

## Motorcycling NSW Ltd

A note from our CEO....

In recent months we have seen a number of disciplinary matters dealt with by either our Board of Directors or our Disciplinary Tribunal. These things never end well for anybody. We have one child and parent removed from the sport for a number of years for assaulting an official at a meeting last year, and more recently two junior riders have been suspended for most of this year due to the actions of their parents. There have also been other matters dealt with, and there are three more sitting on my desk right now that will likely see riders suspended either for their own actions, or the actions of their parents.

We are seeing an increase in the level of abuse against officials, volunteers, medics, and MNSW staff. The majority of the offenders are junior parents. Sad, but true.

The worst part is it is the kids who pay the price, usually through no fault of their own, because when a parent breaks the rules, the suspension is generally applied to the rider they are looking after.

I think it is timely to remind everyone that we all have an obligation to treat everyone else in the sport with dignity and politeness. Not only is that a moral obligation, but it is in our competition rules and our Member Protection Policy. That even includes when you may be on the rough end of circumstances outside your control, or you get an officials decision you don't like. If you want to protest a decision, there are processes for that. Abuse isn't one of them.

In the coming weeks I will be making an effort to remind our officials of their powers and obligations to issue fines and other penalties at events, and of their authority to tell competitors to simply pack up and go home if their behavior warrants it. Taking these actions is very difficult for officials. They are volunteers and want everyone to enjoy their racing. But we will not tolerate officials being abused for doing their jobs, especially considering the amount of personal time they give up so that we can all ride.

MNSW will be taking a hard line on these matters, and we have altered our disciplinary processes to enable us to deal with these matters more quickly than in the past.

So before you let your emotions get the better of you, remember that the people you are about to unload on are here for the same reasons as the rest of us, because we love the sport, and they give of their time so that you can enjoy it. If that's not enough to make you stop and think, then be aware that we will have some pretty serious ramifications waiting on the other side, as we will protect our officials and staff against abusive behavior, as we are obliged to do.

There is no place in our sport for people who think abuse or aggression towards others is acceptable.

Remember, your officials are volunteers, the ladies in the canteen are volunteers, the people waving flags are volunteers, your club day isn't the AMA Supercross, and there's only a 1 in 20 million chance that your child really is the next Chad Reed. Even Chad races because he wants to enjoy himself. Besides, whatever happens on any given weekend will not stop them from being the very best they can be if they work hard. Sometimes we have a bad day. Pack up and have another crack next week. There's always another race...

Dave Cooke  
CEO