



NISOA 2009 PRESEASON GUIDE

Know the Importance of Yellow and Red

By Bob Sumpter

Have you ever watched a game and felt that the referee should have either cautioned or ejected (NCAA) or disqualified (NFHS) a player but failed to do so? Have you ever watched a game and felt that a referee who cautioned, ejected or disqualified a player should *not* have done so? Have you ever watched a game and were not sure that the referee either used, or did not use, the caution or ejection/disqualification most effectively to both punish and control behavior?

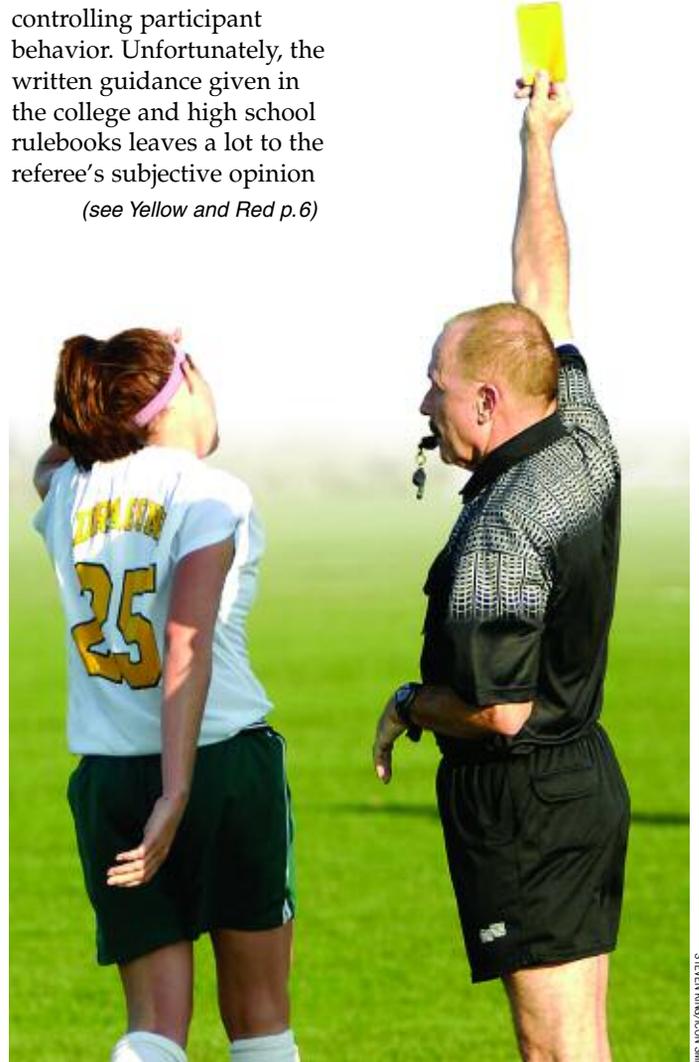
I believe the problem is one of deciding to act — and acting — on an incident that requires a harsh, but correct and required, punishment. I also believe that a related set of problems involve the need to use discretionary judgment, much of which is subjective.

I usually view the game referee's judgments and actions and match them with my own perception of what I would do in a similar situation. You might do the same.

Most referees know that the power to either caution or eject/disqualify is meant to be used primarily in

controlling participant behavior. Unfortunately, the written guidance given in the college and high school rulebooks leaves a lot to the referee's subjective opinion

(see Yellow and Red p.6)



John Kipp, Brunswick Hills, Ohio, uses strong body language to show the yellow card to a Tiffin University player.

Strive for Consistency

By David Cymerman

Referees should deliver actions with the same degree of consistency and quality through the entire 90 minutes. The soccer community expects and demands that all referees' foul recognition abilities be of the same quality. They demand consistency.

Consistency in refereeing is a cry often heard before, during and after the match is

over. Considering there are many games officiated by many different referees having various abilities, consistency is complicated. The ability levels of referees correspond to different levels of demonstrated consistency from match to match. Referees fall into three groups:

1. Referees who, upon seeing a foul, will say to themselves, "What happened?"

(see Consistency p.8)



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Message From the President

By Joe Miller

This is the fifth year in a row that NISOA is publishing a *Preseason Guide*. The first guide was done in-house and totaled four pages with no pictures. Now that we have a great partnership with *Referee*, we have the opportunity to provide the membership with a professional looking publication that has a lot of pertinent information for the upcoming college soccer season. Since there are no rules changes this year, this publication is focusing on key issues that were problems last season — as pointed out by assignors and others.

As president, one of my goals is to get more instructional material to the membership. That includes training more clinicians and assessors at the local level, DVDs, publications and in the future, online training. The *Preseason Guide* is one of those avenues. NISOA has begun the process of training and certifying local chapter clinicians and assessors. Workshops have been held at several locations. It is my goal to have every chapter have

at least one trained and certified clinician and assessor. If your chapter is interested in hosting a training clinic, have the chapter contact e-mail John Van de Vaarst (vandevej@comcast.net) to get all the information needed.

As president, I want the membership to know that if they have concerns or ideas on how to make NISOA stronger, please feel free to contact their chapter president, regional representative or any National officer. Ideas that come to my attention will be reviewed and considered. That does not mean all ideas will become a reality. However, as president, I will ensure that the Executive Board always does what is best for the organization.

Have a great 2009 soccer season! □



COURTESY OF NISOA

Are You Prepared?

The motto of the Boy Scouts is to “Be prepared.” Mike Rottersmann, Tacoma, Wash., shows his preparedness by having a large supply of NISOA jerseys available at the game site. He can match his partners’ length of sleeves and shirt colors to avoid conflicts with both teams.

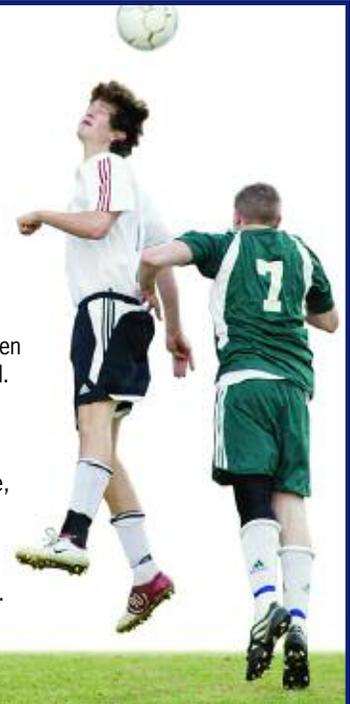
Also notice that his pregame warm-up top is an official NISOA tee. That shows a level of professionalism the teams expect.



DALE GARVEN

Quick Tip

Look where the players are looking. It’s hard to learn to take your eyes off the ball. However, by watching players’ faces and determining what they’re looking at as they contest for the ball, you’ll have an excellent guide to know if they’re playing the ball or playing the opponent. Two opponents jump to head an airborne ball and both have been focusing exclusively on the ball. If the shorter attacker glances several times at the defender and places a hand on the opponent’s hip to create space, it’s an easy call for you — simply because you looked to see what they were looking at as they approached the ball.



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Fitness Workouts to Increase Speed and Endurance

By Greg Dugas

Think of a time at the beginning of last season when you were involved in a match where the players' fitness level outmatched your own. Were you somewhat disappointed? Did you feel a little inadequate? *Sure you did!* I'd like to share two ways to avoid that problem.

There are two ways to be as fit as the players. One is through track workouts and the other is through weight training. There are two types of track workouts to consider. The first is *speed endurance*, which are workouts that include ladders and shuttles. The second is *sprint work*, which involves different types of pyramids. It entails a lot of sprint and recovery work. Working toward shortening the recovery period is the main goal; increasing one's speed comes from the ability to recover.

Below are sprint-and-recovery workouts that have been developed for soccer referees and backed by the NISOA Fitness Program. There are, of course, many others as well.

Sprint Workout Examples

1. 5 X 30 with varying lengths of rest — 10 seconds to one minute — with a total distance of 700 to 800 yards. Sprint 30 yards, jog back and do five repetitions with 10 to 15 seconds rest between each. Rest three to five minutes between sets.

2. A. Shuttle 3 X 30 yards with one-minute rest between sets of four. Rest three minutes.

B. Shuttle 3 X 50 yards with two minutes rest between sets of four. Rest four minutes.

C. Run/sprint 6 X 100 yards with a 110-yard jog or walk for recovery.

3. Shuttle 40 yards, 60 yards, 80 yards with three minutes recovery. Do five sets.

4. A. Sprint 20 yards, jog back with a 15-second rest. Repeat 20 times. Rest three minutes.

B. Sprint 40 yards with a 20-second rest. Repeat 15 times. Rest four minutes.

C. Sprint 60 yards with a 30-second rest. Repeat 10 times.

5. Sprint 80 yards — once; 70 yards — twice; 60 yards — once. Recover 30-60 seconds. Then 50 yards — twice; 40 yards — once. Work up to three sets.

6. Shuttle 20, 40, 60, 80, 100 yard sprint with jog return and repeat up to five times.

Speed Endurance Examples

1. Run 120, 140, 160, 180, 200 yards; jog back to the start and go to the next level. Wait until your pulse drops back to 110 to 120, depending upon your age and condition. Three sets.

2. 6 X 200 yards with five-to-six minute recovery.

3. Run 100, 150, 200, 150, 100 yards with the same distance jog recovery. Do three sets.

Fitness is an important part of being a successful referee. There are a variety of workouts to help you work on your sprinting and speed endurance.

4. A. Shuttle 30, 50, 60 yards to equal 280 yards. Rest three minutes. Repeat four times.

B. Remove the 60-yard distance and repeat at 30 and 50 yards. Repeat four times.

C. Remove the 50-yard distance and run 30 yards four times. Repeat four times.

5. Run 150, 200, 250, 300 yards with full recovery between each run. Do three sets.

6. Sprint 20m; jog 100m; sprint 40m/80m, 60m/60m, 80m/40m, 100m/20m. The second set is a mirror image of the first by sprinting/jogging the following distances: 120/0, 100/20, 80/40, 60/60, 40/80, 20/100.

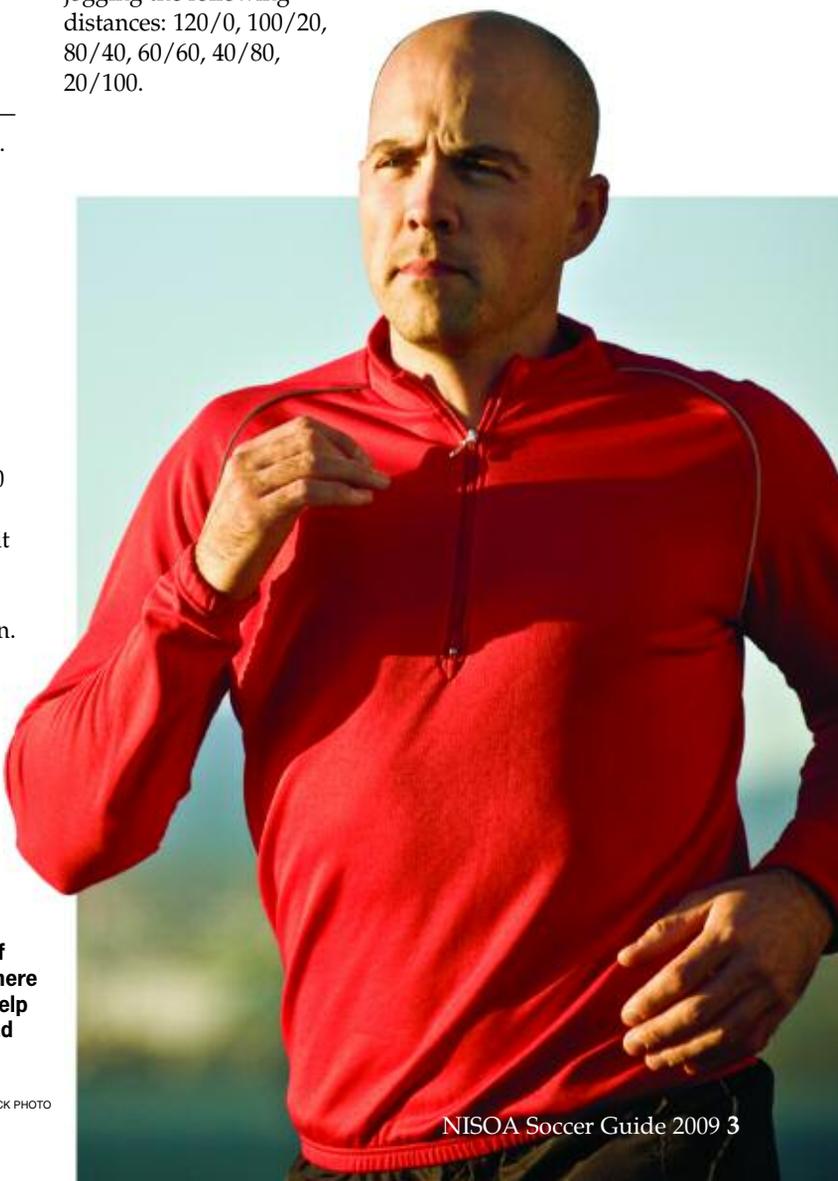
7. Run 200 yards, 150 yards, 120 yards. Recover fully. 150 yards, 200 yards. Work up to three sets.

8. 6 X 120 yards — three sets. Full recovery between sets.

9. 200 yards at maximal effort. Recover four minutes. Repeat four to eight times.

Never do the same type of workout on back-to-back days. Always do your running workout before you do your weight training. All

(see *Workouts p. 11*)



Does That Action Warrant a Card?

By Bob Sumpter

It's useful to consider how to shape your subjective judgments of caution or ejection/disqualification acts in a game. These suggestions can help you make the optimum decisions.

1. When you see an act that might be cause for a yellow or red card, learn to figure out what will happen if you do *not* act. In every game, you've got a field and benches full of players and team personnel who will see how you implement those decisions — and then accept what you will allow as a standard of conduct for the rest of that game. So if you allow dissent from a player, won't others believe that they too will be allowed to

do the same later? If you allow a player to use vulgar or profane language, will you be ready to allow others to do the same? And if you allow a player to hold an opponent's shirt to impede his or her movements, won't others believe they will be allowed to do that? Each time you fail to card, you raise the possibility of seeing that act again used in the game by a factor of 100 percent! Do you really want to encourage that effect?

2. Why not use the card whenever the rules and act require it, such as those acts that require *little* discretionary judgment? Some referees suggest that it influences the "flow or enjoyment of the game." But who is really influencing the

flow, the referee or the participant committing the act? And who's in charge of enforcing the rules?

3. If you card a player when the first rule violation requiring a card occurs, doesn't it show players the behavior limit is being set? After that, consistency will help maintain that standard.

4. Some referees complain that whenever they card players, criticism of their competency by the school comes not only in the rest of that game, but also as follow-up complaints after the game. If criticism comes to you from either team or players during the rest of the game, you need to deal with it as directly and as promptly as the original card — either as dissent or other relevant behavior control. If you have developed your field abilities to uniformly and consistently enforce the behavior rules, postgame criticism will more likely be ignored.

5. If you card players, won't you lose popularity with that school? So what! If a school decides to ask that you *not* be reassigned to its games, aren't there a lot of other school games for which you can be considered? If you are worried about being popular, why be a referee? Only a small number of referees have ever been considered popular by all of the schools that support extracurricular soccer. Don't confuse popularity with respect. The latter is more likely if you do your job competently.

6. A decision *not* to card players when appropriate under the rules only results in unethical behavior. Obviously, you are *not* then enforcing the rules and you

certainly are *not* protecting players against possible injury and unfair play. The unethical behavior comes when you *knowingly* back away from a card when that card should have been used, such as a second caution (i.e., ejection/disqualification).

7. If you once card a player, and then fail to card the next player who commits the same type of offense, there will probably build up — at least for one team, and probably in both — the feeling that you are being biased. While that will not be true, it will create frustration during the balance of the game that may build to greater control problems.

From yellow to red

Following are seven considerations that you might find useful to think about in deciding to move from yellow to red in a game.

1. How many yellows before a red? Over the years, I have seen yellow cards numbered in the double digits without seeing a red card. Yellow cards to that many different players indicated that the use of the cards was not working; their use did not cause behavior to remain at acceptable levels. There is no magic number of yellow cards before it is necessary for the referee to start using the red card to help control behavior. Once a particular player is cautioned, that player is ejected or disqualified if he or she commits another cautionable offense. But a prime concern should be to recognize the point at which the use of the caution is not effectively controlling behavior. It's time to consider

(see *Warrant a Card* p. 15)

Keep Focus on Offside

With intense focus, Chris Wells, Kent, Wash., is looking at the ball in relation to the touchline and watching for illegal contact between the players. Do not allow that play in a concentrated area to draw your focus away from your top priority — offside. In spite of play right off your hip, you've still got to have an awareness of where the second-to-last defender is positioned.



DALE GARNEY

Alternate Officials Play a Critical Role

By John Van de Vaarst

Several conferences are now requiring an alternate official on all games. To some, that appears to be an easy assignment and a great place to watch a competitive game from with little or no responsibility. That is the furthest thing from the facts. The alternate official is a critical part of the officiating team. Any NISOA member assigned that responsibility must take it seriously and perform the duties in a professional manner. To perform the duties, the assigned individual must know what they are. Here is a short summary.

Pregame

The alternate official must arrive at the site at the agreed upon time and be part of the referee team pregame. The responsibilities will vary based on the referee but at a minimum will include being a part of the pregame conference and reviewing those duties with the referee. The alternate official must be ready to become an assistant referee if one of the other officials becomes hurt. Normally, the alternate official will also help with the field inspection, game ball inspection and collecting the rosters from the coaches. Meeting the coaches for the first time is a great opportunity to exhibit professionalism and “set the tone” with the coaches.



Fourth official Daniel Burak (center) observes as referee Bill Dittmar (right) issues a yellow card to Texas A&M assistant coach Phil Stephenson at halftime.

During the game

The alternate official is responsible for maintaining the NISOA-approved alternate official form. That includes tracking substitutions to ensure there are no improper substitutions. Also, making sure the substitutions only enter the field during proper times. *That means that the alternate official must clearly know the NCAA substitution rules.* An improper substitution could lead to a protest being filed. The alternate official must also make sure the substitutions enter and exit according to the NCAA requirements. The substitute is to enter as soon as the referee indicates. The clock must also be observed to see if it is the last five minutes of the game. During that time frame, the clock is to be stopped if the leading team is substituting. Players who leave for an injury or bleeding also become the responsibility of the

alternate official, so that re-entry may occur in a timely manner and within the rules.

During the game, the alternate official has primary responsibility for bench personnel and their actions. The alternate must act in a professional manner and keep the coaches, substitutes, trainers, etc., from having a negative impact on the game. The alternate official must know when to ignore comments and when to step in to prevent problems for the referee. When the alternate official recognizes it is time to step in, they must do so in a manner that will resolve the problem and not escalate

the situation. That requires conflict management and people-management skills. The alternate official must never get into an argument with the coach or discuss the referee’s skills or decisions.

The alternate official must record any cautions and/or ejections. That is a double check, so that after the game, the scorebook will be accurate. In addition, if a player is ejected, the alternate official must ensure that the player leaves the area and does not remain on the bench. That may also require people management skills, since the player may be upset or emotional.

After the game

The alternate official should meet the referee team and leave the field with them. The NISOA Game Report should be completed and ready if needed to verify the scorebook. Once the officials sign the book, the alternate official should leave the site with them.

An assignment as an alternate official means as much as being the referee. One must be professional and ready to perform the duties and responsibilities. *John Van de Vaarst, Cape May, N.J., is NISOA’s National Director of Instruction.* □

Quick Tip

Remember that saying that the best officiated game is one in which no one knows who officiated? It’s bunk. **Competent, professional and impartial officials deserve acclaim, especially from other officials.** Think how the public’s perceptions of officials would improve if every official remembered that they represent the entire profession every time they work a game.

Action to Take When Contact Occurs

The eyes are focused on the contact and it appears as if assistant referee Sharam Pourazarai, Snoqualmie, Wash., has just finished speaking to the players to attempt to prevent a foul. The referee is likely to have the same view of the play as the camera, so the burden of deciding at what point it becomes foul play rests with the assistant. Trying to prevent the foul is the right first step. Allowing trifling or incidental contact at top-level games is appropriate.

But at some point, when an opponent is disadvantaged, there needs to be a flag to request the referee's whistle. Unfair contact may escalate to the point that the opponent may retaliate unless there is a whistle to stop play.



Yellow and Red

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in deciding if an act of a player is “bad” enough to use either the caution or ejection/disqualification.

One problem stems from the written language used — and the problem of how the many thousands of referees who officiate college and high school games define and determine that an act is: intentional, unintentional, incidental, deliberate, unsporting, faking, hostile, threatening, violent, serious, persistent, profane, vulgar, insulting, offensive, abusive, disproportionate, excessive or downright unfair and not in keeping with the spirit of the game and rules.

Since there are so many referees, absolute uniformity of translating those terms correctly into action is a hard, but not impossible, nut to crack. Most intercollegiate and interscholastic referees get their guidance beyond the

rulebooks by seeking the advice and training of other referees, mentors, chapter clinicians and assessors, observing other referees in action, as well as by getting guidance through study and training materials from NISOA and NFHS. That helps, but is not enough to achieve the nationwide uniformity that is expected.

A related problem concerning the ability to eject/disqualify stems from an attitude some referees adopt that they should never (or almost never) eject/disqualify a player, but resolve to keep every player in the game. That attitude is based on a tradition among some referees, who pass it along to younger referees, as advice on the customs and traditions of the game from years past. It often leads to referees making bad decisions about behavior control. Some officials even boast that they have never ejected/disqualified a player in their games. Can it be possible that there has

never been even one player in all the games officiated who did not merit being put out of a game for misbehavior?

Yellow and red basics

First, referees need to accept the fact that both the caution and the ejection/disqualification are ways meant to control behavior. Those are *not* the only ways, but are two important control techniques. Also, referees need to accept the fact that the colleges and high schools are educational institutions that sponsor extracurricular sports as part of their student development programs — keeping a good level of behavior in all games is one of the prime concerns of the schools.

Next, study the reasons for which you are to either caution, eject or disqualify players.

There are specified reasons for a caution that require *little* discretionary judgment on your part.

When any one of those occurs, referees must punish that behavior by one of the two punishments. The behaviors requiring little discretionary judgment to impose a caution if they occur (in both NCAA and NFHS) include: 1) enters, leaves or re-enters the field; 2) dissents or objects to decisions; 3) fails to respect the required distance; 4) illegal use of video or audio; 5) use of tobacco products (NFHS only). When you see those, you caution.

However, the rest of the reasons for caution *do* require subjective, discretionary judgments by referees. Those include: 1) persistently infringes the rules; 2) incidental profane or vulgar language; 3) acts of unsporting behavior/conduct; 4) delays the restart of play.

Those incidents require that you apply subjective, discretionary judgment to decide that one of those has

(see Yellow and Red p. 7)

No Rule Changes for 2009: Review 2008 Changes

Under a new policy, the NCAA switched to an every-other-year rule change cycle. As a result, there were no soccer rule changes for the 2009 season. It is still critical to look back at what changes were made last year:

Diagonal system of control mandated (5.1)

The diagonal system of control (DSC) was mandated for all college games. In its rationale, the NCAA Men's and Women's Soccer Rules Committee said that the DSC allows the referees to have better field coverage and it will facilitate more game control during a match.

Noisemakers (5.5.8)

Noisemakers are allowed; the referee has the

authority to rule what is and is not acceptable. The referee maintains the authority to suspend the game, stop the clock and direct game management personnel to have them removed.

Expiration of time (6.3.11)

Timekeepers signal for the termination of the period and signal with a horn when time has expired.

Note: The expiration of time is the moment when the timekeeper's timekeeping signal begins, regardless of the position of the ball.

Displaced crossbar (1.11)

If the crossbar becomes displaced during the game, the referee shall restart the game by dropping the ball where it

was when play was suspended. Drop ball replaces indirect free kick by team with possession.

No roster (5.5.4.4)

A coach or institutional representative failing to submit an official game roster prior to the beginning of the game became an additional option for a forfeit.

Protested game status (10.9)

If a game ends and a protest option is elected, the coach lodging the protest shall do so before the officials sign the official score sheet and leave the site of the competition (Rule 10.9). If the protest is found to be valid, and the result of the game changed, the game

shall be replayed in its entirety.

Approved rulings

The approved rulings (AR) were also recodified to follow the exact rule being explained.

Second yellow

Note: A new mechanic of displaying just the red card when a second cautionable offense was committed was considered by the NCAA last year. However, it was determined that a second yellow card would be displayed and then a red card. Therefore, the proper mechanic for the 2009 season for NISOA members when a second cautionable offense occurs is to display the yellow card followed by the red. □

Yellow and Red

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occurred and meets the specification of the rule — and that the act must be punished. Here, it's up to you to establish a uniform judgment pattern throughout the game so that once you've carded a particular type of act, you then card every similar act after that. That establishes in every participant that your judgments and punishments are both uniform and consistent. Those two concerns — uniformity and consistency — are always high on the list of referee attributes the schools and teams for whom you officiate look for.

When considering the matter of ejection/disqualification, there are, of course, similar specified acts that require *little* discretionary judgment by the referee. Those include: 1) fighting (NCAA); 2) spits at; 3) receives a second caution; and 4) uses tobacco products (NCAA only). Again, when you see any one of those, you eject/disqualify.

The ejection/disqualification acts that *do* require subjective, discretionary judgments by referees include: 1) prolonged acts to draw attention to self (NFHS); 2) violent conduct; 3) taunting (NFHS); 4) serious foul play; 5) insulting, offensive,

abusive language; 6) denies opponent's obvious goal-scoring opportunity; and 7) fouls goalkeeper in possession. Those incidents require that referees decide whether the act merits ejection/disqualification. Again, your objective should be to judge all such acts uniformly, but also to consistently punish each such act. Remember, if you decide *not* to punish such

an act after punishing for a similar act previously, the players will lose confidence in your being able to manage a fair game.

Bob Sumpter, Homosassa, Fla., is the 1983 Raymond Bernabei Honor Award recipient, in the NISOA Hall of Fame and a Life Member. The Robert Sumpter Excellence in Teaching Award, presented to a top NISOA clinician, was named after Sumpter, who also holds the USSF's Eddie Pearson Award. □

Quick Tip

You are part of a bigger package — don't showboat. When you need to sell a call, it's OK to give an emphatic signal. But **actions designed to draw attention away from the players and onto officials are unprofessional and unacceptable.** Use the NISOA mechanics and signals for games you're working.

Avoid Problems on Restarts

By John Van de Vaarst

When play is stopped because the ball is out of bounds or the referee sounded the whistle, the game must be *restarted*. While some may think that is “Referee 101,” every season there are problems when particular situations occur and the game is restarted improperly. The following is a short summary of restarts for various situations that caused problems last season.

- Game is stopped for an injury to a field player. If the player is attended to on the field, the player must leave the field and the game is restarted with a drop ball.

- Game is stopped for a foul and a player is injured. If the player is attended to on the field, the player must leave the field and the game is restarted with a direct or indirect free kick, at the point of the foul.

In both of the above situations, if the player is not attended to, the player may continue in the game.

- Game is stopped for a foul and the goalkeeper is injured. If the goalkeeper is attended to on the field, the goalkeeper may remain in the game. The game is restarted with a direct or indirect free kick, at the point of the foul.

- Game is stopped because the goalkeeper is injured while in possession of the ball. If the goalkeeper is attended to, the goalkeeper may remain in the game. The game is restarted by an indirect free kick by the goalkeeper’s team at the

point where the game was stopped (where the goalkeeper had possession). *That is different from a field player and must not be confused.*

To prevent restart errors and potential protests, please review the NCAA rules prior to the season. Pay particular attention to the various restart requirements so that you do not have problems during the season.

John Van de Vaarst, Cape May, N.J., is NISOA’s National Director of Instruction. □

Consistency

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2. Referees who, upon seeing a foul, will say, “How did it happen?” Those referees are better than the first group and make fewer mistakes, but they are not consistent in managing the game.

3. Referees who, when a foul is committed, say, “I know what happened!” Those referees can manage the human factor under any circumstances. They will use game management tools the same way throughout 90 minutes, as well as from game to game. They know the game and their experience makes the game easy for them.

Good referees believe the game belongs to the players and will give them freedom to demonstrate their skills according to the rules. If, in their opinion, no one has been put at a disadvantage, they allow the game to flow freely. Every player and coach demands one thing of officials — consistency. They want officials who apply the rules correctly and similarly every

time they officiate. For example, when an intentional trip is committed, referees must punish the offender according to the rules. They cannot call it one time and ignore it the next. That’s one of the quickest ways to lose control of the game.

Referees are guardians of the rules. They must use their power intelligently. Refereeing may be defined as the art of managing human behavior through enforcement of the rules. Behavior refers to any observable and measurable actions — which covers all player skills. For example, the speed with which a player can dribble the ball can be measured in terms of time, but it is difficult for every referee to assess performances of 22 players in a confined area with same degree of accuracy. Officiating is made up of a sequential series of the processes and responses: vision, thinking, decision making and value judgment. Those processes happen very rapidly. A good official can respond promptly to players’ actions and make a value

judgment regarding the infringement of the rules.

According to research, 85 percent of information is received through vision. Among the sensory channels (vision, auditory, vestibule, tactile and kinesthetic), vision transmits the most useful information. Good referees put themselves in position to see player actions. That is called direct vision and has a profound effect on referee decisions. Indirect vision — provided by assistant referees — is less valid than direct.

Thinking

The thinking process also plays an essential role. A good thinker is a referee who is focused on the players and responds immediately to any infringement of the rules with a similar quality judgment.

“Perceptual motor fitness” applies to the apparatus that interprets the information received by the sensory inputs. The information is received mainly through the eyes (vision), processed in the central nervous system (brain) and responded to (decision).

Referees who see the action first hand (directly) and think independently (without much assistance from the assistant referee) will have a higher consistency rate. Referees who work on perceptual motor fitness will function optimally.

Decision making

Value judgment is the end product of a precise and correct decision-making process. During the period of decision making and value judgment, recognizing fouls becomes a vital concern. Referees should be able to distinguish between tackling from behind and tripping at the same time. Did the player hit the ball cleanly or intentionally trip the player? Can the referee exercise that high-quality judgment throughout the match and from game to game? Can referees demonstrate the same foul recognition abilities through the use of the same game management tools?

That is the essence and magic of referee consistency. *David Cymerman, Colonia, N.J., is a NISOA National Clinician. □*

Learn the Truth About Tackles

By John Van de Vaarst

Every referee knows that tackles can be legal or illegal — depending on contact, violence and skill level. Tackles that create problems for the referee are those that have errant follow-through, are reckless or dangerous and tackles that trip or kick the opponent. Any tackle can create a game-control problem.

Officials must anticipate the potential problem and be prepared to deal with it. Failure to act quickly and decisively could lead to escalation or retaliation. Let's look at various types of tackles.

Two-footed tackles

A legal two-footed tackle is where the tackler, using both feet, makes contact with the ball and jars the ball free. The only intent was to get the ball free. An illegal two-footed tackle is where the tackler uses both feet, comes over the ball and either hits the legs of the opponent or positions the cleats up — an attempt to hurt the opponent. That type of tackle can cause a serious injury and must be dealt with quickly — often leading to a caution.

Sliding tackle

That is legal when using one foot or both feet, but at least one foot is in contact with the ground and the tackler makes contact with the ball first. However, even if contact is with the ball first, the tackle can be illegal if the tackler uses



DALE GARNER

Surgically going in to extract the ball is a skill that some players have. The player, with her foot at ball height, is trying to tackle the ball away before the attacker can continue her run. Recklessly kicking the leg would be a foul.

the other leg to intentionally trip or kick the opponent.

Areas for the referee to watch include the follow-through of the legs to see if there is an attempt to trip or kick; one or both feet being lifted high off the ground, which could lead to potential knee injuries; illegally scissoring the opponent's legs, where one leg makes contact with the ball and the back leg hooks between the opponent's legs; using the leg to sweep at the opponent's Achilles tendon. That last example can be a career-ending injury. The referee must also be prepared for the slide that misses the ball entirely and has legs up

and extended. That must be dealt with.

Tackles from the rear

That type of tackle is difficult to execute legally. However, the referee must not predetermine that all tackles from the rear are illegal. The leg must make contact with the ball first and there must be no intent to strike the opponent's legs or take the opponent down. If that occurs, the tackle is illegal and the foul must be called.

Fair tackles that can create controversy

A hard, legal tackle of the ball may result in the ball stopping dead or knocked free. The opponent's

momentum carries the player over the ball and one or both players fall. Players, fans and coaches will want the referee to call a trip for that situation. However, no foul has occurred. The referee must be able to recognize the difference between fair and foul. In order to properly observe that situation, the referee must be in good position.

That type of tackle may be harder to judge when the contact is made on top of the ball. During those situations, the referee must observe the follow-through of the leg to determine if there are any problems. The player that was tackled believes they were fouled and usually wants others to think they were fouled. That could lead to dives or other actions to "sell the call" to the referee. That also may lead to dissent or retaliation. Again, the referee must be prepared for any of those actions.

Players will play to the level the referee permits. If the referee allows illegal tackles throughout the game, the referee is in fact promoting problems and game-control issues. Also, there is a greater potential for injury. The referee must be in position to observe the tackle, make the appropriate decision and, when necessary, deal with the player that committed the foul so that there is no retaliation. That approach will make the game more enjoyable and safer for all involved.

John Van de Vaarst, Cape May, N.J., is NISOA's National Director of Instruction. □

Recognize the Need for the First Caution

By Carl P. Schwartz

According to NISOA, one of the important decisions a referee has to make is when to give the first caution in the game. In an extended view, assessors are asked to judge referees' accuracy of decisions and their courage, character and consistency, one aspect of which is having the courage to give a needed card.

Most cautions are discretionary — you can give them or not, based on a decision. There are many things that go through your mind to help you decide (time in the game, score, division level, skill level, where on the field the incident took place, how many fouls the offender already committed, the degree of physicality used, etc.). One of the important considerations — not an

overriding one, but an important one — is, if the players expect you to give a caution for that incident. Game control is often won or lost on exactly that decision.

Everyone sees A4 come in hard and high on B9. For that particular division game, most referees would caution A4. So, the players' expectation is that in addition to the direct free kick, he or she will have to wait a moment for the restart while you record the caution. You signal for the restart, and they are somewhat in disbelief. Team B starts some low-level dissent, you hear it from the touchlines and the coach offers his first-time-today comment.

If you are a new NISOA referee getting used to a higher level of play, there is help out there. The assignor

likely put you with experienced assistants — use them. Look at them to see if either is touching a breast pocket — the largely accepted signal that a caution is called for.

Players offer clues. It may be facial expressions, small verbal comments or movements indicating frustration — wildly swinging their arms or stomping their feet. The clues for potential game-control problems are often there. "Ref, that's his fifth one" (actually, it's only three — and you need to know that!). "How many times, ref?" Those comments don't mean you need to give a caution, but if a player yells "that's his fifth one," and you have no idea if that is correct or not, it's pointing out to you that persistent infringement needs more attention in your games.

Might be too tight. Refereeing in Division I, a common refrain when a referee new to an advanced division over-whistles a contest, "Come on, ref, it's a man's game." In your games, you might hear, "Really?" or "Another one?" Your whistles and your cards are not meeting their expectations.

Getting the timing exactly right on that first caution is a part of mastering soccer refereeing. It comes with experience and making mistakes. The clues are often there — recognize them. Talk with your partners after a game is over — discuss potential misconduct and the rights and wrongs of those decisions.

Carl P. Schwartz is Referee's soccer coordinator. □

Just Make the Call

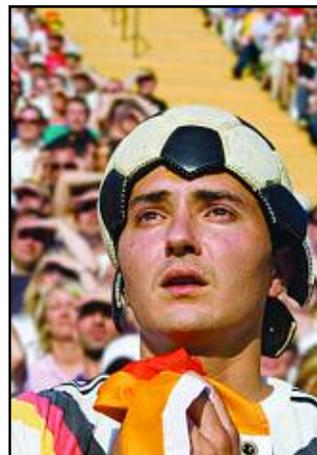
By John Van de Vaarst

As the number of fans increase at college soccer games, there are more comments from the stands directed at the officiating team. Things like "Let them play!" "You can't make that call at this level!" "Raise the flag, already!" "Let the players decide the outcome!" "Call something before someone gets hurt!" and, of course, the famous "Hand ball. How could you not see that?"

All those actions by fans, coaches and bench personnel are meant to

influence the decision-making of the referee team. Although officials work diligently not to hear or react to comments, at times, the comment at the right moment could impact a future decision by the referee or assistant.

Every referee has had a moment when they elected to make or not make a decision and then, in the back of their mind, wondered if they did the right thing. The comment from the fan or bench personnel only escalates the thought process. For a while, the referee is "off



ISTOCK PHOTO

Fans are passionate about their teams and will make comments during games. Referees must block out distractions and focus on game action.

their game" while they process the past few moments.

Block it out

As officials, it is most important to block the comments out of your mind and focus on the moment. Thinking about past actions or worrying about comments from the bench or stands will have a negative impact on performance. Every official is trained to referee the game to the best of their ability. That should be the goal every time the referee enters the field. A referee that second-guesses or has "rabbit ears" will never reach the top levels of soccer. As the season begins, focus on the game and ignore the comments.

John Van de Vaarst, from Cape May, N.J., is NISOA's National Director of Instruction. □

Assistant Referees Are Key to Success

By John Van de Vaarst

The assistant referee has many duties and responsibilities. One key component to being successful as an assistant referee is to be part of the referee team. When assigned as an assistant, it is critical not to take the stance that "I am better than the referee and should be in the middle." Assistants are part of the referee team and must take their assignment seriously and work as part of the referee team. Many officials have been able to be part of top-level collegiate games and playoffs because of the role they played as assistant referees.

It is clear that the basic responsibilities of the assistant referee are to signal the ball in and out of play, signal offside infringements and assist with indicating fouls that are observed within their area of responsibility. Those are the primary responsibilities.

However, there are many more duties that, when performed well, will make the assistant referee stand out as an excellent official. First, recognize the style of officiating by the referee. That helps determine what fouls or infractions the



While player interactions are important, the referee can judge fair from foul. Only the assistant is properly positioned to make this in or out of play decision, so Clyde Jelinek, Everett, Wash., is intently focused on that.

assistant referee should signal. That approach brings about a strong referee team and consistency in foul recognition. Conversely, the assistant referee that tries to "one up" the referee by

signaling trifling fouls or situations (that the referee has been letting play through) results in inconsistency and frustration by the players and bench personnel.

The assistant referee on the bench side has additional duties and responsibilities. That individual must assist with bench control and substitutions. The bench-side assistant referee must focus on the game but be able to control coaches and substitutes while still watching the play. The bench-side assistant referee must be able to ignore gamesmanship comments by the coaching staff, comments that are made in an attempt to obtain a call from the assistant. That assistant referee must also work with the staff at the table to facilitate substitutions and resolve any problems that may occur. For example, there is a substitute at the bench. At the next stoppage, the coach decides not to put the substitute into the game. The assistant referee must know the rule on whether or not that individual is charged with a substitution (they are!) and can no longer re-enter in the first half.

The assistant referee is a key part of the referee team. Acting as a professional and working toward consistency with the referee results in a well-officiated game.

John Van de Vaarst, from Cape May, N.J., is NISOA's National Director of Instruction. □

Workouts

continued from p. 3

workouts can be done on a track or adapted to be done on a soccer field. With the proper warm-up and cool-down, you can get anywhere from four to six miles per workout.

The second way to be as

fit as the players would be through *weight training*. Start by working with a Certified Personal Trainer by having a Fitness Profile done. That helps the professional tell if you have any muscular issues that need to be corrected before you can start a weight program. Follow the professional's instructions

and work toward a workout that involves core training, stabilization training, strength training and power training. Working through the four categories takes three weeks each and will help to get you ready for being on your feet, twisting and turning while you run, for a full 90 minutes or more.

The recommendations are just a start for those who want to be in shape. It takes 12 weeks to be prepared for the fall season. Your time to start is now. We owe it to the players to be in the best shape possible.

Greg Dugas, Portland, Maine, is NISOA's assistant director for fitness. □

How to Deal With Today's Athlete

By John Van de Vaart

The collegiate athlete of today is much different than that of 15 years ago. In the past, the athlete was trained to observe the rules of the game and play to the best of their ability. Today's athlete has a different mindset — their decisions and actions are based on several variables that were not part of the game in the past.

First, the athlete of today is in much better physical condition and trains all year long. That means they are faster and stronger. Also, the additional training increases their skill level. The game is much faster, both with runs and crisp passes that keep the game flowing at a rapid pace. Added to the training and fitness, the fields are in much better condition, so that plays can develop more quickly since the ball moves faster and without bad bounces to slow the game.

Since the speed of the game has increased, the referee and assistant referees must be in better condition for the game — so they can keep up with play and be in position to make accurate decisions. The players' strength and conditioning leads to stronger athletes. The additional strength can lead to harder fouls and create situations that can result in serious foul play and/or misconduct and potential loss of game control. The referee must be prepared to recognize situations that can lead to escalating fouls and prevent them from occurring.



DALE GARNEY

Today's athletes are bigger, stronger, faster and more skilled than those of the past. They also bring a different attitude.

The second area that has changed in today's athlete is their attitude. The concept of win-at-all-cost is paramount. In most cases, sportsmanship is not in the mix. At an early age, players are trained to win. The trophy at the end of the season, even for an eight-year-old team, is more important than teaching sportsmanship and life skills. Players are taught at an early age they can "Be all that they can be!" The

aspiration of playing on a Division I top-ranked team starts at an early age.

The player's attitude changes drastically when they are not the superstar that they (and their parents) perceived and only an average player on an average team. The player can easily become more frustrated, apt to foul more and show more dissent to referee decisions. Conflict resolution and conflict management are two critical

skills that a referee needs to deal with that type of player. Simply blowing the whistle for fouls, talking to players and issuing cautions and ejections is not enough to keep today's game under control. Conflict management skills will greatly assist the referee in game control and dealing with dissent.

Past techniques do not necessarily work in today's game. In the past, a referee could call a player over and lecture them. Today, the player may not accept that approach. The player wants to engage in conversation and debate. The "right" or "wrong" of situations has been blurred with shades of gray and justifications for actions.

Also, athletes are brought up in an environment where they are allowed, and even encouraged, to debate and negotiate decisions. From an early age, if mom or dad says no, the child will try to negotiate a different outcome. That spreads to the field and the debate with the referee over a decision.

Communication skills

Verbal skills have been diminished by the use of text messaging and e-mail. The players' ability to express themselves in an adult manner will not be perceived. To illustrate that fact, during a Division III game last year, a goalkeeper allowed three goals on only three shots on goal. After the game, the assessor was talking to the coach and the

(see *Today's Athlete* p. 16)

Do You Have the Courage of a Lion?

By Todd Abraham

One hears a lot about the courageous decision a referee makes and how it differentiates excellent referees from good ones. It is the fodder for after-match discussions — “Can you believe he had the guts to make that call?” And, it is the basis for the camaraderie we all feel for our fellow referees. We agonize over the call that should have been made, if we only had the courage. We admire the decisions our most experienced colleagues made — because they had the courage.

In the *Wizard of Oz*, Dorothy stumbles across the Cowardly Lion, who only lacks courage. The maturation of the Cowardly Lion provides a good perspective on the development of courage — and how it is manifested. When we first meet the lion (when we are a new referee), we “roar” a lot and use bravado to hide our lack of confidence and courage. As with the lion, deep inside, we are frightened and back down when truly challenged.

As the story continues, the lion becomes more and more courageous. He ultimately leads the characters in the siege of the castle and slays the Wicked Witch. Studying how the lion developed courage provides a good framework for a referee.

Initially, the lion is alone, trying to live up to the expectations of a lion. He doesn't really know how, nor does he fully understand what is expected. A new referee, committed to excellence, often starts alone — beginning to referee after



Having the courage to make the correct call, Will Niccolls, Seattle, signals for a direct free kick after a foul.

a career as a player or as a child's coach. The new referee is expected to know how to referee because of their involvement with the game. The referee doesn't really know how, nor does he or she truly know what is expected. The referee joins the “brotherhood of the referee community” where he has access to other referees' experiences, training and most importantly, an understanding of what is expected of a referee.

As the *Wizard of Oz* continues, the lion becomes more courageous. He feeds off the support of his team (the Scarecrow, Tin Man and Dorothy [Toto, too?]) to feel more comfortable in confrontational situations. The support and learning he garners from his new-found community allows him to have the tools to perform up

to the expectations of his role. Similarly, the new referee can leverage his or her new-found team to build off of the experiences of others and gain the insights, knowledge and techniques to become more courageous on the field.

Courage is a combination of knowing what to do; how to do it; then actually doing it. Courageous calls (or courageously not whistling) are the result of precise knowledge of the rules, insights of their application, fitness required by match level and competitiveness so as to be in the correct position to both judge the incident and sell the decision and the confidence in the support of the full referee community (referee crew, assessors, assignors) to back up the proper decision.

It is also a function of the situations in which the

referee needs to be courageous. More challenging games require more courage — not because the rules are different, but rather, because the insights into their application and fitness requirements become more complex and demanding. Situations that are way beyond the experience level of the referee provide challenges that make courageous decisions difficult. Incrementally increasing the challenges help a referee develop courage better than being subjected to a situation way beyond his or her capability. The referee can experiment with new techniques while building off the confidence and courage developed in familiar situations.

The lion gets thrown into more and more challenging situations (see *Courage* p. 16)

Great Ways to Assess Your Game Performance

Assessment is more than having a trained observer watch one or two of your games officiated during a season. While formal assessments will greatly help referees improve their game, there are other methods that also can be used that are ongoing. Here are some tips that can be considered.

Obtain a mentor

Referee mentors have proven to be very effective. Being able to talk and meet



Video is a solid tool for referees to use to help assess their performance.

with a senior official and receive advice on how to improve skills, game control and prevent problems will

help any official who wants to advance.

A good postgame

After the game, spend some time talking to the assistant referees on how the game progressed. Question them on situations that occurred during the game and listen to their input. That technique will strengthen the referee as an individual and the referee team.

Self-evaluation

After a game, the referee should take time to review in their mind how the game progressed. Thinking about fouls, potential for persistent misconduct, cautions, ejections and determining if the decisions made helped or hurt the game will allow the referee to improve in their next

assignment. During that reflection, take time to consider any new tools that might be used to prevent problems that occurred in the game. Consider using them next time.

Look outside yourself

As time permits, observe senior referees at games. Watching a game and learning from someone else is an easy way to improve. Look for techniques you can incorporate into your games. Look for techniques to avoid.

Go to the film

With modern technology, there are many different ways to obtain game footage. An assignor or conference official can assist the referee in obtaining a tape or DVD of a game. Watch the video with an open mind — critique the skills used. If there were problems in a particular situation, replay it and think about how it could have been avoided if a different management control was used.

Those tips, developed by NISOA assessor Bob Sumpter, will help all officials. □

Rules Interpretations

With the advent of chat rooms, Facebook and other Internet activities, it is important to remember the NISOA procedure for official rules interpretations. Ken Andres is the NISOA national rules interpreter. He is the person that rule questions should go to for clarification, after they have worked their way up the chain.

Cliff McCrath is the secretary/editor for the *NCAA Soccer Rules and Interpretations*. Cliff is the final authority on all rule matters and interpretations.

Chapter first. As a NISOA member, if you have a rule question, you should go to your chapter clinician first. If that person still has a question, they may in turn then go to Ken Andres. If Ken has a question about the rule,

he will go to Cliff for the final ruling.

Questions on rules or interpretations should not be placed on chat rooms or other similar Internet sites. The answer you receive may not be accurate because anyone can answer your question. The person answering may have all the best intentions — but does not have the knowledge of the rules that is necessary to make the interpretation. That could create problems in the future — and possible protests by teams because the rule was not applied accurately.

Consistency is the key to successful officiating. Following the correct procedure on a rule question will greatly assist in making you a better NISOA official. □

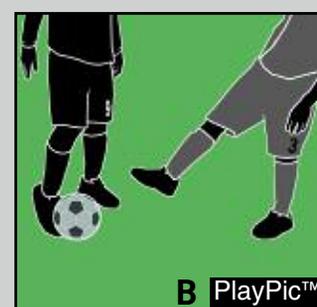
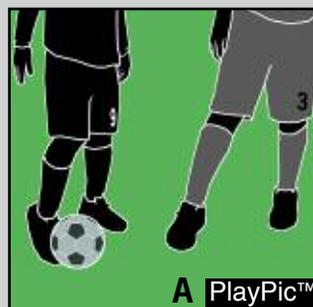
Quick Tip

Always designate which partner you want to be the senior assistant referee. In case of an injury, or a no-notice emergency where you are called off the field (for example, a serious car accident involving a family member) such an arrangement allows for a smooth passing. **The designated senior assistant will have all the needed tools to step into place immediately.** The senior assistant will have a complete record of the game, including score and cards issued, so there will be a seamless transition.

Know the Danger of a Locked Knee

In PlayPic A, number 3 plays defense as number 9 tries to cross the ball toward the goal. That is good defense, even though number 3 has locked his leg. If number 9 were to kick number 3's leg, it may sting for a moment, but injury is unlikely.

The locked knee has a strong potential for injury — when players are in opposition. If the knee is not locked and an attacker kicks a defender's leg, the attacker has to move 15-30 pounds of flesh and bone. However, if the defender locks the knee, there is no "give." The attacker who has wound up to kick the ball 40 yards is generating a great deal of force and expecting a certain resistance. However, that amount of force will not move 120, 150 or 200 pounds of opposing player. So something will give. Too often, it is the tibia and fibula of the attacker. So rather than see broken legs on your soccer fields, when you see a locked knee by a player opposing another player, as you see in PlayPic B, give a



free kick. If there is no contact, award an indirect free kick for dangerous play. If there is contact, award a direct free kick for kicking. Safety is paramount.

Warrant a Card

continued from p. 4

the next level of control. The earlier you act, the better.

2. How rough has the game become? How rough do physical contacts and confrontations between opposing players have to get before the red card is used? You should protect against possible injury. You should discourage unfair incidents and behavior. Consider taking firmer action incident-by-incident in order not to let injury or behavior get out of control. Get across that the game standard must be reestablished. Ask yourself, "If control is lost, am I competent enough to get it back again?" Why risk it?

3. How many times can you ignore possible acts that may cause avoidable injuries? Not even once. If you do not promptly address the first act, the danger to behavior control is that players will act to "protect themselves." That leads to an out-of-control game. You need to be sensitive to those acts and react immediately. Protecting players from

injury by punishing behavior that causes injury is a prime responsibility for you.

4. Do you keep a count of fouls a player commits after being cautioned? That is more important than many referees realize. Once a player is cautioned, your concern should be to see that the player does not continue a pattern of misbehavior. If you try to stay aware of any further fouls that player commits, you can help ensure the player does not become a greater problem and that perhaps he or she can remain in the game. If the player continues to infringe the rules, a required red card (second yellow) should not be avoided.

5. Do you fear the job of ejecting/disqualifying a player? Would you rather *not* have to face a player and declare him or her out of that game? Would you rather *not* have to stand up to the dissents of the ejected/disqualified player's teammates? Of course. No one enjoys the experience. Ejections/disqualifications almost always engender bad

feelings. However, standing up to those and performing the task are the responsibility you accepted as the referee. It seems that the quickest way to lose control is to *not* make the uncomfortable decisions and take the unpopular actions that you need to do to ensure behavior control.

6. How much have you thought about living up to your obligation to the schools sponsoring the games? They want a decent standard of fair play and sporting behavior to dominate games. All you have to do is read the *NCAA Rules and Interpretations* and the *NFHS Soccer Rules Book* to know the aim of schools. You owe them your best effort to oversee the rules.

7. How many chances have you taken to discuss your outlook and experiences about the use of cards with other referees who are ethical, experienced and able? Chances are, if you do, you will get more insight into what your participant behavior standards should be and the

best ways for you to set those game standards.

Judgments

Learning to use the caution and ejection/disqualification authority is important to your ability to control behavior. When thinking through goals as a college or high school referee, start with the basics. Then work on judgment. Remember that in each category there are judgments that require little discretion, because they require you to punish what you can plainly see. Then work on the judgments that rely on your ability to subjectively judge incidents in a manner that matches uniform referee judgments — and to do so consistently within games and from game to game. Constantly work to improve those key abilities.

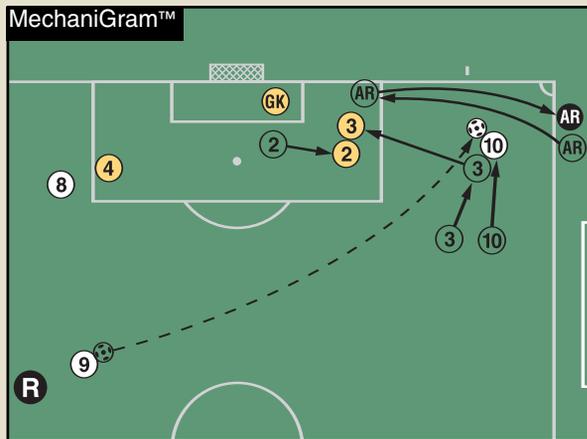
Bob Sumpter, Homosassa, Fla., is the 1983 Raymond Bernabei Honor Award recipient, in the NISOA Hall of Fame and a Life Member. The Robert Sumpter Excellence in Teaching Award, presented to a top NISOA clinician, was named after Sumpter, who also holds the USSF's Eddie Pearson Award. □

CHALK TALK

Use Assistants to Assist

In the MechaniGram, number 9 lobs a long pass forward to teammate number 10. As they sprint into the corner, defender number 3 fouls number 10. The referee sees the holding and blows for a free kick. The defensive wall is slow to retreat.

The referee has two options: run almost 100 yards across the field to set up the defenders — and then retreat to a proper position for the restart; or, as agreed upon in the pregame, signal the assistant to step onto the field to take care of the restart location and the wall. Here, the assistant jogs onto the field and into the penalty area, tells the players the restart will occur on the referee's signal, enforces the minimum distance and then jogs back to the touchline and sets up to observe potential offside on the restart.



Courage

continued from p. 13

situations as the movie progresses and leverages the learning from his prior experiences. By the end of the movie, the same Cowardly Lion, who was scared of his own tail, leads the team to succeed in the assignment the Wizard gave them. He was then rewarded with a medal for his valor and given an even more difficult and visible assignment. Similarly, the

novice referee, who is afraid of the bellowing coach in his or her first match, develops skills, knowledge and expertise with the support of the referee community to be successful in the assignment his or her assignor gives the referee. The referee then gets even more difficult and visible assignments as well. *Todd Abraham is from Glencoe, Ill. Formerly a Referee columnist, Abraham is the NISOA National Assistant Director of Instruction and the 2005 winner of the Robert Sumpter Excellence in Teaching Award.* □

Today's Athlete

continued from p. 12

coach received a text message from the goalkeeper — apologizing for the poor performance. The player did not have the ability to face the coach and verbalize.

That transcends to the player verbalizing with the referee. A player who normally uses text to communicate may not speak in a manner that is expected by an older referee. That could lead to additional control problems. Again, conflict management skills must be used to prevent escalating situations.

Games being shown on television from across the world also impact the style of play and the player's attitude. A college player sees what is an acceptable level of behavior on television and feels that should be permitted in the collegiate game. Players surrounding the referee and dissenting, with no action by the referee, relates to the college player as the authority to dissent whenever there is a call that they do not agree with. The referee must set the tone early in the game to prevent that type of situation.

Commentators are encouraging improper behavior. Commentators state that coaches train their players to always try to influence the officials to get favorable calls — even if they know they are guilty. Gamesmanship is being taught over sportsmanship.

Also, hard fouls or professional fouls that do not result in a caution or ejection, pulling of shirts, etc., are observed and translated into the college game. Again, the referee must set the tone of what is acceptable. Professional fouls can lead to serious injury, retaliation and other problems. They must not be permitted in the college game. Lastly, a college player can read the lips of the player on TV and determine that the language being used is allowed. Profanity has no place in college game and must be dealt with immediately. If it is incidental, the situation must lead to a caution. If foul and abusive, the improper language must result in an ejection.

A secondary impact of television games is the media. Often, the color commentator has a detrimental remark about a referee's decision. That translates back to the college player that the level of competence of referees leaves much to be desired. Again, dissent and game control problems develop that must be dealt with.

Those are only some of the challenges facing a referee who officiates the athlete of today. Strong skills in conflict management, people management and conflict resolution will greatly assist in game control.

John Van de Vaarst, from Cape May, N.J., is NISOA's National Director of Instruction. □