



## Capital Football Zero Tolerance Policy for Swearing as at January 2007

- applicable to all junior, men's and women's leagues in 2007 -

### Preamble

The prevalence of swearing in football is a problem that we want to eliminate from our sport.

The Laws of the Game provide for a player to be sent off for using foul, abusive and/or insulting language, but the definition of foul language has widely varying interpretations. The Zero Tolerance Policy (ZTP) is intended to have a two-fold affect:

- ❖ to educate players not to swear, and
- ❖ ensure that all players, spectators and officials enjoy the World Game.



### What is the policy?

Simply put, the policy represents a punishment for swearing. A referee will caution a player Y2 Making Unsporting Remarks if:

- a) The referee hears the player swear and can identify that player; or
- b) Upon a report from an assistant referee officially appointed to the game who has heard the player swear and can identify that player; and
- c) If the swearing is considered to be self directed.

A ZTP caution will be treated the same as any other cautionable offence.

A referee should still send a player from the field R6 (offensive, insulting or abusive language) if the swearing is considered to be directed at others.

### What is considered swearing?

Words that a reasonable person would consider to be swearing should be penalised under ZTP. Racial, religious and sexual slurs may be considered to be abusive and should be punished under existing offences.

ZTP applies to all Capital Football Under 11 and older competitions. For Under 10 and younger competitions, Clubs can devise their own policies to counsel offending players, and should instruct their referees accordingly. In doing this, clubs should be mindful that some younger players may be involved in inter-club competitions, and policies should be devised for their own players without having implications for players from opposing clubs.



### **Referee's Discretion**

There will be times when an injured player swears and the context of the swearing will have to be considered by the referee. An injury that leaves the player in pain or in tears may result in an expletive from that player. In these cases, the referee will use their judgement in determining whether a yellow card is warranted. A reminder to the player to be careful of what they are saying may be sufficient in the circumstances.

If the swearing is self-directed (i.e. if the player makes a mistake), the referee should caution the player. Where it (swearing) is a self-directed & quiet the referee may issue a warning instead of a yellow card. If the swearing is directed at another person then the referee will have no discretion but to send the player from the field.

### **Penalties under this policy**

The penalty will be as prescribed by the relevant Regulations / By Laws under which the game is being played. The League Manger or Disciplinary Panel may make any other determination they are allowed to make under the relevant Regulations / By Laws.

Heather Reid  
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