



MEDIA RELEASE

PNGNRLC Statement on Digicel ExxonMobil Cup Fixture at Minj

Port Moresby, 21st July 2026: The Papua New Guinea National Rugby League Competition has confirmed the outcome of its investigation into the Digicel ExxonMobil Cup Round 14 fixture between Asila Waghi Tumbe and PRK Mendi Muruks, played at Minj on Saturday, 18 July 2026.

The match was ended approximately three minutes before full time after a section of the crowd threw various objects onto the field that resulted in the playing field being unsuitable to have the remainder of the match played.

The review was conducted in accordance with the PNGNRLC Code of Conduct and PNGNRLC Competition Policies. It focused on the sequence of events leading to the early termination of the match, the safety of participants and officials, spectator behaviour, the conduct of match and club officials, and the obligations of hosting clubs to uphold the integrity and reputation of the competition.

PNGNRLC found that the decision made to end the game with three minutes remaining was the correct one.

Chief Operating Officer Tony Archer said:

"The safety of players, officials, staff and spectators must always come first. This type of behaviour is unacceptable and deeply disappointing, particularly because it overshadows the quality of football being played and the improvement we are seeing across the competition. The actions of a few should not be seen as a reflection of the sport, the clubs or the many supporters who attend matches in the right spirit. We also commend the players from both clubs for the way they conducted themselves during this incident. The decision to end the match early was appropriate in the circumstances, and the PNGNRLC will continue to take firm action where conduct compromises the integrity of the competition."

Following consideration of the investigation, the decision has been made to:

1. Declare that PRK Mendi Muruks are the winners of the match.
2. Issue Asila Waghi Tumbe with a breach notice and a fine of **K20,000** for failing to provide adequate security as the hosting club.
3. Suspend and relocate all National Competition matches scheduled at **John Ambane Oval, Minj**, for the remainder of the 2026 season.

APPROVED FOR RELEASE

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