

## Summary R&D Decisions for 2004

### 1. U19/1 Rejection of Protest

In order for a protest to be accepted as valid two criteria must be met according to NCSL Rules & Procedures:

*Alleged misapplication of FIFA Laws of the Game by the referee which may have affected the outcome of the game may be protested (A single incident in a 7-0 game will generally not be considered to have affected the outcome of the game.) Incidents resulting from judgment calls may not be protested.*

For this game there was no misapplication of the LOTG and the outcome was Team A 7 vs. Team B 0.

This protest is frivolous and without merit. Therefore, this protest will not be reviewed by the NCSL R&D Committee. The R&D Chairman directed the league administrator to return the protest and check to Team B.

### 2. U19/1 Terminated Game

The R&D Chairman reviewed the issues, which caused the above referenced game to be terminated. The R&D Chairman reviewed the referee's report and reports submitted by both.

The referee reported that he terminated the match due to excessive cards and because Coach A came onto the field twice to argue cards that were issued to his players. After the second time he came onto the field, the referee terminated the match.

The referee reported that he ejected three Team A players from the match. In addition the referee issued yellow cards to Player A and Player B.

#### Decisions of the R&D Chairman:

1. The score when the game was terminated stands, Team B 4 vs. Team A 3.
2. All cards issued during the match stand.

### 3. U19/1 Terminated Match

The subject match was terminated by the referee in the 84<sup>th</sup> minute with the score Team A 3 – Team B 3. Written reports were obtained from the referee and both teams submitted statements. A hearing was held on 4 November, and was attended by representatives of both teams.

Reports indicated that the first half of the match, although intense and physical, was not atypical for U19B Division 1. Late into the second half, the play and demeanor of the teams began to deteriorate until, in the 84<sup>th</sup> minute, a reckless challenge by a Player B was cautioned by the referee. At this time, several groups of players began to “square off” on the pitch, exchanging words and some pushing and shoving ensued. At this point, the referee terminated the match to mitigate any further escalation of tensions and out of concern for player safety.

#### Decisions of the R&D Committee:

1. The result of the match stands when terminated: Team A 3 – Team B 3.
2. All cards stand and sit outs served will be valid.

### 4. U19/2 Terminated Match/Referee Assault

The subject match was terminated by the referee at 80:30, with the score Team A 3 – Team B 3. Written reports were obtained from all three members of the referee team, and both team’s coaches and managers. A hearing was held by the committee at the Leis Center on 23 September 2004 at 7:40 pm to determine the disposition of the match only. The hearing was attended by the full referee team, and representatives of Team A.

The match was terminated due to an alleged referee assault by Player B. The assault resulted from a disagreement between the player and the referee over the occurrence of a foul by Team A on Team B. The referee was in the process of issuing a yellow card to a dissenting player, when Player B initiated a verbal confrontation using abusive language toward the referee. The referee asked the player to start toward his own bench. At that time, he began to book the second offending Player B with a yellow card for dissent, which was followed by a mandatory red card for having accumulated two yellow cards in match. Player B then used foul and abusive language towards the referee and struck at the face of the referee. He was immediately escorted from the pitch by the Assistant Coach B, but in the process had to be restrained as further confrontations with Team A and Team B players and an Assistant Referee were initiated by Player B. At this point the match was terminated, and local law enforcement was contacted.

The committee does not retain jurisdiction in assault cases; they are handled by the state association where the player is rostered. In this instance, the case was forwarded to the MSYSA for adjudication. On 20 September, MSYSA informed the League that Player B was suspended pending a state hearing. Team B also took action, suspending the player for the season, and imposing conditions for reinstatement, namely, the completion of referee certification and donating referee time to the club.

The referee crew stated that it was solely the actions of the Player B which caused the match to be terminated. The committee's review of all circumstances and statements support this judgment.

#### Decisions of the R&D Committee:

1. The match is declared a forfeit in favor of the Team A. Team A 3 – Team B 0.
2. The committee will cooperate with and fully support the state investigation into the alleged assault.
3. The committee endorses and commends the swift and appropriate action taken by the Team B club in this instance.

#### **5. U17/1 Forfeit Match**

Team A and Team B played a match to completion, with the result Team A 2 – Team B 1. Team A played with a head coach participating while under suspension. The coach's suspensions were owed from the Spring 2004 NCSL season as a result of non-enforcement of sit out procedures for a player red card. Team A was directed between seasons to produce verification of sit outs, without reply. The suspensions owed were properly documented on the NCSL web-site on the Rules and Discipline page. When contacted by phone, the team manager verified that the coach participated in the match.

The prescribed sanction for using suspended personnel in an NCSL match is match forfeiture by the offending side. (NCSL Rules and Procedures Manual, Section V.D.3)

#### Decisions of the R&D Chairman:

1. The result of the match is voided, and declared a forfeit with a score of Team B 3 – Team A 0.
2. Card(s) issued during the match, if any, will stand. Team A is reminded that suspensions owed MUST be served consecutively in the next matches played by the team.

Team A appealed the R&D decision which resulted in the forfeiture of their game played against Team B.

Background facts are clear and not in dispute:

- June 6, Team A player received a red card
- June 13, Team A player was required to serve the automatic one game suspension. Team A player's name was on the team roster and the player was not listed on the back of the game card showing that he was serving the suspension.
- The league did not receive a sit-out card from Team A

After the spring season was completed, the NCSL R&D database manger e-mailed Team A twice requesting that they provide verification that the sit-out was served. No response was received from the Team A. Since no verification was received, R&D issued a 2 game suspension to the player and a 3 game suspension to the Coach A. These disciplinary sit-outs were supposed to be served in the first 3 games on the Fall season.

Following Team A's first match of the fall season, Team B filed a complaint with R&D that Coach A did not serve his suspension but participated in the match. Team Manager A confirmed that Coach A did coach the team for the match. Since Coach A was ineligible to participate, the R&D Chairman issued a decision on September 15 declaring the game a forfeit and assigned the win to the Team B.

The basis of the Team A appeal was that the sit-out of the Player A was served on June 13th and Team A was able to provide a copy of the sit-out card after the R&D decision was reached.

Even if a team fails to follow sit-out rules and procedures to provide the required paper work to verify that a sit-out has been served, it is customary practice of the league to allow a team to obtain the verification afterwards. The league is not interested in penalizing a team for mismanagement of the paperwork when it can be verified that a sit-out has been satisfied. Even though the sit-out card surfaced after the R&D decision was issued, it appeared that the sit-out verification was legitimate.

The R&D Committee followed proper procedure and practice as outlined in the Rules and Procedures Manual in reaching its decision. Nothing in Team A's appeal indicated anything to the contrary.

During the appeal hearing, Manager A stated that he was out of the country after the spring season and didn't return to the area until the day before the season started. He did not have e-mail while out of the country and therefore was unable to respond to the requests to provide verification that his player's sit-out was served during the June 13th match.

Manager A stated that Assistant Coach A completed and mailed the sit-out card for their player after June 13th match. A copy of the sit-out card was provided with the appeal. Manager A stated that the copy of sit-out card that he provided to the committee was a copy of the card that was filled out at the June 13th game.

As part of the investigation into the appeal, the NCSL President contacted Team A's opponent whose signature appeared on the sit-out card. Manager C stated that he was contacted by Manager A on September 18<sup>th</sup> and informed he did not make a copy of the sit-out card from June 13th and asked Manager C to sign a new sit-out card. In Manager C's written statement he acknowledged that he did not recall meeting Manager A, signing a sit-out card, nor could he certify that a sit-out was performed in the game vs. Team A. When challenged with this information, Manager A changed his story and admitted that the sit-out card was newly generated.

In the unanimous opinion of the committee, Manager A attempted to deceive the committee by presenting a fraudulently generated copy of a sit-out card. This is certainly not complying with the letter nor spirit of the honor system for serving a suspension.

Decisions of the Appeals Committee are as follows:

1. The appeal is denied and the decision of the R&D Chairman stands.
2. Coach A owes 2 remaining disciplinary suspensions. These 2 sit-outs must be served in the next 2 NCSL matches.

**6. U17/2 Protest of Game**

Team A protests the results of the subject match based on a misapplication of FIFA Laws of the Game, Law #14, Penalty Kicks.

With the score Team B 1 – Team A 0, just prior to the end of the first half, the referee awarded a penalty kick to Team A. The penalty kick was taken and resulted in a goal. However, the Assistant Referee noted an attacker had entered the penalty area prior to the shot being taken, and informed the Referee. The Referee disallowed the goal, and awarded an indirect free kick to Team B at the point of the encroachment. The match was played to completion, and ended with a score of Team B 1 – Team A 0.

Law 14 states, in part:

If a team-mate of the player taking the penalty kick enters the penalty area, or moves in front of or within 9.15m (10 yards) of the penalty mark:

- The referee allows the kick to proceed
- If the ball enters the goal, the kick is retaken

The Chairman of the R&D Committee received reports from both teams, and all three members of the officiating crew. All of these reports confirm the facts as stated herein. Further, the referee admitted he erred in not retaking the penalty kick and apologized.

Decisions of the R&D Chairman:

1. The protest is granted. The match result is cancelled, and it must be replayed in its entirety.
2. Card(s) issued during the match, if any, will stand.

**7. U17/2 Terminated Match**

The subject match was terminated by the referee in the 89<sup>th</sup> minute with the score Team A 3 – Team B 0. Written reports were obtained from the referee, and both teams submitted statements.

Shortly before the completion of the match the referee had ejected the Team B assistant coach and at least one other player. The reports then indicate that in the final two minutes of the match, Player A committed a cautionable foul against Player B, who then retaliated and was issued a red card for violent conduct. At this point, the Player B became verbally abusive to the referee. The referee decided to terminate the match with less than two minutes remaining because of the alleged abuse and threats made by Player B.

Statements received from BOTH teams recommend that the match be recorded as complete with the score posted at termination.

Decision of the R&D Chairman:

1. The match result will stand as posted at termination: Team A 3 - Team B 0
2. An investigation into the verbal and threatening abuse of the referee will be conducted. Based on the result, a hearing may be convened.

**8. U17/3 Terminated Match**

The subject match was terminated by the referee in the 75<sup>th</sup> minute with the score Team A 4 – Team B1. Written reports were obtained from the referee, and both teams submitted statements.

The reports indicate that the match was a fast paced, high energy match from the start. Within the first 10 minutes of play, Team A had built a two goal lead. Following this, the aggressiveness and attitude of the Team B became notably more severe. The half ended with a score of Team A 4 – Team B 0. At the time of termination, a total of 4 yellow cards were amassed by Team B and 2 by Team A; Team B also had two red cards shown, resulting in 9 players on the pitch. The referee reports, as well as reports submitted by both teams, indicate that team officials of BOTH sides were concerned with the demeanor of the game, and both coaches had communicated to the referee that they would support an early termination.

Decision of the R&D Committee:

The result of the match stands when terminated: Team A 4 – Team B 1.

**9. U16/2 Inappropriate Behavior**

A hearing was held to review the inappropriate player and spectator behavior during and after the above referenced game. After the match, the tensions escalated to the point where the referee and others felt it necessary to call the Montgomery County Police.

The committee reviewed the referee's report, reports submitted by both teams, reports submitted by both teams waiting to play the next match as well as testimony presented by both teams during the hearing.

The referee reported that the game was played at a high intensity level. During the first half, the referee red carded the Team A goalie for punching a Team B player. The Team A spectators were upset and became very vocal after the Team A goalie's ejection. After the match, the Team A spectators were very upset and confronted Team B. The Team A spectators made disparaging remarks directed toward the referee. The referee stated in his report that he perceived that the Team A spectators "were massed at the sideline as if they were going to come after either me or the other team." The referee reported that Coach A offered no support in controlling his team's parents. The referee further reported that as the teams walked down to the parking lot, the shouting had escalated to the point where he felt the situation had the potential to get out of hand and he had someone call the police.

The Team B manager reported that he was serving as the TSL. During the first half, he felt that the Team A spectators were being excessive in their criticism of the referee. He attempted to meet with the Team A TSL to diffuse the situation; however, he was rebuffed by the Team A TSL and another Team A spectator and was told that their behavior was none of his business. Team B reported that the referee received a lot of criticism from the Team A parents after the match.

Team A reported that the referee arrived ten minutes late with only one 14 year-old assistant to referee the match. Team A complained that the referee was "just bad" and that a 14 year-old was too young to serve as assistant referee for a U16 match. Coach A stated that if the NCSL provided three decent referees to do the match, problems like what occurred in this match would not happen. Team A further alleged that the referee displayed bias against its predominately Hispanic team. Coach A admitted that some of his parents were out of control.

For the record, the assistant referee was 15 years-old and is certainly old enough and capable enough to do a line at a U16 match. Further, it must be pointed out that both team's coaches are Hispanic and there are Hispanic players on both team's rosters.

In the opinion of the committee, Team A's allegations against the referee, assistant referee and the fact that only two referees were assigned to the match were a deplorable attempt to deflect the fact that they lost the match and their spectators were out of control. The Team A TSL was given the opportunity but made no attempt to calm the Team A spectators during the first half. The behavior of the Team A parents/spectators during and after the match was totally out of control and unacceptable.

Decisions of the R&D Committee:

1. Team A is fined \$600.

2. Each parent/guardian from both teams must sign a copy of the Parent Code of Conduct. A copy of all the signed Parent Code of Conducts along with a copy of each team's roster must be faxed to the R&D Chairman.
3. Team A is placed on probation for the remainder of the spring season. Any incident involving Team A that rises to the level of the R&D Committee will result in a disciplinary hearing that may subject Team A to being suspended from the league.
4. Team A club representative/club must get every parent/guardian of each Team A participating in the NCSL to sign the Parent Code of Conduct. A copy of all the Parent Code of Conducts along with a copy of each team's roster must be mailed to and received in the NCSL office.

#### **10. U16/4 Terminated Game**

A hearing was held to review the incidents, which caused the above referenced game to be terminated approximately ten minutes into the second half.

The committee reviewed the referee's report, reports submitted by both teams as well as testimony presented by both teams during the hearing. For the record, the players involved in the altercation were required to appear at the hearing. One Team A player did not attend, however the committee was informed that after the incidents in this game this player was suspended and removed from the roster.

The referee reported that after a goal was scored on a penalty kick by Team A, the suspended Team A player punched a Team B player. The Team B player fought back, after which two more Team A players from the bench ran onto the field and joined in the fight. This was followed by several additional players running to the point of the altercation. It appeared that most of the additional players were attempting to pull the fighting players apart. The referee ejected three Team A players and one Team B player. At this point, the referee terminated the match.

Before the game was terminated, one Team B official entered the field in an attempt to remove some of his players from the area of the altercation. One Team A mother entered the field, and by her own admission, had an altercation with a Team B player.

Both teams agreed with the basic facts as to the sequence of events that led up to the game being terminated.

The committee reminds both teams that field invasion by team officials and spectators is against the rules and can contribute to an escalation in tensions resulting in a match being terminated.

#### Decisions of the R&D Committee:

1. The game is declared a non-game, no score will be recorded and the game will not be replayed.
2. All cards issued in the match stand. Team A is reminded that since Player A had a yellow card in first half of the match, he will be assessed fifteen disciplinary points for this match.
3. Team A is fined \$100.

#### **11. U15/1 Inappropriate Behavior toward Referee**

The NCSL R&D Committee received a report about player misconduct by Player A towards the referee during the above listed match. The allegation was that Player A moved toward the referee and threw the match ball at him following a red card ejection. A hearing was held by the R&D committee on Thursday September 23. Written statements were received from all parties prior to the hearing. Present at the hearing were Player A, Team A coach and manager, Parent A and referee.

During the match, the referee awarded two red cards for Violent Conduct; one to a FREE player and the other one to Player A. It was revealed during the hearing that the FREE player had grabbed and punched another Team A player, and Player A intervened and was issued his red card for being the "third man in" on the fracas. Notably, none of the written statements received in advance indicated that a fight had occurred. On his way off the pitch, Player A picked up the game ball and threw it. The referee's written and verbal statements, as well as the written statements of the Assistant Referee's, allege that the ball was thrown at the referee after steps in his direction were taken. Team A statements allege that the ball was thrown at the ground in general frustration and at some distance from the referee.

The Committee finds Player A's actions disturbing. His action on entering an altercation that was between two other players caused an escalation in the severity of the situation. In addition, he further escalated the tensions of the moment by not immediately leaving the pitch; he unnecessarily moved to the ball, picked it up and threw it. Regardless of the direction, force or intent, NCSL Policy and Procedures Manual, Section V.G.1 states, in part: "After being ejected from a match, a player must leave the field immediately....". Player A failed to do so. The Committee views any untoward action occurring

following an ejection as a serious offense. At this point, match officials have little recourse within the Laws of the Game (except for match suspension and termination), and must rely on action by the R&D process to ensure discipline.

Decisions of the R&D Committee:

1. In addition to the red card and the associated points, an additional 5 disciplinary points will be added to Player A's disciplinary record.
2. The Committee officially censures Player A's actions and warns that any further incidents of this type will be met with increasingly harsh penalties.

**12. U15/2 Protested Game**

A hearing was held to review the protest filed by Team A in the above referenced game. The basis of the protest was Team A was not informed that the club linesman from Team B was serving as an assistant referee and that the Team B club linesman made several offside calls against Team A. In addition, Team A appealed the red card issued to the Team A player for denying an obvious goal-scoring opportunity.

The committee reviewed the referee's report, reports submitted by both teams as well as testimony presented by both teams during the hearing. The referee was invited but did not attend the hearing.

Team A felt that the offside decisions during the match clearly favored Team B. Team A alleged that the Team B parent raised his flag to signal offside calls against Team A several times in the second half. When questioned by the committee as to how the Team A coach knew that the referee accepted the Team B linesman's call rather than the call being made by the referee, Team A stated that the referee nodded his head with concurrence toward the Team B linesman.

The referee reported that prior to the start of the match he had no assigned assistant referees. The referee requested and was provided a volunteer from each team. The Team B parent informed the referee that he completed the SIAR training. The referee reported that he requested both volunteers to stand with the second to last man to aid him in making offside calls and to raise their flag for all out of bounds balls and indicate direction if they can determine it. During the match, Team B acknowledged that the Team B parent did raise his flag once for offside in the first half against Team B; however, Team B claimed that the Team B parent did not attempt to call offside against the Team B in the second half.

The committee cannot determine how many times the Team B parent called or attempted to call offside during the game. However, it is clear that the Team B parent was not asked by the referee to serve as an assistant referee and the referee gave no indication that he acknowledged any attempt by the Team B volunteer linesman to call offside. In the opinion of the committee, offside decisions made during the match were that of the referee.

The referee reported that a Team A player was issued a red card for tackling a Team B player with the ball from behind denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity. While the referee acknowledged that he incorrectly awarded a penalty kick for the offense that occurred outside the penalty area, the penalty kick did not result in a goal. In the opinion of the referee, the foul committed by the Team A player was a red card; the committee is not in position to overturn a judgment call.

Decisions of the R&D Committee:

1. The protest is denied and the score stands Team B 3 vs. Team A 1.
2. The red card issued to Player A stands and must be served in the Team A's next NCSL game.

**13. U15/2 Protested Game**

A hearing was held to review the protest filed by Team A in the above referenced match. The basis of the protest was that a Team B parent volunteer linesman made a foul call which denied a goal to the Team A.

The committee reviewed the referee's report, reports submitted by both teams as well as testimony presented by both teams and the referee during the hearing.

Team A claimed the following play happened near the end of the match: the Team A striker was driving on the goal, the Team B keeper came out missed getting the ball, a Team B defender came across the field collided with the Team A striker and the ball was put in the goal. After the play and during the stoppage time for the injury to the Team B player, the referee went over and consulted with the Team B parent linesman. After the conference, the referee disallowed the goal and stated that the Team A striker interfered with the Team B defender.

Team B did not dispute the basic facts concerning the contested goal. The Team B position was that the call was a judgment call by the referee and therefore, it cannot by league rules be overturned.

The referee acknowledged the confusion and upset that resulted from his poor mechanics following a disallowed goal. The referee stated that he focused on the injured Team B defender and did not on how the ball wound up in the goal. The referee

was pretty sure he saw a foul but he did not whistle for the foul. Instead, the referee took the opportunity due to the stoppage for the injury to consult with the Team B volunteer linesman. After the consultation, the referee disallowed the goal.

In the opinion of the committee, the Team B volunteer linesman clearly influenced the decision of the referee to disallow the goal.

The committee appreciates the referee's willingness to acknowledge the mistake he made during the match. His candor during the hearing made the deliberations of the committee considerable easier.

Decision of the R&D Committee:

The protest is granted and the game is directed to be replayed.

**14. U15/2 Abandoned Match**

The R&D Chairman received a report and spoke with the referee for the above referenced match. In the opinion of the referee, this was a physical match and there was a lot of complaining by both teams. However, the referee acknowledged that he abandoned the match without sufficient justification.

Decision of the R&D Chairman:

In fairness to both teams directed this game be rescheduled.

**15. U15/4 Failure to Sit-Out**

The referee for this game played on May 22<sup>nd</sup> reported that he ejected Player A after the match for foul and abusive language. Player A was supposed to serve his automatic one game suspension in the game played on May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Coach A reported that Player A did not come to the match. However, Coach A did not fill out a sit-out card nor did he inform his opponent that Player A was serving a suspension. Coach A claimed that he informed the referee of the game played on May 23<sup>rd</sup> that Player A was serving a suspension.

The R&D Chairman spoke with and received a report from the referee for the game played on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. The referee could not corroborate Coach A's claim; the referee, in fact, claimed that he was not informed that Team A had a player serving a sit-out prior to the match.

Per NCSL rules: "The penalty for ejection from an NCSL game is an automatic one-game suspension, i.e., a sit-out. A player, coach, or other team official may be ejected during or after a game; an ejection after a game carries the same sanction as an ejection during a game.

Decisions of the R&D Chairman:

1. Game played on May 23<sup>rd</sup> is declared a forfeit and the score will be recorded, Team B 3 vs. Team A 0.
2. Player A is suspended from the next Team A NCSL match.
3. Coach A is suspended from the next Team A NCSL match.

**16. U14/5 Abandoned Match**

The subject match was abandoned by the referee in the 52<sup>nd</sup> minute, due to extensive stoppage time required to medically evacuate two players with head injuries. The score at the time was Team A 2 – Team B 1. The committee reviewed written statements by the referee, and each team.

Law 7 states: "*An abandoned match is replayed unless the competition rules provide otherwise.*" No such rule exists in the NCSL Rules and Procedures Manual. Moreover, the match had 17+ minutes left to play, and the score was close. The abandonment was taken without cause of fault by either team.

Decisions of the R&D Committee:

1. The match is directed to be replayed in its entirety. The rescheduled match should maintain the home field for Team A, if possible.
2. All cards issued during the match will stand. Any sit outs served during the abandoned match will be counted as valid.

**17. U13/1 Protested Game**

A hearing was held to review the protest filed by Team A in the above referenced game. The basis of the protest was a controversial handball call near the end of the game, which resulted in a penalty kick and goal for Team B.

The committee reviewed the referee's report, reports submitted by both teams as well as testimony presented by both teams and the referee during the hearing. In addition, the referee for the next match, who arrived early for his match, provided a

written report and testified during the hearing.

Team A alleged that the handball call was improperly influenced by the behavior of Coach B and manager. Further Team A claimed that the ball was struck so forcefully that the Team A defender had no time to react to it and that the ball glanced off the hand of the player. In the opinion of Team A, the ball played the defender's hand rather than the defender's hand playing the ball. Team A claimed that play continued for 20-30 seconds and only as a result of the Team B's screaming did the referee whistled the play dead and awarded the penalty kick to Team B.

Team B disputed the accounting of the events as provided by the Team A. Team B claimed that right after the handball occurred, the referee whistled play stoppage and awarded the penalty kick. Team B asserted that if there was any undue attempt to influence the referee it was the Coach A who entered the field to argue the call.

Referee A reported that he called the handball and awarded the penalty kick to Team A. Referee A further reported that after the retake of the penalty kick, both coaches came onto the field to argue the call and subsequent goal. Referee A reported that he told both coaches that he called the penalty kick based on what he observed and he was not influenced by Coach B.

Referee B, for the next match on the field, reported that there was a lot of shouting by both sidelines as a result of the whistle for the penalty kick. Referee B further reported that both coaches entered the field to confront Referee A. Referee A looked towards Referee B for assistance. Referee B entered the field, got between the coaches and directed them to leave the field. After the retake of the penalty kick, both coaches continued to argue with each other. Referee B positioned himself between the coaches and directed them to stop arguing and coach their teams.

Referee B reported that the youth referee was inexperienced and clearly over his head at this level of play. He opined that the teams saw an inexperienced referee and both coaches and sidelines tried to intimidate him.

The inexperience of the referee contributed to the confusion during the match. However, the inexperience of the referee is not an excuse for the behavior of both coaches and sidelines in attempting to take advantage of the situation rather than trying to help the referee with the match. The committee believes that the referee assignor shares some of the responsibility for the problems that occurred during the match by assigning a far too inexperienced referee to do this match.

The committee thanks Referee A for attending the hearing and for displaying maturity and composure during the proceedings. The committee is convinced that with experience Referee A is going to be a fine referee.

#### Decisions of the R&D Committee:

1. The protest is denied and the score stands Team B 2 vs. Team A 1.
2. Coach A and Coach B are each suspended for one game. These suspensions must be served in the next NCSL match for each team.
3. Both teams are admonished for their inappropriate behavior and will be monitored for the balance of this season.

#### **18. U13/4 Terminated Match**

The referee terminated the subject match in the 63<sup>rd</sup> minute. The score at termination was Team A 2- Team B 1. The committee received reports from the referee and both teams. The referee, managers, coaches, TSL, players and club representatives of both organizations attended the hearing.

The match was hard fought and played at an intense level. In the 51<sup>st</sup> minute, Player A1 received a second yellow card and subsequent red. In the 53<sup>rd</sup> minute, a red card was issue to Player A2 for foul and abusive language. Shortly thereafter, Coach A was sent off for continued dissent. In the 63<sup>rd</sup> minute, despite being 2 men down, Team A scored and the ball went under the back of the Team B net, and stopped close to where the ejected Team A personnel were making their way to the parking lot, away from the pitch. A general exchange of words occurred between at least one of the ejected Team A players and Player B. The ball was picked up and thrown by one of these players to the Player B. The force and intent of the throw, as well as the words exchanged between the Player B and ejected Team A players is unclear. However, this lead to physical altercations between Player A2 and Player B in close proximity to the net. At this point, several adults including the Coach B ran to the scene and separated the combatants. The referee then terminated the match.

The Committee views any untoward action occurring following an ejection as a serious offense. At this point, match officials have little recourse within the Laws of the Game (except for match suspension and termination), and must rely on action by the R&D process to ensure discipline. Team A's personnel ejected in the 51<sup>st</sup> and 53<sup>rd</sup> minute of the match had more than adequate time to clear the pitch in the 10+ minutes preceding the fight. Regardless of the time, ejected players/coaches must immediately leave the area, and not involve themselves with any aspect of the match. This includes heckling opponents and retrieving balls leaving the field of play. Players who engage in altercations with non-players, are also subject to harsh sanctions by the R&D process. In any event, it is not precisely clear how the sequence of events unfolded to cause the

termination of the match. However, some responsibility is shared by both sides. In instances such as this, the R&D committee is mindful of the consequences of determining the outcome of the match to the remainder of the teams in the division. In no case will a team benefit from a finding of match disposition if the team shares culpability for the termination.

Decisions of the R&D Committee:

1. The match is declared a “non-match.” It will be removed from the divisional schedule and will not be replayed.
2. Card(s) issued during the match will stand. Sit outs served during the match will be valid.
3. Player A2 receives a 2 match disciplinary suspension in addition to the suspension owed for the red card.
4. Player B receives a 2 match disciplinary suspension. The committee notes that the Team Bs self-imposed a one match suspension to Player B, which has already been served and documented. This suspension is valid towards one of the 2 imposed by the committee. The committee commends this action by Team B.

**19. U13/6 Terminated Game**

A hearing was held to review the incidents which caused the above referenced game to be terminated ten minutes into the second half.

The committee reviewed the referee's report, reports submitted by both teams as well as testimony presented by both teams during the hearing. For the record, Coach A and Parent/Assistant Coach A, although both were required to appear, neither attended the hearing. Team Manager A indicated that they were expected to attend and didn't know why they were not at the hearing.

The referee reported that after Team B scored on a direct kick, Coach A came onto the field followed by Parent/Assistant Coach A. The coaches met the referee near the penalty area and protested the call made by the referee. Profanity was directed at the referee. The referee issued Coach A a red card and immediately directed him to leave the field. However, the coaches did not leave the field and instead pursued the referee further. At this point, the referee terminated the match.

Both teams agreed with the basic facts as to the sequence of events that led up to the game being terminated.

The committee points out that Team A had two significant violations of the NCSL Codes of Conduct; a coach entering the field without permission and a parent invading the field to dispute a judgment call by the referee.

Decisions of the R&D Committee:

1. The game is declared a forfeit and the score will be recorded, Team B 3 vs. Team A 0.
2. Coach A is suspended for three games in addition to the automatic one game suspension for receiving the red card. These suspensions must be served in the next three NCSL games. If Coach A changes teams at the end of this season, the unserved sit-outs remain with him and must be served with any new NCSL team he joins.
3. Team A is fined \$200.

**20. U12/3 Protest of Game**

Team A protests the result of the subject match based on a violation of NCSL rules governing the players equipment, Rules and Procedures Manual Section IV.A.2.f., thereby making the player ineligible to participate in the match. Team A requested match forfeiture as the remedy in their written protest.

The R&D Committee reviewed the protest document submitted by both teams. The referee did not submit a statement. A hearing was held on 27 October, with the coach and manager of both teams present, as well as the Team B club representative.

The subject match was played to completion with a result of Team A 1 – Team B 0. Team A wore white jerseys for the match and Team B, as the home team, switched to red jerseys. Prior to the match, it was discovered by officials of Team B that Player B had arrived at the pitch without his red jersey, and the parents were dispatched to retrieve it. In the interim, a red, long sleeved shirt was provided to Player B. The Team B Manager displayed the resulting kit to the referee, and asked if Player B would be allowed to enter the match as attired. The referee was informed that Player B was properly rostered, advised of player's number, and that the proper jersey was being retrieved. The referee decided that he would allow Player B to participate. This decision was not discussed with Team A prior to the match starting and they became aware of this situation only after Player B entered the match in approximately the 8<sup>th</sup> minute. This player participated in approximately 15-20 minutes of the first half. At half-time, the Player B switched into the proper jersey and participated in the second half of the match.

Both parties state that the player was not on the pitch at the time the goal was scored. Coach A also stated at the hearing that he did not feel that any attempt to deceive was made by Team B, and that the color of the jersey was close to the jersey color. When questioned by the committee as to how the match result was affected, Team A stated the result “may have” been

affected by the increased number of substitutes available to Team B than would have otherwise been available if Player B was declared ineligible due to a uniform violation.

The referee made a judgment the uniform kit in question was acceptable to play the match. This is a technical violation of the NCSL rule relating to a player's equipment. However, the fact that a player is allowed to participate by the referee, with equipment not identical to his teammates, does not meet the definition of an "ineligible player" participating in a match. This definition is applicable to players who are not properly rostered, or who are serving suspensions for disciplinary reasons. Player B was properly rostered, and was in good disciplinary standing with the League. Further, although aware of the uniform at the match, Team A made no complaint during play to the referee, and have stated that no purposeful attempt to deceive was made by Team B. The argument that Team B was given an unfair advantage because of having more substitutes available for the match is dubious, and made even weaker by the fact that Team A carries a roster of 12 players, and only 11 showed up for the match. Speculation as to the direct affect on the match result due to this situation is not sufficient cause to overturn a match result.

The committee finds no evidence that the match result was affected.

Decision of the R&D Committee:

The protest is denied. The match result will stand as played.

**21. U12/4 Protest of Red Cards**

The subject match was played to completion with a result of Team A 4 – Team B 2. Reports of the match were obtained from both team coaches, managers and several Team B parents. Several attempts were made to obtain a report of the match from the referee, but none was provided. The nature of the protest surrounds the awarding of cards to two Team B players in the second half of the match. The protest asks for rescission of a second yellow card to one player (and thus the subsequent red card), and the reduction of a red card to yellow for a second player.

Player B1 was awarded a yellow card during the match for a reckless push. Later a teammate was fouled and injured, falling to the ground holding his head and crying. The referee pulled the player to his feet, telling him that he was not hurt. This was not the first instance of this behavior by the referee during the match, a fact that was noted by affiliates of BOTH teams. At this point, Player B1 yelled to the referee that his teammate was hurt. The referee attempted to restart play, and again Player B1 yelled that his teammate was hurt. The referee awarded Player B1 a second yellow card for dissent and then showed him the red card for having accumulated two yellow cards. Subsequently, Player B2 told the referee during play that he had made a bad call awarding Player B1 a red card. The referee then awarded Player B2 a red card.

Although the committee is sensitive to the alleged unusual response of this referee to dealing with injuries on the pitch, this is not a basis for protest, and must be dealt with as a separate issue. Per the NCSL Rules and Procedure Manual, Section V. C.1, all protests must allege a misapplication of FIFA Laws of the Game, NCSL Rules and/or Procedures, or other non-judgment calls. Clearly, the awarding of the second yellow card to Player B1 for dissent is a legitimate judgment call by the referee. However, in the absence of a report from the referee himself, and taking into account all AVAILABLE information, the basis for award of the red card to Player B2 does not appear to meet the definition of FIFA Law 12 for award of a red card; it does appear to meet a reasonable test for the definition of dissent, which merits a yellow card.

The committee is concerned with the alleged attitude and actions of the referee with respect to on-pitch injuries. We note that the behavior of the referee during the match cannot be investigated properly without a statement or appearance by the referee. Treating injuries and handling potentially injured players is a liability issue for the league and the referee himself.

Decisions of the R&D Committee:

1. The protest is partially granted. The protest fee will be returned to the team.
2. The red card issued to Player B2 is reduced to a yellow card for dissent.
3. The second yellow card, and subsequent red card, issued to Player B1 stands.
4. The referee of the match is required to appear before the NCSL R&D Committee, to discuss treating and handling injuries on the pitch. A memorandum will be sent to assignors to ensure further assignments are not made before the appearance.

**22. U12/4 Ineligible Player Roster**

Team A played in the U12 league of the NCSL. Per League and USYSA definition, all U12 teams have a maximum age birth date of August 1, 1992. (Rules and Procedure Manual, Section III.B, p.22). Team A's official MSYSA Roster indicates that three players do not meet the maximum age criteria. They are:

Player 1 DOB: 3/10/92

Player 2 DOB: 2/20/92

Player 3 DOB: 11/12/91

To date, Team A played three matches against U12 opponents with this roster.

Decisions of the R&D Committee:

1. Team A is ordered to remove the ineligible players from their roster immediately, and provide proof to the committee in the form of a copy of the updated MSYSA roster showing their termination.
2. Results of the following matches are voided and declared forfeit in favor of the opposition:  
Match #945, September 11, 2004, Team B 3 - Team A 0  
Match #954, September 19, 2004, Team C 3 - Team A 0
3. Results of Match #951, September 12, 2004, remains as recorded: Team C 5 – Team A 0.
4. The team is fined \$300 for using overage players in NCSL matches, a fact that team (and club) personnel must be accountable for. *The fine must be received in the League office prior to the start of play for matches occurring after September 26<sup>th</sup>.*
5. A report will be sent to the club and Maryland registrar asking for review of registrations done by this registrar.

**23. U11/2 Protest of Red Card**

A hearing was held to review the protest of the red card issued to Coach A in the above referenced match. The committee reviewed the assistant referee's report, reports submitted by both teams as well as testimony presented by Team A and the referee crew during the hearing.

Near the end of the match, Team A claimed that the referee missed a critical call during their attempt to score a goal. A Team A parent yelled at the referee and Coach A responded to the parent that “the referee missed the foul because he is too lazy to get down the field to make a call.” At this point, according to Team A, the referee came over to Coach A, issued him a warning, and returned to the field to restart play. The assistant referee came over and stopped the referee from restarting play. The referee and assistant referee conferred and the referee went back over to Coach A and showed him the red card.

Coach B reported the events as outlined in the protest are similar to what he observed. Coach B believed that there was some justification in reducing the red to a yellow card.

The referee stated that when he first approached Coach A, he told him to leave the field. The referee further admitted that he did not wait for Coach A to leave and returned to the field to restart play.

Based on the actions of the referee, the committee perceived that the referee intended to give Coach A only a warning. Initially a red card was not shown to the coach and the coach thought and acted as if he was only given a verbal warning. In the opinion of the committee, procedural inconsistencies and miscommunication on part of the referee crew contributed to the confusion over the ejection of Coach A.

Decision of the R&D Committee:

The protest is granted and the red card issued to Coach A is reduced to a yellow card.

**24. U10/G Decision on Coach's Behavior**

A hearing was held to review the referee's allegations of significant inappropriate behavior by the Coach A in the above referenced match.

The committee reviewed the referee's report, reports submitted by both teams as well as testimony presented by the referee and Coach A during the hearing.

Coach A admitted during the hearing that he didn't want to play this match and it was his opinion that the field was unplayable due to the high winds. Coach A argued his position with a Team A club official several hours prior to the match. The Team A club official disagreed with Coach A and informed him that the field was open and playable.

Prior to the start of this match, Coach A approached the referee on the field to present his case to the referee that the field was unplayable. The referee informed Coach A that the previous teams had no problems with the wind, the field was playable and he would not cancel the match. Coach A continued to press his case with negative comments directed toward the referee, the referee reported that he walked away from Coach A and started the match.

During the match, the referee awarded Coach A a yellow card for continued dissent. After the match, Coach A approached the referee to question a call he made late in the match against the Team A and to question a yellow card issued to his player.

In Coach A's written submission, he admitted that he “went across the field to get clarification from the referee on a very questionable call.” Further, Coach A reported that “it was important to understand why his player received a yellow card.” Coach A stated that he was not confrontational or rude towards the referee. However, the discussion escalated to the point

that the referee issued a red card to Coach A.

Coaches may approach the referee after the match to request from the referee what cards were issued during the match. However, this must not be taken as an opportunity to challenge or dispute the calls made during the match. Further, if a team is unhappy with the performance of the referee or wants to file a protest over what happened during the match, the team should contact their club representative. There is a formal process for filing a protest of a match outlined in the Rules & Procedures Manual.

In the unanimous opinion of the committee, Coach A's behavior prior, during and especially after the match was totally inappropriate and a significant violation of the NCSL Leaders Code of Conduct.

Decision of the R&D Committee:

In addition to the automatic one game suspension for receiving a red card. Coach A is suspended for an additional two games. This three game suspension must be served in the next three NCSL games. Coach A is directed to review the requirements for serving a suspension in the NCSL Rules & Procedures Manual.

**25. U10/L Protested Game**

A hearing was held to review the protest filed by Team A in the above referenced game. The basis of the protest was the referee did not award a goal to the Team A after a handball by a Team B player in the box.

The committee reviewed the referee's report, reports submitted by both teams as well as testimony presented by both teams during the hearing.

The referee reported that Team A team took a shot on goal. A Team B field player reached out and deflected the ball in flight. The referee reported that he blew his whistle before the ball rolled into the goal. The referee awarded a penalty kick to the Team A team and ejected the Team B player for denying an obvious goal scoring opportunity. The penalty kick was taken but was unsuccessful.

Both teams disagreed with the referee's accounting of what happened. Both teams agreed that the Team B player deflected the ball and it went directly into the goal in the air. Neither coach heard the referee's whistle stopping the play. Both coaches agreed that even if a whistle was blown, the referee would not have had time to blow his whistle before the ball flew into the goal.

Coach B reported that his player has already served the automatic one game suspension for receiving the red card.

This situation was part judgment and part misapplication of the laws.

Decisions of the R&D Committee:

1. The protest is granted and the game will be replayed in its entirety.
2. The ten disciplinary points assessed to the Team B player are waived and will not be counted.

**26. U10/L Protested Game**

A hearing was held to review the protest filed by Team A in the above referenced game. The basis of the protest was a Team B parent served in the capacity of an assistant referee without the knowledge and agreement of both coaches.

The committee reviewed the referee's report, reports submitted by both teams as well as testimony presented by both teams during the hearing.

In the first half, Team A claimed that the Team B parent volunteer flagged an offside call against Team A, which caused the referee to whistle stoppage of play. This offside call by the Team B volunteer parent denied a goal scoring opportunity. During the second half, Team A alleged that Team B scored a goal while a Team B player who received the ball was offside. The referee conferred with the Team B parent and allowed the goal to stand.

Team B stated that they were asked to provide a volunteer parent to serve as a linesman. The center referee was informed that the volunteer was a certified grade 9 referee. Team B did not dispute the facts that the volunteer linesman contributed to the offside calls. Team B claimed that it is fairly common in this division for the volunteer to call offside. The Team B parent volunteer was unaware of NCSL rules that as a volunteer she cannot signal offside or fouls.

The referee felt that he was working with a potentially new referee and that she may have influenced a couple of his calls. The referee further stated that it was not a difficult game to do since Team B dominated the match.

There is no dispute that Team B violated league rules by allowing a parent volunteer to serve as an assistant referee without the agreement of both coaches. However, in order for a protest to be granted, two criteria must be met. There must be a misapplication FIFA or league rules and this misapplication must have affected the outcome of the game. In the unanimous opinion of the committee, the outcome of the game was not affected.

Decision of the R&D Committee:

The protest is denied and the score stands Team B 6 vs. Team A 0.

**27. U10/L Inappropriate Behavior**

A hearing was held to review the allegation of inappropriate behavior by Coach A during the above referenced game.

The committee reviewed the referee's report, reports submitted by both teams, as well as testimony presented by both teams during the hearing. For the record, Coach A although required to appear, did not attend the hearing. Coach A in an e-mail to the R&D Chairman waived his right to represent himself before the committee.

Team B filed a complaint with the R&D Committee claiming that Coach A, during the match, instructed one of his players to trip Player B to prevent a goal from being scored. Player B was headed for the goal and Player A was coming from behind and following his coach's instruction, intentionally tripped Player A.

The referee reported that he heard Coach A yell instructions to Player A to "trip him, trip him." Player A who was slightly behind, followed the coach's instruction, and took out Player A by giving him a hard two handed shove from behind. The referee immediately whistled a stoppage in play and red carded Player A. Before play resumed, the referee went over to the Coach A and issued him a stern warning.

In Coach A's written statement, he acknowledges that he did yell out instructions to his player to trip the Player B. He admitted that it was a poor choice of words on his part and that it is not the intention of his team nor players to purposefully injure anyone. Coach A apologized to the Team B and Player B. The Team A manager, stated that he was shocked when he heard the instructions yelled out by Coach. A. The Team A Manager claimed that this was a single incident and not typical of the behavior of Coach A.

In the opinion of the committee, Coach A's direction to his player was totally unacceptable and a most significant violation of the NCSL Leader's Code of Conduct.

Decision of the R&D Committee:

Coach A is suspended for six games. This suspension must be served in the next six NCSL games. If Coach A changes teams at the end of this season, the unserved sit-outs remain with him and must be served with any new NCSL team he joins.