

## **Player Misconduct System**

*(note: the misconduct system is part of the USAU observer manual. Any reference to the word “you” refers to an observer, not the any player in the game)*

The conduct system described here is for use at all USAU Series events. You are empowered to sanction teams or individual players who commit deliberate or dangerous infractions, demonstrate patterns of repeated violations, or otherwise show disregard for the Spirit of the Game.

The highest USAU Authority in attendance controls the implementation of the conduct system at USAU tournaments – and is, in descending order: Executive Director, Championship Director, National Director for the relevant division, USAU Event Coordinator, Tournament Director. Tournament directors at other events also may utilize the system, if a majority of team spokespersons approve it before play begins.

This conduct system does not supersede or restrict the function or use of the Tournament Rules Group (TRG) or the USAU Conduct Committee. Both of these avenues are always available for resolving conduct disputes, including the specific cases addressed by the procedures described below. The TRG remains the official mechanism for processing complaints filed with USAU while a tournament is in progress.

For the purposes of this system, “player” means any person on the roster of a team competing in a particular tournament, as well as coaches, managers, trainers and others considered as partisans for the team, including significant others, parents and fans.

### ***Components of the Misconduct System***

#### **Technical Foul**

A Technical Foul can be assessed against a team for minor conduct violations that do not affect the competitiveness of the game. The first two Technical Fouls issued to a team are noted as warnings on the score sheet, but with no associated penalty. A third or subsequent Technical Fouls for a team in a single game results in a Misconduct Penalty against that team. There is no limit to the number of Technical Fouls or Misconduct Penalties a team can accrue during a game. Technical Fouls do not carry over beyond the game in which they are issued.

#### **Team Misconduct Foul (Blue Card)**

A Team Misconduct Foul (TMF) can be assessed against a team for unsportsmanlike conduct by one or more of its players. The TMF can be assessed regardless of whether the infringed team makes any call. Repeated minor infractions should only be addressed using TMFs only if the infringed team is calling the fractions of issues a complaint. The first two TMFs issued to a team are noted as warnings on the score sheet, but with no associated penalty. A third or subsequent TMF for a team in a single game results in a Misconduct Penalty against that team. There is no limit to the number of TMFs or Misconduct Penalties a team can accrue during a game. TMFs do not carry over beyond the game in which they are issued.

#### **Personal Misconduct Foul (Yellow Card)**

A Personal Misconduct Foul (PMF) can be assessed against a specific player for particularly egregious conduct or a pattern of such behavior. A PMF is a formal warning for unacceptable behavior and puts the player on notice that any further such actions will result in ejection from the game.

A player who receives a second PMF during a single game is ejected for the remainder of that game. If this occurs in the second half of the game, the ejection remains in effect for the first half of the team’s next game. A player who receives three PMFs during a tournament is suspended for the remainder of the

tournament. Assessment of a PMF is non-reviewable for the duration of the game, although it may be appealed to the TRG after the game.

One TMF is automatically assessed against a team whenever one of its players receives a PMF.

### **Ejection (Red Card)**

A player may be ejected from a game for particularly egregious conduct or a pattern of such behavior. Any player who intentionally strikes an opposing player, or a coach, spectator, Observer or Linesperson, shall be immediately ejected from the game. Any player who strikes in retaliation also shall be ejected. No formal or informal warning is necessary before you eject a player, and an ejection need not be preceded by a TMF or PMF.

If an ejection occurs during the second half of the game, the ejection remains in effect for the first half of the player's team's next game. If a player receives more than one ejection in a tournament, that player is suspended for the rest of the tournament, and a formal complaint may be filed with USAU. An ejection is non-reviewable for the duration of the game, although it may be appealed to the TRG after the game.

One TMF is automatically assessed against a team whenever one of its players is ejected.

### **Game Forfeiture**

If five PMFs are assessed against players on a single team during a game, that team forfeits the game. For this purpose, an ejection is equivalent to two PMFs. For example, if three or more players on a single team are ejected, that team forfeits the game. If the situation arises where both teams would be required to forfeit the game due to multiple player ejections, the Competition Director shall convene the TRG and determine the appropriate outcome based on competition considerations.

### ***Behavior Warranting Sanctions***

#### **Poor Sportsmanship**

When a team demonstrates a pattern of poor sportsmanship or disregard for the Rules, by committing intentional, repeated or flagrant infractions, issue a TMF. If such a pattern is demonstrated by a single player, issue a PMF to that player.

Behavior warranting such sanctions includes deliberate fouling, dangerous play, taunting, fighting, swearing directed at an Observer or opponent, repeated marking fouls, deliberate fast counting or double-teaming, making unwarranted calls or contests, or other blatant disregard of the rules. Any flagrant foul does not require a pattern to result in a TMF or PMF. Likewise, a single particularly violent "harmful endangerment" infraction can be grounds for a PMF or an ejection, at the discretion of the Observer or Linesperson who witnesses the incident. Finally, a single particularly egregious demonstration of disregard for the rules (such as an intentional infraction or clearly unfounded call) can be grounds for a TMF.

#### **Battery**

Intentionally striking another player with a part of the body, a disc or anything else, or any clear attempt to do so, warrants an ejection. This includes, but is not limited to: punching or kicking, or attempting to punch or kick, someone; spiking, or attempting to spike, a disc on someone; and spitting on someone, or spitting at someone but missing. If a player spikes the disc without intending to hit another player, and it does hit an opposing player, you may assess a TMF or PMF.

## **Swearing**

At your discretion, TMF or PMF may be assessed for swearing if directed at an opposing player or coach, or any spectator, Observer, or linesperson. Technical fouls will be issued for general, undirected swearing in accordance with any specific written guidelines for a given tournament.

## **Deliberate Fouling**

A TMF or PMF may be assessed for a particularly hard, dangerous or deliberate foul, at your discretion.

## **Pushing/Shoving**

A TMF or PMF may be assessed for unwarranted aggressive (e.g. shoving) or dangerous (e.g. tripping) behavior, at your discretion.

## **Taunting**

Repeated or prolonged taunting, or any verbal abuse of players, fans or USAU officials, warrants a TMF or PMF, depending on the severity of the offense. In determining which sanction is appropriate, consider whether there appears to be an attempt to intimidate or otherwise gain an advantage over the opponent by such actions, and also the intensity level of the game. Walking away from an incident while jawing or mocking is different than aggressively moving toward the other team's sideline or being in an opponent's face. The former is a case of disrespect, and should be discouraged, possibly with a TMF; the latter is verbal assault and may warrant harsher sanctions. There is a difference between saying that a call is (expletive) and that the player or official making the call is (expletive), the latter being more likely to warrant a PMF than a TMF.

## **Sideline Encroachment**

If, after being warned, players on a team continue to crowd the sideline, you may issue a Technical Foul. If the player's encroachment interferes with play or an observer's ability to make a call, a TMF should be issued.

Any other behavior described by Article X of the USAU Bylaws may warrant a TMF at your discretion. Finally, any behavior that would warrant the issuance of a TMF, but which occurs in a game without Observers, can result in sanctions upon a complaint filed to the TRG.

## ***Implementation***

Any Observer may assess a Technical Foul, TMF, PMF or ejection. The infraction must have been witnessed by at least one official. For PMFs and ejections, stop play as soon as possible; for the purpose of continuation the situation should be treated like an injury called at the time of the infraction. Technical fouls and TMFs should be assessed at the next stoppage of play after the infraction. During the stoppage, signal the infraction (hand signal or card as appropriate), inform the player(s), captains, and coaches of both teams of the sanction, record it on the score sheet, and assess any penalties at that point.

## **Personal Misconduct Fouls and Ejections**

Notify the Tournament Head Observer and Competition Director of any PMFs or ejections immediately after the game in which they occur. Observers should be informed every time a previously sanctioned player (PMF or ejection) is on the roster of a team competing in their game.

An ejected player must immediately leave the general area where their game is being played, as directed by the Competition Director, TD, or Head Observer. In practice this means the player must remove him or herself at least 100 yards from the specific field and refrain from interacting with any players, coaches, fans,

or officials involved in that game. Failure to do so results in a forfeit for that player's team. If a player plays in a game from which they have been ejected, that player is suspended for the entire tournament, the player's team forfeits that game, and harsher sanctions may also result, depending on the event. A team whose player is ejected may substitute another player, and the opposing team also may exchange a player if they wish. All players must remain in the positions they occupied when play stopped (no set-up), unless the ejection also triggers a Team Misconduct Penalty, as described in the following sections.

### **Team Misconduct Penalty Against the Offense**

The disc is moved to the reverse brick mark, away from the end zone of attack. The offense is given 30 seconds to set up anywhere on the playing field. After all offensive players have assumed stationary positions, the defense has an additional 20 seconds to match up and check the disc in with a new stall count. Give appropriate time warnings to both teams. If the defense prefers, they can elect to leave the disc where it was when play stopped – in this case no set-up is allowed, and the stall count resumes as if an uncontested offensive violation had been called, once teams are ready.

### **Team Misconduct Penalty Against the Defense**

The disc is moved to the brick mark closest the end zone of attack. The offense is given 30 seconds to set up anywhere on the playing field. After all offensive players have assumed stationary positions, the defense has an additional 20 seconds to match up and check the disc in with a new stall count. Give appropriate time warnings to both teams. Two other options are available to the offense:

Leave the disc where it was when play stopped, no player set-up, new stall count.

Center the disc on the long axis of the field, normal player set-up, new stall count.

### **Team Misconduct Penalty Assessed Between Points**

If the Misconduct Penalty is accepted, there is no pull. If the penalty is against the receiving team, the disc is put into play at the brick mark in the end zone they are defending. If the penalty is against the pulling team, the receiving team puts the disc into play at the brick mark closest to the end zone they are attacking. Each team may substitute players as usual, and normal time limits apply.

### **Declined Team Misconduct Penalties**

A team captain can decline a misconduct penalty and leave the disc as is. In exceptional circumstances, Observers can overrule the declination and insist on enforcement of the misconduct penalty. Observers will rarely overrule a team's declination of the yardage penalty.