



Welcome to this seventy second edition of **“The Referee”**, the newsletter for all NSW State League Football Referees. This newsletter will enable our branch to communicate directly with our members and will cover issues and areas of interest to all referees.

We wish to ensure that all information, educational resources and opportunities that our branch provides for referees finds its way to those who are likely to benefit most – and that’s you!



LEGEA

Identify the mood or temperature of the game and use this awareness to ensure an adjustment in pace and/or increased involvement to prevent problems. “Tempo” is the key word here again. Games can go in cycles, where the tempo increases or decreases at different times in the game. As the referee seeking to maintain match control an approach which varies with the tempo of the game usually helps – for instance when the tempo is high, then being pickier over free kicks to slow the game down, playing less advantage and increasing communication with players usually helps. A low tempo game, where the players are looking to get on with playing football (fairly) allows the referee to take a more relaxed approach, allow trivial offences to go unpunished and play more advantage.

Make Amends to Regain Game Control

If you have been an official for any length of time, you have had a game or more “get away from you.” Whether it was calling the game to allow players to play when they did not expect that, or some hidden, smouldering rivalry that erupted while it was your turn to moderate the game or just a bad situation in light, angles or partners, this is your moment to assert yourself and, by doing so, get that game back under control.

It sounds so easy when it is put that way — assert yourself and get the game back under control. The truth is far more complicated and it will take all of your skills and management expertise to turn this game around. The key to pulling this off depends on three things: understanding what went wrong, making amends to the affected parties and then changing your approach going forward.

What Went Wrong

In order to address the problem, you have to get a grip on what caused the game to get off the rails in the first place. Replay the comments from the players — was it a situation where you thought they wanted to play but the players really didn't want that? Did you hear some trash talk that could have been stopped had you listened a little closer, and didn't? Was it something else, like a significant injury or foul that was missed due to the natural interferences of 20 players moving in a space, combined with different angles of sunlight, a moment of inattention on your part or something elsewhere which you thought was more important at that point?

If you can put your finger on what the problem is, you are on your way to getting the game back under control. With that said, there are some cases where you should strongly consider terminating the game.

Hidden Bad Blood

If you are familiar with working in a particular area where you know the teams well, you may know of teams that have a rivalry. Then again, you may be helping an assigner on a new field and have no idea that the teams for some reason are mortal enemies. If a fight breaks out toward the end of any match, emotions will likely be at ragged edges. Restarting any match after a fight is likely to result in regrets, since the emotions that caused the fight are now even closer to the surface. Listen to the coaches and ask them if there is anything you need to know after clearing the offending players off the field. If there is a hint of bad blood, do the right thing and terminate the game. File the required report with the game authorities, sticking to facts only, and take this as a way to have avoided losing control a second time.

If you find yourself in a situation where that is not the case, now you have to address the hard part — making a reasonable apology to the team captains in a brief conference on the field. Start by pulling the referee team together and explaining to the team captains what you think is going on. “Look, I know number 3 just got his ankle broken — and we didn't see the play that led to it. That has to be frustrating and we apologise for that.” You can add in some more information, but don't make excuses. The referee team missed it — own the mistake.

The following discussion describes what you could do after any particularly obnoxious foul or too many “ordinary” fouls in too short a period of time — whether or not there was an injury, noticed or unnoticed.

Take a moment to establish your going-forward plan. Tell the captains what you expect — no retaliation, good clean play. Explain that you are going to significantly change the way you are calling the game — that you will be calling it tighter and, if you see any issues, the cards will come promptly. Let them know also that, if the situation improves appreciably, you would be open to adjusting your game control appropriately. Ask the captains to brief their teams on the new expectations and give them a few moments to do so.

Recovering and Change

When you blow the whistle to restart the game, the entire referee team has to be on the same page. The AR's need to be particularly vigilant in watching for things behind your back. Call fouls quickly as you see them — the first few touches and fouls should help set the tone of the game, and show the captains and teams that you are going to keep your word. This is not the time to create “phantom” fouls, just to make a call. Run harder, stay closer to play, use your AR's and get the calls right. The players will quickly realise you have re-asserted control and this, in turn, will help to lower the game temperature. With this in mind, you have to maintain this level of control through to the end of the game. Focus and concentrate for 100% of the match.

When you think about this, games get out of control because the referee team does not read the players or play well, or similarly, the referee team members are too predictable, and as a result the teams are reading them too well! If you are going to referee at a match with unknown teams, you need to use as many clues as possible to figure out an effective “starting level.” That can include arriving far enough ahead of time to be able to watch the teams arrive, warm up and practice, looking for the expected set pieces or actions that could cause problems during the game, as well as other concerns.

How you respond in such situations, either by assessing the situation and addressing it or not, makes the difference between a good official and just an official. Consider the above suggestions. Keep in mind that reading the game and players properly from the start is a far better way to keep the game under control. The hard way is, trying to recover a game after it has started to run away.

This article has been modified from original material produced by Al Baer from www.referee.com.

Active Member of the Month

Congratulations go to Mujtab Ebrahimi who is the Active Member of the Month for August 2019. Mujtab received the highest points for his all-round performance during August for his dedication to training, attending the general meeting and doing well in the monthly LOTG Quiz. Mujtab was awarded a \$50.00 Caltex Voucher by Sharon O'Neill for his efforts at the September General Meeting. Well done Mujtab.



2018-2019 Laws of the Game Quiz

A thorough understanding of the Laws of the Game is an essential quality of a good referee. All referees should regularly review their Laws of the Game book to ensure they are correctly interpreting and applying them.

This monthly LOTG Quiz is highly recommended for all active referees and assessors and counts towards meeting part of the criteria for honour games consideration and annual awards. To reinforce your knowledge you are encouraged to utilise your Laws of the Game Book to assist in answering the quiz questions. All quiz questions are based on the current 2018/2019 IFAB LOTG.

[Click Here](#) Click on the "Click Here" button to complete the highly recommended monthly LOTG Quiz to test yourself on how well you know the laws.

September LOTG Quiz Answers: 1 - D; 2 - D; 3 - A; 4 - B; 5 - D; 6 - B; 7 - C; 8 - D; 9 - B; 10 - A.

Important Dates

Friday 6th December 2019 – Annual General Meeting at Bankstown Sports Club, 8 Greenfield Parade, Bankstown NSW 2200, starts at 7.30 pm.



Richard Baker - NSWFLR TSC Member and Newsletter Editor

