

Oregon School Activities Association

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We are cruising into the final week of regular season play. That means that some games this week are rivalry games, in leagues that deliberately schedule their games that way. Some games may also be critical in determining whether either, neither or both teams make the playoffs this year. And, for seniors on a team that will not make the playoffs, this game may be their final soccer game. We have to be on the top of our game this week, because emotions may be very high for the players, coaches and spectators.

Occasionally, you will encounter a senior on a team not going to the playoffs, who decides that they want to end their high school career with a red card. They will do whatever it takes to get that red card, primarily late in the game. I hope that the way they plan to get that red card is just for offensive, insulting or abusive language, and not violent conduct or serious foul play. We can not prevent players from doing this. We do have to give the red card. Don't give a caution when it should be an ejection. If you do that, they will escalate until you have no choice.

If spectators are harassing the officials about decisions on the field, you will have to use your best judgment about dealing with it. The underlying standard is that the schools and OSAA do not want that kind of behavior. The game manager is the one responsible for dealing with the spectators. Referees have no power to eject any or all spectators. Sometimes, however, the game manager may not hear what's being said. Typically, it's AR2 (or R2) who hears everything the spectators are saying. If they are out of line, the referee should be informed, so they can stop play. The referee then informs the game manager and gives them a chance to deal with it, before restarting the game. It will help the game manager deal with it if the game is not restarted before the game manager has a chance to deal with it. That sends the message to the spectators that their behavior is interfering with the game.

Given the emotions surrounding some of these games, the referee should make a decision, perhaps at halftime, about whether the crew should exit immediately or not at the end of the game. Do not tempt losing players and/or coaches to come give you their opinion of the job you did. Yes, there may be exceptions, when they are coming to thank you for being there or even tell you that you did a good job. Unfortunately, those are not typical. Coaches who come to tell you how wrong you were should receive a caution for dissent or an ejection if they use offensive, insulting or abusive language, which includes taunting you. Threats, like "I'm going to report you to your boss" are also unacceptable. You can give cards after the game until you leave the field "and its immediate surroundings." 5.1.2

Very occasionally, you will find a team not in the proper uniform. E.g. maybe the home team is wearing white socks. Please work with the head coach to get them properly and legally equipped before the game starts. At this point in the season, this is just gamesmanship. You don't even need to give a card at this point. Just don't start the game. We are close to the playoffs and that is the point in the season when pictures show up on line and in the local newspaper. You will embarrass yourself, your association and OSAA if those pictures show illegally or improperly equipped players. This also extends to the use of balls that are not Wilson.

Be safe out there.

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OSAA State Soccer Rules Interpreter