



# The Ref's Report

July 2025  
Volume 1 – Edition 4

# The Ref's Report

A Newsletter for the Match Officials in Football Far North Coast

Dear Match Officials,

As we enter the all-important second half of the 2025 football season, thank you for your continued commitment and dedication. Your role as a referee is crucial to the success and integrity of our competitions.

Now is a key moment for reflection, improvement, and pride. Our mantra must always be: **"What can I do better next week?"**

At the heart of your role is **Law 5 – The Referee**, which clearly outlines your duties and responsibilities. It's worth revisiting this law regularly, not just to know it, but to *live it* every time you take the field.

Ask yourself:

- **How well am I reading the game I am officiating?**
- **Am I making decisions consistent with the Laws of the Game?**
- **Am I managing player behaviour effectively and maintaining control of the match?**
- **Am I demonstrating the courage to make clear, firm decisions—even when they are difficult?**
- **Am I applying advantage correctly and recognising tactical fouls or misconduct when it occurs?**

Off the field, **your responsibilities do not end at the final whistle**. Law 5 also requires referees to:

- **Complete all match administration** promptly and accurately (match sheets, send-off and incident reports, etc.)
- **Ensure player safety** and uphold respect throughout all stages of the match
- **Communicate clearly and confidently** with players, coaches, and fellow officials
- **Take full responsibility** for decisions, in collaboration with assistant referees where applicable

Remember, acting professionally and attention to detail both on and off the field are what set high-performing officials apart—especially as we look ahead to **finals appointments**. If you are aiming for these opportunities, ask yourself:

- **Am I visible at training and continuing to develop?**
- **Do I seek feedback and use it to grow?**
- **Do I consistently show that I'm prepared, punctual, and proactive?**

Keep striving for excellence. Let your performance reflect your preparation and pride in match officials' outfit.

As always, I'm here to support your development. If you have questions, need feedback, or want to discuss your progress, please reach out—I'm always happy to help. Stay sharp, stay committed, and stay proud.

*Lee MacMaster – Match Officials Development Officer – 2025*



**Our next Online Training Session is on  
Monday 28 July from 6pm – 7.15pm.  
Mark Carter, Regional Referee Education &  
Development Officer from NNSW Football will  
lead our training session. A link to the online  
training session is included in the email you  
have received to access this newsletter. Please  
join us for this important session.**



**Q1:** A team begins the match with 10 players. In the 15th minute, a player who was not named on the team list enters the field and scores a goal. What is the referee's decision?

- A. Goal is awarded and player is cautioned for entering without permission
- B. Goal is disallowed and the player is sent off for serious misconduct
- C. Goal is disallowed; player is cautioned; restart with indirect free kick
- D. Goal is awarded and play restarts with a kick-off

**Q2:** The referee allows play to continue after a serious foul because the non-offending team has a clear advantage and then issues a red card at the next stoppage. Is this permitted?

- A. No, the player must be cautioned only
- B. Yes, but only if the foul did not result in a goal
- C. Yes, this is allowed under the advantage clause
- D. No, the referee must stop play immediately for serious foul play

**Q3:** A player in an offside position receives the ball directly from a deliberate save by a goalkeeper. What is the decision?

- A. Offside offence
- B. No offside offence
- C. Indirect free kick for handball
- D. Direct free kick for obstruction

**Q4:** A player attempts to kick the ball while it is in the possession of the goalkeeper. What action should the referee take?

- A. Indirect free kick for dangerous play
- B. Direct free kick and caution
- C. Direct free kick for impeding
- D. Indirect free kick and send-off

**Q5:** At a penalty kick, the ball rebounds off the post and the kicker touches it again before any other player. Decision?

- A. Play continues
- B. Indirect free kick to opponents
- C. Retake the penalty
- D. Caution the kicker and retake



## Upcoming Match Officials Training

The July online training session is coming up on **Monday 28 July from 6pm – 7.15pm**. A link to the session has been emailed to you with this newsletter.



Hopefully, **most** of our match officials can attend this session and future training sessions this season. Coming up:

- **Monday 25 August - Theory & Practical Session (Venue TBA)**
- **Monday 22 September – Online Session**

We need you at these sessions to qualify to officiate at the finals later this season!



## “Deliberate Play” vs “Deflection” in Offside Situations

In judging offside situations involving a defender's touch, referees must distinguish between a **deliberate play** and a **deflection**, as clarified by Law 11 of the Laws of the Game.

A **deliberate play** occurs when a defender intentionally makes contact with the ball—attempting to pass, clear, or control it—with reasonable time, space, and vision. Even if poorly executed, it still counts as deliberate. In this case, an attacker in an offside position is *not penalised*, as the defender's action resets the offside phase.

In contrast, a **deflection** is an unintentional, uncontrolled rebound or ricochet—such as the ball glancing off a defender without purposeful action. If the attacker then becomes involved in play, the offside offence stands.

When assessing this, referees must consider:

- Did the defender have time and clear sight of the ball?
- Was the movement controlled and coordinated?
- Was the ball's trajectory and speed manageable?

How would I (a Referee) judge this?

1. **Frame of reference:** I determine attacker's position at the moment a teammate played the ball.
2. **Did the defender play it deliberately?**
  - Could they see the ball clearly?
  - Was it travelling slowly/directed predictably?
  - Did they attempt to control or clear?
  - Or was it an instinctive flick/stretch with minimal control?
3. **If deliberate**, attacker is onside.
  - Think, defender had time to make a conscious play.
4. **If accidental/deflection**, attacker is offside if involved in play.
  - As per guidance, I need to be **100% sure** it's deliberate; otherwise, it's deflection.

Jarred Gillett is an Australian football referee born on the Gold Coast, Queensland. He began his officiating career in Australia's A-League in 2010, where he was named Referee of the Year five times and officiated five Grand Finals. In 2019, Gillett moved to England to pursue postdoctoral research in biomechanics and joined the English Football League's officiating roster. He was promoted to the Premier League's Select Group in August 2021, becoming the first overseas-born referee to officiate in the league. In 2023, he returned to the FIFA international referees list, representing the Football Association. Gillett has also officiated in various international leagues and tournaments, including the J-League, Indian Super League, Chinese Super League, and the 2024 FA Community Shield.



Jarred Gillett's journey from the A-League to the English Premier League has made him a respected figure in world football officiating. His experience at the top level offers important insights for referees striving to uphold the integrity of the game while managing the unpredictable nature of match day.

Here are some of Gillett's most valuable principles for match officials:

### 1. The Laws of the Game Are Your Foundation

Gillett emphasises that *every decision must begin with a clear understanding of the Laws of the Game*. These laws are not just a set of rules, but the framework that protects fairness, flow, and safety. "The best referees," Gillett has noted, "don't just know the laws – they understand how to apply them at the right moment." To ensure the Laws are central to decision-making:

- Continually refresh your knowledge through match day scenarios and analysis.
- Apply the laws consistently – from grassroots to elite level – but be aware of the match context.
- Never guess. If you're unsure, rely on your team and your preparation.

### 2. Use 'Common Sense' (Law 18) to Control the Match

One of the unwritten principles of refereeing is *game management*. While laws provide structure, common sense provides the human touch. Gillett often says, "Control the match with your presence, your awareness, and your feel for the game – not just your whistle." This means:

- Recognising when a quiet word prevents a bigger issue.
- Understanding when to play advantage and when to stop for a foul.
- Avoiding overreaction to minor offences that can escalate tension.

## Law 18 – 'Common Sense'

### 3. The Unwritten Law: Read the Game

Good referees anticipate. Great referees *read the game* – understanding player intent, match tempo, and tactical shifts. Gillett advises match officials to:

- Watch off-the-ball movements and player reactions.
- Know which players are likely to cause or attract conflict.
- Be proactive – move early, communicate constantly, and position yourself to see the key moments.

### 4. Strive for Consistency and Fairness

A referee's credibility rests on fairness. Players and coaches may not always agree with decisions – but they'll respect consistency. Gillett's rule: "If you'd give it at 1-1 in the 10th minute, be brave enough to give it at 1-1 in the 90th." To build consistency:

- Set your line early in the match – for contact, dissent, and time-wasting.
- Ensure your assistant referees and fourth official are on the same page.
- Avoid "make-up calls" – trust your first decision and keep moving forward.

### 5. Player Protection is Paramount

The safety of players is a referee's non-negotiable duty. From reckless challenges to late tackles, Gillett reminds officials: "If we don't protect players, we lose the game's integrity." This means:

- Recognising the difference between hard and dangerous play.
- Dealing firmly with retaliation, excessive force, and cynical fouls.
- Showing cards when necessary – especially when player safety is compromised.



Jarred Gillett's refereeing philosophy can be summed up in a few key words: **knowledge, control, fairness, and safety**. By keeping the Laws of the Game at the heart of every decision, applying common sense, and maintaining a feel for the match, referees can contribute to a fair, safe, and enjoyable game for all.



### How can I assist you?

As your Match Officials Development Officer this year, I would love to know how can assist you to improve your refereeing. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me for support - [referees.coach@ffnc.net.au](mailto:referees.coach@ffnc.net.au) or 0477317798

### What would you do?

A player scores, runs to the technical area, grabs a phone from the coach, and takes a selfie with teammates, delaying the restart. The opponents complain.

**Decision** – Caution the player (Yellow card) for unsporting behaviour (excessive celebration and delaying restart).



### Answers: Test Your Knowledge of the Laws (Page 2)

#### Q1: Correct Answer: C

*Explanation:* Only players named on the team list may participate. A goal scored by an outside agent or unauthorised player is disallowed. The player is cautioned, and play is restarted with an **indirect free kick**.

#### Q2: Correct Answer: C

*Explanation:* Under Law 5, the referee may apply **advantage** even in cases of serious foul play and issue the **red card** at the next stoppage if doing so benefits the non-offending team.



#### Q3: Correct Answer: A

*Explanation:* A **deliberate save** does **not reset offside**. The player was in an offside position and gained an advantage from it.

#### Q4: Correct Answer: B

*Explanation:* Kicking or attempting to kick the ball **while it is controlled by the goalkeeper** is a **direct free kick offence** and is typically reckless, thus warranting a caution.

#### Q5: Correct Answer: B

*Explanation:* The **kicker may not touch the ball twice** before it has touched another player. This is an **indirect free kick offence**.

### Mobile Phones & Filming in the Technical Area – A Reminder on Child Protection

As we continue through the season, it's important to revisit some key responsibilities that extend beyond just applying the Laws of the Game. One area of increasing concern relates to **the use of mobile phones for filming or photographing from within the technical area**.

While technology can offer benefits in coaching and performance review, we must **remain vigilant about child protection standards and respect for privacy** at all times.

#### What You Need to Know:

- **Filming from the Technical Area:** The use of mobile phones to record players, match officials, or others from within the technical area should be treated with caution. Unless officially authorised for performance analysis or injury review purposes, such activity must be discouraged.
- **Child Protection Comes First:** Many players and match officials involved in community football are minors. Recording their image — especially without parental consent — poses serious **child safeguarding risks** and may FFNC policies regarding the recording of minors.
- **Referee's Responsibility:** As a match official, you are not responsible for team staff behaviour off the field (beyond the technical areas), but you are empowered to **report any inappropriate or unauthorised filming activity** to club officials, or directly to Steve Mackney at FFNC. Documenting the issue on your match sheet or in an Incident Report is also strongly advised.
- **Best Practice:**
  - Politely **remind team officials** that filming in the technical area is not appropriate.
  - If you observe concerning behaviour — particularly if it involves close-up footage of individual players or officials — treat it seriously and raise it immediately with the club and with Steve Mackney at FFNC.
  - Ensure that **no footage taken compromises the dignity or safety of any player and/or official**, especially children.

#### Our Shared Goal

We all play a part in making the game safe, fair, and inclusive. By staying alert and proactive in these matters, match officials contribute not only to a well-managed match but also to a **culture of respect and protection for young players and match officials**. Let's keep the focus on the game, and ensure that our technical areas reflect the high standards we all stand for.

## From Steve Mackney – General Manager, Football Far North Coast

### INFORMATION ABOUT MATCH DAY REPORTS



Information relevant to Match Official Reports is outlined on **pages 18-19** of the **2025 Match Officials Handbook**.

The two types of reports are **(1) Send-Off Report** and **(2) Incident Report**.

A **Send-Off Report** must be submitted by the referee who issues a **RED CARD** during a match. Note that a Red Card can only be issued to a **PLAYER** or a **TEAM OFFICIAL** (from either team) where a Red Card offence is identified immediately prior to, during, at half-time or immediately after the game. Anything beyond this period will require the lodgement of an Incident Report.

The centre referee has the authority to issue a Red Card and will therefore ordinarily write the applicable Send-Off Report and submit to FFNC, relevant to any one participant. Either/both Assistant Referees should also lodge a report (whether send-off or incident) IF the red Card was issued by the referee in response to information given from the AR or where information may assist FFNC to better understand what had occurred.

An **Incident Report** must be submitted by EACH match official for incidents that are (1) Beyond the field of play and are alleged against ANY person, whether a player, team official, parent or spectator (2) Very serious allegations/incident, including IF not otherwise actioned by the issuing of a Red Card (3) Relevant to ANY unusual or exceptional variation from what ordinarily happens at a match. It is better to lodge an Incident report that is found to not be required, than to ignore something that is found later to be of concern.

A brief overview of how to write a report is outlined in the Handbook and also in the Referee Headquarters section on the FFNC website. Link to 2025 Match Officials Handbook [here](#).

There is a QR Code on the back of the handbook that provides access to each report template (see below).

It is necessary to **REPORT** incidents, serious allegations (that **YOU** hear or see), applicable to a Send-Off report or Incident Report. The assessment of what (if any action) needs to be taken in response to Red Cards or information made known to FFNC, is at the absolute discretion of FFNC. The role of match officials includes to action (in relation to CARDS issued on match day) and to **REPORT** any incidents/serious allegations.

**PRIORITY** lodgement of reports (meaning within 48 hours of the relevant match/incident) is critical.

Finally, IF you need to call Steve Mackney for advice or support, Steve is reasonably available.

#### **Scan the QR Code shown below for access to:**

- Schedules (for appointments)
- Laws of the Game
- Player of the Match (Men's Premier League OR Women's Premier League ONLY)
- Send-Off Report and/or Incident Report
- Claim for Reimbursement Jotform
- National Code of Conduct and Ethics Regulations
- National Member Protection Framework
- FFNC Website & Coaching Resources

