



# CALGARY RUGBY UNION

## Match Official Abuse Bond Policy

MEMBER  
Canadian Rugby Union  
Alberta Rugby Union

### MATCH OFFICIAL ABUSE

#### Introduction

What we loosely refer to as “Match Official Abuse” can take a number of different forms and may come from several different sources. It may be verbal, by hand gesture and, in rare cases, physical.

Eradicating Match Official Abuse is essential to maintaining the Game’s ethos and core values of inclusivity and respect.

#### Categories of Match Official Abuse

The CRU Disciplinary process recognizes five distinct categories of match official abuse and which all flow from law 9.28 as follows

1. Disrespecting the authority of a match official:

This is the lowest recognized level of abuse and is often referred to as dissent rather than match official abuse. It includes questioning a decision of a match official.<sup>1</sup> This could include verbal disrespect, such as making a sarcastic gesture in response to a decision, or non verbal actions such as applauding, throwing a ball away or refusing to return to the referee. In extreme cases, it could cover players who persistently appeal for certain decisions and continue to do so following a warning. It may, but need not necessarily, include the use of foul or abusive language. The use of Fowler abusive language adds to the seriousness of the offence and will affect the determination of the appropriate on field response. The use of Fowler abusive language itself does not necessarily elevate the seriousness from dissent to abuse.

2. Verbal abuse:

This occurs where the offender uses foul or offensive language in comments aimed directly at a match official. It also includes any attack upon the integrity of the match official regardless of whether or not this is accompanied by foul or offensive language. And in disparaging comment directed in match official with reference to their religion colour sexual orientation or national or ethnic origin should, or any other prohibited grounds as defined the *Alberta Human Rights Act* should automatically be treated as abuse.

3. Using threatening actions or words towards Match Officials:<sup>2</sup>

This occurs where a specific threat is made to a match official either verbally or by physical gesture but there is no physical contact between the offender and the match official.

4. Making Physical Contact with a Match Official:

This is often referred to as making incidental contact with a match official. It occurs where there is non-intentional contact with the referee which is more than merely accidental. Put another way, it covers physical contact falling short of what might be considered to be an assault the offence can be committed spontaneously such as where the offender pushes a match official out of the way to enable them to make a tackle.

<sup>1</sup> It is a recognized convention of the game that the captain of a team, or in the case of age grade rugby a coach or manager may approach the referee at an appropriate time to seek a clarification for a particular decision. This does not permit the Captain/Coach to challenge the decision.

<sup>2</sup> This policy in no way restricts a person from making a criminal complaint to police if the situation, in that individual’s view, warrants it.

## 5. Physical Abuse of a Match Official:

This is the most serious form of match official abuse and thankfully the rarest. It occurs where the offender intentionally makes physical contact with a match official for example physical contact that could not be categorized as merely reckless or purely accidental.

### **Match Official Abuse Bond Policy**

The Calgary Rugby Union recognizes an international increase in the occurrence of match official abuse. In spite of frequent and clear messaging that match officials, like players are human and apt to make mistakes, the uptick across the world has led to an overall decline in the number of match officials in the amateur sport, in response the union implements this match official abuse bond policy which shall be binding on all teams and clubs registered within the union.

### **Application**

The Match Official Bond Policy shall be applied as follows:

**Players:** Players will continue to be dealt with in accordance with the Laws of the Game and World Rugby Regulation 17. In any case where the Director responsible for discipline, his or her designate, or judicial officer has made a finding of match official abuse the Bond Policy shall immediately apply to the affected member's club and the Bond shall be payable before the club's next fixture.

**Other Persons contemplated in the Rugby Alberta Code of Conduct:** This applies to all other players, team officials, non-playing members etc., who are subject to the Code of Conduct. Instances of alleged match official abuse will be reported by the match official by way of the Match Official Abuse Form Calgary Rugby Union and a hearing will be convened in the ordinary course. In any case where the Director responsible for discipline, his or her designate, or judicial officer has made a finding of an act contrary to the code of conduct in a manner contemplated under the Laws of the Game, the Bond Policy shall immediately apply to the affected member's club and the Bond shall be payable before the club's next fixture.

**Persons who are not subject to the Rugby Alberta Code of Conduct:** This applies to all spectators who are not subject to the Code of Conduct and may include players from clubs outside of Alberta, Parents, Friends and other guests. Instances of infractions by persons not subject to the Code of Conduct shall be reported by way of Match Official Abuse Form and a Panel will be convened by the VP Discipline and shall include the VP Discipline or their designate, the President of the CRURS or their Designate, and at least one other member of the CRU Board of Directors from a club who did not participate in that affected match.

### **Bonds:**

Upon a finding of Match Official Abuse, the Bond shall become immediately payable as follows:

Bond in the sum of \$1,000.00 shall be paid to the Calgary Rugby Union and will form a resulting trust pursuant to the following permitted deductions from the bond.

Second Conviction: \$200.00

Third Conviction: \$300.00

Fourth Conviction: \$500.00

Subsequent convictions will require a replenishment of the \$1,000.00 bond and will result in a forfeiture of the match by the offending team.