

“HEY REF YOU SUCK”
HOW TO ADDRESS UNSPORTING
BEHAVIOR



Today's Goals

- Define “unsporting behavior”
- Identify characteristics and effects of unsporting behavior
- Examine officiating strategies and tools that may be employed
- Identify specific behaviors that “automatically” should be penalized
- Present, analyze, discuss, and critique actual situational scenarios for different sports

**Focus on analyzing
behavior, examining
effect, and diagnosing the
appropriate remedy**

Cause

Effect

Consequence

Game management “perspectives square” has players, captains, officials, and spectators in each of the four corners

PLAYERS

CAPTAINS

OFFICIALS

SPECTATORS



Goal Today.....

**Provide techniques for
YOU to better handle
unsporting behavior**

Parameters

- ⦿ Purpose is to generate discussion
- ⦿ There are no “right” or “wrong” answers
- ⦿ Each situation has different variables and is looked at independently
- ⦿ Certain types of behaviors are **automatics** and represent profound threats to game control
- ⦿ **All** unsporting behavior must be addressed in some manner

How Do **WE**
Effectively Deal
With Unsporting
Behavior?

We Need To Know....

WHAT IS
UNSPORTSMANLIKE
BEHAVIOR?

For our purpose we will define
unsportsmanlike behavior as:

**Unfair, Unethical,
or Dishonorable
Conduct**

We Need To Know...

WHAT ARE SOME
CHARACTERISTICS
OF BEHAVIOR?

Characteristics of Unsportsmanlike Behavior

- ⦿ Profane and/or obscene language
- ⦿ Defamatory, inflammatory, insulting, or disrespectful comments
- ⦿ Argumentative
- ⦿ Intimidating
- ⦿ Demonstrative
- ⦿ Deceitful or unfair
- ⦿ Excessive and/or unnecessary physical contact

We Need To Know...

How does this occur?

What are some Modes of Occurrences?



Modes of Occurrences

- Verbal
- Gestures, gyrations, or demonstrations
- Actions – faking being fouled, cheating
- Physical - contact

We Need To Know

**What effect(s)
will unsporting
behavior have
on the games?**

Effects of Unsporting Behavior

- ◎ **Breakdown in authority**
- ◎ **Unpleasant game atmosphere**
- ◎ **Aggravation, irritation, unnerving, or intimidating**
- ◎ **Unfair**
- ◎ **Safety compromised**

We Need To Know

What are some
tools we can use
to help control
the game?



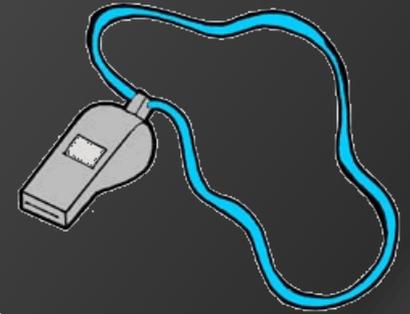
Inventory of Game Control Tools

- The **“quiet word”** – Typically for mild infringements
- **Public warning** – Stronger tactic for situations where behavior is pronounced and apparent to others
- **Captain’s meeting** – Form of public warning where both teams demonstrate inappropriate behavior
- **Intermediate penalty** – A UC or personal foul penalty with a direct consequence
- **Ejection** – The last course of action available is necessary when that individual’s behavior has gone well beyond the limits of acceptable conduct and is compromising the game

Verbal Dissent – Scenario #1

A player on the red team continually complains for a variety of different calls to be made against the opposing team with statements such as “he’s holding”, “pass interference!”, “they’re in the neutral zone”, “they CANNOT block like that!”, “flag guarding, make the call!”

Verbal Dissent Analysis

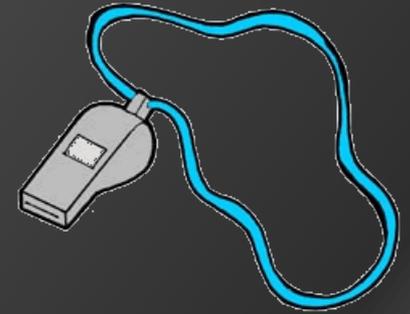


- ◉ Continued verbal questioning or complaining is argumentative and a sign of disrespect for the official's authority
- ◉ If allowed to go unchecked, this dissent leads to a breakdown in authority, aggravation, and an unpleasant game atmosphere
- ◉ A progression from the "quiet word" (private warning) early, to a public warning (heard by others and accompanied by the "stop" sign), to a UC penalty is an effective course of action to maintain control

Demonstrative Gestures – Scenario #2

The field judge rules a pass incomplete on a diving attempt. After the call is made, the receiver demonstrates his displeasure with the call by clapping his hands in the direction of the official, yelling, and spinning around several times.

Demonstrative Gestures Analysis

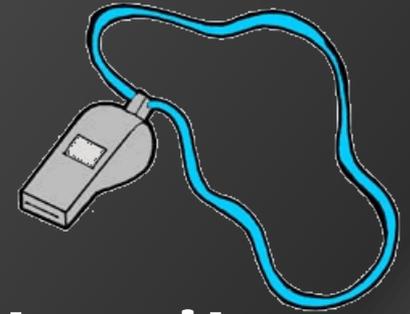


- ⦿ Actions such as demonstrative gestures are designed to focus attention on a player and/or to express displeasure with an official. This type of exhibition is intended to “show up” or embarrass the official.
- ⦿ Behavior of this nature is clearly visible and obvious
- ⦿ Strong action is required since this is a sign of disrespect and respect will be lost if the behavior is not visibly handled and addressed. These actions could result in an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

Integrity Questioned – Scenario #3

The Line Judge has made several calls that were questioned by the Red team. A Red team player then is marked short of the line to gain on a tight 4th down play. Immediately after the call is made, a Red team player loudly says, “Why don’t you just give them the game. You might as well put on one of their jerseys and join the team.”

Integrity Questioned Analysis

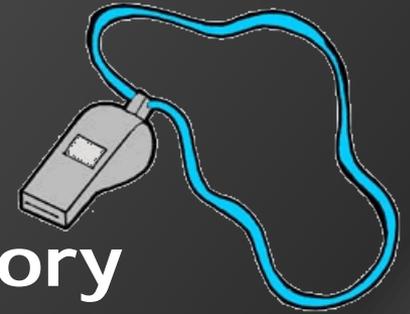


- ⦿ Questioning the fairness or integrity of an official cannot be permitted. This is a personal attack on the honesty of the officials. Integrity is one of the foundations of being an official.
- ⦿ Comments of this nature compromise the official's authority and result in an unpleasant game atmosphere
- ⦿ A UC is needed at this time. If the comments persist, an ejection would be the next course of action.

Prolonged Focus on a Call – Scenario #4

In the 1st quarter a player for “Maurer’s Maulers” is marked short on a close play near the opponent’s 20 yard line and briefly argues. Two plays later the same player comes into the field and passes by the official who made the call and says loudly enough to be overheard, “You blew that one ref.” Three plays after that, an opponent is called inbounds on a catch close to the sideline. The same player responds loudly by saying, “That’s two calls that you’ve missed. You’re killing us!”

Prolonged Focus on a Call Analysis

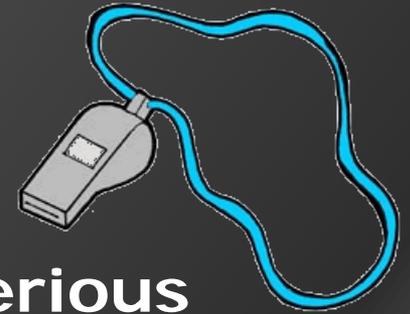


- ◉ Continued references & derogatory comments regarding a call that was made at an earlier time cannot be accepted.
- ◉ This behavior is argumentative, disrespectful, and leads to an erosion of the official's authority
- ◉ Whenever a previous call is questioned or referenced after an appreciable length of time, the official must deal with it either by a "quiet word" if the comment was privately made or a public warning if it was said for others to hear. If the behavior persists beyond the public warning, the player must be given a UC.

Verbal Threat - Scenario #5

An offensive blocker and defensive rusher have been matched against each other throughout the game and the rusher has complained previously about the contact tactics of the blocker. After a play where there was some contact, the rusher points at the blocker and says, "Do that again and I'm goin' f- you up!"

Verbal Threats Analysis



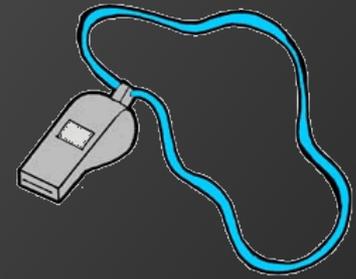
- Issuing of verbal threats is a very serious situation since the player and team affected only assume that the statement will be carried out.
- Threats produce an unpleasant game atmosphere, make a player/team concerned for their safety, lead to a breakdown in authority, and can be intimidating
- Match-ups between two opponents should be monitored consistently for potential problems
- Officials must penalize obvious threats immediately and possibly eject depending upon circumstances. If the threat is more implied, then a strong public warning and word with both team captains may address the situation adequately.

Profanity – Scenario #6

The Referee calls a pass interference foul on the defense and the offending player reacts by saying, “You are a f-ing idiot!”.

Afterwards, a teammate of the offending player subsequently comes to the spot of the foul and says, “What the hell were you looking at?!”

Profanity Analysis

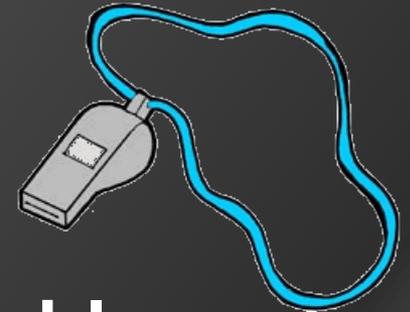


- Language of this nature is vulgar and unacceptable. It contributes to an unpleasant game atmosphere and a breakdown in authority.
- Profanity must always be addressed in some manner. This will vary depending upon how it is directed, who it is directed at, and how loud the statements are made.
- When profanity is personally directed at an official or opponent this is a “defining moment” in game control and should result in a penalty and possibly an ejection. In this example, use of the word “you” makes it personal and should result in ejection of the first offender and a UC for the second individual **(use of profanity is more incidental and not personally insulting).**

Taunting – Scenario #7

Player A1 catches a pass, jukes a defender and is headed toward the end zone. When he reaches the 10 yard line he holds the ball back and shows it to the defensive back who is in pursuit from behind.

Taunting Analysis

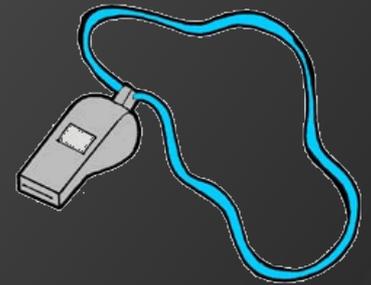


- ⦿ Taunting must be dealt with quickly and strongly. This situation is particularly volatile because it is extreme, visible, and loud and designed to ridicule, inflame, intimidate, and embarrass the opponent.
- ⦿ Behavior of this nature invites retaliation and can cause the contest to turn ugly very quickly
- ⦿ An immediate penalty (UC foul) is needed to sanction the inappropriate actions and show that it will not be tolerated in the future

Gamesmanship – Scenario #8

Two players are contesting for a pass which falls incomplete after the defender makes a nice play to knock it to the ground. Subsequent incidental contact causes both players to fall to the ground. The defensive player, in an attempt to further frustrate his opponent, intentionally gets feet tangled with the receiver causing the offensive player to trip.

Gamesmanship Analysis

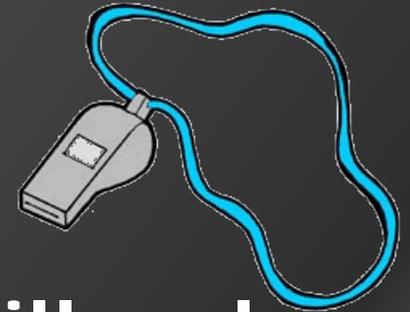


- ⦿ While physical contact is the problem here it is not rough or malicious. The intent in this situation is to frustrate and annoy the opponent through unfair tactics
- ⦿ The effect is aggravation, irritation, and unnerving of the opponent. If these tactics accumulate, they can escalate to bigger problems.
- ⦿ Since this situation occurred after the ball hit the ground, good “dead ball” officiating is a necessity. The actions must be addressed before they build to a breaking point. A dead ball personal foul, or at least a strong public warning, is probably appropriate here to demonstrate to all players that these types of “cheap” tactics have no place in the game and will not be accepted.

Contact -Scenario #9

A ball carrier is running down the sideline and a defender comes over and body checks him out-of-bounds. The ball carrier reacts immediately with verbal unpleasantries while jumping up towards the defender. The ball carrier pushes the defender and players from both teams move toward the incident.

Contact Analysis



- The element of body contact, illegal or incidental, is a potential problem
- Depending upon the nature, contact may provoke feelings of anger, may inflict pain, could be interpreted as an attempt to intimidate, and may threaten player safety
- Officials must react swiftly and get to the spot of the contact. Defuse through physical presence and vocal recognition. Penalize immediately and/or eject (only if violent in nature) for illegal contact.

Review of General Management Strategies

- ⦿ Give respect and expect it in return
- ⦿ Address players in a polite manner
- ⦿ Speak low and slow
- ⦿ Choose words carefully – You can't misquote silence
- ⦿ You are there to defuse rather than incite
- ⦿ Be a good listener
- ⦿ Be a "people watcher" – "clean up" plays