

Sport rage incidents – what officials should do

Despite your best intentions, sport rage incidents may still occur. There are two scenarios for officials:

1 On-field sport rage

Managing sport rage incidents on-field is covered in the rules and regulations of your sport. As the official you are responsible for enforcing these rules and should act swiftly when incidents occur.

2 Off-field sport rage

While it is the club committee's responsibility to deal with incidents off the field, as an official you should understand and support the process. When an incident occurs you should:

- ✓ Report it to the ground official or club committee member
- ✓ Stay calm and collected
- ✓ Suspend play in serious situations.

It is the responsibility of the ground official or club committee member to approach offenders and take action.

When confronted with sport rage, on-field or off-field, it's important you don't:

- ✗ Ignore it and allow situations to get out of hand
- ✗ Lose control of your emotions and composure
- ✗ Engage in aggressive behaviour.



Kids' comments

For officials, it's a good idea to reflect on what children really want from sport. Here are some typical comments:

'I don't mind if I don't win every time I play – in every game someone has to lose.'

'My dad is great – he just watched.'

'We don't have a scoreboard, but we do have the best meat pies.'

'I don't play anymore because mum used to yell too much. I got sick of it.'

'I don't really care who wins as long as I have fun... although it's good to win at least once.'

'When spectators yell at the referees it's like that person has wrecked the game for everyone.'

'I feel good when we score a goal, I guess the other team must feel the same when they score.'

Taken from the Central Coast Sport Rage seminar, 2003 and Kids Sport – A Very Real Guide for Grown Ups, Denis Baker

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www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/sportrage



Stamp out Sport rage

Tips for Officials



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Let's stamp out sport rage

Sport rage is any violence, foul language, harassment, abuse or bad behaviour by players, coaches, officials or spectators of sport.

Simply put, sport rage is bad for sport. At its worst, sport rage risks safety, reduces enjoyment, tarnishes clubs and can lead to drop out.

Sport can do without sport rage. Play your part – stamp out ugly sporting behaviour.

What officials can do

Officials can help create a positive sporting environment and reduce sport rage by being good role models. To do this:

✓ Encourage fair play

- Always be fair, impartial and consistent
- Encourage and praise good sporting behaviour.

✓ Communicate well

- Communicate honestly, generously and fairly
- Express decisions clearly
- Keep your emotions in check and maintain composure.

✓ Uphold your club/association's code of conduct

- Understand, uphold and support your club/association's code of conduct for officials.

✓ Keep up to date and organised

- Know the rules and understand the spirit of the game
- Be conscientious and punctual.

For officials of junior sport, it's also important to:

- Emphasise trying hard and having fun, not only winning
- Place the safety and welfare of kids above all else.

www.playbytherules.net.au is a great place to learn more about fair play in sport.



Self test: Which official are you?

The majority of officials do a great job of creating a safe and enjoyable sporting environment for everyone. But others could be creating tension which contributes to sport rage. Which official are you?

The Party Pooper ruins the fun for all the players. They pick up all the mistakes in a negative way, making players feel they can't get anything right. The Party Pooper needs to keep some fun in the game.

The Weekend Warrior takes the power of the whistle to the extreme. They demand respect from the players without showing any respect. The Weekend Warrior needs to understand players want to have fun too and the game is not about them.

The Grudge does not officiate fairly, showing bias to one team or player. The Grudge should understand players, coaches and spectators will respect an official who upholds the rules without favouritism.

The Out of Date has not stayed up to date with the rules. They confuse players, the spectators and themselves. The Out of Date needs to keep up to date.

The Blind Eye pretends not to see unfair play on the field. They allow sledging and verbal abuse as part of the game. The Blind Eye needs to learn how to prevent and deal with harassment and discrimination in sport.

The Five Star Official (you?) officiates the match to the skill level of the players. They are consistent and emphasise the spirit of the game, not the errors. The Five Star Official is courteous and encourages all players.