DEVELOPING A SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Developing a policy on social media needn't be complicated or time consuming. Make your social media policy an extension of your club's existing Code of Conduct or other related policies/documents. That way, it's not a completely new set of rules and it's tied to well-established practices that existing members should already be familiar with.

Keep it short & simple

Provide easy-to-follow, bulleted guidelines to reinforce key messages.

This could include things like:

1. Use common sense: Use your best judgment at all times. If you're uncertain if something is inappropriate or questionable, don't post it.

2. Mind your manners: Be respectful, kind and civil. You should not tolerate discrimination or hateful comments about anyone, including your rivals.

3. Be human: Use your own voice; speak in a warm, approachable tone and most importantly, be yourself. Anything posted on the behalf of your club is permanent and a reflection of the club and its members.

4. Respect copyrights and fair use: Always give people proper credit for their work, and make sure you have the right to use something before you publish, for example – match photographs taken by someone else.

5. Be aware of confidentiality: Only reference information that is publically available. Do not disclose any information that is confidential without prior consent. For example – a personal telephone number of a coach.

6. Security: Social media accounts should be created using an official club email address, which a designated individual should have responsibility for. Passwords should be protected and any suspicions of account hacking should be raised wih the social media platform immediately.

Communicate it and be encouraging

Let people know this policy exists, where they can find it and who is the point of contact for any queries or concerns relating to it.

You don't want to put people off. Social media is an excellent tool for promoting your club's activities and engaging with your members, so you should openly encourage social media use for club-related purposes. This could include people asking about who else is coming along to training or when the next game is taking place.

There should be consequences

No policy would be complete without consequences. This is another good reason to tie it back to your established conduct policies.

For example, failure by members to adhere to the club's policies could perhaps result in disciplinary action, or even expulsion from the club in extreme cases.

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