



# Dealing with racism in community sport

What happens in the seconds and minutes immediately following a racist incident can have a huge bearing on how it is resolved in the days and weeks afterwards. Understanding the options available to players, coaches, team managers and most importantly the victim, is essential.

## When to intervene?

The first 7 to 10 seconds immediately following an incident of racism are crucial. The longer it takes to intervene and call out the behaviour, the more damaging the incident can be. A delay can also impact the likelihood of a fair and just outcome.

## Pause the game

Racism is serious. Unlike many physical injuries, racism doesn't have a recovery timeline. The impact can last a lifetime. We need to treat it that way.

- When a participant is injured – we pause the game.
- When a reportable incident of physical violence occurs – we pause the game.
- When an incident of racism or other forms of discrimination occur, we also need to pause the game.

This small pause in the game to have appropriate conversations with those involved can make a huge difference. It can be managed in a similar way to when a player was reported for a physical altercation or is injured and needs medical treatment.

However, if the incident has posed a risk to the welfare or safety of anyone, finishing the game becomes a bonus as it is less important than the safety of participants.

## Steps to consider after an incident of racism occurs

- De-escalate the situation.
- Check in on the victim's wellbeing and offer your support.
- Ask the victim what they need and want in the moment.
- Report the incident to the match official.
- The victim will likely be upset and distressed. Take the burden off their shoulders as much as possible by supporting them through the conversations with the match official and others.
- Encourage the official to pause the game to inform coaches and team managers.
- Encourage officials to have a clarifying conversation with the perpetrator.
- Support the victim and remove them and/or the perpetrator from the field of play if the situation is deemed unsafe.
- Ensure any desired outcome expressed by the victim is communicated in the moment and at the conclusion of the game.
- If an umpire/referee is under 18 years of age, it is important for the more senior official or an adult, such as a team manager, trainer, runner or coach, to lead and support the process.



## How to intervene?

Remember you want to de-escalate the situation by reducing any potential confrontations. Encouraging a conversation in the moment from the umpire/referee or coach/team manager of the accused player can help them better understand and own their mistake.

It shouldn't be confrontational and can be done in the form of a clarifying conversation. A clarifying conversation asks questions like:

- What did you mean when you said that?
- What was the point you were trying to make?
- What outcome were you trying to achieve when you said that?

## What do we tell our players?

We feel it is important to have a conversation with your teams to prepare them for what to do if they are witness to an incident on field. We recommend you encourage your players to do the following:

- Firstly, support the person who has received the racist slur. That is absolutely the number one priority. Make sure they are ok.
- Do not get confrontational. The best way to get a good outcome is if we stay calm.
- Inform the match official that something has occurred.
- Inform coaches and team managers on the sidelines as soon as possible and they can help with the process if the umpires is not responsive.