

FOOTBALL IS A PASSIONATE GAME, WE CAN ALL GET SWEEPED UP IN THE MOMENT. HOWEVER IT IS POSSIBLE FOR LEAGUES AND CLUBS TO MANAGE THE MATCH DAY ENVIRONMENT IN SUCH A WAY AS TO CLEARLY SIGNPOST WHAT BEHAVIOURS ARE ACCEPTABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE.

- The best work a club can do starts before a ball has been kicked. It requires a club to determine 'why and how we play' and then communicate this to club members and supporters. If coaches, players and parents have a clear idea of the club's ethos and what this means in terms of selection, training and playing time, then a great deal of potential aggravation can be avoided. Why not stage a parent's meeting where you can provide guidance on the practicalities of playing for the club but also agree a meaningful and shared code of conduct? The CFA will have resources to support such meetings.
- Keep players and supporters informed about what is going on at the club and forthcoming events. More importantly, identify how they can communicate with the club which doesn't involve shouting something at a coach across a crowded pitch!
- If you are the home club there is a value in displaying the club's code of conduct. This could be in the changing room, pavilion or even on a laminated card that can be passed down a line of spectators.
- There may be a value in reconsidering the positioning of the technical areas if these are in use. If there is space to reposition the team officials away from their opposition or spectators – even by a few metres this can reduce 'triggers' that so often result in poor behaviour. If technical areas are in use they should be positioned five metres either side of the halfway line to dissuade coaches of the need to follow play up and down the touchline.
- If the facility allows, the display of a Respect banner or sign can establish to all participants a club's commitment to the Respect programme.
- The use of designated areas for spectators is a key element of Respect. They create a physical and psychological gap between players and spectators and have been introduced successfully in many clubs and leagues. Ideally the Designated Spectators' Area should start two metres from the touchline on both sides of the pitch. Each area should run the full length of the pitch. This means no-one should be watching from behind the goals. It is recognised however that the alignment of some public pitches does not allow for this configuration in which case other appropriate arrangements should be made.
- To help implement the Designated Spectators' Area, The FA has endorsed a Respect Barrier Kit which is available from www.Touchlinelogos.com
- When dealing with difficult spectators, clubs should consider the use of a touchline manager. Ideally someone known to club members, designated to help maintain a supportive playing environment. Some clubs have equipped touchline managers with a Respect bib which has increased their visibility and assisted them when required to intervene. They are there to deal with small scale incidents and to reduce and diffuse problems. It is not the role of the touchline manager to replace the referee or the normal league sanctions. They should never place themselves or others in danger.