

# UKU Competition Committee decision: rostering infringement at Nationals 2014

## 1. Summary

At UKU Nationals on 23/24 August 2014, Paddy Hart competed in the Mixed Division with Pingu Jam, despite having competed with Vision at Regionals. This is an infringement of rule 2.3.3.1 of the UKU Club Outdoor Competitions rules.

The Competitions Committee has decided to apply the following penalties:

- Paddy Hart will be disqualified from representing Pingu Jam at EUCF
- Pingu Jam will receive a written warning reminding them that they have a responsibility to take greater care with respect to roster regulations than they appear to have in this situation.
- Vision will receive a written warning reminding them that they have a responsibility to take greater care with respect to roster regulations than they appear to have in this situation.

This decision does not set precedent that future infringements will result in disqualification of the player or a written warning to the team. Each case will be judged on its own merits.

## 2. Full Statement

At UKU Nationals on 23/24 August 2014, Paddy Hart competed in the Mixed Division with Pingu Jam, despite having competed with Vision at Regionals. This is an infringement of rule 2.3.3.1 of the UKU Club Outdoor Competitions rules. Relevant rules are as follows:

*2.3.3 Any player that competes for a team at UKU-Regionals (EUCQ) is deemed to be on that team's roster. Players that do not compete at UKU-Regionals are considered to be "unrostered" and are free to join any team prior to UKU-Nationals.*

*2.3.3.1 If a team advances to UKU Nationals, then all their rostered players are locked into that roster and may not play for another team at UKU Nationals IN ANY DIVISION.*

Full rules can be found [here](#).

The issue was brought to the attention of the tournament organisers and UKU towards the end of the Mixed semi-finals. An emergency Tournament Rules Group was formed, comprised of three Competitions Committee members, who were the only members that were both at the tournament, and available at short notice. Whilst the Rules Group was discussing the situation the semi-final ended with Pingu Jam winning. The 3v4 game was due to start straight after the semi-final so a decision on what action to take was needed immediately. The Rules Group decided that making a decision in such a short space of time, without all the necessary information from the parties involved would be inappropriate. The best course of action was deemed to be to let Pingu Jam and Paddy continue in the tournament, and to let the Competitions Committee in full decide on the appropriate action to be taken, with sufficient time to investigate further. Nationals results - subject to a potential revision - were published once it became clear that the process would take more than 1-2 days. Pingu Jam were told that their place at EUCF, earned by their second place finish, was no longer guaranteed as one of the possible penalties for deliberate infringement of the Club Outdoor Competitions rules is disqualification from representing the UK at international events.

After investigating the infringement & obtaining statements from all parties the Competitions Committee has decided to apply the following penalties:

- Paddy Hart will be disqualified from representing Pingu Jam at EUCF
- Pingu Jam will receive a written warning reminding them that they have a responsibility to take greater care with respect to roster regulations than they appear to have in this situation.

- Vision will receive a written warning reminding them that they have a responsibility to take greater care with respect to roster regulations than they appear to have in this situation.

This decision does not set precedent that future infringements will result in disqualification of the player or a written warning to the team. Each case will be judged on its own merits.

Key points from the Competitions Committee discussion:

- Vision initially not qualifying for Nationals and then qualifying did create confusion about eligibility. Penalties have been decided with this in mind.
- The infringed rule is primarily in place to prevent teams fielding players at Open Regionals who then go on to compete in Women's or Mixed at Nationals, resulting in a weaker Open team at Nationals. Pingu Jam did not break the rule in this way, Vision did but unintentionally.
- Disqualifying Pingu Jam was extensively discussed as an option, but deemed inappropriate in this situation.
- Disqualifying Vision was discussed as an option, but deemed inappropriate in this situation.
- Fines were considered as a penalty but deemed inappropriate in the situation.
- Sheffield declined their place at Open Nationals in order to abide by this rule. In addition, the majority of teams did abide by the rules. We understand that some members expect to see penalties applied to teams who infringe the rules. This was taken into account when deciding whether or not to apply penalties.
- The primary problem appears to have been ignorance of the rules rather than knowingly committing an infringement. Ignorance is not an excuse to break the rules, but the absence of intent was taken into consideration when deciding the severity of the penalties.
- Teams competing at Open Regionals have an obligation to know whether their players are affiliated with other teams and their intentions for Nationals. If they are aware of players on their roster who have illegally rostered with another team they should let UKU know at the first possible opportunity.
- Teams competing at Nationals have an obligation to know whether their players have competed at Open Regionals and whether this affects their eligibility for Nationals.
- Players and teams competing at Open Regionals should communicate their intentions for Nationals to each other. We ask players to consider carefully playing at Open Regionals if they want to play with another team at Nationals, they should be clear on their Regionals team's intentions if they are awarded a spot at Nationals. Not finishing in the qualifying bracket does not mean a team will not be offered a spot at Nationals. We ask teams to carefully consider rostering players who want to play with another team at Nationals, they should be clear on the player's intentions if the team is awarded a spot at Nationals.
- Similarities to other situations in the past were highlighted, however this situation was ultimately different and the decisions made are specific to this situation alone.
- The "impact" of a player was not considered: the penalties imposed would have been the same regardless of the strength of the individual or team.
- Attention was paid to the exact specifics of the rules, which put the onus on the player to ensure they are eligible to roster with a team.
- The teams and players access to information was discussed and it was deemed that they did have adequate access to the rules that they violated. Nonetheless it was also noted that communication about such rules could be improved.

Questions or comments relating to UKU competitions can be sent to Benji Heywood ([benji.heywood@ukultimate.com](mailto:benji.heywood@ukultimate.com)) who will respond directly or pass to the relevant committee.