

MYSL Referee Notes
6/6/02

At long last it's finally here.....Week 10! Every season I always feel a bitter sweet sensation as I realize that the end of the season is upon us. Reflecting back on any season it is always amazing to me how fast they really do seem to fly by. Starting back on the first weekend in April it always seems like there is such a long road ahead with many games and challenges to come. Before you know it though we reach the time that we are at today. I want to take a moment and express my heartfelt thanks to all of you who have given of yourselves this season in support of the MYSL.

I have been a referee in this league for 10 years myself and I know how much time and commitment is involved with being a referee. Ten weekends in a row suddenly are not your own. You have to get yourself into your uniform, drive to the fields, and then push yourself to try and stay at top form for three, four or more games. All these things we do out of a love for the game and a commitment to providing the youngsters in our league with a fun and safe place to play. All of you who give of your time and sweat to keep our games safe, fair, and fun deserve to give yourselves a huge round of applause!! I have been only too pleased to serve you as a member of the MYSL board this past season. You are the best! **THANK YOU FOR A GREAT SEASON!!**

The Commissioner's Cup is taking shape at this time and I have begun the process of putting together the referee schedule. At this time some significant changes are being made to the overall Cup schedule that will affect the work that I have already done. The changes, however, are the result of a very happy problem since more games and an additional time slot may be added. Due to this change it is possible that it might take me a bit longer than I had thought to produce your schedules. I had intended to release schedules to you by Monday of next week but this timetable may need to be pushed up by a couple of days. I am anticipating that I will have the schedule fully generated and released to you by next Wednesday. As always, I do appreciate your patience and understanding as I work through putting together the Cup referee schedule. I would recommend that everyone who is planning to work at the Cup review the tournament rules and referee instructions. Remember that the proper uniform **MUST** be worn while working at the tournament and that all referees are expected to show up 30 minutes prior to the scheduled kickoff of the games.

I'm looking forward to seeing all of you at the Cup again this year!

Now, on to the notes!!!

WHAT!?!?! ANOTHER MAKE OVER?

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Yup, the MYSL Referee Web Site has had yet another face lift to improve the look and feel of the site. I have rearranged the front page so that certain bits of information now appear right on the front page instead of below the links on the left. While you can still

get at all of the information by navigating to the various other links, anything that you should see or would need will be located in the various sections on the front page. Check it out and please let me know how you like it!

FOLLOW UP ON LIGHTNING

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I wanted to once again stress that all referees are required to adhere to the league policy regarding games that are threatened by thunderstorms. The league policy can be obtained by going to:

<http://www.myslref.org/Lightning%20Memo.pdf>

And additional information on lightning can be obtained from the MSRC at:

http://www.massref.net/lightning_er.htm

If any referee has a question regarding this policy please don't hesitate to contact me at myslref@attbi.com. Remember....safety first!

SPORTSMANSHIP RATINGS AT THE COMMISSIONER'S CUP

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The MYSL Board of Directors unanimously approved a proposed sportsmanship award for the Commissioner's Cup tournament this season. Referees will be an important part of determining the winner of this award as the eyes and ears of the tournament on the fields.

The referee cards for the tournament will be modified this year to include a sportsmanship rating that will be decided on by the referee after the end of each match. Referees working at the Cup will be expected to fill out this sportsmanship rating when reporting in your scores. The results from these sportsmanship ratings will be compiled and the team with the best rating will win the Commissioner's Cup sportsmanship award.

Further instructions will be provided to referees during the tournament.

CHANGE TO MYSL RULE 20

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At its board meeting on Tuesday, June 4, 2002 the MYSL Board of Directors approved a change to MYSL Rule 20 that mandates the use of Assistant Referees in all post-season playoff games at the U12 level and above. This change is intended to provide further support to the referee assigned to these important matches, and to enhance the experience for the players. Further information regarding this change will be posted to the MYSL Referee Web Site at www.myslref.org or given at future referee meetings.

FOOTWEAR AND SHINGUARDS: WHAT TO LOOK FOR

During the pre-game it is very important that referees check the footwear and shinguards of the players for any safety issues.

MYSL Rule 18(i) requires that:

“The footwear shall be soft soccer cleats or sneakers.”

This means that any type of soccer shoe that has hard metallic parts, especially on the studs, may be considered dangerous by the referee and the referee may disallow them. While the final decision on this rests with the referee at the field, MYSL referees are urged to err on the side of caution when determining the suitability of the shoe for the match. Always acceptable are soccer cleats where the studs at the base of the shoe are made of rubber and are molded into the base.

MYSL Rule 18(h) requires that:

“Shinguards are to be made of a suitable material in order to provide a reasonable degree of protection and must be covered entirely by the stockings during the match.”

The USSF defines the following terms used in the above sentence in the following manner:

“The “suitable material” is not specified but is presumed to be material which performs the cushioning and impact spreading function of shinguards.”

“A “reasonable degree of protection” means that the material is suitable for the purpose and that the size of the shinguard is appropriate for the age and size of the player.”

(The above quotations are taken from the March 20, 2001 memo from Alfred Kleinaitis, Manager of Referee Development and Education at the USSF.)

Of course the provision of FIFA Law 4 that requires equipment not be dangerous to the wearer or any other player must be met in all cases of player equipment inspection.

Shinguards that only cover a portion of the shin on younger players (U14 and below) are questionable in their degree of protection. League referees should carefully examine these short shinguards and disallow them if, in the opinion of the referee, it does not provide enough protection for the player.

THE SPIRIT OF THE GAME.....GOALKEEPER POSSESSION AND INJURIES

At one point or another we've all been in the situation where an injury of an urgent nature takes place while the goalkeeper has possession of the ball inside of his/her own area. You blow the whistle to stop play. You take care of the injured player and remove him/her from the field. Now it's time to restart and you are looking at a drop ball inside of the penalty area or even at the top of the goal area! You are now suddenly in the unenviable position of giving a drop ball right in a position where the attacking team can now easily have an opportunity to score! But, wait! Didn't the keeper have possession just moments before? Doesn't the keeper have the right to rid him or herself of the ball in an unimpeded manner?!? Well only during active play! You stopped the game to take care of the injury and NOW a drop ball is the only restart!! HORRORS! The situation seems so unfair!

Fear not young referee for there is an answer, and it's all legal!

Here are some possible remedies for this situation:

- When you notice an injury in this situation try to grab the keeper's attention, during active play, and urge the keeper to throw the ball out of bounds. When this happens that creates a natural stoppage in play. Most teams who understand the tenants of good sportsmanship will return the ball immediately to the team that gave it up. The restart will either be a throw-in or corner kick at this point.
- Sometimes waiting just isn't an option. You have a safety situation and you **MUST** stop the game while the keeper is in possession. If this is the case **STOP THE GAME AT ALL COSTS**. Remember, safety, safety, safety. Once the situation is cleared up you must perform the restart which is a drop ball. USSF Advice in section 8.5 says the following:

"There is no requirement that players from both teams -- or that any player -- must take part at a dropped ball."

Therefore you may pull another *perfectly legal* trick out of your referee bag. Once the injury has been cleared, walk over to the goalkeeper and tell the keeper that you will be dropping the ball in front of him or her and that it should be picked up after it has touched the ground. Of course, make sure that the goalkeeper is inside his or her own penalty area before doing this! Drop the ball in front of the keeper, watch it hit the ground, and **PRESTO** it's in play legally. Once the keeper has picked it back up he/she is now in possession of it and may not be charged. The keeper will put it in play and fairness is restored to the situation.

If you run into a situation where a player moves to try and take part in the dropped ball, simply explain that you are dropping the ball with only the keeper present. The player, if they understand the spirit of the game, will understand. You might also explain what you are going to do to the opposing coach first just so that they understand and can move their players off.

TICK.....TICK.....TICK....SUB!!

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How many times have you seen this one? There is about 2 minutes left in a tight game. Suddenly one of the coaches turns into a lean mean subbing machine. Substitutions are called at nearly every stoppage where it's legal to do so. As the subs move in and out of the field the clock is steadily ticking down. By the time 2 minutes are up and the game is over you've taken care of more substitutions than you did during the entire first half of the match. Not only that, but the other team's coach is fuming because his attempt to try and tie up the game was totally thwarted by his counterpart's tactics. Could you as the referee have done anything about this??? You bet.

Law 7 says the following about lost time in a game:

“Allowance is made in either period [half] for all time lost through:

- Substitution(s)
- Assessment of injury to players
- Removal of injured players from the field of play for treatment
- Wasting time
- Any other cause

The allowance for time lost is at the discretion of the referee.”

So, the referee, under the law, may continue to allow the coach to substitute players, but the referee should also account for the amount of time that these substitutions are taking. If the referee detects a pattern of substitution that suggests the coach is wasting time, that time should be continually added on in fairness to the other team.

Of course, if this coach continues with his wily ways we may never finish the game! So it is up to the referee to somehow communicate that he/she is on to these antics. One could run over to the coach and simply say “Hey coach, I see what you are doing with this subbing game and I think it's time wasting. Could you cut it out?” Alas, it is not really appropriate for the referee to do this since each substitution being called for is quite legal. So what can we do to stop this legal form of cheating?

You can allow the subs, but during the process get within the visual area of the coach, not too close, and stand looking rather disapprovingly at your watch. During this time you are actually adding on the time for the subs, but you are also sending a VERY clear message to the coach; “I know what you're doing...stop it.” I learned this one watching a very good FIFA referee (who's name escapes me at the moment) during a UEFA Champion's League match and used it myself not long after in a match to very great effect. It takes a few tries for the coach to realize what is going on (“How come he isn't blowing the whistle to end the game yet?!?!?”) but once he/she does you've accomplished the task of making the situation fair for the other team. A good and experienced coach will catch on to this quickly and stop.

WRAPPING UP YOUR SEASON

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Now that we are just about at the end of the MYSL season I thought I would give referees a bit of a checklist of things that you should now begin to pull together to finish things up and end on a good note:

- Locate all of the referee game report cards that you have accumulated during the season and make sure that all the appropriate information is filled out on them. Each card should be properly filled out so that it can be referred to as the official record of the matches you worked during the season. The league may need to refer to these cards later in the event of a disputed score.
- Take your game cards and transcribe the necessary information from the card onto the Referee Payment Voucher (obtainable at www.myslref.org) so that it will be ready for you to turn in. The game cards and payment voucher need to be returned together when you submit your information for the season.
- Pull together a log of all the games you worked this season and save it either on a computer spreadsheet or on a paper list. Be sure to have a record of the pay that you should receive for each game so that you can cross-check your records against the check that you will ultimately get in July or August. The log is also important if you intend to seek an upgrade to referee grade 7 as you need to document the number of games you've done as a grade 8

If there are other things that anyone out there does to close out the season drop a line on the MYSL Referee Message board at www.myslref.org!

QUIZ TIME!

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Ok, last week's quiz was:

A team is awarded an indirect free kick inside its own penalty area. The player taking the kick hits it against a team mate who is inside the penalty area and the ball enters the goal. What is the correct call?

- A) Goal
- B) Indirect Free Kick for the offense at the 6 yd line.
- C) Retake the Kick
- D) Corner Kick
- E) None of the above

The correct answer is:

- C) Retake the kick

Free kicks inside of a team's own penalty area must clear the penalty area first (just like a goal kick) as mandated by Law 13.

Correct answers were given by:

Tim Butler
David Blanchard
Ed Flanagan
Bob Bilicki
Andy Ridgers
Dean Michelini
Clark Caplan
Phil Good

Nice work!!

Now, on to this weeks quiz:

When starting the game, what **MUST** the referee do to signal that the players may proceed?

- A) Nod his head
- B) Say "Start Play" to the players
- C) Blow the whistle
- D) A hand gesture toward the kicker
- E) Any of the above

TIME TO WIND DOWN
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Well, now that we are coming to the end of the MYSL season it will be time for me to wind the publication of the referee notes down a bit. There will be one more weekly issue of the referee notes coming out just prior to the Commissioner's Cup next week. After that issue the notes will go monthly until September. During the fall season the notes will be a bi-weekly publication until October, and then it will go monthly again until next April. Look for the notes to be bringing you information about league referee happenings during the off-season. Several things are in the works that will make the off-season (November-March) a productive one for you.

Well, until next week! Keep 'em kickin'!