

Refereeing Youth Soccer

THE SPIRIT OF THE GAME



2011 EDITION
SAY NATIONAL COMMISSIONER
ROLAND F. BEDARD





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REFEREEING YOUTH SOCCER

THE SPIRIT OF THE GAME

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FORWARD

The Soccer Association for Youth has long recognized the need for a simple, compact book on how to referee. It is easy to learn the Laws of the Game, but there is so much more that a referee must know before he or she can become a good official! The author of this book has admirably met our needs. Here you will find explanations and interpretations to clarify the meaning and intent of the Laws, and many helpful suggestions towards improving a referee's effectiveness.

The author has been a student of the Laws of the Game for many years, and has refereed hundreds of games at all levels, up to and including U.S.S.F. Adult Amateur games. He was elected as a charter member of the Hall of Fame of the Midwest Soccer Officials Association and was honored as one of the top 100 most influential people for soccer in Ohio by Major League Soccer.

The interpretations and explanations included herein have the full endorsement of the Soccer Association for Youth. These books, and the official rulebook, taken together, are to be considered the official "bible" for SAY programs.

The SAY National Rules and Referees Committee (SNRRC)

INTRODUCTION

Perfect knowledge of the 17 Laws of the Game as presented in the rulebook is not sufficient to make you a good referee. Such knowledge is only the basic minimum requirement, before you dare to step on a field with a whistle in your hand. To be really proficient, you must know how to position yourself according to what is happening (Mechanics), how to apply the Laws (Technique), and how to interpret the Laws to apply to the various situations which will occur (Interpretation).

The material presented in this book is not the opinion of one person, or a small group of persons. The tips on Mechanics and Technique come from many experienced referees, including many who have refereed at the international level, and have written textbooks about refereeing. Most of the interpretations are derived from rulings of the International Board of FIFA, and, in some cases, from experts on youth soccer.

"Mechanics" tell you where to be under various game situations in order to have the best opportunity to observe infractions. "Technique" points out ways of enforcing the Laws, which will least impair the progress and fun of the game. It also helps you to recognize situations where particular fouls may occur so that you can recognize them quickly enough to call them. "Interpretation" elaborates on the Laws, and tells you what they intend to permit or prohibit, under many game situations.

The general orientation of this book is towards recreational youth games, where there are so many imperfect players, and less than completely knowledgeable coaches. Our objective is that games will be refereed so that the kids can have fun, so that nobody will get hurt, and so that everybody will learn a little more about soccer every game. That's **"The Spirit of the Game."**

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REFEREE ETHICS

One of the definitions of ethics in the dictionary is "Moral principles, quality or practice." Moral refers to what is right, and what is wrong. So, when we talk about ethics, we are referring to the things that a referee must do that are morally right, and the things a referee must not do that are morally wrong.

First and foremost, as a referee you must demonstrate absolute impartiality; you cannot indicate in any way that you care which team wins. There will be times when you do care who wins, but it must not show.

The rules of SAY competition are to be enforced completely. You do not have the option of making an exception because you, personally, do not like the rule.

Sometimes we talk about rules, and sometimes we call them Laws. So let's clarify this situation. Soccer has 17 Laws, all of which contain many requirements and prohibitions. We refer to each of these separate requirements and prohibitions as rules. Each rule is a part of one of the Laws.

Another aspect of ethics is that you are expected to do your best in officiating any game, regardless of the level of skill of the player. Everyone playing a game considers that game to be important, and you must treat it accordingly.

It is unethical to make derogatory comments about your partner(s) during or after a game. Such comments must be made privately to your partner(s), or to the referee's supervisor. If, because of a personality clash, you can't work well with a particular person, do not accept any games with that person.

When you accept game assignments, honor that commitment. Failing to show up is unfair to the other official(s), and to the teams.

Failing to appear without an excellent excuse will usually result in dismissal. This will also apply to violation of the other ethical principles discussed above.

And finally, if for you, refereeing is an ego trip, an opportunity to exercise complete power over helpless people - turn in your whistle! You won't last long, anyway.

DO A PROFESSIONAL JOB

As a referee, whether you are being paid or not, you are providing a professional service to the teams, or to a league. You will be expected to provide that service in a competent manner. Here is some advice on how to acquire and demonstrate that competence.

Know the Laws of the Game perfectly; you can sometimes interpret yourself out of a difficult and unusual situation. If you explain your decision with good reasons, it will usually be accepted. You should know all of the rules of the game better than anyone else at the field. To improve your knowledge and judgment, attend referees' clinics whenever you can. Talk about rules interpretations with other referees. If you see a game situation that makes you think: "What if such and such happened, I wouldn't know what to call," ask your referee administrator, or others, until you get an answer that satisfies you.

When you come to the field, have at least the minimum equipment; a whistle, a watch, red and yellow cards, some sort of referee's uniform, and something to write with and on.

Check out the fields and goals carefully. Get poorly attached nets fixed. If markings are incorrect, get them corrected if possible. If they are not correctable, let the teams know how you are going to treat that situation during the game. Make sure the goals are firmly anchored to the ground so that they cannot tip over

Be friendly but reserved with both teams. It is not a good idea to have a long conversation with one coach only. If the subject is pertinent to the game, call over the other coach. If it is not pertinent to the game, cut it short. A long conversation gives the image of partiality.

Get together with your fellow official(s) before game time to straighten out how you will work together. How are you going to signal each other when help is needed on a call? Will there be any special Mechanics to follow?

Never award a penalty kick unless you are absolutely certain that a direct kick foul has been committed.

When you caution or eject, do not lose your temper, and do not deliberately embarrass the player. Be polite, be firm and give the player the reason for your decision.

Ignore criticism and adverse comments from the sidelines, unless those comments are causing the players to commit fouls. If the players are affected, order the comments stopped. Remember, the coach is responsible for the behavior of his fans. If he or she makes an attempt and fails, require the unruly fans to leave or terminate the game.

MECHANICS

In general, "Mechanics" refers to the correct positioning of the referee on the field for best observation of a particular phase of play. No matter how well you know the game, you can miss a critical call if you are out of position.

The mechanics will vary according to the system of officiating used. Local conditions may require that only one referee may be used, or one referee with club assistant referees or with trained assistant referees, or two referees, or even three referees. All of these systems are used in different SAY programs.

How the referee(s) or assistant referees position themselves for the greatest effectiveness for various game situations should be as described in the following discussions.

A. One Referee:

Using only one referee is not a good way to officiate a soccer game. It will be impossible to be in the right place in every situation that arises. To be successful, the referee will have to cover more ground than would be necessary with more than one official. A high degree of physical fitness will be required to do the job adequately.

It is not a good situation to be in, but most knowledgeable players and coaches will recognize the limitations and will accept a good effort by the referee.

1. **Kick Off:** Just outside the center circle, near the center line.
2. **Ball in Play:** A referee working alone will trail behind the play, but as close as is comfortable, considering the playing abilities of the teams and the referee's running ability. The usual area of coverage will be from penalty line to penalty line.
3. **Goal Kick:** The referee should be positioned up field from the kicker where the kick is expected to come down.
4. **Corner Kick:** Because a corner kick always presents a good opportunity to score, the referee must be stationed on or near the goal line, on the far side of the goal away from the kicker.
5. **Penalty Kick:** Positioning here would be the same as for a corner kick.
6. **Throw-In:** These will be observed from the normal referee position, approximately equally distant from each touch line. The players will decide the need for a throw-in, with a call by the referee only in cases where the players do not agree.
7. **Offside:** Many offside situations will be extreme enough to be recognizable, but some of the close ones will be impossible to see. Watch for teams who appear to be abusing this situation to gain an unfair advantage. A few close calls against them should correct that problem.
8. **Free Kick:** The referee should be down field from the kicker, near where the ball is expected to go. If the kicking point is close enough to the goal that a shot on goal can be expected, the referee should be on or near the goal line (but never closer than 6 yards to the near goal post).

The area patrolled by the referee is shown as the shaded area in Diagram 1.

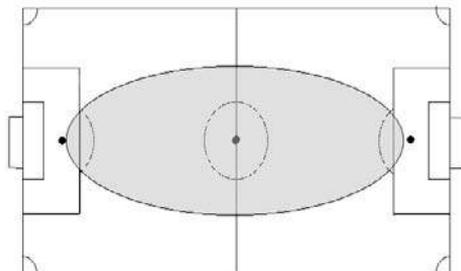


DIAGRAM 1

B. One Referee With Two Unqualified "Club" Assistant Referees:

The mechanics here will be essentially the same as described above for a single referee. The only difference is that somebody other than a player will be deciding when the ball goes out of bounds.

C. One Referee With Two Qualified Assistant Referees:

This system, known worldwide as the "Diagonal System of Control," is the system prescribed by FIFA for all games played under its jurisdiction. This covers professional games, international, national, local leagues, all the way to children's games. It is considered by many to be the best method of game control yet devised.

Contrary to the first two systems discussed above, it provides for three (not just one) sets of eyes to observe play and to assure adherence to all of the Laws. These eyes can be located in such a manner that play is being seen from all sides at once.

The referee, who has sole judgment and authority to decide when an infraction has occurred, patrols the field generally from one corner of the field to the diagonally opposite corner at the other end. An assistant referee is provided on each side of the field to observe the sections of the field opposite those covered by the referee. During the game, an assistant referee should not enter the field of play unless asked to do so by the referee.

The areas covered by each official are shown in Diagram 2.

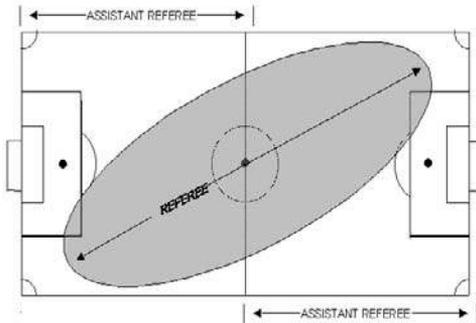


DIAGRAM 2

It is the duty of each assistant referee to inform the referee, by signals, of any infraction which may not have been seen by the referee. The referee observes each signal, and decides whether to stop play and administer the prescribed punishment for the specific infraction.

As before, we will present how these officials should position themselves to provide the most effective coverage of the game.

1. **Kick off:** The referee is just outside of the center circle, in the half of the field into which the ball is to be kicked. The assistant referees are stationed outside the touchline, one on each side of the field even with the second-to-last defender.
2. **Ball In Play:** The referee runs on the diagonal, keeping as close to the play as possible without getting close enough to interfere with play. The lead assistant referee assisting in the attacking half is positioned opposite the second-to-last defender or the ball, whichever is closer to the goal line, in order to judge possible offside situations. The trail assistant referee covering the defending half moves to no

further than midfield to be prepared to cover a reversal in play and to watch for infractions behind play.

3. **Goal Kick:** The referee is stationed in the area where the ball is expected to come down, and the assistant referee is opposite the front edge of the penalty area. This allows easy determination whether or not the ball has left the penalty area. The other assistant referee (now the lead assistant referee) will be positioned no further than midfield, and be able to move even with the second-to-last defender before an offside situation arises.
4. **Corner Kick:** Experienced referees have different opinions on proper stationing, but the most preferred is inside the penalty area nearest the corner arc on the side opposite the lead assistant referee. A potential blind spot near the far goal post could be covered by the lead assistant referee, stationed outside the goal line, in from the corner arc. The trail assistant referee remains at midfield.
5. **Penalty Kick:** The referee is stationed at the corner of the goal area on the side of the field opposite the lead assistant referee. The lead assistant referee is on the goal line, on the other side, where the side penalty area line contacts the goal line. The trail assistant referee remains at midfield, observing the back side of play. Many referees prefer other positioning, and may specify whatever position they desire.
6. **Throw-In:** The referee will be along the diagonal path, about 10 yards behind the point of the throw-in. The lead assistant referee will be ahead of the point of the throw-in, and on the goal line if close enough to result in a shot on goal.
7. **Offside:** The lead assistant referee should always be stationed in line with the second-to-last defender or the ball, whichever is closer to the goal line, a critical point for determining offside. The referee will be following along on the diagonal path, close to the ball, but watching all attackers who might receive the ball. Even if an attacker is signaled by the lead assistant referee to be offside, the referee is the sole judge of whether that player is taking part in the play.
8. **Free Kick:** If a free kick is being taken close enough to score or to set up a scoring play, the defenders will probably set up a "wall." The referee should quickly move to a spot 10 yards from the ball in order to position the "wall". The referee should then move away from the wall and towards the goal before the kick is taken.

For free kicks at midfield, the referee moves down field to be able to observe the area where the ball is expected to come down. The referee must also watch the taking of the kick to observe the correct taking of the kick and possible encroachment by defenders.

D. Two Referees (Dual System):

In the two-referee system, the lead referee is positioned essentially as is the lead assistant referee in the Diagonal System. However, there is the added advantage of being able to enter the field when this offers a better vantage point for observation of play.

The trail referee functions essentially as does the referee in the Diagonal System when play is near the goal. However, movement forward with the play must always be carefully considered. On a sudden reversal of play, there is no third set of eyes (the other assistant referee) to observe play while this referee moves back into position. Close observation of play from both sides of the play is therefore limited.

Another disadvantage is that both referees must stay near the touch line so that offside and out-of-bounds situations can be observed properly. An advantage is that either referee is equally empowered to stop play and impose punishments for infractions, without the problem of observing and reacting to assistant referees' flags.

Areas covered by each referee are shown in Diagram 3.

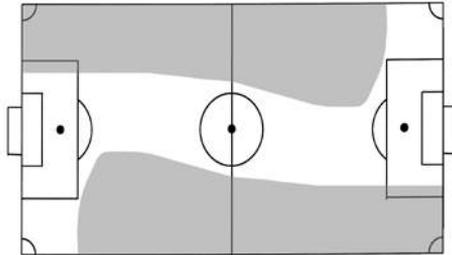


DIAGRAM 3

E. Three Referees (Double Dual System):

This system has all the good features of the Diagonal System, and eliminates most of the disadvantages. The center referee runs a diagonal similar to that of the referee in the Diagonal System. But instead of having the help of two assistant referees, one on each side, limited to one-half of the field, and with only flags to signal infractions, there are two side referees patrolling those same general areas, working on the field, with whistles, and allowed to enter into the attacking half when that appears to be advantageous. The center referee can stay close to the play, even near the goal line, safe in the knowledge that another referee is there as a back-up in case of a sudden change of direction of play.

Another advantage is that each referee is equally empowered to stop play and impose punishments for infractions.

Areas covered by each referee are shown in Diagram 4.

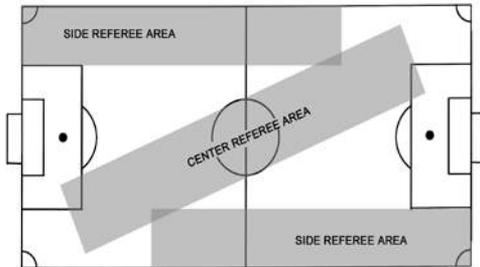


DIAGRAM 4

GAME CONTROL - TECHNIQUE

How many times have you heard, or perhaps said yourself: "Ref, this game is getting out of control!" What does that mean?

It means that some aspect of the spirit of the game has been lost. Foul play is preventing the players from exercising their skills. People are getting hurt, or the players are not having any fun. Usually it is all of these.

Your technique of game control can't prevent every single isolated incident, but it can minimize them, and can make it clear to all the players that you will not tolerate any unfair play.

The most important aspect of good game control has been covered elsewhere, under "Mechanics". Proper positioning during all phases of play permits you to do your job better and will gain the players' respect.

Your attitude towards the players and the game is also very important. Many times an official has been heard to say, "I refereed **against** so and so last night." And the official was only half joking! When a game degenerates to a players-against-referee or a referee-against-players situation, control of that game is well on the way to being lost.

You must do whatever you can to show the players that you are with them, not against them. Your attitude should indicate "this game is going to be fun for all of us."

When you give pregame instructions, do it in a friendly manner; you might even smile once in a while. Don't show irritation if a player asks a "dumb" question. Give as clear an answer as you can. If there are any problems with the field, or special ground rules, tell the players before the game starts.

Don't be afraid to talk to the players during the game. If, after you've blown your whistle you say to the offending player, "You can't move your arms like that when you jump for a head ball," you could be helping that player to correct a fault that was not self-evident. Also remember to be firm, but be polite. If your tone of voice is such as to antagonize a player, it might lead to more fouls instead of fewer.

A favorable comment once in a while won't hurt either. "That was a great shot, the goalkeeper made a good save," might help relieve a wing's frustration, or "It's not your fault, they had your fullbacks beat," might make a young goalkeeper feel a little better.

The rules of the game say that players may not show dissent to a referee's call, but let's be reasonable. On many of your calls, there will be disagreement; that's only human nature. Let it go, unless they make a big deal about it. And try to be especially understanding if the dissenting player has been hurt. A player who has just receive hard kick in the ankle is not going to be inclined to agree with your decision that the contact was accidental, or that you have decided to apply the advantage. A short, polite, but firm explanation is called for, and that should end the matter.

Watch for angry words or gestures between players. Let them know you are aware of it and that you'll be watching them more closely. In that way, you may prevent a more serious flare-up later.

Most good referees say that you should be especially strict in the first few minutes of each period. Establish control early and you can ease up a bit later if all is going well.

But in spite of all that has been said here, and all of your experience, you will occasionally have the misfortune of officiating an unpleasant game. Maybe the coaches dislike each other, maybe the players of the two teams dislike each other, maybe they all dislike referees!

It is the kind of a game where you wish both teams could lose! It is your job to officiate to the best of your ability, punishing all serious infractions, asserting extra-firm control. As long as people are not getting hurt, you can let the game proceed. If cautions and ejections are not effective, as a last resort, but only as a **last** resort, you can terminate the game.

If you do terminate a game, do not call it a **forfeit**. Whether or not it is a forfeit is for someone else to decide. Your duty is to turn in a complete report of the game and the actions that led to termination to your referee administrator.

THE LAWS OF THE GAME

As we consider together each of the Laws, and the proper approaches for their enforcement, the actual text of the Laws will not be repeated. We already have a rulebook that will supply that information.

The dialogue in this handbook is intended to provide tips on how to recognize situations and offenses quickly and correctly, and when and how to punish, or when not to punish. There often are many interpretations, covering situations that are not specifically addressed in the Laws of the Game as published. A simple sentence in the rules can mean many different things to different people. The interpretations supplied here are aimed at eliminating individual opinions in order to provide for a more uniform application of the rules by all referees. The material is authoritative, coming in most cases, from FIFA and, in a few special cases, from SAY. Also included are some common-sense suggestions based on a great deal of refereeing experience of a lot of referees.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

Remember that this book is not aimed at the referee who officiates adult, amateur or professional games. We are talking about recreational youth games, where the players may be anywhere from 4 to 18 years old, and the referees may be anywhere from 12 years old to adults. The level of playing skills will be widely variable and the players' knowledge of the rules will be equally variable.

You will want to adjust your approach to be appropriate for each particular game. There will be games where the players are experienced and knowledgeable, and your job will be to referee the game, being particularly alert to the deliberate infractions that come with playing experience. In other games, with inexperienced players, you will have to be a bit of a coach and instructor as well as a referee. Many of the infractions will be the result of ignorance of the rules. Of course, you can't coach in a way to affect play, but when you see obvious lack of knowledge of a rule you can improve the level of play by briefly explaining that rule.

In games with inexperienced players, there will be a lot of accidental fouls. You will want to let a lot of them go, if they do not materially affect play or present the possibility of injury. You will call "dangerous play" a lot more in games such as these. Remember that the main job of the referee in a recreational youth game is to minimize the probability of injury, and to maximize the enjoyment by keeping stoppage at a minimum.

With the young players, you will be expected to stop play very quickly when a player goes down. If you don't, you may have coaches and parents on the field anyway or, at least, screaming at you for being such a heartless wretch!

LAW ONE - THE FIELD OF PLAY

The rulebook is very complete and explicit in describing the size and markings that are required for a soccer field. It would be nice if every field in use could conform to these specifications, but let's be realistic. In some cases, there are simply not enough excellent fields to provide playing space for the large number of teams who want to play. We simply have to make do with what we can get. The field may not be flat, it may be the wrong size for the age level of the teams, the markings may be bad, but if it is playable we use it.

However, there is one consideration that the referee must not compromise; the field must be safe! If, in your inspection, you find holes, broken glass, or rocks showing, you should require that the faults be corrected before allowing a game to be played. If correction is not possible, **DON'T PLAY!** Make sure that the corner flag posts are about one inch in diameter with no sharp points at the upper end. Unpadded "bicycle" flags are not

acceptable. If the goals are standing on top of the ground and are not anchored, **DON'T PLAY!**

Remember that all lines are part of the area they enclose. The only significant part of any line is its outside edge. The rest of the thickness of the line is merely to help you to see it. If markings are wrong, the best advice is to play them as they are, and report the error to your supervisor. If there are no markings, or no nets on the goals, we require that the game be played anyway. Use your best judgment on line calls, but don't call it too tight! Players cannot react and play according to lines that are not there.

LAW TWO - THE BALL

A writer on youth soccer once commented that the weight of the ball, in ounces, should be the same as the ages of the players. Since our players range in age from 4 to 18, it would call for quite a variety of balls, the smaller of which are not available. SAY requires a No. 3 ball, which weighs between 10 - 12 ounces, and has a circumference of 23.5 - 25 inches, for the Passers Division (U-8). The No. 4 ball, 12 - 14 ounces, 25 - 26.5 inches is to be used by Wings (U-10) and Strikers (U-12). The No. 5 ball, 14 - 16 ounces, 26.5 - 28 inches, will be used by Kickers (U-14), Minors (U-16) and Seniors (U-19).

If it should happen that no ball of the right size is available another size can be used, with the approval of both coaches. There are no requirements as to the color of the ball.

The home team is required to supply the game ball, but if you don't like it, you can pick any other, from either team. Only the referee can decide whether a ball is acceptable. The home team does not have the right to use its ball, if you consider it unsatisfactory.

The rules state that the game ball cannot be changed without the referee's permission. However, since a lot of playing time can be lost retrieving balls kicked far out-of-bounds, it is a good idea to pick out a couple of acceptable alternate balls which can be put into play while someone retrieves the out-of-bounds ball. (That someone should not be an active player or a referee.)

LAW THREE - PLAYERS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

The SAY rules regarding required playing time for players and substitutions are somewhat complicated. Take out your rulebook occasionally and re-read them, so that you won't get into trouble at the field.

If a team has less than eleven players on the field, and has substitutes on the sideline, the rules do not strictly require that you call this to the coach's attention, but it would be good sportsmanship to do so. Of course, if you find twelve players from a team on the field, one must be removed immediately. Let the coach select who is to leave. If the ball was in play when you noticed the twelfth player, award an indirect free kick to the opposing team at the spot where the ball was when you stopped play. If the ball was not in play, have the player removed and proceed with play as normal. This situation is treated as an illegal substitution. If a team scores a goal when it has 12 players on the field, you must disallow the goal and restart with a goal kick by the opposing team.

There are special rules for substitutions of a goalkeeper. Anyone on the goalkeeper's team and on the field can change places and take the goalkeeper's position, but only when the ball is dead. At times when substitutions are permitted, a player from off the field can take the goalkeeper's position. However, a referee must be notified when either type of change is to be made, if it is done during a quarter. If done between periods no notification is required.

If a goalkeeper change is made by two on-the-field players without the referee's knowledge, no action is to be taken until the ball is out of play. At that time, both players will be cautioned. If an off-the-field player changes places with the goalkeeper without the permission of the referee, play will be stopped, and the illegal substitute cautioned. Play will be restarted with an indirect free kick.

There need not be an actual verbal notification. If a referee allows a substitute goalkeeper onto the field, and the substitute is wearing a distinctive goalkeeper uniform, notification is assumed. The same is true if the substitute is observed changing shirts with the departing goalkeeper. The call should be made only if it is determined that a change has been made, of which the referee(s) has no prior knowledge.

Toward the end of the game, a coach may start substituting much more frequently, and with considerable delay on each substitution. If this team has only a slight lead, it may be stalling, to use up as much time as possible under conditions where the opponents cannot score. If it is your conclusion that this type of stalling is happening, you can add time for each substitution, and let the coach know you are doing so. If the stalling tactics continue, you can caution the coach for unsporting behavior.

SAY's participation requirements have led to one further interpretation not included in the rules. If a game starts much later than scheduled, and a player must leave because of previous commitments before playing their required personal time, you must allow replacement of that player, and will credit the departing player with having played their required time.

LAW FOUR - PLAYER'S EQUIPMENT

The rulebook lists many types of equipment that is considered dangerous and may not be worn. Remember, you cannot allow any exceptions, even if both coaches agree.

Players are permitted to wear glasses, and it is not mandatory that they have a restraining strap on the glasses. Earrings or posts are not permitted under any circumstances, nor are necklaces or neck chains.

With most of our girl players and also some of the boys, hair control can become a problem. Barrettes made of hard material might injure another player should accidental contact occur. And, depending on their construction, the ball contacting the head might cause a scalp laceration. The use of some sort of tie to make a ponytail is usually acceptable, unless it is something fancy, such as with large beads on it. Headbands are acceptable, as long as they contain only soft material.

Players must wear soccer shoes or other light athletic footwear. Heavy dress shoes are not permitted. No one may play in socks or barefoot. However, if a player loses a shoe and kicks a goal before he has time to replace the shoe, the goal will count.

Players may not exchange shirts, except when changing places with a goalkeeper.

All players are required to wear shin guards; any exposed hard material must be covered.

LAW FIVE - THE REFEREE

This law spells out the powers and responsibilities of the referee(s). The powers should be exercised with discretion and common sense, and the responsibilities should be discharged in a conscientious manner.

As the referee, your authority over the game and the players commences as soon as you are in the vicinity of the field, and continues after the game until you and the players have left the vicinity of the field. Unsporting or violent conduct of a player after a game is

subject to the same penalties as if it occurred during the game, with regard to suspensions. Unsporting or violent conduct towards a referee is punishable even if it occurs days later, in another place, if that conduct relates to a game in which that player and referee participated.

If you arrive late for an assignment, and find that someone else is refereeing in your place, find out as soon as the game situation permits whether the official wants you to take over. That official may have been willing to help out for a few minutes, but doesn't want to do the whole game. However, if the substitute official does want to officiate the game, you may not take over. You forfeited that right by being late.

You can punish dangerous play at your discretion. The examples of dangerous play in the rulebook are not all inclusive. You can punish any action not specifically covered in the rules if, in your judgment, it could cause injury to any player, including the player committing the action.

In many areas, people having jurisdiction over the fields will decide whether a field is in playable condition. But once a game or a day's play has started, conditions can change, and it becomes the duty of the referee(s) to evaluate whether conditions are such that a reasonable game can be played. Here are a couple of general rules. With regard to visibility, if you cannot see both goals from midfield, do not play. As far as the field itself is concerned, if more than a quarter of the field is in such a condition that a dropped ball will not bounce, do not play.

One of the most difficult aspects of refereeing is the use of the "advantage" clause. The rulebook says: "Refrain from penalizing in cases where doing so would give an advantage to the offending team." It takes a lot of game experience to be able to make this decision in a couple of seconds.

If a player is fouled, but you can see that the fouled player's team will be better off tactically if you do not stop play to give a free kick, don't blow your whistle immediately. If the advantage does not materialize after two or three seconds, blow your whistle and punish the foul. However, if the foul is particularly violent, an advantage call may only encourage this type of play and lead to injuries. In such a case you would allow the advantage only if a strong possibility of an immediate goal exists. Then, as soon as the ball is dead, you would caution the offending player.

The likeliest occasion for an advantage call will be as an attacking team approaches the opponent's penalty area; this is where real advantage can exist. A good general "rule of thumb" is to **NEVER** allow the advantage *within* the penalty area, if the alternative is a penalty kick. A penalty kick is usually the best advantage there is!

However, if the foul in question would result in an indirect kick, it is very possible that allowing play to continue would be more of an advantage than the indirect kick. You will have to judge on the basis of the play situation at that instant, and on the levels of skill and knowledge of the players.

Also, a good general rule is not to apply the advantage clause if you have observed ill-will between the teams. The referee(s) has the discretionary authority to terminate a game if weather or behavior of people makes it impossible to continue to play in a satisfactory manner.

Some examples of reasons for termination are:

1. Field unplayable or low visibility.
2. One team has fewer than the minimum number of players required.
3. Substitutes and/or fans on the field refuse to leave.
4. Ejected player or coach refuses to leave.

5. Unsporting behavior by spectators is causing foul play by players, and they won't stop after being warned.

The referee(s) is also expected to stop a game to allow for treatment and removal of an injured player, but there can be a considerable difference of opinion as to how quickly this stoppage should be ordered. If a player goes down, and play is such that a shot on goal can be expected within seconds, you should allow play to proceed unless you are certain that the injury is serious. As a general rule, the younger the players, the quicker you should stop play. If play is going to proceed, the nearest official should run to the injured player as fast as possible, to evaluate the seriousness of the injury. If a goalkeeper is injured and apparently incapable of functioning, you should assume a serious injury and stop play at once.

LAW SIX - ASSISTANT REFEREE

SAY now recognizes that one, two or three-person refereeing systems are being used by various Areas, depending on local conditions.

This means that you might be called on to referee games alone, with a partner, or with two partners. You might also be assigned to work as one of two assistant referees with a single referee on the field. This is the system used throughout the world, and is called the "Diagonal System of Control." Preferred placement of officials for all of these systems is presented in the "Mechanics" section of this book.

This section will discuss your responsibilities and duties when working as an assistant referee in the Diagonal System.

As an assistant referee, you will carry a brightly-colored flag, usually red or yellow (provided by the referee), and will use that flag to signal infractions to the referee. These will include:

1. When the ball is out-of-bounds, over the goal-line or over the touch-line.
2. Which side is entitled to a corner kick, goal kick or throw-in.
3. When a substitution is desired.
4. When a foul or other offense has been committed, this might not have been seen by the referee.

During your training, you will be instructed on the signals to be used for various situations.

In this system, the referee has complete authority to accept or ignore any signal you have given. Don't get upset when the referee does not accept some of your signals. The referee sees the play from a different vantage point and may interpret the play differently. Remember, the full responsibility for game control is solely in the hands of the referee.

The referee may instruct you not to call fouls in certain areas of the field, or to position yourself in certain situations differently than you have been taught. You should obey those instructions for that game. One other rule that you might forget when you officiate games both as a referee and as an assistant referee: when working as an assistant referee, you must stay outside the touch-line unless beckoned onto the field by the referee.

There is one other type of assistant referee system that is recognized. A referee who is working alone may appoint two "club assistant referees," one of whom will patrol each touch line. Club assistant referees may only indicate when the ball has left the field of play.

With older age players, you can probably do as well by allowing the players to call "out-of-bounds." There will seldom be disagreement, and, if there is, you can make the call or give a drop ball.

LAW SEVEN - DURATION OF THE GAME

Times of periods for the various age divisions are listed in the rulebook. Time starts when the ball is legally kicked and put into play, not when you blow your whistle. The period ends when time runs out, regardless of the play situation or the flight of the ball at that time. The only continuation of play that can take place after time runs out is a penalty kick. You will sometimes encounter a coach with a stopwatch who will complain that your timing of the periods is not accurate. The referee's decision on the time has the same status as any judgment call, and cannot be protested. Be as careful and conscientious as you can in keeping the time. If you cannot afford a stopwatch, use a watch on which the minute hand can be set on an easy-to-read starting point such as 12. You can reset the watch to the proper time of the day after the game.

You are required to allow additional time at the end of a period to allow for delays caused by injury, ball retrieving, other unusual circumstances and stalling by the players. Stalling by the team in the lead can become a problem late in the game. This can take many forms; unusually slow retrieval of out-of-bounds balls, slow clearing by the goalkeeper, delay in taking throw-ins, and more frequent than normal substitutions. When you decide that stalling is going on, take note of how much time has been wasted and add it on. If possible, let the coach or captain know that you are adding time. If, after such notification, stalling continues, you can caution for unsporting behavior.

However, there are playing tactics that can be employed to use up time, which are perfectly legal. Defenders and goalkeepers can kick the ball back and forth, with no attempt to move the ball up field. In such cases the ball is available to be played by members of the opposing team, and therefore no rule is being broken. Also, it is permissible for a defender to kick a ball out-of-bounds to stop a drive by the other team and gain a few seconds for deploying a defense, but it is not acceptable if the ball is kicked deliberately an excessive distance out-of-bounds.

If, during the time between periods, you realize that you cut the previous period short, you should call the players back onto the field to play the amount of time you were short, restarting in the appropriate way. If you're not sure how to restart, restart with a drop ball. You may not add such time to a different period.

LAW EIGHT - THE START OF PLAY

Most of the provisions of this law are straightforward and not subject to misinterpretation, and are listed in the rulebook. However, there are a few things that need to be said about drop ball situations. You will award a drop ball when:

1. You don't know who last touched an out-of-bounds ball.
2. You stop the game for an injury without clear possession.
3. The ball touches or is touched by an outside agent (spectator, another ball, other foreign objects).
4. The ball becomes deflated while in play.
5. You blow your whistle by mistake.

The drop ball is given at the point where the ball was when play was stopped.

In SAY, there are two exceptions to the above rules. First, drop balls are never given within a goal area, but at the nearest point on the goal-area line six yards from the goal-line. Second, if play is stopped in a situation that would call for a restart with a drop ball, but one team is in clear possession of the ball, the game is restarted with an indirect kick, taken by any player of that team.

A drop ball is meant to be an impartial face-off, allowing each team an equal opportunity to get possession of the ball. In most cases, you should have the touch-line at your back when you drop the ball, so that you will be less likely to interfere with play. However, if a drop ball is given near one team's goal, impartiality is not generally maintained if the player from the attacking team is allowed to face the goal. You are not allowed to directly reposition the players, but you can position yourself such that the players are forced to face sideways or in what position you determine to be impartial. This procedure will eliminate an unfair advantage for the attacking team.

You should drop the ball, not throw it to the ground, from the waist height of the players. A good procedure is to hold one hand on top of the ball, the other on the bottom, and simply remove the bottom hand. In a two referee system, usually the referee closest to where the ball will be dropped will administer the drop ball. However, if the drop is to be within about 30 yards or closer to the goal-line, the trail official should do it. The lead official must remain free to observe any attempt to score that can quickly develop from the drop ball restart.

LAW NINE - BALL IN AND OUT OF PLAY

On any free kick, the ball must be kicked and must move before it is legally in play. On certain types of plays, there are special conditions that must be met before the ball is legally in play.

1. On a kick-off, the ball must be kicked into the attacking half of the field.
2. On any free-kick from a team's own penalty area, the ball must leave the penalty area.
3. On a throw-in, the ball must enter the field on the fly.
4. On a drop ball, the ball must touch the ground.
5. On a penalty kick, the ball must go forward (that is, into the front half of an imaginary circle drawn around the kicker).

Another point is that you do not have to signal for a ball that is obviously out-of-bounds. One tends to feel a little silly signaling out-of-bounds, when everyone has seen the ball roll fifty feet beyond the touch-line and become lodged under a parked automobile!

LAW TEN - METHOD OF SCORING

This is another law that is reasonably straightforward, but there are a few helpful points to be made.

Be slow enough with your whistle so that, if a defender "handles" the ball, but it goes into the goal anyway, you can allow the goal. Youth teams often miss penalty kicks!

If contact with an outside agent prevents what appears to be a "sure goal," you may not award a goal. You must stop play and restart with a drop ball.

If you see what you are *certain is an accidental* handling of the ball by an attacker, and the ball goes into the goal, you must allow the goal. Until several years ago, even accidental hand or arm contact nullified the goal, but this rule was changed.

LAW ELEVEN - OFFSIDE

This is a law that often gets a referee in trouble, even though its requirements in general are easy to observe. However, there are a couple of judgmental aspects, which sometimes make an offside call controversial.

First of all, let's look at the situations that must exist before you can even consider whether you are going to call offside on a player.

1. The player must be ahead of the ball.
2. The player must be in the attacking half of the field.
3. The player must be nearer to the goal line than the last two defending players.

All of these conditions must exist at the instant the ball is played by a teammate of the player in the offside position.

A player who meets all of these requirements is in an offside position, but one more condition must be met before you can blow your whistle. When the pass is made, or the shot on goal taken, the player in question must be interfering in play, or interfering with an opponent, or gaining an advantage by being in that position. Because of the rapid movement of many players, you will sometimes fail to see that a player is in an offside position when the ball is played. But that won't happen too often, and is a minor problem compared to the number of times you will have to decide whether a player in an offside position is able to participate in the coming play. Participation is judged for the time period between when the ball is initially played by a teammate and when it is next played.

There are several ways by which a player can be considered able to participate. First of all, the pass may come directly to the player in an offside position. That is an easy one to call. The player also can be judged to be participating if standing in such a position that the movement of a defender or goalkeeper is impeded, or the vision of the goalkeeper is obscured, or if a defender or goalkeeper changes position to allow for the player in the offside position.

But there will be situations in almost every game when a player, clearly in an offside position, should not be called offside. Here are a few examples:

1. A player is in an offside position just outside the penalty area. A teammate, about 20 yards behind this player, lofts a very high shot on goal. The ball passes over the "offside" player at least 20 feet over his head. The "offside" player does not move forward or make an attempt to play the ball. He should not be called offside.
2. A left wing, near the touch line, is in an offside position. A teammate, in the middle of the field, sends a long pass to the right wing. The ball will land about 60-70 yards from the player in the offside position. He should not be called offside. (We constantly get reports of this one being called *incorrectly*.)
3. A player is in an offside position near the left side of the penalty area. A teammate near the right side of the penalty area takes a shot on goal. Offside should not be called. However, there is one further complication here. If the shot should bounce off the goal or goalkeeper and the ball should go to the player who was in an offside position when the shot was taken, then you call offside.

The reason for this is that the changed path of the ball is a continuation of the same play, no other player having touched the ball.

There are some experienced players who, when unexpectedly caught in an offside position, will attempt to signal by their actions to the referee that they are not going to participate in the play. They may turn away from the play, and stand still when a run to the ball would be appropriate, or get down on one knee, or, if near the goal-line or touch-line, will step off the field. It is a tradition of soccer that these actions, if seen, will be honored by the referee and the offside offence not called.

These discussions lead us to a basic recommendation on offside calls. Although the existence of offside must be determined based on conditions that exist at the instant the ball is played by a teammate, hold your whistle for a couple of seconds to see what happens next. If the ball is intercepted, or a bad shot goes out-of-bounds, or the "offside" player does not participate, you won't have to call the offside.

The rules of soccer arbitrarily specify certain play situations where a player cannot be offside, even though in an offside position. The rulebook merely says if: "the player receives the ball directly from a goal kick, a corner kick, or a throw-in." There are many misunderstandings regarding these exemptions, so let's be more specific.

The player who cannot be offside, even though in an offside position is:

1. The player who first touches the ball after it has legally been put into play with a goal kick.
2. The player who first touches the ball after it has been legally put into play with a corner kick.
3. The player who first touches the ball after it has been legally put into play with a throw-in.

If you read older books about refereeing, or talk to more experienced referees, you may hear that "there can be no offside on a drop-ball." While technically correct, this statement has caused a lot of confusion. It has been assumed that, since the three exemptions listed above involve a player receiving the ball from a teammate, a player taking a drop-ball may pass it to an offside teammate who will be exempt from being called offside. This assumption is incorrect.

The player who is exempt from being called offside is the one who receives the ball from the referee. Even if that player has no defensive player between himself (or herself) and the goal line, there is no offside, because the ball has been received from the referee, not from a teammate. Condition three at the beginning of this section said that the ball must be played by a teammate.

It is also the case that a player cannot be offside if the ball has last been played by an opponent. Until recently, there has been controversy concerning what is meant by "played by an opponent." Bouncing a ball off an opponent as it was passed to an offside teammate was considered as "played" by an opponent! This is no longer the case. If the ball is consciously played and controlled by the opponent, then there is no offside. But if the ball merely touches the opponent, accidentally, or even if deflects off an opponent trying to play the ball but fails to gain control, the offside will be called.

We have heard of cases where the referee will signal by pointing, when a player is in an offside position, but no pass has yet been made. This is, of course, very bad practice. No signal should be made to indicate offside position, wait until the offside offense occurs, then make the call.

Many experienced teams use the "offside trap." The defenders simultaneously step forward just before a pass is made, putting the attacking forwards offside in an offside position. This is a legal tactic, *watch* for it.

LAW TWELVE - FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

There are many specific ways of playing and displays of attitude that detract from the enjoyment and safety of playing soccer. This law specifies the actions that are not acceptable, and how they are to be punished.

In general, direct kicks are to be awarded for personal fouls, and indirect kicks for *technical fouls*; that is, personal - tripping, holding; technical - offside, obstruction. For direct kick fouls, the kick is taken from the point where the foul was committed. For example, a player is tripped just outside the penalty area, and falls well into the penalty area. You award a direct kick from the point of the trip, not a penalty kick. Of course, if a defender commits a direct kick foul inside his own penalty area, you will award a penalty kick. Indirect kicks are usually awarded from the spot of the foul as well.

In most games, there will be a lot of contact that looks like personal, direct kick fouls. In the middle of 1995, FIFA made some drastic changes in the wording of Law XII regarding fouls and misconduct. The referee is no longer required to judge whether an action was intentional, in order to award a direct kick. The following six offenses are punished by a direct kick if they are considered by the referee to be careless, reckless or involving disproportionate force:

1. Kicks or attempts to kick an opponent (or the ball when held by the opposing goalkeeper).
2. Trips an opponent
3. Jumps at an opponent
4. Charges an opponent
5. Strikes or attempts to strike an opponent
6. Pushes an opponent

Other offenses that are punished by a direct kick:

7. When tackling an opponent, makes contact with the opponent before contact is made with the ball. A sliding tackle made from outside the peripheral vision (the rear 180 degrees) of an opponent in control of the ball is also a violation, even if first contact is with the ball.
8. Holds an opponent
9. Spits at an opponent
10. Handles the ball deliberately

What FIFA has done here is to say that you punish what the player does, with no consideration of what that player might have intended. Experienced referees have been doing exactly that for many years. Some will merit the award of a direct kick. Some will be accidental contact, where neither player had any intention of making contact with the other and, in most cases, was not even aware of the other player. Such cases are not to be punished.

A third type of situation is one where contact is clearly accidental, but which was caused by an unsafe action by one of the players. For example, a player kicks a loose ball, not in anyone's possession, but kicks too high and his foot strikes another player's head. The player is concentrating on kicking the ball, and is not aware of any other player, but he has done something that the rules describe as not only unsafe, but also in effect "careless".

Even though the contact is accidental, the penalty is a direct kick, for the careless act of kicking an opponent.

If in that same example the player's foot came close, but did not strike the other player's head, then that player has done something that the rules describe as being accidental and unsafe. The penalty is an indirect kick, for "dangerous play."

Direct kicks, indirect kicks and penalty kicks may only be awarded for infractions that occur on the field, while the ball is in play. If the foul is committed off the field, or when the ball is dead, you may punish with a caution or ejection, but you may not award a kick.

If a non-playing substitute commits a foul on the field (for example: stretching a foot out onto the field and tripping an opponent), that foul is punished the same as if it were committed off the field. Substitutes committing fouls off the field may be cautioned or ejected, but no free kick may be awarded. An ejected non-player does not result in a team playing short.

When a player is fouled in a particularly violent manner, there is going to be the inclination to retaliate. This is not permitted, and usually results in severe punishment to the one who retaliates. You can help prevent this by whistling such hard fouls quickly and loudly, and by admonishing the offending player.

The rules say that if two fouls are committed by teammates or opponents, at the same time, you will punish the more serious foul. But "at the same time," this is hardly likely to happen, except when the same act breaks two rules simultaneously (for example: A player flubs a free kick, and it rolls about six feet. The player then lunges at it and bats it away from an opponent with his hand. The ball was played twice before another player touched it, but a handling foul was also committed). In most cases, however, it is more likely that there will be two fouls in quick succession, in which case you will punish the first, even if it is less serious.

In SAY "dangerous play" is the only possible way to commit a foul against a player on one's own team. Other offenses, such as striking, kicking, tripping or directing abusive language that are fouls if committed against an opponent are not considered to be fouls if committed against a teammate. These acts can only be punished as unsporting behavior, with a caution or an ejection and an indirect kick restart for the opposing team.

A favorite subject for argument among beginner referees is what to do if a goal is scored, and the scoring team is found to have twelve (12) players on the field. The correct procedure is as follows: if the game has not been restarted, the goal is disallowed, the coach is instructed to remove one player, and a goal kick is awarded to the opposing team from their goal area. If the game has been restarted, the goal counts, play is stopped, one player is removed and a drop ball is given from the point where the ball was when play was stopped. However, if one team was in clear possession of the ball when play was stopped, you will restart with an indirect free kick by that team.

When we say twelve players on the field, we mean participating players. It is not important if a substitute player is a little slow in leaving the field, and is still not completely off when play restarts, or if a substitute happens to step onto the field, far from the play.

Whether the players are experienced or not, you will often find that a call of "unsporting behavior" is in order. This type of behavior can come from a loss of temper, thoughtlessness, overeager play or a desire to cheat. In international soccer, the call of unsporting behavior requires that a player be cautioned. In the SAY programs, it is felt that many actions which are technically unsporting behavior are really rather trivial, and not deserving of a yellow card. The decision of whether or not to caution is left to the judgment of the referee, based on the severity of the action.

We have noted with dissatisfaction that many referees are calling “unsporting behavior” when a player pushes, punches or kicks at an opponent. Of course, such actions are unsporting behavior, but the more severe, direct kick foul must be called. The penalty for unsporting behavior is an indirect kick. It may be that these referees think that they must call unsporting behavior if they want to issue a caution, but this is not so. You may call kicking, tripping, striking, etc., and impose a caution, or an ejection, anytime you consider it appropriate.

Some referee textbooks give long lists of examples of unsporting behavior, but you, as a referee usually will know it when you see it. A few examples are: encroaching within ten yards on a free kick, interfering with a goalkeeper clearing the ball, and deliberate handling of the ball to stop an attack or prevent a goal.

One other form of unsporting behavior is becoming more common and should be watched for and discouraged with your whistle and yellow card. It occurs under the following circumstances: A player of Team Red is moving to play the ball, which is coming in his direction. Behind this player, a member of Team Blue calls “I’ve got it,” with the intent of convincing the Red player that a teammate is in a better position to play the ball. The Red player lets the ball go, and the opposing team gets possession. This kind of trickery is not to be tolerated.

However, every call of “I’ve got it” is not necessarily an attempt to deceive; very often it is merely information to teammates. There may be no opponent in a position to play the ball who would be deceived by such a call.

The most severe means given a referee to help in controlling a game is the authority to issue cautions and ejections. A caution (yellow card) tells a player that another foul of similar severity, which warrants a second yellow card, will result in ejection from the game. An ejection (red card) removes the player from further participation in that game, and does not allow that player to be replaced by a teammate. It also makes the player liable to suspension from participating in future games. The rulebook spells out those infractions requiring a caution, and those requiring an ejection.

Now let’s discuss a few specifics about cautions and ejections. Dissent with a referee’s decision is a cautionable offense, if offensive, insulting or abusive language is not used. With such language, an ejection is correct. Also, it has become an unfortunate fact of life that some young people use language today that would never have been considered in years past. When a player uses such “offensive” language with reference to self, we leave it to the referee whether or not to caution, but ejection is not appropriate. However, if such language is directed to any another player, a referee or even spectators, it becomes “abusive” and an ejection is appropriate.

Every rulebook in print states that, if a defender commits a foul within his or her own penalty area, which would call for a direct kick if the foul were committed outside of the penalty area, a penalty kick shall be awarded. There is more variation in the enforcement of this rule by referees than probably any other soccer rule! Some enforce it literally, while others go to the other extreme and allow complete mayhem, unless the foul prevents a “sure goal.” Subterfuges such as “obstruction” or “dangerous play” are used to avoid giving the penalty kick. If a defender completely “wipes out” an attacker, and you call “obstruction,” the players and fans will all know you are a fraud, and your authority will be severely undermined. The effect will be similar if such a foul occurs inside the penalty area but out near the edge, and you make the correct foul call, but award a direct free kick instead by placing the ball outside the penalty area.

There are two good arguments for calling penalty kicks strictly according to the rules. First: if a team has managed to move their attack all the way to their opponent’s penalty area, they are entitled to a fair chance to score. It violates the spirit of the game to change the rules at that point and to allow defenders to engage in foul play, which is not tolerated

elsewhere on the field. Second: many people think that one of the drawbacks to soccer is that most games are low-scoring games. With strict calling of fouls in the penalty area, the greater number of opportunities to score will certainly result in more goals, and thus make the game more interesting.

However, there is a reasonable difference between calling direct kick fouls near mid-field and calling direct kick fouls in the penalty area. To facilitate game control and discourage fouls, you might call some marginal fouls anywhere else on the field. But when you call a direct kick foul in the penalty area, which results in a penalty kick, you must be certain that a direct kick foul was committed.

LAW TWELVE - TIPS ON SPECIFIC FOULS

1. Kicking or Attempting to Kick an Opponent:

You won't have too many cases where a player just rears back and kicks at another player (Fig. 1 a). Such an action calls for ejection, whether contact is made or not.



Fig. 1a

It is usually more subtle and, in a sense, accidental. Throughout the game, players are kicking at other players, as they try to play the ball. If you didn't have some sort of rule to prevent it, attempts to kick a ball being played by an opponent would result in a barrage of kicks into the legs of the players with the ball, every time the challenging player missed the ball.

Therefore, a basic interpretation has been applied to this situation. When a player has possession of the ball and is dribbling it or has it within playing distance and an opponent attempts to kick the ball, the opponent's kick must contact the ball before making contact with the player (Fig. 1b), that is "kicking", which is punished with a direct free kick. If the challenger kicks the ball first, and then makes contact with the opponent (Fig. 1c), then there may or may not be a foul.



Fig. 1b



Fig. 1c

However, with older and more experienced players, you will sometimes see a kick attempted in such a manner that you believe contact with an opponent was intended. This is at the very least "reckless" and as such should be punished severely. You will also see the challenger kick over the top of the ball, directly into the opponent's legs (Fig. 1d). With young and inexperienced players this could merely be bad play, and you would award the direct free kick. But more experienced players sometimes do this in order to make a

deliberate attempt to injure look like an accident. If that is your judgment, a caution or ejection must be issued.



Fig. 1d

Remember, attempting to kick an opponent is treated the same as kicking, but it must be an obvious, deliberate attempt. If you are in doubt, don't call it. A player driving a knee into an opponent also is guilty of kicking.

In order to provide better protection from injury, no player is permitted to attempt to kick a ball in the goalkeeper's possession. In the past, this was a form of dangerous play. However, the '95 FIFA changes to "reckless, careless or use of disproportionate force" criteria, make it a direct free kick foul. Goalkeeper possession is defined as having sufficient contact to control the ball, even if that involves an arm stretched out on the ground, with one finger on the ball, and the ball is no longer moving.

If a goalkeeper has the ball directly between his feet, and he shuffles his feet in such a manner as to roll the ball, but keeping it between his feet, that is not considered possession, and any attacker may attempt to play the ball.

2. Tripping or Attempting to Trip an Opponent:

As with kicking, the classic case of someone reaching out with a foot to trip an opponent is not very frequent, and is easy to call.

Most tripping occurs when a defender tries to tackle the ball, that is, to take it away from an opponent who has possession. The same interpretation is used as discussed under "kicking." The tackler must contact the ball before making contact with an opponent in possession of the ball. If the ball is played first, and then the opponent trips over an outstretched leg (Fig. 2a), there is no foul. If he misses the ball and the opponent trips over his leg (Fig. 2b), that is tripping, and a direct free kick is given.

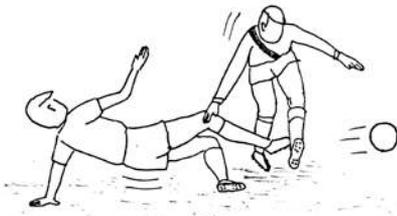


Fig. 2a

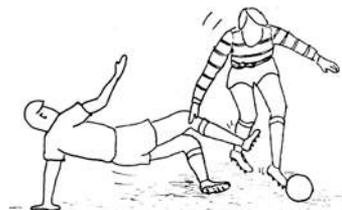


Fig. 2b

Often, a tackler slides in with both legs, one on the ground and the other raised about one foot from the ground. This is usually interpreted as "one leg for the ball, the other for the player" (Fig. 2c), and will be punished as tripping



Fig. 2c

If it involves very young and inexperienced players, you could call it “dangerous play” and verbally instruct the player to keep both legs on the ground, or come in with only one leg, baseball-slide style.

Another type of tripping which is very dangerous involves a defender chasing the player who has the ball. The defender gets close behind and clips his opponent’s heel with his foot (Fig. 2d). With beginners this can be accidental, but it is to be considered “careless” and should be simply called as a tripping foul and with a firm admonition to the offending player. But in general, this type of foul should be treated as a severe offense. As a referee, it is often very difficult to see and an experienced player may fake being tripped when he sees that he is about to be overtaken. When you have that situation developing, you must watch it more closely.



Fig. 2d

In SAY, we do not permit a sliding tackle from outside a player’s normal peripheral vision, that is, from the rear (Fig. 2e). If such a tackle makes contact with either the ball or the player, or both, it will be called “tripping.” If contact is not made with either the ball or the player, but the attempt is made, it will be called as “dangerous play.”



Fig. 2e

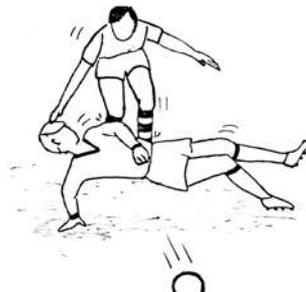


Fig. 2f

But tripping isn't done only with feet and legs. A player may fall in front of an opponent intentionally to trip him (Fig. 2f). In most cases, the fall will be accidental and the trip

unintended and no foul should be called. But in a desperate situation there are players who will fake an accidental fall in order to break up a potential scoring play. Whether the fall is accidental or intentional is usually easy to judge.

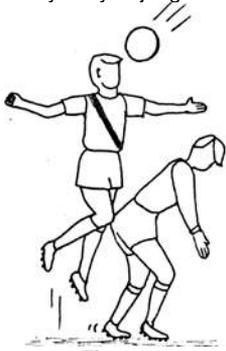


Fig. 2g

Another form of tripping is to stoop over and back into a player who has jumped to head a ball, what is called "undercutting" or "making a back" (Fig. 2g). Also, a player lying on the ground might be able to trip an opponent with an outstretched hand or arm.

3. Jumping at an Opponent:

The only form of jumping that is permitted by a player when close to other players is to jump straight up. One exception to that statement is the situation where two players are attempting to run under a high ball, or concentrating on the flight of the ball and are completely unaware of each other, and collide as each jumps to head the ball. This often results in injury, but there may or may not be a foul, even though there was no intent to jump at or collide with the other player. You must determine whether either or both players were careless or reckless in their actions.

A more common occurrence is to have one player standing at the point where the ball will come down, and an opponent jumps to intercept the ball with his head before it reaches the first player. There are very few (Fig. 3a) players agile enough to do this without "wiping out" the opponent.



Fig. 3a



Fig. 3b

Another very common version is to approach an opponent, as in the previous situation, and to realize, as he is about to jump, that he is too late. He jumps anyway, but turns and strikes the opponent with his back, making no attempt to head the ball (Fig. 3b).

4. Side Tackle from the Rear:

Any slide tackle from outside the peripheral vision of the player with the ball, (the rear half of a circle drawn around the player) is to be considered tripping if the tackler makes contact with either the player or the ball. If no contact whatsoever is made (Fig. 4a), call a "dangerous play" foul to alert the player that this type of tackle will not be allowed. However, if no contact is made, remember to consider the advantage clause and warn the player when it is convenient, if you indeed do allow the advantage.

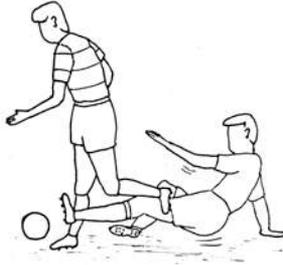


Fig. 4a

5. Charging an Opponent from Behind:

A fair charge must be shoulder-to-shoulder. We allow a little leeway; the charge can be slightly in front or in back of the shoulder (Fig. 5a). But a charge directly into the back of another player (Fig. 5b) could very easily result in serious injury, and must not be permitted.

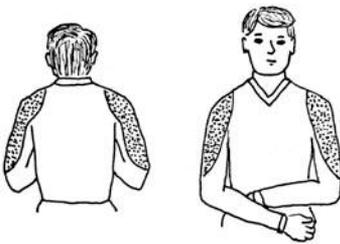


Fig. 5a



Fig. 5b

6. Striking or Attempting to Strike an Opponent:

When we first think of striking, we picture an angry player doubling up his fist and punching an opponent. That is indeed the most serious form of this foul, and the guilty player is subject to immediate ejection, whether the punch lands or not.

But other less obvious versions of striking are much more common. A play can start out looking like a legitimate charge, and suddenly one of the players will jab an elbow into the ribs of the other player (Fig. 6a). When two players contest for a head ball, one may jab his elbow or fist into the head or body of the other player (Fig. 6b). In this respect, watch for players who cannot jump for a head ball without wildly waving their arms. This is fine if the player is alone, but if others are nearby, somebody is going to get hurt. If the level of competition indicates to you that the problem is just ignorance on the part of the player and no contact is made, you can call it "dangerous play" and warn against repetition.



Fig. 6a



Fig. 6b

Throwing a ball violently at an opponent with an apparent intent to injure is considered striking. This will usually occur on a ball thrown by a goalkeeper or on a throw-in situation.

7. Holding an Opponent:

The obvious form of holding is for the player to grab an opponent's shirt or arm to restrict his movement (Fig. 7a). But there are other versions of holding. A player on the ground might wrap his legs around the legs of an opponent to restrain him. Extending an arm to contact and physically restrain an opponent from coming around him is holding (Fig. 7b). An unusual version of holding is for two players to charge the same opponent, simultaneously one on each side, what we call "boxing him in" (Fig. 7c). Then there is the player who extends his arms out when in possession of the ball. An opponent cannot legally charge him without running into the outstretched arm. When contact is made, the player with the ball is holding (Fig. 7d), otherwise it may be obstruction.

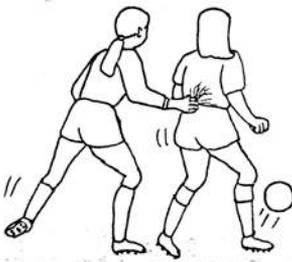


Fig. 7a

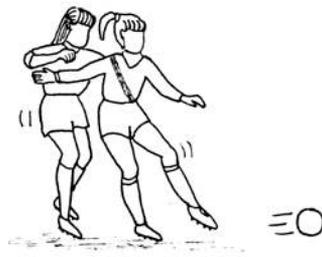


Fig. 7b



Fig. 7c



Fig. 7d

8. Pushing an Opponent:

In an eagerness to beat an opponent to the ball, a young player often will reach out and push the opponent away. That one is easy to call. But how about when a player leans on an opponent's shoulder so that he can jump higher for a head ball (Fig. 8a)? We call that pushing, too!



Fig. 8a

Don't confuse a good legal shoulder charge involving a solid shoulder nudge with pushing. On the other hand, what starts out as a legal shoulder-to-shoulder contact may end up with the arm coming out and pushing the opponent away.

9. Charging an Opponent:

Beginner referees have particular trouble with this foul, because they don't have enough experience to judge between a fair charge and a violent charge. Sometimes it's easy, of course, when a defender plows into a player with the ball and knocks him or her ten feet! A fair charge requires that both players have at least one foot on the ground, and that contact be shoulder-to-shoulder. Therefore, a player cannot jump, i.e. lifting both feet off the ground, to charge an opponent (Fig. 9a). Conversely, if the opponent has both feet off the ground, as when jumping to head a ball, that player cannot be charged by an opponent who has one foot on the ground (Fig. 9b). Also, only the shoulder can make contact, and only with the opponent's shoulder. The charging player cannot contact the opponent with a hip, chest or back, nor can he use his shoulder on the opponent's chest or back.



Fig. 9a



Fig. 9b

The real problem comes when contact is shoulder-to-shoulder, and the player in possession is moved sideways, off the ball. If this is done with a nudge or by the charger moving his body sideways, with both players moving in the same direction at the same speed, the charge is legal. But if the charger comes in at an angle or with excessive force and runs into the opponent, then it is not legal.

One further clarification is required. As far as the game of soccer is concerned, a charge is making bodily contact with an opponent. Rushing toward a player might be called "charging" according to the Standard English Language Dictionary definition, but it is not charging in soccer, unless there is bodily contact.

10. Handling the Ball:

Along with offside, this is the call that gives referees the most trouble. Particularly in youth soccer, there is a lot of hand contact with the ball, and most of such contacts should not be called. Notice that the rulebook describes the foul as "carrying, striking or propelling the ball with hand or arm," and Law Twelve also requires that this be "deliberate".

There are many instances when a ball is kicked into the hand or arm of a player, and this type of contact is a foul only if the hand or arm is in an unnatural position, considering what the player is doing at that instant. What we mean here is that soccer players are not required to play the entire game with hands and arms pressed tightly to their sides. A certain amount of arm motion is common to running, turning, etc., and it is not a foul when a ball strikes the hand or arm that is behaving normally (Fig. 10a). However, if the arms are outstretched abnormally, sideways or overhead, contact with the ball is a handling offense because the arms are intentionally in an unnatural position.



Fig. 10a

The action that is prohibited is the intentional striking of the ball with a hand or arm, or catching it. However, this does not include reflexive self-protection (Fig. 10b). Considering the level of skills in each game, self-protection is not a handling offense unless you judge

that the player had plenty of time to do something else, such as move aside, turn, move the head to head the ball, etc.

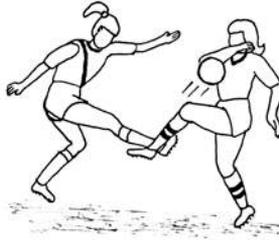


Fig. 10b

One other important point is if you judge the hand or arm contact to be unintentional, it does not subsequently become a foul just because the player or the player's team gains an advantage as a result of the contact. This is a commonly held belief that is completely wrong.

11. Dangerous Play:

"Dangerous Play" refers to an action by a player which unintentionally causes the possibility of injury to that player or any other player, whether it is a teammate or an opponent. There are many examples of such play in the rulebook, but the call is not limited to those examples. These actions must be committed close enough to the other player that there is the possibility of injurious contact. Within six feet is usually prescribed as a general rule, but it is not absolute. Sometimes being only one or two feet away may not constitute a dangerous situation for the other players.



Fig. 11a

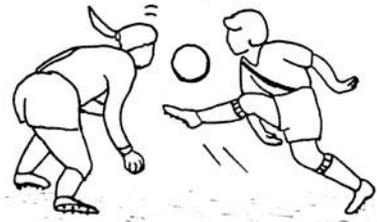


Fig. 11b

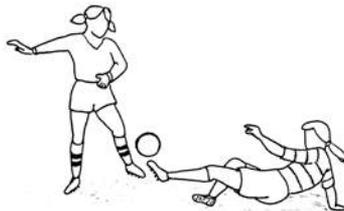


Fig. 11c

In addition to the inherent dangers of a high kick (Fig. 11a), a scissors kick or a low head ball (Fig. 11b) in close proximity of other players, the playing of the ball while lying on the ground (Fig. 11c) should only be called when this play invites injury to the player on the ground. You should also watch for the extending of the bottom of a cleated shoe towards a player ("cleats up") (Fig. 11d), jumping forward to volley kick the ball (Fig. 11e), and

running so fast that collision with other players cannot be avoided. You may see other actions that you could consider to be dangerous. If so, you must first determine whether it was merely an accidental dangerous play or not, and if so, award the indirect kick and explain the nature of the danger to the offending player.



Fig. 11d



Fig. 11e

12. Unfair Charge:

In the discussion of charging an opponent, the definition of a fair charge was not complete, because the final requirement was irrelevant to that discussion. We said that both players must have at least one foot on the ground, and that contact must be shoulder-to-shoulder. In addition, the ball must be within playing distance of the two players. If the charge is otherwise fair, but the ball is not within playing distance, an indirect kick offense has been committed. If the players are standing, playing distance is defined as about three feet. If they are running, playing distance is defined as about six feet.

Watch for unfair charging particularly when a free kick having been taken in the direction of the opposing player, but the ball is still a considerable distance away (Fig. 12a).



Fig. 12a

13. Obstruction:

The rulebook defines obstruction very simply and very accurately: "when not playing the ball, intentionally interposing the body so as to impede an opponent's movement" The first part of this statement says that a player who is playing the ball cannot be guilty of obstruction. He can keep his body between the ball and an opponent. But we must also define carefully what is "playing the ball." If he is dribbling or kicking the ball, he is

obviously playing the ball. But it is also considered to be playing the ball if the player keeps the ball within reach of his foot, but does not touch it, such as when letting it roll out of bounds (Fig. 13a). If the player is able to play the ball but chooses not to, he is still considered to be playing the ball. This would require that he keep himself within about three feet of the ball.

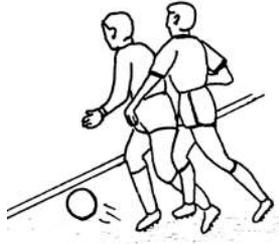


Fig. 13a

Obstruction, to be an offense, must be intentional. There is a great deal of player movement in any game, so accidental obstruction often occurs. Before you call it a foul, you must be satisfied that the player obstructed deliberately.

The other part of the rule says, "interposing the body so as to impede an opponent's movement." That means any movement, not just an attempt to go to the ball. A player could be impeded when trying to move to a more advantageous position, in anticipation of a pass.

One of the most common forms of obstruction with experienced players is to prevent a goalkeeper from coming out to play a corner kick. Watch the attacking players that position themselves near the goalkeeper carefully. When the kick is made, do they move in a manner that fits the play situation, or do they stand in positions that impede the goalkeeper's movement?

14. Charging the Goalkeeper:

First of all, if the goalkeeper has possession of the ball, he or she may not be charged at all. Any such intentional charge must be punished by a caution or ejection, depending on the severity of the foul. The goalkeeper may not be charged even when not in possession of the ball, when within his or her own goal area.

That leaves us with one other possible situation for the goalkeeper, inside the penalty area, but outside of the goal area, and not in possession of the ball. Here, the goalkeeper may be charged the same as any other player, subject to the rules covering fair charging. Remember particularly that the ball must be within playing distance of both players (Fig. 14a). Remember also that rushing toward the goalkeeper is not "charging," according to soccer rules. A charging call requires that bodily contact be made.

If the goalkeeper leaves the penalty area, he or she becomes an ordinary player while outside the penalty area, and all special rules regarding goalkeepers do not apply to that player.

If you determine that unintentional contact is made with the goalkeeper in possession of the ball and the ball is jarred loose, you will call "dangerous play" and award an indirect free kick. If a goalkeeper is about to take possession of the ball, an attacker may attempt to play the ball but may not make contact with the goalkeeper.

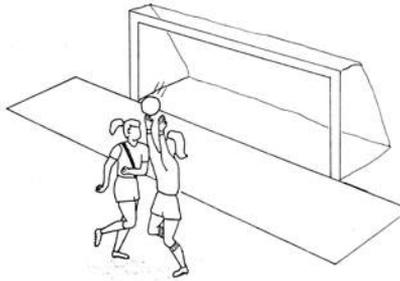


Fig. 14a

15. Improper Clearing of the Ball by the Goalkeeper:

Very young goalkeepers (Passers (U8) and Wings (U10)) often cannot punt or throw the ball very well. In order to facilitate a more satisfactory clearing of the ball, in proportion to the way it can be done in the older divisions, we do not limit the goalkeeper's time as long as there is no excessive delay in clearing the ball back into play.

In all other age divisions, a recent change in the rules has omitted the four-step limit after the goalkeeper has gained possession of the ball. The rule now requires that the goalkeeper release the ball into play within six (6) seconds after gaining possession.

Only one possession with the hands by the goalkeeper is permitted. Holding, bouncing or tossing the ball in the air are all considered possession and do not constitute giving up hand possession; however, if a ball tossed upward falls to the ground, it does constitute that the goalkeeper has given up hand possession.

In order for the goalkeeper to legally regain the right to hand possession, the ball must be first touched or played by a teammate outside of the penalty area or by an opponent anywhere on the field.

Another rule restricting a goalkeeper provides that, if a teammate kicks (with the foot) the ball to his or her goalkeeper, the keeper may **not touch** the ball with his or her **hand** (arm is ok). The intent of the rule makers is to eliminate the easy escape from an attack on goal or deliberate time-wasting. The pass by a teammate to the goalkeeper must be deliberate, not an accidental deflection of the ball or a miss-kick, and it must be with the foot (not the leg, knee, chest or head). This rule also applies to the goalkeeper receiving the ball from a throw-in by a teammate.

16. Interfering with the Goalkeeper:

In the last two sections, we have discussed some rules that place limitations on what the goalkeeper can do, but the goalkeeper has some rights, too! Once a goalkeeper has gained possession of the ball, the rule says it must be cleared as soon as possible. Attackers are not permitted to interfere in any way with the clearing of the ball by the goalkeeper.

If, in the course of pursuing the ball, an attacker arrives in front of the goalkeeper just after the ball has been caught, that attacker has the right to stand there and the goalkeeper will have to go around him. If the attacker makes any movement to follow the goalkeeper, this is unsporting behavior, and an indirect free kick is given. No attacker who is located away from the goalkeeper when the ball is caught has the right to run over and stand in front of

the goalkeeper. Once the goalkeeper shows by his actions that he is about to clear the ball, he must be left completely free to do so, without being impeded or harassed in any way.

LAW TWELVE - CAUTIONS AND EJECTIONS

There are other occasions when an indirect free kick is given. If you stop the game to administer a caution or ejection, and no foul has been committed requiring a free kick, you will restart play with an indirect free kick taken by the opposing team. In the unlikely event that you stop play to caution or eject a player or players from both teams, no free kick foul having been committed, you would restart with a drop ball. Of course, most cautions and ejections will come as a result of a foul, which requires the awarding of a free kick. These have been discussed previously.

If there is an advantage for the opposing team, you don't have to stop play to administer a caution or ejection. You can wait until the ball is out of play. Conversely, you may not caution or eject while the ball is in play.

Recently, FIFA has recognized the need to discourage personal fouls by defenders when an attacker has an obvious goal-scoring opportunity. When such a foul is committed the appropriate penalty will be given, and the player committing the foul will be ejected.

The most important part of this rule is the "obvious goal-scoring opportunity." The attacker must be one-on-one with the goalkeeper, in a position to score. The foul must be a deliberate attempt to prevent a goal. If you have any doubts, don't make the call.

The referee must also eject any defender who intentionally handles the ball to prevent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity (in other words, the ball would have gone into the goal if the defender did not stop it by handling the ball). Although you will eject the player if the goal does not score, you should only caution the player if the goal does score.

So far, in discussing cautions and ejections, we have been talking about players. However, we also have to consider cases where coaches can be guilty of unsporting behavior. Of course, the rule against dissent with referee decisions also applies to the coaches. But there are other forms of unsporting behavior as well. A coach might instruct players to commit fouls, or might make abusive comments toward players on either team, or even toward people on the sidelines. In such cases, the same caution or ejection rules apply, except that an ejected coach should be forced to leave the immediate vicinity of the field. You must restart with a drop ball, not an indirect free kick, because a free kick may only be awarded if the offense is committed by a player, on the field, while the ball is in play.

If there is abusive behavior on the part of a spectator that is affecting the game, invoke the rule that coaches are responsible for the behavior of their spectators. If this approach is unsuccessful in quieting the abusive party, you can stop the game until the person agrees to cooperate or leaves the field.

LAW THIRTEEN - FREE KICK

After you have blown the ball dead, and have awarded a free kick, the rules require that you signal your permission to take the kick. In all divisions, the kick may be taken as soon as the ball is properly placed, unless you have some reason to delay the taking of the kick. Your permission is assumed unless you indicate otherwise.

You must signal in a clear manner whether the kick is to be direct or indirect, and indicate which team is to take the kick by pointing in the direction that the team would be attacking. If the kick is to be indirect, you will raise an arm vertically overhead, hand open. You will

keep the arm upraised until the kicked ball is touched by another player or goes out of bounds. By doing this, you remind everyone, including yourself, that a goal cannot be scored until another player touches the kicked ball. If the original kick should go into the net, untouched, everyone will see your arm still upraised, and will know that it is not a goal.

For a direct kick, you will not raise your arm, but will merely point in the proper direction. If the kick is to be indirect, and you forget to raise your arm, and the ball is kicked directly into the goal, you have created a problem! You may not allow the goal because the kick was indirect. But the team played it like a direct kick, and was deprived of a chance to score by correctly playing it as an indirect kick. It is important that "direct" or "indirect" be very clearly indicated. But in spite of the obvious unfairness that may be caused by your error in that a goal can not be allowed, some degree of fairness will be restored in the fact that you now must restart with a retake of the indirect kick. It is a terrible feeling when you make a mistake that may have allowed or denied a goal. Stay alert and always do what you are supposed to do, and you can avoid that feeling.

Under the two-referee system, the referee calling the foul will immediately indicate direction and whether direct or indirect. If the kick is to be indirect, the lead referee will then have the responsibility to give the signal until the kicked ball is touched, or goes out of play.

The biggest problem for the referee on the taking of free kicks is the enforcement of the rule that all defensive players must be at least ten yards from the ball when it is kicked. Sometimes, a single defensive player will stand near the ball, to delay the taking of the kick while teammates set up their defense. This is "unsporting behavior," and can be punished with a caution. If the kick is near the defenders' penalty area, they will set up a wall, but the wall will usually end up being only six or seven yards from the ball.

The player taking the free kick always has the option of kicking it at once, even though there are defenders within ten yards. There may well be a definite tactical advantage in doing so. However, if the kicker exercises this option and the ball touches a defender within the ten yards, you will take no action. In taking the kick, the player gave up the right to the ten yard buffer.

But then there is a slightly different situation. A defender is about five to ten yards away, and is standing still, awaiting the kick. As the attacker goes into his kicking motion, the defender rushes forward and is much closer to the ball by the time it is kicked. The play should be whistled dead at once and a retake ordered. You may also caution the offending player. The kicker decided to take the kick based upon a given defensive situation, which was changed illegally before the kick was taken. The kicker, concentrating on the ball, would typically not see this.

The other reaction to the above situation by a player about to take a free kick will be to ask the referee to enforce the ten yards distance. Having made this request, the kicker must then wait for permission from the referee before taking the kick. Failure to do so after a reminder should end in a caution. It is good practice here to signal permission for the kick with your whistle, so that all players will be alerted that play is about to restart. In fact, after any appreciable delay, the use of the whistle is a good idea.

We need to say more about the wall that is only six or seven yards from the ball. This is a common practice, especially among more experienced players. They will move back very slowly and reluctantly, and it can be like pulling teeth to get the full ten yards! This is a grossly unfair tactic and should not be tolerated. The wall situation usually occurs near the goal, and a reasonable chance to score can be nullified if the wall is allowed to remain close to the ball. A good player can put a ball over the top of the wall and drop it into the goal when the full ten yards is given, but doesn't have a chance with the wall just six yards away.

Most of the better referees say that you should not pace off the ten yards, but stand aside and wave the players back until you are satisfied with the distance. As a referee, you

should know what ten yards look like. If you don't, lay out a ten yard distance at home, and then stand back and look at it until it is firmly planted in your mind. At no time should you physically push the players back. You have the authority that you need, including the right to caution players who will not cooperate. One or two instances of having to move the same team back is all that you should tolerate. If this tactic continues, it is time to issue a warning or caution for unsporting behavior and delay of game.

On the other hand, a team can be judged guilty of delay of game if they continually call for ten yards on every free kick, even when the opponents appear to be sufficiently withdrawn. Listed below are three final short tips:

1. The kicker's teammates can be guilty of being offside from the free kick.
2. A direct free kick (DFK) can score only against the team that committed the foul. If the kicker puts it into his own goal, no one else having touched it, you will award a corner kick.
3. Any free kick that rebounds from the goal post or crossbar and returns, otherwise untouched, to the original kicker may not be played again by the kicker. That player may not play the ball again until it is touched by another player. This applies to direct kicks, indirect kicks, penalty kicks and corner kicks.

LAW FOURTEEN - PENALTY KICK

Every season, there are reports of mistakes by referees in the administration of penalty kicks! You should make a special effort to study and understand all the provisions of this Law, as they are presented in the rulebook.

The requirements for the positioning of the players are very specific. All but the kicker and the defending goalkeeper must be on the field of play, and outside of the penalty area, and at least ten (10) yards from the ball, and farther from the goal line than the penalty mark. If there is no ten-yard restraining arc outside the penalty area, move the players back so that, to the best of your judgment, they are ten yards from the ball.

The goalkeeper must stand with some part of each foot on the goal line, between the uprights, and may move along the line, but not off the line, before the ball is kicked. The kicker will kick the ball from the penalty mark, which is a spot opposite the center of the goal and twelve yards from the goal line. The kicker may move back as far as desired to run up to the ball, even from outside the penalty area. Make it a point to identify, for yourself and the goalkeeper, who is going to take the kick. Once the kicker has been identified, there can be no change unless the kick is being retaken. On a retake, both the kicker and goalkeeper may be changed, but only by players who are on the field. If a goalkeeper was to be injured and unable to continue in the game, and a retake is necessary, a substitute goalkeeper may be brought in from off the field. Normally, there can be no substitutions from off the field in a penalty kick situation, because play was not stopped by the ball leaving the field (as for goal kick or throw-in) and play is proceeding as in any free kick.

A penalty kick taken before the signal is given must be retaken, regardless of its outcome. It is good practice to tell the kicker "wait for my signal!" It also is recommended that you use your whistle for the signal, to avoid the possibility of the kicker's misunderstanding any arm motion you might make. In a two referee system, when all players are properly positioned to the satisfaction of both referees, the lead referee is the one who should signal to permit the taking of the kick.

Now, we finally come to the taking of the kick, and here is where referees often get into trouble. There are infringements that can occur after your signal and before the kick is taken, and the nature of these infringements will control what you do after the kick. These

infringements include players of either team stepping into the penalty area or closer than ten yards from the ball before it is kicked, or the goalkeeper moving forward before the ball is kicked. First of all, if any such an infringement occurs, you first must allow the kick to proceed.

The rest looks complicated, but it is really quite simple and reasonable. If a defender commits the infraction (entering penalty area, goalkeeper moving forward) you want to punish the defending team. If the kick scores, you allow the goal. You can't punish the attackers by ordering a retake when it was the other team that committed the infraction. But if no goal scores, whether the ball goes out of play or is deflected by the goalkeeper or goal post back into play, you should award a retake of the penalty kick.

If a member of the kicker's team steps into the penalty area (encroaches), you want to punish that team. If the kick scores, you should order a retake. If it misses, and goes out of play, you restart play with a goal kick or a throw-in as appropriate. If the goalkeeper gains possession of the ball allow him to punt the ball away. If it is deflected and remains in play, you stop play, and award an indirect kick to the defending team. If it is deflected over the goal line, you also stop play, and award an indirect kick to the defending team. In ordinary play, a deflection over the goal line would require a corner kick, but in this case the encroachment by the kicking team takes precedence.

If the kicker goes through the motions of taking the kick, but then stops or kicks over the ball to cause the goalkeeper to make an attempted save to one side or the other, then kicks the ball into the open goal, you should order a retake and caution the kicker.

You will notice a basic principle in all of the above instructions. A team cannot lose the right to a penalty kick merely because of an infraction committed before the kick is taken, but they can forfeit the favorable result of that particular kick.

There will be times when a penalty kick will be awarded, but the time of the period will expire before the kick is taken. The Laws permit extending time for the taking of such a kick, but special rules come into effect in such a situation.

In this case, only the kicker and the goalkeeper will participate; the other players will stand away and observe. Extended time continues for only as long as there is the possibility of the kicked ball entering the goal, without being played again by the kicker. The player taking the penalty kick may only play the ball once.

If the ball strikes the goalkeeper or the goal, and bounces away a considerable distance upfield, so that it obviously cannot enter the goal, time elapses. If, however, it bounces in such a manner that its spin or contact with the goalkeeper or the posts causes it to enter the goal, the goal shall count.

This is a changed interpretation, adopted by FIFA in 1987, that provides that mere contact with the goal or an incomplete save by a goalkeeper will not prevent the scoring of a goal.

When "kicks from the mark" are used to settle a tied game, they are administered according to these extended-time penalty kick rules.

LAW FIFTEEN - THROW-IN

Considering the skill level of most youth games, not much of consequence to the outcome of the game will occur on throw-ins. The main objective is to get the ball back into play as quickly as possible. However, there are players who can throw long enough to create a

play equivalent to a corner kick or a crossing kick from a player on the wing, and you must be sure that such throws are absolutely legal.

The throw-in must be taken so that the ball enters the field at about the same point where it went out. If the thrower moves away from that spot, indicate where the throw is to be taken. If the player throws the ball in from the wrong spot, without looking at the referee for instructions, award the throw-in to the other team. Also, look for the player who stands two or three yards back from the touch line, then throws almost parallel to the touch line. This tactic also can bring the ball into play far from where it went out. This also requires that the throw-in be given to the other team.

The ball may not be dropped, but it may be thrown gently, as long as there is continuous arm motion. The ball must enter the field in the air, not after bouncing off the ground outside the field of play (retake if it bounces onto the field). Once any part of the ball has crossed the plane of the outside edge of the touch-line, it has entered the field. If it then curves out-of-bounds, a throw-in is given to the other team.

The law requires that both hands are used equally, and many referees interpret any sideways spin of the ball to indicate unequal use of the hands. Almost everyone is either right-handed or left-handed, so that a moderate amount of inequality or spin is inevitable.

With regard to the position of the thrower's feet, a part of each foot must be touching the ground, and be on or behind the touch line. This means that a part of either foot may be projecting beyond the touch line onto the field of play, as long as the remainder of either foot is on or behind the touch line itself.

A throw-in has the status of an indirect kick. If a throw-in ball happens to enter a goal, untouched, a goal may not be awarded. The correct call would be a goal kick or corner kick, since the ball was properly put into play prior to going over the goal line.

If a player from the thrower's team is the first to play the ball after the throw-in, that player cannot be offside, regardless of that player's position on the field.

Sometimes a thrower sees no teammate to whom a successful throw can be made. The thrower may elect to bounce the throw off an opponent, thus making it legal for the thrower to then play the ball. Bouncing the ball off an opponent is always legal, as long as it is not done in a violent or dangerous manner. If there appears to be intent to injure, the player making the throw-in may be ejected and a direct free kick (DFK) awarded, since such a play is considered the same as striking an opponent.

If an opponent attempts to impede a throw-in by jumping or waving their arms in front of the thrower, this is "unsporting behavior," and can be punished with a caution. The call should be made before the ball is thrown in. If the ball is thrown in before you can blow your whistle, let it go but warn the offending player that you will not permit this type of behavior.

LAW SIXTEEN - GOAL KICK

In general, a goal kick has the same status as any other indirect kick that is being taken by the defending team from within its own goal area. This means that the kick may be taken from anywhere within the goal area, all opponents must be outside the penalty area, and the ball is not legally in play until it has completely left the penalty area. If it is played a second time by any player on either team before leaving the penalty area, it must be retaken. A goal may be scored direct from a goal kick, but only against the opposing team. If attackers are slow to leave the penalty area, and are still within the area when the kick is taken, you need take no action unless one of them tries to play the ball.

There is one special rule that applies to goal kicks. If a teammate of the kicker taking the goal kick is the first to touch the ball after it has been legally put into play, that player cannot be offside, regardless of where that player is positioned on the field. Teams who have a strong kicker sometimes use this as a tactic, stationing their forwards well beyond the defending fullbacks, in an offside position. A long kick can then go to one of those forwards who is not guilty of an offside offense. Be aware of this, and don't get caught looking like a fool by calling offside. This means, of course, that you must always know whether the kick is a goal kick, or a free kick given for a foul or misconduct. For any free kick (DFK or IFK), the offside exemption does not apply.

LAW SEVENTEEN - CORNER KICK

With the corner kick, we again have the special offside exemption. If the first player to play the ball after it has been legally put into play is a member of the kicker's team, that player cannot be offside, regardless of his or her position on the field. As soon as the ball is touched by that player, the offside exemption terminates and normal play resumes. If this same player then deflects the ball to any other teammate who is in an offside position, including the original kicker, that teammate is guilty of being offside.

The special situation to watch for on corner kicks is obstruction of the goalkeeper. Until the kick is taken, attacking players have the right to station themselves anywhere they please. This will sometimes be right beside or in front of the goalkeeper. Once the ball is kicked, watch to see that these players move in an appropriate manner to play the ball. If an attacker is not trying to play the ball, and deliberately prevents the goalkeeper's movements, you should call obstruction at once.

Remember that a corner kick is direct, and a goal can be scored without being touched by another player. This kind of luck can occur even with unskilled players.

There is one other play that is often missed by referees. The kicker takes a short corner kick to a teammate, who then immediately passes it back to the kicker. The original kicker has not had much time to move away from the corner, and will usually be offside.

"LAW EIGHTEEN" - THE ART OF REFEREEING

When referee trainers come to the end of their training sessions or after authors on refereeing have covered the Seventeen Laws, they will often include a discussion on the mythical "Law 18," which they refer to as "Common Sense!"

The general theme of such a discussion is that better control of a game will often be served by a decision based on common sense, if the Laws do not adequately cover a particular situation, or if strict application of the letter of the Law would be counterproductive. The ability to make such a decision in the heat of a game is an Art, so we prefer to call this the *ART OF REFEREEING*.

The dictionary says that science is something that may be studied or learned, like systematized knowledge. Most of what has gone before in this handbook could be referred to as the science of refereeing. Art, on the other hand is "the conscious use of skill and creative imagination!"

The large differences that you will see in the effectiveness of various referees are a manifestation of the application of that "creative imagination," that "Art".

The use of the word "creative" does not mean that we expect you to make up new rules as you go along. What is expected is that you will be able to make decisions that will invoke the intent of the Laws, with the result that the "Spirit of the Game" will be maintained. You

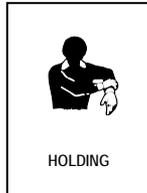
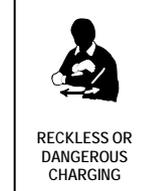
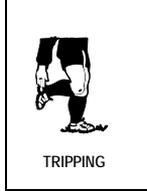
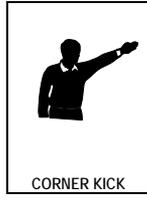
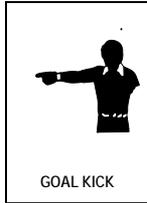
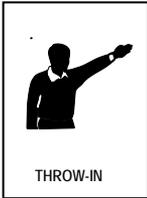
will need to do this when, in your judgment, a letter-of-the-law decision will make an unpleasant situation worse, or will create antagonism towards yourself in exchange for a negligible improvement in rules enforcement.

Here are some examples of the types of situations we are talking about:

1. Weather conditions have made the field very muddy and slippery, and the lines are gone. The players are not happy at being required to play. You would allow more contact than normal, as long as there appeared to be no danger of injury. You would not call trifling foot violations on throw-ins.
2. A player has been injured, and his or her teammates are angry. You would be ill advised to invoke the rule that the player must be removed from the field as quickly as possible, or to start flashing yellow cards at players who remark about lack of game control. You would move away and let the situation cool down.
3. In a game between two very inexperienced teams, you would not call six bad throw-ins in a row where no tactical advantage was being gained.

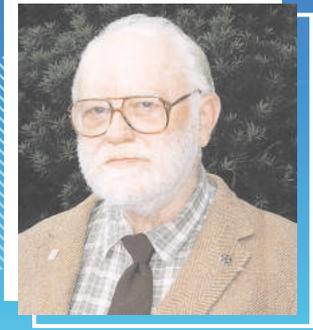
These are only a few examples. You will encounter many other situations calling for the exercise of your art as your experience increases.

SAY REFEREE SIGNALS



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

ROLAND F. BEDARD SAY COMMISSIONER



Roland Bedard became involved in SAY Soccer in 1969 as a coach and referee. He joined the Board of Directors in 1972 and was elected as Vice President and also served on an Expansion and Affiliation Committee that dealt with requests to join SAY. In his first year, Roland took on the job of putting together a manual with the information necessary for running a SAY organization. In September of his first year, he was appointed Director of Officials and Rules.

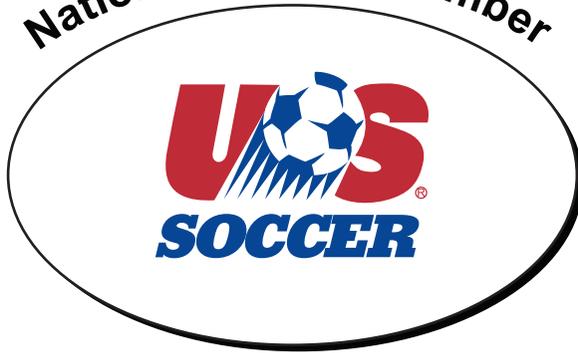
In 1973, Bedard was elected to the first of six terms as President of SAY's Board of Directors. He served as President from 1973-75 and 1980-82. He has also held the positions of Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian. He has served three times as the Interim Executive Director during periods when the National Office was seeking a new Director. Bedard continued to serve as a member of the Board until 1996.

One of his greatest contributions to the SAY organization is the Referee Handbook entitled "Refereeing Youth Soccer," a manual that deals with some of the more complicated laws and concepts of soccer and explains them in a language that is easy to understand. It has periodically been updated to stay current with the new laws as they are introduced. For his work on this manual, Bedard received the Silver Ball Award, which is the highest possible for work within the SAY organization. His latest accomplishment is "The History of SAY," which was published in 2000.

Bedard was selected by Major League Soccer as one of Ohio's Top 100 Soccer Leaders in 2000 and was recognized at the MLS All-Star Game Skills Challenge at Crew Stadium on July 27, 2000.

Bedard and his wife, Patricia, have been married for 59 years and have six children. The couple now resides in Springfield, Massachusetts.

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