

## ***“Fair Play”***

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### **1) THE REFEREE’S ROLE IN YOUTH SOCCER**

**By Julie Ilacqua, Managing Director of Referee Programs**

*This is a continuation of the article featured in the last edition of Fair Play. Part One of this article, which dealt with keeping the game safe and keeping the game fair, may be accessed at [http://dps.twiihosting.net/USSF/doc/content/doc\\_6\\_178.pdf](http://dps.twiihosting.net/USSF/doc/content/doc_6_178.pdf). Part Two covers making the game fun, referees as role models and some of the complications a referee can bring to the game.*

#### **Making it Fun**

Enjoying what you do is important in all areas of life. For a referee, having fun and enjoying the experience makes the game better for all involved – players, coaches and spectators. If you are refereeing just for the game fees or feel like you are trapped in an obligation, chances are, being a referee will be a really tough job. There are many positive things you learn from being a referee and two of the most important skills you can acquire as a referee are people management skills and learning how to manage the game itself. Gaining experience in these areas can be beneficial to you throughout life, so let’s look and how you can make the most of your refereeing opportunity.

In order to make a game fun, there are a few things you can really focus on to get the most out of your experience: 1) Treating each assignment like it’s the best one you have ever had; 2) Being fair to all involved and 3) Portraying a positive attitude towards others at all times.

Referees should treat each game like it’s the best assignment they have ever had. Players like having referees that enjoy what they do and players normally respond positively when they see a referee enjoying the way the players are playing the game. The game is for the players and having a referee treat the game and the players with that kind of respect usually makes for a better experience for all involved. So, what happens when you have been assigned a game that you don’t feel like doing? Maybe you don’t feel like doing much of anything that day or you wanted to be off with your friends and now, because you made a commitment, you have to do what you said you would do, which is referee a game. Grumpy referees are not allowed. Put on a smile and make the best of it. Did you ever hear the saying, “Some people bring happiness wherever they go and some

people bring happiness whenever they go?” Strive to be the first person in this quotation and not the last. The game will be more pleasant for everyone involved, including you.

Making the game fair for everyone involved is an important part of making the game fun. It's hard to feel like you are having fun if you feel like you aren't being treated fairly. Sometimes there is nothing you can do as a referee to keep players or coaches from feeling that “it isn't fair,” but there are things you can avoid doing that may give the impression that you favor one team over the other. One way is in not talking to one coach or team in a more familiar way than you talk to the other coach or team. You should never behave or referee in a manner that gives the impression you have a preference for one team over another. A referee should not mistake teasing players or calling players by “cute nicknames” as having fun with the players. This may work with some of the very little children when they first start playing, but it won't be long before the players and their competitive natures will outgrow that behavior from a referee.

Finally, do you remember what it is that always improves one's looks? The answer is a smile. This is especially important for referees – smile when you come to the field, smile while you are there and smile when you leave. Remember – soccer plus children should equal fun and as a referee, you can help everyone enjoy the game and learn some valuable life lessons in the process.

### **Officials as Role Models**

Role models come in all shapes, sizes and ways. As an “authority figure” on the field, referees of all ages are role models for players, coaches, spectators and other referees, so referees should strive to set a good example of professional behavior. Providing an atmosphere for soccer that is safe for the players, fair to all participants and fun for everyone is a good place to start when striving to be a role model for children.

When you are the referee assigned to do a game, you are one of the authority figures the players will deal with that day. This applies to our young referees who are working games for even younger players. When you are on the field and you have the whistle, you are the authority figure to all of those little boys and girls. It is important that we leave them with a good feeling about dealing with people in authority.

The first thing that will be noticed about you when you approach the field is how you look. Are you dressed like a referee who cares about the impression you make on others? Your OSI official uniform should be a neat and clean. Your Nike shoes should be clean and polished with your socks pulled up and not slouched around your ankles.

For the older referees it should go without saying that alcohol should not be consumed before officiating a game or at the field where you have worked as a referee. Referees should refrain from smoking as well. These are activities that don't belong in youth sports by participants in a game, and as a referee, you are a participant in the game.

Referees should be aware of what they are saying to players, coaches and spectators. Sometimes we say things that we think are inconsequential, but we have to realize that

statements we think are unimportant may be misinterpreted by others when they do not know our intent. Sexual comments and innuendoes should not be made at the field – to anyone. This is not part of the game, and using sexual innuendo or making comments is inappropriate and unprofessional.

Be courteous to everyone and treat everyone with the same courteous manner. This isn't always easy, especially when the people on the sidelines are going crazy and yelling at you. But remember - it is really hard for someone to keep yelling at you if you don't yell back. If you speak softly and respectfully, the other person will normally respond in a like manner. If they don't respond in a respectful manner, but continue to rant and rave, then you would deal with the situation with the powers afforded you as a referee under the Laws of the Game.

Role models share some qualities that are contagious to those with whom they have contact. Being ethical is an important quality for role models. Consider this definition of "ethics" from Webster's Dictionary: "The system of moral values, the principle of right or good conduct." Another way to say the same thing - "Doing the right thing, even when it is difficult or could cost you." In a recent survey on ethics 56 percent of high school age boys and 45 percent of high school age girls think that successful people do whatever they have to do to win even if others consider it cheating. As a role model, you have the opportunity to show young soccer players that this is not the case and that people in a position of authority can be fair and professional.

Another quality that role models share is character. Character is easily defined as doing the right thing even when no one is watching. As a referee, you have a great deal of influence over how the game is played and how enjoyable it is. You have the whistle and can stop and start play. A good thing to do is to put yourself in the player's shoes and ask yourself: "If I was playing this game, how would I like me as the referee?"

A third quality that role models have in common is a great attitude. Attitude is just about the only thing in your control. You can't control the weather, the kind of field you are playing on, the skill level of the players, who the coaches are and what kind of people are on the sidelines. But the one thing you can control is your attitude and that will determine how you handle all of those things that you cannot control. Your attitude as a referee will be apparent to players and coaches in your body language, your tone of voice, how you treat your fellow referees, as well as all other participants in the game.

Remember – when you take the field as a referee, the players will watch what you do, how you behave and how you respond to difficult situations – what will they learn from you?

### **Referees Sometimes Complicate the Game**

At times, referees, are our own worst enemy and when that is the case, the game on the field can be difficult and not much fun for anyone involved. What are some of the ways in which a referee can complicate a game? We can forget that the game is for the players and think that we are the center of attention. This is ego involvement that doesn't belong

on the field. The game is not about the referee. There are children playing soccer in streets, at parks and on fields all over the world without a referee, but you will never see a referee working a game without the players. The game is for the players and as referees, we provide a service to the game, but we are not the game.

Another way in which the ego of the referee becomes involved is to think that some assignments are beneath them. How can that be if the game is not about the referee? It shouldn't matter what level of competition you are assigned or referee, or whether you are assigned as the referee, as the assistant referee or as the 4th official. Your job remains the same – to serve the game. If that is the case, then obviously there is no assignment that is beneath a referee, because for the players on that day, that is the most important game in the world. A good referee treats every game that way regardless of the level of competition.

Have you ever worked with a referee that thought they had nothing to learn about soccer? This is another complication that referees can bring to the game. Referees who think they know it all will never be good referees. Good referees are always learning – they learn from the games they work, they learn from working with more experienced referees, they learn from mentors and they learn from watching the game. Learning is a never ending process and this is something that our very best referees know instinctively.

Another complication referees bring to the game abusing the authority they have been given as a referee. Referees who relish the authority and use a heavy-handed approach are a nightmare for players and coaches. Referees who do this tend to bully people with their authority. Nobody likes being bullied. There is an old adage to remember when it comes to authority – “Just because you can, doesn't mean you should.” Authority and power should be viewed more as duties and responsibilities; this will help referees to keep the authority they have over a game in proper perspective.

Sometimes referees bring past baggage with them to a game. You may cringe at the thought that you are once again going to have to see a specific player, coach or team at the field. Maybe you had a difficult experience the last time you were the referee for one of their games and you feel you are going to be in for more of the same. As difficult as it is, that past experience should be put aside – this is a new game on a new day and everyone should be able to expect fair treatment with no carryover from the previous game. If you can let that past game go as a referee, perhaps it will help the coach and players to do the same. Referees should gain experience and knowledge from past games, but they should not hold grudges. Doing any job while holding a grudge about the people you are working with influences how you do your job. Let it go and move on. The ability not to hold grudges will be appreciated by all.

If you are having trouble with a particular part of the game as a referee, don't be afraid to ask for help. Talk to someone more experienced at the field, call an instructor that you know and talk it over. Maybe you have trouble managing a free kick close to the penalty area – maybe you have problems catching the flags from the assistant referees. Whatever it is, you are not the first referee to have that problem – all referees struggle with different

aspects of the game and need more training and more education. Having a mentor who will work with you is very beneficial. Every referee who earns a national badge has had at least one mentor in their career as a referee, and usually many more. Don't be afraid to ask for help. You can also contact "Ask a Referee" at the [ussoccer.com](http://ussoccer.com) Referee page and ask anything you want about the Laws of the Game or how to handle a specific part of the game and you will receive an answer.

Remember, as a referee you should be someone who makes a game run smoothly – part of the solution, not part of the problem.

### **Summary**

Being a U.S. Soccer referee officiating youth soccer means:

- Keeping the games safe for the players
- Knowing and applying the Laws of the Game evenhandedly to keep the games fair for the players
- Taking an active role in making soccer fun for children
- Honoring the obligation to be a role model as a referee. If you are a young referee, what kind of a referee do you want to see at your games? If you are an adult, what kind of a referee do you want to see at your children's games?
- Taking an objective look at yourself and recognize what you can do to make your experience better as a referee and the children's experience better as players – it's about the players, not the referee!

There are many referee training materials available at [www.ussoccer.com/referees](http://www.ussoccer.com/referees).

Please take advantage of these materials to help you to continue to develop as a referee.

Thank you for choosing to be a part of the game of soccer in a very challenging and demanding role – that of a referee.

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## **2) PLAYER MANAGEMENT**

**By Esse Baharmast, Director of Advanced & International Referee Development**

Player management is the wonderful art of handling a match in such a way that the majority of players and coaches wish to see this referee over and over again. A referee who is capable of managing the players is always in demand and is sought after for the most crucial matches by teams and assignors alike.

How does a referee acquire such a great gift? Where can we look to find several possible ways of accomplishing this difficult yet rewarding task? We will give you some basic tools to experiment with and with your own ingenuity you will find ways to build upon these elements and create an art form of player management that is unique to you.

The first step is to recognize and believe with all your heart, that the game IS ALL ABOUT THE PLAYERS. This is the most fundamental yet crucial piece of this puzzle. As referees, we must know and accept that the game is not about us. Our job is to provide a service to our customers (the players). Our function is to provide a safe environment where players can show their energy, creativity and skills. We do this by making sure that the Laws of the Game are applied in a fair and consistent manner with the Spirit of the Law as our guiding light. When a referee uses this approach to the players and respects them as the essential elements of our beautiful game, this positive and service-oriented attitude comes across clearly and becomes the building block of a good relationship.

The second step is to become A STUDENT OF THE GAME. That means so much more than just taking a referee course. It means playing the game, watching as many high level games as possible, taking a coaching course, reading soccer publications and keeping up with newest developments in our game. It also means spending some time with referees who have been successful in their careers to find out what type of advice they can pass on. The more we study the game, the easier it becomes to understand the nuances of the game and why players and coaches do what they do.

The next step is to learn to be a GOOD COMMUNICATOR. To be a good communicator, means that you have to learn to listen and filter through what you hear. During games, players will talk to you and if you can sift through what is being said, you can get good information that will help you prevent problems. It also means that you can be friendly when needed and stern and somber when the situation calls for it. A good communicator establishes what is acceptable in the game very quickly and applies it consistently and even handedly. Most referees think that their only forms of communication with players are whistles and cards but, they could not be farther from truth as the whistle and cards are reactive tools. A preventive and proactive referee uses body language, tone of voice, eye contact, or a quiet word to let the players know that they need to settle down. This type of referee recognizes a problem before it becomes too big and diffuses it by good communication.

Finally it is the RESPECT, CARING FOR OTHERS and PASSION FOR THE GAME that shows everyone that this referee is in the game for all the right reasons. The referee who shows respect for others will get their respect back in the long term. A referee who cares for others is recognized as such by the players and even when there is a genuine, human mistake (which believe it or not, does happen!), the players will give the benefit of doubt to the referee and move on without making their life more difficult. Passion for the game is the fire that burns within and a referee who has this will never tire of giving service to the game and the players. This referee looks forward to every assignment and every opportunity to be around the game, because they love what they do. This is the secret of those who succeed.

Each game, remember the key elements mentioned here - good communication, respect, caring for others and passion for the game - and use them to evaluate your performance. Over time, you can take these tools and use them to continually improve and develop your own art form of player management.

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### **3) QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

#### **Report All Serious Injuries**

*Q. A player was struck in the face by a hard shot. The referee stopped play to evaluate the injury. The match was over within five minutes after play was restarted. After the game, one of the coaches of that team asked the referee to make a note of the injury on the game card and/or to complete a game report in order to record the event for insurance. The player had surgery for a torn retina and missed two weeks of school and a longer period from other activities. Is there an official policy regarding referee responsibilities in situations like this?*

A. The referee must note any serious injuries on the game report, no matter what the level of play.

#### **Common Sense Management of the Game**

*Q. During a challenge between blue 8 and white 9 at midfield, white 9 simulates a dive in an attempt to draw a foul. Blue 8 wins the ball and proceeds to goal. The referee applies the advantage clause. Blue 8 shoots on goal and the goalie collects the ball. The referee now stops play and runs back up the field to issue a caution to white 9 for diving. While the referee is issuing the caution, the keeper, who is still holding the ball, kicks at blue 8. The assistant referee raises the flag. There is a conference between the referee and the assistant referee. What should the referee do?*

A. The restart should be an indirect free kick from the place where the original infringement occurred.

The referee should not have stopped the game to run back up field to punish non-dangerous misconduct at that moment. It would have been better to wait until the ball went out of play (for whatever reason) and then punish the misconduct.

The goalkeeper must be set off for violent conduct and shown the red card. This could have been prevented by not stopping play to run back up the field. The intelligent referee will keep play moving along whenever possible. A busy player doesn't have as much time to get into trouble as the idle player.

#### **Unsporting behavior at a penalty kick**

*Q. During a penalty kick, the defending players all yelled in an unsportsmanlike manner just as the opposing player was about to kick the ball, thereby distracting that player. The ball did not go in. What should the call be? If it is unsporting and every player was involved, who should be cautioned and what should the restart be? Should the player attempting the kick be allowed another chance?*

A. Follow the instructions in Law 14: Allow the kick to be taken. If it enters the goal, score the goal. If the ball does not enter the goal, retake the penalty kick. For game management purposes, this is not a situation in which you would simply warn the opposing player(s). Therefore, do not retake the kick until you have cautioned at least one of the players on the opposing team for unsporting behavior and shown the yellow card. It is your choice as to which player(s) to caution, but it might be wise to select a player who has not previously been cautioned.

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#### **4) REFEREES ARE NOT ALWAYS TESTED ON THE FIELD** **By Rodney Kenney, National Assessor**

One attribute that is key to a successful refereeing career is a POSITIVE ATTITUDE. When we talk to referees who are not successful, it doesn't take long to discover why. They say, "I never get the better games," although they are assigned to the same type of games as everyone else in their grade. They are also the referees who believe they are always right, and the comments from the assessors are always wrong. They consider themselves above all junior referees and tell the assignor that they should be doing the center instead of the "less qualified" people who are being assigned. The attitude of "I have been refereeing for 15 years and don't need to go to any clinics," or "the players are getting worse . . . they are out of control," are some of the comments you hear from them. They always seem to have problems in games and blame everyone else, the assistants, coaches, and players for the trouble. Never once do they reflect on what they may have done to cause the problems in the game.

This negative attitude turns off fellow referees, assessors, assignors, and administrators, the people we depend on to support our referee careers. Refereeing at all levels, from entry to level, is a team effort and a positive attitude can make your refereeing career a success, while a negative attitude can cause it to be a failure.

You may never know when you are being tested for better assignments; the following is an example of such a test. A new National referee was invited to the Olympic Development Program tournament finals. He was the highest-rated referee there. When he returned from the tournament he was asked how he did, and he replied simply, "fine." Pressured further about the games he received, he said he did two fourth officials, and three assistant referee assignments. Questioned about the lack of high-level assignments, he said that all week the other referees at the tournament also questioned why the highest-rated referee did not get better assignments. He said he told them he was just pleased to be there for a week and felt that if that is what the people who sent him wanted him to do, that was fine with him. He smiled and conceded, "Oh, I also did the final in the middle," which was the best assignment in the tournament.

Yes, they were testing him, but what were they testing him for? Obviously it was not his refereeing ability, but rather his attitude, both on and off the field. The test was whether

he would he represent the Federation well. Would he be a good role model for younger referees? They found the right man and have since assigned him to many pro games and other prestigious assignments. What can we learn from this example? We learn that each assignment is not only a test of refereeing skills, but also of a positive attitude and approach. Accept each assignment no matter what it is, and always do your best. If you are as good as you think you are, success will come with the assignments.

A positive attitude can sometimes see you through times when your skills are not quite what they should be or when you move to a new level in your refereeing career. Assessors want to know that you understand your weaknesses and can accept constructive criticism with a positive attitude and will work to improve your refereeing skills. Referees want to work with other referees who have a positive attitude and are not afraid to ask for help to get better. Just remember, “You can fail on your own but you can only succeed with the help of others.” Refereeing is a team effort, be part of the team.

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## **5) PREPARING FOR YOUR FIRST ASSESSMENT**

**By David E. McKee, National Director of Assessment**

*Referees who have never experienced an assessment often arrive at the field on match day filled with anxiety and trepidation. This can disrupt your concentration on the task at hand (i.e., refereeing the match). This article is intended to help prepare you for the match, minimizing any anxiety about the assessment.*

### **What should you expect from an assessment and why it is critical to your development as a referee?**

The role of the assessor is to observe how the referee team performed before, during and after the match. As an experienced referee, the assessor will observe your performance with an unbiased and fair perspective. As a coach/mentor, the assessor will provide you with immediate feedback at the end of the match. The feedback will focus on the things that were done well (proficiencies), problem areas noted (areas in need of improvement), and most important, options or suggestions for improvement. The postgame discussion must be meaningful to you and the rest of the referee team, an open and honest two-way discussion between the assessor and you. The assessor should answer all questions you raise. This ensures a clear understanding of the points raised by the assessor and paves the way for an action plan on the areas needing improvement discussed. Both parties must approach this discussion with a positive attitude, a willingness to learn and mutual respect. You should leave the discussion with a path forward for improvement of performance for future matches. This discussion should not be a negative, critical or demeaning experience. It is important that you focus on the game itself, not on being assessed. You should not change your refereeing style or your decisions because you are being observed! Easier said than done, right?

### **How to prepare for an assessment:**

1. Know the criteria under which you will be assessed.

At the end of this article you will find a checklist of the assessment criteria used by assessors when observing your match.

2. Know the Laws, their correct interpretation, and how they should be applied.

You have access to the Laws of the Game, the Referee Administrative Handbook, the Guide to Procedures for Referees and Assistant Referees, the Guide for Fourth Officials, and the Advice to Referees on the Laws of the Game.

a. Review the Guide to Procedures for Referees and Assistant Referees and the Guide for Fourth Officials to be certain you use proper mechanics and signals. Review these with your referee team in your pregame discussion on match day.

b. Review the Advice to Referees on a frequent basis, to broaden your awareness when making decisions requiring the application of the Laws of the Game in your match. Always prepare for matches and expect the unexpected. By anticipating, rather than reacting to events, you will have a plan of action in mind and will be better equipped to make instantaneous decisions under the stress of the match.

3. Begin your teamwork as early as possible.

Your match preparation begins when you receive your assignment. This is a three-step process: preparation before match day, pregame activities on match day and actual performance during and after the match.

#### **a. Before match day:**

(1) You and your referee team have complete control of your own mental and physical fitness. A regular training regime to achieve match fitness requires dedication and hard work, but without physical fitness you will experience mental fatigue as you tire during the match. Mental fatigue results in diminished visual acuity and poor decisions, and physical fatigue results in being in a poor position to judge challenges for the ball as well as the ability to read the tactical nature of developing play.

(2) Gather needed information from the assignor (time, date, location, age level, rules of competition, substitution procedures, length of match, etc.). Know who your fellow officials are, and how to reach them. Gather your referee equipment and uniform to ensure you come to the pitch with all the needed equipment. It is very embarrassing to arrive at the match without a watch, a whistle, a current badge, cards, flags, shoes, etc.

#### **b. The match itself:**

(1) Agree on where and when to meet prior to the kick-off (at least 30 minutes beforehand). You must have adequate time to complete the pregame discussion, to introduce your team of officials to the coaches, to perform your pregame duties (field, equipment, ball and player inspections) and to conduct the coin toss.

(2) Allow enough time to get warmed up and stretched prior to kick-off to prevent injury. It is your responsibility to insure the game starts at the designated time.

(3) After kick-off, your focus must be entirely on refereeing the game to the best of your ability, not on the observations of the assessor. **Remember the game is for the players.** Your job is to maintain game control by fairly and consistently applying the Laws of the Game. You are the guardian of the spirit of the "beautiful game" and the

game is for the enjoyment of the players, fans and coaches. You must establish an environment that allows the players to play to their skill level, without fear of injury. Good game control requires good fitness and field position, a good read of the game, good foul discrimination, knowledge of the laws and their application, player management and game management. Maintaining a calm and professional demeanor reflects confidence in your decisions. Do not be influenced by appeals from the players, coaches or fans when making your decisions. During half time the referee team should discuss adjustments needed for the second half. Above all, remain focused for 90 minutes and enjoy the match. Coming to the match prepared makes your job easier.

**c. After the match**

(1) The post-game discussion between your referee team and the assessor will provide you with positive feedback on the things that were done well, areas for improvement and suggestions on how to improve your performance in future matches. Immediately after the match you should discuss the major incidents or decisions made during the match which led to good match control or problems. You should always self-evaluate your own performance whether or not an assessor is present. Even if you are not being assessed you need to do this to maximize the learning from each match you officiate.

(2) Do not hesitate to call or contact an assessor/coach/mentor after you have had a difficult match that wasn't assessed – or even when you have questions on how you might have handled situations that created problems for you in game control. The sole purpose of the assessment process is to help you become a better and more experienced referee and to assist you in achieving higher referee grades when your game experience and abilities warrant upgrade.

**Assessment Criteria**

Read the criteria at this URL carefully:

<http://www.ussoccer.com/referees/content.sps?iType=4169&icustompageid=6686>

This will give you the head start you need to perform correctly on any game you do.

###

**6) NEW AND UPDATED REFEREE MATERIAL!**

New and Updated Referee Material Now Available

**Player Management CD ROM**

U.S. Soccer is pleased to announce the availability of a CD presentation entitled Player Management. The CD presentation was created by Esse Baharmast and Paul Tamberino and is narrated by Esse Baharmast.

Baharmast is the U.S. Soccer Director of Professional and International Referee Development and a former member of the FIFA International Referee Panel who officiated in World Cup France in 1998. Baharmast was known for his player management abilities on the field of play as a referee and most recently served as the

head of instruction for the FIFA World Youth Championship in Holland. Tamberino was a member of the FIFA International Panel of Assistant Referees and four-time MLS Referee of the Year, selected for this honor by MLS players and coaches.

The CD deals with how to become a good player manager as a referee, what are the qualities that make up a good player manager and how can you improve this part of your game as a referee.

This is a great presentation for referees of all ages and experience levels which can be used for instruction in a group or for an individual referee's personal library of educational material. The CD includes video clips to enhance learning, as well as a great goals sequence at the end highlighting goals from our youngest players to our most seasoned veterans.

### ***Offside Made Easy***

A new publication, *Offside Made Easy*, is the second in a series that present the *Laws of the Game* in a simplified, enjoyable form for players, coaches, administrators and spectators. In 2003, the Federation published the first book, *Laws of the Game Made Easy*, which was well received and has been used as a teaching tool around the world.

Offside (Law 11) is one of the most often misunderstood elements of the game of soccer yet, properly presented, it can be among the easiest concepts to present. *Offside Made Easy* seeks to do that through simple language, humorous graphics, and a logical arrangement of the subject:

- Where Does It Come From? -- A brief summary of the history of the offside Law
- What Does It Say? -- The specific language of Law 11
- What Does It Mean? -- A discussion of offside position, involvement in active play, exceptions, and the required restart
- What If? -- A series of 15 common scenarios involving offside which often cause comments, questions, and confusion

### ***Advice to Referees on the Laws of the Game***

A newly updated edition of *Advice to Referees on the Laws of the Game* is now available. The first edition of the *Advice* was published in 1998 and it was updated in November 2003. The material in the latest edition is consistent with The International Board decisions to date.

*The Advice to Referees* provides USSF referees, referee instructors, referee assessors, coaches, players, and fans a reliable compilation of international and national guidelines on interpretations of the *Laws of the Game*. It is not a replacement for *the Laws of the Game*, nor is it a "how to" book on refereeing. It has been compiled from a number of sources of information: the *Laws of the Game*, the *Questions and Answers to the Laws of the Game*, annual FIFA Circulars, as well as other official publications from the USSF instructional program, including articles in Fair Play and specific subject memoranda.

*The Advice* provides insight into aspects of the *Laws* that are not always clear to the casual reader and gives referees a solid foundation for making the correct decision at the correct time. It answers questions whose solutions are not always clear to even the most experienced referees. *The Advice* is also an ideal resource for coaches and players, to help them understand the decisions made by referees, assistant referees, and fourth officials.

These and other U.S. Soccer Training Materials for Referees can be purchased at [www.ussoccer.com/referees](http://www.ussoccer.com/referees).

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