

Canterbury District Soccer Football Association Inc



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An open letter to Association members & local football community,

You will have all noticed the recent news items surrounding a football incident in western Sydney recently. Yes that's right it occurred in football (soccer) and not rugby league. Football for the most part in recent times has not been the spotlight of such instances in the media and it has been other football codes that have worn the brunt of it.

Let's not kid ourselves – football is not immune to such incidents. The Association is not immune to such incidents.

The Association since the 2005 season has continually taken steps to minimise the chance of serious football incidents occurred in our area. We have been largely successful in this. Through the policies set and the penalties issued. Those who did not want to abide by the standards expected of them have been removed from our football area. It is with the help of the member clubs in also removing such undesirables we have put together a football product that has attracted players to the game. During this period the Association has grown by some 4,000 active participants.

Parent, coach/manager, spectator as well as player behaviour at all levels is on display for all. Do you want to be the next person to face up to the nightly news coverage? Of course not! No-one in our game wants such publicity. And I would expect no-one in our game wants to find themselves facing criminal charges because they acted in a way far from appropriate at a local "amateur" football game.

In noting recent disciplinary actions within the Association it is still prevalent that coaches/managers and spectators at junior games still believe their children are playing in a World Cup final. Yes we all like to support children in their efforts but there is a line between supporting a child of say 10-years of age and constantly abusing/intimidating others by word or action, and acting in a way that for many is socially unacceptable. A love of football is not an excuse to act in such a manner. A love of football should be one of enjoyment and encouragement for the participants involved in the game.

At a senior level the lack of people taking responsibility for their own actions and making it "someone else's fault" with on-field indiscretions resulted in some 360 odd players sent from the field last year. Whilst in a football population of 12,000 in 2010 such numbers appear small, just think that each weekend there are 20+ persons, on average, missing a game of football because they cannot control themselves.

The on and off field behaviour of players, officials, parents and spectators is something we all need to keep an eye on. The Association will continue to support the clubs and officials governed to run football within the area. It would be a wonderful season in 2011 if the number of incidents reported were reduced by a third, dare I say half. But let it be known to those who disrespect the game – you will be dealt with and you will be punished. If you do not wish to abide by the rules set to be involved in this game then do not play in our Association.

This is football – amateur football. It is a game! Enjoy it and enjoy your sport. Do not ruin it for yourself and those others which you will affect through your actions.

Enjoy your season.

Frank Parisi
President