

Risk Management Update

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The NCYSA Risk Management program established by our Board of Directors is now being applied at all levels of play – Recreation, Challenge, Classic and State Select/ODP. Our referee administrators, John Bouda (SRA) and Paul James (SYRA), have also brought referees who officiate matches in North Carolina into the program. We appreciate their strong support in doing our best to keep our children safe.

The great majority of our member clubs have also shown their strong support. They require their “covered persons” to file applications and receive approval. To date, over 16,000 applications have been received. Of these, about 50% have resulted in “red” background reports (red means a criminal record has been located). Fewer than 50 applicants have been rejected or allowed to participate in a probationary status.

Unfortunately, we do not have 100% compliance. We saw an upswing in applications in advance of the State Cup and Recreation Festival weekends. Many appeared to be filed by coaches who had been coaching since the beginning of the Fall Season. Under our Risk Management Rules, these failures to timely register are a basis for suspension of the coach and can be a basis to place his or her club in bad standing. As Risk Management Coordinator, I decided to not impose suspensions this time around. This is the first year of our program in its current form. Perhaps the word was not fully communicated across the State.

This coming year will be a different story. Late applicants will be suspended until their applications can be processed. They will not be first in line. Clubs with a significant number of late or non-filing “covered persons” will be placed in bad standing until they fix the problem. Last, we will engage in spot audits of clubs in 2008. Every three months or so we will randomly select a member club. A request will be made for a list of all of its “covered persons.” The refusal to provide a list will cause the club to be placed in bad standing. The discovery of a significant number of late filers or non-filers – well, see above.

Our plans may seem harsh. There are three responses. First, our members approved this program. It is our duty to implement it. Second, having rules that are not enforced once they are generally known makes little sense and exposes each of our member clubs and NCYSA to potential liability. Last, as the person who has reviewed the “red” background checks (ranging from speeding in a no wake zone listings in a sexual offender registry) and had to reject many applicants, there are numerous people who desire to associate with our programs that none of us want to be near our children. These rules and procedures have a real purpose. To be effective, they must have “teeth”.