



**A guide on how to deal with
Football cautions and sendings-off**

The Five C's

Including:

Part 1. Confidence.

Part 2. Concentration.

Part 3. Confrontation.

Part 4. Caution Reports

Part 5. Sending -Off Reports

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Part 1 “CONFIDENCE”

1a. Routine.....Feel comfortable in knowing just where your cards, pencil and pad are. Whether you keep your cards in your back pocket, or your pencil tucked in your sock top - find the system that suits you, and stick to it. Double check that you have all cards, pads, pencils and whistles, etc. before you enter the field of play. Make sure your pockets are secure enough to retain these items whilst running.

1b. Tools.....The UK Referees' Association combined Plastic wallet with red and yellow cards and pencil (less than £2) is ideal - all the 'tools' required are combined in a lightweight pack. Whatever type of pad you use, e.g. plain paper, notebook, RA pads etc. stick to it. Check that you have all items before leaving home, including spares.

1c. Pencil..... Always use a pencil; pens are liable to smudge in wet weather. A 'Mr Bloggs' could end up being a 'Mr Blobby'. Always carry at least one spare sharp pencil. Beware of the new wipe-on, wipe-off plastic cards, they can smudge when wet or sweaty. Find a safe, easy, accessible place to keep your pencil(s). Carry a sharpener with you in your kit bag.

1d. Rain.....Learn to use your upper body to shield your pad when noting details in rainy weather. Turning your back towards the wind can also help. Your pad cover will need to be waterproof and sweat proof. Use half time to supplement your notes - don't try and update them during the game, you could easily miss an incident. Carry ample replacement sheets in your kit bag and replace them at half time if they get wet.

1e. Stationery.....To enable reports to be completed and posted in good time - make sure you have a good stock of blank reports, stamps and envelopes at home. Complete reports on the same day if you can - whilst the memory is fresh - and post within 2 days in the UK (Sundays excluded.) You **must** report any incident(s). If you use a Word Processor or typewriter, ask the Discipline Secretary to send you a stock of blank reports in an A4 envelope to prevent creasing.

Part 2 “CONCENTRATION”

2a. Play..... Never turn your back on open play. At the same time, don't always follow the ball if there has been a hard tackle. Look out for any after effects. You can't act on the say-so of a club-linesman, **you** need to actually see any offences before you can discipline the players. Let players know if you've missed an incident. Be honest with them, you can't be expected to see all the players all of the time.

2b. Listen...carefully for any dissent or offensive, insulting or abusive language or gestures, and note down exactly what was said. You don't have to write down a chapter - one sentence will do - preferably the most colourful one! Use your common sense in deciding whether the language warrants a red or yellow card. Ask all players not involved in the incident to move away from you whilst disciplining a player.

2c. Concentrate 100%.....throughout the match. Incidents occur very quickly. Remember the culprit's face, (& number if you can see it), before they get swamped with players. To prevent further escalation, run quickly to the site of the incident; keep blowing your whistle hard if required. Concentrate on exactly what happened - it is very easy to get side-tracked by interfering players. Wave aside any pleas of “I played the ball ref,” when a blatant offence has occurred.

2d. Free-For-Alls.....It is impossible to discipline every player after an 'all out battle'. Concentrate on the initial incident, and aim to discipline (at least) the main perpetrators if you can. You don't have to physically get involved with players, you can just stand back - keep blowing your whistle and WATCH. If you are unable to identify the exact culprits during a serious fight, send in a general report against the club(s) giving as much detail as possible (see example under Pt 4)

2e. Diagonals.....You can prevent problems by changing your positioning to be closer to potential trouble makers, and by making players aware that you are especially watching them. Be ready to step in quickly. Good positioning, awareness and talking can often prevent you having to discipline players. Do not get distracted by comments from the crowd, officials or players.

Part 3 “CONFRONTATION”

3a. Be polite and firm.....“Come here please Blue”, will usually suffice. Aim to meet players half way. Speak quietly and firmly to players rather than bawling them out in front of others. Stay calm. Extracting your pad quickly will demonstrate that you mean business - so do not back down.

3b. Positioning.....As you confront a player, position yourself as to allow you a good view of the remaining players. Get the player to face you and to look at you whilst you speak to them - leave a sensible gap between yourselves. Wave interfering players away. If the player is agitated, ask them to “Calm down, and not to make matters worse”. Your main responsibility is to protect yourself and other players from any potential, harmful physical danger, so don’t over-react or embarrass the player as this can escalate the problem; be calm.

3c. Verbals.....When cautioning, firstly tell the player that you are cautioning them before you take any particulars. For a sending-off, take the players name first, then send him off. If a player asks why you are disciplining him, you can just say that *it will all be in your report*. (This line is also recommended if approached by players or officials after the game. It allows you breathing space, and prevents confrontations - you can never talk sense to angry players OR officials.

3d. Writing....ALWAYS ask the player to spell their name. Allow yourself enough time to note down **all** the relevant details. Stop your watch. Aim to write the particulars so that you can read them after the game. Have a routine, e.g. name, number, time, incident, position. Ensure details are entered in the correct Home/Away half of your pad. Annotating team colours on your pad before the game starts - will help you.

3e. Penalising.....After noting details - show the appropriate card(s). Don’t brandish the card in the player’s face. When sending a player off, just say “*Can you please leave the field quietly Blue*”. If required - escort the player away from further trouble. Note down any further misdemeanours. Players invariably can’t resist throwing in a ‘pleasant’ comment or two - note these down if warranted and put into your report also.

Part 4 “CAUTION REPORTS”

4a. Retain one copy yourself and send two copies to the Discipline Secretary, but remember, they have hundreds of reports to sift each week, so be accurate, truthful, brief and consistent. Neat reports will help you in your promotion assessments. Do not include extraneous reference to the weather or condition of the field of play unless you really need to. (Note. Players can only appeal against a caution where they claim mistaken identity.)

4b. The following are some caution incident examples.

C1: (a) Tony Bruiser - with little or no attempt to play the ball - recklessly tackled an opponent.

(b) Following a fair challenge for the ball, Tony Bruiser pushed his opponent to the ground.

(c) Tony Bruiser purposely tripped his opponent.

(d) Tony Bruiser purposely handled the ball.

(e) Tony Bruiser purposely threw the ball down in disgust after a decision went against him.

C2: (a) Having already spoken to Tony Bruiser on a number of occasions, he shouted, "Don't keep on".

(b) Immediately following a decision which had gone against his side, Tony Bruiser waved both arms downwards towards me in a dissenting manner.

C3: Tony Bruiser purposely obstructed an opponent, this was a culmination of a number of persistent infringements in this match by the same player.

C4: Tony Bruiser deliberately wasted time by delaying the taking of his goal kick.

C5: Tony Bruiser purposely failed to retreat ten yards during the taking of a free kick against him.

C6: (a) Tony Bruiser (a substitute) entered the field of play without my (the Referee's) permission.

(b) After receiving treatment for an injury, Tony Bruiser re-entered the field of play without my permission.

C7: Tony Bruiser left the field of play to change his boots, without my permission.

Suggested Misconduct Report In The Case Of A Mass Brawl.

I wish to report a mass brawl in the 20th minute of the above match. Following a 50/50 challenge between two opposing players, numerous players from both teams converged on the scene of the incident, and a mass brawl ensued. From my position 10 yards away, I witnessed at least X number of players grappling with each other and exchanging punches, some of which landed. The situation was further exasperated and confused by other players entering the fracas in an attempt to restore order. In the confusion, I could not be certain of the identities of the individuals who threw punches. Rather than attempt to dismiss a large number of players which would have resulted in the abandonment of the game, I decided that my first priority was to restore order and calm; secondly, to complete the game and then thirdly - report the facts to you for consideration of misconduct charges against the clubs. I informed the players that I would be reporting the incident.

Part 5 “!SENDING-OFF”

5a. Players can appeal against Sending-Off reports, so be factual and to the point. Don't write an essay (unless you need to). Any over-elaboration could provide ammunition against you in an appeal, stick to the brief facts only. Make sure you note exactly what happened and/or what was said. Use the simple report format shown overleaf. Spell out any swear words fully.

5b. The following are some sending-off incident examples.

S1: Joe King recklessly challenged an opponent from behind using excessive force, with both sets of studs foremost.

S2: (a) Following a 50/50 challenge, Joe King head butted his opponent.

(b) As a result of a decision against him, Joe King purposely barged into me (the Referee) in a violent fashion.

S3: Following an award of a penalty against him, Joe King spat in the face of an opponent.

S4: The United defender Joe King purposely handled the ball, thus preventing an opponent from scoring a goal.

S5: Joe King purposely tripped an opponent, thus preventing a clear goal scoring opportunity for that opponent.

S6: (a) Immediately following a decision that had gone against him, Joe King turned towards me and said, "You're just a blind f***ing twat ref". He also gestured in a masturbating fashion towards me.

(b) After failing to receive a pass from a colleague, Joe King shouted, "What's the use of playing with that f***ing w**ker".

S7: *(For a 2nd Caution in same match -use one report form only)*

1st cautionable offence; Joe King purposely kicked the ball away to prevent a free kick taking place quickly in the 67th minute.

2nd cautionable offence; leading to a sending-off: Immediately following an off-side decision against him, Joe King angrily shouted loudly and angrily towards the assistant referee the following exact words, "Keep up with play lino, that was never off!".

5c. For Other misconduct, the standard misconduct form can also be used to report misdemeanours by spectators, officials or anyone else on or near the field, prior, during or after the match. Put a line through the "~~under Law 12 section () See note 5 overleaf~~" section of the report form, and replace with: "Under Law 5, I wish to report".

5d. You can't caution or send-off a player **after** the end of a game - use the Law 5 method mentioned above in 5c to report misdemeanours by players after the match has ended.

You can Red/Yellow card substitutes on the 'bench/line' during the game or at half-time.

5e. S1 Serious Foul play is an action committed within the game itself - during play, such as a dangerous challenge from behind.

S2 Violent Conduct is an action outside of the actual game play, such as thumping, head butting, stamping, etc.

A player who has been sent off must leave the vicinity of the field of play and the technical area.