



# Mahaska County Soccer Club

## Referee Orientation Manual

### Referee Hints / Advice

**Most important role of the referee: safety of the players!**

#### **Mistakes vs. Judgment**

- Every referee makes mistakes or uses poor judgment at times. No referee has worked a perfect game or saw every foul that happened.
- Attempt to improve with each game but know there has never been a perfect game played or refereed!
- Judgment is whether someone is offside or it is to the advantage of the attacking team to play on.
- Mistakes are black and white rules—e.g., what is the appropriate re-start? Was there a push or trip?

#### **6 C's of Refereeing**

- Competent—Know your rules
- Congenial—Be friendly and human to everyone
- Confident—Be proud that you know the rules
- Consistent—Call a game consistently from start to finish
- Control—Maintain control of the game, yet let the game flow
- Change—Don't be afraid to correct any call you made before you put the ball in play. But not because you are talked into it.

#### **Most common mistakes of new referees**

- Forgetting to start their watch. Start your watch and then blow the whistle.
- Making unclear arm or whistle signals
- Not signaling correctly for direct or indirect kicks
- Not staying with play
- Making unclear verbal calls, too quiet of verbal commands
- Forgetting to mark down which team is kicking off on the scorecard
- Signaling the wrong direction for team restarts especially in the second half of play



## **Make a Good First Impression!**

- Keep in mind you probably have more knowledge of the rules than coaches or parents on the sideline
- Be prepared; your game schedule for the day, be on time, be confident
- Develop your own style as a referee over time
- Attend an on field training session if at all possible.
- Re-read the FIFA Laws of the Game each week of the season for the first year including:
  - Rules specific to the age of players
  - Re-read this orientation manual periodically
  - Review any rules before and after a game about which you are uncertain
  - How do you consistently call handballs and other fouls?
  - Don't be afraid to change your style over time and ask for advice from experienced referees
  - Observe other experienced referees and adopt what you like about them
  - Keep up to date on the FIFA and MCSC rules. Read through your new USSF rulebook each year. The rules change yearly and the changes are important to player safety and significant!

## **As a referee, make the game fun for yourself and the players!**

### **Good Web-site resources:**

- United States Federation Referee Website - [www.ussoccer.com](http://www.ussoccer.com)
- Iowa Referee Committee Website - [www.iowareferees.org](http://www.iowareferees.org)
- [www.thearbiter.net](http://www.thearbiter.net)
- [www.fifa.org](http://www.fifa.org)

### **Game Locations:**

- Directions to all 641 League clubs are listed on the MCSC web site [www.mahaskasoccer.com](http://www.mahaskasoccer.com)

## **Uniform - Equipment Information**

### **Referee Uniforms**

- Official referee jersey – yellow (First Choice), black, blue, red or green.
- Black soccer official shorts
- Black soccer socks with 3 white stripes(official)
- Shoes – black soccer cleats or turf style cleats are recommended, if you play use the same shoes to start with.
- Any shirt worn under the referee jersey should be black or the same color as the referee jersey (i.e. yellow t-shirt under yellow jersey). You can get “Starter” brand cold and warm weather under garments for about \$10 per piece at Wal-Mart.
- Warm-ups? Gloves? Hat? Can be worn in cold weather. Black is preferred. Referee jersey must be worn on the outside of any jacket. Can use hat for sun also. Look as professional as possible.
  - Wear a complete and clean uniform for your game(s). Jersey tucked in, socks on and properly worn, clean shoes (wipe the mud off and use polish when they need it).
  - The more professional you look and present yourself, the more respect you will have from coaches, players, and parents.



## **Other Equipment Needed**

- Game schedule
- Referee wallet – holds red & yellow cards, game score cards
- Whistle (always carry a backup) Get at least one whistle with a pea (ie: Acme Thunder) in it as they tend to be louder and a second one of a different brand so you can sound different than anyone near you
- Wrist watch with a timer function (carry a backup if possible) Wal-Mart usually has some on sale for \$15.
- Coins for coin toss
- Pens for marking score cards
- Ball pump
- Velcro back for badge
- Drinking water and plenty of it
- FIFA rule book and MCSC age specific rules
- Lineperson flags for ages 9 and up. Not needed to start as you should be working younger games without AR's. Wait until you move up to older games as center referee and buy a mid priced set.
- Second pair of shoes for dry conditions (not necessary to start with, Turf style cleats are easier on feet if you do a large number of games.

## **Game Day Reminders**

### **As The Center Referee**

- Meet with the coaches, with a firm hand shake introduce yourself
- Keep a reasonable distance from the action so you can see more of what is happening
- Blow clear and sharp whistles
- Be decisive with your calls (you will be less likely to have someone question it), make your hand signal clear, ALWAYS point the direction with a straight arm at a 45 degree angle (if your hand is above your head it's easier for others to see).

### **Field Inspection**

- Arrive at field 20-30 minutes prior to game time. 30 Minutes gives you time to properly do everything expected of a quality referee.
- Conduct field inspections and remove objects that could injure a player
- Make sure goals are properly anchored down.
- Check nets to ensure they are adequately attached to goals – no gaps. If gaps are present, alert AR's and/or take into consideration as to how you run the field.
- Remove any foreign material from field (cans, bottles, rocks etc.)
- If you note any dangerous holes on the field, point these out to players for safety and report to Director of Referees for repair (preferably before the game).
- If there are really muddy places or heavily watered areas, look for an alternate field in the complex or advise both the players and coaches of these areas. You must determine if the field conditions are safe for play before you allow the game to go on.
- Ensure corner flags are in place
- Conduct team check-ins



## **Pre-Game Reminders when working with Assistant Referees**

- Inform them which diagonal, right or left, you will be running. Assign the AR's to correspond with the diagonal.
- Review with them what you want them to be responsible for (e.g. only make an off-side call only when the player in the off-side position is a) Involved in active play, b) interfering with play, c) interfering with an opponent, and d) gaining an advantage by being in that position; Touch line calls and Goal line calls in their quadrant, etc.)
- Remind them to keep time, record goals scored and record any cautions or send offs to back you up.
- Go over preferred substitution procedure.
- Remind them to take position with 2<sup>nd</sup> to last defender
- Have them match your signal when they are different from you.
- Have them to make frequent eye-contact you through out the game.
- Walk to the center circle as a group at the start of the game
- Ask them to check the nets before proceeding to their game starting positions
- Ask them to meet you on the field, at half-time and after the game, for any discussion away from teams and spectators

## **Pre-Game Reminders for Assistant Referees**

- Help check nets to ensure they are adequately attached to goals – make sure goals are properly anchored
- As an assistant referee (AR) your primary responsibility is to support the center referee in making calls. You are in the best position to determine off-sides. It is important for you to pay attention to the game at all times.
- Make eye contact with the center referee when a call is made so you know both officials agree.
- Use proper flag signals at all times, if you are not sure—ASK!
- The AR should stay in a position that is even with the 2<sup>nd</sup> to last defender (including the keeper), but no closer to the opposing goal than the half line. Know what makes a player(s) off-sides.
- Make all flag signals directly and clearly. Weak signals are a sign of apathy or uncertainty.
- Lower flag once referee acknowledges your signal.
- When not signaling, the flag should be held straight down and at your side toward the center referee so it is visible to them. Do not carry it under your arm or waive it around during the game.
- If a goal has been scored and there was no foul or offside by the scoring team, immediately move back toward the center of the field; if you remain at or near the goal line, the center referee will assume that there was some reason the goal should be disallowed.



## Team Check-in Procedure

- Line-up one team at a time in a line. Use the 6 yard line on younger age games and 12/18 yard line on older age groups or the touch line in front of the team bench area.
- Check player cards and rosters for Tournaments only!
  - No card = no play; All player cards must have picture that matches player attached. **No exceptions!**
  - No roster = team must provide a hand written roster to referee for verification by MCSC Registrar. Check to ensure player cards match roster names
- Equipment check
  - No shin guards = no play; **No exceptions!**
  - Socks must cover shin guards
  - Jerseys must be tucked in
  - Cleats – soccer style (baseball cleats are allowed but not preferred, the shoe cannot be altered in any way e.g. toe cleat removed) Tennis shoes are acceptable.
  - **No jewelry**, except for religious jewelry (wear taped under jersey only) or medic alert bracelets (wear with tape covering). No bracelets, barrettes or wrist bands allowed. (i.e. “Live Strong”).
  - All piercing that are visible must be removed. Tape covering jewelry is NOT acceptable. **No exceptions!**
  - No bandanas, sunglasses (prescription OK), headbands, (unless for medical reasons i.e. chemotherapy)
  - Casts must be covered 100% in protective foam, Braces must be covered by manufacture’s cover and no sharp edges can be exposed.
  - Keeper may wear a ball cap to keep sun out of eyes
  - Sweats / stocking caps~ Referees discretion; make sure color does not interfere with referees and opposing player’s ability to tell which team a player is on.
  - U9 & above; if there is a jersey color conflict, **away** team should change colors. If away team cannot & home team can, then home team changes. If neither team can change, try to find penne’s but play the game anyway.
  - Goalkeepers must be in colors that are different from either team. GK is responsible to change.
- Instructions to players/coaches
  - Remind players & coaches to play to the referee’s whistle or signal
  - No slide tackling at U-7 through U-10 age level.
  - No goals can be scored directly from a kick off at U-7 through U-10 age level.
  - No goals can be scored from defensive end of field in U-7 or U-8 age level.
  - Inform teams how you want substitutions handled (see later section in this book)
  - Remind U7-8 coaches that defender cannot play in the goal area the entire time –they must come forward as play advances.
  - U9-10: ask each coach to provide an AR if you want them; preferably a certified referee or knowledgeable parent or sibling (siblings should be at least 2 yrs older than players)
  - Record team numbers and jersey colors on game card

Note: This manual has been developed as a reference for club level referees. It is intended to address club-specific rules (especially for the U8-U19 age levels) as well as some of the more common questions/situations faced by referees. It is **NOT** intended to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Laws of the Game; for this, please refer to your FIFA Laws of the Game or USSF Handbook.



## **Teams/Coaches/Spectators at the Field**

- Both teams shall be benched on the same side of the field and should be 2-3 yards back from the touch line (critical when using ARs and easier for referee to see who is a player)
- Spectators shall be on the opposite side of the field and should also be 2-3 yards back from the touchline. Don't allow anyone to lay down facing the field along the touch lines.
- Teams and Coaches should stay on their team's side of the half line. No one on either side of the field should be between the goal line and 18 yard line
- Any adult on the team bench should have a coach's card. If they do not then they are a spectator and need to move to proper side of field.

## **Player's Age Related Instructions**

### **Ball Size / Inflation**

- Always ensure game ball is properly inflated. (In absence of a pressure gauge), a ball that is properly inflated should not allow a person to significantly depress its sides.
- Do not use a ball with tears in the cover or panels missing.
- U7-8: use a size 3 ball
- U9-12: size 4 ball
- U13& above: size 5 ball

### **Team Size**

- U7-8: 4 players on the field at one time; no goalkeeper.
  - Minimum of 3 players per side to play the game
- U9-10: 6 players on field at a time including goalkeeper. Also applies to U-14 through 19 small sided teams.
  - Minimum of 4 players per side to play the game
- U11-12: 8 players on field at a time including goalkeeper.
  - Minimum of 6 players per side to play the game
- U13 & up; 11 players on field at a time including goalkeeper.
  - Minimum of 7 players per side to play the game
- If one team is short players, opposing team may play short handed, but is not required to—this is the coach's decision, not the referee's.
- A team forfeits if it has not arrived or take the field with sufficient players to play the game within 15 minutes after the scheduled kickoff time

### **Game Duration**

- U7 – U8: 4 x 12 minute quarters = 48 minutes
- U9 – U10: 2 x 25 minute halves = 50 minutes
- U11– 12: 2 x 30 minute halves = 60 minutes
- U13 – 14: 2 x 35 min halves = 70 minutes
- U15-16: 2 x 40 minute halves = 80 minutes
- U17 & above: 2 x 45 minute halves = 90 minutes
- No stoppage time for U7-10; stoppage time at referee's discretion for U11 & above.
- Halftime breaks = 5 minutes for U7-U12; 5 minutes for U14 & above
- Quarter breaks for U7/8 = 2 minutes
- A game is considered complete if it is stopped at any time after the 2<sup>nd</sup> half kick-off.

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# Game Instructions & Advice

## **General Referee Positioning/Movement**

- Center referee: be flexible, run the diagonal of your choice but take into account the condition of the field.
  - Traditional is to run to the left corner in the direction of play but some referees prefer the opposite
  - Run deep into your quadrants to stay close to play. You must be close enough to make accurate calls.
  - Stay far enough away from play as to not interfere with play and see most of the action.
  - Be in a position on free kicks to see the most players that may be involved with play.
- Assistant referees:
  - Even with 2<sup>nd</sup> to last defender or ball, whichever is closer to the goal . . . the goalie is not always the last defender!
  - Flag down at your side showing to the referee
  - Face the field of play
  - Side step back and forth facing the field, unless speed is required then turn and sprint
  - Always face the field before signaling with the flag
  - Lower the flag whenever the referee has acknowledged it and the proper direction and restart decided.

## **Use of the Whistle**

- The whistle commands attention, therefore, don't overuse it
- Reserve its use primarily for infractions within the field of play
- Vary the sound—the louder and longer the whistle, the worse the offense. A few short soft blows to attract a players attention.
- Whistle is appropriate:
  - To start the game or restart at half-time
  - To signal half-time (blow twice) and the end of game (blow three times)
  - To stop play for a foul or injury on the field of play
  - To start play after substitution
  - To caution or send-off a player
  - To restart play after issuing red or yellow card or after verbal cautioning a player
- Whistle is not necessary (unless players continue play):
  - For throw-ins
  - For goal kicks
  - For corner kicks



## **Substitutions**

- Substitutions may be made without limit, at the proper times, for all age levels within the MCSC clubs
- Substitutes shall enter and exit from near the midfield area on the team side and may not enter without the referee's permission
- With the consent of the referee substitutions may be made at the following times;
  - End of quarter/half (do not need to notify referee)
  - After a goal scored by either team
  - Prior to a Throw-in taken by substituting team
  - Prior to a Goal kick taken by either team
  - Any stoppage for injury. Player or players injured and the same number from the opposing team if they like
  - When play is stopped for a caution, only the cautioned play may be substituted
- Substitutions may not be made at any other time in MCSC games
- Coach must get the attention of the referee and referee must approve the substitution before players leave/enter the field. Players should enter/leave the field from the center of the field (except at end of quarters or halves.)
- Assistant Referee nearest the teams will typically snap the flag once loudly and move the flag to the proper position to show there are substitutions ready to enter the field; lower flag when referee acknowledges you.
- Center referee should be aware that players are ready to substitute when they are at the half line;
  - Request that the throwing or kicking team hold the ball and wait for the substitutions to take place
  - Signal for the players to enter the field
- Referee and AR should count entering & exiting players to ensure the correct numbers of players are on the field.
- Remind coaches to notify the referee when substituting goalkeepers.
- Play restarts on referee's signal—hand, voice, or whistle

## **Procedure/Rule Review**

### **Coin Toss**

- Call for team captains
- Have captains shake hands
- Away team calls toss
- Winner of toss selects end of field to defend 1st; Other team kicks off
- Record captain numbers on game card & which side is kicking off 1st
- Ask home team for game ball; ensure it is properly inflated. For U11 & above –get 2 balls & leave 1 with your equipment on the sideline



## Kick off

- Center referee may call the teams onto the field by voice or whistle
- Count the # of players on the field before play begins; remove any additional players; Assistant referees count as well.
- **Position of Center referee:** in a position judged by the positioning of the other players on the field; usually outside the center circle in the attacking ½ of the kicking team
- **Position of Assistant referee:** even with the 2<sup>nd</sup> to last defender; flag down at the side; facing the field
- Center referee & assistant referees make eye contact with each other to ensure that everyone is ready
- Inform the teams how you will indicate the start of the game—either whistle or voice (whistle preferred)
- The ball is in play once it moves forward. This is when the clock officially starts. Both the referee and the AR's should keep time.
- Always start your watch before signaling to kick off, The few seconds of difference is minor.
- If the ball is passed back on the initial kick-off, the kicking team re-takes the kick.
- Defending team must be outside of the center circle until the kicking team moves the ball. Kicking team can have multiple players inside the center circle
- Another player of either team must touch the ball before the initial kicker touches it a second time. No double touches on kick-offs; redo for U7/8; loss of possession for U9 & above (indirect free kick).
- **No** goals can be scored on kick-offs in U7 through U10.

## Goal Kicks

- This is the correct restart for a ball ruled out of touch on an end line, and last touched by the offensive team
- The whole of the ball must cross the end line to be considered out of touch.
- Center referee signal: points directly at the goal with arm parallel to the ground. Whistle to stop play if necessary and announce goal kick and direction.
- Assistant referee signal: points directly to the goal area with arm parallel to the ground and perpendicular to the field
- Center referee position: Down field in a position to observe where the ball will drop
- Assistant referee position:
  - Move to position at top of goal area to ensure proper positioning of the ball for the goal kick
  - Move to top of penalty area to verify that the ball is properly put into play and that attackers do not encroach into the penalty area
  - If keeper is taking the kick, do not stand at penalty area, but rather in a position to judge offside
  - Move quickly to a position to judge offside after the ball is properly put in play
- Ensure opposing team players are outside the penalty area (U12 & above) or are at least 8 yards from the ball (U9-U10) or 4 yards from ball (U7-8).
- Goal kick can be taken with ball placed anywhere on in the goal area; remind U7-10 players of this if needed
- Any player on the kicking team can take the goal kick; players of same team can be in the penalty area.
- (U12 & above); ball must move outside the penalty area on the initial kick before any player on either team can touch it. Opposing team cannot enter the penalty area until after the ball has left it. For U7-U10, the ball is in play as soon as it leaves the goal area.
- Goal kick can be taken as soon as kicker is ready and referee signals play to start.
- No goal can be scored by team taking the goal kick without the ball first having touched another player



## Throw-ins

- This is the correct restart for a ball ruled out of touch on a sideline
- Center referee:
  - Whistle to stop play, if necessary
  - Signal with a 45 degrees upward hand signal in the direction of the throw-in, squarely facing the side-line; announce direction of throw-in
  - Indicate the location of the throw-in
  - Vary your position, you may wish to be where the ball is anticipated to be played
- Assistant referee:
  - Squarely facing the field, signal with flag 45 degrees upward in the direction of the throw-in.
  - Lower the flag when it is clear that the restart and direction are established
  - Maintain offside position while the ball is being thrown in, even though there is no offside on throw-ins.
  - If any part of the ball enters the field of play and then exits before landing; signal with a raised flag; then point in the opposite direction for the opposing team's throw-in
  - If the ball does not enter the field of play on the throw in, signal with a raised flag and then indicate the direction of the throw-in for the same team to retake the throw-in
- The whole of the ball must cross the sideline to be considered out of touch.
- Unlike restarts by free kick, there is only a 2 yard minimum distance required between the thrower and the defending players. However, the defender may not unfairly distract or impede the thrower. Watch player taking the throw to ensure that throw-in is taken correctly (ball is thrown from behind and over the head using both hands, and both feet are on the ground when the ball leaves the thrower's hands.)
- If throw-in is done incorrectly;
  - Whistle to stop play
  - Do over once for U7-8 and explain to player making the throw what they should do differently
  - U9 & above improper throw-in = change in possession; other team gets to throw in.
- No goal can be scored on a throw-in unless another player touches ball first.



## Corner Kicks

- Correct restart for a ball ruled out of touch on an end line, and is last touched by the defending team
- The whole of the ball must cross the end line to be considered out of touch.
- Center referee:
  - Points to the corner with arm extended 45 degrees upward toward the corner; announce corner kick (for U7/8 also tell which team is to take kick)
  - Whistle to stop play if necessary
  - Ensure ball is properly placed within the corner arc –you may have to direct U7/8 players
  - Ensure that the required distance (10 yds for U13 & above, 8 yds for U9-U12; 4 yds for U7-U8) is observed by defenders
  - Player takes kick when they are ready.
- Center referee position: depends on age level; always position so you can see the next play made once the ball is put in play.
- Assistant referee signal:
  - If the ball crosses the goal line and quickly re-enters, raise flag vertically to gain referee attention
  - Point down at a 45 degree angle toward the corner flag
- Assistant referee position: In line with the goal line to observe whether the ball crosses out of play (behind the kicker when taken from his side of the field); then move to position to observe offside
- Corner kick can be taken as soon as kicker is ready
- No double touches. Penalty = do over for U7-8; loss of possession for U9 & above (indirect free kick)
- Goal can be scored on a corner kick without being touched by another player
- Watch for rough play in goal area



## Penalty Kicks

- A penalty kick is awarded against a team that commits one of the ten offences for which a direct free kick is awarded, inside its own penalty area and while the ball is in play. U-7 through U-10 no penalty kicks as all are indirect free kicks.
- A goal may be scored directly from a penalty kick.
- Additional time is allowed for a penalty kick to be taken at the end of each half or at the end of periods of extra time.
- The ball: is placed on the penalty mark. The player taking the penalty kick: is properly identified.
- The defending goalkeeper: remains on his goal line, facing the kicker, between the goalposts until the ball has been kicked.
- The player taking the penalty kicks the ball forward. The ball is **in play when it is kicked and moves forward**.
- He cannot play the ball a second time until it has touched another player from either team.

### The player taking the penalty kick infringes the Laws of the Game:

- The Referee allows the kick to proceed.
- If the ball enters the goal, the kick is retaken.
- If the ball does not enter the goal, the kick is not retaken and restarts the match with an indirect free kick to the defending team.

### The goalkeeper infringes the Laws of the Game:

- The Referee allows the kick to proceed.
- If the ball enters the goal, a goal is awarded.
- If the ball does not enter the goal, the kick is retaken

### An attacking team player enters the penalty area or moves in front of or within 10 yards of the penalty mark:

- The Referee allows the kick to proceed.
- If the ball enters the goal, the kick is retaken.
- If the ball does not enter the goal, the kick is not retaken and restarts the match with an indirect free kick to the defending team.
- If the ball rebounds from the goalkeeper, the crossbar or the goalpost and is touched by this player, The Referee stops play and restarts the match with an indirect free kick to the defending team.

### A defending team player enters the penalty area or moves in front of or within 10 yards of the penalty mark:

- The Referee allows the kick to proceed.
- If the ball enters the goal, a goal is awarded.
- If the ball does not enter the goal, the kick is retaken.

### **Referee:**

- Starts PK with a whistle, watches kicker and players for any type of Law violations; e.g encroachment, illegal touches, etc.

### **Assistant referees:**

- If PK is on other end of the field should be positioned at Center Line, watch activity behind the referee
- If PK in your end of the field should be positioned at the intersection of the Goal Line and the Penalty area or on the Goal line towards the goal.
- Watch for any early entry into the penalty area and actions of the keeper.



## Goalkeeper Possession

- Remember, the keeper is guilty of handling the ball outside of the penalty area if the whole of the ball is outside the area while in his hands; foot position means nothing.
- The keeper is considered in possession of the ball by touching it with any part of their hand or arm. Possession of the ball includes the keeper deliberately parrying the ball, but does not include the circumstances where, in the opinion of the referee, the ball rebounds accidentally from the keeper, for example after they have made a save.
- A keeper is allowed to retain possession of the ball for 6 seconds
- A keeper may bounce the ball off the ground and still handle it without penalty. He is considered to still have possession.

## Goal Scored

- A goal is scored when the whole of the ball crosses the goal line, inside the goal posts and under the crossbar.
- Rule of thumb for the assistant referee: The ball must be completely visible on the inside of the goal posts to be considered a goal
- U7/8: No goals can be scored from the opposite half of the field
- Signal all goals with a whistle
- Make eye contact with linesman to confirm goal is scored
- Center referee: After goal is scored, signal toward the center of the field; back pedal to the center of the field
- Assistant referee: signals a goal scored by running up the touch line toward the center line; otherwise raise the flag vertically to indicate that the goal was illegally scored
- Ask players to return ball to center
- Record score
- Make eye contact with the assistant referees to insure they are ready for play to restart
- Restart with kick-off by opposing team on referees signal

## Goal Scored, Ball Returns to Field of Play

- Center referee should look to the assistant referee for their input
- Assistant referee raises the flag vertically; after eye contact, run a short distance up the touch line to signal a goal was scored or hold position to alert referee that you have information for them

## Apparent Goal to be Disallowed

- Center referee:
  - Stops game, if necessary
  - Confers with assistant referee & decides action
  - Signals correct restart
  - Goes to appropriate restart position
- Assistant referee (AR):
  - If referee stopped game, stand in place
  - Signals the referee according to the situation:
    - A) If the scorer was offside, signals offside
    - B) If foul by an attacker, stands attention with no flag
    - C) If player other than scorer was in an offside position and, in the opinion of the AR was interfering with play or an opponent, stand at attention, no flag

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## End of Quarter/Half

- Whistle to stop play, point to center circle and announce end of period
- Try to stop play when ball is in a neutral position
- Recover ball to referee's possession and take off the field with you
- Keep track of time
  - Quarter breaks for U7-U8 = 2 minutes
  - Half time for U9-U12 = 5 minutes; 10 minutes for U13 & above
- Center referee & assistant referees should compare recorded scores and cautions/sending off offenses with each other
- Signal for teams to return to field at end of break
- Ensure correct team kicks off and that teams switch ends at the half
- Remind coaches about proper substitution and other issues if necessary but keep it short and direct. You do not want to give them an opportunity to discuss the 1<sup>st</sup> half with you.

## Fouls Observed by the Referee

- Center referee:
  - Stops the game with whistle
  - Moves to location of foul
  - Indicate the direction of the free kick
  - Eye contact with assistant to determine if foul occurred within the penalty area
  - Ensure ball is properly placed
  - Allow a quick free kick, except where interfered with by opponent's failure to observe the required distance
  - If opponent does not observe distance, whistle to stop play, indicate where the opponent should locate themselves; restart must then occur on the whistle
- Assistant referee: Makes eye contact with the center referee. If foul was committed by the defense in the penalty area, signal with flag waist high across the body
- Follow rules for fouls as per FIFA Rules of the game;
- **Slide tackling is not allowed in U7-U10.**
- All U7/8 & 9/10 fouls are punishable by **Indirect Direct** Free Kick. For U10 & below, referee should whistle play to stop and explain (briefly) foul to players.
- For U11 & older, the referee should also announce to the players what type of restart will be taken. The proper arm signals are mandatory; indicate either indirect or direct kick.



## Fouls Observed by the Assistant Referee

- Center referee:
  - Acknowledges the assistant referee's signal by stopping play, calling advantage, or waving down the signal to indicate that play should continue.
  - If play is stopped, indicate the direction of the free kick
  - Ensure the free kick is properly taken
  - Confers with the assistant referee, if necessary to confirm the nature of the infringement
- Assistant referee:
  - Signals with the flag raised vertically in the hand appropriate for the restart direction and, upon making eye contact with the referee, gives the flag a slight waggle
  - If the referee stops play, signals with the flag held 45 degrees upward in the direction of the restart if the foul was committed by any player outside the penalty area or by an attacker inside the penalty area.
  - Moves directly to goal line to assume the position for a penalty kick if a defender inside the penalty area committed the foul.
  - Indicates the location of the restart if necessary (far, middle, near)

## Advantage/Play on

- Center referee:
  - Used mainly on U-11 and above aged teams
  - Declare distinctly and loudly, "Play on!" or "Advantage!"
  - Move both hands forward in a sweeping motion at waist level
  - If there is no foul committed there is no need to use this. You are telling the players you did see a foul but it is not in their best interest to stop play for a minor foul.

## Handballs

- Handballs occur when the player in question **handles the ball with any part of his hand, arm or shoulder.** However, a ball that inadvertently touches a player's hand after being kicked or thrown should not be called a handball, unless the that player tries to 'settle' the ball. The definition of a handball includes the hand, arm, and shoulder.
- The key question is did the ball play the hand (no handball) or did the hand play the ball (handball).

## Impeding Play

Player is playing another player when the ball is not in playing distance (2 strides for their current pace)



## Offside (U12 & older only)

- Center referee:
  - Acknowledges the assistant referee's signal by stopping play or waving down the flag to indicate play should continue
  - If offside is awarded, signal indirect free kick with a raised arm and hold until ball is touched by another player from either team
- Assistant referee signal:
  - Raise the flag vertically
  - If the center referee misses the flag, stay at attention with the flag raised until the defense gains clear possession of until a goal kick or throw-in is awarded to the defense
  - Indicate the location of the offense (far, middle, near)
- Reminder: It is not an offense in itself to be in an offside position
- A player is in an offside position if he is nearer to his opponent's goal line than both the ball and the second to last opponent (including the keeper).
- A player is not in an offside position if he is in his own half of the field, or he is level with the 2<sup>nd</sup> to last opponent (including the keeper).
- A player is penalized for being off side if at the moment the ball is played forward by one of his team, he is in the offside position, and he is in the opinion of the referee involved in active play by;
  - Playing the ball
  - Interfering with play, or
  - Interfering with an opponent, or
  - Gains an advantage by being in that position
- **There is no offside offense if a player receives a ball directly from a goal kick, throw-in, corner kick, or drop ball.**
- Correct restart for offside—Indirect Free Kick
- **Note – there is no offside for U7-U10.**

## Dangerous Play

- High kicks are the most common form of dangerous play
- It is not a dangerous play simply because a player kicks the ball while lying on the ground. It IS a dangerous play if they run the risk of being kicked by another player while on the ground.

## End of Game

- Whistle play to stop
- Point and return to center circle
- Encourage teams to shake hands
- Return ball to proper team
- Retrieve flags if used



## **Injuries**

- Play should be stopped for injuries at the referee's discretion. For younger age groups (U7-10), play should be stopped whenever a player is down or appears hurt.
- In case of injury, referee should whistle play to stop and direct coach to enter the field if necessary.
- Injured players at the younger ages usually have parents on the field to make sure their child is okay. Use some judgment and understanding with them. At the older ages politely ask them to return to their side of the field. Try to determine if the injury is serious enough to call for medical assistance, Wave the coach on and then move away from that area. Don't invite a chance for a coach or parent to discuss the game with you.
- If play is stopped for an injury the injured player must leave the field but does not have to be substituted for and may return at the next stoppage of play

## **Issues with Players/Coaches/Parents**

### **Issuing Yellow or Red Cards**

- Only team members scheduled to play, players or substitutes, on the game roster may receive yellow or red cards; coaches, team members not dressed on the sideline or parents may not be carded. (See section on abuse at end of booklet)
- You are not carding a player because of a foul. You may issue a card because of the manner in which the foul was committed. Also refer to listed offenses below.
- When issuing a yellow or red card, whistle to stop play, call the player to you and away from other players and show the player in question the card by raising it above your head.

### **Yellow Cards Offenses (player is cautioned)**

- Unsporting behavior (tackle with cleats out, unnecessary force, deliberate foul with no attempt to play the ball, etc.)
- Dissent by word or action
- Persistently infringing the Laws of the Game: Repeated fouls by same player or similar fouls by different players or against one player from opposing team
- Delaying the restart of play
- Failing to respect the required distance when restarting by corner kick, free kick or throw-in
- Entering or re-entering the field of play without the referee's permission
- Deliberately leaves the field of play without the referee's permission

### **Red Card Offenses (Player is sent off)**

- Serious foul play
- Violent conduct
- Spitting at an opponent or any other person
- Denies an obvious goal scoring opportunity by deliberately handling the ball (does not apply to keeper in his own penalty area)
- Denies an obvious goal scoring opportunity by an offense punishable by a DFK, IFK or PK
- Using offensive, insulting or abusive language or gestures toward anyone
- Receiving a 2<sup>nd</sup> caution (yellow card) in the same game
  - Person receiving the red card must leave the field area

Note: This manual has been developed as a reference for club level referees. It is intended to address club-specific rules (especially for the U8-U19 age levels) as well as some of the more common questions/situations faced by referees. It is NOT intended to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Laws of the Game; for this, please refer to your FIFA Laws of the Game or USSF Handbook.



## Misconduct by Coaches or Parents

- Remain calm. Don't be intimidated by either a coach or a parent. Coaches tend to start yelling when frustrated. Set your limit of what you will tolerate and enforce it. Calmly ask the coach to settle down or quite down and politely as possible remind him if behavior continues you will eject them from the game. If a parent is the problem ask the coach for assistance and let the coach know if the parent continues the coach will receive the misconduct for the parent's action. Never get into a discussion or argument with the sideline people.
- Misconduct (behavior not supportive of the game) or abuse of referees by parents or coaches will not be tolerated. If you experience misconduct, verbal or physical abuse, it is within the referee's duties to:
  - Eject the coach or parent verbally (no card is shown) or if you feel threatened;
  - Ask a board member to escort the person from the area.
  - Discontinue the game at any time.
- Any misconduct or abuse should be reported immediately to MCSC Director of Referees and MCSC President.
- Any physical contact of the referee or threat of physical harm to the referee is unacceptable and should be referred to local law enforcement authorities by club officials, for prosecution. It must also be reported to the MCSC President and MCSC Director of Referees within 24 hours of the game.

For questions, contact:

MCSC Director of Referees

[www.mahaskasoccer.com](http://www.mahaskasoccer.com)

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