

CREATING A POSITIVE CULTURE



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Government of South Australia

Office for Recreation and Sport

Footy carnival gets the boot



DISAPPOINTED: Hackham juniors Lachlan, 8, Kaleb, 9, and Kieran, 11, were looking forward to the carnivals. Picture: Roger Wyman

Players 'very sad'

HACKHAM Football Club juniors are disappointed this year's carnivals have been cancelled. The club is planning to host its own family day this month to replace three junior carnivals cancelled by the Southern Football League after an increase in complaints of umpire abuse (see separate report). Under-10 player Kaleb said he was "very sad" when he was told the carnival had been called off. "It's lots of fun at the carnivals," he said. Under-10 player Lachlan said he

was looking forward to playing in the carnival. "I got to play with my friends from other clubs," he said. "We got so close to it and then it got cancelled." Hackham junior co-ordinator Sally Delant, whose daughter Tiarnah was set to play in the under-8 carnival, said the children were "very upset". "The kids have all been looking forward to it and it came so late in the year," Ms Delant said. "There are a lot of disappointed kids everywhere."

Matches cut over abuse

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"(But) we support the league in what they're doing. "Until we have parents and coaches doing the right thing I think it's quite right." Noarlunga Football Club president Kieron Irvine said the club would host a mini league match against Reynella on Saturday, August 11, and against Port Noarlunga the following week for its 20-year premiership reunion day. "It will be a chance for the kids to at least play something and for the parents to have a look at how our Saturday games run," Mr Irvine said.

"We totally understand the stance taken by the SFL." Happy Valley Football Club president Wayne Hasel said the club would hold a family day in replacement of the carnival.

"We'll just have the grades playing against each other and just have a family day to finish off the season instead," he said. Hackham Football Club junior coach Andrew Hoskin said the club would also organise a family day. The carnivals were cancelled last month after the SFL's Investigation Committee received 12 official complaints of abuse at mini league matches this year. SFL president Craig Warman

More online

Are you an umpire - or a parent of an umpire - who has been abused? Share your experience at southernnews.com.au



said there was more abuse this season than last, with eight clubs investigated over incidents.

"We have to be seen to be doing something," Mr Warman said.

"It was mainly the verbal abuse of young umpires, not physical.

"We have just lost our second umpire who was sick of the abuse.

"We have a duty of care to our players, umpires and teams."

Marion and Morphettville Park football clubs will hold their own mini carnival, with Brighton and Cove football clubs planning a family fun day.

Morphettville Park FC junior director Scott McDermott said more tolerance was needed towards junior umpires, who were aged as young as 12.

The board will conduct a review of the mini league competitions for the 2012 season, but could not guarantee the carnivals would be put back into the schedule.



SUPPORTIVE: SFL umpire coach Mark Jensen agreed the carnival needed to be cancelled because of escalating abuse towards umpires from officials, including coaches and runners. Picture: Ian Rodde

Threats of bodily violence

LIA HARRIS

A COACH telling a 10-year-old umpire he would "slam" his head into the turf was among the incidents of abuse on southern football fields this year.

SFL junior umpire Matthew Elliot and his family lodged a complaint with the SFL's investigations committee against the coach who threatened him with physical violence earlier in the season.

"Often you get abuse from parents, but lately it has been more abuse from coaching staff," Matthew told the Southern Times Messenger last week.

"A lot of them just scream at

you, but then in one case a coach told me he would slam my head into the turf."

Further details of cases lodged with the investigations committee, including the clubs involved and the outcomes, are kept confidential.

Matthew said he was determined to continue umpiring despite the incident, but said the abuse had deterred others from taking up the job.

Two junior umpires have quit the SFL this season after being abused during mini league matches.

SFL umpires coach Mark Jensen said one of the umpires quit after he was sworn at by

coaches, runners and spectators. Mr Jensen said he supported the league's decision to cancel three junior carnivals this month because of the escalating abuse (see separate story).

"They're getting this abuse when the games aren't even scored, so if you throw them into a carnival with 2000 spectators and where there will be scoring, it will be a lot worse," he said.

"A lot of the umpires are disappointed it's been cancelled, but I probably would have had half of them after the carnival if it had gone ahead."

Mr Jensen said the majority of the abuse came from officials, including coaches and runners.

Words from the web

Dev
I am glad the carnivals have been cancelled as I have a son who is a junior umpire and the verbal abuse that he has put up with is a disgrace. How adult coaches of clubs can speak to the young umpires like that is beyond me. Thanks so much Craig Warman.

Squawk
Adults who abuse junior match officials are absolutely pathetic. Just like the players, these young people are developing their skills. Just like the players, they will make mistakes and they should be treated with the same respect as the players.

MAN
I am a parent of an under 10 player who is now devastated that this carnival has been cancelled. It is difficult to explain to a nine year old that this has occurred due to the disgraceful behaviour of parents from a few particular clubs. I have been at games and witnessed the abuse and the inappropriate behaviour from these individuals towards these young umpires, who in my opinion 99.9 per cent of the time do an amazing job. We are not at all perfect!

Neville
Parents and bystanders! So why punish all the young players who look forward to these carnivals all year. Take some firm action against the offending people/clubs when it happens by way of sanctions, suspended fines, etc. Don't punish the innocent.

PUTTING STEPS IN PLACE TO CHANGE THE CULTURE

- **Support documentation – policies**
- **Blue card**
- **Game day support**
- **Alter Rules**
- **Communication plan**
- **Follow up with clubs**
- **Provide resources**

HOW TO IMPLEMENT A POSITIVE CULTURE

**Develop club expectations to develop
club culture outcomes**

Clubs taking ownership of their culture and direction

UNDERSTAND WHAT MEMBERS WANT

- **Successful**
- **Professional**
- **Quality coaching**
- **Enjoyable environment**
- **Safe environment**
- **Social environment**
- **Inclusive**
- **Looks after their members**

CLUB EXPECTATION EXAMPLES

- **Game Day Environments (SFL)**
 - Respect to umpires and the opposition
 - Behaviour - players, coaches, officials, parents, spectators etc
- **Team Outcomes**
 - Importance on winning vs participation
 - Rotating players
 - Selection process
- **Family Friendly**
 - Serving alcohol
 - Social events
 - Behaviour
 - Inclusive

HOW TO IMPLEMENT CLUB EXPECTATIONS

- **Communication plan – initially and continued communication**
 - Pre season presentation nights
 - Reminders throughout the year
 - Provide a booklet to all members
- **Policies to outline expectations for coaches, players, parents, members etc**
- **Processes in place to manage and ‘police’ expectations**
- **Education sessions**
- **Awards relating to expectations** (eg good sport player of the week/year)

**COACH
DRIVES
CULTURE**

COACH DRIVES CULTURE

Importance of being a role model

– monkey see monkey do

**ANY ACTION OR BEHAVIOUR A
COACH MAKES WILL BE DEEMED AS
ACCEPTABLE**

- BY PLAYERS, PARENTS, SPECTATORS ETC



COACH DRIVES CULTURE

How can we achieve a coach that drives the culture of the club?

- **Select the right coach (when possible) that can be a role model for your club expectations**

COACH DRIVES CULTURE

How can we achieve a coach that drives the culture of the club?

- **Support the coach to assist them to drive the culture**
 - Develop coaching policies to help guide the behaviour and decisions of the coach
 - Selection policy – rotating players, selecting teams etc
 - Support staff
 - Club coordinators/ ground managers to assist the management and policing of behaviour issues
 - Chairman of selectors
 - Mentor Coach
 - Coaches meetings to discuss culture outcomes, make sure all coaches are on the 'same page' (as well as coach education opportunities)

SELECTION POLICY EXAMPLE

CRITERIA

Junior Grades

- Provide equal playing time for all junior players
- Ensure that all team members play in the finals
- Rotate all players in different positions

Seniors

- Selection will be based on
 - Performance
 - Training attendance
 - Abiding by club values
 - Abiding by club code of behaviour

SUPPORT FOR YOUR CLUB

- **League**
- **State sporting body**
- **Office for Rec and Sport**
- **Online resources**
- **Other clubs**