



VERBAL ABUSE OF MATCH OFFICIALS

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It is vitally important that Match Officials report to the Disciplinary Department any verbal abuse to which they have been subjected.

In order to assist the disciplinary process, it is critical that the report completed by the Match Official is well written, accurate and contains sufficient detail to enable a WRU Disciplinary Panel to determine an appropriate sanction for the offence committed.

Providing sufficient and accurate detail should result in the case being unchallenged and ultimately, should allow the Panel to deal with the case without requiring the Match Official to attend the hearing.

If Match Officials are required to attend a WRU Disciplinary Hearing, the Report will assist Match Officials being credible and accurate in the evidence that they give as a witness.

The primary purpose of the report is to provide a detailed and accurate factual account of what took place and should provide the Complainant (whether Player, Coach, Club Official etc) and the Panel with a clear picture of the events leading up to, during, and immediately after the incident complained of.

1. Make notes as soon as possible after the incident or game

This will assist you in writing your report and also when you have to recall the incident. It may also assist you in being credible and accurate in the evidence that you give as a witness

2. Report – Factual Description of the Incident based on your Observations

Ensure that you are accurate in your report, and focus upon recalling the facts as you remember them.

3. Report via the Ref App

(or other means) and submit to the WRU within 48 Hours.



CATEGORIES OF MATCH OFFICIAL ABUSE

(AS PROVIDED BY WORLD RUGBY).

Match Officials are required to act swiftly and reactively to on-field abuse even if unsure where the abuse falls in respect of the categories provided by World Rugby.

The remit of the WRU Disciplinary Process and subsequent Disciplinary Panel is to consider the circumstances and evidence and determine the appropriate charge that the alleged offender(s) should face.

The categories are provided below:

Law 9.28: Disrespect the authority of a Match Official

This may include:

- Questioning a decision of the match official
- Sarcastic gestures in response to a match official decision.
- Refusing to listen or return to the Referee.

Law 9.28: Verbal Abuse of a Match Official

- The Player/Person uses foul or offensive language in comments aimed directly at a Match Official.
- Includes any attack upon the integrity of the Match Official regardless of whether or not this is accompanied by foul or offensive language i.e calling a referee a cheat.
- As an illustrative example, “that’s a fucking joke”, that would constitute disrespecting the authority of the referee but if the player’s response was to shout directly at the Match Official, “You’re a fucking joke” that would amount to abuse.



Law 9.28: Using threatening actions or words towards Match Officials

- This occurs where a specific threat is made to a Match Official either verbally or by physical gesture.
- As an illustrative example “I’m going to wait for you after the game”. “I am going to fucking have you after the game”. “I know where you live”.

Law 9.28: Making physical contact with a Match Official

- Non-intentional contact with the referee which is more than merely accidental.
- Pushing or moving the Referee out of the way to get to a breakdown situation.

• Law 9.28: Physical abuse of a Match Official

- The most serious level of offending.
- Intentionally/deliberate makes physical contact with the Match Official



CHECKLIST

The report should address all of the issues below which apply to the incident(s) being reported:

Name of the Offending Person or means of identifying the Offending Person (by number, description etc).

1. When did the alleged incident occur? Time?
2. Where on the field did this occur?
3. Did the offender uses foul or offensive language in comments aimed directly at you? What was specifically said? Provide the detail.
4. What prompted the alleged abuse?
5. How far away from the offending were you when the offending words were spoken (or physical act committed)?
6. Did the offender make eye contact with you when the offending remarks were made?
7. Were the words/remarks said aloud or directed at or said to another person/Player? (Are you in a position to discount the possibility that the offending words were directed at someone other than yourself such as a team mate or opponent)
8. What impact did the offence have on the remainder of the match? Did it incite poor side-line behaviour? The response of the team or other players?
9. Was there an appointed Assistant Referee or Referee Assessor / Performance Reviewer who may be able to provide supporting evidence?
10. Did you wear a Referee Camera?

