

# DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL HEARING

## FINAL DETERMINATION

<b>Reference</b>	21-21.02
<b>Respondent</b>	Queanbeyan City Football Club (QCFC)
<b>Attendees</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Witnesses</b>	[REDACTED]
<b>Date and Time of Hearing</b>	8.00pm Wednesday 4 August 2021
<b>Date of Final Determination</b>	6 August 2021
<b>Venue of Hearing</b>	By Video Conference
<b>Committee Members</b>	Mr Chris Gardiner (Chair) Mr David Horner Mr Clive Mackillop
<b>Regulations Reference</b>	Capital Football Dispute and Disciplinary Regulations Section 6 Schedule 5 Offence Codes S4-03, S4-05, S5-04, S5-06, S5-09
<b>Key Words</b>	Offensive, Abusive, Discriminatory Language to Match Official Intimidatory Language to Match Official Threat to Match Official Aggressive Behaviour to Match Official Club Liability

## JURISDICTION, FUNCTIONS, & POWERS

1. Capital Football established this Disciplinary Committee pursuant to Section 5 of its Disputes and Disciplinary Regulations dated 21 April 2021 Version 4 (**Regulations**).
2. The functions and powers of the Committee are set down in Section 5 of the Regulations.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. Capital Football undertook investigations into incidents of supporter and spectator misconduct at matches between Queanbeyan City Football Club (QCFC) and O'Connor Knights Soccer Club (OCK) NPL2 Men's teams at QCFC's grounds on 10 July 2021.

## NOTICE OF CHARGES

4. Capital Football issued a Notice of Charge (**Notice**) and Notice of Proceedings to the Respondent's Club dated 22 July 2021 and 2 August 2021 respectively.
5. The Notice specified the Charges against the Respondent and particulars as follows:

## Charge 1

*That the Club, being liable under Sections 4:4.1 and 4:4.4 of the Regulations for the conduct of its Participants, is charged for the following offences by its Participants under Section 6 Schedule 5 of the 2021 Capital Football Disputes and Disciplinary Regulations:*

- S5-04: Offensive, insulting or abusive language or gestures.
- S5-06: Intimidatory or threatening language or actions.
- S5-09: Physical or aggressive behaviour towards a Player, substitute, Team Official, Match Official, Spectator or any other person.

*This occurred after an NPL2 Men's U23 match between Queanbeyan City FC and O'Connor Knights on Saturday 10 July 2021 at High Street.*

*The particulars alleged to this point, but not excluding particulars which may arise in further investigations or evidence before the Disciplinary Tribunal, are as follows:*

- *It is alleged that QCFC spectator ██████████ entered the Referees' change room after the match specified above.*
- *It is alleged that ██████████ closely approached the Referee and yelled at him "I want your full name, badge number and I am going to report you".*
- *It is alleged that ██████████ yelled at the Referee "you ever mention or speak of my daughter again, you'll see. Get her name out of your mouth".*
- *It is alleged that ██████████ did not leave the Referees' change room until Assistant Referee 1, Assistant Referee 2 and a QCFC CVO removed him from the Referees' change room.*

## Charge 2

*That the Club, being liable under Sections 4:4.1 and 4:4.4 of the Regulations for the conduct of its Participants, is charged for the following offences by its Participants under Section 6 Schedule 5 of the 2021 Capital Football Disputes and Disciplinary Regulations:*

- S5-04: Offensive, insulting or abusive language or gestures.
- S5-05: Use of discriminatory language on the basis of ethnicity,

*religion, sex, or sexual orientation.*

- S5-06: Intimidatory or threatening language or actions.
- S5-07: Threat(s) to Match Official, or their property or family.
- S5-25: Bringing the Game into Disrepute.

*This occurred during an NPL2 Men's 1<sup>st</sup> grade match between Queanbeyan City FC and O'Connor Knights FC on Saturday 10 July 2021.*

*The particulars alleged to this point, but not excluding particulars which may arise in further investigations or evidence before the Disciplinary Tribunal, are as follows:*

- *In the last 15 minutes of the match, it is alleged that QCFC spectators shouted at the Referee "you call yourself a Macedonian, shame on you".*
- *In the last 15 minutes of the match, it is alleged that QCFC spectators shouted at the Referee "you're a kurva" ("kurva" means "slut" in Macedonian).*

- *In the last 15 minutes of the match, it is alleged that QCFC spectators shouted at the Referee “you’re a disgrace to Macedonians”.*
- *In the last 15 minutes of the match, it is alleged that QCFC spectators shouted at the Referee “you always go against your own”.*
- *In the last 15 minutes of the match, it is alleged that QCFC spectators shouted at the Referee “you might as well f### a Croat”.*
- *In the last 15 minutes of the match, it is alleged that QCFC spectators shouted at the Referee “the most useless and s### Referee ever”.*
- *In the last 15 minutes of the match, it is alleged that QCFC spectators shouted at the Referee “go on, make another call against us you soft b#####”.*
- *In the last 15 minutes of the match, it is alleged that QCFC spectators shouted at the Referee “you’re a disgrace [REDACTED]”.*
- *In the last 15 minutes of the match, it is alleged that QCFC spectators shouted at the Referee “it’s a foul [REDACTED], open your eyes”.*
- *In the last 15 minutes of the match, it is alleged that QCFC spectators shouted at the Referee “we are in Canberra and everyone knows how f##### s### you are”.*
- *In the last 15 minutes of the match, it is alleged that QCFC spectators shouted at the Referee “[REDACTED], you’re a joke [REDACTED]”.*
- *In the last 15 minutes of the match, it is alleged that QCFC spectators shouted at the Referee “[REDACTED], where are you?”*
- *In the last 15 minutes of the match, it is alleged that QCFC spectators shouted at the Referee “you better hope [REDACTED] is here, you’re going to need him to protect you”.*

## PLEA

6. The Club pleaded guilty to the Charges in a Notice of Response dated 28 July 2021.

## FINDINGS & DECISIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

7. The Tribunal found in Determination 21-21.01 that a QCFC supporter had been guilty of entering the Referee’s change rooms after QCFC’s Men’s NPL U23 match on 10 July 2021 and subjecting the Referee for that match to intimidating, aggressive behaviour. The Tribunal found the Club liable for that misconduct under Sections 4:4.1 and 4:4.3 of the Regulations and guilty of Charge 1.
8. The Tribunal found that QCFC supporters had directed offensive, abusive, discriminatory, and threatening language toward the Referee in QCFC’s Men’s NPL2 match on 10 July 2021. The Tribunal found the Club liable for that misconduct under Sections 4:4.1, 4:4.3 and 4:4.4 of the Regulations and guilty of Charge 2.
9. The Tribunal imposed the following sanctions on the Club:
  - 9.1. In Determination 21-21.01, fines totalling \$250 for the offences by its supporter after the NPL 2 U23 match.
  - 9.2. In Determination 21-21-03, fines totalling \$850 for the offences by one of its supporters during the NPL 2 1<sup>st</sup> Division match.

- 9.3. That the Club undertake a risk assessment and submit to Capital Football a risk management plan relating to supporter and spectator conduct at its matches by 23 August 2021, with amendments as required by Capital Football to be negotiated and finalised to Capital Football's satisfaction by 6 September 2021.
- 9.4. That the Club be issued a formal warning by Capital Football that it must enforce suspensions under Determinations 21-21.01 and 21-21.03 and that failure to do so would likely result in charges for an S5-22 offence in Schedule 5 of Section 6 of the Regulations and, if found guilty, further significant sanctions.
- 9.5. For the misconduct by the broader group of supporters and spectators at the NPL 2 1<sup>st</sup> division match, a fine of \$1000.
- 9.6. That 24 competition points be deducted from the QCFC team in Capital Football's 2021 Men's NPL2 1<sup>st</sup> division competition with immediate effect.
- 9.7. That the Club be issued a further formal warning that a repeat offence of misconduct directed towards match officials by its supporters or spectators at its matches could be the subject of sanctions that remove spectators from its matches and/or that remove or relegate teams from competitions.
- 9.8. That the Club be directed to communicate the findings of this Determination and the sanctions and warnings it imposed via its social media pages within 10 days of the date of this Determination.
10. The Tribunal determined that a copy of this Determination be provided to the Match Officials who officiated at QCFC's NPL2 U23 and 1<sup>st</sup> division matches on 10 July 2021.

## **THE HEARING**

11. The Hearing was held via an online video conference.
12. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], from the QCFC Committee, attended the hearing as Club representatives.
13. The Tribunal confirmed with [REDACTED] the documents upon which it would rely as part of its deliberations as specified in Section 16 below. [REDACTED] advised that whilst the Club had received the documentation, he had not read all the documentation. The Tribunal was of the view that the Club and its representatives had had adequate time to review all documentation and prepare their case and proceeded. The Chair drew [REDACTED] attention to the Statement from Capital Football with regard to any possible Club submissions on sanctions.
14. The Tribunal invited the Club to make submissions regarding its jurisdiction and competence. No such submissions were made.
15. The Club was afforded opportunities to make opening and closing submissions, was able to put questions through the Chair to the witnesses and was advised of its right of appeal.

## DOCUMENTS, EVIDENCE & SUBMISSIONS

16. The documents received and relied on by the Committee were:
  - 16.1. Notice of Charge dated 22 July 2021.
  - 16.2. An Assistant Referee 1 Incident Report – Player Send Off – submitted by Capital Football as Annexure B to the Notice.
  - 16.3. An Assistant Referee 1 Incident Report – Spectator Misconduct – submitted by Capital Football as Annexure C.
  - 16.4. An Assistant Referee 2 Incident Report – Spectator Misconduct submitted by Capital Football as Annexure D.
  - 16.5. Referee Incident Report – Match Delayed submitted by Capital Football as Annexure E.
  - 16.6. Referee Incident Report – Player Send-Off submitted by Capital Football as Annexure F.
  - 16.7. Referee Incident Report – NPL 1st Spectator Misconduct submitted by Capital Football as Annexure G.
  - 16.8. Referee Incident Report – NPL U23 Spectator Misconduct submitted by Capital Football as Annexure H.
  - 16.9. A letter of investigation sent to QCFC by Capital Football submitted by Capital Football as Annexure I.
  - 16.10. A document titled ‘Statement – ██████████’ submitted by Capital Football as Annexure J.
  - 16.11. A document titled ‘QCFC Response’ submitted by Capital Football as Annexure L.
  - 16.12. A document titled ‘Statement from Capital Football’ submitted by Capital Football as Annexure M.
  - 16.13. A document titled ‘Referee Statement – ██████████’ dated 4 August 2021.
  - 16.14. A document titled ‘Referee Statement – ██████████’ dated 2 August 2021.
  - 16.15. A document titled ‘Referee Statement – ██████████’ dated 4 August 2021.
  - 16.16. Capital Football Disciplinary Determinations 19-09.03, 20.01, 21.05.
17. The Club pleaded guilty to both Charges.
18. The Club stated at the hearing that it did not condone the conduct of supporters and spectators on 10 July 2021, that it valued the role of referees, and that it was committed to improving spectator conduct regarding referees.
19. The Club argued that not all the misconduct at the 1<sup>st</sup> division match was from its supporters.

20. In an email to Capital Football dated 21 July 2021 (QCFC Statement – Annexure K), the Club outlined actions it said it would be taking urgently to improve spectator behaviour. These actions included internal communication with supporters; zero tolerance of misbehaviour including removal from the grounds; communication with referees before and during games; improved fence barriers; 5 dedicated officials to monitor and control entries and spectators; large signage regarding conduct.
21. The Club asked the Tribunal to accept the difficulties Clubs faced, especially relying on volunteers, to manage spectators and to focus on practical improvements for the Club in terms of possible sanctions.
22. Under the Regulations:
  - 22.1. Send-off and Incident Reports provided by a Match Official in relation to any matter stand as their statement of evidence in proceedings.
  - 22.2. The facts stated in such reports are presumed to be accurate and stand as facts of an alleged incident.
  - 22.3. The onus to challenge facts in reports from Match Officials to the required standard of proof rests with the Respondent.
23. The Tribunal accepted the Incident Reports from the Match Officials at the matches and from Capital Football Official [REDACTED].
24. The Tribunal also accepted impact statements submitted by three Match Officials [REDACTED].
25. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] appeared at the hearing and provided additional testimony. They were unshaken in their accounts and viewed by the Tribunal as very credible witnesses.
26. The Referee for the U23 match, [REDACTED], stated in his Incident Report on an incident involving a Club supporter entering the Referee's change room after the match:

*This extremely unpleasant interaction resulted in me feeling vulnerable, unsafe, threatened, and that my security had been invaded and compromised. I was consequently unable to officiate the following match and remained in the changeroom until well after the Queanbeyan FC club officials had ensured he was removed from the venue.*

*Following the removal of the spectator from the venue and the completion of the remainder of the afternoon's games, I returned to one of my colleagues' homes for the evening. I felt neither safe nor comfortable spending the evening alone at my own home for fear of repercussions, either physical or on social media platforms, from the spectator or any associated parties. Despite being in the company of those I trusted, my evening was restless and anxiety filled for continued fear of my safety*



27. In his statement dated 4 August 2021, ██████████, reiterated his account of the immediate impact of the incident on him. He stated further, however, that in subsequent weeks he had experienced panic attacks and had not felt free to be in public spaces without someone accompanying him. He stated that the impact of the incident had continued, including depression and anxiety, had disrupted participation in any further referee activities and had impacted his ability to attend his position at work, from which he had felt forced to resign. He had sought a referral from his GP for a sports psychologist.
28. ██████████ in her Incident Report on that incident stated that after removing the spectator, she checked on ██████████, who was shaken and locked in the bathroom stall. She confirmed that he had been “unfit” to officiate the next match.
29. In her statement dated 2 August 2021, ██████████ stated that she had been “scared for the safety of her peers” in the situation and left shaken by the incident.
30. Regarding the conduct of supporters during the 1<sup>st</sup> division match she officiated, ██████████ stated inter alia:

*The names that I was called (refer to incident report), along with the sexist and racial comments directed towards me during the match have had a profound impact on me. To be abused based on my gender and ethnicity, particularly by individuals of the same background left me feeling numb ... As a woman, I feel angered that I would be subject to such behaviour – particularly as I have met the standard of what is required in terms of fitness, examinations and experience and to be targeted purely based on my sex is unacceptable*

*Following the match, I was shaken, in tears and severely stressed and traumatised in the changeroom – trying to process what had just taken place and realising that I would have to potentially walk through all of those spectators to reach my car. I felt unsafe and exposed to potentially being attacked, both verbally and potentially physically as I left the field of play and later I the ground, and had to wait for an escort out of the ground. The stress and anxiety caused, contributed to the inability to sleep, led to stomach issues and caused me to not feel safe enough to take up the role of referee the following week, as thinking about putting myself on the pitch in that role again caused me a great deal of anxiety.*

31. ██████████, an Assistant Referee in both matches, in his statement dated 4 August 2021, described the behaviour directed at the match referees as “bullying in the extreme”. He stated

*Having first hand experience of seeing how both ██████████ and ██████████ were affected by these incidents weighed greatly on me. So much so that I contemplated having a few*

*weeks off refereeing as I felt disillusioned with the game in general. This experience has affected me in ways that I never thought possible with the game I love, and my refereeing that I take pride in*

## **CONSIDERATION & COMMENT**

### Findings, and Nature and Severity of the Misconduct

32. The Tribunal found in Determination 21-21.01 that the incident after the NPL U23 match that is the subject of Charge 1 involved a Club supporter aggressively confronting and intimidating a referee.
33. Referee change rooms should be secure spaces, and it is the responsibility of the Club managing the ground in particular to ensure they are safe and secure spaces.
34. In terms of Club culture, it is completely unacceptable for a spectator to think they have a right to enter a referee change room and confront and intimidate a referee after a match.
35. In terms of Charge 2, other than to suggest that not all the misconduct at the 1<sup>st</sup> Division match had been from its supporters, the Club accepted the Referee and Capital Football incident reports relating to that misconduct.
36. Based on those reports, the Tribunal found in Determination 21-21.03 and finds in this Determination that the Referee in the 1<sup>st</sup> Division match was subjected to offensive, insulting abuse. Threats were directed towards her, by name. She was subjected to crass, misogynistic, discriminatory abuse.
37. The Tribunal accepts the observations expressed in Official Incident reports that the abuse directed towards the Referee was from QCFC supporters. Even if the Tribunal accepted that it came from a mix of spectators, of course, the Club is still responsible and liable under Section 4:4.3 of the Regulations.
38. Finding that Club supporters were responsible for offensive, abusive, intimidatory and threatening behaviour towards Referees at QCFC matches on 10 July, the Tribunal found the Club guilty of the two Charges, and specifically liable for offences by supporters coded S5-04, S5-05, S5-06, S5-07, S5-09, and together, S5-25.
39. The Tribunal wishes to be very clear on supporter and spectator misconduct, for QCFC and all other Clubs and Participants.
40. Offensive language directed at a referee is not acceptable. Intimidation of and threats towards referees are not acceptable. Discrimination against referees based on ethnicity and/or gender is unacceptable. These behaviours and actions constitute misconduct. They are not part of the game. They are not excusable because of the 'passion' involved in the game. They are prohibited under the relevant FA Spectator Code. They bring the game into disrepute.



41. The Tribunal has included in this Determination above detailed quotes from the referees involved in these incidents regarding the impact of the misconduct on them. It does so to make clear how serious this behaviour can be for referees. It should not be the case that a referee's weekend participation in the game results in fear, panic attacks, sleepless nights, anger over infringement of basic human rights, and disillusionment with the game.

#### Club Supporter and Spectator Management

42. Community expectations and standards regarding the rights of individuals to undertake work, including voluntary work, without abuse, bullying, intimidation and discrimination are reflected in Work Health and Safety and Fair Work Laws. They are reflected in football codes and regulations. Directors of incorporated football associations and clubs have obligations to respect those standards and comply with those laws, codes and regulations.
43. In its email to Capital Football by way of a response to the Charges (Annexure K), the Club provided a list of actions it said it was putting in place in response to the incidents. The Tribunal notes that it made similar commitments in disciplinary hearings in 2019, referenced in Determination 19-09.03 at section 17.4.6. The Tribunal notes that it provided no evidence to the hearing that any of the actions listed were in place before the match, notwithstanding its commitments in that 2019 disciplinary hearing and notwithstanding the very clear warning it had received about spectator misconduct in Determination 21.05 two months before these incidents.
44. The Club stated at the hearing that it hoped that the Tribunal would treat these incidents as a chance for the Club to improve and for practical suggestions to be made to assist the Club.
45. The Tribunal notes that in 2019, the Club made the same argument in a disciplinary hearing, referenced at section 22.4 of Determination 19-09.03: "*The key point of the hearing should be the potential lessons to be learned for the club and not sanctions*". It was not clear at this hearing that the Club had put any practical lessons into effect after previous findings of misconduct in 2019, 2020 or 2021. The Tribunal addresses that apparent failure to 'learn potential lessons' in directions included in sanctions below.
46. The Club asked the Tribunal to understand and accept the constraints and limitations of volunteer-based football clubs. It pointed to the fact that on the day in question, it had not provided the club officials it intended because some simply did not show up.
47. The Tribunal Members are very experienced in football and its volunteer constraints. It notes, however, that Clubs accepting an NPL license accept the concomitant obligation to establish and implement policies and operations necessary to responsibly and effectively comply with legal and regulatory obligations, no matter that they are primarily volunteer based.

### Previous Club Record

48. One of the considerations for a Tribunal in determining an appropriate sanction, as specified in Section 6:4.3(d) of the Regulations, is the Respondent's disciplinary history.
49. In a statement to the Tribunal, Capital Football drew attention to the Club's disciplinary history. Capital Football argued:

*QCFC spectators have shown a persistent disregard for the welfare of Participants at Capital Football matches through their multiple instances of abuse.*

50. In its statement to the Tribunal, Capital Football summarised the offences for which the Club had previously been found guilty. The Tribunal notes the following:

50.1. In August 2019, in Determination 19-09.03, the Club's spectators were found to have directed offensive, abusive and discriminatory language towards a young female referee at a Kanga Cup match.

50.2. In August 2020, in Determination 20.01, the Club's spectators were found to have directed offensive, abusive, discriminatory language towards a female referee at an U/12s match.

50.3. In May 2021, in Determination 21.05, the Club's spectators were found guilty of offensive, abusive language in a Men's NPL2 match, including towards an Assistant Referee.

51. Capital Football noted in its summary the sanctions imposed on the Club for the misconduct of its spectators in the past, primarily financial fines but also including a ban from the Kanga Cup. Capital Football argued:

*Previous sanctions do not appear to have deterred QCFC spectators from continuing to engage in abusive and threatening behaviour towards other Participants. Due to this, Capital Football submits that the sanctions imposed should be severe, for example deduction of Competition points, if QCFC is found guilty of the Charges.*

### Previous Warning

52. As Capital Football noted in its statement, the Club was the subject of a very clear warning after it was found liable and guilty for the misconduct of its NPL2 supporters and spectators in May 2021. That warning, stated in Determination 21.05 and communicated in a subsequent letter from Capital Football read:

*Further instances of misconduct, including offensive, abusive and discriminatory language, and intimidation of Match Officials, will not be tolerated. Further occurrences may result, in addition to fines, in the playing of games without spectators, to loss of*

*competition points, and/or, as was the case in Determination 19- 09.03, to suspension or exclusion from a competition.*

## Sanctions

53. The Club pleaded guilty to both Charges. The Tribunal first satisfied itself as to the facts and the seriousness of the misconduct and then to the task of imposing sanctions.
54. Under the Regulations, the Tribunal:
  - 54.1. May impose a sanction for misconduct in addition to the minimum sanction (Section 6:4.2).
  - 54.2. May impose entirely cumulative suspensions for multiple offences (Section 6:4.5).
  - 54.3. May impose any of the sanctions set down in Schedule 1 of Section 6.
55. The Tribunal shares Capital Football's concern that previous sanctions appear not to have deterred the Club's supporters from misconduct directed towards referees or compelled the Club to put in place adequate measures to prevent and manage such misconduct.
56. In determining the sanctions for the misconduct involved in the abuse of referees at QCFC matches on 10 July 2021, the Tribunal first considered the severity of the misconduct. As shown in the Particulars and noted above, the offensive, abusive, discriminatory and intimidatory behaviour of supporters was egregious and reprehensible. It warrants a correspondingly serious sanction.
57. The Tribunal considered the deterrent effect of the sanctions it would be imposing.
58. The Tribunal considered what directions might assist the Club and ensure the Club, having asked for practical advice on how to improve, addressed policy and operational shortcomings and avoided repeat offences.
59. Accordingly, the Tribunal determined that a number of related sanctions were appropriate.
60. Recognising that the Club did not have in place adequate, formal risk management systems and plans for the enforcement of the FA Code of Conduct and management of spectator behaviour, and relying on point 17 relating to 'legal entities' in Schedule 1 of Section 6 of the Regulations, the Tribunal determined that the Club be directed to undertake a risk assessment of supporter and spectator conduct, and supporter and spectator management, home and away, and communicate to Capital Football a risk management plan and related operating procedures for supporter and spectator management by 23 August 2021, with amendments as required by Capital Football to be negotiated and finalised to Capital Football's satisfaction by 6 September 2021.
61. As part of its future management of supporter and spectator conduct at games, and to comply with the decisions of the Tribunal, the Club will no doubt put in place communication and arrangements to enforce the suspensions imposed in Determinations

21.21-01 and 21.21-03. To signal the seriousness of those suspensions and to ensure compliance, the Tribunal determined that the Club be issued a formal warning that it must enforce those suspensions and that failure to do so would likely result in charges for an S5-22 offence in Schedule 5 of Section 6 of the Regulations and, if found guilty, further significant sanctions.

62. The Club was the subject of fines for the misconduct of individual supporters in the related Determinations 21.21.01 and 21.21.03. Determination 21.21.03 addressed offensive, abusive and threatening language to the Referee at the Men's NPL2 match by a particular supporter. The Referee, however, was subjected to offensive and discriminatory abuse by supporters and spectators other than that individual, and indeed the discriminatory abuse came from within the group of supporters. For the misconduct by the broader group of supporters and spectators, the Tribunal imposes a fine of \$1000.
63. Noting the disciplinary history of the Club and the specific warning in Determination 21.05, the Tribunal concluded that it was appropriate to turn to deduction of competition points to both signal the seriousness of the misconduct and effectively deter recurrence. The Tribunal determined that the deduction of competition points would need to be significant enough to reflect the unacceptability and seriousness of the misconduct and to show how that misconduct can negatively impact the Club into the future.
64. The spectator misconduct on this occasion and the last occurred at the Club's Men's NPL 2 matches. The Tribunal determined that loss of points that effectively denied the Men's NPL2 1<sup>st</sup> division team a place in the 2021 finals and put them at some risk of relegation was an effective way of signalling the seriousness of the repeated supporter misconduct at the Club and of deterring recurrence.
65. The Tribunal determined that 24 competition points be deducted from the QCFC team in Capital Football's 2021 Men's NPL2 1<sup>st</sup> division competition with immediate effect.
66. The Tribunal determined that the Club also be issued a further formal warning that a repeat offence of misconduct directed towards match officials by supporters or spectators at its matches could be the subject of sanctions that remove spectators from its matches and/or that remove or relegate teams from competitions, including NPL competitions.
67. To ensure that the Club undertakes the necessary communication to members and supporters regarding respect for match officials and general spectator conduct, the Tribunal determined that the Club be directed to communicate the findings of this Determination, and the sanctions and warnings it imposed, via its social media pages within 10 days of the date of this Determination.

## COMMUNICATION TO REFEREES

68. The Tribunal commends the three referees who provided impact statements to the Tribunal in these proceedings. It notes, again, the impact of the misconduct on them.
69. The Tribunal determined that a copy of this Determination be provided to each of the Referees: [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], and [REDACTED].

## COSTS & FINES

70. Having found the Club guilty of the Charges, the Tribunal determined that it pay the costs of the disciplinary proceedings as assessed by Capital Football.
71. Under Section 6:6.1 of the Regulations, QCFC is to pay the costs and fines imposed in this Determination within 30 days of the date of this Determination.

Chris Gardiner (Chair)  
David Horner  
Clive Mackillop

**6 August 2021**

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## APPEALS

Aggrieved parties to a determination from a Disciplinary Committee Hearing may lodge an appeal to the CF Appeals Committee in accordance with Section 6 of the CF Disputes and Disciplinary Regulations. Any appeal must be submitted by completing the online [Notice of Appeal](#) form and lodging the relevant Application Fee (\$500) when lodging the Notice of Appeal.