

# WE CARE ABOUT FOOTBALL



## UEFA Referees Development Programme 2004

**12<sup>th</sup> UEFA Advanced Course for Elite and Premier Referees**

**And**

**13<sup>th</sup> UEFA Introductory Course for International Referees.**

**February 2004, Madrid.**

### **General CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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Attention is drawn to the following conclusions following technical presentations and discussions made at the above UEFA Referee Courses for Elite, Premier and New International Referees for the benefit of international football in Europe. These should be read in conjunction with earlier UEFA referee course conclusions, which have been sent previously and can still be read on the uefa.com website (<http://www.uefa.com/TrainingGround/index.html>).

As with earlier UEFA referee course conclusions, it was felt that these practices would reinforce the uniform interpretation and application of the Laws of the Game.

It should be reiterated that these conclusions are based on discussions between the 44 UEFA Elite and Premier referees, the 27 new UEFA referees in 2004 and the members of the UEFA Referees Committee.

#### Communicating and Managing

##### *Positive body language*

1. After discussing positive methods of communicating with players during matches, in respect of announcing decisions credibly and with conviction, it was agreed that there was benefit in using additional discreet explanatory signals appropriately to clarify any incidents not apparently understood by some participants. The example of indicating simply that a caution (yellow card) was being given for a series of offences (persistent infringing of the

Laws of the Game) was quoted as being useful so that players realised that the sanction was not for the final offence alone.

It was, however, emphasised that such additional discreet signals (e.g. shirt pulling, etc) should only be used to clarify decisions and not to justify them.

#### *Dealing with mass protests*

2. In respect of managing heated situations (such as mass protests/confrontations) it was accepted that the referee must remain calm and concentrated in his role. The prime instigator of the challenge to the referee's authority should be conducted to (and isolated in) a neutral zone, away from the group of players, as soon as possible in order to be cautioned for this unsporting behaviour. Where a greater offence was committed (red card) the sanction should be seen to be imposed, again with calmness and dignity.

Physical contact in intervening between players should normally be avoided. Strong use of the whistle might be helpful, but shouting at players should also be avoided.

#### *Conflict prevention*

3. Where conflict can be avoided by taking early preventative action (e.g. often prior to corner kicks, when players are jostling for positions in the penalty area) this is recommended strongly.

#### *The Technical Area*

4. The management of the technical area is normally best left to the fourth official. He should be alert to his duties, in accordance with the referee's expectations (as discussed before the match), but ensure that the coach can carry out his role responsibly without interference. A fourth official 'low profile' approach is recommended.

If problems arise in the technical area or near the benches necessitating the attention of the referee, the two assistant referees should retain their normal positions and be aware of anything that happens on the field of play, to report subsequently to the referee.

In principle, therefore, it was agreed that the coach, acting responsibly, should be totally free to do his or her job, but that where he openly criticises the referee or other match officials, action should be taken to curb his behaviour.

## The Team of Match Officials

Further to the General Conclusions and Recommendations from the 3rd Seminar for Assistant Referees and 1<sup>st</sup> Gathering for Elite Referees in September 2003, the participants in the Introductory Course in Madrid discussed and concluded that it was necessary to remind referees and assistant referees that although they have different roles, training on different techniques is only one part of the aim and much can be gained from studying similar and common responsibilities in their roles.

### *Development of teamwork*

5. It was agreed that only by practising techniques and ensuring that every member of the team of officials has a common knowledge and interpretation of the Law can teamwork develop further. Team members should also respect their different roles. They can only be successful if the referee takes the responsibility for open and honest pre-match instruction and discussion, and is open for questions and conclusions.

It was also recommended that the Team of Officials use time for a post match evaluation of the teamwork.

## To Halt Play or Not?

### *Handball Considerations:*

6. Although football is a game in which players constantly move their arms and hands as a natural part of their movement, it is recommended that in deciding if a player is handling the ball deliberately, it is essential to consider the following points:

- Was it a hand to ball situation or ball to hand?
- Are the player's hands or arm in a "natural" position?
- Should the player take the consequences of having his hand or arms lifted high?
- Does the player try to *avoid* the ball striking his hand?
- Is the player *able* to avoid the ball striking his hand?
- Does he use his hand or arm to intentionally touch the ball?

Referees are also reminded of possible additional circumstances and consequences, e.g. How and where did the offence occur (stopped an attack? Denied an obvious goal scoring opportunity?). They must then punish fully in accordance with the Law.

### *Advantage Considerations*

7. It was reminded that in considering the use of advantage or halting play, it is essential that referees consider whether the team offended against would actually benefit from allowing play to continue.
8. It is recommended that referees, if possible, should adopt a “wait and see” approach in order to assess whether the non-offending team really has an attacking possibility. However, remembering that many teams now practise taking free kicks near their opponent’s goal, it is very often of greater benefit to award a free kick, especially for a physical offence, rather than risk the use of advantage.

There is rarely any advantage in having the possibility just to keep the ball in its current position, to pass the ball backwards or to be put under pressure by defenders even when the ball is under control. In principle advantage should normally only be played when a promising attacking move or an obvious goal scoring opportunity would occur.

In addition the referee should take into consideration:

- Where on the field the offence occurred.
- Should the player committing the foul be cautioned?
- Should the player committing the foul receive a second yellow card?
- Should the player committing the foul receive a direct red card and be dismissed from the field?

In those circumstances where the referee considers that the offending player should receive a second yellow card or a direct red card for the original offence, advantage should not be considered. A free kick should be awarded immediately.

### Correct decision-making; Fouls and consequences

#### *Determining the seriousness of offences*

9. In determining the seriousness of an offence (such as kicking, tripping, jumping at, striking, pushing, charging an opponent), referees were reminded that they should take into account:
  - The element of intent or malice;
  - The speed of the player’s action (intensity);
  - The tackler’s chance of playing the ball;
  - Is a player endangering the safety of the opponent?

Particular emphasis was placed on the elimination of challenges where a player gives no consideration to the safety and welfare of an opponent. Any challenge involving excessive force, and therefore endangering the safety of an opponent, must be considered as serious foul play and the offender must be sent off. Brutality must always result in dismissal (red card).

### *Sanctions*

10. Referees are reminded that the sanction for offences such as holding or deliberately handling the ball is, according to the Laws of the Game, a free kick only. However, a player must be cautioned if the offence was blatant (yellow card for unsporting behaviour).

### *Additional factors to consider*

11. It was emphasised that in addition to the determination of the seriousness of the offence, referees must take into account the circumstances in which the offence has been committed:

- Was an obvious goal-scoring opportunity denied (red-card offence)?
- Was a promising attacking move prevented (yellow card offence)?

The following criteria were agreed for determining if an offence denied an obvious goal-scoring opportunity:

- Possibility to control the ball.
- Position of the attacker.
- Direction of movement (the attacker and ball).
- Distance to the goal line.
- Position of the defenders / goalkeeper.
- Was the attack very likely to produce a goal had it not been stopped by an offence punishable by a free kick (or a penalty kick)?

The following criteria were agreed for determining if there was a promising attacking move stopped by an offence:

- Position of the offence.
- The player's chance of playing ball.
- Position of his teammates.
- Position of the opponents.
- Distance to goal.
- Was the attack likely to develop in next few seconds had it not been stopped by an offence?

### *Positioning*

12. It was also re-emphasised that good positioning and a side-on view are crucial for optimum judgment of the manner (seriousness) and the circumstances of the offence and that the assistant can often provide valuable information to the referee.

*Fitness Test experiment*

13. The Elite and Premier referees were used to evaluate a so-called "Bleep Test". This was viewed as a good high intensity exercise, similar to the activity of a referee during a match. As a result, it can be used for measuring training progress in addition to the Cooper test. However, to be used as fitness test, it requires further experimentation so it can be controlled in more objective way.

It is hoped these conclusions and recommendations will be of benefit not only to international referees, assistant referees and referee observers, but also to match officials within the UEFA member associations.

UEFA / Referees Committee / February 2004