

Referees, especially those who are also coaches:

During the past two weeks, I've received no fewer than three reports from referees who were working tournaments in which a fellow referee was attending as a coach. The reports all indicated that our fellow referee-coaches were less than respectful during the course of the day. These coach-referees chastised, challenged and argued with their fellow referees on the stand. Some even received yellow and/or red cards. Unacceptable. Period.

To those of you who are coaches --

You KNOW what it's like to be on the stand. You KNOW that sometimes we don't have the best view or angle on a play. You KNOW that referees do their best, within the scope of their officiating knowledge and skills, to get the calls right. And you also KNOW that referees don't take on the job as an official because they expect that they will never be questioned or challenged. Questions and challenges from a coach come with the territory. We all understand that.

HOWEVER, your unique position of being both a referee and a coach does not load the gun for you so that you can take aim at a fellow referee. YOU ARE HELD TO A HIGHER STANDARD. I don't suspect that any of you became referees so that you could do a better job of arguing with a fellow referee when you're coaching. And I don't suppose you seek higher certification levels so that you can "trump" a first-year referee, or a lesser rated referee, by saying, "I'm a Regional referee, and I know what I'm talking about." If either of those were your goals when you became a certified USAV referee, then we don't need you.

I could write a book, and you all know I can be long-winded, so I'll end with this:

If you can't find it within yourself to respect the officiating profession AS A FELLOW REFEREE, then hang up your whistle and stick to coaching. Neither I nor the OVR will tolerate the disrespect that some of you are showing your fellow referees. Teach your players how to overcome adversity. Teach your players that just like them, referees have to start somewhere. Teach your players that despite not agreeing with a call, you are going to stay focused on the game and move on to the next play. And teach your players that referees make mistakes too, like the kid who just served the ball into the net or blasted it out of bounds.

Stop using your referee certification to try to embarrass or intimidate a fellow referee. It's not going to fly. And for those of you who set great examples as a coach-referee/referee-coach, THANK YOU! We need more folks to do that.

Respectfully,

Brian
OVR Referees' Chair