

In the past years, Region 42 has witnessed incidents where coaches and/or spectators questioned the calls of referees requiring referees to stop matches to deal with the situation. We even had an incident where a youth referee was verbally abused. These incidents prompt me to remind everyone that Region 42 has a long standing, zero tolerance policy prohibiting such behavior.

Our zero tolerance policy will be enforced as follows:

1. If a coach or spectator questions the call of a referee, the center referee will stop the match, retrieve the game ball, and invite the coach onto the field for a conversation.
2. During this conversation the coach will be told 3 things:
 - a. The purpose of the conversation is not to debate a call but to inform the coach that the behavior of the coach/spectator is unacceptable.
 - b. The coach has 2 choices. He/she can go back to their coaching area and coach per AYSO philosophies or the coach/spectator can leave the playing facility.
 - c. The coach/spectator will be sent off if the referee has to speak to them again during the match.
3. Any coach/spectator that is sent off during a match will not be allowed to coach or watch the team's next scheduled match.
4. If the center referee is a youth referee, the youth referee should stop the match, retrieve the game ball, and find a board member to deal with the situation as described above.
5. Any coach/spectator who is heard verbally abusing a referee will automatically be sent off by the center referee (if an adult) or a board member (in the case of a youth referee). Verbal abuse includes foul and abusive language and comments with racial or sexual overtones.

Soccer is a fast and exciting game. Matches are more enjoyable when their flow is uninterrupted. When a referee has to stop a match to deal with a disruptive coach or spectator, the flow of the match is broken, and the match is less enjoyable for players, coaches and spectators. Soccer is unique in that the Laws of the Game do not provide for debating a referee's calls. A foul is not a foul and misconduct is not misconduct unless, ***in the opinion of the referee***, a player commits an action that violates the Laws or Spirit of the game. Let's preserve this great game and keep it fun, fair and safe for our kids.