

Cal-North Referee Academy Clinic

"Assistant Referee Involvement"

Case Study No. 1

ANSWER

A White attacker, standing barely outside his opponent's penalty area and to the right of the semi-circle, shields the ball with his back to his opponent's goal. When a defender comes up and challenges him from behind, he turns around him and lobs the ball forward towards the penalty-kick spot as a White teammate #9 runs after the ball through the middle of the field.

As the ball starts coming down in the middle of the penalty area, three (3) players make a run for it: (1) the Goalkeeper as he comes out of the goal-line, (2) a retreating defender as he follows the descending flight of the ball and (3) White attacker #9. The three players arrive at the ball at the same time. The defender seems to shield the ball for his keeper to catch it or punch it out of the penalty area. However, White attacker #9 gets there barely ahead of the defender with the intention of playing the ball first. White #9 stretches and contacts the ball with his arm, just before the Goalkeeper has a chance to catch or punch the ball away.

After contacting the attacker's arm, the ball first hits the Goalkeeper's head and then lands in front of White #9 who kicks the ball into the net as the Goalkeeper collides with the defender and losses track of the ball.

The lead AR looks for the Referee immediately after the ball hit the net and finds him standing inside the semi-circle. The Referee is looking at him and is ready to point at the middle of the field for a kick-off restart.

Assuming that both ARs have seen this play as described, are they "required" to get involved? If so, why? What involvement criterion would they be applying? Who should be the first to get involved, and how he/she should do it? How and when should the other AR get involved?

In your analysis of this incident, consider the following two cases: (1) Referee and ARs are not using an electronic device to communicate and (2) they are using any electronic device to communicate.

Notes:

Without electronic communication: Assuming that the Leading AR is **100% sure** about a deliberate handling by Attacker #9 and sensing, after making eye contact with the Referee, that he/she has not seen the contact based on his/her posture and apparent next hand-signal ready to point at mid-field for a kick-off restart, **YES**, the Leading AR is required to get involved. His/her involvement would be based on both Criterion #1 ("Game Critical Decision - Misconduct") and Criterion #6 ("Referee's Off-Position – Wrong Angle of View"). Because of its nature against the spirit of the game, the Leading AR should suggest that the infraction deserves to be punished with a caution (yellow card), in addition to a direct free kick (DFK) for the defending team. Mechanics: The Leading AR should "**stand at attention with the flag held straight down at the side**" and preferably in the left hand for a defending team's DFK restart. Additionally, the Leading AR should inform the Referee that this should be considered a cautionable offense by **placing his/her right hand on the chest** (subtle hand-signal commonly accepted by most Referees for a caution). The AR must be ready to give details of the infraction (i.e., type of infraction, player to be cautioned) if the Referee decides to approach him/her.

Assuming that the Trailing AR is **100% sure** of the infraction, if the Leading AR has not seen the deliberate handling by Attacker #9, the Trailing AR must get involved. Mechanics: He/she should raise the flag to call the Referee's attention, *before the kick-off is taken*, and hand-signal him/her for a 1-on-1 chat to inform what happened and provide his/her suggestions for handling the incident.

With electronic communication - Mechanics: Under the same above-mentioned assumptions, the Leading AR should do the same as described above as he/she verbally informs the Referee through the electronic device: "*No goal, White #9 handling, should be cautioned, direct free kick for defense*".

Assuming that the Trailing AR is **100% sure** of the infraction, if the Leading AR has not seen the deliberate handling by Attacker #9, the Trailing AR should contact the Referee, *before the kick-off is taken*, to verbally inform him/her through the electronic device: "*No goal, White #9 handling, should be cautioned, direct free kick for defense*".

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Case Study No. 2

ANSWER

White midfielder #6 crosses the ball on the ground, from the right side of the field, into the middle of the Blue penalty area. Blue defender #14 beats White striker #9 to the ball and clears it but with a short kick.

The ball is trapped by White attacker #8 at the penalty-area line, to the right of the arc, who starts to make a short run right over the 18-yard line trying to get a better angle to shoot on goal. However, a slide tackle from Blue defender #2 contacts White #8's right foot and brings him down before he has the chance to shoot.

Although the Referee is about 25 yards from the challenge and on the other side of the field, he recognizes the foul and blows the whistle for the infraction. However, he does not give any hand-signal. As he approaches the spot of the foul, he makes eye-contact with the Leading AR.

What should the Leading AR do when the infraction occurs? What involvement criterion would the Leading AR be applying? What are the recommended mechanics and signals that the Leading AR should use to communicate effectively with the Referee? Should the Trailing AR get involved?

Notes:

Mechanics: When the Referee calls the foul, the Leading AR **should stand still even with the penalty-area line where the contact occurred**. There is no "required" flag signal for the foul since the Referee made the call, unless he/she specifically requested that immediate support from the Leading AR at the pre-game instruction meeting. However, when the Referee makes eye-contact with the Leading AR, while approaching the spot of the foul, he/she is looking for the Leading AR to confirm the location of the infraction. That is when the Leading AR should be "**holding the flag across the lower body to indicate that the infraction was committed by the defense inside its penalty area**" so the Referee will be able to make the penalty kick decision without any doubt. The Leading AR would be applying Criterion #1 ("*Game Critical Decision – Foul Inside the Penalty Area*"). Once the Referee makes the decision and points at the penalty kick mark, the Leading AR should move briskly to the goal-line and take a position at the T-intersection of the penalty-area line and the goal line, facing the Blue goal.

In this case, it is not recommended for the Trailing AR to get involved. Since he/she is far away from the contact and has a poor angle of view, the Trailing AR would not be able to confirm with 100% certainty the location of the foul.

If the AR is electronically connected with the Referee, he/she must follow the Referee's pre-game instructions when dealing with this type of infractions. However, since this is a "*Game Critical Decision*", a concise verbal confirmation from the Leading AR would be recommended and appropriate, such as "*Foul on the line - PK - Blue #2 yellow card*".

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Case Study No. 3

ANSWER

The Red team is playing the ball on the right side of the field, near the half-way line, trying to build an attack on that flank. Red attacker #11, with his back to the White goal, is getting ready to receive the ball near the 18-yard line, tightly marked from behind by White defender #16. Earlier in the game, Red #11 and White #16 had an altercation which the Referee managed by speaking to both of them during a stoppage in play.

Suddenly, the Red team changes the direction of attack and crosses the ball to the center circle shifting the Referee's attention in that direction. At that moment, Red attacker #11 turns towards the defender and deliberately elbows him in the face which sends him to the ground. This happens right in front of AR2 who sees the contact.

AR2 is not using an electronic device to communicate with the Referee. What involvement criterion should the AR apply? What should AR2 do considering that the ball is being played on the other side of the field? What mechanics and communication steps should AR2 follow to manage this situation? Is there a need for the AR1 to get involved? If so, when he should do so? How different should be AR2's management of the incident if he had been using an electronic device to communicate with the Referee?

Notes:

Since AR2 witnesses the elbow in the face and is 100% sure that it is deliberate, he must get involved based on Criterion #1 (*"Game Critical Decision – Misconduct – Send Off"*) and Criterion #2 (*"Off-the-Ball Incident"*), regardless of where the ball is being played.

Mechanics: Assuming that the AR2 is not electronically connected with the Referee, he should look at the Referee to see if he has seen the incident. Assuming that the Referee has not seen it, the AR2 should immediately raise the flag, and yell at the Referee if needed, to call his attention. This is when the AR1 may also need to get involved and mirror the AR2 flag, if the Referee is facing him, unaware of the AR2 raised flag.

Once the Referee sees and acknowledges the flag by stopping play with the whistle, the AR2 should wiggle the flag for the infraction, give the direction of the re-start for the White team and hand-signal the Referee for a 1-on-1 chat. At that time, the AR2 should inform the Referee about Red #11's violent conduct and suggest his send-off.

If the AR2 is electronically connected with the Referee, he should verbally communicate and alert the Referee about an off-the-ball violent behavior. Once the Referee acknowledges the AR2's message and stops play with the whistle, AR2 should follow the mentioned-above mechanics while informing him what he saw and his recommendation to manage the incident in a detailed but concise manner: *"Red #11 elbowed White #16 in the face, violent conduct, should be sent off, direct free kick for defense right outside the penalty area"*.