



**Mississippi RUSH
Jackson Futbol Club
Mississippi Futbol Club
Code of Conduct**



Youth sports are meant to be constructive, rewarding and fun for the players. Unfortunately, many parents, fans, and coaches do not realize that their actions can have a lasting emotional effect on children.

Too many children are leaving sports activities because adults unfairly take the fun environment. Parents, players, coaches, and fans represent Mississippi RUSH when our teams play and practice wherever we are. Therefore, **Mississippi RUSH, Mississippi Futbol Club and Jackson Futbol Club** have adopted the following **Code of Conduct** for parents and spectators.

This code of conduct requires us to work together to play with good sportsmanship and to treat players, coaches, referees, and parents with respect. The **Code of Conduct** can also be found at www.jacksonfc.com and www.mfcsoccer.com.

The essential elements of character building and ethics in sports are embodied in the concept of sportsmanship and these core principles: respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good sportsmanship.

Parents and coaches therefore agree to:

1. Treat referees with respect:

- There are no circumstances in which a parent or a coach should confront a referee during or after a game.
- Do not verbally harass a referee.
- Coaches will be held responsible for ensuring that parents comply with this portion of the code of conduct.
- A Coach who fails to control unruly parents will be subject to suspension.
- SEE REFEREE ABUSE POLICY LATER IN THIS DOCUMENT.

2. Treat your team with respect:

- Ensure your child has the required equipment and is on time for games and practice.
- Pick your child up promptly; do not make the coaches and/or other parents wait on you.
- Disagreements with the coach do NOT belong on the public soccer field or its surrounding areas at any time. Critical questions and comments should be voiced later according to club policy and procedures. Always observe the 48 hours contact rule.

3. Treat our players and opponents with respect:

- Coaches, not parents, are the ones we entrust to instruct our players. Parent criticism of or “constructive help” for other players is not well received by the player, coach, or the player’s parents.
- Never yell or criticize a player on ANY team. Think of how you feel when another parent or coach, especially from another team, yells at or berates your child.
- Avoid confrontations or shouting matches with referees, coaches, parents or fans of an opposing team. Move to another part of the field where you cannot hear them. If at a tournament, find a field marshal or tournament official.
- No alcohol, drugs, profanity, or fighting are permitted at a game or practice.

4. Grievances and Consequences:

- Your manager should be contacted first if you feel a parent’s, players or coach’s behavior warrants corrective action. The manager will attempt to resolve the issue, but may refer to the club’s directors or the full board of the organization for a remedy.
- Consequences are outlined later in this document.

Players therefore agree to:

1. Treat referees with respect:

- Never touch a referee except to shake hands.
- Always address referees as “sir” or “ma’am” no matter how old or young they are.
- Do not back talk a referee. If a referee speaks to you, your response should be respectful and to the point.
- Do not question the calls that referees make during play. If there is a question about a call, your coach should be the one to address it, not the sideline.
- It is possible that the referee made a mistake; this is part of the game and will not change. Do not let it affect your play or attitude of good sportsmanship.
- REFER TO REFERREE ABUSE POLICY LATER IN THIS DOCUMENT.

2. Treat your team with respect:

- Listen to your coach. Do what the coach asks of you without complaining.
- Be at practice and games on time.
- Be responsible for your own equipment.

3. Treat your teammates and opponents with respect:

- Whether you win or lose, do so with class. Shake hands after the game.
- Never yell or criticize a member of the opposing team.
- Never criticize your own teammates.
- No alcohol, drugs, profanity, or fighting are ever permitted at a soccer game or practice.

4. Treat fields with respect:

- RUSH relies on teams to volunteer during the season to help maintain fields. Teams should volunteer to help line, paint, clean, and protect our complex when asked.
- Fields are expensive to build and maintain. The fields and equipment are paid for by your families through their club dues and community taxes. Never damage the fields, goals, benches, nets, fences, or corner flags.
- Do not leave litter on the fields or grounds. Always pick up any litter in your area after practice or a game. A quality team or player should not leave behind athletic tape, paper trash, empty drink containers and worn-out equipment, etc. on the grounds after a game or practice session.
- *Offenders may be required to do field service duty – see section on consequences.*

5. Practice goal safety:

- Do not hang, jump, or climb on goals. Do not attempt to reattach nets to goal frame.
- Report any damaged or unstable goals to your coach right away.
- Never move or tip goals on your own. Your coach will not ask you to move a goal as it is club policy NOT to involve players in movement of goals.
- Practice with only the approved goals from the complex.

6. Grievances and consequences:

- If you cannot play by the rules in this code of conduct, there will be consequences.
- The penalties may include reprimands, suspension of playing privileges and expulsion from the team or club.

Consequences

All coaches, parents and players agree to abide by the aforementioned rules and guidelines. Failure to abide by the rules and guidelines will result in disciplinary action that could include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Verbal warning by an official, head coach, and/or President and/or Chairperson of the Disciplinary Committee of Mississippi RUSH, Jackson Futbol Club or Mississippi Futbol Club.
2. Written warning.
3. Probation with written documentation of the incident kept on file within the organization.
4. Game(s) suspension with written documentation of the incident kept on file within the organization.
5. Season suspension with written documentation of the incident kept on file within the organization and its affiliates; or
6. Such other action as the Disciplinary Committee shall determine is necessary and/or proper with written documentation of a violation, which will be kept on file with the organization and its affiliates and may result in consequences such as required field service hours or fines to teams for:
 - failure to maintain clean sidelines,
 - failure to abide by field assignments,
 - practicing when fields are closed.

In addition to the above Gulf States Premier League, US Club Soccer, ECNL, and US Youth Soccer may respond to certain actions that take place during events that they sanction, such as the following:

1. Confrontations involving verbal abuse, threats, profanity or touching a referee.
2. Confrontations between parents and coaches or parents and opposing team Parents.
3. These governing bodies have the authority to impose fines and/or suspensions above and beyond those imposed by Mississippi RUSH.

REFEREE ABUSE POLICY

Latest news reports and articles revealed an increase in incidents of referee abuse in all youth sports leading to declining numbers of both adult and youth referees in all sports, including soccer. Competitive soccer can take place without a licensed referee, so without them, competitive soccer ceases to exist. Therefore, Mississippi RUSH has adopted a stronger Code of Conduct regarding abusive behavior directed toward referees.

All individuals responsible for a team (Coaches and Team Managers) and all spectators (parents, friends, siblings, relatives) shall support the referee and respect his/her decisions. Failure to do so will undermine the referee's authority and has the potential of creating a hostile environment for the players, the referee, and all the other participants and spectators.

Teams, Parents, Coaches, Managers, and spectators must follow these rules:

- 1) Questioning of referee decisions during a game should be minimized. **NO YELLING** at the referee—**EVER**, and no criticism, sarcasm, harassment, or intimidation of any kind before, during or after the game.

Coaches, players, and sideline spectators may NOT address any member of the Referee crew during play except for:

- Responding to a Referee-initiated communication.
- Making a request for substitutions.
- Pointing out emergencies or safety issues, such as an injured player on the field.
- **Only coaches and team captains** may request clarification of a call, provided the request is courteous and non-argumentative.

- 2) Violators of this rule, including coaches, players, and spectators, may be ejected by the referee.

A Referee may caution or send off any coach and /or spectator for his/her failure to abide by this policy.

- This includes cautioning or sending off a coach for failure to control spectator or player behavior on their team.
- If a coach is sent off and no assistant coach is available, the match cannot continue.
- A referee can, at their sole discretion, refuse to continue a match until disruptive behavior is resolved to their satisfaction.
- Any abusive behavior toward referees by players will be handled according to the Laws of the Game.

- 3) Referees are responsible for reporting any incidents of abuse by coaches, spectators, and players to the Referee Assignor. The assignor will then report those incidents to tournament and/or RUSH Board officials. Any ejections and/or reports of referee abuse are subject to disciplinary action by the Mississippi RUSH Board of Directors and/or tournament officials. These actions may include:

- (a) Game suspension.
- (b) Tournament or multiple game suspensions.
- (c) Other penalties are at the discretion of the Board of Mississippi RUSH.
- (d) **NOTE: Abuse directed toward a YOUTH REFEREE will result in stronger sanctions.**

Signature: As a coach or parent or player with Mississippi RUSH, I acknowledge:

- ☐ That I have read, understand, and will adhere to this Code of Conduct.
- ☐ That my participation in club activities is contingent upon my ability to comply.
- ☐ That I will help remind others within our organization when they need to be reminded of their own commitment to this code of conduct.
- ☐ That I will refrain from abusive behavior toward referees.
- ☐ That I will abide by and accept the consequences for failing to comply with the rules set forth in this Code of Conduct.

Team _____ Coach Signature _____

Parent/Guardian Printed Name (1) _____

Parent/Guardian Signed Name (1) _____

Parent/Guardian Printed Name (2) _____

Parent/Guardian Signed Name (2) _____

Player Printed Name _____

Player Signed Name _____

Date signed _____