

SIDELINE BEHAVIOUR UPDATE FROM THE POSITIVE ANGLE

Last Saturday while at Northcote Rugby Club viewing junior games in the appalling weather I noticed two excellent “sandwich board” signs provided by the Northcote Rugby Club proclaiming to parents and spectators that junior rugby is a kids game played for fun and development, that coaches are volunteers, the referees are human and it ain’t the Bledisloe Cup, but hey, have a great day! The “sandwich boards” were strategically placed at the access ways to the Harvey Wright fields and kindly sponsored by a community minded and generous sponsor. A great job Northcote helping to get the message out about sideline behaviour standards – Love The ‘Cote (LTC)!!!!

I attended a forum with Paul Evans (JRC Chairman) on Tuesday night at Silverdale Rugby Club attended by 30 odd coaches and managers about Sideline Abuse. The ‘Dale had had a few incidents of late regarding sideline abuse of referees and poor spectator behaviour at junior games and members of the junior committee took the initiative to get the message to the team officials. Paul Currin (junior coach and NHRRA referee) assisted by Dylan Turner and Andrew Short (both parents/coach/associate referee) and the Junior Chairman Jamie Schedewy. It was a well thought through presentation using videos of sideline abuse and poor spectator behaviour, overseas presenters and university papers on the subject.

The message is that is a kid’s game, not the parents game, poor sideline behaviour contributes to kids dropping out of rugby, criticism of kids by parents for perceived errors in their play and putting fun back into the game. From reputable research, kids ranked winning as 48th in “what’s fun in sport” and trying your best, getting game time, playing with your mates, getting respect from your coach is ranked in the top five. Kids want respect and encouragement, clear communication, knowledge of the game and a good listener from their coaches and they just want their parents to watch them play in a positive way – a key message to your rugby playing kid is “I Love Watching You Play” and that’s it in a nutshell. Kids don’t want the critique in the car on the way home, would you want your son criticising your poor golf putt at 50 Decibels from the edge of the green or in the locker room?! No way! The forum dealt with why some people are sideline terrors, how to recognise what is poor sideline behaviour and referee abuse and how to manage it - key message here was “Nip it In The Bud ASAP”, it will only get worse and spread through the spectators. Educate and motivate your parents (or yourself) from day one, recognise the issues and deal with them but be positive and tough with the miscreants but use a bit of humour. Check out the NZ Rugby Applaud programme - <http://www.smallblacks.com/applaud/>. Excellent job Silverdale Junior Committee – “Go the Mighty Dale!!

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