



Case Study 2 - Professional Football Disciplinary Tribunals

What are the options when a club, player, coach or even an owner are charged with disciplinary offences by a sports associations or governing body? How can the club protect its position and defend itself?

Adam Haines, Associate, acted for and represented a club owner in relation to disciplinary charges brought by a football association, namely the posting of comments on Twitter which were alleged to have brought the game into disrepute.

The owner denied that the charges brought the game into disrepute and believed he was entitled to make the comments raise awareness of flawed financial practices within the league.

The hearing was conducted by written submissions and the possible sanctions were an uncapped fine; suspension or a points deductions.

Adam Haines represented the client at the hearing, he prepared:

- written submissions on the owner's defence;
- evidence on why the comments were made in the best interest of the game and association;
- evidence on inherent financial unfairness within the league; and
- written submissions on appropriate sanctions if the decision was in favour of the football association.

The owner was ultimately fined a nominal sum. In the circumstances, it was the best possible result for the owner and at the time it was the lowest reported fine issued by the association.

Since then Adam has frequently advised the club in relation to player contracts, transfers and other day to day matters. He is currently working with the club to develop its academy and assisting with activity in the transfer market.

*If you have received notice of a Disciplinary Tribunal from a sports association, or need assistance with any conduct issues relating to any player, coaching staff or employees, then contact **Adam Haines** on 01244 405414 in our Chester office or email adam.haines@aaronandpartners.com*

