



Welcome to this fifty ninth 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!



**Dissent is an insidious disease. Ignoring dissent does not solve problems – it makes them worse. If you do not deal with dissent it creates serious doubts in the minds of players about who really is in charge of the match. Effective match officials do not tolerate dissent in any form. They exert their personalities on the match and simply refuse to accept dissent against them and their colleagues. Immediate and strong action is required.**

## ***Positioning and Anticipating Play***

This has truly been one of the hardest things I've felt I've had to learn in the game so far. You can watch tons of videos and gameplay on fouls and misconduct to get decisions right when it comes to fouls and cards. It's not quite the same for anticipating play. Here's my theory why. During life, we accumulate experience doing things repetitively. This helps us pick out patterns. With enough practice, these patterns help instruct our gut and give us a deeper instinct. A random example .....

An attacker and a defender were running down the touchline with the ball. They had just passed the halfway line into the attacking half in what looks like a promising attack mounting. This was right in front of AR2. Midfield was more or less empty so there wasn't too much to focus on but I turned my head towards the wayward attacker and defender in the middle just by the penalty area. If the attacker on the touchline got away, there would definitely be a cross/pass there. As I turned to look over early, I saw a wrestling match begin to ensue as both tugged each other to the ground. Granted the defender instigated it knowing that the attacker had more to gain from being in a good position.

When you see a pattern in the early stages, your mind already connects the dots and knows what's going to happen next. So, what? You look at the ending. You see it happening as though all in slow motion. The point I try to bring here is that earlier in my refereeing experience, I wouldn't have thought to look that way until the ball was crossed. Notice my wording almost spells out the problem - Ball-watching. Had I looked only when the cross happened or chase ended, I would have seen two players on the ground and other players in uproar.

Stepping back - So why do we ball-watch? Why does it happen? We get so engrossed in the little things that we forget to look at the big picture. Sometimes, this happens as a result of the game temperature. Sometimes the little things matter more and demand more of our attention but not always. It's important to constantly adjust between the two mindsets and allow yourself to. I may be innocuously and rather accidentally referring to the ball and the player in possession as the "little thing" here. The reason is that as the level of gameplay elevates, players are making decisions more tactically and there are typically less but more important challenges on the ball. Less means that there's more happening elsewhere as everyone else is taking a position and that's where the referee's attention is needed.

In the early stages of the game, as teams are trying to figure each other out, I usually do the same. The left-back on the backline has the ball. There's deep pressure on him. I immediately expect the ball to be played across the backline one-by-one to alleviate the pressure and use the space on the other side of the field. I swiftly turn my back and start moving looking at the potential fifth pass in the sequence. Granted, this doesn't always work out. Sometimes they decide against it. I gauge my confidence in doing this based on the likelihood of a turnover. Perhaps the most egregious thing I do as most referees would have picked up quickly is that I turn my back to play. It's a risk but I do it so I can run neutrally while patrolling and save my energy for lateral movement for close space situations.

I search, quite obviously, looking left and right when a player not under pressure is in possession of the ball. The set of questions running through my mind are -

"What are his options?"

"Where would I play this ball?"

"Where's the space?"

As I see space and body language acknowledgment from his teammates, I see the next phase of play developing in the offing. It's time to go before he squares up to kick the ball. At least, that's how it's developed for me in my experience. But wait... I didn't quite answer the question.

Why do referees focus so much on the ball? I've found that earlier in my career, I was so fixated on play because I had to build my own self-confidence in foul recognition. I would call fouls that were fouls (or at least everyone agreed after) but I wasn't always sure and wasn't always confident in my ability to know when they would happen. As I've learnt the patterns on when to expect them, how they look and what angle I need to see them with certainty, I've found the mental capacity to pay attention to the next phase of play. The focus then becomes making educated guesses on where the ball will next likely be, use fitness to my advantage and be in the right place proactively instead of reacting to it.

What do you think? Have you mastered this art?

*Adapted and Modified from Refereeing the Beautiful Game November 2017 by Labitre.*

## 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.*

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

## Important Dates

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2017 - General Meeting at Bankstown Sports Club, 8 Greenfield Parade, Bankstown NSW 2200, starts at 7.30 pm.

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2018 – NSWSLFR Networking and Awards Night at the Bankstown Sports Club, 8 Greenfield Parade, Bankstown NSW 2200, starting at 7.30 pm – Finger Food and Drinks will be available.

## Violent Conduct - Challenging For The Ball

In this month's video analysis, we are discussing Violent Conduct when players are challenging for the ball, often in full view of the referee. We are looking at three situations where there is contact to the face, all with different degrees of force and intensity. Law 12 says on this subject:

***A player who, when not challenging for the ball, deliberately strikes an opponent or any other person on the head or face with the hand or arm, is guilty of violent conduct unless the force used was negligible.***

Click on the following link to view Situation 1 – <https://youtu.be/n2ZjklUe-es> Situation one is from the game between Philadelphia Union and last year's MLS Cup winners Toronto FC played on the 8<sup>th</sup> June 2018. The ball is punted up-field by Toronto keeper Alexander Bono, to create a quick counter attack. This is every referee's

nightmare! Vastly experienced referee Baldomero Toledo has to try and make up as much ground as possible but it's impossible to beat the speed of the ball. Even Usain Bolt would struggle!

We then have a race between Union defender Raymon Gaddis and Toronto's Sebastian Giovinco to get the ball. Gaddis gets there slightly ahead of Giovinco who is closely behind. At this moment, as Gaddis shepherds the ball back to his keeper Andre Blake, he brings his arm back and makes contact in the face of Giovinco, who goes down holding his face.

The referee, Toledo, has no chance of seeing this contact, let alone judging the intensity and malice of the arm to the face. The nearer AR Eduardo Mariscal has more chance than Toledo but from his distance it would also be difficult to judge the contact. When we look at the replay it appears that Gaddis tries to hold Giovinco off, and the actual contact is negligible. Therefore, the correct outcome should have been the award of a free-kick only.

Click on the following link to view Situation 2 – <https://youtu.be/Va2CbRNPx0> The second situation is from Portland Timbers v Sporting Kansas City played on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2018. As Timber's Fanendo Adi passes the ball to his team-mate Diego Valeri, Sporting's Wan Kuzain runs up alongside him and appears to raise his elbow slightly into the chin of Adi, who goes down requiring treatment. Referee Chris Penso who is well positioned gives a free-kick and allows the treatment to Adi. This situation is more sinister than situation one, but it appears that Kuzain is trying to create space for himself and there is still not enough intensity to warrant a red card. Therefore, the correct outcome should have been a Yellow Card.

Click on the following link to view Situation 3 – <https://youtu.be/DzPMlyq7m5o> Situation three is from the game between Houston Dynamo and Colorado Rapids played on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2018. Rapid's Yannick Boli, who is in possession of the ball, is put under pressure from behind by Dynamo's Leonardo. He raises his arm and makes contact with his opponent's face, who goes down holding his face. Referee Drew Fischer, who is in a good position, immediately goes over to AR Peter Manikowski, just for confirmation that they had seen the same thing, particularly as Malinowski had a clearer view of the actual contact. He confirms that Boli should be sent off for Violent Conduct. Manikowski deserves a great deal of credit for excellent work on his part in a Violent Conduct situation.

In this situation you can see more intensity than in the previous two. He deliberately raises his arm into his opponent's face with more force. If it the hit had been contact to the chest and not the face, it would not have risen to the level of violent conduct. Therefore, the correct outcome is a Red Card.

These three situations, show examples of hands and arms making contact with opponents' faces but with different levels of intensity. The first one is a free-kick only, the second is a free-kick and yellow card, the third one is a free-kick and red card. Referees have to judge the difference between each one and take the appropriate action depending on if the offence is with careless, reckless or excessive force?



**Richard Baker - NSWFLR TSC Member and Newsletter Editor**

