



IN THE MATTER OF PROCEEDINGS BROUGHT UNDER THE ENGLAND AND WALES CRICKET BOARD DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE REGULATIONS

Before:

Sarah Crowther KC

BETWEEN:

CRICKET REGULATOR

and

FYNN HUDSON-PRENTICE

SUMMARY PROCEDURE DECISION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Respondent cricketer, Mr Fynn Hudson-Prentice admits one charge of breach of Regulation 3.3 of the Professional Conduct Regulations, namely that he engaged in conduct related to race which had the effect of violating the dignity of another or creating an offensive environment for that person.
2. On 18 September 2025 following the conclusion of the County Championship match against Yorkshire County Cricket Club ("**Yorkshire CCC**"), the Respondent attended a social event post-match. As the event was drawing to a close, he shouted towards a group of players he saw leaving, saying, "*alright n***er*".
3. Taking account of all the circumstances, including the fact that the words were not directed at any person by reason of the colour of their skin and that the Respondent has admitted the charge and is genuinely remorseful, the appropriate sanction for the conduct is:
 - 3.1 A reprimand;

- 3.2 A direction to undertake equality and diversity training suitable to address the conduct to be agreed with the Cricket Regulator; and
- 3.3 A one match suspension. The Respondent was de-selected from the Sussex County Cricket Club ("**Sussex CCC**") fixture against Worcestershire County Cricket Club as a result of this conduct and therefore the suspension can be taken to have been served.

INTRODUCTION

- 4. The Cricket Regulator confirmed in its charge letter dated 24 September 2025 that it considered it appropriate for the case to proceed under the Summary Procedure.
- 5. On 30 September 2025 by email sent on behalf of the Respondent he admitted the charge and agreed to the range of sanctions referred to in the charge letter.
- 6. On 2 October 2025 the case was referred to the Chair of the Cricket Discipline Panel to determine whether it is appropriate to initiate the Summary Procedure in this case.
- 7. On 4 October 2025 the Chair of the Cricket Discipline Panel determined that it was appropriate to initiate the Summary Procedure in this case and appointed me, Sarah Crowther KC, as the Sole Arbitrator to determine the applicable sanction under the Summary Procedure within the range specified under Regulation 7.4 of the England and Wales Cricket Board Disciplinary Procedure Regulations.

THE CHARGE

- 8. The Charge is under Regulation 3.3 of the Professional Conduct Regulations, which reads as follows:

"Each Participant is bound by and must comply with the ECB Anti-Discrimination Regulations."

The specific paragraph of the Anti-Discrimination Regulations under which the conduct falls is paragraph 1.2 which provides:

"It will be a breach of these Regulations for any Participant to:

1.2 engage in conduct related to a relevant Protected Characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating another's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person or persons..."

Race is a Protected Characteristic under the Anti-Discrimination Regulations.

MATERIAL CONSIDERED

9. In order to consider the charge and proposed sanction I am grateful to the parties for providing the following materials which I have considered in full:
 - 9.1. An audio file of the interview with the Respondent;
 - 9.2. Witness statements from Player A and of David Reid from the Cricket Regulator;
 - 9.3. An email from Sussex CCC reporting the incident; and
 - 9.4. A transcript of the interview with the Respondent.

RELEVANT FACTS

10. The final day of the County Championship match between Sussex CCC and Yorkshire CCC occurred on Thursday, 18 September 2025, and ended early in a draw around 4.30pm. As it was the final home game of the season at Sussex CCC, staff and players remained in the changing room and balcony areas to celebrate with pizza and drinks.
11. At about 10pm, Player A decided to leave with two other players, whom he was giving a lift home in his car. As they exited the building walking towards the car park, Player A had his hood up. Several other Sussex CCC players were around, including Tom Haynes. As Player A walked away, he heard Tom Haynes call up to the Respondent on the Players balcony. The Respondent called back, "Oy n***er" or "Alright n***er". Player A turned around and recognised the Respondent.
12. Player A turned back and continued to his car. A few minutes later, the Respondent called Player A who took the call on speaker phone in his car. The Respondent apologised profusely for using that language and said that he had not intended to

cause offence and that it was a stupid joke for which he was very sorry. Player A indicated that he considered the incident over. Player A added in his evidence to the Cricket Regulator that he has always had a welcoming and friendly relationship with the Respondent and that he did not believe that the language was directed towards him, because the Respondent did not know that he was there when he said it and because he was walking away from the Respondent with his hood up. He has never heard the Respondent ever use language of this nature on any other occasion.

13. Player A did not report the incident. The matter was drawn to the attention of the Cricket Regulator by Sussex CCC in accordance with its obligations. Player A has indicated that he would not wish to be identified, and I have chosen to anonymise him in an effort to protect him from any personal attention.
14. The Respondent was interviewed by the Cricket Regulator in the presence of an accompanying colleague and a representative from the Professional Cricketers Association on 23 September 2025. He explained that there had been several drinking games, including one v one drinking contests during the evening's celebrations and that he had consumed three or four glasses of red wine and three or four bottles of beer, which had led to him being "*very intoxicated*". It had been getting "*quite silly*" in the dressing room all evening. The group of people on the balcony had been exchanging "*general banter*" and funny jokes. As he saw some people outside the building looking as if they were heading off, he leant over the balcony and shouted, "*Alright n****er*".
15. Nobody responded and he could not explain why he said that, because it was a ridiculous remark and he regretted it straight away. Then it was pointed out to him that Player A (who is black) was in the group outside and he "*felt horrendous and sick to his stomach*" because he had no idea that Player A was there and that he had heard him use that word, so he immediately left and spoke to one of the Sussex CCC managers and asked for advice. He then tried to find Player A to apologise, but when he realised that Player A had left already, he made the call referred to above.
16. The Respondent told the Cricket Regulator that he fully understands the connotations of the language that he used and what it represents and that it was language that he would never hope to hear from anyone, "*let alone myself*". He was asked to explain

his behaviour and stated that he honestly could not say what had come over him and it was a “*really, really poor call of judgement at that period of time.*” In his opinion, there is no culture of racist language in the Sussex CCC dressing room.

17. The Respondent explained that he had already apologised to the Sussex Manager and also Player A. He added this, “*I feel so disgusted about this whole, like, my own wrongdoing in this situation, because I’ve always been someone that has respected others, and that people can approach for issues, and things that have gone on, either cricket related or otherwise, that I’m part of the senior management almost as a player.*” He indicated that he had previously prided himself on being someone who would look after others in the squad and help others out and that this situation was a source of deep regret and something which he was extremely sorry for, and the fact that everyone else in the dressing room, especially Player A, was having to go through this process. He continued that, “*this is definitely not something that I’ll ever do again, something that I hoped I never would even do myself, to be honest, but that’s just obviously the situation I’ve put myself in, and the club in.*”
18. It is apparent from both the audio and the transcript that the Respondent was deeply upset by his own actions and their effect on others.

SUBMISSIONS OF THE PARTIES

19. The Cricket Regulator submits that the offence falls into ‘Category B’ because whilst it was not intended to cause fear, distress or harm, the conduct was likely to create such an effect. It submits that there are features of the conduct, however, which are more in line with ‘Category C’ misconduct, namely that it was a single comment and that the Respondent was acting alone and that therefore, any sanction should be towards the lower end of the Category B range in the guidance.
20. Whilst the starting point, therefore, is a two week suspension from cricket, the Cricket Regulator has taken this into account, together with the evidence of clear and significant remorse and the immediate and full acceptance of wrongdoing, and suggests that a one match ban is appropriate, together with a reprimand and suitable education and training with respect to race issues and equality, diversity and inclusion.

21. The Respondent submits that in addition to the above, he has since the incident (but before the charge process) voluntarily enrolled on an Anti-Racism in Sport Foundation course which he will have completed in the coming days.

THE SANCTION

22. I am satisfied that the proposed sanctions are appropriate in all the circumstances of the case:
- 22.1. A reprimand;
- 22.2. A suitable education or training course to be agreed with the Cricket Regulator; and
- 22.3. A one match suspension, which has already been served.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

23. I have regard to the ECB guidance document on aggravating and mitigating factors, and the Sanctions Guidelines – Discrimination.
24. The offence is a Category B offence, but I accept that there are features which are more reflective of Category C, such as the fact that it was a single comment made not as part of any wider discriminatory conduct and did not involve any other party.
25. The Respondent, in his interview, has already recognised the harm which his conduct has caused, to Player A, to others at the club who were there at the time and either heard the language used or had to address the aftermath of the incident as well as those who have had to deal with the process. In addition, I would add the harm which is caused to the sport of cricket by racist comments. There can be no place in the sport for racism; such language damages the very fabric of an inclusive environment and erodes the confidence of participants to take part in the game and to be truly welcomed into the sport. It cannot be tolerated.
26. It follows that the correct starting point for sanction is a two-week ban.
27. I find that the term used was extremely serious and shocking and constitutes an aggravating factor.



28. Against that, however, there are mitigating factors. This is a one-off incident, and I accept the evidence that it was wholly out of character and also outside the prevailing culture at Sussex CCC. Whilst the fact that the Respondent had consumed a significant amount of alcohol is not mitigation, it does to my mind go some way to explain how he came to use racist language which was so shocking and wholly out of character. Having said that, we will never know why he came to use that word, which I accept would not otherwise form part of his vocabulary.
29. I also take account of his full acceptance of his fault and his attempts to apologise. His remorse is complete and genuine in my judgement.
30. I have also considered the fact that he has taken steps himself to seek out training and to prevent recurrence. I am satisfied that he is right to suggest that this kind of incident will never happen again. He has learnt the lesson a hard way, but effectively.
31. Taking a step back to consider the totality of the sanction, I must ensure that the package of sanctions as a whole is appropriate, fair and proportionate for the charge accepted. It seems to me that it is, because whilst some suspension is necessary to mark the fact that conduct of this nature will be punished, further suspension from playing would be disproportionately punitive and would not serve any other purpose. The important aspects in this case for the sanction are the reprimand and the training. It is essential that having been punished, participants are given the opportunity to learn from what I consider to have been a very serious mistake and to demonstrate to themselves and others that they can and will conduct themselves better in future.

PUBLICATION OF THE DECISION

32. An application was made by the Respondent (i) that his name should be withheld in the published reasons for my decision and (ii) that the language which formed the basis of the charge which he has admitted should be redacted. It was said that he was deeply embarrassed by his use of "*such a pernicious word*" and that its repetition in my reasons would exacerbate the harm which this process is seeking to avoid. Further, it was suggested that it was part of the 'duty of care' owed by the sport to participants not to expose them to public criticism, especially in the age of social media.

33. I disagree. The role of the Cricket Regulator is to regulate the sport which includes ensuring that racist language is eliminated from the game. The role of the independent Cricket Discipline Panel is to provide scrutiny to that regulation and promote consistency and transparency in proceedings which are brought before it.
34. It is not right to suggest that the Cricket Discipline Panel owes a 'duty of care' which extends to limiting the embarrassment caused to them by publication of reasons in misconduct cases. In the absence of compelling evidence of a specific risk of real harm associated with publication, I would generally expect decisions to be published identifying the names of those who have admitted or been found to have committed wrongdoing. There is no evidence before me which justifies departure from the general rule. Acceptance of guilt and genuine remorse are reflected in the sanction, but do not affect the question of publication regarding the process and reasons.
35. Secondly, I accept the submission of the Cricket Regulator that there is a regulatory interest in consistency of decisions which requires the full facts of the charge admitted to be published, insofar as the rights of victims or third parties are not unduly affected. Without knowing the facts, the reasons are of little use to those wishing to understand why this decision has been reached.
36. In any event, I have endeavoured to keep repetition of the language used to a minimum, but it would be wrong in my judgement to be so coy about what was said that the wider public should be made to speculate. Indeed, such speculation is likely to cause greater harm than knowledge of the truth.
37. In the circumstances, I shall direct that these reasons shall be published. I have redacted the name of Player A, and I would hope that his privacy will be respected by those who have an interest in this decision.

APPEAL

38. The Respondent admitted the charges and agreed to the range of sanctions referred to in the charge letter. Any sanction imposed by a Sole Arbitrator in accordance with Regulation 7.4 is final and binding and there is no right of appeal from this decision.



Cricket
Discipline
Panel

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Crowther'.

Sarah Crowther KC

Sole Arbitrator

London, UK

14 October 2025