



KIRPAN POLICY

Wearing of the kirpan within the Cledara Abbey Stadium

Background

The kirpan is a symbolic dagger worn as a religious symbol by members of the Sikh community. It is especially important to those who have been through an initiation process known as 'Amritdhari' where they are obliged to wear the 'five Ks' or 'articles of faith' – one of these being the kirpan.

Whilst non-Amritdhari Sikhs may be comfortable wearing symbolic versions of the kirpan such as a miniature version on a necklace or to have it etched into their kanga (wooden comb), those that are Amritdhari are obliged and should be allowed to express their religious beliefs freely and wear kirpan as ordained by the Khalsa.

The kirpan is not classified as an offensive weapon under the Offensive Weapons Act and it is an offence under the Racial Discrimination Act to deny an Amritdhari Sikh the right to wear the kirpan publicly.

Policy statement

Cambridge United Football Club firmly believe that people should have the right to demonstrate their religious beliefs and that the club's role in the community should be used positively to encourage social inclusion whenever it is safe and practical to allow this to happen. The policy is in conjunction with the Club and the EFL's wider commitment to Inclusion across Football and to supporting underrepresented communities to access the Sport.

Therefore, Sikhs who have demonstrated their commitment to the faith by taking Amritdhari will be welcomed at the Cledara Abbey Stadium.

However, as the kirpan is a symbolic dagger, Cambridge United Football Club has a 'duty of care' to everyone who comes to the Cledara Abbey Stadium. Therefore, the club has worked with the various groups to come up with a policy which respects the rights of Amritdhari Sikhs but also respects the rights of others and the clubs' regulatory obligations regarding safety.

Process for entering the Cledara Abbey Stadium wearing a kirpan:

- The blade length can be up to 4 inches and the full length with the sheath should not exceed 6 inches, but smaller kirpans are preferable.
- People wishing to wear a kirpan will be allowed to do so within the Cledara Abbey Stadium upon production of a 'validation letter' from the club. This should be shown to Stewards upon request when entering the ground. The purpose of this is to ensure people have smooth entry to the Cledara Abbey Stadium by removing the potential for embarrassment or Steward's acting incorrectly at the turnstiles.
- To obtain a 'validation letter' people should visit the Ticket Office, the Cledara Abbey Stadium, Newmarket Road, Cambridge, CB5 8LN.
- Individuals wishing to wear their kirpan within the stadium will also need to sign a disclaimer which waives the individual's right to make any claims against the club, its servants or agents and Directors should anything happen because of them wearing the kirpan.



- The kirpan must be sheathed and restrained in accordance with religious requirements.
- The kirpan must be concealed and not immediately obvious (by shape, size, or visibility) at any time during the individual's time at the Cledara Abbey Stadium.
- If the kirpan is ever drawn or made visible, then the individual will be asked to leave, and a decision will be made regarding a stadium ban.

Should there be any questions regarding this policy document please e-mail. andyp@cambridgeunited.com