

Essex County RFU Ltd



29th January 2014

Dear Chairman and Secretary,

DISCIPLINE: AREAS OF CONCERN & ACTION REQUIRED BY CLUBS

We are now half way through the current season and whilst the overall level of discipline has been comparable with previous seasons there are two areas in particular that are giving me great concern:

1. **Match Official Abuse** – quite simply there is too much of this, ranging from casual swearing, to serious and persistent abuse from players and also spectators, and this is unacceptable. The potential consequences to the game are huge: not just do we risk losing referees but our claims to be “not like football” are becoming empty boasts. Both the London Society of Rugby Referees and Essex County RFU Disciplinary Panel are determined to address this issue and with immediate effect anyone found guilty of an offence of Abuse of Match Officials will be given an additional 4 week ban as an aggravating factor over and above the entry point sanction. This could mean a ban of 10 weeks for even a low end offence.
2. **Behaviour at Youth and Mini Matches** – a number of youth matches has been abandoned in recent weeks as a result of adults becoming involved with on field matters. This is also unacceptable and the amount of damage that it is doing to the game is massive with the adverse publicity on a national level actively discouraging parents from involving their children in the game. The Essex County RFU Disciplinary Panel will treat any further incidents of abandoned matches, and other spectator issues, with the utmost seriousness and impose substantial and wide ranging bans on any clubs and individuals involved.

Please acknowledge receipt of this letter and confirm that the contents have been advised to all your members by return to discipline@essexrugby.com

As you advise your members will you please remind them of the RFU's Core Values and reinforce the message. If clubs fail to control their players and spectators with regard to the above issues, sanctions may be imposed against clubs themselves which for the most serious offences might include the deduction of league points from their 1st XV's

If you have any queries about this letter or need any help getting the discipline across within your club please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Wakefield
Chairman of Discipline
Essex County RFU