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Updated Foul Play Act Striking and Tribunal Process

In Round Four of the AFL Canterbury Senior Premiership competition between the Bulldogs and Cougars, an incident occurred which lead to a formal complaint against the Bulldogs AFL Club from the Cougars AFL Club.

Due to inconclusive evidence The Bulldogs player – Daniel Otley – **could not** be found guilty in causing an injury to the upper eyebrow of Adam Clarke (Cougars). As a result of the finding, Mr Otley is cleared to play in Round Five of the AFL Canterbury Senior Premiership competition.

Player Otley was also witnessed performing a striking action but was seen to **not connect** and the game continued.

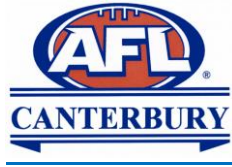
In the 2019 season to date, there have been several striking actions witnessed during the games, but field umpires have only been informed at the conclusion of the quarter or game. As a result of this, player Otley who performed a striking action in Round Four has been issued a formal warning with no other formal action.

As a result of this incident and subsequent Tribunal Process, AFL Canterbury will introduce the following measures effective immediately;

- Game umpires to provide a report on each game to the clubs involved,
- All striking witnessed by an umpire (field, boundary or goal) will result in the player(s) receiving an automatic one-week suspension along with being sent from the field for the remainder of the game.
- An updated Tribunal Process.

Umpire Reporting

In a new initiative, AFL Canterbury would like to increase the communication and transparency between the umpire collective and the four CAFL clubs. As a result, umpires involved in each of the two Senior Premiership games will meet at the conclusion of the game to discuss; how the game flowed, any foul play, umpire performance, player three, two and one votes, and team/game discipline.



The idea of this post game debrief is to begin tracking how games are performed etc. Areas of concern from the umpires, i.e. there was a high number of sling tackles in the game, will be communicated to the clubs involved with the aim of the clubs to go away and adjust their process.

These reports will also assist in the training and development of AFL Canterbury umpires.

Umpire game reports will be made available to the clubs involved following the game.

Striking & Foul Play

There was an incident in Round Four where a striking action was witnessed, but the game continued. In the 2019 season to date, there have been several striking actions witnessed during the games, but field umpires have only been informed at the conclusion of the quarter or game. As a result of this, the player who performed a striking action in Round Four has been issued a formal warning with no other formal action.

Effectively immediately, any umpire - field, boundary or goal – who witness a strike from anyone involved in the game (players, coaches, trainers, runners etc), MUST immediately blow their whistle and stop the game. Once the game is stopped, field umpires are to be consulted with the person(s) who performed the striking action sent from the field (red carded and not able to be replaced).

Furthermore, umpires who witness striking are required to submit a report to Craig Varcoe within 24 hours from the conclusion of the game outlining what they have been seen. Those involved, will incur an automatic one-week suspension for their actions.

The reason behind this move revolves around the increasing “niggle” that has crept into the 2019 season with many incidents of players using unreasonable force. We are trying to stamp this out and make it the law and umpire expectations very clear to all players and clubs.

Tribunal Process

Should a player, club or official wish to make a formal complaint against another member of the AFL Canterbury community, they can do so within 24-hours for the incident occurring. Formal complaints are to be emailed to tribunal@afllcanterbury.co.nz

Once a complaint is received, a confidential Tribunal Panel will be selected from members of the CAFL Committee. The Panel will be made up of three independent people. There are five groups where Panel members can be selected from – one from each of the four AFL clubs and one from the umpire collective.

Once the Panel has been selected, statements will be requested from those involved (and witnesses). Statements will be reviewed with a decision to be announced in a timely manner.



Contact AFL Canterbury

For questions or clarification, please contact the AFL Canterbury League for further discussion.

On Behalf of the CAFL committee,

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Website: www.caf.co.nz

Social: www.facebook.com/AFLCanterbury