

“Violence has no place in our game”

As those that have attended the recent bi-monthly meetings will know, the number of games been abandoned has increased considerably this season (2018), often resulting in serious mass brawls. In many of these instances, not only are the players on the pitch involved but the substitutes, manager/coaches and several spectators now feel compelled to become involved.

In the past six (6) weeks, the number of games that have been abandoned or have ended in mass brawls is unacceptable. We have had seven (7) games that have ended in this manner, totally unacceptable in schoolboy football, “one game is one game too many”.

Today it is all too easy to engage in an altercation using the guise of sport to justify those actions and it is becoming ever more prevalent throughout sport in general, not only in soccer.

Within the DDSL, acts of indiscipline that seamlessly lead to acts of violence, leading to mass brawls have seen the introduction of harsher punishment’s being meted out to the players involved in the initial act that incites the brawl in the first instance, increase fines on the clubs involved. We will not accept thuggery and physical assaults in our everyday life, why should we be expected to accept it in our chosen sport.

“The DDSL will not tolerate or accept that kind of behaviour”

On more & more occasions adults now become involved in these incidents, ending with them verbally or physically striking out at young players. This is an extremely worrying trend that is developing in sport. Instead of setting a good example, unfortunately in a growing number of cases, the choice is to verbally abuse and/ or resort to violence. Young players are influenced more, not by what they are taught, but by what they see in real time. Perhaps those that are charged with looking after the young players should take a long hard look at how they conduct themselves in these situations.

In all such incidents, although not always easy, everyone must show restraint and do the right thing, show respect for the match officials or supervisor’s and of those in authority on the day. For this to happen, managers/coaches and the spectators should be to the forefront in setting/showing the standards/examples expected, for the players to follow by respecting the players/management of the opposition and by extension the officials in charge of the game.

It is inevitable that failure to eradicate the number of violent incidents on the pitch that lead to or end in brawls, will result in a serious injury or a fatality before too long. We cannot allow this to happen within our game.

On what should be an enjoyable sporting occasion for many parents and their children, people are fearful the game will descend into a free for all brawl, more akin to an MMA event than a young players football match. It is time to stand up and take responsibility for the conduct of everyone involved within our game each weekend. Clubs must lead by example and make the playing environment a safer place, a place where football can be played in an enjoyable manner.

The league will be decisive when faced with such incidents, players that are involved in an incident that leads to a game been abandoned or leading to a brawl will be severely punished with a mandatory 6 weeks suspension. A club fine of €500 and a 6-point deduction will be imposed for the first offence, for a subsequent offence, the team will be relegated by at least one division. Any further incidents will result in that team been removed from the league completely and ultimately the club.

Executive

DDSL