



Date: September 10, 2001

To: District Three League Coaching Coordinators

From: Louis Gagne, District Three Coaching Director

Cc: Izzy Loth, District Three Commissioner  
District Three League Presidents

Re: Acceptable and unacceptable behavior for all level of coaches (Class 4, 3 and 1)

The 2001-2002 season has just started and **again a disturbing and persistent trend** has already been identified, not only in our youth games – but in CSAN games as well. It is apparent, after reviewing Referee Game Reports, Referee Send Off Reports and from personal observations from several sources, that the number of verbal confrontations between Coaches and Referees is alarmingly high. Added to this, the number of players who are in verbal confrontations has grown again. This is unacceptable behavior and is contrary to the Codes of Conduct published in the CYSA 2001-2002 Team Manual that each Coach should be in receipt of.

#### ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

The stated goals for Coaches are many, and NONE address arguing with the Referees. Every one of these goals deals with the Coaches' responsibility to teach Youth Players about soccer using skill, reason, fitness and logic. Some specific goals request the coaches to:

- Inspire a love for the game and the desire to compete fairly.
- Realize that you are a teacher (and role model) and that the soccer field is a classroom.
- Develop respect for the ability of opponents, as well as for the judgement officials and opposing coaches.

Nowhere is a Coach asked to argue with a Referee for his / her team, parents or especially, to win a game.

#### UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

As a role model and teacher of youth Players, it is expected that all Coaches will refrain from exhibiting negative behavior by shouting and arguing with the Referees officiating their games. The CYSA Rules of Play (3:08:03) specifically prohibit this behavior and an offending Coach can be awarded a minimum of a three game suspension and a three game probation by the proper authorities.

It appears that many verbal confrontations revolve around Coaches and the referee's difference in opinions. Referees are trained to make calls based on FIFA Instruction of the Application of the Laws of the Game. FIFA and CYSA specifically recognize the decisions of the referee regarding facts connected with play are final.

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## COURSE OF ACTION

District Three is adopting a ZERO tolerance response toward any Coach confronting and verbally abusing a referee before, during or after a game. Coaches will be suspended per CYSA guidelines mentioned above.

The District has instituted a two step program to monitor behavior. The first immediate steps are instructions to Referees to record on the game card any warning to a Coach regarding unacceptable behavior. The District will work with local Club Coaching Staffs to counsel the offending Coach regarding the negative impact of unacceptable behavior on Youth Soccer. This phase will be accomplished, by the District Coaching Representative or his / her Club Coaching Representatives, attending random games to observe first hand. This action is also done, by the use of Referee Assessors and Referee Instructors, to observe the referees.

The second step of the plan is a training program currently under development. This special program will re-enforce the Goals for Coaches and how to implement them on the field. Other existing courses in the State Coaching Program or Referee Program may be required to be taken.

## RECOMENDATIONS TO COACHES

1. It is vital that all Coaches understand that they are the focal point for their team and their actions, both positive and negative. Coaches greatly influence the enjoyment of the Youth Players and Team Parents. As stated above, it has been noted that a Coaches' abusive language on the sidelines, spills onto the playing field and increases the chance of Youth Players being Cautioned or Sent Off for Dissent or worse – use of foul and abusive language. Section 4:08:02, of the CYSA Team Manual, assigns a minimum for a send off of one game for dissent or two games for the use of foul and abusive language. Section 4:08:06 adds two games, whatever the send off, if the offender is a Coach.
2. Please review the Goals for Coaches on page 68 of the CYSA 2001-2002 Team Manual. This is the criteria by which District Three will judge Coaches' acceptable versus unacceptable behavior. Note: Page 69 is for the Parents and Page 70 is for the Players as Coaches are held accountable for their actions as well.
3. Coaches should realize that just like the Youth Players, the Referees are part of the Game. A negative comment during a game to a Referee reduces the pleasure and heightens the tension for Officials, Players, Spectators and other Coaches. These comments accomplish nothing except to diminish the Good of the Game.
4. Understand the Laws of the Game and how they should be applied. The USSF web site, [www.us-soccer.com](http://www.us-soccer.com), or now the District Three Referee web site, [www.d3ra.com](http://www.d3ra.com), provides instructions to Referees on how the Laws of the Game are to apply during a game. (You will not get this valuable insight if you just read the rulebook.)
5. Learn the proper way to protest a Referees' actions on the Field. EVERY Club in District Three has a Referee Coordinator where you can register your comments regarding an individual Official. Below is a listing of all the Clubs Referee Coordinators.

District III Referee Coordinator: [referee@district3soccer.com](mailto:referee@district3soccer.com)

District III Referee website: <http://www.d3refs.com>

District III website: <http://www.district3soccer.com>

