

# DECISION FORM

To be sent to [discipline@rugbyeurope.eu](mailto:discipline@rugbyeurope.eu).



|   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| <b>Particulars of offence</b>   |                             |
| Player's Name: Vazha Mikadze  |                             |
| Player's number: 15   |                             |
| Player's union: Georgia   |                             |
| Competition: Rugby Europe Men 7s Championship Makarska #1 2025  |                             |
| Host Team (T1): Georgia   | Visiting Team (T2): Czechia |
| Venue: Gradski Sportski Centar, Makarska, Croatia   |                             |
| Date of match: 15 June 2025   |                             |
| Rules to apply: Regulation 17 World Rugby Handbook and RE Disciplinary Regulations  |                             |
| Referee Name: Eugeniu Procopi   |                             |
| Plea: Foul play: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Admitted <input type="checkbox"/> Not admitted; Red Card/Citing: <input type="checkbox"/> Admitted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Not admitted  |                             |
| Offence: <input type="checkbox"/> Red card <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Citing <input type="checkbox"/> Other  |                             |
| <i>If "Other" selected, please specify:</i>   |                             |
| <b>Hearing details</b>  |                             |
| JO: Val Toma (Romania)  |                             |
| Hearing date: 15 June 2025  |                             |
| Hearing venue: Gradski Sportski Centar, Makarska, Croatia   |                             |
| Appearance Player: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No  |                             |
| Appearance Union: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No   |                             |
| Player's Representative(s): Alexander Nizharadze – Team Manager   |                             |
| Other attendees:  |                             |
| List of documents/ materials considered by the Panel:<br>Citing report;<br>Footage of the incident from 4 camera angles;<br>Submission of Albert Aaron Fronek – Czechia no 11 (C11), the victim player.   |                             |
| <b>Summary of essential elements of citing / Referee's report / Incident footage</b>  |                             |
| The hearing has been convened as a result of the Player having been cited for an incident in the match against Czechia.   |                             |
| The appointed Citing Commissioner (Dave Guyan - England) cited the player for an alleged act of foul play against<br>Law 9.20 Dangerous play in a ruck or maul.<br>(a) A player must not charge into a ruck or maul. Charging includes any contact made without binding onto another player in the ruck or maul.  |                             |
| The citing report reads:<br>"At 6:32 in second half Czechia 10 and 11 take Georgia 10 to ground. Czechia 11 then adopts a jackling position. Georgia 15 then enters the breakdown driving downwards and leading with his left shoulder which makes direct contact to the head of Czechia 11 knocking him backwards and to the ground whilst going off his feet and falling to ground also. Czechia 11 reacts immediately by raising his hands to his head.<br>Georgia 15 has clear line of sight and enters with force. |                             |

I therefore cite Georgia 15 Vazha Mikadze with Dangerous Play at a ruck or maul: A player must not charge into a ruck or maul under WR Law 9.20A.”

Additionally, the footage (available from four camera angles) reveals that:

- Georgia no 11 (G11) carries the ball into contact and is tackled by C10 with the assistance of C11;
- Both G11 and C10 go to ground whilst C11 releases and then adopts the jackler position;
- G11 releases the ball on the ground and then gets back on his feet and picks up the ball;
- In doing so, he pushes up with his back and slightly lifts C11’s body who is bent above him;
- In the meantime the Player charges with no attempt to bind on C11, turning his head and body slightly to the right such that his left shoulder leads into contact;
- The Player’s left shoulder hits forcefully C11’s head which is seen to recoil suddenly to the right and to being “compressed” towards his neck right side;
- C11 is knocked backwards to the ground and raises his hands to his head;
- C11 looks to the referee but upon no reaction he gets back on his feet and retreats to his team line of defence;
- The referee blows his whistle to penalise a subsequent breakdown offence.

#### Essential elements of other evidence (e.g. medical reports)

The JO contacted the Czechia Team Manager who facilitated a discussion with the victim player Albert Aaron Fronek.

In summary he submitted that, whilst he was jackling for the ball and he has been hit into the head, probably by a shoulder and the ref said "play on". The contact was right on top of his head and the force went mostly to his neck. He did not and does not feel any dizziness or headache but his neck is a little numb or sore. He has been cleared of a potential concussion by his team medical personnel.

Mr Fronek’s submissions have been recorded and played for the Player and his representative at the beginning of the hearing.

The match referee verbally confirmed that he had not seen the incident on the field of play, his view having been obstructed by another player. This info was also shared with the Player.

#### Summary of player’s evidence

After the commencement of the hearing the JO explained to the Player that he is required to confirm whether he accepts he committed the alleged act of foul play specified in the citing report and whether he accepts that the foul play warranted the issuing of a red card. In such case the JO must consider evidence as to establish a sanction, if any, in accordance with the three-stage sanctioning process. If the player does not accept the citing, the burden is on him to demonstrate that the Citing Commissioner’s decision to issue a citing was wrong either because his actions do not amount to foul play or, if there is foul play, the act of foul play would not have warranted a red card.

For acts of foul play involving:

- High tackles
- Shoulder charges
- Dangerous cleanouts
- Head-to-head collisions
- Leading elbow / forearm

match officials and disciplinary personnel must use the guidance of the [Head Contact Process](#).

The Player accepted that he committed an act of foul play but denied that it would have warranted a red card.

In this respect the Player submitted that:

- He approached the tackle area aiming to perform a legal clear out of his opponent (C11);
- He intended to go under C11's body but, due to C10's body lying on the ground (and failing to roll away) between the Player and C11, he was forced to change his movement direction to avoid C10's body;
- Due to this "obstacle", he arrived late so he decided to make contact with his shoulder at the level of C11's shoulder/back from above to dislodge/remove him. Had he not turned his body/head slightly to the right there had been the risk of a head-on-head collision;
- He was not sure where the contact occurred and then he saw C11 getting back on his feet right after the incident so he did not realise the contact was so serious. Had he done so, he would have gone to C11 to apologise.

Upon questioning from the JO and in respect of the Head Contact Process, while reviewing the footage at various speeds and from all camera angles, the Player gradually admitted that:

- He had a clear line of sight;
- The head contact occurred;
- There was foul play and the Player was at fault;
- The degree of danger was high as the contact was direct with force and speed;

In respect of applicable mitigation the Player submitted that the lift of C11's body by his teammate G11 action to get on his feet made some difference in the way that absent this action the contact to C11's head would have probably not occurred. However, the Player conceded that his action was illegal in that he did not attempt to bind and reckless in that he knew (or should have known) that by doing as he did he ran the risk of committing the act of foul play.

The Player further declared that he is 21 years of age, he plays rugby since he was 10 years old and he has a clean disciplinary record. He added that he is genuinely apologetic for committing the act of foul play and that he would think how to better approach similar rugby situations in the future.

## Findings of fact

The standard of proof for all matters under disciplinary procedures is the balance of probabilities.

The JO considered all the evidence and the submissions and, on balance of probabilities, made the following findings of fact:

- The Player had a clear line of sight. C10 body position lying on the ground was not a significant factor, the Player simply arrived too late to the breakdown and had the power of choice on what to do next;
- The Player drove into C11 with some considerable force, turning his body/head such as to lead with his left shoulder into the contact;
- The shoulder to head contact was direct, with force and posing a high degree of danger;
- The slight lift of C11's body by the action of G10 was not significant/sudden enough to count as a mitigation factor as the head contact would have probably occurred anyway. But even if C11's slight body lift could count as a mitigation factor, the Player's actions were always illegal in that he made no attempt to bind onto C11 as he made contact with him, such that mitigation cannot apply;
- It is of concern the Player's admission that he decided to initiate the contact with his shoulder to C11's shoulder/back with no binding as if he was entitled to do so (absent contact to head/neck);
- C11 was caused discomfort by the contact, as seen in the footage and confirmed by Mr Fronek on the phone. Fortunately, no serious injury/concussion occurred;
- The Player had intended to act illegally (by not binding), however, the JO found that the Player had not intended to make contact with C11's head. Rather, he was reckless as to whether contact with C11's head would occur.

Therefore, the Player did not discharge his burden of proving that the Citing Commissioner was wrong and the citing is upheld.

## Decision

☒ Proven ☐ Not proven ☐ Other disposal (please state)

## SANCTIONING PROCESS

### Assessment of seriousness

*As per Article 4.5 of Rugby Europe Disciplinary Regulations and Regulations 17 of World Rugby*

### Assessment of intent:

☐ Intentional/deliberate ☒ Reckless

### State reasons:

The Player, by his own admission and by the JO's finding, intended to illegally charge his opponent, however he did not deliberately target C11's head. The contact to the head was a reckless consequence of his action.

### Nature of actions

As described above.

### Existence of provocation:

N/A

### Whether player retaliated:

N/A

### Self-defence:

N/A

### Effect on victim:

Neck soreness but fortunately nothing more than that.

### Effect on match:

None.

### Vulnerability of victim:

The victim was in a jackling position with no possibility to anticipate the charge to his head.

### Level of participation / premeditation:

Full participation/no premeditation.

### Conduct completed / attempted:

Completed.

### Other features of player's conduct:

N/A

### Entry point

|                                     |               |  |              |                                     |               |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|--|--------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Low-end<br><input type="checkbox"/> | Weeks<br>[XX] | Mid-range<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Weeks<br>[6] | Top end<br><input type="checkbox"/> | Weeks<br>[XX] |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|--|--------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|

### Reasons for selecting entry point:

Reckless contact to the head with no significant consequence on victim's welfare. The minimum mid-range entry point is mandatory (and fully appropriate in any case), however there is no reason to elevate the entry point to Top-end level.

#### Relevant off-field mitigating factors

*As per Article 4.5 of Rugby Europe Disciplinary Regulations and Regulations 17 of World Rugby*

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Acknowledgement of the commission of foul play:</b>          | <b>Player's disciplinary record / good character:</b> |
| Foul play admitted from the early stages of the hearing.        | Clean record.   |
| <b>Youth and inexperience of player:</b>                        | <b>Conduct prior to and at hearing:</b>               |
| The Player is young and relatively inexperienced at this level. | Excellent.  |
| <b>Remorse and timing of Remorse</b>                            | <b>Other off-field mitigation:</b>                    |
| Acknowledgement of remorse during the hearing.                  | N/A   |

**Number of weeks deducted: [3]**

**Summary of reason for number of weeks deducted:**

The Player meets most of the criteria to be awarded the full 50% reduction by way of mitigation.

#### Additional relevant off-field aggravating factors

*As per Article 4.5 of Rugby Europe Disciplinary Regulations and Regulations 17 of World Rugby*

|  |
|--|
| <b>Player's status as an offender of the Laws of the Game:</b> |
| N/A  |
| <b>Need for deterrence:</b>                                    |
| N/A  |
| <b>Any other off-field aggravating factors:</b>                |
| N/A  |

**Number of additional weeks: [XX]**


**Summary of reason for number of weeks added:**

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 – RE Discipline Regulations 4.1.4 / 4.4 (or equivalent Tournament rule)

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Total sanction:</b> 3-week suspension translated into 3 matches of 7s.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sending off sufficient |
| <b>Sanction commences:</b> Immediately  |   |
| <b>Sanction concludes:</b> After completion of the pool stage of Rugby Europe Men 7s Championship Hamburg #2, 27-29 June 2025   |   |
| <b>Matches/ tournaments included in sanction:</b><br>The Player's representative, Mr Alexander Nizharadze, raised the issue of the matches counting for the sanction if Georgia will be drawn into the same pool with Ireland in Hamburg, whereas Ireland has withdrawn from both legs of the RE 7s Championship 2025.<br><br>For the avoidance of doubt, in such a situation the match Georgia – Ireland from the pool stage in Hamburg will be counted for the purpose of Player's sanction because the result of the match will be 28 – 0 and the pool ranking points will be awarded (as it happened with all Ireland matches in Makarska).<br><br>Per the <b>DC Guidance from Ind Judicial Panel Chairman</b> (circulated to Unions/Regions on 27 Jan 2021) on application of playing suspensions (for foul play) to matches that are ultimately cancelled, a match cancelled with points awarded has "taken place" and therefore will count towards the player's suspension. <sup>1</sup> |   |
| <b>Costs:</b> n/a   |   |

|  |
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| <b>Signature</b>   |
| Name of the JO or Chairman: Valeriu Toma   |
| Date: 17 June 2025   |
| Signature (JO or Chairman):<br><br> |

**NOTE:** You have 48 hours from notification of the decision of the chairman/jo to lodge an appeal with the tournament director – RE Discipline Regulations 4.6.2 (or equivalent Tournament rule)

<sup>1</sup> This present decision will be sent along with the DC Guidance from Ind Judicial Panel Chairman.