



SOUTHERN COUNTIES EAST FOOTBALL LEAGUE – COOLING OFF PERIOD DIRECTIVE

The protocol is that Club managers, coaches, players, club officials etc. may not approach the match officials at half time nor until at least 20 minutes after the game has finished (this includes not going onto the field of play at the end of the match nor waiting for the match officials in the tunnel area). Please note the post-match hand shake is an exception but any adverse comment(s) made will be considered as a breach of this protocol.

In principle, post-match 'cooling off' periods are:

- Applicable after the end of every game
- Applicable to all occupants of the Technical Area and all players.
- Designed to reduce confrontation by creating a period of reflection so that any discussion can take place in a calm atmosphere to ensure it is as fruitful as possible for all parties leading to greater understanding
- Likely to result in considerably fewer cases of misconduct

Benefits of having such a post-match 'cooling off' protocol

- Prevents obvious public dispute on the field of play that detracts from the image of the game
- Reduces the likelihood of confrontation / misconduct and all that the aftermath entails
- Reduces the adrenaline levels in everyone concerned
- Allows a calm, rational conversation to take place that should benefit both parties
- Allows all parties to have a period of reflection and a reduction in the stresses the game produces
- Allows the match officials time to complete the official paperwork
- Gives the opportunity for the Match Observer where requested to be present so that he can watch, listen and offer advice or an opinion, if appropriate to do so
- Reduces pressure on referees

There would then be a consistency across all Steps where "Professional Game" referees operate, thereby allowing a smooth transition as they or the clubs migrate upwards through the game.

If a request is made by a club official to a referee to speak to them after the 20 minutes period the referee should ensure they make themselves available.

Referees are expected to report any breach of this mandate.

Any approach to a Match Observer will also be considered as a breach of this protocol. It is totally inappropriate to engage the Observer at any stage in a conversation appertaining to the match.

All clubs must bring this to the attention of their team managers.

This notice must be displayed in the home, away and match officials dressing rooms on all SCEFL match days.

Failure to comply with any such Policy Directive issued by the League will result in the Club being charged for a breach of League Rule 4.2.