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UEFA Referees Development Programme 2006

**6th Seminar for Assistant Referees
and
4th Summer Gathering for Elite & Premier Referees
29-30 August 2006**

UEFA Headquarters – House of European Football, Nyon

General SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This document is intended to supplement the second edition of the UEFA booklet “Practical Information for Match Officials”, which has recently been sent to all UEFA International Referees, Assistant Referees and Referee Observers.

The seminar and gathering served as an opportunity to reinforce the practical information in the booklet. In addition, the points mentioned below should also be considered.

Advantage

This was a major topic for the pre-season instruction for referees and the following points were agreed by the participants:

- Players, coaches and spectators want the game to flow but sometimes allowing advantage can threaten control.
- “Wait and see” (i.e. referees should not be too quick with the whistle) and “team benefit” (i.e. possession of the ball alone is not always a benefit for the team) are vital principles when deciding whether or not to allow advantage.
- Many teams practise free kicks in attacking situations so it is often better for them to receive a free kick rather than advantage around their opponents’ penalty area i.e. the benefit to the team is the free kick.
- If the referee considers an offence to be reckless or serious, he should stop the game unless there is a very significant attacking opportunity i.e. the benefit of keeping the game under control must, in principle in such cases, outweigh the ‘team benefit’.
- Referees must have a wider perspective and not focus just on the foul (its punishment and location).
- Where advantage is played, the correct disciplinary sanctions must still be undertaken once play stops.
- Too much advantage may cause more serious offences.

- It should be very rare to play advantage for defenders in or near to their own penalty area (only if they have full control of the ball; there are no opponents in the vicinity of the defender etc)

Re-emphasis of points covered at previous courses

The UEFA Referees Committee noted that a number of instructions and actions agreed in February 2006 at the Winter Referees courses in Barcelona are not being uniformly applied in UEFA competitions. Consequently, the following points were re-emphasised and reference made to their inclusion in "Practical Information for Match Officials" edition 2006,

- Reaction/Confrontation
 - Confrontation between players (page 30).
 - Confrontation with the Referee/assistant referee (page 31)

After the course a media release was issued by UEFA highlighting the actions referees would take in such confrontation situations, specifically that players would be cautioned in the following cases:

1. *For 'demanding' that an opponent should receive a yellow card.*
2. *When crowding round the referee – at least one other player should receive a caution, and not just the initiator.*
3. *For dissent by word or gesture at or running towards the referee. (Naturally, should the player use offensive or insulting or abusive language and/or gestures, he will be shown a red card).*

- Illegal Challenges with hands/arms (page 27) and Correct decision-making: Fouls and consequences (page 23).

The duty referees have in respect of protecting players from unfair strong physical contacts is strongly re-emphasised!

- Illegal use of the Arms prior to corner kicks / free kicks (page 28)

Referees are expected to act firmly against such actions.

- Handball Considerations (page 29)

The principles which the referees should take into account when deciding whether to punish hand/ball contact.

The UEFA Referees Committee insists that referees and assistant referees strictly apply the above-mentioned instructions.

Points agreed by participants of the Assistant Referees' course

Pre-match Discussion

The participants reached several conclusions in line with the instructions outlined on page 37 of the "Practical Information for Match Officials" edition 2006. These included:

- Ensure a comprehensive pre-match team discussion takes place prior to the arrival in the stadium and in a neutral comfortable setting without distraction.
- Discuss the expectations of the match.
- Exchange previous experiences of the teams and anticipation of specific situations, including team tactics.

Individual Pre-match preparation

The participants felt that the following points may assist individual assistant referees in their own preparation prior to a match.

- Trust your colleagues and be honest with each other.
- Previous negative experiences should be forgotten with positive past experiences used as an incentive to improve.
- Admit and learn from your mistakes. Don't look back – look forward.
- Good warming up is essential. Assistant Referees should spend some of the warming-up time on their appointed touch-lines.
- Remain concentrated throughout the match.
- The use of discreet signals can be of great assistance to the referee.
- Afford the participants (players) respect at all times.

During the match

Participants agreed that certain procedures could be followed which would assist them in their performances. These include:

- The importance of using field markings to maintain concentration.
- During the half-time interval discuss with colleagues useful hints / information on the defending and attacking tactics from first half.
- 'Self-talk' during the match (ensuring concentration – i.e. offside / onside)
- Always keep a record of the game to assist the referee if necessary
- Always be prepared to "Expect the unexpected".