

Recommended Sanctions for Members of Clubs involved in offences at matches at U18 and below.

This guide is written for use by Club Disciplinary Panels when dealing with spectators/club members who offend at matches at U18 and below. It is not exhaustive and should be used in conjunction with the RFU Disciplinary Regulations, which can be found on rfu.com

For use by Club Disciplinary Panels only

Suggested

Starting point

Entering the playing enclosure	3 weeks
Striking	6 weeks
Verbal abuse	4 weeks
Verbal abuse of match official	10 weeks
Threatening behaviour	12 weeks
Threatening behaviour towards Match Official	24 weeks
Racial abuse based on religion, colour or national or ethnic origin	18 weeks
Any other act, misconduct or behaviour contrary to the spirit and/or the interests of the game	6 weeks

- **In assessing a penalty, Panels should take into account mitigating or aggravating factors which will determine a reduction or an increase from the entry point**
- **Clubs can, in exceptional circumstances properly suspend wholly or in part a period of suspension**
- **In the most serious cases, a life ban can be imposed.**

In addition if such misconduct is reported formally – for example by a referee then the following regulation applies.

5.12 Actions Prejudicial to the Interests of the Game

Coaches, parents and other adult supporters reported for ill discipline on the touchline at a School or Club Youth match

Responsibility for dealing with the Report

CB (County) Disciplinary Committee

Representatives of the senior club, the junior section and the age group in question will be required to attend the Senior Disciplinary Committee.

Sanctions may range from advice to suspensions of individuals, a team, a coach, a complete

junior section or eventually suspension and therefore points deductions for the whole club.

Ultimately the senior section of the club has the responsibility for the discipline and good conduct of all its players, including all the junior players, for all its coaches and officials and for all its spectators.

Some clubs deal with spectator misconduct vigorously, but other are less interventionist. It is significant that when clubs have been asked to appear in front of the Senior Disciplinary Committee to answer a 5.12 charge they have usually begun to implement a series of strategies to improve the behaviour of adults watching junior games. With further advice from the Panel they have been able to achieve very significant improvements which have made the game experience a much better one for all involved.

Clubs may want to consider roping off pitches; issuing copies of the spectator code of conduct and displaying appropriate information around the clubhouse but by far the most effective strategies have been to have people on the ground challenging unacceptable behaviour from any adult watching the game, setting a good example themselves and dealing firmly with anyone who will not comply with the code of conduct.

Recent cases have made it very clear that a club is much more able to discipline individuals if they are members of the club and so the advice to make sure that the parents and relatives of the players in your junior section become members of the club is repeated yet again. No one should be acting as a representative of your club in any formal or informal role unless they are a member of your club.

It should be noted that all junior players under the age of 18 fall within the Child Safeguarding regulations. In any interaction between an adult and a young person, the adult has a responsibility to exercise a duty of care towards the young person and any kind of threatening or abusive behaviour towards a young person – let alone any physical contact will inevitably produce problems for the adult and should therefore be avoided. In such circumstances the adult and the young person are rarely judged to be of equal status; they rarely have the same expectations placed upon them and the adult is expected to show maturity, restraint and discipline when dealing with young people.

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