

# DECISION FORM

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



| Particulars of offence  |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| Player's Name: Kristiana MARINKOVA  |                           |
| Player's number: 8  |                           |
| Player's union: Bulgaria  |                           |
| Competition: Conference 1 Sevens Women – Andorra 2026   |                           |
| Host Team (T1): Bulgaria  | Visiting Team (T2): Malta |
| Venue: National Stadium Andorra   |                           |
| Date of match: 13 June 2026   |                           |
| Rules to apply: Regulation 17 World Rugby Handbook; or Tournament Disciplinary Program; or Other  |                           |
| Referee Name: Francesca NOVELLI (ITA)   |                           |
| Plea: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Admitted <input type="checkbox"/> Not admitted  |                           |
| Offence: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Red card <input type="checkbox"/> Citing <input type="checkbox"/> Other<br><i>If "Other" selected, please specify:</i>   |                           |
| Hearing details   |                           |
| Chairperson / JO: Eric Jara   |                           |
| Other Members of the Disciplinary Panel:<br>-<br>-  |                           |
| Hearing date: 13 June 2026  |                           |
| Hearing venue: National Stadium Andorra   |                           |
| 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): Maya Ilieva (Team Manager)  |                           |
| Other attendees: -  |                           |
| List of documents/ materials considered by the Panel: Referee's Ordering Off report; match incident footage; the Player's oral submissions; Rugby Europe Disciplinary Regulations (April 2026) and World Rugby Regulation 17 (Appendix 1).  |                           |
| Summary of essential elements of citing / Referee's report / Incident footage   |                           |
| The referee's report states the following regarding the red card:<br><br>"After getting tackle, 8 Bulgaria is not released and then proceed to retaliate by intentionally bringing the attacker down with force."<br><br>The JO reviewed the incident footage and heard the Player; findings below. |                           |
| Essential elements of other evidence (e.g. medical reports)   |                           |
| No medical evidence or report. The Player displayed to me a visible scratch near the eye, consistent with her account of the opponent's contact. Neither player left the field or required treatment; both continued in the match.  |                           |
| Summary of player's evidence  |                           |

The Player's account: after being tackled she was not released by the opposing Malta player, who scratched her near the eye (a scratch she showed) and made contact with her twice with the feet on her back (first the right, then the left) with little force, resembling a natural walking movement but without any attempt to avoid contact. The Player stated she reacted to being held and to that contact by bringing the opponent to the ground. She did not intend to injure but not expressed remorse. The Player admitted the act.

### Findings of fact

On the balance of probabilities the Panel finds:

- (i) the Player was tackled and the opposing Malta player failed to release her;
- (ii) During that phase the opponent made contact near the Player's eye, evidenced by a visible scratch shown to the Panel, and made low-force contact with the feet (right then left);
- (iii) Reacting to that ongoing illegal hold and contact, the Player took hold of the opponent and brought her to the ground;
- (iv) The referee reported the act as an intentional retaliation carried out 'with force';
- (v) On the footage there was no contact with the head or neck and the opponent landed on her legs and hands;
- (vi) No injury resulted and both players continued.
- (vii) JO notes the divergence as to the degree of force between the referee's live report and the footage, and assesses the act, in its overall context, at the lower end.

### 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 takedown was a deliberate but a reaction, committed under a provocation (being held illegally and contacted near the eye and also contact with the foot on her back). It was not premeditated.

### Nature of actions

Taking hold of the opponent and bringing her to the ground (no lift). On the footage, no contact with the head/neck; the opponent landed on her legs and hands. The referee reported the act as carried out 'with force'. The JO assessment of the degree of force is set out in the findings.

### Existence of provocation:

Yes. The Player had just been struck by the opposing player's foot while on the ground. Treated as modest provocation. As for the scratch on the eye, it isn't visible in the clip, which seems to be a coincidence

### Whether player retaliated:

The act was a reaction to an ongoing illegal hold and contact, characterised as a retaliatory but instinctive response under provocation, rather than premeditated foul play.

A low-level, immediate reaction to the foot contact. To the extent the contact had ceased, it is characterised as a minor retaliatory reaction rather than premeditated foul play.

### Self-defence:

The Player was on the ground reacting to contact made to her. While not strictly self-defence, the response was instinctive and the force used was moderate.

### Effect on victim:

None. The opponent was uninjured, not treated and continued in the match.

### Effect on match:

Negligible.

### Vulnerability of victim:

The opponent was standing and brought to ground, but landed safely on her legs and hands; no head/neck contact and no vulnerability exploited.

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| <b>Level of participation / premeditation:</b>                                   |
| No premeditation; spontaneous, isolated reaction. Sole participant.              |
| <b>Conduct completed / attempted:</b>  |
| Completed.   |
| <b>Other features of player's conduct:</b>                                       |
| Isolated, low-level incident; both players able to continue without consequence. |

| Entry point   |       |                          |       |                          |       |
|---|-------|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|
| Low-end   | Weeks | Mid-range                | Weeks | Top end                  | Weeks |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>   | 2     | <input type="checkbox"/> | -     | <input type="checkbox"/> | -     |
| <b>Reasons for selecting entry point:</b>   |       |                          |       |                          |       |
| Applying Law 9.11 (reckless/dangerous play) under Appendix 1, the conduct sits at the lower end of the scale: no head/neck contact, low force, no injury, no aggravating dynamics, and provocation present. Low-end entry point of 2 weeks. |       |                          |       |                          |       |

| Relevant off-field mitigating factors  |   |
|--|---|
| <i>As per Article 4.5 of Rugby Europe Disciplinary Regulations and Regulations 17 of World Rugby</i> |   |
| <b>Acknowledgement of guilt and timing:</b>  | <b>Player's disciplinary record / good character:</b>             |
| Admitted at the earliest opportunity at the hearing.   | No relevant disciplinary record; good character                   |
| <b>Youth and inexperience of player:</b>   | <b>Conduct prior to and at hearing:</b>                           |
| -  | Cooperative and respectful; admitted the act.                     |
| <b>Remorse and timing of Remorse</b>   | <b>Other off-field mitigation:</b>                                |
| She shows no sign of remorse   | Provocation context; minimal force; no injury; isolated incident. |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Number of weeks deducted: 1</b>  |
| <b>Summary of reason for number of weeks deducted:</b>  |
| Maximum permissible mitigation of 50% applied (1 week/match) given the early admission, clear record and the provocation context. |

**Additional relevant off-field aggravating factors**

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

**Player's status as an offender of the Laws of the Game:**

None.

**Need for deterrence:**

Not applicable.

**Any other off-field aggravating factors:**

None.

**Number of additional weeks: 0**


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

No aggravating factors. No additional weeks.

## 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> No further sanction. Given low-end offending committed under substantial provocation, with off-field mitigation, a suspension would be wholly disproportionate (Art. 4.5.3); the sending off is deemed sufficient. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sending off sufficient |
| <b>Sanction commences:</b> Not applicable (no suspension imposed).  |  |
| <b>Sanction concludes:</b> Not applicable.  |  |
| <b>Matches/ tournaments included in sanction:</b> None. The red card served in the match of 13 June 2026 is deemed sufficient.  |  |
| <b>Costs:</b> Not applicable.   |  |

| Signature  |
|--|
| Name of the JO or Chairman: Eric Jara  |
| Date: 13 June 2026   |
| Signature (JO or Chairman):<br><br><div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div> |

**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)