



Nepean District Soccer Football Association Inc

FIELD INVASION

Dear Club Committee Members,

The association has received a number of requests seeking direction on how to deal with this particular subject matter.

Whilst section 11 of the NDSFA by-laws covers penalties for individuals, teams and spectators, the document is not designed to offer advice on how to manage a situation of this type as it simply deals with the consequences of an incident.

These are the key points to consider:

1. The referee is responsible for controlling the game. There is no difference in status between an official and a mutually appointed, or club referee.
2. Entering the field of play without the referee's permission constitutes field invasion.
3. It is recognized that there are exceptional circumstances; the referee may be unconscious; the referee may be the subject of an assault by a player and there are a myriad of other reasons for the referee not to appear to be in control.
4. If persons enter the field of play in exceptional circumstances they may or may not be sanctioned for their actions. There is no hard and fast rule as there will be different circumstances on each occasion.
5. Other persons in the vicinity of the playing area may interpret your good intentions in a completely different manner.
6. Teams, team captains, coaches, managers, club officials do not have the right to abandon a game. The decision is the sole responsibility of the referee. This applies to competition and trial games.
7. Persons on the touchline have the right to attempt to attract the referee's attention to draw attention to an incident or incidents and may suggest a course of action, but should be aware that their behaviour may be interpreted as trying to unreasonably influence the outcome of a game.
8. If a club official, coach or manager believes that a situation or incident is so serious that the team should not be on the field, they do have the right to withdraw a team from the game. All persons are reminded that a decision to remove a team from the field of play will be viewed negatively by a board of inquiry or DC, unless irrefutable evidence is produced to show there has been a flagrant disregard for the rules of the game by either of the participating teams, spectators, or the match official. The match will initially be recorded as a forfeit, and other penalties may follow.

In summary; Field invasion is not good practice and even with the best of intentions, actions are likely to be misinterpreted. Allow the referee to control the game and deal with incidents. If you are concerned about the referee's performance, submit an incident report to either the NDSRA or NDSFA. If you genuinely believe a situation is out of control withdraw the team from the field and be prepared to justify your actions, whilst bearing in mind that the situation may be seen quite differently by others watching the same game.

Yours in sport
NDSFA Management Committee
12th April 2011