

A message to our CUSA managers.

As we begin a new season, we would like to share some important information for you to review and communicate to your players and coaches.

First, a new rule will be implemented this season. It is designed to reduce incidents of mass protest and dissent, while also improving communication between teams and match officials:

The IFAB has rolled out guidelines to help referees control situations where there is mass protest or crowding/mobbing by multiple players towards the referee (Pages 24-27 of the 2025-2026 Laws of the Game or <https://www.theifab.com/laws/latest/only-the-captain/>)

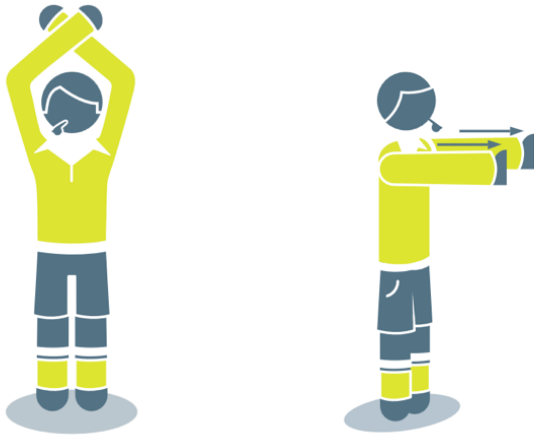
These guidelines will allow the referee to diffuse contentious situations with teams by being able to communicate clearly to the teams in a respectful and collaborative environment. “Only the captain” does not relate to situations of isolated dissent or general disagreement from players. Referee-player interaction remains important to the game and other players may continue to interact with the referee in respectful and isolated ways.

*The Calgary leagues support and recommend referees use the “Only the Captain” signal in situations of **mass protest or mass crowding of the referee**. When the referee initiates this signal:*

- *All players, except the captain from each team, must stop confronting the referee and leave the 4-meter “captain-only zone”.*
- *Any players breaching the 4-meter captain-only zone once it is established, will be sanctioned with a **yellow card for dissent by action**.*
- *In situations where the captain is not on the field of play, or the team does not have an identifiable captain, **the referee will designate one player from each team to act as “captain”.***
 - *Team officials, and substitutes are not to enter the field or the 4-meter captain-only zone.*
- *All other players must leave the 4-meter zone after both teams have captains designated and/or identified.*

Referees should discuss the new guidelines and procedures with the captains of both teams during the pre-game coin-toss. The captains should be reminded that they have a degree of responsibility for encouraging team-mates to respect the captain-only zone and remain at least 4 meters away from the referee when this situation arises.

These signals will indicate when the Only the captains guidelines are initiated and the establishment of the 4-meter captain only zone:



Please work with our match officials when these situations arise.

Additional Notes to Help Set Your Team Up for Success:

- All individuals in the technical/bench area **must** be listed on the game sheet and present a valid player or coach card to the match official. Please ensure your game sheets are fully completed and organized before presenting them.
- If a player receives a red card, they must leave the field immediately, collect their belongings, and remain out of sight of the match officials for the remainder of the game. They are not permitted to return to the field after the game - especially to interact with officials. Failure to comply, or any verbal abuse toward officials, will result in extended suspensions and additional sanctions.
- Please ensure that all players presenting cards are who they claim to be. Any individual found playing under a false identity can be suspended from all CUSA play for 12 months. The same applies to team officials responsible for ensuring the game sheet is accurate for that match. Teams found guilty will face fines, performance bonds, and denial of promotion or participation in Provincials. Respect your opponents, match officials, and the integrity of the league.
- Teams are responsible for tracking yellow card accumulation. Website statistics and automated warning emails may not always be up to date. To help keep records accurate, you can submit game details for matches played within the previous 7 days through the “Team Management Login” section of the website.

- There is no guest play allowed between programs. Players can register separately into each of our different programs (11v11, 7v7, Coed Indoor, Coed outdoor) should they wish to play in multiple formats.

We wish you a fantastic Summer 2026 CUSA season. If you have any questions about our processes, please don't hesitate to contact us.