

Red cards for football players who hide racist comments

5th March 2026



FIFA, the organization that controls world football (or soccer), wants to make a new rule to stop racism. It wants referees to give a red card to players who cover their mouths when they say things to other

players. If a player is shown a red card, they are sent off and must leave the football pitch. Recently, there have been several cases of players being racist. Last month, Brazilian international Vinicius Junior, 25, was playing for Real Madrid against Benfica in the Champions League. The match was suspended for ten minutes after Vinicius Junior claimed that a Benfica player had racially insulted him. Vinicius has faced 20 cases of racial abuse since joining Madrid in 2018.

FIFA boss Gianni Infantino wants footballers who cover their mouths during arguments to be sent off. Any player receiving a red card for discrimination can face a 10-match ban. Mr Infantino spoke to reporters at Sky News. He said if a player covered their mouth and said something, the comment could be racist, so that player has to be sent off. He added that players who cover their mouths must have said something they shouldn't have, otherwise they wouldn't have had to cover their mouth. Real Madrid is happy that FIFA is thinking about a new red-card rule. It said it would also "continue working, in collaboration with all institutions, to get rid of racism, violence, and hate in sport and society".

Sources: [espn.com](https://www.espn.com) / [sky.com](https://www.sky.com) / [sports.yahoo.com](https://www.sports.yahoo.com)

Writing

All sports players should get a red card and a long ban for making racist comments. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

organization / football / soccer / racism / red card / football pitch / suspended / abuse / arguments / discrimination / bans / collaboration / violence / hate / sport / society

True / False

- 1) FIFA said it wants to control world football. T / F
- 2) FIFA wants referees to send off players who make racist comments. T / F
- 3) A Real Madrid player said he was racially abused in a World Cup game. T / F
- 4) A game stopped for 10 minutes because of a possible racist comment. T / F
- 5) Players who racially abuse others could get a 10-match ban. T / F
- 6) FIFA's boss said players must cover their mouths in any argument. T / F
- 7) Real Madrid is happy about the possibility of a racism red card. T / F
- 8) Real Madrid said it would work to end violence, hate, and racism. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| 1. organization | a. if not |
| 2. pitch | b. fights |
| 3. suspended | c. insults |
| 4. arguments | d. remark |
| 5. abuse | e. field |
| 6. discrimination | f. wipe out |
| 7. comment | g. group |
| 8. otherwise | h. cooperation |
| 9. collaboration | i. halted |
| 10. get rid of | j. prejudice |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) Is a 10-match ban long enough for making racist comments?
- c) Why is there so much racism in football?
- d) What should happen to soccer fans who are racist?
- e) What would you do if you heard a racist comment?
- f) How can we get rid of violence in society?
- g) What do you think of the 2026 FIFA World Cup?
- h) What questions would you like to ask the FIFA boss?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. the organization that controls | a. cases of racial abuse |
| 2. a player is shown | b. could be racist |
| 3. there have been several cases of | c. during arguments |
| 4. The match was suspended | d. a red card |
| 5. Vinicius has faced 20 | e. off |
| 6. footballers who cover their mouths | f. world football |
| 7. face a 10-match | g. with all institutions |
| 8. the comment | h. for ten minutes |
| 9. that player has to be sent | i. ban |
| 10. continue working in collaboration | j. players being racist |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you know about FIFA?
- Which word is best, 'football' or 'soccer'?
- What do you think of racism in sport?
- What can FIFA do to completely end racism in football?
- Why are people racist?
- Do you think a red card for covering your mouth is good?
- What do you think of football?
- What advice do you have for Vinicius Junior?

Spelling

- the nirnigozoata that controls world football
- It wants freesere to give a red card
- leave the football thpic
- there have been arevesl cases
- The match was eesdusdpn for ten minutes
- 20 cases of lraiac abuse
- cover their mouths during armtsgneu
- a red card for mtinriiadonics
- otehieswr they wouldn't
- continue working in tolracnioalbo
- oneceliv and hate
- sport and etscyoi

Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. e	3. i	4. b	5. c
6. j	7. d	8. a	9. h	10. f

Comprehension Questions

Listen to / read the news article. Answer these questions. (Answers are on p. 27 of the 27-page PDF.)

1.	What is the name of the organization that controls world football?
2.	Who might have to give racist players a red card?
3.	For how long was a Real Madrid match suspended after possible racism?
4.	How many times has Vinicius Junior been racially abused at Madrid?
5.	When did Vinicius Junior join Real Madrid?
6.	For how long could a player be banned if they get a red card?
7.	Which news agency did Gianni Infantino talk to?
8.	How does Real Madrid feel about a possible red card for racism?
9.	Who will Real Madrid continue to work with?
10.	What does Real Madrid want to get rid of besides racism?

Speaking – Sports

Rank these with your partner. Put the best sports at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|------------|--------------|
| • Football | • Tennis |
| • F1 | • Basketball |
| • Skiing | • Ice hockey |
| • Rugby | • Cycling |

Answers – True False

1	F	2	T	3	F	4	T	5	T	6	F	7	T	8	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.