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Memo

To: All Club Secretaries
Date: 14/06/2011
Subject: 11-33 – Various Items

Dear Club Members,

Increasingly over the past month, there has been communications to Football Brisbane relating to various issues around the grounds. These vary from inappropriate language and behaviour of players, spectators and officials, to misuse of facilities and complaints about controlling of matches.

Therefore, I feel it is timely to remind **all clubs to review and advise all to their members** of the requirements under the various Codes of Conduct.

Let us all be clear in our communication to everyone involved in football in the Brisbane Zone.

- 1) Inappropriate language is not acceptable at any level of the game. Clubs should promote this to all of their teams, officials, parents and spectators.

While the direction some years ago by Football Queensland was for zero tolerance, this is not where we wish to go again. The reason being, it would have significant ramifications on the field because it leaves our Referees with no room to manoeuvre. Specifically, Law 12 - Fouls and Misconduct, lists one of the **sending off offences** as – using offensive, insulting or abusive language and/or gestures.

I would suggest to clubs that the management of such behaviour would be better served by actions within the club under their Disciplinary processes, than by Football Brisbane Officials and its Disciplinary Processes.

All clubs received supplies of the Positive or its Pointless information in early May, this can be used to assist in the behaviour management

- 2) Inappropriate behaviour, like language, is also not to be condoned or left unchallenged by Club Officials. Increasingly, reports are coming in of acts occurring at the end of matches between, team officials and or spectators.

Clubs are responsible for security around the playing field by the provision of Ground Officials. Part of their role is to escort match officials from the field. Unfortunately, this is the



time we are seeing more and more issues arising. While in the most part, the behaviour at our matches has been acceptable, there are incidents being reported where team officials and spectators are entering the field and acting in a completely inappropriate manner by approaching the teams or opposition officials.

Clubs are to ensure that all Officials are aware of the Code of Conduct appropriate for their role and also ensure no parents or spectators enter the field surrounds until all players and officials have left. I ask Clubs to also ensure they have adequate support for their members before, during and after matches in order that we provide a safe sporting environment for everyone to enjoy.

- 3) Whether you are attending the facilities at your own club or those of another, it is essential that you treat it with respect. Miss-use of facilities through actions such as damaging, defacing or leaving them in a mess is not to be tolerated. Each one of us pays significant amounts in fees to provide the basics for our players and spectators alike. Yet, on occasions individuals believe it appropriate to dump their rubbish or vandalise the property of the club.

Please have all members reminded that this is our game and it is only through mutual respect for property that we will be able to improve the facilities we have. It will not happen, if money is continually wasted repairing or cleaning up after other participants of the code.

- 4) There have been reports of alcohol being brought to licenced grounds. This action could see the hosting club fined heavily by the government and perhaps lose their liquor licence and therefore a valuable source of fundraising. I ask for clubs to ensure their members respect the game and the clubs they visit by not bringing alcohol to matches. If you find the need to have a drink, support the clubs you visit by patronising their establishment. In the end, it will benefit all players through raising income for the club.
- 5) Football Brisbane endeavours through its promotion, training and development to provide as many Officials as possible to run matches in the zone. On any given weekend, with over 1200 competitive matches in the zone, plus QSL, RSJPL and A-League trial matches, we attempt to schedule as many of our 467 officials to fulfil the demand. Unfortunately, we are not always successful juggling these numbers and as a result we see matches without recognised officials.

In late 2010 and early 2011, Football Brisbane attempted to progress the option of Club Referees which has been very successful at Kenmore.

The intent was to provide training to club members free of charge, on the basics of being an official. These Club Referees and Assistants would also be mandated to receive 70% of scheduled match fees required for our qualified Officials whenever they officiated.

Club Referees, once trained, would then notify the club of their ability to assist and the club could coordinate the group of members as a backup for occasions when Football Brisbane could not provide an official. All this with the comfort of knowing that matches would at least have someone who understood the laws of the game and wanted to help in officiating. Further, at all times these people would only be called on by their club and only at their home facility.



A request was issued to all clubs to indicate their interest in progressing such a concept zone wide, but alas there was no positive responses received back to Football Brisbane. This leads me to the issue of challenges to match officials and their performances.

With such a disproportionate number of players to officials (18590 registered competitive players to 467 registered official), one would have to question why we continue to see everyone from officials to people who are completely ignorant about the laws of the game, complaining about the few match officials we are able to convince to stay on the park.

Clubs must begin to act in moderating the attitude of their members' actions at matches. Given the clubs are run by volunteers and referees generally come from these same volunteers. Why can't we learn, that the match officials are a necessity of the game. They do not deserve abuse or dissent when doing their best for the sport.

Putting this issue into prospective, we have no Professional players or clubs registered in any of Football Brisbane's competitions. We also have no Professional Officials registered to Football Brisbane or for that matter in Australia, and yet there is this continual expectation that the Match Officials must get every decision correct. If Clubs run by Volunteers deem it fair and reasonable to be shown leeway in their administration, then surely the same should be an entitlement to Match Officials.

I am specifically asking every Club Administration and every member of every club to take the time to review these issues and act appropriately on them for the betterment of the game. Football Brisbane can legislate to correct these issues until the cows come home, but to what effect? Only you as the members can make the fundamental changes necessary to ensure the needs of the game are met now and in the future.

Regards



Reuben Robertson
General Manager

