



Dear Coach, Manager, Parent and Players

Over the past month, a number of incidents have been brought to the attention of the College where unfortunately match officials have been verbally abused by Coaches, Managers, Parents or Players. This behaviour will not and should not be tolerated.

In many cases match officials are very young (some are just 12) and they are also learning the ropes. On other occasions a volunteer parent who has stepped up where the sporting association have been unable to place a match official on a particular game due to shortages in that volunteer role. They will make mistakes and we should show them the same tolerance and understanding that we show our own children within our sporting teams. We cannot and should not expect perfection.

The role of a match official is sometimes an intimidating role for any volunteer whatever their age. Junior match officials will often show an extreme reluctance to blow their whistle. Maybe they do not enforce the full interpretation of the games laws. As a parent or coach you just have to deal with this, frustrating as it may be. Like players, match officials have to start somewhere. We won't have any match officials in the future if we don't train junior referees today and let them gain some experience in a non-challenging environment. Shortage of match officials can already be seen in most sports each weekend and the same philosophy should be applied when a volunteer parent assists with refereeing the game to ensure games can take place.

If you have concerns with the manner the game is evolving please approach the ground coordinator or send through a report to your respective association which has been completed after having time to reflect on the events. At no stage should any person approach a match official during or after the game to deal with issues that may have occurred and caused frustration.

The College has clear expectations on the code of conduct for all members of our community. Students should be encourage to display good sportsmanship and to participate within the spirit of the game always respecting the importance of fair play. The College expect that any student not meeting these values to be removed from the activity immediately whether the referee has formally warned or penalised the player. This is a time to calm the boy and refocus him on the expectations of the College.

The role of Volunteer Coaches and managers are valued positions at the College. The role modelling of adults involved in these roles is critical to the development of the young men at Marist. Thus the expectation placed on you needs to be of the highest standard.

Winning and losing is part of competitive sports. Is just as important to be gracious winner demonstrating humility as it when losing.

I hope this is a timely reminder as you continue representing Marist in your chosen activity, which the lasting impression once the game is over reflects positively on yourself and the College no matter the result.

I would like thank you for your continued support and involvement in sport at Marist, as it greatly enhances the strong culture that exists at Marist College Canberra.

Regards

Mr. Paul Mead

Together, we create fine young men.