



Victorian Amateur Football Association

Policies and Code of Conduct

VAFA GUIDELINES

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AUDIBLE OBSCENITY RULE

The audible obscenity rule covers all Association matches.

A **Yellow Card** will be held up by the umpire towards the coach's box indicating that a player has been sent from the ground, but has not been reported under the audible obscenity rule. This signal indicates that the player can be replaced. The player sent from the ground must be off the field for 15 minutes actual playing time.

An umpire can simply caution a player if the language is not considered excessively obscene.

If the abuse is of the umpire, the player is to be reported shown a Red Card, ordered-off and is only able to be replaced after 15 minutes of playing time has elapsed.

VAFA Goal and Boundary Umpires have no power to order players from the field. If they make a report, the correct procedure is to immediately notify the field umpire at the next appropriate break in play (but to be as soon as possible), who will then confirm the report with the player and order him from the field for the appropriate time, again displaying a red card in the manner described above.

In the event of any player refusing to leave the field, when ordered-off by the field umpire, the match shall be awarded to the opposing team.

The **Red Card** will be shown to a player showing him he is reported and must leave the ground for 15 minutes playing time.

The Red Card is then shown to the timekeepers showing them that this player has been reported and is off the ground for 15 minutes playing time and cannot be replaced during that time.

The timekeepers must signal back to the reporting umpire they have seen the Red card and start recording the time off the field once the player has left the ground.

The **Black Card** will be shown to a player showing him he is reported and must leave the ground for the remainder of the match.

The coach knows that the player is off for the rest of the match & that he can only be replaced after 15 minutes playing time has elapsed.

The Black card is then shown to the timekeepers showing that this player has been reported and is off the ground for the remainder of the match.



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The timekeepers must signal back to the reporting umpire they have seen the Black card and start recording the time off the field once the player has left the ground & cannot be replaced until 15 minutes playing time has elapsed.

Where it is found that the injured party was feigning injury the umpire may change the order-off time from whole game to fifteen minutes duration.

BLOOD RULE

The procedure for removing "bloodied" players from the field will be applied as follows:

- once a field umpire gives the blood rule signal, the player must leave the field at the nearest point to receive treatment.
- the replacement player must come onto the field through the interchange area.
- the game recommences when the replacement player takes up a playing position and the injured player is off the field.
- the injured player can only re-enter the field via the interchange area.
- the runner must communicate immediately player on/off to the interchange steward.
- if the injured player ordered to leave the field is deliberately slow in leaving the field the field umpire will advise him only once to hurry. If he does not leave quickly he risks being reported for misconduct.

HEAT POLICY

In keeping with the VAFA's development of risk management policies to provide the safest possible environment for the conduct of Amateur football, the VAFA announces the following policy which is to be followed.

The policy is as follows.

An announcement will be made available on the Sportscover Info-Line (9644 2828) between 9.30 am and 11.00 am on the day of a match where the temperature is expected to reach or exceed 30 degrees. Where high temperatures are forecast for match day at 6pm the day before a match, clubs and umpires must ensure that they check for this announcement.

When it is announced that the Heat Policy is to be adhered to, the following is to apply:



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1. The length of each quarter shall be 22 minutes plus time on.
2. The length of the half time break shall be twenty (20) minutes.
3. The length of the three-quarter time break shall be ten (10) minutes.
4. Water carriers to be permitted to be on the playing arena during play, provided they not go within 50 metres of play, and not interfere in any way with play.
5. Field umpires will also be encouraged to delay the re-commencement of play after a goal has been scored by 20-30 seconds so as to allow water carriers some additional time to provide water to players.
6. In relation to Reserves and Club XVIII matches the above rules shall apply, except that the length of each quarter shall not be altered.

Senior and Under 19 Matches

If the temperature at 1.30 pm is, according to the Bureau of Meteorology, 30 degrees or above, the following playing conditions shall apply:-

1. The length of each quarter shall be 22 minutes plus time on.
2. Each club shall be allowed 2 additional water carriers (who shall be properly attired).
3. The length of the ½ time break shall be 20 minutes (to be strictly enforced).
4. The length of the ¾ time break shall be 10 minutes (to be strictly enforced).
5. Water carriers will be permitted to be on the playing arena during play, provided they do not go within 50 metres of play, and do not interfere in any way with play.

Field umpires will also be encouraged to delay the re-commencement of play after a goal by 20-30 seconds so as to allow water carriers some additional to provide water to players.

Reserve and Club 18 Matches

If the forecast temperature for the day is 30 degrees or more, or if the temperature at 11.15 am is in fact, according to the Bureau of Meteorology, 30 degrees or more, the above rules shall apply, save that the length of each quarter shall not be altered

It is the obligation of the home club to ascertain the temperature at the relevant time, and to advise the umpires and the away club accordingly.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES POLICY

- with particular reference to HIV (AIDS) and Hepatitis B



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Introduction:

This policy is to take immediate effect for all games administered by the VAFA.

The policy is based to a significant degree upon the Infectious Diseases Policy published by the Australian Sports Medicine Federation Ltd, 2nd edition, revised and reprinted August 1991 and adapted specifically to the perceived needs of amateur football.

The Need For A Policy:

A number of blood-borne infectious diseases can be transmitted during body contact and collision sports. The more serious include HEPATITIS and HIV (AIDS) infections. These diseases may spread by contact between broken skin or mucous membranes, e.g. the eye and the inside of the mouth, and infected blood or saliva contaminated by blood.

It should be stressed at this point that the risk factor of such infections is very low but, having regard to the potential outcomes of such infections, the Association believes it must take all reasonable steps to minimise that risk.

N.B. There is no evidence the sweat/urine, and tears will transmit Hepatitis B or HIV.

Conduct Of Matches:

A) During the game-

1. Biting

- (a) Biting of ANY person is prohibited
- (b) Umpires will be directed to report EVERY incident of biting.
- (c) Clubs are directed to report through the Investigation committee EVERY incident of biting not already reported.
- (d) Tribunals and Investigation committees will be directed as to the dangers of transmissions of infection by this means in order to take this factor into consideration when fixing penalties for biting offences.

2. Spitting

- (a) Spitting at umpires, players, officials or any person is prohibited.
- (b) Umpires will be directed to report every incident of spitting.



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- (c) Clubs are directed to report through the Investigation committee every incident spitting at a person or persons not already reported.
- (d) Tribunals and Investigation committees will be directed as to the dangers of transmission of infection by this means in order to take this factor into consideration when fixing penalties spitting offences.

3. Cuts and Abrasions:

- (a) All wounds resulting in blood loss shall be covered by a clean dressing.
- (b) Where bleeding is continuing and is not controlled by a dressing the player shall leave the field, voluntarily or by direction of a field umpire, until the bleeding is controlled and the wound is properly dressed.
- (c) The dressing of wounds must be clean and not blood soaked. Where dressings are blood-soaked the player shall leave the field, voluntarily or by direction of a field umpire, until the wound is covered by a clean dressing.
- (d) Where clothing is contaminated by blood e.g. jumpers or shorts, it must be replaced prior to the player being allowed to resume play. The player may be directed by a field umpire to leave the field until the clothing is replaced.
- (e) If bleeding cannot be controlled and the wound securely covered, the player shall not be permitted to continue in the game.

B) Team Areas-

1. It is the club's responsibility to ensure that the dressing rooms be clean and tidy. Particular attention should be paid to hand basins, toilets and showers. Adequate soap, paper hand towels, brooms, refuse disposal bins and disinfectants must be available at all times.
2. All clothing, equipment and surfaces contaminated by blood must be treated as potentially infectious and treated accordingly.
3. Plastic bags ought to be available to dispose of potentially contaminated clothing and dressings.
4. At training sessions all open cuts and wounds must be treated immediately and covered with clean dressings.
5. It is preferable that there be no share of towels, face washers and drink containers.
6. There should be no sharing of shaving razors.

Players, umpires and officials personal protection:

1. It is the responsibility of all players, umpires and officials to maintain strict personal hygiene as this is the best method of controlling a spread of infectious diseases.
2. It is strongly recommended that ALL players, umpires and officials be vaccinated against Hepatitis B. This involves a series of three injections over a period of six months.



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3. All players, umpires or officials with prior evidence of these diseases are strongly advised to maintain confidential advice and clearance from a doctor prior to participation or involvement.
4. Clubs should supply disposable gloves for use by their training staff on match days and at training sessions.
5. In the event that medication is administered to players by injection there must be no sharing of needles.

This policy has been prepared in consultation with Dr Peter Stanley, a consultant infectious diseases physician who is a visiting consultant to Fairfield Hospital, St. Vincent's Hospital for Women. Dr Stanley has a working knowledge of the amateur code having played amateur football for a number of years.

The policy will be reviewed from time to time as required in consultation with Dr Stanley.

The association acknowledges and is extremely grateful to Dr Stanley for his advice and assistance.

MELEE POLICY

A melee is:

“ an incident involving a number of players pushing, scragging, wrestling or engaging in similar such conduct.”

ORDER-OFF RULE

The Association's "Order Off" rule shall apply in all matches. The field umpire must automatically order from the field, for a period of 15 minutes actual playing time, any player reported by him for a reportable offence under the Rules of the VAFA.

If the report is a serious one, the field umpire may order the player from the field for the remainder of the game. This player can be replaced after a period of 15 minutes of playing time. The reported player cannot take any further part in the match.

Upon the Red Card being shown the Club Runner must immediately wait on the umpire and enquire i) if the 15 minute penalty is to apply, (he must advise the timekeepers accordingly) or ii) if the



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player has been ordered from the ground for the remainder of the game (if this is the situation the runner is to advise the Interchange Steward and the Coach accordingly).

Where it is found that the injured party was feigning injury the umpire may change the order-off time from whole game to fifteen minutes duration.

RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS POLICY

The policy

No player, official or supporter of a member club of the Association shall speak to, or at, or about, any person of any member club of the Association in a manner which abuses, threatens, disparages, vilifies or insults the other person on the basis of that person's race, gender, religion, physical characteristics, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin or any other personal characteristics.

Enforcement of the policy.

Umpires are instructed to refer to the Chief Executive Officer of the Association by written report within seventy- two hours of the conclusion of any match **any alleged breaches of the policy**. The Chief Executive Officer shall then consult with the Chairman of the Tribunal and Investigation Committee and undertake any preliminary investigations as directed by such chairman, which may include an attempt at mediation, that if successful, may see a formal hearing not necessary.

The Association may lay a charge or charges based upon the umpire's written report alleging a breach or breaches of this policy as constituting conduct unbecoming or conduct prejudicial to the interests of the Association and such charge or charges shall be heard before an Investigation Committee.

Clubs are encouraged to report alleged breaches of the policy to the Association under Rule 124 for Investigation by the Investigation Committee. The requires the details are to be provided in writing to the Chief Executive Officer of the Association by 3 pm on the Wednesday following the alleged incident accompanied by a fee of \$200 which may be forfeited in whole or in part if the Investigation Committee which hears the matter considers the complaint or charge to be frivolous. The Chief Executive Officer shall then consult with the Chairman of the Tribunal and Investigation Committee and undertake any preliminary investigations as directed by such chairman and which may include mediation (see above).



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The Association may lay a charge or charges based upon the umpire's written report alleging a breach or breaches of this policy as constituting conduct unbecoming or conduct prejudicial to the interests of the Association, and such charge or charges shall be heard before an Investigation Committee.

Application of the policy.

The policy was adopted at the meeting of the Executive on May 17th, 1996 and takes effect for all games administered by the Association.

Background

Football followers will be well aware of the much publicised Damien Monkhorst / Michael Long incident, where it was alleged that certain racially based comments were made towards Essendon footballer Michael Long. The incident highlighted one of the major changes in our society over the last decade or so whereby it has been confirmed that it is not only not acceptable to make such comments, but that those to whom such comments are directed have had enough and have been prepared to stand up and say so.

Amateur Football is not immune from the issue and we have already seen a number of charges involving racial abuse heard by the Investigation Committee in the past few years.

The Executive decided to adopt a policy applicable to all Amateur games. All Amateur football followers were and are urged to embrace and adopt the policy to stamp out the practice of unreasonable abuse as defined in the policy statement.

The Association is aware that there still exists a very small minority of players, officials and supporters of clubs who engage in abusing the opposition on the basis of race religion, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin.

The Association has been and remains committed to eradicating such abuse from all Amateur football. Where alleged breaches have been brought to the Association's attention in the past they have been dealt with either at the Tribunal as reportable offences or before the Investigation Committee as conduct unbecoming.

The Association recognises that clubs - including their players, officials and supporters, umpires and Investigation Committee need to be aware of what constitutes unacceptable conduct in relation to racial and religious abuse and therefore has deemed it necessary to prepare a documented and published policy on the issue.



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SPONSOR NAME ON PLAYING JUMPERS

Clubs are reminded of the procedure to be followed should the club wish to have a sponsor's name appear on the back of a playing jumper.

The VAFA must be provided with the sponsor's name that is to appear. This must be provided in writing and to replicate exactly what is to appear on the backs of jumpers (size, style of writing etc).

All designing and affixing must then be carried out by Hugh Lyon Knitwear.

After VAFA approval has been obtained the VAFA will contact Hugh Lyon and advise that your club will be making contact with them regarding this matter.

Lettering is to be affixed under the jumper number.

The size of the sponsor's name, to appear on the back of the jumper and under the number, must fit into an area no larger than 30 centimetres wide by 10 centimetres high.

Logos appearing on the front of the jumper must appear on the opposite to the VAFA logo and be no larger in area than 8 x 8 cm.

SPONSOR NAME ON PLAYING SHORTS

Logos appearing on shorts must appear on the right hand side and be no larger in area than 8 x 8 cm.

Enquiries can be directed to the VAFA Administration (Jeremy Bourke) or Tony O'Callaghan (Properties Officer).