

Sport Rage – a guide

Dealing with an incident

Despite best intentions, sport rage incidents sometimes occur.

Coaches, officials and other people in the club are often unsure of what they can do to intervene, so simply allow the bad behaviour to continue.

As an administrator, it is your responsibility to ensure that your club has a process for dealing with sport rage and that this process is communicated to members and relevant non-members.

Understanding the rights of people involved in sport, allocating tasks to key people and making sure that everyone is aware of their responsibilities on game day is the key to addressing sport rage situations.

Common scenarios - spectator threatens referee, parents abuse referee, player taunts opposition, parents chastise young player

What to do

As an administrator, it is important that when an incident occurs you understand exactly what to do and who is responsible for what.

Here are some of the steps that can be taken depending on the seriousness of the incident:

Reporting inappropriate behaviour - Responsibility of everyone

Behaviour that contravenes the codes of conduct should be reported to a club official. Any person who is unsure who a club official is should report the incident to a club committee member.

Approaching the offender - Responsibility of the club official / club committee

Only the club official should approach the offender - this prevents the situation escalating.

Issuing warnings - Responsibility of the club official / club committee

The first time a person breaches a code of conduct, they might be issued with a warning. The person might not be aware that their behaviour is unacceptable and should be notified of the club's rules regarding behaviour.

Taking disciplinary action - Responsibility of the club committee

If the conduct is repeated or of a serious nature the club committee should consider taking disciplinary action in accordance with its rules. This might result in counselling, suspension or expulsion.

Removing people from the field of play or venue - Responsibility of the club official / club committee.

The referee should communicate directly and immediately with the club official to remove a person from the venue. If the club is in a position to control venue entry, it will be able to evict persons from the building. Where attendance is not controlled, clubs can request offenders leave the venue, or otherwise can discipline the person for breach of the code.

Suspending play - Responsibility of the referee

The referee may suspend play and refuse to restart until appropriate action is taken

They may request that a person is removed from the building and, in serious cases, abandon the game altogether.

Involving the police - Responsibility of the club official / club committee If a person feels the behaviour of another constitutes a criminal act the police should be notified immediately by the club official.

Your first concern should always be your own safety and that of others with you. Never take the law in to your own hands or take unnecessary risks. Call the police. It is a Police job and they are trained to deal with trespassers and other criminals. Incidents can quickly get out of hand.

More Information can be found on the www.SPARC.org website using their search engine and using "sport rage" as the search criteria.