

FOUL PLAY REVIEW COMMITTEE

DECISION

PARTICULARS OF OFFENCE			
Player's surname	Waters	Player's forename(s)	Harry
Player's Union	IRFU		
Match	Ireland U20 v Fiji U20		
Competition	World Rugby Junior Championship 2026	Match Date	13 July 2026
Offence	Law 9.16 - A player must not charge or knock down an opponent carrying the ball without attempting to grasp that player.	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 3 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	Junior World Championship: Italy U20 vs Ireland U20 on 18th July 2026 All-Ireland League: Blackrock College RFC vs MU Barnhall RFC on 26th September 2026 All-Ireland League: University College Cork RFC vs Blackrock College RFC on 3rd October 2026		
REASONS FOR DECISION			
Harry Waters ("the Player") was shown a yellow card by the match referee in the 81st minute of the match for an offence contrary to Law 9.16 of the Laws of Rugby Union which provides: "<i>A player must not charge or knock down an opponent carrying the ball without attempting to grasp that player</i>". The match footage of the incident showed how the passage of play had unfolded. Fiji had possession of the ball at a ruck near the centre of the field about 28 metres from the Ireland try line. The ball is passed out from right to left twice before Fiji player Turagacoke receives the ball in front of the Player who is defending. Mr Turagacoke "dummies" a pass to his left as he is within two metres of the Player who is in a good position to tackle him. At the point the dummy is made, the Player and Turagacoke collide. At the point of collision, the Player remains in an upright position and leads slightly with his left shoulder which impacts with the head of Turagacoke who is knocked to the ground and remains largely motionless for several seconds after play has moved on. Following the issuing of the yellow card to the Player the match ended and after review, the temporary suspension was upgraded to a red card.			

The evidence from the Fiji national team was that Turagacoke had undergone several head injury assessments and passed them all and was symptom free.

In his responses, the Player had admitted committing an act of foul play which warranted a red card and made representations that the correct classification of the offending was law 9.13 (dangerous tackling) rather than law 9.16 – charging or knocking down an opponent carrying the ball without attempting to grasp that player. The basis of the argument was that the Player had not attempted to either charge or knock down the Fijian and was caught between defending two attacking players at the point the dummy pass was made leaving him with insufficient time to make a well executed tackle.

The Committee considered the representations but considered that whilst the Player was in the defensive line, he did not make an attempt to tackle prior to the collision any more than he had attempted to charge or knock down an opponent. On the basis there was therefore no good reason to amend the charge, the Committee concluded it would consider the question of sanction on the basis of the offence contrary to Law 9.16¹

In its approach to sanction, The Committee concluded that the World Rugby Head Contact Process was engaged as this offence alleged a charge upon an opponent. Furthermore, a red card was warranted because (i) head contact had occurred (ii) the Player had committed foul play by recklessly charging/knocking down an opponent (iii) the degree of danger was high as the contact with the Fiji player's head was direct and forceful and (iv) that there was no mitigation of the type mentioned in the HCP Law Application Guidance.

In concluding the Player had acted recklessly, the Committee concluded that the Player ought to have adopted a lower body position at the point of impact which, if he had done so, would have avoided contact with Turagacoke's head.

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 six weeks, which is the minimum pursuant to Appendix 1 of World Rugby Regulation 17.

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 six weeks to three 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	14 July 2026

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

¹ Law 9.16 has the same penalties as acts of foul play contrary to law 9.13

² Former international player

³ Former international player

Addendum

Following the hearing, the Player's representative updated World Rugby and the Disciplinary Committee with the newly published fixtures for the Leinster Senior League which were to commence during August 2026, and invited the Committee to amend its decision so as to include the following matches as weeks two and three of the suspension:

1. Leinster Senior League: Blackrock College RFC vs MU Barnhall RFC 22nd August 2026
2. Leinster Senior League: Wanderers FC vs Blackrock College RFC 29th August 2026.

The Player's representative submitted that these matches were "meaningful" for the purposes of Regulation 17.9 on the basis they attracted full Senior caps and were part of a Leinster Rugby League, culminating in a final and trophy.

World Rugby confirmed these matches could be regarded as meaningful and did not oppose the requested variation to the decision.

On the basis of the above, and accepting the matches were meaningful for the reasons advanced by the Player's representative, the Committee varied its sanction so that the Player's suspension would now cover the following:

1. Junior World Championship: Italy U20 vs Ireland U20 on 18th July 2026
2. Leinster Senior League: Blackrock College RFC vs MU Barnhall RFC on 22nd August 2026
3. Leinster Senior League: Wanderers FC vs Blackrock College RFC on 29th August 2026

The Player is free to play on Monday 31 August 2026

Simon Thomas (Wales), Chair
23 July 2026