

FOUL PLAY REVIEW COMMITTEE

DECISION

PARTICULARS OF OFFENCE			
Player's surname	Booth	Player's forename(s)	Alfie
Player's Union	USA		
Match	USA Under 20s v Japan Under 20s		
Competition	World Rugby Junior Championship 2026	Match Date	12 July 2026
Offence	Law 9.15 - Except in a scrum, ruck or maul, a player who is not in possession of the ball must not hold, push, charge or obstruct an opponent not in possession of the ball, or push a teammate with or without the ball.	SELECT: Red card ☒ Citing ☐	
Finding of Committee <i>Foul play determined?</i> <i>Red card/Citing upheld?</i>	We find that Player's actions constituted foul play. We find the Player's actions merited a red card.		
Summary of Sanction	A suspension of 2 weeks (one week of which can be replaced by coaching intervention if the Player completes the Coach Intervention Programme to the satisfaction of World Rugby)		
Matches/tournaments included in sanction	USA U20 v Uruguay U20 - 17 July 2026 Mount St Marys University v Southend Virginia University - 19 September 2026¹		
REASONS FOR DECISION			
In the 73rd minute of the match when the scores were Japan 71 – 21 USA, Japan kicked the ball downfield from just outside their 22-metre line. Japan players chased the kick which was gathered by USA 23. USA 23 begins to run upfield and diagonally to his left. This run causes a Japan player to check his run downfield and move laterally to his right and towards Alfie Booth, USA 18 ("the Player"). The Player adjusts his movement and charges with his shoulder into the Japan player. Heavy direct contact is made with the shoulder of the Player to the head of the Japan player who falls heavily to the ground. In his responses, the Player accepted responsibility for his actions and apologises for them. He did not seek to argue that his conduct was not foul play nor did not meet the red card threshold. The Committee concluded that the World Rugby Head Contact Process was engaged as this offence was a shoulder charge. Furthermore, a red card was warranted because (i) head contact had occurred (ii) the Player had committed foul play by recklessly charging into an opponent who did not have the ball (iii) the degree of danger was high as the contact with the Japan player's head was direct and forceful and (iv) that there was no mitigation of the type mentioned in the HCP Law Application Guidance.			

¹ Unless successful completion of Coach Intervention Programme

In applying the facts of the case to the sanctioning process under World Rugby Regulation 17.18-17.20, the Committee concluded the offence warranted a mid-range entry point suspension of four weeks, which is the minimum pursuant to Appendix 1 of World Rugby Regulation 17.

The Committee concluded that the Player had acted recklessly in making head contact, that he had used his shoulder on another player "off the ball", that there had been no question of provocation, retaliation or self defence and that the Japan player was vulnerable in that he would not have anticipated such a collision. Fortunately the Japan player was uninjured and there was no material effect upon him or the match. The Committee concluded that the Player's actions had not been premeditated.

The Player was entitled to the maximum mitigation permitted under Regulation 17.19 due to his age, youth, relative inexperience, admission of responsibility, apology and unblemished disciplinary record. This reduced the sanction from four weeks to two weeks.

The Committee concluded that the Player is also eligible to participate in World Rugby's Coach Intervention Programme (CIP) which, if successfully completed, means that the final week of his suspension can be replaced by Coaching Intervention.

Foul Play Review Committee Members	Simon Thomas (Wales- Chair), Martyn Wood (England) ² Ruhan Straeuli (South Africa) ³		
Signature Chair	<i>Simon Thomas</i>	Date	15 July 2026

Proposed sanction	Accepted by Player ☐ Not accepted by Player ☐
-------------------	--

² Former international player

³ Former player