

Berks & Bucks FA

Football Services Guides



Sin Bins

What are they?

From the start of the 2019/2020 season, all yellow cards for dissent in grassroots football will result in the player being temporarily dismissed from the field of play – or “sent to the Sin Bin.”

Which Leagues are impacted?

All Leagues sanctioned directly by County Football Associations, in addition to regional Women’s Leagues sanctioned by The FA, are required to adopt Sin Bins. This includes all Saturday Men’s Leagues at Step 7 and below of the National League System, Women’s Leagues at Tier 5 and Below, Youth, Veterans and Sunday Leagues.

How do they work?

The description below relates to a player receiving their first dissent caution of a game. Please refer to the table on page two for what happens if the player has previously committed offences during the game.

If a player commits a first act of dissent, the referee will show them a yellow card and point to the side of the pitch. The player is required to leave the field of play and is not permitted to re-enter the pitch, or be substituted, until ten minutes of play have passed (eight minutes for all matches of less than 90 minutes).

There is no designated area the player must stand in, and they are permitted to warm up on the side of the pitch.

If the same player commits another cautionable offence while “in the Sin Bin,” they are shown a second yellow card, are not permitted to return to the field of play and cannot be substituted (this includes committing a second act of dissent while in the Sin Bin).

What happens after the match?

A referee is still required to report Sin Bin cautions to the County FA in the normal manner, and they will continue to count towards the accumulation of offences for Players, Teams and Clubs throughout the season; however **there is no financial penalty for a single Sin Bin caution.**

Where a player is not permitted to return to the field of play under sin bin procedures, they will receive a £40 fine and one match suspension (equivalent to receiving two regular cautions in a match).

Further Information

For more information on the Sin Bin process and regulations, please contact Support@Berks-BucksFA.com or 01235 544890.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Can a referee manage multiple players in the Sin Bin at the same time?

Yes, provided they follow the correct procedure.

Does the Sin Bin period roll over?

The Sin Bin period will roll over from the First Half to the Second Half, and in to Extra Time, but does not roll over from one match to the next.

Can a Sin Binned player be substituted?

A player in their first Sin Bin can only be substituted once the Sin Bin period has elapsed and provided the Team has not used all permitted substitutions. A player who has previously committed an act of dissent is not permitted to return to the field of play.

Can a goalkeeper be Sin Binned?

Absolutely. If the goalkeeper is sent to the Sin Bin, they can be replaced by an outfield player and re-enter the field of play in an outfield position once the ten minutes have elapsed.

Can a team drop below seven players due to Sin Bin procedures?

Yes. As players are only temporarily dismissed, play can continue.

Can a Sin Binned player be involved in a Penalty Shootout?

Yes. Penalty Shoot Outs are used to decide the outcome of a drawn match, but are not considered part of the match itself. All Sin Bins expire at Full Time/the end of Extra Time.

Can a Substitute be sent to the Sin Bin?

No. If a substitute commits an act of dissent they will receive a standard yellow card.

What happens if a player commits an act of dissent after the final whistle or during a penalty shoot-out?

In this instance the player will receive a standard yellow card.

Guidance for multiple offences in one match:

Cautious 1	Cautious 2	Cautious 3	Can re-enter	Can be subbed
D	-	-	Y	Y*
D	C	-	Y	Y*
D	D	-	N	Y*
C	D	-	Y	Y*
D	C	D	N	N
D	C	C	N	N
C	D	D	N	N
C	D	C	N	N

D = Dissent C = Other cautionable offences

*substitution allowed only after Sin Bin period has been served, and provided the Team has not used all permitted substitutions