

Cranbrook Sports Club

Cranbrook Rugby Football Club

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1957

3.3 DISCIPLINE POLICY

It is the Club's responsibility to deal with any act of indiscipline on the field of play by players, and/or any of their supporters and spectators on the touch line, or any Cranbrook Rugby Football Club\ Cranbrook Sports Club member who at any time uses threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour towards any other member or visitor to the club or in any way brings the club or the game into disrepute.

Any member, whether player / supporter /spectator will have a right, to the Cranbrook Rugby Football Club\ Cranbrook Sports Club appeals procedure following any penalty imposed.

Any player/spectator supporter who appears before the County Discipline Sub-Committee is reminded that there is a levy imposed by the County Discipline Sub-Committee which the player /spectator/supporter may be asked to pay.

CRANBROOK RFC – DISCIPLINE CODE

1. This code is to be read in conjunction with the 'Rules of the Club' in force at the time and which are regularly amended and updated.
2. It is to be remembered that it is not only the behaviour of players, which can result in the appearance of the Club before a County Disciplinary Hearing. Club Members are responsible for their invited guests at all times.
3. Match officials voluntarily give of their time in the to take part in the game of Rugby Union. It is a Cranbrook RFC rule that match officials should be shown the utmost respect both on and off the field of play. Decisions made by the referee are final and should not be questioned.
4. Only the captain or vice-captain should refer to the referee during play.
5. Players should not engage in arguments with spectators nor spectators engage with players *or other spectators* during a match.
6. *Any player\spectator or club official sent from the field of play will appear before the Club Disciplinary Committee, which will impose a ban in accordance with the RFU Disciplinary Regulations if the said member is found guilty of the offence; in any event that member will be suspended until their case is heard by the Kent County RFU Disciplinary Committee, where a further ban may be imposed. It should be noted that any costs imposed by the Kent RFU Disciplinary hearing may be met by the member.*
7. Spectators should refrain from using foul or abusive words or behaviour or acting in any way that could be deemed to be abusive They must not encroach on the field of play.
8. Any Club Member, who, through their actions brings the club into disrepute, will be required to appear before the Club Disciplinary Committee.

Cranbrook Sports Club

Cranbrook Rugby Football Club

R.F.U.



K.R.F.U.

1957

9. A member who has been sanctioned by *the Club Disciplinary Committee* may appeal to the Club Committee against that sanction or finding. Notice of such an appeal must be in writing to the Club Chairman and this communication must set out the reasons for the appeal and should be made within fourteen days of the original finding.
10. None of the above shall affect the overriding principles contained in The Laws of the Game of Rugby Union, or the rules of Kent County RFU.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE

The following outlines the procedure to be followed where an act of indiscipline has taken place:

Player sent off (Red Cards) by the referee (Society or Club)

The Captain of the team concerned **MUST** report the name, contact detail and playing position of the player sent off, the match including the opposition and any relevant details to the **CRFC Honorary Secretary** within 24 hours of the sending off.

In the case of Players (those who are 17 years old at the time of the offence/incident) and are playing in a club adult match Junior the same procedure will apply.

This is important as it is mandatory that the **CRFC** Club Secretary has to report the incident in writing to the Kent County Discipline Secretary within **48 hours of the incident**.

Referees (Society or Club) must in all adult matches report all players sent off to the Discipline Secretary of the County Constituent Body of the player's club on the RFU Discipline Report form.

For all incidents involving youth players, playing in club matches at any age group below and including U18, the referee (Society or Club) should send the report form to the Club Secretary and the **Club** Chairman within 48 hours of the incident.

Player Sin Binned (Yellow Cards) by the referee (Society or Club)

The Captain of the team (or his representative) must report the name of any player sin binned (shown a yellow card) during a game (this relates to all teams and is irrespective of there being a Society or **CRFC** referee officiating) to the Chairman of Selectors at the selection committee meeting following the sin binning.

If there is no representation from that team at the next selection meeting the Captain must inform the Chairman of Selectors by telephone.

A record of players being sin binned will be kept by the Chairman of selectors, any player, who in the opinion of the Discipline Sub Committee, has an excessive amount of yellow cards will be asked to appear before that Sub Committee to explain the reasons why.

Cranbrook Sports Club

Cranbrook Rugby Football Club

R.F.U.



K.R.F.U.

1957

In the case of Junior Players the coach or manager of the relevant team should report the name of the player sin binned to the relevant Junior Chairman who will keep a record.

Acts of Foul Play not Detected by the Referee/Match Officials

Any member/player who witnesses an act of foul play or bad behaviour *by a player (of any club team)*, can report the incident giving name(s) and details of the incident to: the **CRFC Club Chairman**, Chairman of Selectors or **CRFC Club Honorary Secretary** as soon after the incident as possible.

*Any incident of foul play involving a member of an opposition team that has or has not been dealt with by the match official(s) and is witnessed by a player CRFC member can be reported to the Club Chairman or Honorary Secretary without delay so consideration and action can be taken if appropriate. In the case of Youth Players the report should be given to the **Mini / Junior Chairman**. A Citing may only occur where an act of foul play was not detected by the match officials. Any consideration for a Citing must be reported to the Club Chairman or Honorary Secretary immediately as there is a very short time scale and a detailed procedure that has to be followed. Only an Officer of the Club may cite an opposition player.*

Acts of Bad Behaviour by Players, Members, Spectators, Supporters or Visitors

Any member/player who witnesses an act of bad behaviour at any time by any **CRFC Club Member**, or visitor to the club, of whatever age, can report the matter to the Club Chairman or Secretary or any member of the Club Committee so the appropriate action can be taken.

Any such report may be a verbal account but must be confirmed in writing by the reporter to the Club Chairman or Secretary detailing the alleged offence and including the names of witnesses, date, time and location.

THE DISCIPLINE SUB COMMITTEE

The Discipline Sub Committee will be responsible for investigating and taking action on any sending off, or any incident of foul play or bad behaviour by a CRFC player not detected by the Match Officials and instances where a player has been sin binned an excessive number of times.

The Discipline Sub Committee will also investigate and take action on any instance of indiscipline or bad behaviour by any CRFC member, supporter or spectator.

The Discipline Sub Committee will exercise such power in a fair and open manner with the accused always having a right to attend and put his/her case after first been given reasonable notice of the hearing and to exercise its power without prejudice.

Cranbrook Sports Club Cranbrook Rugby Football Club

R.F.U.



K.R.F.U.

1957

The Discipline Sub Committee shall consist of three members of the main Club Committee and may include

-) *Chairman of Discipline*
-) *Chairman of Selectors,*
-) *A member or members of the General Committee*
-) *Honorary Secretary.*
-) ***Or senior club member appointed by the Club Chairman***

The Discipline Sub Committee will meet within five (5) days of the act of indiscipline, offence or incident in question. Further meetings may be held if circumstances require this.

The reported player, member, supporter or spectator **MUST** attend the discipline hearing. He/she may, if they wish, be represented by one person of his/her choice.

The Committee may also receive evidence (either verbally or in writing) from any other person(s) who witnessed the incident or was involved in it.

Those present at a discipline hearing will be:

-) The player or **Club Member,**
-) Supporter or spectator.
-) His/her representative.
-) Witness(es) to the incident.
-) Discipline Sub Committee members.

Procedure

-) *The report of the incident will have been sent to the player\member at least 48 hours before the hearing and will be read to the meeting.*
-) *The player, member, supporter or spectator is invited to make his/her statement.*
-) *Witness(es) to the incident make their statement(s), copies of which will be sent to the player\member at least 48 hours before the hearing.*
-) *The character witness makes his/her statement.*
-) *Members of the committee may question any of those present about the incident, and/or the player, member, supporter or spectator involved.*
-) *The meeting will be adjourned while the Committee decide on what action to take.*
-) *The meeting is then re convened and the results of the hearing along with any penalties are announced.*

Cranbrook Sports Club

Cranbrook Rugby Football Club

R.F.U.



K.R.F.U.

1957

Penalties

The **CRFC** Club Discipline Sub Committee will have the power to decide upon one or more of the following:

-) No further punishment additional to the punishment of sending off.
-) To take no action but to leave the matter to the County Discipline Sub Committee.
-) That the player (or other, person if the enquiry is into incidents off the field of play) be cautioned or severely cautioned as to his/her future conduct.
-) A period of suspension from playing, or taking part in the administration of Rugby Union Football (within the Club context only), or both, be imposed on the player, member, supporter or spectator.

Procedures in the RFU Handbook prints a list of recommended sanctions from the IRB. It states the various entry points based on the scale and seriousness of the player's conduct

Suspend or terminate membership of the club for such period as it thinks fit.

Any other penalties or suspensions as decided by the Sub Committee.

A record of any penalty awarded against any player/supporter/spectator etc, plus the reasons how that decision was arrived at by the Club Discipline Sub Committee will be kept on file for 3 years. This penalty can be taken into account when deciding any future penalties at any subsequent discipline hearing relating to that member within that 3-year period.

A member/player/supporter/spectator has the right to an appeal process as outlined in section

YOUTH DISCIPLINE

The **CRFC** also has a duty to deal with all Junior Discipline matters. Junior being a player under the age of 18 at the time of the offence, providing the player is playing in an U17 or U18 club match. Any player who has reached their 17th birthday and is playing in either an U19 (Colts) or adult match is classed as an adult and will therefore be dealt with under the procedure outlined in section 1 above.

All players U18 years of age whether playing in age group, colts or adult rugby matches will automatically be suspended from playing, irrespective of the referee being a member of a society or a club referee, until they have appeared before a club Discipline Sub-Committee.

Player sent off (Red Cards) by the referee (Society or Club)

In the case of Junior Players the coach or manager of the relevant team **MUST** report the name, age, DoB, playing position and contact details of the player concerned, the referee's name and society (if any), the opposition and any relevant match details to the relevant Junior Chairman and the **CRFC** Club Secretary within 24 hours of the incident.

Cranbrook Sports Club

Cranbrook Rugby Football Club

R.F.U.



K.R.F.U.

1957

This is important as it is mandatory that the **CRFC** Club Secretary has to report the incident in writing to the Kent County Youth Discipline Secretary within 72 hours of the incident.

Referees (Society or Club) who red card a player who has reached 17 years of age must send the report to the Discipline Secretary of the County Constituent Body of that players club. For all incidents involving youth players, playing in club matches at any age group below and including U18, the referee (Society or Club) should send the report form to the Club Secretary and the relevant Youth Chairman within 48 hours of the incident.

All reports should be on the RFU Discipline Report form. Copies of this form for Club referees are available from the **CRFC** Club Secretary.

Player Sin Binned (Yellow Card) by a referee (Society or Club)

In the case of Junior Players the coach or manager of the relevant team should report the name of the player sin binned (shown a yellow card) to the relevant Youth Chairman. A record of players who have been sin binned will be kept by the relevant Chairman. Any player who has been sin binned twice in a season will be asked to appear before the Junior Discipline Sub Committee.

Acts of Bad Behaviour by Players, Spectators, Supporters and Visitors

Any member/player who witnesses an act of bad behaviour at any time by any Club Member or visiting supporter/spectator, of whatever age, can report the matter to the relevant Youth Chairman who will consult with the Chairman of the Club and Secretary so the appropriate action can be taken.

Acts of Bullying

Bullying of any kind is not acceptable in any form or at any age at CRFC. Any instances will be taken seriously, responded to promptly, and procedures followed to deal with the situation. Rugby is a 'telling' culture and anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to report it to the Club Welfare Officer. He/she will follow the guidelines as outlined in the RFU Anti Bullying Policy. It is the responsibility of every adult working in rugby union to ensure that everyone, adults and all young people can enjoy the sport in a safe, enjoyable environment.

Junior Discipline Sub Committee

The Junior Discipline Sub Committee will follow the format as in section 2 above however, the age etc of the person will be taken into account in the way the hearing is conducted.

The members of the Junior Discipline Sub Committee *may consist of:*

-) **Club Chairman of Discipline**
-) **Junior Chairman**
-) **Mini Chairman**
-) **Members of the General Committee.**

Cranbrook Sports Club

Cranbrook Rugby Football Club

R.F.U.



K.R.F.U.

1957

The Junior member should be accompanied by a parent/guardian and can be represented by an adult of his/her choosing.

Penalties

The Mini /Junior Discipline Sub Committee can impose the same penalties as for a senior player, spectator, member etc as outlined in this document however, the age and seriousness of the offence must be taken into account when deciding penalties, generally players under the age of 18 are normally suspended for shorter periods than adults.

A record of the penalty awarded against any Junior player/spectator etc (if any), plus the reasons how that decision was arrived at by the Junior Discipline Sub Committee will be kept on file for 3 years. This penalty can be taken into account when deciding any future penalties at any subsequent discipline hearing relating to that member within that 3-year period.

It is the responsibility of **CRFC** to report the circumstances of the offence (together with the referee's report if available) and the findings along with any penalties imposed, to the KCRFU Honorary Youth Discipline Secretary. *The county Discipline Sub Committee may confirm or vary the findings of the club's Discipline Sub Committee.*

A youth player/supporter/spectator/member has the right to an appeal process.

Appeals Procedure

Players Reported by a Match Official

Any senior male, female or youth player (who has reached their 17th birthday and were playing in an adult or U19 Colts match when the offence occurred) who has been reported by a match official has the right of appeal against the club's Discipline Sub Committees decision to the club's Appeals Sub Committee.

Non-Playing Members or Players not reported by a Match Official

All other members, senior or Junior or any player dealt with by the club Discipline Sub Committee for an offence not detected by a match official have a right of appeal to the club's Appeals Sub Committee.

Appeals Sub Committee

This committee will be made up by *the Chairman of CRFC* plus two members of the club of good character who did not sit on the Discipline Sub Committee.

Any appeal relating must be submitted to the Honorary Secretary in writing giving reasons for the appeal within 7 days of the discipline hearing. The appeal will be heard within the following 7 days.

Cranbrook Sports Club Cranbrook Rugby Football Club

R.F.U.



K.R.F.U.

1957

The Appeal Committee may uphold the Discipline Sub Committee judgment, it may increase or decrease the length of any period of suspension or it may annul the judgment.

Costs of Attending a County Discipline Hearing

There is a levy imposed on the Club by the County under County Resolution 3.3 for any player appearing before the County Discipline Committee (senior player or youth player who has reached their 17th birthday and who was playing in an adult or U19 [Colts] match)

The amount of such levy shall be as determined from time to time by the County Union. However, it is the club's policy that this levy *may be paid by the individual concerned and therefore the club may invoice the player for the said amount.*

Failure to pay the club this levy will result in the player being banned from playing any further matches or use any club facilities until the levy is paid in full. If a player leaves consequent to not paying the levy they will not be entitled to a refund of their annual subscription.