

Guide for Fourth Officials



United States Soccer Federation

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Topic : Guide for Fourth Officials

Length : 1 hour approximately

Date: July, 2001

Set :

Remind the participants of what is taught in driving school – side mirror, speedometer, road, rear-view mirror – over and over. Ask : “How can this be used in a soccer match?” Other sets include asking the participants (dependant on their level) about what they have seen 4th officials do in a match. Another approach might be to ask participants to think about the last time they served as an Assistant Referee on the bench side of the field and to recall how much more work there was than if they had been on the other side of the field.

Objective

The participant will be able to list the duties, responsibilities and techniques of the 4th official.

Objective:

This objective sets the expectation level for the participants.

History

- 1991** - *Introduced*
- 1995** - *Given official status*
- 1996** - *Able to submit reports*
- 1999** – *technical area/direct communication with the referee*
- 2000** - *Assist with enforcement*
- 2001** – *Monitor bleeding, injury and equipment changes*

The fourth official is a relatively new role in soccer (introduced in 1991). Because of this, and the spreading practice of using fourth officials in more games and at all levels, it is useful to review the development of the role of fourth official.

- 1991 -- initially introduced. Limited to administrative duties, substitutions, managing replacement balls, and stepping in as referee or Assistant Referee if needed (depending on the competition rules)
- 1995 -- given official standing in Law V as IBD 15
- 1996 -- authorized to submit reports regarding incidents out of view of the Referee or Assistant Referees
- 1999 -- given responsibilities involving the technical area and allowed to directly communicate with the referee if needed
- 2000 -- role is again expanded to provide assistance to the referee in preventing or correcting errors regarding misconduct and violent conduct
- 2001 – allowed to monitor equipment changes for blood or bleeding injuries and assist with getting players back on the field in a timely manner

Characteristics

- Appearance
- Professionalism
- Communication
- Total Concentration

In addition to his formal responsibilities, there are several characteristics the fourth official must display. They are:

•Appearance – the fourth official is a part of the referee crew and must dress accordingly, before, during and after a match. Ties, jackets and dress warmups (as appropriate).

•Professionalism – the fourth official should treat this assignment with the same consideration as any other refereeing assignment. It is important to remember that the Code of Ethics applies to officials working in all capacities.

•Communication – the fourth official's greatest strength comes from the ability to communicate effectively and interact in a positive manner with a variety of individuals, all with different interests in the game.

•Total Concentration – the fourth official must pay close attention to the match and the manner in which all the participants interact. The fourth official needs to anticipate the need for his involvement and determine its most effective form. As is the case with the referee and Assistant Referees, this often keeps the fourth official from enjoying the match as a sports contest but this role is critical to the smooth execution of the match.

Pregame Duties

- Early Arrival
- Part of Referee Crew
- Liaison to Participants
- Help Referee and Assistant Referees
- Game Balls

Coordinate with the referee when, where, and how to arrive at the field as well as the referee's preference for the appearance of the officiating team

Be prepared (uniform and equipment) to serve as the referee or assistant referee in accordance with the rules of competition

Bring or obtain the proper equipment – for example, clipboard, extra flags, paper, fourth official logs

Participate fully in the pre-game conference to assure a smooth flow of communication and match control

Unless given competing tasks by the referee, participate in the field inspection and pay particular attention to the technical areas

Work with the facility manager(s) regarding changing room(s), field matters needing attention, and an appropriate supply of game balls which comply with Law 2

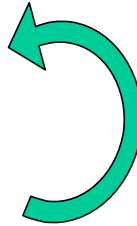
Responsible for the proper operation of any substitution board equipment (if available), security issues, and obtaining the rosters and related game forms

As the primary point of contact with the teams, accompany the Senior Assistant Referee during team inspections

Make the substitution passes available to the team coaches and ensure that the coaches are aware of the procedures for substitution, warm-ups, and injuries

Game Duties

- Manage Substitutions/Balls
- Observe :
 - Home Team Bench
 - Visitor's Team Bench
 - Referee/Assistant Referee
 - Game
- Keep Record
- Manage Off-Field Activities



Manage the substitutions (ensure the sub is on the roster, has the proper pass and is ready to enter with appropriate equipment). Communicate as arranged during the pre-game with the referee to ensure that the substitutions are completed efficiently.

Manage game balls, ensuring that no balls enter the field inappropriately. Be aware of ball person procedures and offer direction/assistance in ensuring the process runs smoothly.

Pay close attention to activities in the technical areas, anticipate possible outbursts from the teams (goals scored, players carded, injuries, disagreement with referee decisions), and react quickly to defuse any situations. Keep attention constantly shifting from the game to the referee to the benches on either side. Be alert to outside interference and respond appropriately to limit its effect.

Keep accurate records to assist (as required) in ensuring that the proper players are identified when misconduct occurs, that no player is cautioned twice and allowed to remain in the game. Any misconduct or irresponsible behavior not seen by the Referee and Assistant Referees must be brought to their attention.

Manage departures from the field other than substitutions (e.g., players instructed to leave the field to repair equipment, bleeding, or misconduct) and, where appropriate, manage the return of these players to the field. Ensure that bench personnel do not enter the field except when beckoned by the referee.

The instructor should review Section 2 of the Guide to Fourth Officials for specific steps to follow in each of the various situations where people might enter or leave the field, legally or illegally, and relate each to the requirements of the Laws of the Game. Specifically, the instructor can facilitate comprehension of this material by breaking into groups and having each one prepare and present the individual sections. This active participation by the participants and sharing of the material between groups is a good way to ensure understanding.

Postgame Duties

- Observe Postgame Activity
- Complete Records
- Check with Referee/Assistant Referee
- Followup with Participants
- Participate in Debriefing
- Return Game Balls

Join the referee and Assistant Referees in leaving the field together

Take all materials and equipment used during the match and return any items to the competition authority or facility managers.

Complete all fourth official paperwork prior to assisting the referee in preparing the game reports

Participate fully in the officiating team's own post-game review and in any debriefing conducted by an assessor or match inspector

Techniques

- Deal Primarily with Coach
- Establish Rules Early
- Avoid Giving “Orders”
- Speak Quietly, with Respect
- Smile!
- “Presence Lends Conviction”
- “When All Else Fails” – Report to Assistant Referee/Ref

The fourth official should always work primarily through the coach. Guidelines should be established early, politely, and based on the pregame guidance of the referee. Ask instead of command. Use a soft voice and be respectful – remember that the coach has many things on his mind that are often more important to him than the needs of the referee crew. Keep your conversations with the coach professional.

Smile often, be approachable, and exhibit a positive attitude. These are investments to cover any future need to manage behavior. Handle as much as possible on your own and then, if necessary, involve the senior Assistant Referee. If that fails to accomplish what is needed, the referee can always be brought into the situation.

Anticipate the needs of the referee crew. Since your presence alone may solve many problems, don't hesitate to drift into the view of a coach or substitute. That action – without words – may resolve and prevent any situation from becoming inflamed. When someone knows that their actions have attracted your attention, that may be sufficient to prevent them from crossing the boundaries.

Summary

- **Responsibilities**
 - Appearance/Professionalism
 - Communication/Total Concentration
- **Duties**
 - Pregame
 - Arrival/Liaison/Assistance
 - Game
 - Subs/Balls/Observe/Record
 - Postgame
 - Observe/Followup
- **Techniques**
 - Take Charge/Be There/Smile/Use Ref-Assistant Referee

Actively involve the participants in all phases of the presentation by soliciting examples of both positive and negative fourth official behavior. Role playing, carefully managed, can go a long way toward demonstrating a concept in this phase of man management. It may help to break up the participants into groups, set up various scenarios for them, and let the participants present their solutions or act out how a fourth official might respond.

Allow the participants to guide the examples, but lead the discussion. As this is potentially new for many, the instructor must ensure that the proper procedures are communicated. The Guide for Fourth Officials should be utilized in the presentation of this material and certainly made available afterward for continuing reference by the participant.