

DISCIPLINARY DECISION



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|------------------|---|-------------|-----------------------|
| Match | Ireland U20 v USA U20 | | |
| Competition | Junior World Championship | | |
| Date of match | 7 July 2026 | Match venue | Avchala Rugby Stadium |
| Applicable rules | JWC Tournament Disciplinary Manual Off-field sanctioning process | | |

| PARTICULARS OF OFFENCE | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|---|
| Player's surname | Molony | Player's forename(s) | Charlie |
| Player's Union | IRFU | Date of birth | 16/03/2006 |
| Referee's name | George Selwood | | |
| Foul Play | <input type="checkbox"/> Admitted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not admitted | Red card warranted | <input type="checkbox"/> Admitted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not admitted |
| Offence | Law 9.17 | SELECT: Red card <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Citing <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> If "Other" selected, please specify: | |
| Summary of Sanction | No sanction. Red Card Rescinded. | | |

| HEARING DETAILS | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| Hearing date | 9 July 2026 | Hearing venue | Remote by Zoom |
| Chairman/JO | Richard Whittam KC | | |
| Other Members of Disciplinary Committee | Val Toma, former international match official, Romania Olly Kohn, former professional rugby player, Wales | | |
| Appearance Player | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> | Appearance Union | Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Player's Representative(s) | William McEvoy, IRFU Legal Counsel John Farrell, IRFU U20 analyst | Disciplinary Officer and/or other attendees | Brian Hammond, World Rugby Discipline Officer Joyce Hayes, WR Disciplinary & Eligibility co-ordinator |
| List of documents/materials provided to Player in advance of hearing | A compilation video recording of the incident Referee's Second Yellow Card Report Foul Play Review Officer Report USA Rugby Medical Report FPRC Player's Submission IRFU Replies to Standard Directions | | |

SUMMARY OF ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CITING/REFEREE'S REPORT/INCIDENT FOOTAGE

The video recording showed that, in approximately the 63rd minute of the match, USA 23 kicked a high ball to be chased from just inside his 10m line to outside the Ireland 22, quite close to the touchline. A number of Players chased the kick. Ireland 14 covered the kick and was in a position to catch the ball. He arrived in the landing area at a controlled speed. USA 11 chased the ball and leapt forwards, into and over Ireland 14. USA 11 pivoted over Ireland 14, only just beyond the horizontal. He put his arms out to break his fall. The Referee was well sighted of the challenge, as was the Assistant Referee. Both considered it to be a knock-on by USA 11.

There was little or no reaction from any of the Players on the field of play.

The Referee stopped the clock for USA 11 to receive treatment. Thereafter USA 11 played on.

The TMO asked the Referee to review the recording. The Referee did so and issued a yellow card to Ireland 14. It was the second yellow card issued to Ireland 14 (the first being for a technical offence) and so he was removed from the field of play for receiving two yellow cards in a match.

Within the 8 minutes allocated, the second yellow card was upgraded to a 20-minute red card.

The Referee's report stated:

"After a review from the TMO Ireland 14 tackled an opponent in the air and they landed dangerously. Ireland 14 was sanctioned with a yellow card and sent for an off field review. This was Ireland 14's second yellow card and so he was sanctioned with a 20 minute red card. After the off field review the TMO said that the player landed dangerously on his head/neck. Ireland 14 had already been sanctioned with a 20 minute red card anyway."

The TMO's report stated:

"Ireland 14 charge 11 USA player in the air. Player put into a highly dangerous position- landing on the head / neck. For that reason yellow card is upgrade to 20 min red card."

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF OTHER EVIDENCE (e.g. medical reports)

The USA Team Physician reported:

"During the game against Ireland, player #11 Finian Love went up for the highball when his legs were taken out from under him causing him to pitch forward and fall onto his trunk. As he was watching the ball, he was unable to prepare for the hit. He was able to get his arms up in enough time to not land directly on his head or cervical spine but instead first his left arm and shoulder. This caused axial rotational at his lumbar spine.

He was immediately assessed by our athletic trainer Janie Kluempers. The wind was knocked out of him but he did not state he had any low back pain at the time of assessment. She performed an evaluation of his right leg as he started to have significant cramping in his right calf after the landing. In addition she evaluated his right knee and ankle as well as checking for neck pain as she had seen how he landed.

Watching the replay he stated he was lucky he was able to catch himself enough and fell in the way he did. He was able to continue to play and complete the game.

This morning he endorsed bilateral low back stiffness and right sacroiliac pain. On examination he had localized sacroiliac tenderness to palpation as well as right quadratus lumborum and paraspinal hypertonicity. He had mild limitation to his lumbar flexion and extension. His sacroiliac joint compression and FABER tests were positive and he has been diagnosed with a sprain of the sacroiliac joint.

We will monitor his symptoms and exam and depending on how it progresses today, we are considering obtaining imaging however we are hopeful he has avoided significant injury or impairment from this incident."

SUMMARY OF PLAYER'S EVIDENCE

The Player gave a clear and concise account of what had happened.

He read the kick early and thought that he arrived in the landing area at a controlled speed, not least because he was aware of the left touchline. He slowed. He was the first to arrive in the landing area and thought he was well placed to catch the ball. He did not think that there would be an aerial contest. He set himself to catch the ball and was turning to have his back to the opposing side and braced himself for a tackle and to resist being pushed into touch.

The ball was knocked on centimetres from his outstretched arms.

As indicated in the written submissions, Ireland 14 and USA 11 apologised to each other on the pitch and exchanged gear afterwards.

FINDINGS OF FACT

The video recording and the Player's evidence accurately reflected what had occurred.

This was not the case of a Player over-running a kick and being reckless as to a Player trying to make a fair catch.

Ireland 14 had read the kick well and had arrived in the landing area in a measured and balanced way. He was in a position to make a fair catch. He braced himself for a tackle. USA 11 arrived at speed, appeared to jump late, and rotated over Ireland 14, reaching out and knocking the ball on when the ball was almost in his hands. Had that not occurred, it is likely that he would have made a fair catch. USA 11 rotated just beyond the horizontal, but not much more, and put his arms out as he was travelling forward. The USA Team Physician's description of USA 11 landing on his trunk was a reasonable one. The Referee and the Assistant Referee on that wing were well sighted, and when they viewed the incident in real time, neither thought that there had been an act of foul play. Both thought that USA 11 had knocked the ball on.

There was little or no reaction from Players on either team to suggest that they thought there had been an act of foul play.

Ireland 14 had made a reasonable decision. This was a Rugby incident and there was no act of foul play.

The Disciplinary Committee was grateful to the IRFU for its timely return of the replies to the Standard Directions, and its concise and relevant written and oral submissions.

DECISION

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|--------------------|---|
| Foul play | Admitted <input type="checkbox"/> Determined <input type="checkbox"/> Not determined <input type="checkbox"/> No act of foul play <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Red card warranted | Admitted <input type="checkbox"/> Determined <input type="checkbox"/> Not determined <input type="checkbox"/> The Red Card was rescinded <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

SANCTIONING PROCESS

ASSESSMENT OF SERIOUSNESS

| | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Assessment of Intent – R 17.18.1(a)-(b) (or equivalent Tournament rule) | |
| Intentional <input type="checkbox"/> | Reckless <input type="checkbox"/> |
| State Reasons | |
| The sanctioning process was not applicable. There was no act of foul play and the red card was rescinded. | |
| Nature of actions – R 17.18.1(c) (or equivalent Tournament rule) | |
| N/A | |
| Existence of provocation – R 17.18.1(d) (or equivalent Tournament rule) | |
| N/A | |

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| Whether player retaliated – R 17.18.1(e) (or equivalent Tournament rule) |
| N/A |
| Self-defence – R 17.18.1(f) (or equivalent Tournament rule) |
| N/A |
| Effect on victim – R 17.18.1(g) (or equivalent Tournament rule) |
| N/A |
| Effect on match – R 17.18.1(h) (or equivalent Tournament rule) |
| N/A |
| Vulnerability of victim – R 17.18.1(i) (or equivalent Tournament rule) |
| N/A |
| Level of participation/premeditation – R 17.18.1(j) (or equivalent Tournament rule) |
| N/A |
| Conduct completed/attempted – R 17.18.1(k) (or equivalent Tournament rule) |
| N/A |
| Other features of player’s conduct – R 17.18.1(l) (or equivalent Tournament rule) |
| N/A |

ASSESSMENT OF SERIOUSNESS CONTINUED

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Entry point (select entry point and indicate n° of weeks/matches starting point) | | |
| <u>Top end</u> * <input type="checkbox"/> | <u>Mid-range</u> <input type="checkbox"/> | <u>Low-end</u> <input type="checkbox"/> |
| N° of Weeks/Matches | N° of Weeks/Matches | N° Weeks/Matches |

*If Top End, the JO or Panel should identify, if appropriate, an entry point between the Top End and the maximum sanction and provide the reasons for selecting this entry point, below.

In making this assessment, the JO/Committee should consider World Rugby Regulations 17.18.1(a), 17.18.1(g), and 17.18.1(h) or the equivalent provisions within the Tournament Rules referred to above.

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| Reasons for selecting Entry Point above Top End |
| N/A |

RELEVANT OFF-FIELD MITIGATING FACTORS

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|---|--|
| Acknowledgement of commission of foul play – R 17.19.1(a) (or equivalent Tournament rule) | Player’s disciplinary record – R 17.19.1(b) (or equivalent Tournament rule) |
| N/A | N/A |
| Youth and/or inexperience of player – R 17.19.1(c) (or equivalent Tournament rule) | Conduct prior to and at hearing – R 17.19.1(d) (or equivalent Tournament rule) |
| N/A | N/A |
| Remorse and timing of remorse – R 17.19.1(e) (or equivalent Tournament rule) | Other off-field mitigation – R 17.19.1(f) (or equivalent Tournament rule) |
| N/A | N/A |

Number of weeks/matches deducted

N/A

Summary of reason for number of weeks/matches deducted:

N/A

ADDITIONAL RELEVANT OFF-FIELD AGGRAVATING FACTORS

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|---|
| Player’s status as an offender of the Laws of the Game – R 17.20.1(a) (or equivalent Tournament rule) |
| N/A |
| Need for deterrence – R 17.20.1(b) (or equivalent Tournament rule) |
| N/A |
| Any other off-field aggravating factors – R 17.20.1(c) (or equivalent Tournament rule) |
| N/A |

Number of additional weeks/matches


N/A

SANCTION

NOTE: PLAYERS ORDERED OFF OR CITED BY A CITING COMMISSIONER ARE PROVISIONALLY SUSPENDED PENDING THE HEARING OF THEIR CASE, SUCH SUSPENSION SHOULD BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION WHEN SANCTIONING – R 17.12.5(f) / 17.13.7 (or equivalent Tournament rule)

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|--------------------|-----|---|
| Total sanction | N/A | Sending off sufficient <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sanction commences | N/A | |

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| Sanction concludes | N/A |
| Matches/tournaments included in sanction | N/A |
| Costs | N/A |

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| Signature (JO or Chairman) |  | Date | 10 July 2026 |
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NOTE: YOU HAVE **48 HOURS (15s) / 24 HOURS (7s)** FROM NOTIFICATION OF THE DECISION OF THE CHAIRMAN/JO TO LODGE AN APPEAL WITH THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR – R 17.24.2(a) / R 17.38.1 (or equivalent Tournament rule)