



October 30, 2008

Sierra Valley Soccer Referee Association

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Thank you

The Stockton Triad soccer tournament was a success thanks in part to the good job you did refereeing games. Feedback cards from coaches and fellow referees have been tallied for referee awards. Congratulations and awards go to:

- Best Referee: Doward Williamson, Elk Grove
- Best Assistant Referee: Steve Ikeda, Stockton

Striking

As a result of several recent incidents, as well as a general rise in actions which demonstrate disrespect by players toward each other in MLS matches, USSF is urging referees to review the following guidelines regarding "strikes or attempts to strike" as a foul and/or misconduct, the appropriate action to take in each case, and the reasons why such behavior must be dealt with firmly.

Striking is not defined in the Laws of the Game. Referees must therefore apply commonly accepted usage and common sense in identifying the actions which would properly be called striking. As a foul, striking consists of a player making (or attempting to make):

- direct contact with an opponent;
- on the field during play;
- using a hand, elbow, arm, head, or knee;
- or by throwing any object at an opponent (including the ball).

Underlying the concept is the notion that the action involves at least some degree of force -- merely touching an opponent would clearly not be seen as a striking foul. There should be no hesitation in whistling the offense and indicating the correct restart (direct free kick or penalty kick) -- according to the IFAB, advantage is not applied to such behavior unless there is a clear, immediate possibility of a goal.

If the referee's decision is that a striking foul has occurred, the assumption should be that a red card should be shown and the player should be sent off (violent conduct). A red card must be given when the striking is performed:

- using the backhand, open-handed slap, fist, or poking fingers; or
- in a manner intended to increase pain, injury, or humiliation.

Particular attention must be paid to striking the head, face, or other vulnerable parts of the body (e.g., the eyes). Grabbing the hair of the opponent could be considered striking or holding but, in either case, would be evaluated using the above criteria. If the contact does not involve force and would thus not be considered a foul, the referee must still consider the likelihood of misconduct punishable by a red card if it is performed in an insulting, offensive, or derisory manner designed to provoke, intimidate, or humiliate the opponent (the card would not be reported as violent conduct but as insulting or offensive language, which includes gestures).

On the USSoccer.com web-site is a video clip from a match involving Los Angeles Galaxy at DC United (June 29, 2008), United player Gallardo contacts the face of Galaxy player Donovan with a backhanded slap in the 42nd minute. Although not delivered with the aggressive force of a punch nor with the sort of "cocked and thrown" aspect of an elbow, it is nevertheless a clear case of striking (the foul) which must also be considered a send-off offense as the contact was to the face, delivered with enough force to produce bleeding, and done to intimidate. The fact that it was in retaliation for an immediately prior offense (tactical holding) neither excuses the foul nor mitigates the misconduct. It demonstrates the importance of the referee stepping in quickly in the absence of a clear advantage to prevent further problems.

Details Matter: Goal Kicks

On a goal kick, the players on the opposing team need to remain outside the penalty area until the ball comes out of the penalty area onto the field of play. If any player on the opposing team enters the penalty area, (for example, cuts through it, or plays the ball before it has come out of the penalty area), stop play immediately and have the goal kick taken over again. Blow your whistle quickly before the opponents can shoot on goal. If you are slow and the ball goes into the goal before you blow the whistle, you may have a lot of unhappy fans. Better to act quickly and explain your call to the players so they don't do this again.

Details Matter: Space on the Touch Line

Spectators, coaches, substitutes, chairs, the overhang of umbrellas, etc. all need to be 3 feet off the field. Reasons: a) So assistant referees do not have to worry about running into them. If your path is obstructed, it is dangerous for both you and the spectators. If you have to take your attention away from the game to make sure you don't get hurt, realize that you should have taken care of this before the game. b) So that the assistant referee has a clear view of play and the touch line. If you can't see the play to make the call, do you blame spectators after the fact or do you set the situation right before the game even starts? c) So that players don't have a risk of colliding with them. This summer a u19 girl tripped while running near the touch line. As she fell, her head made contact with her coach's knee. She broke her neck.

Improving your referee grade

If you want to improve your referee license, two of the things you must do every year (there are other things, too) are to take a physical test known as a "Fun Run" and also a written test. If you are upgrading from 8 to 7, the test is the same as the test you took to get your license, just you have to get a score 85 or above. Here is when the tests will be conducted:

- Modesto Jr. College: 8:00 am on Sunday, November 9
- Delta College, Stockton: 8:00 am on Saturday, November 8

No reservations or fees are required. Please bring a clipboard and pencil for testing purposes, and water to drink. For further information, contact BarrettMeiselman@sbcglobal.net

Upcoming Tournaments:

November 15-16 Stockton Youth Soccer end-of-season rec tournament

November 22-23 US Club Norcal State Cup, Manteca

Dec. 6 Stockton/Manteca Inter-City rec championship

Dec. 6-7 Dennis Olson League/Kaercher League end-of-season tournaments

Dec. 6-7 13-14 Stockton AYSO tournament

If you need further information on any of these, please contact Doug Chard

Reminder: SYSA referee schedules and SVSRA newsletters are being posted on this web-site: <http://www.stocktonyouthsoccer.org/>