DECISION FORM

To be sent to discipline@rugbyeurope.eu.

Particulars of offence	
Player's Name: Mariet Anna Luijken	
Player's number: 7	
Player's union: Netherlands	
Competition: Rugby Europe Women's Championship (XV)	
Host Team (T1): Sweden	Visiting Team (T2): Netherlands
Venue : Trelleborg Rugby Arena	
Date of match: 19/04/2025	
Rules to apply: Regulation 17 World Rugby Handbook; Rugby Europe Disciplinary Regulations	
Referee Name: Adele Robert (BEL)	
Plea: ☒ Admitted ☐ Not admitted	
Offence: ☐ Red card ☒ Citing ☐ Other *If "Other" selected, please specify:*	

Hearing details
Chairperson: Martin Picton
Other Members of the Disciplinary Panel: - Chris Morgan (WAL) - Piergiorgio Della Porta (ITA)
Hearing date: April 29th, 2025
Hearing venue: On remote
Appearance Player: ☒ Yes ☐ No
Appearance Union: ☒ Yes ☐ No
Player's Representative(s): Josje Verweij (Team Manager)
Other attendees: David Baird-Smith (Rugby Europe)
List of documents/ materials considered by the Panel: • Referral to CC • Citing report • Game Sheet • Video clip of the Interview conducted by the CC • Pictures • Statement from the AR • Video clip of the incident

Summary of essential elements of citing / Referee's report / Incident footage
"Following a maul successfully won by Sweden the ball is passed from the scrum half to S#2 who takes the ball into contact. She is tackled low around the ankles by N#3 and falls to ground. At the same time N#7 attempts a jackel and S#6 clears out. The only players contesting the ruck are N#7 and S#6. The contest is won by Sweden. The ball is at the back of ruck ready to be played by S#9, at this time S#6 clearly reacts to something pushing N#7 and grabbing her shirt at the shoulder. N#7 raises both her arms and bows her head. S#6 retreats to an onside position, but can then be seen clearly showing the AR her lower arm and pointing

to something on her arm.
Nothing more was said regarding the incident during the game, S#6 remained on the pitch.

Following the game a referral was made via the team manager regarding a bite to S#6 from N#7 in the above mentioned passage of play.

An interview was conducted with S#6 following the game where they clearly articulate that during this ruck N#7 bit their arm, no skin was broken but bruising appeared immediately. They were clear that it was a bite and that is was N#7.

In addition a statement was taken from the AR on that side of the pitch corroborating the statement from S#6 that she had reported a bite and that there were marks on her arm.

Photographs have been supplied both directly following the game and the next day. Whilst there are no direct teeth marks the shape of the bruise supports the evidence given that N#7 who was wearing a gumshield made contact with her mouth to the arm of S#6 and applied pressure.

Whilst there is no direct eye witness or video footage of the bite I find that the evidence supplied supports the account given by S#6 that during the ruck N#7 did bite her arm. And therefore I cite Mariet Anna Luijken for biting contrary to law 9:12 accordingly."

The video footage was consistent with the description in the CCR but it did not clearly show the bite as the view was obscured.

In the course of a video interview on which the CC based her decision S#6 displayed a mark consistent with the allegation of a bite by a player wearing a gumshield.

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

N/A

Summary of player's evidence

The Player related the build up to the event in the terms of the CCR. She said that the bite occurred when S#6 had both her arms around the Player's head and face. She said at that point she panicked as she could not breathe and without thinking bite the arm of S#6. She said as soon as she did so she appreciated that what she had done was wrong and she regretted her actions which she said were instinctive rather than deliberate. She described what she did as a reflex action in a situation of panic. She stated more than once that she knew she was in the wrong. On the Player's behalf it was pointed out that the injury was not serious and S#6 was able to continue playing; that there was no material impact on the match.

Findings of fact

The Citing Commissioner's decision to cite the Player was correct. The Player did bite S#6 although we accepted that this was a reckless rather than a deliberate action on the part of the Player. Her frank acceptance that she was in the wrong underlined the fact that the CC was fully justified in citing the Player for an offence under 91.2.

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:
See above.
Nature of actions
See above.
Existence of provocation:
The video evidence supported the Player's contention that S#6 had her arm across her face.
Whether player retaliated:
Yes in the sense of instinctively biting, but without a considered intent so to do.
Self-defence:
NA
Effect on victim:
Bite mark.
Effect on match:
None.
Vulnerability of victim:
NA
Level of participation / premeditation:
Not premeditated.
Conduct completed / attempted:
Complete
Other features of player's conduct:
NA

Entry point					
Low-end	Weeks	Mid-range	Weeks	Top end	Weeks
☒	12	☐		☐	
Reasons for selecting entry point:					
There was no reason to go above low-end entry point.					

Relevant off-field mitigating factors *As per Article 4.5 of Rugby Europe Disciplinary Regulations and Regulations 17 of World Rugby*	
Acknowledgement of guilt and timing:	**Player's disciplinary record / good character:**
Clear admission in course of hearing.	Nothing relevant.
Youth and inexperience of player:	**Conduct prior to and at hearing:**
The player was born on November 29, 2023, so she is relatively young and inexperienced.	Exemplary.
Remorse and timing of Remorse	**Other off-field mitigation:**

Fully remorseful.	NA

Number of weeks deducted: 6
Summary of reason for number of weeks deducted:
The Player is, in the circumstances, entitled to the maximum mitigation.

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:
NA
Need for deterrence:
NA
Any other off-field aggravating factors:
NA

Number of additional weeks:
Summary of reason for number of weeks added:
NA

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)

Total sanction: 6 weeks/games	☐ Sending off sufficient
Sanction commences: April 19th, 2025	
Sanction concludes: June 15th, 2025	
Matches/ tournaments included in sanction: • Sunshine 7s 27 april: Lionesses • 1e klasse tegen Utrecht 11 mei: Diok dames, national competition • Eggchaser 7s 17 mei: Lionesses • Melrose 7s 25 mei: Shogun • Amsterdam 7s 31 mei/1 juni: Jordan Legacy • Eggchaser 7s 14 juni: Lionesses	
Costs: None	

Signature
Name of the JO or Chairman: Martin Picton
Date: 29/04/2025
Signature (JO or Chairman): M Picton

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)