

TO: Gustavo Dipolito, President, Trident Rugby Football Club
Fernando Bretos, Vice-President, Trident Rugby Football Club

CC: John Devonport, President, Florida Rugby Union
Karl Mesloh, Disciplinary Chairman, USA Rugby South

FROM: James Gladen, Disciplinary Chairman, Florida Rugby Union

DATE: October 17, 2008

RE: Disciplinary Sanction Against Trident Rugby Football Club Player,
Francisco Julio Gonzalez (CIPP # 385248)

Offender: Francisco Julio Gonzalez (CIPP # 385248)

Date of Offense: October 4, 2008

Match: Ft. Lauderdale Rugby Football Club @ Trident Rugby Football Club

Referee: Gavin Curtis

Facts: As reported by the referee, it was a well-spirited match with the Tridents dominating most of the match. At about the 20 minute mark of the second half, Ft. Lauderdale was attacking the Trident goal line and a ruck ensued. An unknown Trident player counter-rucked the Ft. Lauderdale #12 player, at which time the Ft. Lauderdale #12 took offense and took a swing at the Trident player. Had the punch connected it would have caused considerable injury to the Trident player. This incident incited a number of Trident players, who joined the melee. It was also at this time that the Trident substitute hooker, ran over and kicked one of the Ft. Lauderdale players and then ran off (he was later red-carded). Another pod of players broke off and continued to scuffle near the goal posts at which time the Offender, serving as a touch judge for the match, took his umbrella and struck a Ft. Lauderdale player in the back. The Offender was red-carded for his actions and he left the pitch without further incident.

Decision: This is one of the more disturbing disciplinary matters brought to the attention of the FRU for quite some time, and again stresses the need for qualified touch judges to be present at all rugby matches in the FRU. This incident is disturbing on several levels, including, but not limited to, (i) the fact that the Offender was serving as a touch judge for the match (a position which should be held to a higher standard of conduct), (ii) that the Offender chose to strike a player in the back, a per se defenseless position, and (iii) the Offender used an umbrella to strike a player in the back which not only violates Florida Rugby Union Disciplinary Regulations and Procedures (the "Regulations"), but may also be seen as a criminal act. The Offender was red-carded for striking a player on the pitch in the back with an umbrella in violation of the Regulations. This "Major Physical Offense" carries a mandatory suspension of 2-6 weeks or 2-6 regularly scheduled matches, whichever is longer, barring any mitigating circumstances. Although this seems to be the Offender's first offense, the seriousness of this violation warrants the

imposition of the maximum suspension period of six (6) weeks from the date of the offense or six (6) regularly scheduled matches, whichever is longer. In addition, because the strike of the umbrella was directed to a player in a defenseless position (to his back), the suspension will be increased by an additional period of six (6) weeks from the date of the offense or six (6) regularly scheduled matches, whichever is longer. **In total, the Offender shall be suspended from play for the period of twelve (12) weeks from the date of the offense or twelve (12) regularly scheduled matches, whichever is longer.**

Sanction: Offender is suspended from play for the period of twelve (12) weeks from the date of the offense or twelve (12) regularly scheduled matches, whichever is longer.

Be advised, if entitled to an appeal under the Florida Rugby Union Disciplinary Regulations and Procedures, such appeal must be made within ten (10) days of receipt of this notice of suspension, and must be made to Mr. James Gladen, Disciplinary Chairman, Florida Rugby Union, with a copy of the appeal sent to Mr. John Devonport, President, Florida Rugby Union.