

FC Central Illinois will continue with our tournament policy that focuses on stopping the abusive behavior towards referees. This behavior is extremely troublesome but is very alarming when this behavior is directed toward younger referees who are simply trying to learn their trade just as the young players are. At FC Central IL we want to foster a relationship where the players play, the coaches coach, the referees officiate and the parents' cheer. An environment where everyone plays their specific role and respect the role of the other. Below is a refresher on our tournament policy:

- If a coach or parent is ejected from a match all parents from that team will be removed for that current game and the next following game.
- If after the match the Tournament Director or Referee Assignor determine that a prior match had referee abuse the parents from that team will be removed for the next applicable game.

Many may view this as extreme, but the situation continues to be at a point where significant action needs to be taken (there are leagues considering the use of body cameras with referees under the age of 18!). Coaching staff need to be the model of what is acceptable sideline behavior. Recently there have been too many examples of coaches and parents that are crossing the line with their sideline behavior. Everyone wants competent and experienced officials, but then create an environment where young referees cannot learn due to the sideline behavior and abuse. We want you all to come out and enjoy the weekend, and everyone should come with the intention of supporting their team, the opponent's team, AND the referee crew. There will be mistakes and missed calls. Just like players miss shots, miss passes or are not successful in trapping and receiving the ball. However, this weekend is intended to provide an environment where players and officials gain experience and develop in their roles. We cannot have "experienced" referees if we do not allow them to learn at tournaments. No referee steps onto the field wanting to make a mistake, but no referee will ever be 100% perfect each match either. Most of these officials are working 10 or more games, running over 10 miles, and are exposed to whatever extreme weather conditions over the weekend. Please understand the spirit and intent behind this policy and help us create a supportive environment for all. We need a healthy environment for everyone that is part of our tournament.

If you do have concerns on officiating there are proper channels to address these concerns. Please reach out to the field marshal and the Tournament Director or Referee Assignor.

Thanks, and good luck this weekend,

FCCI Tournament Director and Referee Assignor