

LEVEL

Jonathan Rennie



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Partner

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I have significant high level dispute resolution experience and am recognised as an accredited employment law specialist by the Law Society of Scotland and am ranked in Legal 500 and Chambers. Having qualified 18 years ago, I am a partner at Level law. I am legally qualified in Scotland and England and Wales and am a qualified Company Secretary and Notary Public.

I am an appointed member of Sport Resolutions' Legal Arbitration panel and am one of the only solicitors in Scotland to sit as Chairman on both the SFA Football Judicial Panel and the SRU Rugby disciplinary panel. For the SFA I have chaired "fast track" disciplinary cases and more involved "main" panel cases and have determined significant high-profile appeal cases on Covid points deductions for premier league clubs and penalties for players who breached Covid government regulations.

In 2021 I was also appointed as an Independent Legal Member of the English FA Judicial Panel. That appointment has subsequently led to me being appointed to the FA's anti-discrimination judicial panel from 2024 onwards and that appointment reflects my discrimination expertise.

In 2023 I was appointed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Lausanne as both a football arbitrator and general sports arbitrator.

I sat on the Steering Group of the anti-discrimination charity Nil by Mouth for seven years and assisted their submissions to the Scottish Government on the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012. I also presented at their schools' education events.

I am now a trustee and sit on the Board of the UK sports charity Street League which creates employment opportunities through football and sport. The charity works with young people and safeguarding is a principal focus and I sit on the HR sub-committee.

Over several years, my sports law practice has involved acting for football players and managers in exiting clubs and I have negotiated several high profile exits. I have also acted for clubs dealing with player misconduct and drafted player and manager contracts and disciplinary and regulatory rules.

Increasingly many employment cases are resolved by judicial mediation and I have successfully conducted judicial and non-judicial mediations for clients.

I am a noted commentator on employment and discrimination matters and host a podcast series "Employment Law Focus" which discusses hot topics including discrimination in sport. I have written many employment law articles and sports related ones including the undernoted:

Sports Law Articles (Non-exhaustive list)

- HR Magazine June 2019 - Social media lessons from the Israel Folau case.
- People Management July 2019 - Israel Folau and philosophical beliefs.
- Law in Sport March 2020 - Family Friendly Policies for Athletes.
- Law in Sport August 2020 - No Fault dismissals for Sports Organisations.
- People Management August 2022 - When Protected Characteristics collide in Sport.
- Herald Business HQ Magazine - September 2022 - Discrimination obstacles in Sport.

Football Work (Non-exhaustive list)

- Christian Doidge, Forest Green Rovers and Bolton Wanderers.
- Derk Boerigter, Celtic Football Club.
- Ronnie Deila, Manager and John Collins, Assistant manager, Celtic Football Club - Exit advice.
- Bard and Grete Homstol, physiotherapy and sports science team, Celtic Football Club.
- Nadir Ciftci, Celtic Football Club.
- John Kennedy, Assistant Manager, Celtic Football Club in negotiating his contract with the club.
- Motherwell Football Club in terminating their highest paid player who was found to be abusing recreational drugs and was pictured in the Sun newspaper. We managed the press and reputational issues and termination of the contract and negotiations with the player's agents.
- Exit negotiation advice for Commercial director of Falkirk FC.
- Forest Green Rovers on various contract and policy issues and player transfer disputes.

Rugby

- English Rugby RFU instruction to review and revise all framework policies on discrimination and equality in line with their strategic action plan, to include disciplinary regulations and diversity and inclusion statements and processes. Governance review of judicial processes and decisions.
- Judicial decision maker on Sport Resolution UK panel determining the sanction for the English Premiership Rugby match abandonment between Worcester Warriors and Gloucester due to Covid issues - in person Hearing at the International Dispute Resolution Centre in London.
- English Rugby RFU instruction to carry out an independent investigation into allegations of race discrimination raised by the father of a current England player.

Cricket

- Cricket Scotland on executive restructuring and performance management.

Golf

- Various Scottish golf courses on the Equality Act implications of exclusively male membership and the Royal and Ancient Golf club as the overarching governing body.

Sailing

- World Sailing Disciplinary Investigation officer - instruction to manage complaint on Board appointments to Olympic sailing classes and sex discrimination allegations.

Lawn Green Bowls

- Acting for Bowls Scotland in management of disciplinary proceedings against a bowler who had breached social media policies and was consequently banned from the Commonwealth Games.

British Triathlon

- Acting for British Triathlon in advising on the implementation of their Trans-Gender participation policy and the discrimination, equality and data protection impact as well as the verification and appeal processes required.

Federation Court of the Commonwealth Games 2022 appointed for Birmingham Games via Sport Resolutions London

Ad Hoc Disciplinary Panel for the Rugby League World Cup in 2022 via Sport Resolutions in London

SFA Judicial Panel chairman appointments from the 2017/2018 Season – Main Panel

May 2017	Preston Athletic Football Club	George Thomson (manager)	Hampden Park	Referee abuse
June 2017	St Johnstone	Richard Foster (player)	Hampden Park	Referee abuse
May 2018	Gretna Football Club	Ellis Pearson (player)	Hampden Park	Referee abuse
May 2018	Motherwell Football Club		Hampden Park	Club infringement in lodging of team sheets during a Scottish Cup Semi Final fixture at Hampden Park
May 2018		Kieran Wallen (match official)	Hampden Park	Social media abuse and referee issued with verbal warning only
May 2018	Newton Stewart Football Club	John Kiltie (manager)	Hampden Park	Referee abuse
July 2019	End of Season Review		Hampden Park	Awarded fines to clubs across all league divisions that had disciplinary levels above the average
September 2020	Ross County	Stuart Kettlewell (Manager)	Online	Two charges of referee abuse on the field and then impinging character of referee in Sky Sports Interview - match ban awarded
December 2020	Appellate Hearing (member only)	Kilmarnock and St Mirren	Online	Appeal Hearing on covid penalties issued by SPFL and points allocation - sanction moderated to financial penalty rather than sporting sanction
April 2021	Appellate Hearing (member only)	Rangers Football Club	Online	Appeal Hearing on covid penalties for five Rangers players - appeal rejected
July 2021	Rangers Football Club	Chris McKee	Online	Match ban for player found guilty of

				homophobic abuse on the pitch
December 2021	St Mirren	John Needham, Chairman	Online	Fine imposed upon Chairman of St Mirren for bringing the game into disrepute
December 2021	Kilmarnock	Aidan Macadam	Online	Match ban for player found guilty of throwing a projectile into the crowd
February 2022	Cambuslang Rangers	Stevie Owen	Online	Manager found guilty of misconduct in abandoning game and subject to match suspension
February 2022	Motherwell FC	Graham Alexander	Online	Manager admitted charge of misconduct for abusing officials and subject to match suspension
May 2022	Bo'ness Athletic FC	Willie Irvine	Online	Manager banned for Referee abuse
May 2022	Cumbernauld Colts FC	Connor Hogg	Online	Match Ban for player Misconduct
May 2022	Tynecastle FC	Blake Trevor Wales	Online	Match Ban for player Misconduct
May 2022	Whitburn Juniors FC	Lewis Milton	Online	Match Ban for player Misconduct
July 2022	End of Season Review		Online	Awarded fines to clubs across all league divisions that had disciplinary levels above the average
October 2022	Aberdeen FC	Jim Goodwin, Manager	Online	Match ban for Manager for bringing the game into disrepute following TV interview
March 2023	Livingston FC	Stevie McPhillips, Team Staff	Online	Match Ban for dugout infringements
July 2023	End of Season Review		Online	Awarded fines to clubs across all league divisions that had disciplinary levels above the average

SFA Judicial Panel chairman appointments from the 2018/2019 Season – Fast Track Panel

August 2018	Kilmarnock	Gary Dicker	Online	Appeal rejected
October 2018	Kilmarnock	Greg Stewart	Hampden Park	Appeal rejected
January 2019	Cowdenbeath	Robbie Dees	Online	Appeal rejected
January 2019	Nairn	Kenneth McKenzie	Online	Appeal rejected
January 2019	Stenhousemuir	Connor McBrearty	Online	Appeal rejected
January 2019	Dundee	Darren O'Dea	Online	Appeal rejected
February 2019	Kilmarnock	Daniel Bachmann	Online	Appeal upheld
March 2019	Rangers	Alfredo Morelos	Online	Appeal rejected
April 2019	Bonnyton Thistle	Mark C Walker	Online	Appeal rejected
July 2019	Dundee		Online	Preliminary point raised on perceived prejudice
August 2019	Edinburgh	Jonathan Court	Online	Appeal upheld
August 2019	Montrose	Sean Dillon	Online	Appeal upheld
September 2019	Keith FC	Adam Clark	Online	Appeal rejected
December 2019	Airdrieonians	Callum Fordyce	Online	Appeal upheld
January 2020	Peterhead	Simon Ferry	Online	Appeal rejected
January 2020	Jeanfield Swifts	Connor McLaren	Online	Appeal rejected
February 2020	Hamilton Academicals	Jamie Hamilton	Online	Appeal upheld
February 2020	Cowdenbeath	Chris Hamilton	Online	Appeal rejected
February 2020	Inverness	James Keatings	Online	Appeal upheld
November 2020	Kilmarnock	Stuart Findlay	Online	Appeal rejected
December 2020	Peterhead FC	Gary Fraser	Online	Appeal upheld

January 2021	Hamilton Academicals	Jamie Hamilton	Online	Appeal upheld
March 2021	Rangers Football Club	Alfredo Morelos	Online	Appeal upheld
May 2021	Raith Rovers	Iain Davidson	Online	Appeal upheld
May 2021	Dundee United FC	Jamie Robson	Online	Appeal rejected
June 2021	Partick Thistle Womens Team	Freya MacDonald	Online	Appeal rejected
August 2021	Spartans Football Club	Sam Jones	Online	Appeal rejected
September 2021	Newtongrange Star	Christopher Robertson	Online	Appeal upheld
September 2021	Whitehill Welfare	Blair Tolmie	Online	Appeal rejected
November 2021	Dunbar United	Jamie Devlin	Online	Appeal rejected
November 2021	Falkirk FC	Stephen Heatherington	Online	Appeal upheld
November 2021	Montrose Football Club	Sean Dillon	Online	Appeal upheld
December 2021	Dunfermline Athletic	Graham Dorrans	Online	Appeal upheld
December 2021	Caledonian Braves	Scott Forrester	Online	Appeal upheld
March 2022	Cumnock Juniors	Kyle McAusland	Online	Appeal rejected
March 2022	Hibernian FC	Ryan Porteous	Online	Appeal rejected
March 2022	Johnstone Burgh FC	Jordan Mutch	Online	Appeal rejected
March 2022	Beith Juniors FC	Jordan Duffy	Online	Appeal upheld
March 2022	Peterhead FC	Andrew McDonald	Online	Appeal upheld

English FA Judicial Panel chairman appointments from the 2021/2022 Season

December 2021	Bournemouth AFC		Online	E20 fine of £15,000 imposed on Bournemouth for admitted breach
December 2021	Forest Green Rovers		Online	E20 fine of £3,000 imposed on Bournemouth for admitted breach
December 2021	Hertfordshire FA	Karl Turner (Assistant Referee)	Online Regulatory Commission appeal	Appeal rejected
December 2021	Kent FA	William Hamlin	Online Regulatory Commission appeal	Appeal Upheld and race aggravation removed from charge
January 2022	Bournemouth AFC		Online	E20 fine of £25,000 imposed on Bournemouth for admitted breach
January 2022	Birmingham FA	Crown Elite	Online Regulatory Commission appeal	Case dismissed
January 2022	Liverpool FA	Darren Wildman	Online Regulatory Commission appeal	Appeal case concerning homophobic abuse and the manager refusing to continue the game - appeal rejected but original sanctions quashed and nullified
January 2022	Bristol Manor Farm	Lee Lashenko	Online Regulatory Commission appeal	Charges of referee abuse leading to 12 match ban and £250 fine
January 2022	Isthmian League	Cray Wanderers	Online	Appeal rejected from County league determination
February 2022	Derby County and NFFC		Online	E20 fine of £10,000 imposed on each club

February 2022	Barnsley FC Cardiff City FC		Online	E20 fine of £12,000 for Barnsley and £10,000 for Cardiff
March 2022		Oliver Scott	Online	Fine and match suspension for betting irregularities
March 2022		Saul Deeney	Online	Fine and match suspension for betting irregularities
March 2022	Lincolnshire FA	Luke Hayes	Online Regulatory Commission appeal	Appeal on penalty for homophobic abuse rejected
March 2022	Swansea City	Dean Thornton	Online	Fine and match ban for referee abuse
March 2022	Blackburn Rovers	Ben Benson	Online	Fine and match ban for referee abuse
March 2022	Hellenic League	Westbury FC	Online Regulatory Commission appeal	Appeal rejected on claims for match expenses following Covid match abandonment
March 2022	FA Pokemon Cup	Club Futsal UK	Online Regulatory Commission appeal	Appeal Upheld on player eligibility and disqualification decision by league
April 2022	Tranmere Rovers Carlisle United		Online	E20 fines administered to both clubs
April 2022	Queens Park Rangers		Online	E20 fine of £5,000
April 2022	Queens Park Rangers	John Eustace - Assistant Manager	Online	Fine of £2,000 and one match ban for misconduct
April 2022	Bridie Thompson, Sunderland Womens team		Online	12 match ban for race discrimination and education sanction imposed
May 2022	Bedfordshire FA	Mohsin Mahmood	Online Regulatory Commission appeal	Limited Match Ban

May 2022	Birmingham FA	Micah Dhanda	Online Regulatory Commission appeal	Limited Match Ban
May 2022	Hampshire FA	Adam Trivett	Online Regulatory Commission appeal	Limited Match Ban
May 2022	Worcestershire FA	Jordan Adams	Online Regulatory Commission appeal	Charge to be reissued and sanction to be set aside from 17 May pending the findings of the fresh Disciplinary Commission
May 2022	FA	Jack Peel (Coach)	Online	Six month suspension for inappropriate behaviour towards minors
June 2022	London FA	Hackney Juniors	Online Regulatory Commission appeal	Appeal rejected
June 2022	Middlesex FA	Frank Dennis	Online Regulatory Commission appeal	Appeal upheld and case remitted to FA to consider Charge again
June 2022	FA	Ben Strevens, Manager	Online	Aggravated Discrimination charge rejected
July 2022	Essex FA	Max Mayo, player	Online Regulatory Commission Appeal	Player appeal rejected
August 2022	West Riding FA	Mount Pleasant Club	Online Regulatory Commission Appeal	Appeal upheld
August 2022	FA	Kenny Amor, Chairman of Eastleigh FC	Online	Fine and match suspension for betting irregularities
October 2022	FA	Gary Powell, Coach at Bristol City	Online	Fine for betting irregularities
November 2022	FA	Ross Doohan	Online	Anti-Doping cases

December 2022	FA	Mark Williams	Online	Intermediary activity involving a minor
December 2022	FA	Yannick Lufakaylo	Online	Intermediary activity involving a minor
January 2023	FA	Ashley Eastham	Online	Anti-Doping cases
February 2023	FA	Paul Heckingbottom, Manager	Online	Misconduct
April 2023	Kent FA	Craig Martin	Online Regulatory Commission Appeal	Misconduct
June 2023	London FA	Aaron Williams	Online Regulatory Commission Appeal	Misconduct
August 2023	FA	Tom Bradshaw	Online	Anti-Doping case
August 2023	FA	Matthew Mallon	Online	Anti-Doping case
September 2023	FA	Liam Castle	Online	Fine for betting irregularities
October 2023	FA	Dave Northfield	Online	Fine for betting irregularities
January 2024	FA	Jake Thompson	Online	Fine for betting irregularities
February 2024	FA	Brendan Galloway	Online	Anti-Doping case
February 2024	FA	Connor Pye	Online	Anti-Doping case
February 2024	FA	Jake Bloom	Online Regulatory Commission Appeal	Discrimination Misconduct
March 2024	FA	Nottingham Forrest	Online	Mass confrontation and referee abuse case
April 2024	FA	Vincent Kompany, Manager	Online	Referee abuse case
April 2024	Surrey FA	Nebojsa Djordjevic	Online Regulatory Commission Appeal	Misconduct
May 2024	Middlesex FA	Vijay Kumar	Online Regulatory Commission Appeal	Misconduct

August 2024	FA	Matthew Mallon	Online	Anti-Doping Case
August 2024	FA	Austen Booth	Online	Betting Case
September 2024	FA	Erol Batul	Online	Manager Misconduct
October 2024	FA	Liam Castle	Online	Betting Case

SRU Disciplinary Panel Appointments from the 2019/20 Season –Chair from September 2022

September 2019	Cumnock	Connor Hill	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
	Stirling County	Kieran Rix	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
	Orkney	Christopher Guthrie	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
	Stewart's Melville College	Dominic Gray	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
	Kirkcaldy	Craig Leatham	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
November 2019	Royal High	Andrew Hicks	Murrayfield	No ban
	Forrester FP	Paul Bogie	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
	Paisley	Neil Ritchie	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
	Cartha Queens Park	John McCartney	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
	Aberdeenshire	Tom Watson	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
	Montrose and District	Jamie Scoular	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
	Blairgowrie	Kevin McCormack	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
	Earlston	Steven Cessford	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
February 2020	Garioch	Calum Cuthbertson	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
	Grangemouth	Peter Brough	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
	GHK	Jared Ebowemen	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
	Peebles	Richard Harrison	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
	GHK	Toby Squires	Murrayfield	No ban
	Hawick Youth	David Murphy Clark	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
	Uddingston	Ruairidh Anderson	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
	Waysiders/ Drumpellier	Jonathan Weir	Murrayfield	Limited match ban

	Ross Sutherland	Ross MacLeod	Murrayfield	Limited match ban
September 2021	Hawick Youth	Justin Tait	Online	Limited match ban
	Inverleith	Ashley Thomson	Online	Limited match ban
	Dumfries	Craig Goldie	Online	Limited match ban
	Cumnock	Graeme Dick	Online	Limited match ban
	Corstorphine	Bastien Chavagneux	Online	Limited match ban
	Deeside/Garioch U18	Archie Johnston	Online	Limited match ban
	Hillfoots	John McMurdo	Online	Limited match ban
	Highland	Joshua Ryder	Online	Limited match ban
	Aberdeenshire	Steven Shrewsbury	Online	Limited match ban
	Inverness CD	Richard Jessiman	Online	Limited match ban
	Kelso	Terry Logan	Online	Limited match ban
	Annan WRFC	Nadine Barnes	Online	Limited match ban
	Glenrothes	Scott Morrison	Online	Limited match ban
	Glasgow Academicals	John Wiggins	Online	Limited match ban
	GHK	Craig Gossman	Online	Limited match ban
	Paisley	Kyle Stevenson	Online	Limited match ban
	Clydesdale	John Brown	Online	Limited match ban
	West of Scotland	Rachel Morrison	Online	Limited match ban
	Currie	Jacob Ramsay	Online	Limited match ban
	Deeside	Jack Marshall	Online	Limited match ban
	Grangemouth	Keni Dakuidreketi	Online	Limited match ban
	Aberdeen Grammar	Matthias Schosser	Online	Limited match ban

December 2021	Trinity Rugby Club	Freddie Ballantyne	Online	Personal Hearing on racial abuse and game abandonment - sanction endorsed
	Ayr/Wellington U18	Jamie Steele	Online	Limited match ban
	Dollar Academy	Luke Foreshaw	Online	Limited match ban
	Highland	David Marnock	Online	Limited match ban
	Stobswell	Derek Mawhinney	Online	Limited match ban
	Deeside	Ryan Strachan	Online	Red card deemed sufficient
January 2022	Seven disciplinary cases held across a variety of clubs		Online	Variety of outcomes including match bans and education sanctions
March 2022	Eight disciplinary cases held across a variety of clubs		Online	Variety of outcomes including match bans
April 2022	Nine disciplinary cases held across a variety of clubs		Online	Variety of outcomes including match bans
September 2022	Seven disciplinary cases held across variety of clubs		Online	Variety of outcomes including match bans
Continuing Hearings				