

Policy on Dealing with the Abuse of Match Officials or Players

1. Dorking RFC subscribes to the RFU code of conduct on abuse of match officials (shown as an appendix to this document) and will not tolerate abuse of match officials by Dorking members, or opposition parents or coaches.
2. Equally Dorking RFC will not tolerate inappropriate supporter behaviour. It is understandable that parents and supporters want their team to perform well and to win, and will shout encouragement. However encouraging players to break the laws or the spirit of the game by shouting from the touchline will not be tolerated. Overly aggressive supporting of a team from the touchline is easily misinterpreted by youth and mini players, and can lead to violence on the pitch as children are whipped up into a frenzy.
3. Should such behaviour be observed on the touchline, the lead Dorking coach should ask for the game to be temporarily stopped (or if he is refereeing he should stop the game) and discuss the matter with either the Dorking supporters, if that is where the problem lies, or the opposition coach, with the objective of calming down parents and supporters, and if necessary asking for the offending supporters to be removed from the touchline.
4. If the behaviour does not cease, and a Dorking official is refereeing the match, he is within his rights to abandon the game. If a Dorking official does not have control of the game (e.g. it is either a society referee or an opposition official refereeing), the Dorking lead coach should make representations to the opposition lead coach to try and amend the behaviour.
5. If despite the best efforts of the Dorking coaches the behaviour continues until the end of the match, the Dorking lead coach should adopt the following procedure:
 - 5.1. If the behaviour is from a Dorking parent, coach or supporter, the lead coach should discuss the matter with him/her and make it clear that such behaviour is not acceptable, and if repeated will lead to a touchline ban. If the supporter refuses to believe there is a problem, or repeats the behaviour, the matter should be referred to the club's Child Protection Officer, Phil Dalton, who will investigate the matter, and if necessary refer the matter to the mini or youth Chairman. Continuing and persistent poor behaviour can ultimately result in a touchline ban, or the member being barred from the club.
 - 5.2. If the behaviour is from an opposition team the lead coach should firstly discuss the matter with his opposite number after the match (and when tempers have cooled) and make his concerns known. If he feels that the matter is not receiving proper attention by the club in question, or the incident was of such a serious nature, he should refer the matter to the club's Child Protection Officer, Phil Dalton, who will investigate the matter and if appropriate, raise the subject with either the mini or youth chairman who in turn will raise the matter with their opposite number at the club concerned. If the matter does not receive proper attention at the opposition club, the matter should then be referred to the Dorking club Chairman, who will endeavour to discuss the matter with his opposite number. Ultimately, if the matter is not dealt with properly by the opposition club, Dorking may complain to the Surrey RFU. However, complaints to the Surrey RFU should only be made by the club Chairman on behalf of the age group concerned and after every other avenue has been explored.
 - 5.3. A parent may raise a concern over supporter behaviour (whether by Dorking or opposition supporters), firstly with his/her age group coach. If he/she feels the matter has not been dealt with satisfactorily, or if it relates to a member of the coaching staff, he/she may raise the matter with the club's Child Protection Officer, Phil Dalton. The procedure outlined in 5.2 above then applies.



RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

REFEREE CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE

ABUSE OF MATCH OFFICIALS

CODE OF CONDUCT

This document has been produced by the Rugby Football Referees' Union (RFRU) in response to serious concern expressed by Referees' Societies across the country about the growing incidence of Abuse of Match Officials. It describes the part to be played by clubs in helping to deal with the problem. The term "clubs" includes colleges and universities.

Clubs have a responsibility for the behaviour of their members, players, coaches and regular supporters towards Match Officials, and are expected to take all reasonable steps to protect Officials from any form of Abuse. Abuse of Match Officials is defined as

Individual perception of personal degradation be it mental or physical, before, during and after the game including (but not limited to) :-

- verbal or physical assault
- intimidatory conduct
- racial or sexual harassment

The IRB Code of Conduct Regulation states that a person:

- shall not abuse, threaten or intimidate a referee, touch judge, or other Match Official, whether on or off the field of play (20.1.10) and
- shall not use crude or abusive language or gesture towards referees, touch judges or other Match Officials or spectators (20.1.11)

All members and regular supporters of clubs should be made aware of the provisions of this Code, and might need to be reminded that abusive behaviour is also harmful to the reputation of the club. Where a club fields junior teams, parents who attend their matches should support the club by observing this Code.

Clubs are expected to sign up to the Code as an indication of willingness to abide by its terms. In so doing, clubs will commit themselves to take all reasonable steps to ensure that Match Officials are protected from Abuse. Societies have the option to consider not appointing referees to clubs who do not acknowledge the Code.

The following guidance is provided to enable clubs to publicise and observe the Code:

- This notice should be displayed on club premises and should appear in match programmes.
- All spectators should be prevented from being in close proximity to the touch lines by means of permanent or temporary barriers, wherever possible.
- Replacements, coaches, medics and water carriers must comply with game regulations as to the areas they are restricted to during the match, namely either marked technical areas or those areas designated by the Match Official as being technical areas.
- Match Officials should not be approached for uninvited discussion concerning the match until at least 30 minutes after the final whistle.