

Vietnam Swans – National Code of Conduct

National Code of Conduct

Vietnam Swans Australian Football Club.

20 September 2013

The words in this document are designed to guide behaviour. The behaviour we display on and off the field is a direct reflection of our Club's culture.

To be a strong and vibrant Club, the Vietnam Swans need a culture that encourages inclusiveness. Inclusiveness helps us recruit players, supporters, sponsors and other stakeholders. And retain them – even after they have left Vietnam.

1. OUR OBJECTIVES: WHY WE HAVE A CLUB

The Vietnam Swans Australian Rules Football Club is special; our reasons for being are not the same as some other footy clubs.

We have a club for the following reasons:

- To make friends, in a sociable environment where everyone who wants to join in is welcome
- To play footy as regularly as possible, and to introduce footy to the people of Vietnam
- To give a little to the community we live amongst, in return for the graciousness of our hosts in letting us live here.

In order to achieve this, the Vietnam Swans do the following things:

1. We create opportunities to play footy as regularly as possible, including by nurturing the relationships that allow us access to the things we need to play the game.
2. We organise and deliver activities that demonstrate respect for all participants and allow them to participate as actively as they wish, regardless of nationality and background.
3. We establish and protect a fun environment that makes playing footy as enjoyable as possible for all, irrespective of football ability.
4. We support local charities, where appropriate, for the betterment of the local community.
5. Through our conduct, we earn the respect of sponsors, parents, peers, playing ground owners/landlords (including RMIT University), the

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Australian Embassy & Consulate and all other stakeholders – including, at all times, our Vietnamese hosts.

As a club, we have established a code of conduct to make sure that we can do all the things we need to do to justify our reasons for being.

2. OUR CODE OF CONDUCT: THE WAY WE DO THINGS

This section below outlines the way we behave as members of the Vietnam Swans.

To make our footy club work, we need a few things:

- Teammates
- An oval
- A footy and some related kit
- An opposition
- An umpire
- The respect and continued support of our community

3. OUR TEAMMATES

To facilitate the “continual renewal” of the Club, the Club needs to create an environment that encourages people to join and players to participate as often as they possibly can. Accordingly:

1. The Club has a zero tolerance policy for any physical altercation that erupts on the field or threatens to erupt on the field. There are no excuses.
2. During training sessions and scratch / international matches, players shall be supportive of their Swans’ team mates (regardless of whether the Swans’ team mate is playing for the Reds or Whites or in an international). Where some “good fun” sledging of an opponent begins to encroach upon personal abuse, the player shall desist immediately to avoid the situation escalating.
3. The Vietnam Swans Captain and/or Coach on the day shall have the authority to intervene if a member of the Vietnam Swans is not adhering to the above two clauses..

4. THE PLACES WE PLAY

We are fortunate to have the trust and respect of some important partners that allow us to play our games. RMIT University’s sporting facilities in Saigon are critical to the long term success of the Vietnam Swans’ Saigon chapter. Similarly, the Australian Embassy in Hanoi provides the Vietnam Swans’ Hanoi chapter an incomparable benefit unavailable to almost any other group. Accordingly, when we gather to play and train, players must ensure that their behaviour is exemplary. Players at all times shall ensure that:

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1. All ground personnel including staff, students, grounds staff and security personnel are treated with respect.
2. Dedicated toilet facilities are used at all times as required; ie, players must not use the bushes in preference to using the dedicated toilets.
3. Players must leave the ground in a clean, tidy and orderly state.
4. Players must not infringe on the rights of other users of shared facilities. Where there is a dispute with another party (eg an apparent double booking of the same facility), it shall be resolved in a professional and appropriate manner that does not adversely affect the reputation of the Vietnam Swans.

5. *THE KIT WE USE*

A game without kit is 36 blokes standing around. Here is how we deal with the property we need to play the game.

1. If the kit we use belongs to the Club, treat it with respect. It's not yours to take and use; it's ours to share.
2. If the Club uses kit that belongs to you, you have every right to expect it to be treated with respect.

6. *OUR OPPOSITION*

We need around 20 players from another country to travel here on the same weekend, or to show up in their hometown to play us. If we keep it fun, that improves our chances of playing more matches, because more people will want to play footy with us more often.

Footy can be a tough game. There's a way the Vietnam Swans go about it.

1. We play the ball with intensity.
2. We recognise that without team mates, umpires and an opposition, we do not have a game in Asia. Over here, we cannot take these critical ingredients for granted.
3. In Asia, every opposition player is an AFL Asia team mate.
4. The Club has a zero tolerance policy for any physical altercation that erupts on the field or threatens to erupt on the field. There are no excuses.
5. Where some "good fun" sledging of an opponent begins to encroach upon personal abuse, the player shall desist immediately to avoid the situation escalating.

7. *OUR UMPIRES*

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Without an umpire, we do not have a match. Creating a fun environment that supports the recruitment and retention of umpires is critical – whether in a scratch match or international match. Accordingly:

1. The Club's position is very simple: at all times, the umpire is always right. No excuses. No exceptions.
2. It is recognized that, at times, a player will express frustration in the heat of the moment. If it is just a moment, the Club shall be more understanding.
3. The Club will not tolerate any "hounding" of any umpire in an international match or scratch match – especially if it leads to personal abuse.
4. Should the Club believe there is a 'systemic failure' with the umpiring, the coach / captain / president may approach the relevant officials to discuss.

8. OUR COMMUNITY

The Vietnam Swans are a visible local expression of Australian culture and the Australian community in Vietnam. In turn, we receive support from the Australian community and the broader community commensurate with our contribution. Each of us is obliged to protect the reputation of the Club.

1. At official Club functions, all players and officials shall behave in an appropriate manner that enhances the reputation of the Club and our sponsors.

9. THE SIN BIN

Everything about this Club is geared towards the continual recruitment and retention of players, umpires and sponsors. We're also wanting more clubs to tour more often to Vietnam. And we want to secure long term access to excellent facilities.

Accordingly, we strive to develop and nurture a positive culture of respect and fun. This document attempts to explicitly articulate the culture of the Club and its philosophy. This document is about guidance and prevention rather than "cure".

However, in the event that an individual does engage in inappropriate behaviour, the Club reserves the right to take disciplinary action which may include:

- Immediately sending the offending individual from the ground
- A reprimand
- A suspension
- Expulsion

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10. THE NATIONAL, HANOI & SAIGON COMMITTEES

The National, Hanoi and Saigon Committees:

1. Have jointly approved this National Code of Conduct.
2. May, from time to time, review and formally amend this document as appropriate.
3. Determine any penalties, if appropriate, for all serious disciplinary cases.
4. Saigon's and Hanoi's Committees will determine their chapter specific issues respectively with oversight from the National Committee. The National Committee shall consider issues of national interest: eg international matches.
5. Serving members of the city chapters are elected at their respective Annual General Meetings at the beginning of the year for a 12 month period. The National Committee is elected from and by the Hanoi and Saigon Committees.

11. SUMMARY

The Vietnam Swans thrive on 'connecting communities', building relationships and friendships. It makes our Club stronger and bigger by attracting more positive interest from new recruits, sponsors and other stakeholders – as well as securing the continued interest of our ever growing alumni.

We are all beneficiaries of the legacy of those who have come before us. It is now our responsibility to work together to lift the Vietnam Swans to the next level.

This code of conduct offers a set of guidelines for those who would like to make a proactive positive contribution to the Club's development as members.