

## Summary R&D Decisions for 2007

### 1. U15/5 Player Melee and TSL/Affiliate Misconduct

The subject match was played to completion with a result of Team A 3 – Team B 0. Reports were received from all parties and a hearing was held on 9 May 2007.

In approximately the 50<sup>th</sup> minute, a routine foul call by the referee led to a stoppage in play. As the players were getting ready for the re-start, Player A1 and Player B1 became involved in an altercation and punches were thrown. Accounts differ as to how the altercation started, who threw the first punch, etc. This led to an escalation as Player A2 and Player B2 already in close proximity joined in the fracas, as well as Player B3 who left the goal area and became involved. The fight was ended when team officials and/or parents from one or both teams entered the pitch and used verbal commands to stop the fighting.

As the match officials were sorting out the disciplinary situation, teams lingered around their respective benches. Reports from both teams indicate that Player B3 was “out of control” and had to be restrained by his teammates and coach. Further, it appears that he became involved in a verbal exchange with one or more Team A affiliates. At some point, the Team A Sportsmanship Liaison engaged Player B3 from across the field, which led to an exchange with Team B affiliates. The incident was contained at this point. The referees issued 5 send offs for violent conduct to Players A1, A2, B1, B2 and B3. Play then resumed and the match was completed.

The committee notes that it considers evidence from all sources. Frequently, there is a difference in the reports submitted by various parties. In these cases the committee weighs the evidence and arrives at the most probable scenario on which to base its decision. Reports by match officials are frequently given the most weight.

The committee views a multi-player melee as a very serious breach of the players codes of conduct. Frequently, events of this type lead to even more serious escalations and result in match terminations and the involvement of law enforcement. The committee is aware that reports will differ significantly as to how these events are initiated and evolve. Therefore, we rely principally on the official match record. Players involved in violent conduct send-offs for fighting will be sanctioned with additional suspensions. Further, players who display lack of control and engage affiliates run the danger of continuing to escalate an already tense situation, and will be sanctioned further.

Questioning by the committee indicates that the Team Sportsmanship Liaison function was not followed by both teams. The Team B Sportsmanship Liaison admitted that he had not worn his badge at the match, and had not identified himself as such to the Team A Sportsmanship Liaison nor the referee.

The Team A Sportsmanship Liaison indicated that he had not sought out the Team B Sportsmanship Liaison prior to the match. However, the committee was most disturbed by the fact the Team A Sportsmanship Liaison took it upon himself to engage Player B3 from across the pitch. This is a direct violation of the stated purpose of the Team Sportsmanship Liaison function to be the “cooler head”. Such an exchange with an opposition player will naturally cause an increase in tension between the affiliates, and the Team Sportsmanship Liaison must not put themselves into a position which could cause further altercation.

Team A club officials conducted a review of the incident, and sanctioned Players A1 and A2 with an additional one match suspension, and a community service project within Team A. Team B officials conducted an internal review and placed Players B1, B2, and B3 on club probation.

The committee also notes that Team A was sanctioned in Fall 2006. The team was sanctioned by the League and fined \$200 for ineffective Team Sportsmanship Liaison leadership. In addition, Team A club officials required team affiliates to attend a mandatory meeting regarding expectations for affiliate behavior at matches. The committee notes that repeated violations and appearances at hearings will result in increasing sanction.

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

1. Players A1, A2, B1 and B2 are suspended for the next additional League match, in addition to the match suspension required for the red card. Player B3 is suspended for the next two League matches in addition to the match suspension required for the red card. Suspensions already served (if any) as a result of club actions may be applied towards satisfaction of these requirements.
2. Team A is fined \$300 (2<sup>nd</sup> offense) for failure to follow NCSL Rules and Procedures related to the Team Sportsmanship Liaison function. This fine must be received in the NCSL office no later than 4:00pm 25 May 2007. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of the next League match.

3. Team B is fined \$200 (1<sup>st</sup> offense) for failure to follow NCSL Rules and Procedures related to the Team Sportsmanship Liaison function. This fine must be received in the NCSL office no later than 4:00pm 25 May 2007. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of the next League match.
4. Team A Sportsmanship Liaison is banned from serving as a Team Sportsmanship Liaison for the remainder of 2007.

## **2. U14/1 Ineligible Coach**

Subsequent to this match, Manager A was advised by the Team A club representative and Maryland Commissioner that Coach A should sit out the next game under suspension, even though he was not shown a red card by the referee. Manager A ignored this advice, and Coach A participated in the next two scheduled matches. A telephone conversation between the Manager A and the R&D Chairman confirmed Coach A's failure to sit out and participation in the next two matches.

NCSL rules stipulate that coaches who are ejected from a match must serve a one match suspension. Further, NCSL rules allow match forfeits to be awarded in cases of illegal participation by suspended players or coaches. Lastly the statutory penalty for failure to serve a red card sit out is 3 matches.

### Decisions of the R&D Chairman:

1. Coach A is suspended for the team's next three NCSL league matches which are actually played.
2. The result of subject match is annulled. The match result will be recorded as forfeit in favor of Team B 3 – Team A 0.
3. The result of second match is annulled. The match result will be recorded as forfeit in favor of Team C 3 – Team A 0.

## **3. U14/1 Protest**

Team A protests the result of the subject match based on the failure of Team B and the referee to properly follow the requirements of the NCSL STAR program. Written reports were received from both teams and the match referee; a hearing was held on 9 May 2007.

Protests must allege a misapplication of FIFA Laws of the Game or League Rules which have impacted the outcome of a match. Further, judgment calls of the referee may not form the basis for a protest. The STAR program is administrative in nature. League Rules and Procedures Manual, Appendix IX: STAR Programs Rules and Procedures, provides sanctions only for failure to register the proper number of STARS. R&D is not empowered to extend league rules beyond that which was voted on by the membership. Therefore, R&D is unable to rule on the instant protest. Judgment calls of the referee may not form the basis of a protest. [NCSL Rules and Procedures Manual, Section XII: Protests]. The referee exercised judgment in allowing one STAR [Team A affiliate] and one club linesman [Team B affiliate] to officiate the match. Therefore, this protest is not valid.

### Decisions of the R&D Chairman:

1. The protest is not valid and the match result stands as played.
2. The \$200 protest fee shall be returned to Team A.

## **4. U14/3 Protest**

Team A protests the result of the subject match. The match played to completion with a result of Team B 4 and Team A 2. Team A alleges a violation of NCSL Rules and Procedures, Section II: Definitions: Team and Section V: Player and Team Transfers. Statements were requested and received from both teams. In addition, the official blue match card and a copy of the official state roster for Team B were review and analyzed.

Both teams agree on the material facts of the allegation: that Team B did not have a full complement of 11 players ready immediately prior to scheduled match time, and that Team B was able to produce 3 more players who were written in on the blue match card to enable Team B to field a complete, 11-man side. Team A contends that these three players were "guest players", not properly rostered, and who were procured from another team.

A review of the official state roster and the blue match card indicates full compliance with NCSL rules. These documents show that the roster consisted of not more than 18 players, all players were added prior to the season, the three players in question were added to the roster on 3/31/07, and each of the three players in question carried "multi-team" passes, as allowed by MSYSA, and that primary team was a BBSL team, not another NCSL team. Therefore, Team B is found to be in complete compliance with all applicable NCSL rules concerning team formation and roster.

### Decision of the R&D Committee:

1. The protest is DENIED. The result of the match is upheld.
2. Team A forfeits the \$200 protest fee.

### **5. U14/3 Protest**

Team A protests the result of the subject match, based on a violation of NCSL Rules and Procedures Manual, Section X: Game Procedures, which states, in part, "The referee crew must inform and get agreement from both coaches if one member of the crew is an immediate family member of a player." Team A asserts that the assistant referee and a Team B player are siblings.

Written reports were received from both teams. The R&D Chairman also spoke with the assignor who received a report from the referee crew. Assistant referee stated that he was not related to any player on Team B.

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

1. The protest is denied. The match result stands as played.
2. Team A forfeits the \$200 protest fee.

### **6. U14/4 Protest**

Team A protests the result of the subject match based on a misapplication of Law-14: Penalty Kick. R&D received and reviewed written comments from both sides as well as the match referee. A telephone interview with the match referee was conducted by the R&D Chair. A poll of the R&D committee was conducted using all pertinent information.

The basis for the protest was that the referee disallowed a goal scored on a penalty kick. The penalty kick was taken and the shot was deflected by the Team B goalkeeper and off the goal post. The ball then caromed back to the Team A kicker, who shot the ball into the net. The referee disallowed the goal based on a misinterpretation of Law 14, instead awarding an indirect free kick to Team B based on the "two touch rule". This is an incorrect application of Law 14, which allows the kicker to touch the ball after it has been touched by another player, in this case the Team B goalkeeper.

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

1. The protest is upheld. The protest fee will be returned to Team A.
2. The match result is annulled. However, any cards earned and any sit outs observed in the annulled match are valid.
3. The match is ordered to be replayed subject to league rules governing the reschedule of matches.

### **7. U13-3 Protest**

Team A protests the result of the subject match based on a misapplication of Laws 5 and 12. Team A further protests the issuance of the following disciplinary cards during the subject match: 1) red card - Coach A and 2) yellow card – Player A.

Judgment calls of the referee may not form the basis for protest. [NCSL Rules and Procedures Manual, Section XII] FIFA Law 5 states that all facts associated with a match are final upon the referee's determination. The referee's report indicates that, in his judgment a defender was in the vicinity of the attacker and with 25 yards or so to goal this did not represent an obvious goal scoring opportunity.

In regards to the red card to Coach A, judgment calls of the referee may not form the basis for protest. This must be submitted as a separate protest and fee.

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

1. The match result stands as played.
2. The yellow card to Player A is rescinded given severity of injury.
3. The \$200 protest fee shall be returned to Team A, since protest not valid.

### **8. U13/U12 Dual Rostered Player**

The NCSL R&D Committee was made aware of the dual roster status of Player A the week of 22 April 2007. On 25 April 2007 confirmation was received from the VYSA registrar that Player A was rostered as follows: Team A, roster date 7/17/2006 and Team B, roster date 8/9/2006. Team B was ordered to release Player A and they complied. Player A then played the remainder of the season with Team A.

The facts as stated above are a matter of record, and are not in dispute. A poll of a quorum of the R&D committee was undertaken to determine the disciplinary action resulting from the dual roster status.

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

1. Team B shall forfeit all matches by a score of 0-3 in favor of the opposition during the period in which Player A was on the roster. US Youth Soccer Rule 209, Use of Ineligible Players, states that a team shall forfeit each game of in which a player was improperly entered on the team's roster. VYSA Travel Team Registration Manual, Rule 5-9, prohibits

multiple rosters for travel teams. In this instance, Player A was properly rostered to Team A, but improperly rostered to Team B by virtue of violation of VYSA Rule 5-9. Therefore, Team B forfeits the matches in which he was on the Team B roster.

2. Player A is suspended for the next three NCSL matches in which he plays. Although Team A is held harmless as a team, Player A will have to serve his sit outs with that team should he return to the roster for Fall 2007.