3136 Dundas Street West
Toronto, ON
M6P 2A1
www.thpfc.ca

THPFC Player Safety During Match Play Policy

Applies To: *This policy applies to all THPFC coaches, assistant coaches, team officials, volunteers, players, referees, match officials, administrators and operations staff involved in Club sanctioned match play. It applies to all THPFC recreational, house league, development, competitive, OPDL, tournament, exhibition and sanctioned match environments where player safety concerns may arise.*

Toronto High Park FC – Player Safety During Match Play Policy

This policy outlines the process a coach should take to ensure player safety while maintaining cordial and professional relationship with the match official.

Step 1: Initial Calm Discussion with the Match Official

- **Observe and Evaluate**: Assess the situation to ensure that there is a genuine concern regarding player safety.
- **Choose an Appropriate Time**: Select a break in play or half-time to ask to speak to the match official. DO NOT enter the field of play.
- **Approach Calmly**: Engage with the official in a composed manner staying within your technical area.
- **Express Concerns Clearly**:
    - Politely introduce yourself.
    - Clearly state the specific incidents or behaviors that are causing concern.
    - Request that the match official pays closer attention to these issues to protect the players and issues cautions (yellow/red card) to the players if necessary.
- **Listen**: Allow the match official to respond and explain their perspective.
- **Thank the Official**: Thank the official for their time and attention.

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Step 2: Monitor the Game

Observe Changes: Watch to see if the match official addresses your concerns and if the environment improves.

Communicate with Players: Check in with your players to understand if they feel safer and if the issues have been resolved.

Step 3: Second Calm Discussion if Necessary

- **Assess the Situation Again**: If the safety concerns persist, decide if a second discussion is necessary.
- **Choose Another Appropriate Time**: Select another break in play or another suitable moment.
- **Approach Calmly Again**: Repeat the calm approach.
- **Reiterate Concerns**:
    - Remind the match official of your previous discussion.
    - Provide specific examples that have occurred since the first conversation.
    - Emphasize the importance of player safety and request immediate action.
- **Listen Again**: Allow the match official to respond and consider their perspective.
- **Thank the Official Again**: Thank the official for their attention and effort.

Step 4: Decision to Remove Players if Safety Concerns Persist

- **Assess the Immediate Risk**: Determine if the players are in immediate danger or if the environment remains unsafe.
- **Communicate with Players and Assistants**: Inform your players and assistant coaches of your decision and the reasons behind it.
- **Remove Players from the Field**: Notify the match official of your decision to

temporarily remove the players for their safety. Ensure the removal is done in an orderly and calm manner.

- **Inform Opposing Coach, Officials and High Park Operations Staff**:
    - Briefly explain the situation to the opposing coach, officials, and High Park ops staff.
    - State your intention to return the players to the field once the situation has calmed down.

Step 5: Post-Removal Actions

- **Monitor the Situation**: Observe the environment and wait for things to settle down.
- **Communicate with the Match Official Again**: Once things have calmed down, speak with the match official to discuss the current state and your intention to return the players to the field.
- **Return to Play**: If the environment is deemed safe, return the players to the field. If not, continue to monitor and take further actions as necessary.

Step 6: Post-Game Actions

- **Document the Incident**: Write a detailed report of the incidents, conversations with the match official, and actions taken.
- **Report to League/Organization**: Submit the report to the appropriate league or soccer organization for review and further action.
- **Follow Up**: Stay in contact with league officials to ensure the concerns are addressed and to discuss any necessary changes to improve player safety in future games.