



NOCRA November Newsletter

R-E-S-P-E-C-T

This month of October has been hot, an unusually hot month, unlike any other in recent years. As a referee, it has tested our character and resolve. In most cases, we, as a whole, have done remarkably well ...under the circumstances. Speaking on behalf of the NOCRA BOARD, I commend you all for keeping your "cool", and for striving to do "business as usual", even under harsh conditions.

Having said that, however, the Board has received a few "legitimate" complaints from coaches and league officials, our clients, about certain referees who have overstepped their authority by dealing harshly with law-breakers. They have forgotten or neglected, above all things, to uphold the Referee's Code of Ethics. Instead of reaching deep within themselves to resolve a situation amiably, they have decided to escalate the tension of the problem to heights where it's been too far damaged to bring back to normalcy. Feelings are hurt, condescending remarks are made, even profanities are hurled, including demeaning send-offs and ejections.

Here are just a few minor suggestions to utilize, even before the game begins: Introduce yourself to the coach and make small talk, anything in or out of soccer. That will break all tension and win him to your side. As an AR, do the same on the sideline, as time permits...perhaps a joke or a funny situation. This will surely set a pleasant tone for the game. Show them that you are as human and as caring as they are.

There are always situations that you must deal with uncooperative people, so remember to use the "Ask, Tell, Dismiss" method advocated by US Soccer.

In previous articles, I have constantly reminded our membership that under tense conditions, a referee must rise above the problem and seize the "opportunity" to calm things down and resolve the situation, with DIGNITY and RESPECT, without arrogance and haughtiness. I always say, "If you win the argument, you have lost much more...the respect of those involved." The soccer field is not a venue to flail one's vested authority as a referee. The word "referee", in every language I know, means an arbitrator. Un arbitre in French, un arbitro in Spanish, etc. It means to arbitrate, justly and fairly without bias...with humility.

With kindness and respect towards our customers, the ones who pay our fees, we can achieve the same goal: diffusing the anger and the agitation, and still keeping control, with dignity.

On the whole, we are proud at NOCRA to be doing just that. We are to be commended.

In having said all that, excuse me while I take my faulty product (purchase) from Sears to its COMPLAINT DEPARTMENT. I am so angry! I just hope I don't confront a management official there who will belittle me and insult me, instead of taking care of my "problem" in a courteous manner, and send me on my way---happy and content. After all, I AM THE CUSTOMER, and I need to be treated with RESPECT.

Armen Keuilian
Past President