

DISCIPLINARY GUIDANCE

A few years ago the IKF Playing Rules Committee issued a document showing Misbehaviour Offences which can lead to a red or yellow card. I have been asked by the BKA Referees Committee to further explain the offences listed in the IKF document so that clubs know the sorts of offences that their players can get cards for and for referees to know when they should be thinking about giving cards. The list below is not an exhaustive list but does cover most situations. The relevant reporting code is shown in each case.

When can a referee give a yellow card for general playing offences?

1. Not taking the correct distance for a free pass or re-start having been warned at least once by the referee. (PG1)
2. Disrupting or trying to influence the taking of a penalty (normally the penalty is ordered to be re-taken and a warning given but it becomes misbehaviour if repeated at the same or subsequent penalty). (PG1)
3. Intentional spoiling tactics and non-aggressive infringements with the intention to unfairly influence the play of an opponent or result of the match. (PG2)
4. Rough play showing a serious lack of care towards an opponent (including repeated examples of unintentional rough play which have been dealt with by an informal warning or warnings) (PG3)
5. Continual rough play considered by the referee to be intentional can lead to a direct red card or just a yellow depending on how severe the referee deems the offence. Included in this category are continued examples of intentional clinging to an opponent, holding off an opponent or running down an opponent. (PG4)

When can a referee give a yellow card for non-playing infringements towards an opponent?

(the codes shown here shall be prefixed with P if by a player, C if by a coach and X if by another person – e.g. PP1)

1. Use of a strong phrase towards an opponent. (-P1)
2. Incorrect use of words towards an opponent. (-P1)
3. Irritation or provocation (probably best described as deliberately ‘winding an opponent up’) either verbally or in the manner in which one plays. (-P1)
4. Instigating an incident with an opponent probably causing both players to be guilty of misconduct due to the opponent’s response. (-P1)
5. ‘Indirect insult’ – described as ridiculing the opponent or making remarks to or about an opponent with a hidden insult. These can take the form of either verbal insults or by gesture. (-P2)
6. ‘Direct outrage’ – described as either a serious kind of insult made by gesture or verbally. If considered serious enough an immediate red card should be given for this offence. (-P3)
7. Threat by attitude, remarks or movement towards an opponent in an aggressive manner. (-P4)
8. A knocking or kicking movement made with little or no contact being made. (-P5)
9. Aggressive behaviour whilst clinging to an opponent or aggressively knocking an extended hand or arm away or aggressively pushing away an opponent. (-P6)

The following would normally merit an immediate red card: -

- Serious aggression like kicking, knocking or punching an opponent (-P7)
- Intentionally throwing the ball fast, or kicking the ball hard, towards or directly at an opponent (-P7)
- Sexual intimidation (-P8)
- Sexual or racially discriminatory remarks. (-P8)

When can or should the referee give a card for misbehaviour directed against himself or his assistant?

(the codes shown here shall be prefixed with P if by a player, C if by a coach and X if by another person – e.g. PP1)

1. Non-insulting criticism. This can be any of the following, either individually or a combination: - (code –R1)
 - Verbal dissent
 - critical remarks even when not said directly to the referee but made to a team mate or coach in such a way that the referee can hear what has been said
 - body language like facial expressions, excessive shaking of the head after a decision, ‘sarcastic’ applause etc
 - use of a strong phrase or inappropriate use of words (when not made directly towards an official and no matter to whom it is addressed).
2. Indirect insult (code –R2) – this includes
 - ridicule
 - remarks with a hidden insult
 - light forms of insult – either verbally or by gesture.
3. Refusal of cooperation or insufficient response to requests. (code –R3)
4. Failing to notify the referee of a substitution. (code –R3)
5. Aggressive attitude towards the referee. (This shall include deliberately obstructing the referee) (code –R4)

The next set of offences should normally warrant an immediate red card: -

1. Serious kind of insulting behaviour either by gesture or verbally. (code –R5)
2. Threat by attitude, movement or verbally. This shall include making a knocking or kicking movement towards an official with little or no contact taking place. (code –R6)
3. Aggression with physical contact like clinging to; knocking away an extended arm or hand; pushing away. (code –R7)
4. Serious aggression like kicking, knocking or punching an official or intentionally throwing the ball fast, or kicking the ball hard, towards or directly at an official. (code –R8)
5. Sexual intimidation or making sexual or racially discriminatory remarks. (code –R9)

General Comments

In many instances, especially when the punishment is a yellow card, the referee may choose to first give an informal warning to the person concerned. This is not obligatory and should only be used for the first offences of light forms of misbehaviour. With respect to behaviour towards the officials one might give a warning for the first instance of dissent but punish accordingly if the player does not take the advice to behave in an appropriate manner. However, direct insults as defined above should not be tolerated and the appropriate card should be shown without any previous warning.