

APPEALS COMMITTEE

ENNISKILLEN TOWN UNITED v IFA JUNIOR AND YOUTH CUP COMMITTEE

Peter Dornan (Chair), Jonathan Burgess, Paul Suckling

This appeal has been brought by Enniskillen Town United (the Club) against the decision of the Junior Cup Committee to exclude the Club from the 2022-2023 Junior Cup Competition. In line with the current procedures followed by the Appeals Committee this matter was considered on the written submissions provided by both parties and the Appeals Board would like to place on record their thanks and appreciation to both parties for their cooperation and the clarity of their submissions.

The situation arose as a result of the abandonment of an IFA Junior Cup match between the Club and Strathroy Harps which took place on the 26th February 2022. After an investigation by the IFA Disciplinary Committee the Club was found to have caused the abandonment of the match and the appropriate disciplinary charge was issued against the Club on the 2nd March 2022, in accordance with Article 17 of the IFA Disciplinary Code (the Code) Notification of this charge was issued to the club by email on the 4th March 2022.

Under Article 35.3 of the code, the club then had 4 days to submit a general disciplinary challenge to the charge. This was not done and in fact on the 10th March 2022 the Club paid the sum of £200, that being the fine imposed for causing the abandonment of the match. The Club made the claim that this was paid by mistake. The Appeal Panel reject this.

In accordance with Article 23.1 of the Code, the matter was then referred to the competition organiser, in this case the Junior Cup Committee. Under Article 14 of the Junior Cup Rules, the committee has power to order the match to be re-played in full or to allow the result of the match at the time of stoppage to stand or to dismiss or debar one or both teams from the competition if considered appropriate. After consideration of the evidence, the committee confirmed the result of the match and dismissed the Club from the competition. This Appeal Panel did not take issue with the evidence relating to the abandonment of the match.

The Committee also came to the decision to exclude the Club from next year's Junior Cup Competition. The Appeals Board came to the conclusion that whilst, under Article 14 of the rules, the committee did not have power to do this however Rule 31 provides the committee with power to deal with any offending club as they may think fit and to deal with any matter not provided for in these rules. The Appeal Panel therefore is satisfied that the committee had the power to reach the conclusion that it did.

Taking into consideration the circumstances relating to the abandonment and the fact that the Club were losing the match with a few minutes to go the Appeals Board conclude that the decision of the committee was entirely proportionate, appropriate and reasonable and that the Board has no justification to interfere with the decision made by the committee.

The Appeal therefore fails.