

Oregon Schools Activities Association

Soccer SRI Bulletin #3

2021-2022

We're now getting into the end of the pre-league season for many teams. You can expect that things will heat up once games are league contests, with more on the line for the players and coaches, as well as spectators.

If anyone on the roster uses offensive, insulting or abusive language in your hearing, they must be red carded. Even if it's a coach or sub and only you can hear it. Do NOT wait until half time or after the game to tell the referee. There's no excuse for that language on the field and it is up to you, as the representative of OSAA at the game, to deal with it. We have had a few referees who report giving a card for 'bad language.' Please, please, please report the exact words they used, as you best remember them. Others who read the game report, which may include the administration at the school, need that information to take any appropriate additional action.

There are too many referees reporting that 'the coach was complaining the whole game.' And they did not give the coach a card of either color. ????? You do not have to just take it. It doesn't matter whether they might possibly be right about their complaint. Even if you made the worst decision of your entire refereeing career, but there's nothing you can now do about it because the game has restarted, they still don't get to complain loudly enough that you or your crew can hear it. If you hear it, deal with it. That might be a warning like, "Coach, I've heard enough." I've even said "Sir, I'm not on your team. You don't get to coach me." It might be a card the first time, depending on the circumstances.

We have had (only) a few card fests so far this year. Probably fewer than we normally have by this time in the season and that's a good thing. You may find that you are in the middle of the game and the number of cards you've given are getting up there. Take just a second to consider: Am I calling the game tight enough? Do I need to make giving the card more of a big deal? Giving a card is supposed to change the player or coach's behavior. If the players don't change their behavior, make a bigger deal out of the next one. Don't just flash a yellow card and wait for them to leave the field. Verbalize to them the reason for the card. Walk or slow jog to the benches to inform the coaches of the official (rule 12) reason for the card. Do a formal version of the substitution process for the carded player. Walk or jog back to where you issued the card. Pause and record the card. Move into position for where the kick is probably going to land and only then whistle for the restart. After all, the clock is stopped! Take your time. You are in control, not the players.

Last night, I had a game where there was an injury stoppage with four seconds left on the clock. We had to deal with it as if there was a lot of time left, if nothing else to impress on the players and coaches that we were dealing with the foul and the injury, not just letting it go.

When there is an injury, check on the player by going to them. Stop the clock if they may not be ready to continue playing. Call on the coach/trainer and then move away! Don't stand over them. There is nothing you can do or should do to the player, so get away. This is an excellent opportunity to talk to your dual partner or AR2. It would be seen better by the players, coaches and spectators if, while talking to them, you aren't laughing or smiling. If nothing else, it takes you out of the line of fire if someone wants to "comment" about the foul or your decisions in the game so far. Don't tempt the staff to do or say something that will get them a card.

It will also make it so much easier if the coach walks past their injured player and continues towards you. Everybody in the place knows that they are now going to engage in dissent. It makes the card so much easier to give because they just can't argue about it. If they haven't reached you yet, but they are past the injured player, you might, loudly, ask them to take care of their injured player. That makes them the bad person because it emphasizes that they would rather argue than help their player.

Just one more thing: If you have a problem with the performance of a fellow official, please do not put that in your game report. Your game report is about what the other participants did. Your comments should be communicated directly to your commissioner by phone or in an e-mail.

Patrick Duffy
Soccer State Rules Interpreter