



July 24, 18

EDMONTON RUGBY UNION

### Referee Abuse Policy

As in past seasons it is all too common for referees to be targets of verbal abuse by coaches, players and spectators. In spite of frequent and clear messaging that referees, like players, are human and apt to make mistakes on occasion, the message is not getting through to participants.

It has become obvious that in most cases, the seed of more serious abuse begins with a coach coaching and trying to influence the ref. Despite the fact that none of the coaches in the Edmonton Rugby Union (ERU) are accredited World Rugby referee coaches, several feel they have license to offer advice and criticism to the Match Official(s). This is not welcome and will not be tolerated. Inevitably it leads to players and spectators offering their comments.

In order to curb this behavior, the ERU, in conjunction with the Edmonton Rugby Union Referees Society, will be implementing the following policy to be applied at games:

- **First incident** – referee directs team captain or coach to tell offending coach or spectator to refrain from making any comments whatsoever about the actions of the match official(s).
- **Second incident** – coach or spectator is directed by the match official to leave the playing area and to maintain a distance of 400m from the field. If the coach or spectator refuses to leave the playing area, the game will be stopped until such time that they do leave the area. If the coach or spectator still refuses to leave the area, the game will be abandoned with the offending club forfeiting the game.

If a coach or spectator is ejected, a Disciplinary Committee will be convened and the incident investigated. The Club will be required to post a \$1,000 Behavior Bond with the ERU for the balance of the season and the coach will be required to provide a written apology to the referee.

If there are no further ejections the full amount of the Bond will be returned to the Club at the end of the season. Any further ejections will result in the following sanctions:

- First Ejection – fine of \$200
- Second Ejection – fine of \$300
- Third Ejection – fine of \$500
- Fourth Ejection – rescheduling of all remaining games away from the home field of the offending Club.

These sanctions are aimed specifically at abusive coaches and spectators. Referee abuse by players will continue to be dealt with according to World Rugby and ERU Rules and Regulations.

It should be noted that the ERU reserves unto itself the right to apply this policy to abuse of volunteers, ERU staff and board members as well as levy any additional sanction it deems warranted in the circumstance.

Sincerely,

Devin Vandenberg  
President  
Edmonton Rugby Union

Mick Graham  
President  
Edmonton Rugby Union Referees' Society

**Mailing Address: 11004 Ellerslie Rd. SW Edmonton, AB. T6W 1A2**  
**Phone: 780-988-5245 Fax: 780-401-3451 www.edmontonrugby.com**