

Conflict and Avoidance

Part 1:

Dealing with hostile situations BEFORE it turns into a brawl

- How to recognize when trouble looming and how to deal with it before it blows up.
- Communicate with Officials, Players and Coaches to keep game under control.

- A. RECOGNIZE** that there is a potential issue early and talk to the Captain(s) and give them the first shot at handling the issue. Usually this is an amped up player who may have a chip on his shoulder and wants to go outside of the rules of the game. This could be a huge rival game or 2 teams searching for their first win.
- B. ADDRESS** the Captains and allow them to handle the issue. Place the onus on the Captains and the Coaches to uphold all aspects of Sportsmanship set forth

by the CIAC and the integrity of the game. (Remind Coaches during your pregame meeting that they are responsible for their sideline and we Officials will need their help to uphold the integrity of the game) If the Captain is the issue, go directly to the head coach.

- C. COMMUNICATE** Bring both coaches to the middle of the field and let them know that there is trouble looming and allow them to address their teams before resuming play. Don't be hesitant to throw flags as that will send a message that we are not taking any garbage. We aren't doing any favors with constant verbal warnings. A flag is a record of offense and will help support our cause if the situation turns to a fight.
- D. EJECT/Disqualify:** When all the steps above have been exhausted, it's time to remove the issue before there is a

brawl. We will try to even out all UNS fouls when we can but locate the problem and penalize accordingly. That sends a message and shortens that players ability to continue non-football activity.

E. Extra Points: 1. Officiate with Dead Ball purpose at ALL times, Especially when we detect that tempers are flaring. No verbal warnings for Safety Fouls or Punches, even if the punch misses. 3. If there is a flag and you have nothing to add to the conversation, stay away from the Official reporting and DEAD BALL OFFICIATE!!!

F. Part 2 : How to handle a fight after it starts.

1. If by putting yourself between 2 players to prevent a fight(think of a Hockey Linesman getting in between two players) then do so, but never do so to the risk,of your own safety. Your

safety is your #1 concern. Never grasp a player's face mask to prevent or break up a fight.

2. If a fight breaks out on the field, and you are the nearest Official to a Team Area, you should regard it as your Primary duty to keep Substitutes and Coaches from entering the field to participate. This is usually the Wing or Deep Official on that side of the field, but could also be a Referee or Back Judge if the action is near the End Zone.

3. Do everything you can to keep Substitutes and Coaches off the field. If you are overwhelmed by the rush of players, write down the numbers of the players that you know left the team bench area.

4. If you are the nearest to the fight, and are unable to prevent it, make note(record) the numbers of the players

involved and attempt to distinguish between the active fighters and other players who may just be trying to break it up and/or prevent further escalation.

Those players who **DEFINITELY** participated in the fight **MUST**. Be disqualified once order is restored.

5. Once the fight has ended, and the Teams have returned to their sideline, the Officials should get together and discuss what happened and verify all information with each other.

How did it start?? What #'s did we write down?? Who is being DQ'd.

6. The Referee and at least 1 other Official will talk to **BOTH** coaches and explain how the game will proceed going forward.