

Dear player/coach/friend of football,

I trust that you are enjoying the World Cup as it is being played out before us and we continue with our own footballing journeys within the Nepean Football Association.

I am writing this short letter as the halfway point of our season is upon us and it is a good time to reflect on how the season is going on a personal and team note as well as both a club and Association level.

In my role here at Nepean I am lucky enough to be able to hear and be involved in so many of the great things about our game at a local, State and National level but as with all things, there is always a small element that can make it bad for everyone.

We are receiving too many reports of poor behaviour, both on and off the field and far too often, this leads to violent, nasty and aggressive outcomes. We have players being injured badly enough to lose jobs. We have had club officials being threatened, spectators involved in altercations and all of this in the name of the "beautiful game". "Passion" is not another word for violence.

As you read this, we all need to take ownership of this problem. It isn't always someone else doing the bad stuff, sometimes it is us, or our mates, or someone we know. It isn't always someone else that gets injured either, sometimes it is us, or our mates or someone we know, and then we care more and we demand action. The action is in our hands, and in our feet, and in our mouths. If we all decide to take action and own our behaviour, the first incident doesn't happen and then the 2nd one doesn't either. No one goes out on the weekend to injure another player or be injured and we know that our game is a body contact sport and injuries will happen but what we need to stop is the unnecessary injuries from occurring.

We need to remember that we are all participating in our game for fun. We can be as competitive as we want to be, but at the end of the day, we are all amateurs with other jobs and school and families and no one has to win at all costs to pay the bills.

I am asking everyone involved in our great game to play their part in making it even greater and to keep everyone playing for as long as they want to and not have to give it away because of injuries. Don't blame the referee for your poor behaviour and actions. Chances are you would've done it anyway but had no one to blame.

Coaches please teach your players the right way to play and set an example. Players please play the way you want to be played against. Your opposition doesn't want to get kicked either. It's not about being "soft", it's about respect. Respect for the game, your team mates, the opposition, the officials, your club. Remember why you first pulled on your boots.....

Remind your friends, families and fans that you are playing for fun and that you, your team mates, opposition and the officials are all amateurs and probably won't be able to do (all the time) what they see on tv but you will be giving it your best shot.

With all of this said, I hope you enjoy the World Cup and the rest of your season and look forward to hearing and seeing even more great stuff from the Nepean area.

Yours in Sport,

James Rankine

Football Manager

Nepean Football Association Inc.

Ph: 02 4731 2911

Mob: 0409 969 540

Fax: 02 4722 6751

Email: James.Rankine@nepeanfootball.com.au

Web: www.nepeanfootball.com.au



Soccer. it's REAL football and it's REAL fun!