



# Nashoba Valley Youth Soccer League

Date: June 6, 2022

The objective of the Nashoba Valley Youth Soccer League is to develop and promote a vital and exciting youth soccer program among its 21 member clubs. This is accomplished through organized competitive soccer play and programs designed to educate and develop players, coaches and referees.

During Week 3, there was an incident in the handshake line at the conclusion of a G34 match. The hand of a Home player reportedly struck the forehead of a Visiting player, and a Visiting coach intervened to protect a second Visiting player. The coaches did not adhere to the post-game handshake procedure on the first page of the NVYSL Spring 2022 Information Booklet. A dispute then arose between the opposing coaches regarding whether the contact between hand and face occurred at all, whether it was forceful, whether it was intentional, whether the intervention was appropriate, and whether the player involved should be reprimanded.

This confrontation between coaches escalated in intensity, with raised voices and profanity, including the coaches questioning each other's qualifications, in front of the players and the youth referee who found it necessary to step between the angry coaches and separate them. While each coach, during the hearing, continued to blame the other for continuing the confrontation, the Sportsmanship Committee found that it took two sides to argue -- and that both coaches were responsible for the inappropriate intensity of their public exchange.

Pursuant to the referee report and initial league investigation, out of concern for the safety of our clubs Team B's coach was suspended pending a meeting of the NVYSL Sportsmanship Committee (the "committee"). Due to a variety of scheduling factors, the coach served a two (2) game suspension prior to the committee meeting.

On June 2, 2022 the committee sat and heard further evidence from parents, coaches, character witnesses, and the clubs.

The committee was composed of 10 coaches, parents, and Board members from around the league, and was chaired by Christopher Batinsey, the league President. The committee deliberated for nearly one (1) hour about the facts in the referee report and the further evidence from the committee meeting. The committee deliberated on the forehead hit, Team B's response to that, as well as Team A's overall response.

The committee ultimately decided (1) no further action was required for Team B's coach because they acted appropriately under the circumstances, (2) that an apology was owed to Team B's coach personal and the club for Team B due to how long it took to convene the committee meeting and the stress and anxiety that the delay caused for the club and coach, (3) that Team A **cannot** participate in handshakes or high-fives for the remainder of the season but rather must stay near their bench at the end of the game and either wave or clap, and (4) that the Assistant Coach from Team A shall not attend the Week 8 away match when they face Club B again.

On point 4 specifically, a majority of the committee felt strongly about sanction because the Assistant Coach displayed unsporting behavior and a lack of collegiality towards Team B's coach. We recognize that Team A's Assistant Coach was self-certain in his perceptions but the manner in which he reacted -- yelling at an opposing coach, in full view of 8-9 year old girls and their parents -- is not an appropriate response.