

Hello News 9,

First off, thank you for reaching out to us for our side of the story.

We would like to begin with explaining how Saturday October 11th had started and to what lead to our coaches reactions.

Before the 5th grade game we hosted Shawnee 3rd grade and Shawnee 4th with no issues whatsoever. From their parents to their coaches and their athletes they were very kind, had great sportsmanship, and we enjoyed hosting them at our stadium.

Before we start any game it is a Red Dirt League wide stipulation that we weigh every athlete before every game. While weighing in James Rutledge (Shawnee 5th grade head coach) walked his team over, and begun to address our 5th grade head coach with a decision that the Red Dirt League had came to within their board in regard to Shawnee having ineligible players. He began to accuse the folks involved in the situation to be racist and other things. The president of our league did his best to descale the situation once he had stepped in Mr.Rutledge began to get aggressive, one of our 5th grade coaches began to try to descale the situation as well but Mr.Rutledge began to get physical and slap our coaches arm. We as a league asked our coaches to hold their composure and to please allow the boys to still play since they had traveled so far. The president of our league addressed all of the referress at this time to keep an extra eye out on both sides.

As the game began Shawnee coaching staff were using very aggressive language and profanity. There was encouragement on their part as well for their athletes to target our athletes which resulted in multiple Guthrie Athletes to be cleated and stomped on after the whistle had ended the play.



At this point in the game our League President as well as a few other board members began to approach the field to speak with Mr.Rutledge and his coaches, at this point we told Mr.Rutledge it was time for him to leave. The refs had stopped our league president and said that they had

already given him a sideline warning. At this time Guthrie parents were very concerned about the escalating situation the Guthrie Police Department was dispatched and had approached Mr.Rutledge and his coaching staff asking Mr.Rutledge to leave this is evident on the body cam footage. Mr.Rutledge refused to move and was very vocal to the officer that was assisting.

They continued to play dirty which is seen in multiple videos from the Shawnee parents. Our head coach had made the decision at this time to protect our athletes and to call the game.

Our head coach had began to pull all of our athletes off of the field at this point Shawnee becomes unhinged this is evident in the attached referee statement.

#### Guthrie vs. Shawnee

Both coaches understood the conditions of the game after speaking with them during the coin toss. It seem like both teams had issues with each other from the last time they met.

1. 2nd quarter one of the Guthrie coaches approached the Shawnee sideline to warn coaches about yelling cuss words. A few more coaches from the Guthrie sideline came over as well.

2. Shawnee spent to much time instigating after that which lead to more issues.

3. When the Guthrie coach decided to discontinue the game in the 3rd quarter Shawnee seem to become unhinged and things escalated.

In summary I felt it was unnecessary for Shawnee to escalate because they were ahead the entire game I wasn't sure why Shawnee seem to be so disappointed. This is from the Referee Eric Watson

The Shawnee coaches and parents were encouraging the children to chant “hell yeah” and “belt to ass” Shawnee at this time began to try to approach our coaches and at this point our coaches reacted to the situation. This would be the video you all publicized, that situation lasted about 30 seconds at this point all of the Shawnee parents as well as the athletes and coaches were asked to exit our stadium as quickly as possible. This is when Guthrie Police Officers had asked the Guthrie patrons to step aside so that Shawnee patrons could exit. After they were escorted out of the stadium our head coach approached Mr.Rutledge to try to smooth the situation this interaction can be noted below in the snapshot of a video of both coaches shaking hands.



As a league we had considered the situation handled and that we could all move on from what was a very turmoil day.

We were then very taken back when our league facebook page was getting very aggressive messages and comments from Shawnee coaches and parents. This continued into Sunday and the beginning of Monday. We have had multiple parents messaged privately with threatening messages.

Again we very much appreciate you all giving us the opportunity to speak our truth. There is a process that has to be taken when dealing with such an intense situation. We hope that in the future you all give a better opportunity to respond to such strong allegations to the Guthrie Community.

We would like to state that our coaches have been reprimanded for their uncharacteristic behavior on the field and we are handling the situation internally as a board.

Thank you,  
Guthrie Youth Football Board of Directors