



Instructor's Corner

November 2006

Wally Fallman

We are more than mid-way through the CSL season and there are a few things that need to be addressed so that the remainder of the season goes relatively smoothly. In my travels around SCRA fields, there are a few observations I need to share.

We have all heard the expression, "moment of truth" but how many of us have had one (that we know of)? How about situations like these?

1. An attacker in the defending penalty area takes a shot on goal, and in the process is tackled unfairly, in a hard manner. The referee, in a position outside the penalty area calls for a penalty kick. But before the kick can be taken, goes to confer with the Assistant Referee to see if the ball was in or out of play before the tackle. The AR indicates that the ball was out. The referee erases the PK and indicates a goal kick for the restart. There is no discussion with the tackler (no talking, no card, no nothing). Later in the match, the same defender is cautioned for other fouls and is subsequently sent off for a second caution.

How would you handle this? (A possible solution is at the end of this article)

2. An attacker on an apparent breakaway is pulled down from behind by the defender pulling on the shirt. The referee stops play, just as the ball is played to open space where another attacker runs onto the ball and takes a shot, and the ball goes into the net.

How would you handle this one? (A possible solution is at the end of this article)

3. A parent on the home sideline is irate about a non-call and continues to voice her displeasure every time the referee comes close. This persists for at least 10 minutes, and the players are taking up the behavior of dissent.

How would you handle this one? (A possible solution is at the end of this article)

Possible solutions to the situations on page 1.

Situation 1. All situations can be dealt with (and sold) better with better positioning and more definitive signals. As referees, we are expected to make tough calls. In this situation, if I blow the whistle and indicate a PK, I have made the decision. I may elect to caution the player, or depending on the severity of the action, send him off. But whatever I do, I do it with authority.

Conferring with the AR after I have made the call, allows the world to see that I am not really sure of what I saw or of my ability to referee, that I have second thoughts and that maybe the sideline has an effect on my decision making process. This will certainly affect the game at a future time.

My recommendations are simple..... be in position, be firm and fair (and of course, be right) and don't allow others to influence the decision. Administer disciplinary measures, i.e. cautions and send-offs when needed, so that play later in the match is not retaliatory, or perceived by a player to have another chance at fouling.

Situation 2. Where is your head? Are you so deeply involved in the match that you are unaware of what is going on around you? Do you have tunnel vision? Did you send off the defender? In this particular case, maybe a step or two, a glance to the sides to see the approaching attacker would have allowed an 'advantage' (if not sure what 'advantage' is, read Law V) to develop and a goal to be scored. You can always come back and caution the defender. Or, if the advantage does not materialize, call the ball back to the spot of the foul for the restart.

Again, the position you have in this situation will allow the flexibility to make a better decision. The law is clear about the caution to the defender for the shirt pull, or a send off if the defender denied a clear goal scoring opportunity. Where on the field did this occur? Remember, I said it was an apparent breakaway, but only the referee can make that call. The rest of the situation is based purely on position and patience. Wait a few seconds for play to develop and if it doesn't, deal with it.

Situation 3. Of course we have never had out-of-control parents on the sidelines. But when we encounter such behavior that impacts the behavior of the players on the field, DEAL WITH IT FIRMLY, and through the coach.

I would recommend that you approach the coach when play has been stopped for a throw in on that side, and indicate that play will not resume until the parent has either (a) stopped yelling and causing a scene, or (b) which may be more appropriate depending on the level of play, retired to the parking lot. In either event, do not become confrontational with the parent/spectator, or with the coach. Ask the coach to assist, and if you are refused, tell the coach that play will not be resumed until the matter is

corrected. Failure of the coach to resolve results in a terminated match and notification to the league office on the match report.

I hope that we can get through the remaining weekends of CSL without incident. We have done well so far..... see you on the pitch.