

Ismail's tantrum costs him \$10,000

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By Marg Ommanney
of The StarPhoenix

CFL commissioner Larry Smith says it's time coaches and clubs took responsibility for the action of their players.

In two separate incidents last Sunday — one involving the Toronto Argos and Calgary Stampeders, the other between the Saskatchewan Roughriders and Winnipeg Blue Bombers — nasty skirmishes broke out and players were ejected by the officials.

In the ugliest incident, Toronto wide receiver Raghil (Rocket) Ismail twice kicked Calgary fullback Andy McVey, tried to jump on McVey's head, but missed, and appeared to brush an official as he stormed off the field.

Smith, in a telephone interview from Vancouver, said he thought long and hard about the incident involving Ismail.

Smith proposed a penalty of a one-game suspension and \$1,000 fine for Ismail, or a charitable donation of \$10,000. Ismail chose to donate \$10,000 to the Special Olympics chapter in Ontario.

Smith said Ismail has not been assessed a single penalty since he came into the CFL last season and the referees think he's "a hell of a model citizen."

Smith says Ismail supports a youth hostel in his home town. He also supports his family. With the exception of the last game, Rocket's slate is apparently lily-white.

"I looked at the Bruce Holmes and the James Curry scenarios, and they

And it's a fine time for Riders, too

The CFL game tapes may not be clear, but four Saskatchewan Roughriders got the picture.

Commissioner Larry Smith said he reviewed tapes of a skirmish involving the Riders and Winnipeg Blue Bombers in game last Sunday, but found the tapes inconclusive. However, The Star-Phoenix has learned that four Riders have been fined a total of \$1,900.

Saskatchewan quarterback Kent Austin was fined \$600, linebacker Tyrone Jones \$500, Craig Hendrickson \$400, and Charles Anthony \$400.

The Winnipeg club was fined \$1,000 and reports indicate the three Blue Bombers who were ejected from the game have also been fined.

In addition, each club was fined \$1,000.

The letter to the four Riders from Smith read:

were bad apples. They were bums. And they're the only two suspensions the league has had in 21 years. The most severe fine was Curry's, at \$2,500," Smith said.

"It's one of those cases where in the constitution and collective agreement, I do not have any more power than to fine a guy one-half of his salary (for a game) or suspend him, but they've never accepted both."

Smith says he wanted to set an exam-

During the fourth quarter . . . you were involved in an altercation which resulted in penalties and disqualifications to four members of your club and three players of the Winnipeg club.

The entire incident was unprofessional in every respect and it must be clearly understood that behavior of this nature will not be tolerated.

This office has reviewed available tapes and results of this debacle and this letter will serve as notice that you are hereby assessed a fine in the amount of . . .

The players have been told their fines must be paid by 12 noon Sept. 25 or they will not be allowed to participate in the Sept. 26 game against Toronto.

At least one Rider will appeal the fine.

— OMMANNEY

ple; to send a message loud and clear across the league.

"I don't care if you're earning \$100,000 or \$10,000 or \$1 million, if you have to pay \$10,000, that's a lot of money. At least it is to me. It's the highest fine in the history of our league.

"When you compare that to guys getting fined \$100 or \$200, even if they're earning \$60,000, it's peanuts.

"This is peanuts to him (Ismail), but it's a huge fine and it's a huge message

to everybody else in the league that if they screw around and they're earning \$50,000, I may fine them \$2,000."

Smith also handed down four other fines stemming from the Toronto melee.

McVey was fined \$250, Toronto head coach Adam Rita \$500, Argo receiver David Williams \$250, Toronto safety Dave Van Belleghem \$350 and injured Argo receiver Darrell Smith \$500.

Darrell Smith was involved in the incident as he watched from the sidelines in street clothes.

Commissioner Smith said he reviewed tapes of the Saskatchewan-Winnipeg game, but found them inconclusive. In that game, seven players were ejected by officials after a brawl.

On Thursday, Smith fined Winnipeg and Saskatchewan \$1,000 each.

"The thing that irritated me most was the fact that there was a complete loss of control by the teams," Smith said of the weekend incidents. "In my mind, the coaches have to bear a certain responsibility. I'm sick and tired of hearing people complain about officials.

"When my kids get into trouble, I don't blame the teachers at school like some people do. I blame myself for being a poor father. And a coach is responsible for his players. I don't want to hear anybody throw the crap at me or anyone else that the officials are responsible for the players' actions. I've never heard such ludicrous behavior . . . it's about time we put the responsibility where it really belongs. After all, who takes responsibility for his troops, the General or the Corporal?"