



**TD Decision – Pedro Ibarra, Argentina.
14 March 2009 - 19:00 hrs**

**Hearing into alleged breach of the F.I.H. Code of Conduct
by: Argentina Player - Pedro Ibarra, Number 5**

The Reported Breach

After the semi-final match between Argentina and Canada at the 3rd Pan American Cup, the Argentina player number 5, approached the umpire Daniel Lopez, making contact with the umpire's upper body, two or three times, using his left hand. He at the same time was abusing the umpire verbally, until he was pulled away by the other umpire, Gus Soteriades. ("the alleged behaviour")

The alleged behaviour, if proved, constitutes a breach of the following clauses of the Code of Conduct:

1. Participants shall at all times conduct themselves fairly and properly on the field of play and any part of the hockey venue/accommodation. Participants may not conduct themselves in a manner or commit any act or omission which may prejudice the interest of hockey or which may bring the game of hockey into disrepute.
2. Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the following shall be regarded as conduct which is improper, unfair, and unacceptable:
 - (a) Verbal/physical abuse or hostility towards any other participant, person or any other member of the public.
 - (b) Disputing, protesting and/or reacting in a provocative or disapproving manner in an inappropriate way toward any decision made by an umpire or official.
 - (c) Charging or advancing towards an umpire or technical official in an aggressive manner when appealing.

I therefore decided to hold a hearing into the alleged behaviour.

The Hearing

The formal hearing was held at 16:40 on March 14th, 2009. Pedro Ibarra attended along with the manager of the Argentina team, Mr. Juan Manuel Grondona. Also in attendance was the Umpires' Manager Antonio Morales.

When presented with the alleged behaviour, the Argentina player, Pedro Ibarra, denied that he touched the umpire but did admit that he was somewhat abusive to him verbally. The player was asked if he was sure about this because a number of credible hockey officials had reported to the TD that the physical contact did take place. He once again repeated that he did not touch the umpire.

After informing the player and the manager that the reported behaviour constituted a level 2 Code of Conduct offence, the player and manager were also informed that the TD would check again with the witnesses prior to making his decision.

The Finding

I have considered the evidence available. After checking again with the witness, I am satisfied that the alleged behaviour occurred. I find that the alleged behavior constitutes physical abuse to another participant (the umpire).

The Penalty

This offence fits at level 2 of the Guidelines of Offences and Penalties: "Physical assault, without injury, of another player, umpire, official or spectator." I therefore consider that the appropriate penalty is to suspend the player Pedro Ibarra for two matches. This includes the next and final match Argentina plays at this tournament on March 15th, 2009 and another match as determined by the Pan American Hockey Federation.

Eric Donegani
Tournament Director
14 March 2009 – 19:00 hrs.