

WMSRA WINTER CLINIC PRESENTATION

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REFEREE ASSAULT

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I. WHAT CONSTITUTES AN ASSAULT?

a. Legal definitions in Michigan

1. Assault, MCL 750.81-An intentional offer of violence from one person to another with the present apparent ability to carry out the threat.
2. Assault & Battery, MCL 750.81-An unpermitted touching of one person by another.
3. Aggravated Assault, MCL 750.81a-An assault and battery that causes physical injury serious enough to cause the victim to seek medical treatment.

b. USSF definition of Referee Assault-Policy 531-9

1. Page 41 of USSF Policy Manual-Referee assault is an intentional act of violence, physical violence, at or upon a referee.
2. Assault includes, but is not limited to the following acts committed upon a referee:
 - A. Hitting
 - B. Kicking
 - C. Punching
 - D. Choking
 - E. Spitting on
 - F. Grabbing
 - G. Bodily running into a referee
 - H. Head butting
 - I. Kicking or throwing any object at the referee that could inflict injury
 - J. Damaging the referee's uniform or personal property.
3. Referee abuse is a verbal statement or physical act not resulting in bodily contact which implies or threatens physical harm to a referee or the referee's property or equipment.

4. Referee abuse includes, but is not limited to the following acts:
 - A. Using foul or abusive language toward a referee that implies or threatens physical harm.
 - B. Spewing any beverage on a referee's personal property.
 - C. Spitting at (but not on) the referee.

II. IF ASSAULTED WHAT SHOULD YOU DO OR NOT DO?

- a. USSF Referee Administrative Handbook pp. 44&45
 1. Never hit or strike back
 - A. The only time that retaliation is acceptable is if you cannot physically "flee" the situation. Self defense is not allowed if a person can absent themselves from the situation.
 - B. A person can only use "reasonable" and "equal" force to defend themselves.
 - C. If you choose to "slug it out" you may lose the support and sympathy of the players and spectators.
 2. Remain calm and focus on de-escalating the situation.
 3. Do not add to the tension by raising your voice or by making any threatening gestures or actions.
 4. If the assault is by a player, send them off and abandon the match if the player refuses to leave the field or if the coach won't accept the send off.
 5. If the match has to be ended or suspended, take the time to make a detailed written account of what happened, and request that the AR's do the same. This will be valuable in helping to recall the details of the events in the future at any administrative hearings or in court. If you make a "recorded recollection" as a witness you can use it to refresh your memory or it can be read into the record MRE 803(5).
 6. Obtain the names and phone numbers of witnesses including coaches, managers spectators and players. Using players as witnesses is only a last resort especially if they are minors.
 7. Promptly seek medical attention if injured. Suspend the match if necessary and keep a copy of all medical records including the cost of treatment.

III. WHO DO I CONTACT?

- a. Within 24 hours of the assaultive incident contact the:

1. The police if the assault was such that you want to press charges.
 2. The President of WMSRA
 3. The Vice-president of WMSRA
 4. The Michigan State Referee Administrator, if recommended by WMSRA, although you can decide to do this on your own.
- b. Collect all reports from your referee teammates ASAP and send copies to the WMSRA Vice-president and if you are requesting action from the Michigan Soccer Association then contact them, through their president as to what you need to send them.
1. WMSRA will contact the league administrator and will communicate with the local league on your behalf.
- c. Contact an attorney if your injuries are serious enough to warrant such action.
- d. MHSAA contact procedure:
1. After any incident at a high school match including an assaultive or abusive incident, the first contact should be the school official on duty for that event. Do not hesitate to have them escort you and your referee team from the field. (Remember that in both USSF and high school matches your referee authority extends to the parking lot and continues until you leave the premises.)
 2. If a red card is shown, you need to contact the school principal of the respective school as well as fill out the required report form.
 3. In addition to contacting WMSRA officials you need to contact Wayne Wilkinson the high school assignor.