



Welcome to this sixtieth edition of **“The Referee”**, the newsletter for all NSW State League Football Referees. This newsletter will enable our branch to communicate directly with our members and will cover issues and areas of interest to all referees.

We wish to ensure that all information, educational resources and opportunities that our branch provides for referees finds its way to those who are likely to benefit most – and that’s you!



Maintain effective distances from play that add credibility to decisions whilst avoiding being too close or constantly having to avoid the ball and players. During open play the best distance to be from play is 10-15 yards, which means enough players can be kept in view and offences are easy to detect. Too close and the ball could be passed behind you and less players can be seen and there is also the chance of getting in the way. This is not a strict rule and there will be occasions where a closer presence will help to deter foul play, such as when a defender is trying to guard the ball from an attacker as it leaves play near a corner, or when players are trying to run down time while leading at the end of a game and the opposition are trying desperately to win it back.

Are Football Referee Assessors Loved or Hated?

Assessors can be an important key piece in the development jigsaw in a referee's career. Whatever occupation you are following whether professionally or as a hobby, an independent and knowledgeable opinion of performance is vital for those seeking promotion or betterment. Self-assessment alone may be useful, given that the referee is the only one present at all of his/her matches. An independent analysis can give so much more, by providing a proper balanced view with workable solutions. What better than the Assessor to provide this?

The role of the referees' assessor has gradually been developed to provide the integrity of an independent viewpoint for measuring performance. This measuring equation is particularly geared towards referees who are seeking promotion, whether it is at the lower levels or aspiring to the higher rungs of the refereeing ladder. The assessor is also a very useful friend to have around when referees' not seeking promotion require help in the form of a development assessment where things are maybe not going too well, and encouragement is needed.

Assessor training and recruitment and retention is an ongoing exercise (much like any other job in society) and relies on a balance of the older experienced assessors alongside the younger ones. Each has his/her place; and derogatory referee to the "Old Brigade" that hides behind trees, does nothing to promote unity in the refereeing fraternity. A balance of experience and young potential is a key to any form of business where consistency is a goal.

It is always nice to have a friendly face at the match – someone who is experienced and has been trained to coach and develop rather than to find fault. The assessor very often provides a "buffer" between the referee and the teams. His/her presence will certainly curb the antics of those who are aware of his/her attendance. He/she uses this presence to protect the referee, such as being nearby to monitor potential referee abuse when the game ends. This facet alone merits its weight in gold. It's worth is certainly not fully recognised by those who look at assessors negatively.

The assessor is always on hand if required, to advise the referee; before the game, at full time (or even at half time if the occasional need arises) by identifying the cause and providing a solution, or a "route out". The written assessment report provides the referee with a record that covers performance and some coaching points. This can also be referred to later, to identify trends where two, or even more reports draw attention to similar development areas. This encourages referees to use their next matches to try out new ideas. Assessors can also be used to give presentations at referee monthly meetings, seminars and courses giving hints on what they look for during a match.

As far as football is concerned, assessing is a fruitful way to retain experience thus enabling retired referees to remain involved by putting something back into the game. It is all about using experience to help others. Referees should be encouraged to become assessors, as this opens up a new world that can only make them better. The Assessor is the Guardian of Refereeing Standards.

Assessors, being generally in the mould of ex-referees, remain invariably on good friendly terms with active referees. More so perhaps, at "Grass Roots" football level; for this is the place where every referee starts, and where careers can be enhanced or shot to pieces by the ability, or rather sometimes the non-ability of the Assessor.

Are Assessors looking for the right things and providing the correct feedback? In most cases the answer is yes but occasionally the answer is no with some older style Assessors who refer to the past and "the good old days". Today we must focus more on the potential of the referee, and not expect almost absolute perfection in the early stages of their career. Any rough edges can be smoothed over in the fullness of time. The question that should be asked is "Would this Referee be comfortable and give satisfactory performances at the level for which they are being assessed"? Also "Is this Referee capable of doing games at a higher level". We need to promote referees

who are performing well. The same should also go for those referees not performing at their level - they should be demoted and allow the better performing referees to take their places.

Gone are the days when the spotlight seemed to be on fault finding rather than encouraging and focusing on a few development areas after each game. How many referees have looked at their assessment report, only to find several picky comments that frustrate rather than provide helpful solutions?

Instructors and Assessors should all be singing from the same hymn sheet. More training courses should be held to reinforce Darwin's theory that we really did evolve from the Dinosaur age. Well most of us did! Assessors must look more to assisting rather than assassinating potential referee promotion candidates.

Remember that most established Assessors are as professionally minded as anyone in the game because their commitment demands full concentration and plenty of deep thought leading to well-constructed reports which help in referees' development. The majority of Assessors are giving back to the game they love so much. Many have several years of experience having played the game professionally or semi-professionally before they took up the whistle to referee and when the legs gave out continued their commitment to the game as Assessors.

Adapted and Modified from "Refereeing Today" – The Official Publication of the English Referees' Association December 2005

2017-2018 Laws of the Game Quiz

A thorough understanding of the Laws of the Game is an essential quality of a good referee. All referees should regularly review their Laws of the Game book to ensure they are correctly interpreting and applying them.

A new format has been introduced, in our Newsletter, for testing your knowledge of the LOTG. This monthly LOTG Quiz is highly recommended for all active referees and assessors and counts towards meeting part of the criteria for honour games consideration and annual awards. To reinforce your knowledge you are encouraged to utilise your Laws of the Game Book to assist in answering the quiz questions. All quiz questions are based on the current 2017/2018 IFAB LOTG.

Click Here

Click on the "Click Here" button to complete the highly recommended monthly LOTG Quiz to test yourself on how well you know the laws.

September LOTG Quiz Answers: 1 - A; 2 - D; 3 - D; 4 - A; 5 - C; 6 - B; 7 - B; 8 - D; 9 - A; 10 - B.

Important Dates

Friday 7th December 2018 – Annual General Meeting at Bankstown Sports Club, 8 Greenfield Parade, Bankstown NSW 2200, starts at 7.30 pm.

Pushing in the Penalty Area

In this month's video analysis, we are discussing "Pushing in the Penalty Area". One of the biggest and most topical issues in the game is the amount of pushing and holding in the penalty area from free kicks and corner kicks. Referees are constantly criticised for not dealing with it but are often criticised when they do.

When referees award a penalty for pushing, the defending team's coaches, fans and sometimes even commentators and pundits will claim that the force was not enough to cause the player to go to ground. The players can often make this one of the most difficult decisions a referee has to make. Defenders will put their hands in the opponent's back and attackers will fall down as soon as they feel contact. It can be argued that defenders run the risk by raising their hands knowing that the attacker will go to ground. The problem referees face is judging the amount of force and did it in fact cause the player to fall.

In this month's analysis we are looking at two penalties that were awarded for pushing. Click on the following link to view the first penalty situation: https://youtu.be/6Oq9Q9_xbSg The first situation is from the game between Columbus Crew and Real Salt Lake which was played on the 30th June 2018. When the ball is crossed from a corner Crew's Luis Argudo goes down following contact from behind by Real's Danilo Acosta. Referee Drew Fischer who has a good viewing angle from a good distance has no hesitation in pointing to the spot.

Click on the following link to view the second penalty situation: <https://youtu.be/zzdrQZtkEZ4> The second situation is from New England Revolution v DC United, Wayne Rooney's new team, also played on the 30th June 2018. Again, from a corner the ball is moving around inside the penalty area when United's Darren Mattocks takes possession of the ball with his back to goal and goes down following contact from behind by Revolution defender Claude Dielna. Referee Allen Chapman who also has a good viewing angle, and is in close proximity, confidently awards the penalty.

When you examine both of these situations they have many similarities:

- The defender has his arms raised
- There is contact
- The attacker goes down

These are facts that the referee has in his thought process. However, the most difficult element that the referee will always consider is does the contact cause the player to fall? When you look at these two plays it is very hard to make that judgement. So, the referee has to work with the facts to make his decision:

- The defender has his arms raised
- There is contact

These are the only two elements that really matter, whether the attacker goes down or not shouldn't be a consideration but we know in reality it would be difficult to award a penalty if the player does not go to ground in these circumstances. It is the responsibility of the defending player not to raise his arms and push or hold the attacker. By doing so he gives the referee a decision to make. Additionally, whilst not condoning cheating, it gives the attacker an opportunity to fall whether or not it was caused by or was commensurate with the contact made!

In both of these plays neither attacker has a real opportunity to score so it makes you wonder why the defender takes such a risk. Referees can only work with the facts. So, if they see the arms raised and pushing or holding taking place it is difficult to argue with their decision to award a penalty kick.



Richard Baker - NSWFLR TSC Member and Newsletter Editor

