



RESPECT Program

Each month we will present to you illustrative cases from the **General Purpose Tribunal (GPT)**.

The GPT deals with all disciplinary cases that require more than a standard sentence, further investigation or involve significant player or match official abuse.

Did you know that: Lionel Messi has had a long career at the highest levels; despite this “Leo” has had only 1 red card – on his first match as an international for Argentina, 2 minutes after coming on the field.

He has never had a red card whilst playing for Barcelona.

The case of the abandoned match

A striker and keeper became entangled during play. The referee saw no intent in the incident. The goal keeper aggressively approached the attacker and referee complaining that the attacker had fouled him. When the goal keeper refused to desist from his actions, the referee gave him a yellow card. At this point a number of players from the goal keepers team surrounded the referee and questioned his ability to referee and manage the game. This went on aggressively for over a minute. The referee felt sufficiently threatened to abandon the match at that point and end the game.

The team defence was largely one of deflection trying to paint the other team as the bad guys. The tribunal noted that it was not the other team cited. They also disputed that they surrounded the referee however it was clear from various sources of information that there were at least 4 and probably more surrounding the referee. The tribunal noted that the referee felt threatened and intimidated and would not abandon a match without good reason. The defence from the team involved was flimsy and self-serving.

Deliberations and Sanctions: The tribunal wants the team to keep playing but to have motivation to behave better. The team was found guilty of misconduct and given the following sanctions:

- Game considered a forfeit to the other team
- 3 match points deducted from their season total
- A \$1000 bond put on the team to be forfeited if there are further incidents involving referees this season

Learning points

- **Be aware that referees can feel threatened when surround by a crowd of angry players!**
- **As a team, watch for hotheads on your side and calm them down before things get out of hand**
- **If the referee is dealing with a player, don't get involved as it only escalates things**
- **Substitute a player who is getting over-heated or they can cost your team match points!**

The case of the enthusiastic participant

A young defender saw a melee at the other end of the field. He ran 50 metres to join in and help his friends. Was cited for violent conduct. Player said he was just trying to help his friends and prevent injury.

The tribunal noted that

- I. He ran a long distance to join the melee
- II. Doing so prolonged the incident as the referee was settling it down when he came barging in
- III. Fortunately, his intervention did not reignite the melee

Findings: He was found guilty of Violent conduct and participating in a melee. However, it was felt this was at the lower end of the scale and a minimum penalty applied. **3 week suspension** applied.

Learning points:

- **Running into a melee won't make things better. Once you do, you forfeit all rights to being a non participant and risk being charged with violent conduct whatever your intentions are. If you are involved, try and back away or restrain your own players and not touch the opposition. In the confusion, you will often be mistaken for someone else throwing a punch and there is little we can do to help you in that event**
- **Penalties rapidly rise once there is any physical violence.**



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Case of the growling goalie

A mature goalie was unhappy with a decision regarding a free kick outside the box. He let the referee know his displeasure and was warned and then, when he continued to let his feeling be known, was given 10 minutes in the sin bin. While walking off, he turned around to give the referee further dissent and scored a yellow card. This led to him coming back and abusing the referee further, being issued a second yellow and a red card.

After the match, the referee walked past the team to retrieve his bag. He was subject to further abuse that he ignored until the player threatened physical violence leading to the referee to submit an incident report. At the hearing the players' defence was largely that he was swearing not at the referee but only to himself. Multiple times. While looking at the referee. He also denied making physical threats. The tribunal felt his comments were all self-serving and that there was no remorse or understanding being displayed.

Findings:

1. M6 -is disrespectful or abusive of Match Officials or of their decisions
 - a. (Sanction range 1 Month to 30 Years). Given **12 month** suspension
2. M30- Threat of physical violence towards an individual or his/her family or property
 - a. (Sanction range 6 Month to 2 Years). Given **12 month** suspension

As the two incidents were linked, it was allowed that he could serve the two sentences concurrently and hence was suspended for 12 months total.

LEARNING POINTS

- Don't abuse the referee
- If sent off, walk away promptly and say nothing
- Whether you swear at yourself (a lame excuse at the best of times) or not, if you do so right in front of the referee after they have just made a call, it is not surprising that they will consider it aimed at them and the tribunal will do the same.
- Note that most referees will ignore a single, immediate outburst of frustration. It is the follow up dissent that will get their attention.



Total Yellow Cards	1043	Total Reds Given	83
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Most Cards Earned	Score	Least cards Earned	Score
St Patricks FC	10.75	Roselea FC	2
Northern HFC	9.00	North Ryde SC	2.3
Epping FC	8.56	West Ryde Eagles FC	2.5
Epping Eastwood FC	8.50	Normanhurst FC	2.6
Ryde Saints United FC	7.20	Old Ignatians FC	2.7

Card score = total yellows + (total reds X 5) divided by number of teams age 18 and over.

This is similar but not identical to the formula used to calculate GHFA Fair play award