

# **UWW DISCIPLINARY CHAMBER**

## **DECISION**

**Case:**

**United World Wrestling (UWW)**

**v.**

**Mr Karol Lebkowski (Referee)**

**Sole Member:**

Mr Beltcho Goranov

Prosecutor: UWW General Secretary

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### **I. Introduction**

1. This is the final Decision of the UWW Disciplinary Chamber in the case between United World Wrestling (“UWW”) and Mr Karol Lebkowski (the “defendant”) relating to a violation arising from the Disciplinary Procedure & Dispute Resolution Regulations (“Disciplinary Regulations”) and other relevant UWW rules.
2. United World Wrestling is the governing body for the sport of Wrestling. It is based in Corsier-sur-Vevey, Switzerland.
3. Mr Karol Lebkowski is an international UWW referee in the IS category. He holds the international referee licence number 3359 and is regularly appointed to officiate as such in official competitions on the UWW calendar.
4. In this capacity, he is subject to the jurisdiction of UWW and bound to comply with all Regulations, rules and directives.

### **II. Facts**

5. On the occasion of the 2023 Senior World Championship in Belgrade, Mr Lebkowski was assigned as a Mat Chairman for the Gold medal match # 1115 in GR 87 kg.
6. During this bout, several serious refereeing mistakes were made and were deemed to have caused an incorrect outcome of the match.

7. After this match, a review of the refereeing decision was carried out by the Refereeing Delegates due to a complaint lodged by the national federation of the affected wrestler.
8. A panel formed by the UWW Bureau and composed of four members of the Bureau reviewed all the elements of this case, including the video of the match, the complaint, the Refereeing Delegates' match report as well as your written explanations (provided by the Refereeing Delegate), and concluded to your involvement in these serious refereeing mistake, in particular for not confirming a fall.
9. Given these facts, disciplinary proceedings were initiated. Mr Lebkowski was notified on 10 October 2023 and was given fifteen days to provide his statement of defense. On 18 October, he sent his statement, including one video of a referee training on "fall" actions, four videos of this action in other matches and the video of the match at stake.
10. In substance, Mr Lebkowski thanked the disciplinary chamber for the opportunity to provide his opinion and upheld his position that the fall could not be declared his this match.
11. All the elements of the case were forwarded on 27 October 2023 to the sole panel member for a decision.

### **III. Applicable rules**

12. These proceedings are conducted in application of the UWW Regulations, rules and directives. This decision is rendered by the Chairman of the Disciplinary Chamber acting as the sole judge in this case, pursuant to article 17 of the Disciplinary and Dispute Resolution Regulations and taking into consideration all elements submitted in this case to review the matter.
13. Article 9 letter d of the *Regulations for the International Refereeing Body* provide:

#### *Article 9 - Duties*

*When working as such, international referees do not represent their country, but the United World Wrestling. In addition to his duties and being the subject of the provisions applicable to the function of referee as defined in the Rules, the international referee must:*

*[...]*

*d. carry out the tasks which he is given in the pure spirit of justice and impartiality, and demand the integral compliance with the International Rules*

14. Article 16 of the International Wrestling Rules provide:

#### *Article 16 – General Duties*

*Officials shall perform all the duties set forth in the Regulations governing wrestling competitions and in any special provisions which might be established for the organization of particular competitions. It is the duty of officials to follow each bout very carefully and to evaluate the actions of the wrestlers so that the results shown on the judge's and mat chairman's score sheet accurately reflect the specific nature of said bout. [...]*

15. Article 8.2 of the *Disciplinary Procedure & Dispute Resolution Regulations* provide:

*8.2. Specific violations and sanctions*

[...]

*b) Partiality*

*Any referee found guilty of partiality or injustice shall be subject to suspension or exclusion for life from the list of international referees.*

16. Article 10 (“Sanctionable Infringements”) of the *Disciplinary and Dispute Resolution Regulations* provide the following:

*“Unless otherwise specified, sanctions are applicable regardless of whether infringements have been committed intentionally or negligently”.*

17. Article 13 (“Determination of the sanction”) of the *Disciplinary and Dispute Resolution Regulations* provides the following:

*“The disciplinary body shall determine the type and duration of the sanction based on the seriousness of such infringement and the degree of fault. The disciplinary body may take into consideration aggravating and mitigating circumstances”.*

#### **IV. Discussion**

18. This sole member of the panel considers to be sufficiently informed about this matter. All facts pertaining to the contested decision and the analysis by the experts in the this field have been thoroughly considered and the defendant was offered the opportunity to present his case.
19. From the analysis of the sequences of decisions by two different panels (refereeing delegates and Bureau panel) which conclude to the defendant’s mistake, plus the evaluation of the actions by the mat referee, this sole member considers that there is clear case of serious refereeing mistake that warrant a sanction. While having taken in account the defendant’s explanations and examples, the opinion expressed by these panels are explicit as to the occurrence of a fall that should have been judged as such. This caused an indisputable injustice being suffered by the wrestler from Hungary who should have been declared the winner of the bout. The conditions of article 8.2 letter b are therefore met.
20. In the determination of the sanction, this sole member must consider the degree of fault of the defendant, the seriousness of the fault as well as all circumstances of the situation. While it has been acknowledged that a considerable number of matches took place during this championship and that the bout at stake took place in the last days of the championship, the refereeing delegates made accommodations to the referees’ schedule to allow more periods of rest. The experience of Mr Lebkowski must also be taken into consideration, i.e. an active referee since 1994 and a “1S” category referee. As to the seriousness of the fault, this mistake caused the gold medal and the title of world champion to the athlete, with all resulting impacts on points, awards and prizes.
21. In light of these above, a 12-months suspension of activity as international referee in UWW events is to be imposed on Mr Lebkowski, starting from the day of the infringement (24 September 2023).

## **V. Decision**

Considering the above, pursuant to the UWW Regulations and rules as described here above, the Disciplinary Chamber rules that:

- I. Mr Karol Lebkowski committed a violation of the Dispute Resolution & Disciplinary Procedure Regulations, namely article 8.2, letter b.
- II. Mr Karol Lebkowski is sanctioned with a period of suspension of 12 months from his activity as international referee. During this period, he is not allowed to officiate in any of the events on the UWW calendar.
- III. The period of ineligibility shall commence from 24 September 2023 until 23 September 2024 included.

## **VI. Right to Appeal**

The conditions to appeal against this decision are described in the Disciplinary and Dispute Resolution Regulations.

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To be notified to the defendant through the concerned national federation.



**Beltcho Goranov**  
Sole Member  
Chairman of the UWW Disciplinary Chamber

Sofia, November 15, 2023