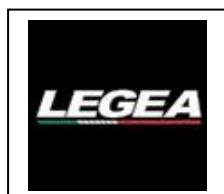




Welcome to this eighty seventh edition of **“The Referee”**, the newsletter for all NSW State League Football Referees. This newsletter will enable our branch to communicate directly with our members and will cover issues and areas of interest to all referees. We wish to ensure that all information, 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!



**Happy New Year to All
NSWSLFR Members and
Referees Worldwide**



To do for NSWSLFR members in January 2021:

1. [Register for the branch for 2021](#)
2. [Review the 2020/21 LOTG changes](#)
3. [Make yourself available for trial matches on Horizon WebRef](#)
4. [Training 2021 – Starts from Tuesday 12th January 2021 – Likely to be at Jim Ring Reserve at the moment](#)
5. Register for the seminar: [Sunday 17th Jan 2021 - Assessor](#) and [Sunday 7th February 2021 - Referee](#)

Refereeing With Focus When Officiating Teams With Bullying Tactics

Does refereeing a team who try to bully you and your colleagues into making decisions which favour them, disrupt your strategies? Do you find yourself losing focus when faced with a team whose tactics are clearly to foul, hold, trip or push their higher skilled opponents at any given opportunity during matches.

This is something that I frequently hear is a challenge from the officials, referee coaches and Referee Managers I speak to. The industrial tactics of certain teams means that with the frequency of incidents it is a huge challenge for referees to maintain a high level of match control and stay on top of every incident which takes place in a game where one team feels like they need protection afforded by the referee. Some officials fear that with one missed key match incident they'll lose total control and never be able to recover the situation.

When you focus on where the next 'dirty' tackle may come from or begin to worry about challenges of that nature you may have missed, you take the focus off refereeing your game and become hyper focused on what one team is doing around you. Losing your focus means you lose sight of the opportunities to stamp your authority on the game, take the disciplinary action you need to, allow the game to flow fairly, earn the respect of both teams and ultimately, deliver the game successfully having maintained a good level of match control throughout. You will be less authoritative when blowing your whistle. You may award a foul where there was not one for fear of what the aggressive team may have planned. You second guess your decisions. You are hesitant in your decision making. You make more mistakes when you are focused on the physicality of one or both of the teams.

When you focus on the industrial play by players, you feel uneasy, frustrated, and angry. You may even start making defensive decisions, awarding 50/50 decisions against one team, and give an unnecessary caution to a player. You are aware that you're being unfair. When you throw your pre-match plans out of the window and you begin to focus on the tactics of one team, you give them a mental edge over you.

To officiate well, you should focus on executing your game plan, recognising foul play intuitively, and trusting your ability to perform at a high level. From the perspective of a player, fouls are nothing new for Chelsea winger Christian Pulisic. Pulisic was fouled 11 times in his first five Premier League matches as his opponents attempted to frustrate and nullify his threat. Pulisic has stayed focused despite the physicality and fouls posed by opposition defenders. Instead of retaliating physically, Pulisic has responded with eleven goals and ten assists in 34 games during his first season at Chelsea.

"When players start to get to know you more, watch films, see how you play, then it [the physicality] is normal. With how I play it is normal, they do anything they can to take you off your game. It is a physical league; I have been kicked a few times in CONCACAF so I am used to it. I will be alright!" – Christian Pulisic

Pulisic remains composed in games because he focuses on his job and not the challenges from opposing players. Pulisic understands fouls are a part of the game and he realises he has been targeted in the past but sees it as a compliment. When you manage to remain focused on yourself and your game, you take the opportunities, maintain your poise, and referee with freedom, intuitively on the field.

Tip for Maintaining Your Focus When Officiating Teams With Bullying Tactics:

Officiating teams with bullying tactics are a mind game inside the game. Players are trying to taint your focus by getting inside your head. Players know if you become frustrated, you may make a mistake or rush into a decision incorrectly. You can overcome the mind games by sticking to your game plan and staying focused on refereeing your game. Focus on your objectives out in the middle, such as to deliver a game successfully, so that the players and club officials thank you afterwards and have respect for the job you've done. If players know that they cannot rattle you, those players will become frustrated and become rattled themselves. Officiating with focus and poise can help you overcome a lot of challenges you'll face during games.

Modified and adapted from an article in The Third Team Blog by Nathan Sherratt

2020-2021 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 new 2020/2021 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.

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

Important Dates

Fitness Tests: Sunday 31st January 2021, Wednesday 3rd February 2021, Sunday 14th February 2021, Wednesday 17th February 2021. Venue – TBC but likely to be at Barden Ridge.

Note: *You will need to attend three training sessions before you can attempt a fitness test.*

Assessors Seminar – Sunday 17th January 2021. Venue – TBC but likely to be at Valentine Sports Park.

Referees Seminar – Sunday 7th February 2021. Venue – TBC but likely to be at Bankstown Sports Club.

2020/2021 Law Changes Explained

Here is a simplified version of this year's key law changes to help prepare clubs, managers, players, referees and spectators for the new season.

Law 1 – The Field of Play

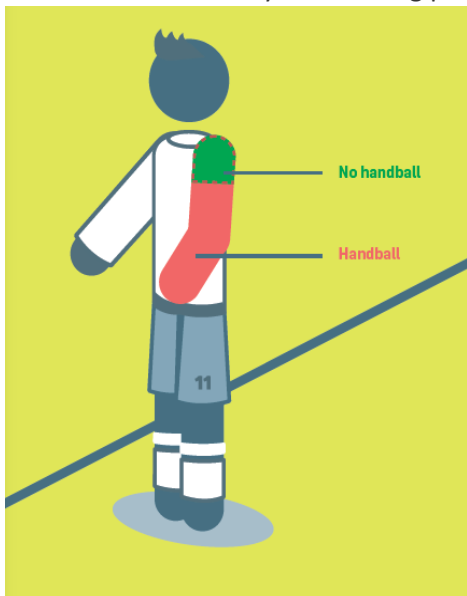
Goalposts and the crossbar may be a combination of the four basic shapes

Law 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match

Yellow cards (YCs) and warnings are not carried forward into kicks from the penalty mark (KFPM)
See also changes to Law 14 relating to KFPM

Law 11 – Offside

Deliberate handball by a defending player is considered 'deliberate play' for offside



Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

- Handball: the boundary between the shoulder and the arm is defined as the bottom of the armpit
- 'accidental' handball by an attacking player (or team-mate) is only penalised if it occurs 'immediately' before a goal or clear goal-scoring opportunity
- A goalkeeper can receive a YC or be sent off (RC) for 'illegally' touching the ball a second time after a restart (e.g. goal kick, free kick etc.) even if the touch is with the hand/arm
- Any offence (not only a foul) which 'interferes with or stops a promising attack' should result in a YC
- player who fails to respect the 4m required distance at a dropped ball should receive a YC
- If the referee plays advantage or allows a 'quick' free kick for an offence which 'interfered with or stopped a promising attack', the YC is not issued

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

An offence by the goalkeeper is not penalised if a penalty kick misses the goal or rebounds from the goal (without a touch from the goalkeeper) unless the offence clearly affected the kicker

The goalkeeper is warned for the first offence; it is a YC for any further offence(s)

The kicker is penalised if the goalkeeper and the kicker offend at exactly the same time

VAR Protocol

Only one 'TV signal' is required for a VAR-only review

Glossary

A definition of the offence of holding has been included

A player's position at a restart is the position of the feet or any part of the body which is touching the ground (except as outlined in Law 11 – Offside)

[Please click here to view an IFAB Presentation](#) with video examples explaining the new changes or download the resources below:

- [Laws of the Game 2020-21_11.2MB \(PDF\)](#)
- [Laws of the Game 2020-21 - Changes and Clarifications_410.7KB \(PDF\)](#)



*Richard Baker - NSWSLFR TSC Member
and Newsletter Editor*

