

Preston Bullants AFC Report and Melee Information and Procedure

Order-off Rule and Reports

Detail information is contained in the following VAFA Rules.

FS5 Match Day 2017 rules - Both clubs Responsibilities - Section 7 (3).

FS9 2017 VAFA guidelines inc. Blood Rule - Sections (Audible Obscenity Rule & Order-Off Rule).

VAFA Rules 2017 - MEN'S PREMIERSHIP COMPETITIONS - Section 70 & 70A

Section 70 states that VAFA matches are played under the Laws of the Game as adopted by the Association.

Section 70A states if a player commits a second such offence, the Association shall advise the player's club in writing of such fact and of the fact that if the player commits a further such offence in the same season, the player shall be suspended for 2 matches. If the player commits a third such offence in the same season, he shall be automatically be suspended for 2 matches.

From the FS4 Tribunal Investigation 2017 - Section Investigations (2) - Melee Procedure

1. The Umpire charges Club(s) with a melee(s) on Match-day.
2. The VAFA offers the Club(s) the minimum prescribed penalty (if applicable) by noon Monday; the club then must respond by 9 a.m. Tuesday morning.

VAFA Rules 2017 - INDEPENDENT TRIBUNAL - Section 99 to 119C

99. General power to lay reports

99A. Video reports initiated by VAFA (Such video report shall be in writing and made not later than 5.00pm on the Monday following completion of the match).

99B. Video reports initiated by umpires (Such video report shall be in writing and made not later than 5.00pm on the Monday following completion of the match).

99C. Video reports initiated by Clubs: (A Club's request must be made to the Association by not later than 12.00 noon on the Monday following completion of the match and shall be accompanied by a copy of the recording and prescribed video review fee of \$200).

99D. Nothing in Rule 99C limits the rights of a person, player or Club to request the investigation of a protest, complaint or charge under Rule 124.

99E. The provisions of Rules 100 to 119C inclusive shall apply to any video report, save that any player reported under Rules 99A, 99B or 99C has until 3pm on the Tuesday following the match to advise the Chief Executive Officer of his or her consent to the imposition of a prescribed penalty.

Cards

PLAYERS ORDERED FROM THE FIELD (YELLOW, RED OR BLACK CARDS)

Cards	Report	Duration	Player Replaced
Yellow	No Report	Spend 12 mins playing time off the arena	Yes
Red	Automatic Report	Spend 12 mins playing time off the arena	Yes
Black	Automatic Report	Cannot take the field for the remainder of the game	Replaced after 12 mins playing time

Conclusion of the Game for a Report or Melee

At the conclusion of a game the following needs to occur by the Team Manager as the official of the club.

From the VAFA Rules 2017 - RESPONSIBILITIES OF CLUBS IN PREMIERSHIP MATCHES - Section 72 (xviii).

Provide an official of the club (the Team Manager) to wait on the field umpire at the conclusion of the match for the purpose:

- (B) Acknowledging any report concerning the match recorded on the back of either team sheet and receiving a copy of such report.
- (C) Acknowledging any report concerning any player of either team made by a competent person.
- (D) Noting from any report required to be acknowledged, the person referred to therein who are reasonably identifiable as connected with the club which he represents. The said official shall be responsible for advising such persons that they shall be required to be present at any Tribunal investigation.

This also includes the charge sheet for a Melee.

Notification of the Report

At this time the club has been notified of the report.

As per the Rules of the competition, the VAFA will formally notify to the nominated person (the Secretary of the Club) the official report charge by the prescribed time. Normally 24 to 48 hours after the incident.

To allow sufficient time to challenge a report, the notification of the report to the team manager will establish the following process:

1. The player(s) reported must be notified post the game.
2. The coach of the team must be notified post the game.
3. Confirmation is required from the player whether the report will be accepted or will it be challenged at this time. (This will allow the maximum time to prepare for tribunal visit).
4. If the report is challenged:
 - i. The team manager must confirm the player report and contact phone number.
 - ii. The team manager must notify the secretary of the challenge (they will receive the formal notification and have all the information to formally respond to the report).
 - iii. The team manager must notify the tribunal advocate of the challenge. This will then commence the tribunal related process.
 - iv. The secretary will notify the president of this fact.
5. If the report is accepted:
 - i. The team manager must notify the secretary of the acceptance of the report (they will receive the formal notification and have all the information to formally respond to the report).
 - ii. The secretary will notify the tribunal advocate and president of this fact.
 - iii. The secretary will then confirm the acceptance of the report on behalf of the player(s).

Notification of the Melee

At this time the club has been notified of the Melee.

As per the Rules of the competition, the VAFA will formally notify to the nominated person (the Secretary of the Club) the official report or Melee charge by the prescribed time. Normally 24 to 48 hours after the incident.

To allow sufficient time to challenge a Melee, the notification of the Melee to the team manager will establish the following process:

1. The coach of the team must be notified post the game of the Melee charge and confirm whether this should be accepted or challenged. (This will allow the maximum time to prepare for the challenge of the Melee charge).
2. If the Melee is challenged:
 - i. The team manager must notify the secretary of the challenge (they will receive the formal notification and have all the information to formally respond to the Melee).
 - ii. The team manager must notify the tribunal advocate of the challenge.
 - iii. This will then commence the tribunal related process.
 - iv. The secretary will notify the president of this fact.

3. If the Melee is accepted:

- i. The team manager must notify the secretary of the acceptance of the report (they will receive the formal notification and have all the information to formally respond to the report).
- ii. The secretary will notify the tribunal advocate and president of this fact.
- iii. The secretary will then confirm the acceptance of the melee on behalf of the club.

Deciding whether to contest the Charge

Factors to consider when deciding whether or not to accept the set penalty may be:

- An honest appraisal of guilt or innocence,
- The number of umpires/witnesses that reported/observed the incident,
- The severity or consequences of the incident,
- The possibility of a more severe penalty.

Rolling the dice and believing your skills as an advocate through technicalities and muddying the facts will get the player off is foolhardy. The fact that the player has been reported and an umpire has offered a suspension demonstrates what one credible witness believes the severity of the indiscretion deserves. Should the charge appear before the tribunal, this evidence will be presented. If found guilty the minimum sentence is normally two weeks and consideration is given that the player could have taken the set penalty.

Once a player decides to contest the charge, preparation for the hearing should begin immediately. If after the game the player has decided to challenge the charge at the tribunal, but later decides that it is in his/her best interests to accept the set penalty, the club should contact the VAFA at the stated time following the match.

Tribunal Advocate

Objective

To provide advocacy support to any player required to attend the League Independent Tribunal either for clearance appeals, charged player or players called as witnesses to a charge.

Responsibilities

- Ensure that he/she is familiar with all VAFA Rules pertinent to clearances and umpires charges arising from on field incidents.
- Ensure that he/she is familiar with all VAFA Playing Rules.
- Ensure that he/she is familiar with procedures at tribunal hearings.
- Where an alleged charge is laid against a player or an opposition player is charged with an alleged offence against a Club player obtain all documents relevant to that charge from the Team Manager.
- Meet with player and develop case and brief player regarding the tribunal appearance.
- Attend the tribunal with player at the time and date set down by the VAFA.
- Report outcomes of any hearing to the Secretary and appropriate Coach as soon as practicable after the conclusion of the hearing.

Relationships

- Reports to the President
- Liaises with players required to appear before Tribunal
- Liaises with the Secretary
- Liaises with Coaches

Accountability

Accountable to the President

Tips for Advocates

As an advocate, avoid an ad hoc or casual approach. Be prepared and have in mind an end result, a concept of what version of events you want the Tribunal to accept. The Tribunal is more likely to accept an argument if it is presented in a coherent, consistent, credible and probable manner. Be confident with your approach and manner. Telling the Tribunal; “this is your first time as an advocate,” will not help the player you are defending.

You will be responsible for asking any questions or raising issues you consider important, as the Tribunal members may or may not choose to ask questions of the umpires, player or witness. As a result you will need to pre-plan the questions you would like to ask.

Cross examination which merely repeats evidence, or asking the same question in a different form, to reinforce a point should be avoided. Be prepared and take notes throughout the hearing. These can be used as important references for later questioning. Use these answers to clarify and create doubt around the guilt or innocence of your player.

Some important considerations for cross examination are:

- Be brief - don't ask lengthy questions,

- Try and use closed questions which elicit only yes/no answers, [A skill which needs practicing!]
- Don't argue with the umpire, witnesses or tribunal members,
- Do not give the witness an invitation to explain (Use closed questioning).

Report Sheet

(To be completed by the Team Manager and sent to the Tribunal Advocate)

Match Details:	Preston vs
Report Date:	
Ground:	
When did the report occur: (Use information from the umpires report)	
Reported Player:	
Reported Player's contact details:	
Accept or Challenge:	
Summary of Player's version of incident: (No need to complete if player accepts report)	
Confirmation coach is aware of report: (Yes / No)	

Melee Sheet

(To be completed by the Team Manager and sent to the Tribunal Advocate)

Match Details:	Preston vs
Melee Date:	
Ground:	
When did the Melee occur: (Use information from the umpires report)	
Accept or Challenge: (coach will need to confirm)	
Summary of Melee: (including Factors necessary to appeal against the Melee)	