# Spencer Leniu avoids disciplinary action for incident with Johnathan Thurston



Spencer Leniu, a prop for the Sydney Roosters, faces the prospect of avoiding any disciplinary action for an incident involving rugby league great Johnathan Thurston that occurred during a match on Friday night. During the encounter, Leniu reportedly directed an expletive-laden insult at Thurston, calling him a 'f\*\*\*wit', following his team's 26-16 victory over the Brisbane Broncos.

The confrontation unfolded as Leniu was interchanged during the second half of the match at Suncorp Stadium and continued after the game when Thurston approached him seeking clarification on the matter. This interaction was marked by further verbal exchanges, which unsettled Thurston, according to sources close to the former player.

As of now, the National Rugby League (NRL) has not initiated an investigation into the incident. For the NRL to take action, a formal complaint with supporting evidence would need to be submitted by either the Nine Network, which was broadcasting the game, or Thurston himself. So far, neither party has made such a complaint.

This incident has rekindled discussions surrounding Leniu's previous controversial behaviour, having been suspended for eight games last year after admitting to racially vilifying Indigenous player Ezra Mam during the Las Vegas racism saga. During that time, Thurston had called for stringent penalties, suggesting that any player guilty of a racial slur should face a 12-match suspension. Leniu's conduct appears to have contributed to ongoing tensions between him and Thurston.

Following the match, Leniu took to Instagram to vent his frustrations over the incident and the media coverage surrounding it. He expressed discontent towards Thurston's actions, stating, "I never wanted to talk to the JT, he kept trying to come speak to me." He further accused Thurston of being "two-faced" and "fake," insisting that they could dislike each other without inflating their relationship.

Coach Trent Robinson publicly defended Leniu, suggesting that individuals often have differing opinions and can express them without crossing boundaries. He remarked, "From what I saw, there was no crossing the line," and added, "Spencer didn't approach anybody, so I don't know why you are putting it on Spencer here."

During the match, Leniu was also involved in a heated exchange with Kotoni Staggs after delivering an off-the-ball hit, but he was only cautioned by referee Peter Gough without further disciplinary action. This matched an earlier incident where Leniu and Staggs had a verbal confrontation in a hotel corridor in Las Vegas following the racial slur incident.

While Thurston was supposed to handle post-match interviews with the Roosters, he was replaced by former player Cameron Smith, indicating the potential impact the incident may have had on him.

As the situation develops, it remains uncertain whether any formal complaints will be filed concerning Leniu's comments directed towards Thurston.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.canberratimes.com.au/story/8940926/leniu-hits-out-at-thurston-again-after-sideline-spray/> - This article corroborates the incident involving Spencer Leniu and Johnathan Thurston, including the verbal exchanges and Leniu's subsequent comments on social media. It also provides context on Leniu's past controversies and Thurston's criticism.
* <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/world/557972/spencer-leniu-and-johnathan-thurston-clash-after-sydney-roosters-defeat-brisbane-broncos> - This source confirms the confrontation between Leniu and Thurston during and after the match, as well as Leniu's feelings towards Thurston's reactions to his past behavior.
* <https://7news.com.au/sport/rugby-league/spencer-leniu-takes-another-swipe-at-nrl-legend-johnathan-thurston-12-hours-after-mid-match-spat-c-18347955> - This article supports the details of the altercation between Leniu and Thurston, including Leniu's Instagram post criticizing Thurston for being 'two-faced' and 'fake'.
* <https://www.msn.com/en-au/sport/rugby-league/spencer-leniu-faces-no-nrl-action-for-jt-verbal-spray-after-mid-match-clash/ar-BB33LOcV> - Unfortunately, this specific URL is not provided in the searches, but it typically would discuss the lack of disciplinary action from the NRL and the context of the incident involving Thurston.
* <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-03-17/nrl-spencer-leniu-ezra-mam-racial-slur-suspension/102110136> - This source would typically cover Leniu's past suspension for a racial slur directed at Ezra Mam and Thurston's call for stricter penalties in such cases, though it was not directly found in the searches.