

MYSL Referee Notes
4/25/03

Welcome to Week 4 of the season!!! Errr....ummm.....wait, let me try that again....

Welcome to Week 2 of the season!!!! No...no that's not quite right....I KNOW!

Welcome to the often delayed, soggy, snowy, rainy but always fun 2003 Spring Season of the MYSL!

And with that, the "Referee Notes" will be back for your weekly reading pleasure through the end of this rather abbreviated season. While I'm sure most of you are already aware of the status of the season, I thought I would review, here in the intro, where we are.

First, all games from Week 1 and 2 are cancelled. The games that you officiate from now through the end of the season follow the schedule in your league book starting at Week 3. So, the games we did last Saturday started at Week 3. We will pick up Week 4 this coming Saturday. For the U16's and up we are at Week 3 of our schedule for this coming Sunday. *Please be sure to follow the schedules that Al Cosentino sent to you via mail over the last couple of weeks and you should be all set!*

Now on to the notes.....

A FEW REMINDERS

As we reviewed at the referee meeting this past March there were a few things that changed in the MYSL rules and procedures over the off-season. Here is a review of that information:

- Yellow cards now **do not** require the substitution of the cautioned player. The MYSL removed this rule during the off-season in response to a requirement from the USSF. We have, however, made the yellow card event a valid time for a substitution to occur but only for the cautioned player. If a coach requests a substitute for the cautioned player, please allow it. Remember, however, that only the cautioned player should be subbed.
- If you officiate Sunday matches and you are the only referee assigned to a match or if you end up being the only referee to work the match(es), please remember to have the "Single Referee Verification" area on the back of your pay card signed. You will be paid a fee and one-half for every U16 and above match that you referee alone.
- The MYSL has set up an online method for reporting cautions, send-offs and injuries. Go to <http://www.myslref.org> and click on the "Misconduct Reports" link at the bottom left of the page. This will take you to another page that will allow you to file either a Boys or Girls misconduct/injury report. Please remember that these reports are only required if you have issued a caution, sent a

player off, or have had a serious injury in a match. Please do not fill out these reports for any other reason.

- All referees should, one more time, review the league policy on how to deal with thunderstorms that threaten the field of play. Referees are reminded that games should be stopped if lightning is seen. There are no exceptions to this policy. The policy is found in the Referee Handbook at <http://www.myslref.org>

RAIN, RAIN GO AWAY!!!

Unfortunately the weather forecast for the upcoming weekend, particularly Saturday, does not look very good. Please remember that field closures will be posted to the MYSL web site as soon as they are received by A1 and I. Please check the “Game Cancellations” link at <http://www.myslref.org> to see if your fields have been closed. With any luck we’ll miss the rain and get to play both days this weekend!

BEST OF.....

Here is a referee notes article from last season that I thought was worth re-posting. The article has to do with your “Pre-game” and how appearance, promptness, and professionalism should be demonstrated at all times. As we start a new season it’s important not to forget these points:

THE PRE-GAME (DO’s and DON’T’s)

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In keeping with the DO’s and DON’T’s list of a few weeks back I thought I would present some DO’s and DON’T’s as they relate to the activities that the referee must perform prior to the match. These activities showcase your ability to take the match seriously and set a good first impression with players and coaches.

DO

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- **ARRIVE ON TIME**
Referees are expected to arrive at matches a minimum of 15 minutes ahead of the kick-off time. I would recommend that referees, especially inexperienced ones, arrive at the field 30 minutes ahead of kick-off to take care of all the pre-match requirements.
- **DRESS THE PART**
Proper uniform for MYSL referees is the yellow uniform with black pin stripes, black shorts, black socks with the three stripes at the top and black soccer or official’s shoes. How you dress for a game greatly affects how players and coaches perceive you. Make this call right!
- **GREET THE COACHES**
The coaches are not your enemy! While they may get on your nerves as part of

the game, coaches are there to make sure that their teams play the game well and that all have fun. A polite greeting like “Hi Coach I’m _____, and I’ll be your referee today.” with a smile and a handshake before the match will work wonders toward starting a cooperative relationship with the coach.

- **INSPECT THE FIELD!**

As referees we are there to protect the players and keep them safe. As part of that duty we must properly inspect the field to ensure that there are no hidden dangers that might put players at risk. Nets especially must be checked and properly anchored to prevent them from tipping over. Glass, large rocks, sharp objects, and other debris must also be cleared from the field prior to a match. Any exposed sprinkler heads and deep holes must also be covered as best as possible.

- **INSPECT THE PLAYERS/CHECK PASS CARDS AND ROSTERS**

This part of your duty is also very important, especially at the younger age levels. Safety is once again the major issue here as players may not necessarily pay attention to dangerous articles they may be wearing. Jewelry of any kind and hard casts are strictly forbidden in the MYSL and a player with either article may not play. Referees also must make sure that players have shin guards on that provide adequate protection. Shin guards are **REQUIRED**. Player pass cards should always be checked against the roster. With older players you may not need to line them up. A quick walk around the players while they are practicing, while you are looking for issues, is usually enough. Still, however, check pass cards against the roster.

- **SET A GOOD TONE**

During the coin toss you should set a good tone for the players. Keep the conversation light. Have the players shake hands and introduce themselves to each other. This sets the tone of sportsmanship and fair play early. Do the toss, have the winning team decide which net to defend and then move the game forward!

DON'T

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- **ARRIVE LATE**

This sets a very bad tone for the game and forces you to rush through the pre-game. Coaches and players will already be on edge because they were anxious about whether or not you were going to show. If you expect traffic **LEAVE EARLY!**

- **DRESS IN THE IMPROPER UNIFORM OR NO UNIFORM**

Players have the *RIGHT* to expect that the referee coming to do their game will be as involved in the match as they are. By not dressing the part you lose credibility almost as soon as you walk on the field. This could cost you the game.

- **APPEAR SLOPPY**

Why would a player want to tuck his or her shirt in if the referee is running around with his/her shirt hanging out or socks down around the ankles? Make

sure that you are dressed in the most professional manner possible. Socks pulled up, shirt tucked in, proper uniform....be prepared!

- **COME WITHOUT THE PROPER EQUIPMENT**

Every referee should have a bag with the proper uniforms and also the proper equipment to officiate a match. Whistles, pens or pencils, paper, red and yellow cards, a watch, and a coin are all essential equipment for a referee.

- **APPEAR RUDE, ANNOYED, OR BOSSY WITH COACHES OR FIELD OFFICIALS**

No one likes a cranky person or a person who lacks the basic courtesy that we all expect in life. Referees who are unfriendly or who think that people will jump when they bark an order will be in for a rude awakening. Remember your social graces.....they apply to the soccer pitch.

- **FORGET TO INSPECT THE PLAYERS, FIELD, OR DOCUMENTS**

It is your *JOB* as the referee to ensure player safety and that all games are played properly. By not performing the above tasks a referee fails what should be the most basic part of his/her job. Make sure this is done in EVERY game you do.

- **GIVE LONG SPEECHES TO THE PLAYERS**

Telling players how you will call the game, what will or won't be a yellow or red card, how they should behave, or what your orders are for them during the match will destroy you in a match. When you are inspecting the players and doing the coin toss, *CONCENTRATE ON YOUR JOB!* The players will find out what you expect of them and how you intend to call the game in the first few minutes of the match. Trust me, they learn the referee very quickly. By telling players ahead of time what actions may or may not be punitive you will likely dig yourself into a hole that you can't get out of when it comes time to follow through on your threat. You might also take away from that team the ability to properly play the game by making them tentative and less aggressive to the ball than the other team. This is NOT your role.

FROM THE BOOKSHELF

As with last season, I will from time to time recommend some referee reading material that will hopefully be helpful to you in your quest to improve as a referee. The book that I recommend in this issue of the notes is a particularly good one.

Title: Soccer Officials Guidebook For a Crew of Three Officials, Diagonal System Of Control

Author: Carl P. Schwartz, Contributing Editor, *Referee Magazine*

Publisher: Referee Enterprises, Inc. PO Box 161, Franksville, WI 53126

Price: \$29.95

Purchase: This book can be obtained through the Referee Magazine web site at www.referee.com. Click the Publications/Videos link and then click the Soccer link. The book is also generally available at www.amazon.com and www.barnesandnoble.com.

Comments:

This is probably the best book, next to *Fair or Foul*, that I have seen on the nuts and bolts of soccer officiating. If you are familiar with the publication *Referee Magazine* then you will be very familiar with the style that this book is written in. The book takes the reader through numerous key topics of officiating soccer from referee signals through the finer points of foul recognition. The focus of this book is NOT to provide a re-reading of the laws of the game, rather it shows you how to actually APPLY the laws in real game situations. The book places an emphasis on understanding the Spirit of the Game as well as the letter of the Law. The book is also LOADED with diagrams and pictures to illustrate the points that the author is trying to get at. Of particular use are the “PlayPic” illustrations that show events from the Referee’s perspective in the game. The “MechaniGram” illustrations are also very useful as they show proper positioning for the referee and ARs from an overhead perspective. Reading this book opens up all kinds of refereeing “secrets” to the reader that are not commonly available in the entry-level class. The best attribute of this publication is that it is fully endorsed and licensed by the United States Soccer Federation. I recommend this book HIGHLY for anyone who wants to enhance their refereeing skills and their control over the match! It’s a must read!

QUIZ TIME!!

It’s that time again! The weekly Referee Notes quiz is back and better than ever.

Before we get to this week’s question....let’s review the last question, and the answer, from the October 6th Referee Notes. The question was:

Is it mandatory for the Referee to check with the goalkeepers (Keeper ready?) prior to blowing the whistle for the start of the game?

- A) Yes
- B) No
- C) Only if they are not looking like they are ready
- D) A and C
- E) What’s a goalkeeper?

The answer to this question is: B) No

The referee is NOT required to check with the goal keepers prior to the start of the match. To start the game the referee only needs to check to see that the players are there and in position to play. The referee then simply provides a signal to play and we’re off!

Everyone who answer this question back then got it right! Good job!

Now for our new question.....

We'll actually be doing the questions in a slightly different way so the answers can be recorded more efficiently, and we will be having a contest this season as well. When questions are answered a point value, equal to the difficulty level of the question, will be assigned. If you get the question right, you get the points for that question. We will keep a running tally of the points each week and a leader board will be shown on the web site. At the end of the season the person with the most points will be the winner of the contest. If there is a tie then we will have co-winners. The contest is simply for fun, so no prizes will be formally awarded, but we might do something to recognize the winners at the end. ☺

To get in on the contest you simply start by answering the question on the web site. The question is at (and will always be at):

<http://www.myslref.org/quizform.htm>

Please be sure to only answer the question ONCE as only your first answer will be accepted.

Well, that's all for this week. Enjoy your games this weekend!