

The Bowmanville and Nilestown Resolutions

At the twenty-first Annual General Meeting of the Ontario Soccer Referees` Association on December 14th, 1980 in Bowmanville, enraged, battered and provoked members made another positive move to protect the Ontario referee from the continuing problem of vicious assaults by cowardly players and fans against game officials. The following resolution was passed unanimously by the members of the eighteen (18) Branches in attendance:

"Whereas the referee assault problem in Ontario continues unabated; and whereas many OSRA members who have been assaulted in recent years in their capacities as game officials have sustained very serious injuries; and whereas the OSRA, in the light of the inadequacy and ineffectiveness of the measures taken by the soccer authorities to deal with the referee assault problem in Ontario, is committed to protect its members. be it resolved that when an OSRA member reports that he/she has been assaulted, the member`s Branch is empowered to advise all OSRA members, through Branch Secretaries, not to provide service to that team and/or club until such time that the member`s Branch is satisfied that adequate protection for all referees is being provided by the league, team and/or club"

The Bowmanville Resolution does not supercede the Association`s Nilestown Resolution which was introduced at the OSRA`s Annual General Meeting on December 8th, 1974 in Nilestown, and which, for ease of reference, is reproduced below

"That in the event of an assault on a referee, no further services will be provided to the offending club until after the finding of the appropriate discipline power has been promulgated in accordance with the minimum standards set by the Canadian Soccer Association. That service will continue to be withheld from any club or team to which the offending player or players may be transfered or play for subsequent to an assault and whilst any Branch action on this resolution is in effect"

The two resolutions are complementary, and they have been classified as non-negotiable legislation by the OSRA Council.

The Bowmanville Resolution was deliberately written in a way which would provide Branches with the flexibility needed to apply it. Thus, it is the Branches, not the OSRA Executive, which will determine what constitutes adequacy of police protection or who is to be categorized as an inveterate referee beater and/or intimidator. This, of course, is as it should be, for no one knows better than the Branch Executives the conditions that exist in their respective areas.

Each Branch will have full support of the entire OSRA membership whenever the Bowmanville Resolution is applied. The OSRA Executive will continue to be responsible for the application of the Nilestown Resolution, a responsibility which was vested in it by the OSRA Council on February 27th, 1978. All relevant soccer authorities have already been informed that, effective immediately, where there is unnecessary delay in the hearings of assault cases, the Nilestown Resolution will be applied three (3) weeks after the day of the assault on a referee