SUOMEN RUGBYLIITTO
FINNISH RUGBY FEDERATION

DECISION FORM

PARTICULARS OF OFFENCE			
Player's Name	Tuomo Nurmi		
Player's Club	Pori Rugby Club		
Match	Helsinki Warriors Rugby Club vs PHT		
Competition	Men's Division 2		
Date of match	14 June 2025		
Match Venue	Ruutisavu, Vantaa		
Rules to apply	2025 SRL Competition Regulations & World Rugby Regulation 17		
Referee Name	Chris Wallace	**Plea**	☐ Admitted ☒ Not admitted
Offence	9.11 Reckless or Dangerous Play subsequently changed to Law 9.16	☒ Red card ☐ Citing ☐ Other If "Other" selected, please specify:	

PANEL DETAILS			
Hearing date	18 June 2025	**Hearing venue**	Via Slack
Chairperson/JO	Palemia Field		
Other Members of the Disciplinary Panel	George Mossford Stephen Whittaker		
List of documents / materials provided to Player in advance of hearing	1. 250616 CW Referee's Report on an Ordering Off		

SUMMARY OF ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CITING/REFEREE'S REPORT/INCIDENT FOOTAGE

The Disciplinary Officer received notification of a Red Card issued during the match during WRC and PHT. The MO's report stated:

> "*Player was on a warning for a previous high shot which was penalised only. After this, many attempts were made to complain how innocence, started complaining and whinging to players and referee. Play was getting reckless as the opposition scored more tries. Incident occurred when carded player flew in from 15 meters away, arm tucked in with no effort at all to tackle safely, only to shoulder charge with as much force as possible, hitting the ball runner side on and forcing them to the ground with illegal shoulder charge which was the only effort given, to shoulder charge said player as hard as he could from side on with a huge run up as he held his arm into his body the whole way and throwing his shoulder and side of his body into the ball runner at time of contact to do nothing legal at all, only effort was to incite as much damage as possible illegally*

due to a shoulder charge. Everyone who saw acknowledged it was horrible and the tackler didn't argue the card at all yet he complained he didn't hit him hard enough for a red card. Horribly unsportsmanlike and dangerous with the player knowing he did wrong, the effort was 100% to hit and hurt a player illegally."

No other witness statements were provided.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF OTHER EVIDENCE (e.g., medical reports)

None provided.

SUMMARY OF PLAYER'S EVIDENCE

The Player provided his evidence through his club who also provided his playing schedule. As part of the response to the hearing, The Player and his club stated that the contested both that this incident was one that met the "Red Card Threshold" and that it was Foul Play.

While Pori provided a clip, WRC also provided a higher definition YouTube link that the Panel accessed.

The Player stated:

"*When WRC took a quick penalty, I noticed that I had to slide quickly to the other side of the field. Therefore, I started running sideways from where I was. Just before the contact, I saw that WRC had player completely free on my right side. I started turning that way because I was completely sure that the WRC #15 was going to pass the ball to the free player. When he did not pass, I was very surprised and did not have time to turn facing the WRC #15. The WRC ran a strong line and surprised me and hit me well on my weak shoulder and I fell to the ground. However, it was not high in anyway and from my part it was accidental as the WRC player surprised with his smart move. Previously, during the game, I was cautioned once by the referee because of a high tackle. That was the only time I spoke with the referee during the game before the red card. However, the red card incident was not high in anyway, and I have never tried to deliberately hurt players in rugby matches.*"

In supporting his case, The Player's Club provided the following statement:

"*Pori Rugby would like to contest the red card received by our player, Tuomi Nurmi against WRC2s on 14.6.*

From the match video, one can clearly see that there is no head/neck contact in the situation, thus considerably lowering the degree of danger. The referee acknowledges in his match report that the contact was 'side on'. From the match video, one can also clearly see that Tuomo Nurmi runs sideways the whole time and during the contact the

WRC player hits Tuomo's weak shoulder and bumps Tuomo the ground, supporting Tuomo's claim that the whole situation was an accidental collision which surprised him, because Tuomo thought that the WRC player was going to pass the ball to the other WRC player who was completely free at the time. The match video also shows that Tuomo took a couple of slower steps before the contact. As per the video evidence, we find it difficult to find anything supporting the referee's claim the player 'flew in from 15 meters away'. This clearly does not corroborate with the video.

We are also bit surprised and shocked about the accusations made by the referee in his report about the incident. The referee claims that he knows that Tuomo Nurmi wanted to cause 'as much damage as possible' or that 'the effort was 100% to hit and hurt a player illegally'. Surely, the referee is not able to read anyone's mind, and the referee cannot give red cards by claiming to know what the player's intentions or thoughts were. The referee cannot adjudicate on intent or what a player supposedly tried to do or not. A referee can only adjudicate on what they see, and actions of players. We would emphasize again that there is no head contact, Tuomo does not lead with the shoulder. It is an accidental collision more than anything.

Tuomo Nurmi has been playing rugby since 2020, and this is the first card of any kind he has ever received. Therefore, we as a club reject any claims or arguments that Tuomo Nurmi is a dirty player or is deliberately trying to hurt other players. It is not consistent with his character or his playing history. Tuomo plays rugby the way it should be played, hard but fair."

FINDINGS OF FACT

The Panel needed to clarify the law being breached. While the MO cites 9.11, this is very broad:

9.11 Players must not do anything that is reckless or dangerous to others including leading with the elbow or forearm, or jumping into, or over, a tackler.

Therefore, under Law 9.11, the referee is always entitled to issue a red or yellow card for any action they deem reckless or dangerous. However, if we consider that other Foul Play laws are applicable, this helped the Panel in determining severity or degree of danger:

9.16 A player must not charge or knock down an opponent carrying the ball without attempting to grasp that player.

We see that The Player does "knock down an opponent carrying the ball without attempting to grasp that player." At the point of contact, The Player is static without setting a tackling position, which is contrary to 9.16, ie, no wrap, which more accurately defines the nature of The Player's action. While The Player was surprised that the Ball Carrier did not pass the ball, he had made the conscious decision to track across the field. The Player knew (or should have known) there was a risk of committing an act of Foul Play in moving across the attacking line, the Ball Carrier's actions notwithstanding.

Based on this, we changed the charge to that contrary to Law 9.16, and that, on the balance of probabilities, Foul Play has been committed by The Player.

In defining the severity of the contact, we observe the following:

Point of Impact: Contact occurs below the neck, with no direct or secondary force applied to the head/neck area. Consequently, World Rugby's Head Contact Process does not apply, nor was it used in our determination.

Body Mechanics: The defensive player maintains a narrow stance, avoiding a lean into the collision, which results in low force exertion and a passive approach to entering the contact. The defender's feet demonstrate a lack of intentional forward drive. A wide, stable stance— typical of deliberate forceful collisions— is absent.

Resultant Motion: The defender's instability (evidenced by being easily knocked off-balance) further supports the conclusion that this was not a high-danger action.

We are therefore of the opinion that The Player has satisfied "on the balance of probabilities" that, while Foul Play has occurred, the actions do not meet the Red Card Threshold.

The Player is free for immediate selection.

DECISION
☐ Proven ☐ Not proven ☒ Other disposal (please state): Red Card dismissed

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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 – As per Article 1.5 of SRL Competition Regulations and (or equivalent Tournament rule)

Total sanction	(X) week	☐ Sending off sufficient
Sanction commences		Not applicable
Sanction concludes		Not applicable
Matches/tournaments included in sanction		Not applicable – The Player is free to play immediately.

Costs	N/A

Date	18 June 2025
Signature (JO or Chairman)	

NOTE: You have 48 hours from notification of the decision of the chairman/jo to lodge an appeal with the tournament director – SRL Competitions Regulation 5.5.1 (or equivalent Tournament rule)