Red cards**

Two yellow cards in the same match will automatically constitute a report and a red card will be issued.

Three yellow cards in a season will automatically incur a one match suspension.

All red cards will constitute a report to be issued.