



# *Wicklow & District Football League*



To All Clubs

As you are all aware by now we have had another assault on a referee recently. This situation cannot continue and the league will deal with anyone guilty of misconduct towards any Referee. We wish to extend our sympathy to the Referee in question and wish him a speedy recovery and hopefully a return to the game he loves very much.

We all know that any assault on any Referee is a very serious offence and will be dealt with as such. It is possible however that one or two clubs are still unsure of what constitutes an assault so to clarify the situation.

An Assault is an **intentional** act of physical violence at or upon a Referee.

For purposes of this, "**intentional act**" shall mean an act the person did for the purpose of causing a result, not just that the person did the act. Unintended consequences of an act are irrelevant.

Assault includes, but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a Referee, hitting, kicking, punching, choking, spitting on, grabbing or bodily running into or head butting a Referee and the act of kicking or throwing any object that could inflict injury; damaging the Referee's uniform or personal property, i.e. car, equipment, etc.

Abuse is a verbal statement or physical act not resulting in bodily contact, which implies or threatens physical harm to a Referee or the Referee's property and equipment.

Abuse includes, but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a Referee: using foul or abusive language toward the person or persons, Damage to any part of a Referee's personal property; spitting at (but not on) the Referee; or verbally threatening a Referee.

Verbal threats are remarks that carry the implied or direct threat of physical harm. Such remarks as "I'll get you after the game" or "You won't get out of here in one piece," shall be deemed as abuse.

Anyone found guilty of any of the above will have to face the prospect of heavy fines and long suspensions.

With the health and safety of a Referee in mind we now bring to your attention the following guidelines.

## **SAFETY OF LEAGUE APPOINTED REFEREE.**

Clubs are reminded also that they are held responsible for the safety of Referee once the Referee arrives at the ground for a game and until the game is over and the Referee had departed the ground after the game. We fully understand that at times it is impossible to guarantee 100% the safety of the Referee at all times but every effort must be made to do whatever needs to be done to limit the risk.

The Wicklow League Committee and the Referees Committee recently met to discuss all issues relating to the safety of match official's and we are very much in agreement on the above issues. We cannot expect anyone to officiate at games when they feel unsure about their safety. So we ask all clubs to help by following the correct procedure when the Referee arrives for your game.

1. Where Pitch is required to be roped off before a game then make sure it's done.
2. Pitch should be marked and nets in place and corner flags in place.
3. Referee should be met by official of the home team and escorted to the dressing room.
4. Referee should receive match fee before the game and not after.
5. When game is over the club official should ensure the Referee has departed the ground in a safe manner.

We all want to see soccer played in the proper manor and without incident and while we are fully aware that we cannot be perfect all the time but we can do our very best all the time to make sure things run with safety in mind.

Your's in Sport.

Michael Conlon,

Chairperson

Wicklow & District Football League

P.P

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Conlon', written in a cursive style.

Wicklow League Public Relations Officer.

