

EDITION #5

Refereeing without Qualified Assistant Referees

Introduction

- There is a FIFA approved system of controlling a game that is known as the Diagonal System of Control
- This relies on a Referee on the field and 2 Assistant Referees on the sidelines
- This system is based on the use of certified and trained Assistant Referees (formerly Linesmen)
- A majority of local games are, however, without qualified ARs
- The AR you get (if you get one) is usually a parent, friend, player, etc.
- This lesson plan outlines some tips / methods of Refereeing without qualified ARs

Before the Game

- When you introduce yourself before the game, go early and bring a flag
 - REASON: you find out who is going to be your AR
 - REASON: gives the team time to round someone up
 - REASON: gives you time to talk to them and to seek the co-operation of the players before the start of the match in a friendly and polite manner.
- Get teams positioned on opposite sides of the field
 - REASON: You will have help on both sides of the field
 - REASON: It keeps teams and team supporters apart in the event they do not get along.
- Put the teams at or near the half way line
 - REASON: It is easier to control the substitutions. You will be able to visually make eye contact with the coaches and players when a substitution is being requested (you will know where to instinctively look when a verbal request is made).
 - REASON: The halfway line is where subs must enter the field at your permission, anyhow.
 - REASON: It will allow for quick substitutions to be made and to allow the game to flow better.

- Discuss how much you want to delegate to the ARs
 - REASON: You will want to find out how much they know. Perhaps quiz them on the laws like ball out of play and offside, the substitution procedure. Based on this you will have to decide how much responsibility you want to give them. There is a wide range of possibilities for this:
 - 1) Limit their responsibility to calling the ball out of bounds (side line and end line) and giving the appropriate direction
 - 2) Call the out of bounds situations and assisting with substitutions.
 - 3) Call out of bounds, assist with substitutions and indicate when players offside.
 - 4) If you feel your assistant is quite capable ask to also assist with indicating when it is felt there is a foul involved by a player and to flag accordingly – the final decision still rests with the referee whether to stop play or allow play to proceed.
 - REASON: You must demonstrate you are the Referee and the one in Charge, with the final say

- Instruct the ARs to stay with “their own” club’s defense, both halves
- REASON: It is “safer”. It promotes tight offside calls. It is better to have a bad offside call than a bad goal call.
- REASON: If there is a controversial call against the defense, it is someone from their club who made the call. It will be easier for the defensive to accept it, if the controversial call is made by someone from their club.
- REASON: There are usually 3 or 4 defenders and 1 or 2 attackers. It is better to have 1 or 2 players complain, rather than 3 or 4, should there be a bad call.
- REASON: If Team A provides an incompetent AR, and Team B provides a competent AR, why should Team B suffer for a half.
- Otherwise, you may instruct the ARs to stay at the same line, both halves
- REASON: Will prevent the volunteer AR from being in front of the opposition bench and agitating issues in a tight game or controversial disagreements.

During the Game

Open (Free) Play:

- Moving around the field to remain in contact with the play will require a good level of fitness.

- Fitness is very important and you have a responsibility to yourself and the teams to remain fit for the matches.
- There are two systems normally chosen to patrol the field with two assistants:
 - The linear system, which involves the referee patrolling the center portion of the field, with little variation in lateral movement. This keeps your movement more restricted, but is useful to be in better position to accurately monitor the decisions which the AR may make on off-side and when the ball leaves the field of play.
 - The diagonal system, which requires more fitness and puts you in closer proximity to the play and players in the corners opposite the volunteer ARs. You cover more ground and are more present with the players and closer to much of the play. This, however, can be a disadvantage as it sometimes places the referee further away from the ARs and the play, and can result in disagreements on judgment calls for balls out of play and infractions.

Off-side positioning:

- Judgment of the off-side will probably be the most difficult task for the referee w/o qualified ARs.
- As play switches from end to end it is impossible to keep up with the play to check on the accuracy of the ARs.
- If you have ascertained that your volunteer AR is capable of making the judgment call, then you can rely on their call.
- If not, you will still have to use our own judgment to determine if play needs to be stopped.
- If there is any doubt, err on the side of caution. Give the “benefit” to the defending team. A strong whistle and strong body language may help to convince the attacking players that the correct decision has been made and so reduce the probability of appeals.

Ball out of play:

- Balls which leave the field of play at the ends of the field may be difficult to assess if they barely cross completely over the end line, with or without qualified ARs
- Positioning yourself to keep up with the attack is important and the straight line or linear system of patrol may prove your best option
- Be prepared to make a call without the support of an AR.

- Balls which leave the field over the sides of the field are usually best to be judged by your AR and keeping up with the play is important to give players confidence of your decision.
- Be sure your AR knows that the ball has to be completely over the line to be considered out.

Free kicks:

- Be aware that sometimes, regardless of where the FK is taken from, you may have to be present where the kick is taken from and where it lands. You cannot rely on your AR to manage the restart area, therefore, be prepared to handle this. Take your time. Manage the restart area first, then go down field and administer the drop zone, then blow your restart whistle. Don't rush.
- Kicks taken from the defensive third, or even the middle third, which will drop in the middle third should see the referee be around the drop zone. You want to be able to be in position for fouls and be able to react if the ball is propelled further down field. Read the play.
- Kicks taken which will result in a shot on goal or the ball dropping into the goal area should see the referee position themselves near the goal area to view any challenges with players and to be in position to judge for awarding a goal if the ball crosses completely over the goal line between the posts, and for awarding a goal or corner as appropriate. Don't expect assistance from the AR.
- Kicks taken from the attacking third (which are directed at the goal) may result in a defensive wall being set up. Position yourself so you can see that the players are respecting the 10 yards from the ball prior to the kick, and you are able to move quickly towards goal if a shot is taken. Use of your whistle to restart play is a good tool here to indicate start of play and to indicate to the players you are ready for the kick to be taken.

Throw-Ins:

- Position yourself down field of the thrower, to react to where the ball may land and where the challenges occur.

Corner kicks:

- Position yourself at or near the end line and just inside the goal area to be close to where most of the players line up.
- This also allows you to be able to see if the ball crosses the end line,

- You will be close to the goal,
- You will be able to be seen by the players (preventive refereeing)

Goal kicks:

- Use your judgment again on the skill level of the players.
- If they are long kickers, move well down field prior to the kick to be in position to respond if the ball runs through, and at the same time to be able to respond to the ball and play changing direction.

Substitution:

- Substitutions can only take place once the referee has been notified by the team wishing to substitute or by the AR.
- Once there is a regular stoppage in play, the referee will hold up the restart to allow the team coach to indicate which player(s) are being taken out.
- Only once the player or players (maximum of two) have left the field of play, can you allow the player(s) who are the substitutes to enter the field.
- The players entering the field of play must do so at the half line.
 - However, if you have players doing the AR responsibilities and they need to get substituted, you can not expect them to enter at the half line as they will enter from where they are standing as an AR at the time of the substitution, once the flag is transferred to their teammate.
- They must also be ready and organized to enter, otherwise, the substitution can not proceed.
- Play is restarted once the referee is satisfied that the substitution procedure has been followed correctly.
- Should players who have just been subbed off, be required to leave the field at the half line?

REASON IN FAVOUR: It definitely allows for much quicker substitutions and reduces the time lost due to substitutions.

REASON AGAINST: You may want greater control over the players entering and leaving, therefore, using the half way line as this point can gives you this luxury

After the Game

- Sincerely thank the ARs who volunteered their time and effort

- Self Assessment (what could you have done different with the ARs)
- Don't forget your flags
- Complete paperwork – make sure you note on the game sheet that Club ARs were used (or whatever the situation was – or not used)