



COOLING OFF PERIOD PROTOCOL

For all matches under the auspices of **THE NORTH WEST COUNTIES FOOTBALL LEAGUE** the protocol is that Club managers, coaches, club officials, players etc. **may not approach the match officials at half time or until at least 20 minutes after the game has finished** (this includes not going onto the field of play at the end of the match or waiting for the match officials in the tunnel area) in order to make comment to any match official concerning incidents or the handling of the game. The after-match handshake is permitted, but any derogatory comment will be considered a breach of the 'cooling off' protocol.

In principle, post-match 'cooling off' periods are:

- Applicable at **half time**
- Applicable after the **end of every game**
- Applicable to all occupants of the Technical Area, all players and Club Officials
- Designed to reduce confrontation by creating a period of reflection so that any discussion can take place in a calm atmosphere so that it is as fruitful as possible for all parties leading to greater understanding.
- Likely to result in considerably fewer cases of misconduct

Benefits of having such a post-match 'cooling off' protocol

- Prevents obvious public dispute on the field of play that detracts from the image of the game
- Reduces the likelihood of confrontation / misconduct and all that the aftermath entails
- Reduces the adrenaline levels in everyone concerned
- Allows a calm, rational conversation to take place that should benefit both parties
- Allows all parties to have a period of reflection and a reduction in the stresses the game produces
- Allows the match officials time to complete the official paperwork
- Gives the opportunity for an Observer to be present so that he can watch, listen and offer advice or an opinion, if appropriate to do so
- Reduces pressure on referees

There would then be a consistency across all Steps where "Professional Game" referees operate, thereby allowing a smooth transition as they or the clubs migrate upwards through the game.

By order of the Management Committee