

Hearts Seek Rule Change After Yellow Card Calamity



Hearts have decided not to appeal against the incorrect booking of midfielder Malaury Martin during Saturday's 3-0 Ladbrokes Premiership win at Motherwell.

Martin was booked for what referee Andrew Dallas believed was a trip on Motherwell's Louis Moulton despite the fact the home player was accidentally tripped by his teammate Lionel Ainsworth.

The current SFA rules state an appeal against a yellow card in Scotland can only be appealed on two grounds – simulation (diving) or mistaken identity. The Martin booking didn't come under either category so Hearts will propose this issue is addressed by seeking a change to the rules

Hearts issued the following statement on their official website:

The club had intended to appeal the weekend booking of Malaury Martin, who was yellow carded by Andrew Dallas against Motherwell, and indicated an intention to do so on the grounds of "Mistaken Identity". (i.e. The Referee wrongly identified the player who committed the foul.)

Following discussions with the club's legal advisors and various officials at the SFA, it is clear however that the current rules as they stand, do not cover this specific situation.

Put quite simply, we cannot appeal on the grounds of "Mistaken Identity" as the referee did not mistakenly identify our player. He believed the offence was committed by Malaury.

The fact that it was not a foul and that the Motherwell player merely tripped over the feet of his own player, means that while it may have been an error to give the foul and to book our player, it was not a case of mistaken identity. The Referee did not mistake Malaury for another Hearts player, which is the only situation that would allow an appeal to be successful in the case of "Mistaken Identity". Nor can the yellow be rescinded by Referee Dallas as the rules do not allow for this. N.B. Yellow cards can only be appealed in Scotland on two grounds, "simulation" and "mistaken identity"

The club is going to pursue a potential rule change at the earliest opportunity so that common sense can prevail in the future and no other player or club suffers a similar fate.

Meanwhile, Hearts midfielder Arnaud Djoum is expected to report for training later this week after playing his part in Cameroon's triumph in the African Cup of Nations. Cameroon defeated Egypt 2-1 in the final on Sunday and Djoum played the entire ninety minutes.