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Witney & Dist. Yth' League

[REDACTED]
Oxfordshire



Dear Witney & Dist. Yth' League

As preparations for a new season are well underway, I would like to take the opportunity to update you on the outcomes of the second season of Respect. As you will see, although there are still considerable issues to tackle there are some encouraging trends beginning to develop. I am very conscious that such progress has only come about through the support and endorsement of Leagues up and down the country. I would like to take this opportunity to confirm The FA's continued full support for the Respect programme and you'll also find details of our planned activity for the coming season below.

As a reminder these are the objectives of the Respect programme:

- A base number of registered referees in England sufficient for the demands of the game at every level
- Zero tolerance for assaults on referees
- An improvement in on field player discipline particularly in the area of dissent to referees and in competitions that have an established record of poor discipline
- A step change in youth football as to what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour from parents and spectators

At the end of the second season of Respect here are some of the outcomes:

- Prior to the launch of the Respect programme in 2008 the number of affiliated referees had fallen to an all time low. In 2010 there were 26,692 registered referees, an increase of 7.4% compared to 24,852 for the same period in 2009
- The number of trainee referees at level 9 is 5598 compared to 4111 in 2009 - an increase of 36.2%



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- The Respect programme has made a contribution to creating an environment where referees feel better supported and are more likely to continue their involvement. In a survey of 3,500 referees in November 2009, 35 % of respondents reported that they were more likely to remain a referee and 39 % reported that they received less abusive behaviour from players as a result of the Respect programme. When the Respect programme was launched referees were encouraged to submit 'Respect' marks after a fixture. In 2009/10 nearly 10,000 reports were entered by 1723 referees. Encouragingly the average Respect marks (out of a possible 5) ranged from 4.1 to 4.7
- In 2008/09 The FA received reports of 534 referees having been assaulted (ranging from a referee having a card knocked out of their hand to serious assault). In 2009/10 the figures for assaults on a match official (all categories) show a 13 % decrease from last season (a reduction to 466 cases from 534 cases in 08/09). This number although declining is still unacceptably high.
- One of the major themes of the Respect programme has been its attempt to deal with overly aggressive coaches and pushy parents in youth football. The Respect programme has increased awareness of the problem and provided some practical measures to create a more supportive environment. The use of Codes of Conduct, designated spectator areas and pre-match handshakes is now widespread. More importantly there is greater peer pressure on coaches or parents that do not behave in an acceptable way. Over 500 youth leagues have committed themselves to the programme. Despite this work a significant problem still exists with the key finding of the 2010 CFA Online Grass Roots Survey of 12,000 respondents across all regions and all roles in football identified as: *'the abuse of young players by spectators'*
- In the professional game player behaviour has improved. Overall in the Premier League, Football League, Football Conference, Isthmian, Northern and Southern Leagues there was a 6 % decline in dissent cautions. Dissent cautions in 10 out of 16 of the senior Leagues were down compared to 2008/09 levels.
- There was a 23% reduction in dissent cautions in the Premier League (76 compared to 99). In 1 in 5 games in the PL there was a caution for dissent. The total was down from the previous two seasons.
- Dissent cautions were down by 31% in the Championship (99 compared to 144). In about 1 in every 5 games in the Championship there was a caution for dissent.
- Dissent cautions were down in the Football League as a whole by 12 % (373 compared to 425).
- There were two charges of harassment in the PL, FL and Football Conference but mass confrontation charges have risen from 4 to 43 charges this season (Premier League: 2, Championship: 10, League 1: 10, League 2: 10, Conference National: 11)
- In the amateur game dissent cautions have reduced by 3%, misconduct 3% and dismissals by 2%.
- Disappointingly the number of matches abandoned due to misconduct in 2009/10 was 947; an increase of 7 % on the 2008/09 figure.

- An online Respect module has now become a pre-course requirement for those undertaking the FA Level 1 coaching qualification. Since its introduction in May 2009, nearly 17,000 Coaches have undertaken this module.
- 752 Leagues have signed up for Respect (out of 1200) although implementation of the Respect measures is at different stages across those leagues
- 40 % of the 12,000 respondents of the CFA's Grassroots Survey claim that their experience of football has improved with 'Respect' and that they have experienced 66 % less discrimination or touchline abuse.
- Based on the CFA Grassroots survey The Respect measures considered to have the most practical value are Referees being encouraged to deal with dissent, use of Codes of Conduct, use of captains to assist on field management and the use of designated spectator areas.

For the coming season The FA will continue to promote Respect – here are some of the things that we are planning:

The FA will demonstrate its ongoing commitment to Respect at the 2010 FA Community Shield in August and at the UEFA Euro qualifier England vs Bulgaria in September. The FA will promote improved working and communication between the CFAs, Leagues, Clubs and the welfare officer network to ensure that there are clear channels to report and challenge poor practice and misconduct. We will produce versions of Respect for use in secondary schools and for use by commercial small sided football operators.

An online Referees Respect training module will be introduced in November to replicate the successful approach of the Respect parent's guide.

The FA will continue to support those leagues that have committed themselves to Respect and try to convince those that still stand outside the programme.

The CFA Grassroots survey highlighted continuing concern as to the abuse of young players by spectators and a further campaign will highlight this issue in 2010.

The Respect Awards will be run once again as a way of celebrating those that have taken on the responsibility to develop Respect as well identifying good practice.

The FA Cup will be a focus for Respect promotion with the ties of the third round in January 2011 headlining a national Respect day.

The Respect Programme will succeed if everyone involved in football takes collective responsibility to integrate Respect at the heart of the game. The contribution of leagues is crucial to do this and The FA will continue to produce resources to assist you in this task. These will be available either from The FA directly or the County Football Association.

I would therefore request your continued support for Respect in the coming season. I can assure you that The FA and the County FAs will do all that we can to assist you in this important work.

Regards,



Dermot Collins
FA Respect Manager