



Reminder of some additional instructions to be applied in UEFA matches

(Please refer to the Laws of the Game and to UEFA competitions regulations)

Celebration of Goal

A player must be cautioned when:

- in the opinion of the referee, he makes gestures which are pro-vocative, derisive or inflammatory;
- he climbs on to a perimeter fence to celebrate a goal;
- he removes his shirt over his head or covers his head with his shirt.
- he covers his head or face with a mask or other similar item.

Leaving the field of play to celebrate a goal is not a cautionable offence but it is essential that the players return to the field of play as soon as possible.

Players must also not reveal undershirts that contain or display any form of slogan or advertising. The basic compulsory equipment must not contain any political, religious or personal statements. However, referees should note that removing a jersey to reveal slogans or advertising is not a cautionable offence, but the player will be sanctioned by the competition organiser.

Referees are expected to act in a preventative manner and to exercise common sense in dealing with the celebration of a goal.

Half-time / break before extra time

The half-time interval lasts 15 minutes. If extra time is required, there will be a five-minute break between the end of normal time and the start of extra time. As a rule, the players remain on the field of play during this five-minute break, and at half time during extra time, at the discretion of the referee.

Liquid Refreshments

Players are entitled to take liquid refreshments during a stoppage in the match but only on the touchline. It is not permitted to throw plastic water bottles, bags or any other water containers onto the field.

Jewellery

Referees are reminded that, in accordance with Law 4, players may not wear any kind of jewellery. If it is dangerous it must be removed. It cannot be taped.

Indication of Additional Time Allowed

Fourth officials are reminded that when, on the instruction of the referee, the **minimum** additional time to be allowed at the end of each half is being indicated, this indication should only be made at the end of the final minute in each period of play.

The allowance for time lost is at the discretion of the referee. Referees are reminded that they must allow at least the full additional time indicated and not stop play before this time expires. If substitution(s), assessment of injury to players, removal of injured players from the field of play for treatment, time wasting or any other delay occurs during the additional time, the referee must make allowance for this time lost but it will not be indicated by the fourth official.

Management of Injured Players

The Laws of the Game are clear that the referee should only stop play if a player is seriously injured and that players should not be treated on the field of play. The referee should assume sole responsibility for stopping the match and players should not be encouraged to put the ball out of play. Players who do so should not expect the ball to be returned to them by their opponents at the restart of play.

Referees must observe the following instructions below when dealing with injured players:

- Play is allowed to continue until the ball is out of play if a player is, in the referee's opinion, not seriously injured.
- Play is stopped immediately if, in the referee's opinion, a player is seriously injured.
- **After questioning the injured player**, the referee authorises one or, at most, two doctors to enter the field to assess the injury and to arrange the player's safe and swift removal from the field.
- Stretcher bearers should only enter the field of play with a stretcher following a signal from the referee.
- The referee should ensure that an injured player is safely removed from the field of play.
- A player is not allowed to be treated on the field, unless the injury is exceptionally serious and may be made worse by the player being moved.
- A player bleeding from a wound must leave the field of play and may not return until the referee is satisfied that the bleeding has stopped. A player cannot wear clothing with blood on it.
- If the referee has authorised the doctors to enter the field, the player must leave the field, either on the stretcher or on foot. If a player does not comply he is cautioned for unsporting behaviour.

- An injured player may only return to the field of play after the match has restarted and he receives a signal from the referee.
- An injured player may only re-enter the field from the touchline when the ball is in play. When the ball is out of play, an injured player may re-enter from any of the boundary lines.
- The referee alone is authorised to allow an injured player to re-enter the field, whether the ball is in play or not.
- However, the referee may give permission for an injured player to return to the field of play if an assistant referee or the fourth official verifies that the player is ready.
- If play has not otherwise been stopped for another reason, or if an injury suffered by a player is not the result of a breach of the Laws of the Game, the referee restarts play with a dropped ball.
- The referee must allow the full amount of time lost through injury to be played at the end of each period of play.
- When the referee has decided to issue a card to a player who is injured and has to leave the field of play for treatment, the referee must issue the card before the player leaves the field of play.

Exceptions: Exceptions to this ruling are made only:

- for injury to a goalkeeper;
- when a goalkeeper and an outfield player have collided and need immediate attention;
- when players from the same team collide and need immediate attention;
- when a severe injury has occurred e.g. swallowed tongue, concussion, broken leg etc.



UEFA Referee Committee technical recommendations

After discussions between the UEFA Referees Committee and referees and assistant referees attending UEFA referee courses, it was felt that following advice would reinforce the uniform interpretation and application of the Laws of the Game.

Correct decision-making; Fouls and consequences

The following criteria have been established to determine the seriousness of an offence and when an offence prevents an obvious goal-scoring opportunity or stops a promising attack (as well as the appropriate punishment in such situations).

Determining the seriousness of offences

In determining the seriousness of an offence (such as kicking, tripping, jumping at, striking, pushing, charging an opponent), referees are 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;
- Direction of the feet and tackling with studs/sole;
- Is a player endangering the safety of the opponent?

Particular emphasis should be placed on the elimination of challenges where a player gives no consideration to the safety and welfare of an opponent, including when contact is made with the ball and opponent at speed. Referees must take firm action when they identify uncontrolled physical challenges made at speed and without thought or consideration for the possible consequences and safety of the opponent. When judging the element of intent or malice, referees should be especially alert to the direction of the tackler's feet and any use of studs.

A tackle may still be considered as reckless (or even involving excessive force) even though the ball is played. Where contact is made with the ball and opponent at speed and without consideration for the potential danger to the opponent, it should be punished appropriately – normally with a yellow card and, in cases of serious foul play, with a red card.

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 a red card.

If a player uses excessive force or endangers the safety of an opponent, it does not matter whether the tackle is from behind, the front or from the side.

Referees are reminded that they must allow hard/fair challenges, and only punish unfair actions, but it must not be forgotten that a player who exaggerates the effect of a challenge in order to have an opponent punished more severely is guilty of unsporting behaviour.

Circumstances

In addition to determining of the seriousness of an offence, referees must take into account the circumstances (including position on the field of play) 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 should be used to determine if an offence denied an obvious goal-scoring opportunity:

- Possibility to control the ball.
- Position of the attacker.
- Overall direction of movement (the attacker and ball).



- Distance to the goal.
- Position of the defenders / goalkeeper.

• Was the attack very likely to produce a clear goal scoring opportunity had it not been stopped by an offence punishable by a free kick (or a penalty kick)?

The following criteria should be used to determine 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?

There is no difference if an obvious goal-scoring opportunity is unfairly denied by a goalkeeper or an outfield player.

Other unfair actions (holding, handling the ball...)

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 given a yellow card for unsporting behaviour if the offence was blatant e.g:

- blatantly prevents the opponent gaining possession of the ball or taking up an advantageous position
- prevents a promising attacking move to develop

When the offence denies an obvious goal-scoring opportunity the offender must be sent-off.

Offences committed when ball out of play

Offences can be committed when ball is in play or out of play. In both cases, the offenders must be punished according to the nature / seriousness of the offence. If an offence occurs when ball is out of play, the offender must still be punished according to the seriousness of the offence, only the circumstances of the offence will not be taken into account (since promising attack or obvious goal-scoring opportunity actually never occurred).

Physical Contacts (use of hands/arms)

Football is a sport in which physical contact is a natural part of the game and only unfair physical contact should be punished.

In order to achieve greater consistency criteria have been established to help referees distinguish between fair contact and punishable offences.

A referee's judgement should take into account the following criteria:

- Did the defender unfairly hinder or impede the movement of the attacker by his hand/arm contact?
- Did this contact negatively influence the advance of the attacker or the progress of the team attack?
- Was this contact designed to hinder (or was it accidental)?
- Did the defender use his hands/arms to clearly restrict the chosen position of the attacker on the pitch?
- Did the attacker initiate the illegal hand/arm contact?
- Did the attacker use the defender's body contact to try to deceive the referee and gain a free kick or penalty kick?

If after examining all criteria, a referee decides:

- unfair physical contact (holding, pushing...) - a free kick/penalty kick is awarded.
- the attacker attempted to deceive the referee - the simulation must be punished with a yellow card for unsporting behaviour and play restarted with an indirect free kick to the opposing team.

Attention is drawn to the fact that the initiator (first offender) of unfair physical contact may be an attacker or a defender. If both players use unfair physical contact, the initiator (first offender) is punished by a free kick/penalty kick to the opposing team. In addition, both players can be given a disciplinary sanction.

Illegal challenges with hands/arms

Improved concentration, enhanced scrutiny and greater awareness should make referees and assistant referees alert to the possible occurrence of illegal challenges with hands/arms. By focusing not only on feet/legs in challenges, referees will be able to identify those strong, unfair physical contacts with elbows and arms which must be punished appropriately and consistently.

Attention is drawn to the particular danger caused by a player jumping near an opponent and intentionally extending his arm in an unnatural manner (e.g. causing danger with the movement of his elbow).

Referees should be aware of their responsibility to protect players from unfair play by ensuring that any challenge involving excessive force (and therefore endangering the safety of an opponent) must be considered as serious foul play and result in a red card.

Elbows/arms used deliberately as a weapon against an opponent are, of course, included in this category.

Illegal use of the Arms prior to corner kicks/free kicks

The illegal use of the arms, particularly prior to the taking of corner kicks and free kicks near goal, has become increasingly apparent.

Referees should be pro-active prior to play re-starting at a corner kick or free kick and they should be clearly seen to take preventive action. Conflict can be avoided by taking early preventative action e.g. when players are jostling for positions in or near the penalty area. Players identified should be isolated and given a clear public warning. Where possible referees should use their assistants to ensure the ball does not enter the field of play until he gives a signal for the game to be re-started.



It is essential that any similar misconduct after a referee's initial preventive actions is dealt with firmly:

- Before the ball is in play it should result in either a yellow card or a red card depending upon the seriousness of the misconduct.
- After the ball is in play referees must deal very firmly with continued holding, pushing etc. by awarding a free kick/penalty kick depending upon which team commits the offence. In appropriate cases, further disciplinary sanctions may also be necessary.

Considerable improvement has been noticed recently and strict action has been taken. However, the referees are reminded to continue to take strict action against holding, pulling and pushing within the penalty area and to apply the recommended procedure!

Illegal use of the Body

There is a growing trend of the illegal use of the body to halt a promising attack or prevent a player moving to receive a pass from a teammate. While it is pleasing to note that there are fewer fouls involving trips or shirt pulling designed to stop attacks, many attacking movements are halted by the illegal use of the body ("bodycheck"). In all cases where a promising attack is unfairly stopped in this manner, referees are reminded that a yellow card for unsporting behaviour should be given in addition to the free kick/penalty kick. Where the illegal use of the body involves excessive force, violence or brutality, then, in accordance with the Laws of the Game, a red card must result.

Penalty kicks

Referees are reminded that the Laws of the Game now state that:

"Feinting in the run-up to take a penalty kick to confuse opponents is permitted as part of football. However, feinting to kick the ball once the player has completed his run-up is considered an infringement of Law 14 and an act of unsporting behaviour for which the player must be cautioned."

This applies to penalty kicks during the game and also penalty kicks at the end of the game to decide the outcome of the match.

Simulation

Referees are reminded that simulating actions, intended to deceive the referee, committed anywhere on the field of play must be punished with a yellow card for unsporting behaviour.

Acts of simulation to deceive the referee may occur:

- when there is **no contact** between players;
- when a player **uses** a slight contact with an opponent;
- when a player **initiates** contact with an opponent;
- when a player **anticipates** a possible contact from an opponent.

Unfortunately, there has been an increase in this type of misbehaviour by players making the task of the referee more difficult. Referees must remain alert to these unsporting actions and punish offenders strictly to eliminate simulation from the game. When simulation occurs it is not acceptable for it to be recognised but then go unpunished.

However, where the players' actions are not intended to deceive the referee they should not be considered as simulation and play should be allowed to continue.

Handball Considerations

Although football is a game in which players constantly move their arms and hands as a natural part of their movement, 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 arms in a "natural" position?
- Does the player want to "make himself bigger" by using his arms?
- Does the player try to *avoid* the ball striking his hand?
- Distance the ball travelled before striking the player's 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 should also consider possible additional circumstances and consequences, e.g. how and where did the offence occur (stopped a promising attack? denied an obvious goal scoring opportunity?) and they must then punish fully in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

Incidents involving players' reactions/confrontations

Confrontation between players

Referees should ensure offenders are punished uniformly. There is a clear benefit in going quickly to the point of conflict and being seen to take immediate disciplinary action (yellow card, red card as appropriate).

It has been noted that when a referee does not go quickly to the location of the incident, reactions and retaliations often follow and the problem escalates.

If it is not possible to prevent the escalation of a confrontation between players immediately, the referee should observe what happens in detail and he should avoid being physically involved in separating fighting players.

Physical contact by a referee or assistant referee when intervening between players should normally be avoided. Strong use of the whistle might be helpful, but shouting at players should also be avoided.

Referees should not only punish the initial offender(s) where the offence warranted it (recklessness, brutality), but also players involved in further confrontation. The main aggressor(s) should be punished appropriately and it is recommended that **at least one player from each team is cautioned**. Yellow cards are not considered sufficient punishment where fighting (excessive physical contact etc) is involved. Any player approaching or joining such an incident from some distance must be identified and cautioned.

One assistant should monitor and record events and the other assistant should remain close to the referee. The fourth official should maintain his position between the technical areas while also monitoring the situation.

The referee and assistant referee(s), and 4th official if necessary, should communicate with each other before the match re-starts.

Referees should not allow time-wasting and ensure the match re-starts as quickly as possible.



Confrontation with the Referee – Undermining the Referee's Authority

The UEFA President has endorsed the UEFA Respect campaign encouraging all people involved in the game to respect the roles of each other. With this in mind, referees are expected to maintain respect and to punish behaviour which is designed to undermine the referee's authority.

According to the Laws of the Game, players who show dissent to the referee or assistant referee by word or action **must be cautioned**.

Players express dissent or undermine the referee's authority in many ways, such as:

- by gestures or by running towards the referee or assistant referee in protest
- by crowding around the referee (mass protest / mobbing) - in this case it is expected that at least one player is given a yellow card
- by verbally or physically demanding a yellow card for the opponent

Referees should gain full respect and maintain it throughout the game.

For this purpose the referees should:

- express strong personality if player(s) show first signs of disagreement;
- administer a caution if they consider the player's action as dissent;
- administer a caution to a player who requests a yellow or red card for an opponent

A timely caution may have a preventative effect and stop other players showing dissent.

UEFA expects referees to deal firmly with dissent and the offenders to be cautioned.

UEFA is determined to stop dissent and the harassment of referees on and off the pitch.

Dealing with mass protests ('mobbing')

When managing heated situations (such as mass protests/confrontations) the referee must remain calm and focussed. He should try to defuse/calm the situation by quickly identifying the main protestor/aggressor, who should then be conducted to (and isolated in) a neutral zone, away from the group of players, as soon as possible in order to be given a yellow card for his unsporting behaviour. Dialogue should be kept to a minimum; the referee must remain calm, firm, maintain eye contact with the player concerned and be in total command. Where a serious offence, such as unsporting physical contact with the referee, is committed, the red card should be shown with calmness and dignity.

In such situations the nearest assistant referee may assist the referee. The other assistant and fourth official should observe and record the details of the incident. The fourth official must remain between the two technical areas.

Play should be re-started as quickly as possible. The time lost by the delay must be allowed in the normal way.



Communicating and Managing

Positive body language

It can sometimes be beneficial to use discreet explanatory signals appropriately to clarify an incident not apparently understood by some participants. This is a positive means of communicating with players and gives decisions credibility and conviction e.g. indicating simply that a yellow card is being given for a series of offences (persistently infringing the Laws of the Game) can be useful so that the players realise that the yellow card was not just the final offence.

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

The Technical Area

The fourth official 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. In general, a 'low profile' approach is recommended.

Referees are reminded that one person at a time is allowed to remain at the edge of the Technical Area as long as he acts in a responsible manner.

In case of inappropriate reactions of the person(s) in the technical area, the fourth official should use his personality and try to calm down the person(s) in question. He should avoid becoming involved in confrontation or lengthy conversations with these persons.

However, in cases of irresponsible behaviour the fourth official should inform the referee, during a suitable stoppage in play, who will then issue a public warning to the person(s) concerned (or in more serious circumstances remove this person from the technical area). In cases of repeated irresponsible behaviour, the fourth official should again inform the referee who will then remove the person(s) concerned from the technical area.

In principle, therefore, 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.

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.

Advantage Considerations

Players, coaches and spectators want the game to flow but sometimes allowing advantage can threaten control.

When thinking about the possible use of advantage (or whether to stop play), it is essential that referees consider whether the team offended against would actually benefit from allowing play to continue – "team benefit" – as possession of the ball is not always a benefit for the team. If possible, referees should adopt a "wait and see" approach by delaying the whistle in order to assess whether the non-offending team really has a clear attacking possibility.

However, many teams now practise taking free kicks near their opponents' penalty area, so it is very often of greater team benefit to award a free kick, especially for a physical offence, rather than risk the use of advantage.

Referees should remember that whenever advantage is applied it is important to indicate this immediately by VOICE and the approved ARM SIGNAL so that players are aware that the foul had been seen and not just missed.

There is rarely any advantage 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 attack 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?

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 outweigh the 'team benefit'.

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 (except in the cases of obvious goal-scoring opportunities) and a free kick or penalty should be awarded immediately.

In summary:

- 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 taken 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).

Management at free kicks

The following procedures should benefit the control and management of free kicks:

- Once any disciplinary measures have been dealt with, ensure that the ball is positioned where the offence occurred as quickly as possible.
- If the attacking team has decided not to take a 'quick' free kick, then clearly advise them (*by showing the whistle to the kicker*) that they must wait for a signal. If the kick is taken before the signal the free kick must be retaken in all cases, **regardless of the outcome of the premature kick**. The offending kicker will be given a yellow card.

- Manage and remove any defending players in front of the ball.
- Manage the 'wall' by measuring the distance, not through the wall but to the side and also simultaneously controlling the position of the ball. Any player who refuses to retreat the required minimum distance should be given a yellow card.
- Take up a correct position (monitoring the ball, wall and assistant referee).
- Signal that the free kick may be taken. If the defenders advance from the wall while the kick is being taken, re-take the free kick if a goal is not scored and yellow card the offending player(s).
- Ensure that the ball is placed in same position for the re-take and follow the same procedure.

In cases of misbehaviour of the players in the wall, the referees are advised that after issuing an initial warning any further misbehaviour should be punished by disciplinary sanction i.e. yellow or red card(s) - another warning is not appropriate.



Quick free kick

A free kick may be taken quickly – without the referee's whistle – provided that:

- no disciplinary sanction is to be taken
 - the free kick is taken quickly after play is stopped (i.e. few seconds...)
 - the ball is stationary at the place of the offence
 - the free kick requires no management by the referee
 - the referee has not yet started to control the wall / the opponents to get them back the appropriate distance
- If an opponent deliberately prevents a quick free kick being taken he must be cautioned.

Dangerous play with contact

If a player acts in a dangerous manner and also makes contact with an opponent, the referee should punish the more serious offence, i.e. the contact and thus award a direct free kick. If necessary, disciplinary action should be taken e.g. a yellow card if the challenge is reckless.

Re-entering the field of play

After a player is given a signal by the referee to re-enter the field of play, the player can take part in play immediately.

Referees must carefully take into consideration the position of the ball and other players before signalling for a player to re-enter the field.

Disciplinary sanctions against substitutes

When taking disciplinary sanctions against a substitute, the referee must give a clear indication by using a yellow or red card.

Positioning

Good positioning and a side-on view are crucial for optimum judgment of the manner (seriousness) and the circumstances of an offence. The assistant can also often provide valuable information to the referee.

UEFA's top referees recognise the benefit of using a flexible and wide diagonal as recommended by the UEFA Referee Committee. The key principle of positioning (keeping play between referee and assistant referee) should be respected whenever possible, in order to improve the angle from which incidents are viewed, whilst maintaining eye contact with the assistant referee.

At free kicks near the penalty area, the referee should be seen to measure the 9.15m distance and then take a position, in principle to the left and not to the right with the exception of the free kicks near the left side (i.e. he once again moves on to his diagonal or other convenient position to monitor the incidents in the penalty area). It is felt that by taking up this position there is less chance of misjudging or missing incidents.

Identifying offending players

Lack of concentration or being too hasty can cause mistakes in **identifying offending players**. The following procedures should be beneficial when issuing disciplinary sanctions:

- Isolate and identify the player(s) to be disciplined
- All four match officials should note the identity of the player and check if the player has already been cautioned

Play should only be re-started once these procedures have been completed.



Co-operation: The Team of Match Officials

Pre-match discussions

Only by practising techniques and ensuring that every member of the team of officials has a common knowledge and interpretation of the Laws can teamwork improve. 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 instructions and discussions, and is open for questions and the team agree the conclusions.

Teams of officials are reminded of the benefit and necessity of detailed pre-match discussions concerning the role of each member so that there is no doubt about their duties and responsibilities.

Referees should help prepare assistant referees and the 4th official to co-operate fully in a match by giving detailed pre-match instructions even if the team of officials has worked together on many earlier occasions. Following the standard approach will ensure greater consistency in the application of the Laws of the Game and, in particular, with offside. As the leader of the team in any match, the referee must accept the final responsibility for decisions taken.

Efficient communication from the referee to his team before and during the match is essential (improved awareness).

Eye contact and mutual awareness with two-way communication is essential.

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

Offside

Assistant referees should only signal for offside when absolutely sure about an offside offence. If an assistant referee is not totally sure about an offside offence the flag should not be raised (i.e. the benefit of any doubt must be given to the attacking team).

In deciding whether an attacking player is nearer to the opponent's goal line than the second last defender, consideration should be given to the position of the attacker's head, feet and body in respect to that of the second last defender i.e. the attacker's arms should not be considered.

To ensure correct judgement of offside offences, an assistant referee should not raise the flag but use the "wait and see" technique to consider the following criteria:

- a. Movement of the ball (direction, speed, distance, any deflection, etc.)
- b. Involvement of the player in active play by:
 - interfering with play or
 - interfering with an opponent or
 - gaining an advantage.

Referees and assistant referees are reminded of the definitions in the "Interpretation of the Laws of the Game and guidelines for the referees" in the Laws of the Game booklet.

"The definitions of elements of involvement in active play are as follows:

- Interfering with play means playing or touching the ball passed or touched by a team-mate.
- Interfering with an opponent means preventing an opponent from playing or being able to play the ball by clearly obstructing the opponent's line of vision or movements or making a gesture or movement which, in the opinion of the referee, deceives or distracts an opponent.

- Gaining an advantage by being in that position means playing a ball that rebounds to him off a goal post or the crossbar having been in an offside position or playing a ball that rebounds to him off an opponent having been in an offside position."

Referees and assistants should be aware of the following situations which fall within the category of "making a gesture or movement which, in the opinion of the referee deceives or distracts an opponent":

- A player in an offside position, by his manner and direction of movement, on or near the path of the ball interferes with an opponent by contributing to / provoking the opponent's uncontrolled clearance of the ball or other action).
- A player in an offside position and clearly in the goalkeeper's line of vision (between him and the kicker) interferes with the goalkeeper (distraction).

In connection with interpreting and applying the Offside Law concerning "gaining an advantage by being in that position", assistant referees are reminded of their responsibilities to be alert in situations where the ball rebounds from a goal post or cross bar or goalkeeper, to a player who was in an offside position when the ball was last played by his team-mate.

Assistant referees are also reminded that:

- When making judgements concerning offside, it is better to be slightly late and correct, than to be too quick and wrong.
- If a flag signal for offside is given and is not seen immediately by the referee, the assistant referee must keep signalling until it has been recognised or the ball is clearly in control of the defending team (the electronic beep signal is used to alert the referee to the flag signal).
- For very tight judgements where an assistant referee decides "not offside" a discreet hand signal may give valuable support to the referee when the referee makes eye-contact.

In the rare situation where the referee is convinced that a player is in an offside position and involved in active play, and the assistant does not raise his flag, the referee must take the ultimate responsibility to punish the offside offence. Similarly in the rare situation where an assistant raises his flag for an offside offence and the referee is of the opinion that the player is not involved in active play, the referee should acknowledge the flag signal and allow play to continue. Referees must be courageous and not act upon the signal of an assistant referee in cases of obvious error.

Ball out of the field of play

1. Assistant referees are reminded that, whenever the ball leaves the field of play, the flag signal of the assistant referee should show clearly the correct restart and direction. In clear throw-in situations, the assistant referee can directly show the direction (along the whole touch line). But if he has any doubt about the direction, the assistant referee should simply raise his flag, make eye contact with the referee and follow the referee's signal.

On very tight decisions, when the ball stays in play, a discreet hand signal could give valuable support to the referee.

2. Whenever an assistant referee signals the ball out of the field of play (even if players continue to play the ball) he must retain the signal until acknowledged by the referee taking action.
3. When the ball enters a goal:

To confirm a valid goal has been scored, an assistant referee should display clear movement down the touchline towards the centre line. In borderline cases - to signify the ball has completely crossed the goal line - the assistant should raise the flag (but not wave it), seek eye-contact with the referee and only then display clear movement towards the centre line.

If in his opinion a goal has not been scored correctly, the assistant referee should stand still, retaining any signal already given. The referee may then choose to consult further if he needs additional guidance.

Offences

An assistant referee should:

- use a raised flag signal to advise the referee that he has seen a foul committed (or unsporting behaviour or violent conduct), in his immediate vicinity or out of the referee's vision. The flag should be unfurled and waved/agitated to distinguish from the signal for offside.
- make eye contact with the referee and raise his flag when he is better positioned than the referee and the referee has not taken any action i.e. it is clear that the referee was unable to identify the offence.

If the assistant referee has additional information concerning the offence for the referee or, if the referee has not seen his flag signal, the communication system or/and electronic beep signal should be used, but only to supplement the flag signal already given.

It should be emphasised that such action by an assistant referee must be taken for all appropriate offences including those committed inside the penalty area.

In other cases discreet help should be given if sought by the referee.

It is also important to remember that:

- Before signalling for an offence, the assistant must determine that the referee would not have applied advantage if he had seen an offence; he should use the "wait and see" technique and make eye contact with the referee.
- If a flag signal for any offence is not seen immediately by the referee, the assistant referee must keep signalling until he is acknowledged by the referee or he recognises a clear advantage to the team against which the offence has been committed.

- Eye-contact and discreet hand signals from an assistant referee may be helpful in passing information to a referee e.g. type of offence, next action etc. This would reduce the need for him to come across to the assistant referee for consultation.
- Where direct consultation is necessary between the referee and assistant referee, the information should include, as concisely as possible, exactly what happened, which players were involved, the precise location, recommended action and the re-start of play. It is recommended that in such cases the assistant referee advances towards the referee by 4 to 5 metres.
- During consultation, the assistant referee and referee should both face the field of play. It is usually appropriate to avoid the consultation being heard or understood by others.
- Offences of violent conduct seen and signalled by an assistant referee must be acted upon in accordance with the Laws of the Game by the referee. If play has been stopped for the disciplinary action (even if the signal has not been seen immediately and play has continued), the restart must also be in accordance with the Laws (free kick / penalty kick). However, if the assistant referee's signal is not seen immediately and play has been re-started for a subsequent situation only the appropriate disciplinary action can be taken against the offending player.
- Where a referee seeks guidance from an assistant referee concerning the exact location of an offence near the boundary of the penalty area the action of the assistant referee should be as follows:
 - a. If the offence is inside the penalty area – the assistant referee moves visibly down the touchline towards the corner flag.
 - b. If the offence is outside the penalty area – the assistant referee stands still having moved to be in line with the edge of the penalty area.



Obvious incorrect disciplinary decision of the referee

If the fourth official and either of the assistant referees are aware that the referee has made an obvious disciplinary error (e.g. two yellow cards to the same player without sending him off; red or yellow card to the wrong player etc), they must intervene immediately (flag and beep or even enter the field of play). It is essential that errors are not made in connection with these responsibilities and the team of match officials must identify clearly offenders to be disciplined and make appropriate written notes at the time.

Control of the 9.15m distance

When a free kick is awarded very close to the touch-line near the assistant referee, the assistant referee may enter the field of play to control the 9.15m distance from the ball. It is recommended that the assistant referee does not physically measure the 9.15m but rather asserts his control from the position of the ball.

Role of 4th officials

As from 1st June 2010, the role of the 4th official has been extended beyond violent conduct, mistaken identity or a second yellow card not resulting in a dismissal. *The Laws of the Game now state: "He assists the referee to control the match in accordance with the Laws of the Game. The referee, however, retains the authority to decide on all points connected with play."*

It is important that the referee in his pre-match instructions establishes what assistance is expected from the 4th official.

Assistant Referee Positioning

Free kick close to the penalty area

At free kicks close to the penalty area, the assistant referee should position himself in line with the second last defender (controlling the offside), but also with an awareness of the goal line. The referee should control the ball and the wall.

After an offside

Ideally, after a free kick for offside has been awarded the assistant referee who gave the signal should position himself in line with the place where the ball should be positioned to re-start the game. He should then immediately take up a position to judge offside (level with the second-last defender), which is his priority.

Goal kick and goal clearance

For goal kicks and when the goalkeeper is in possession of the ball inside his own penalty area, it is advised that the assistant occasionally checks that the ball is correctly positioned or that the goalkeeper does not cross the 16 metre line before releasing the ball from his hands. This should be done in convenient situations (e.g. second last defender near the penalty area). Judgment of offside from subsequent play is the priority.

Corner kick

For corner kicks, it is recommended that the assistant involved takes a position behind the flag in line with the goal line.

Penalty kick

For a penalty kick awarded during the normal course of play, the assistant should be on the goal line where it meets the penalty area boundary line.



Referee Programme

For kicks from the penalty mark to determine the winner of a match, one assistant should be positioned on the goal line where it meets the goal area boundary line, with the other assistant controlling the players within the centre circle. The referee must determine and agree the role of the assistant referee on the goal line and his own role in detecting any forward movement from the goal line by the goalkeeper. Referees and assistant referees are also reminded that the "inactive" goalkeeper should remain positioned on the goal line where it meets the penalty area boundary line, behind the assistant referee.

Flag technique

It is recommended that an assistant referee holds the flag in his hand nearest to the field of play by switching hands whenever he changes his direction of movement so that the flag is always visible to the referee.

When the assistant referee raises his flag for a foul or misconduct, he must use the hand that will be used to indicate the direction of the free kick.

It is recommended that UEFA member associations instruct new assistant referees in this way.

The referee observer shall continue to assess the performance of the assistant referee according to the accuracy of his decisions.

Throw-In responsibility

Assistant referees are reminded that the responsibility for ensuring a correctly-taken throw-in is shared by referee and assistant referee, with the referee normally checking the correct throwing action with the hands and the assistant referee observing compliance with the Laws of the Game in respect of the position of the feet (on or behind the line and touching the ground). However, referees have an overall responsibility to act accordingly if, from their position, they identify a foul throw.