



Dealing with Sideline Abuse

Coach Misbehavior:

Referees are encouraged to use the "Ask-Tell-Remove" approach used in MLS.

1. First, 'ask' the coach to please stop the behavior.
2. Next 'tell' the coach his (her) behavior is no longer going to be tolerated.

Say, "Coach, your behavior is not acceptable. If you don't stop (*fill in the blank*), I'm going to be forced to take further action. The decision is yours."

Always tell them, "The decision is yours." This puts the sole responsibility on the coach to manage his behavior.

3. The final step is an ejection.

Say, "Coach, your behavior leaves me no choice. You need to leave. The game will restart after you have left the field." If the coach refuses to leave, terminate the game.

If the coach tells you that when he leaves there will be no coach, say, "I'm sure one of the parents will volunteer. If none of them volunteer, we'll have to terminate the game."

Parent/Spectator Misbehavior:

Dealing with abuse from parents is tough. Technically, you can't dismiss parents. Work through the coach.

Go to the coach and say, "Coach, you have responsibility for the conduct of your parents. We are at the point where I feel they're impacting our ability to referee this game and they're affecting the players on the field. If no one deals with it, we will have to terminate the game."

Stop the game until the coach deals with the parents. Tell the coach, "I'll give you a couple minutes to go over and tell the parents to stop... (*abusing the referee, berating opponents, etc.*)."

Knowing that if he doesn't deal with his team's parents the game can be terminated, the coach is forced to take action. While the game is stopped, as the coach walks all the way across the field, the focus is off the referee and on the coach and parents.

If the coach refuses to address the parents, or if the coach talks with the parents, but the abuse continues you have the authority to terminate the game.

Important Note - WASA U6 through U12 Rec Games

If you eject a coach or terminate a game, phone Henry Bell (614-890-0696) within 24 hours to report the specifics of the incident.