

Managing Encroachment and Free Kicks



**GETTING 10 YARDS,
HANDLING ENCROACHMENT,
DEALING WITH DELAYING THE RESTART,
ORCHESTRATING FREE KICKS AND
MANAGING THE WALL**

GLASA Referee Academy ~ 10 August 2010

General Disclaimer



- The following has been put together based on 20 years of personal experience, learning, clinics and trial & error
- What works for one person may not work for another
- FIFA and USSF directives and procedures may change and need to be followed
- I am not a USSF certified instructor
 - Nor do I play one on TV
 - Kids, do not try this at home

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Definitions



- **Free Kick**
 - Law 13
 - Restart that should be *free* of interference
 - All opponents must be at least 9.15 meters from the ball
- **Encroachment**
 - Law 12
 - Failure to respect the required distance when play is restarted with a corner kick, free kick or throw-in
- **Delaying the Restart of Play**
 - Law 12
 - Sometimes what looks like encroachment is actually delay

Fun stuff



- When is 9.15 meters not enough?
- When is 9.15 meters too much?
- What is 9.15 meters?

Types of Free Kicks



- **Quick Kick (preferred method)**
 - Attacking team takes the kick as soon as the ball is properly placed, with no separate signal needed by the Referee.
 - The attacking team does not ask for the minimum distance to be enforced
- **Ceremonial Free Kick**
 - The kick can't be taken until the Referee gives a separate signal
 - ✦ Attacking team requests minimum distance be enforced
 - ✦ Referee chooses to enforce the distance for game management purposes

Mandatory Ceremonial Restarts



- Yellow or Red Card is given for misconduct
- Serious injury occurred requiring the Referee to address the injury or requiring sideline assistance
- Attacking team requests the minimum distance be enforced
- The Referee decides to slow down the tempo of the match for game control purposes
 - Talk with player
 - Deal with coach
 - Potential confrontation

Punishment



- If opponent is closer to ball than required distance
 - Kick is retaken
- Referees are responsible for ensuring that free kicks are taken without encumbrances unless a team decides to take a quick kick
- Attacking team assumes the risk when they put the ball in play despite the defender not being 10 yards from the ball

Punishment (cont)



- Note FIFA's "Interpretation of the LOTG and Guidelines"
 - If a player decides to take a free kick and an opponent who is less than 10 yards from the ball intercepts it, the Referee must allow play to continue
 - If a player decides to take a free kick quickly and an opponent who is near the ball ***deliberately prevents*** him from taking the kick, the Referee must caution the player for delaying
- **Deliberately prevents = moving/lunging/advancing towards the ball**

Setting the Tone



- It is critical to set the tone early on all free kick restarts
- Set the standards and hold the players accountable
 - Set the precedent
- Failing to deal with encroachment and interference early makes it more difficult to get distance in critical areas of the field as the game develops
 - “deal with” doesn’t necessarily mean a caution
- Where encroachment and interference is blatant, your control is being tested ~ it is particularly important that you act firmly

Referee Tools



- Do nothing
- Evil eye
- Hand Gestures
- Voice Command
- “First Brick”
- Public Admonishment
- Caution
- Send Off

Cast of Characters



- The Protester
- The Old Guy
- The “Late to the Party” Guy
- The Good Samaritan
- The Length Challenged
- The Ball Carrier/Ball Tossler
- The Director

Cast – The Protester



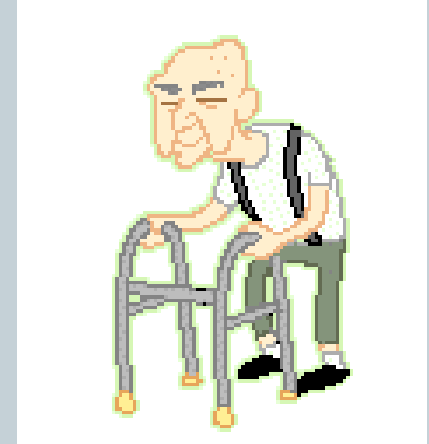
- Still by ball after foul or runs into mix to protest call
- Attacking team may comment or confront protester, thus leading to confrontation
- Protests fall onto deaf ears and quick kick happens. Protester lunges or tries to prevent restart
- May transform into Good Samaritan, Ball Carrier, Length Challenged or Director



Cast – The Old Guy



- Is on the ground due to foul committed
- Slow to get up; possibly delaying restart
 - May be genuine
 - May be feigning an injury
- At risk of having ball played into him
 - Vulnerable
- May also be a Protester
- May transform into Good Samaritan, Ball Carrier, Length Challenged or Director



Cast – Late to the Party



- Usually a forward coming in from behind and stepping on top of the ball
- Kickers vulnerable because coming in from blind side
- Very much intentional and needs to be dealt with
- Probably a Protester as well
- Might upgrade to Good Samaritan, Length Challenged, Ball Carrier and Director



Cast – The Good Samaritan



- Helping with injured player or apologizing
 - Even if genuine, attacking team may not be receptive
- Helping with ball placement...especially after kickers set ball up
- Potential for game disrepute or mass confrontation
- Can then progress to be Length Challenged, Ball Carrier or Director. Could even digress to Protester



Cast – Length Challenged



- Not the person that stands 7 yards away and just thinks that's 10 yards
- Need to read player's intent if this is deliberate
- Could also be a player in very slow retreat
- When attackers do a quick kick, defender may or may not be guilty
- Often times also a Director



Cast – Ball Carrier/Ball Tosser



- Probably the worst person to deal with
- Carrying the ball encourages attacking team to get it
 - Often leads to game disrepute or mass confrontation
- This is a direct assault on the Referee's control
- Close cousin is the ball-kicker-away
- Sometimes is a Director as well



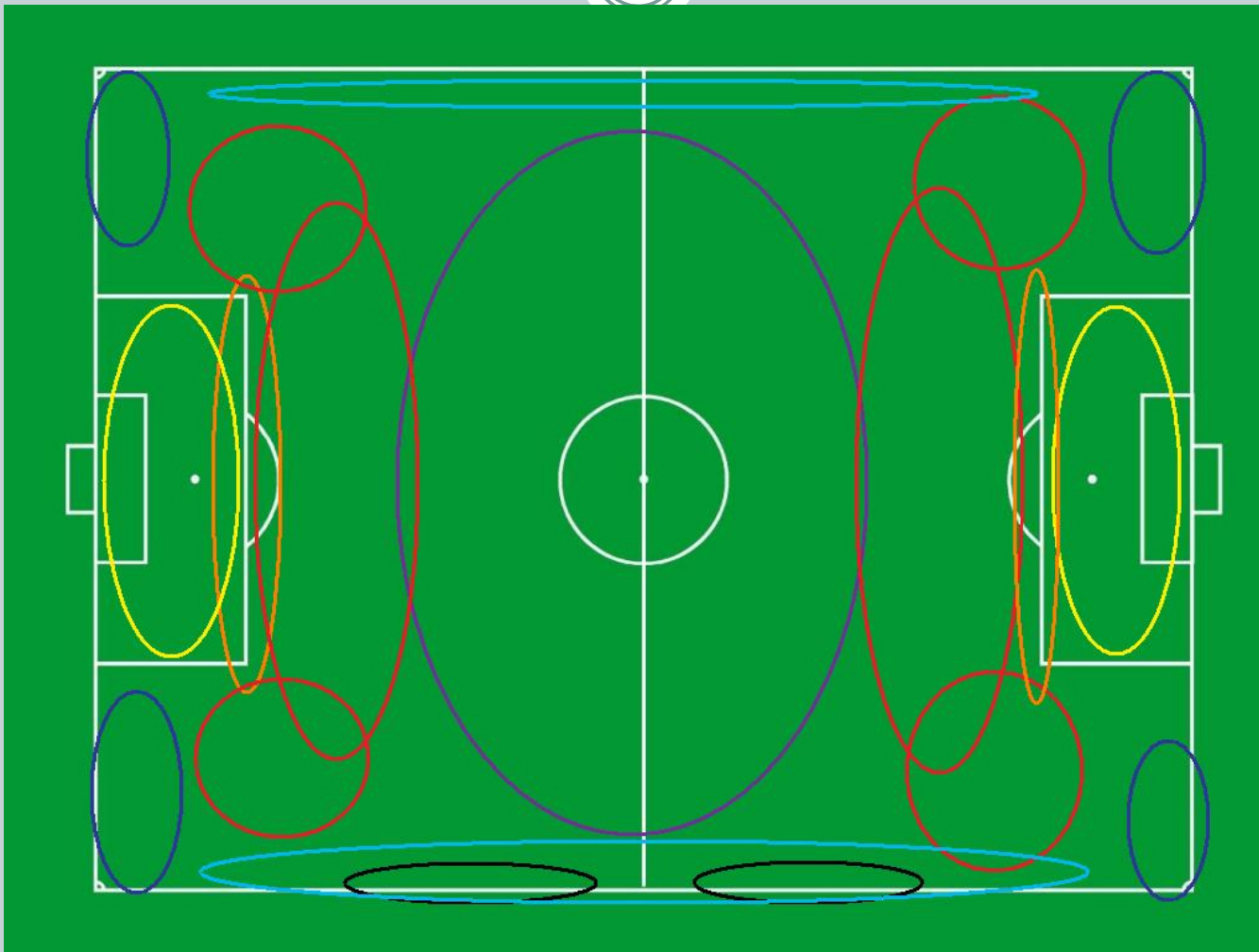
Cast – The Director



- Main objective is to slow down the restart by standing over the ball and “directing” the wall
- May be a “late to the party” and directing from behind the ball
- Closer to the ball the “Director” is, higher the possibility for confrontation with kickers



Hot Spots



Throw-In



- Minimum required distance – 2 yards
- No gesticulating
- No moving
- Where can this degenerate?

Corners



- Pregame procedure to locate 11 yards
- On AR side, AR needs to enforce
 - Use hand gestures or voice
 - Stand in front of ball if need to
- On Referee side, Referee needs to enforce
 - Take up position to be near corner during ball placement
 - Read play and situation
 - ✦ Two players in corner? Defender cheating over?
 - Once dealt with, Referee takes up normal corner position

Goalkeeper Distributions



- Normally not an issue once past U-12's
- Potential hot spots that require your attention
 - After a 50/50 challenge with goalkeeper
 - When an attacker is slow getting off the ground
 - Attacking team slow to retreat
 - Possible quick distribution
- Referee needs to keep longer eye on the area

Bench Areas



- This is already a hot spot for fouls
 - Referee/AR should already be there managing
- Linger a little longer to prevent any restart issues
- Keeping a calmer demeanor will hopefully help keep benches cooler

10 -15 Yards of Midfield



- Typically a routine foul where Referee presence is not required.
- Not a scoring opportunity, so no wall
- Potential for quick kick to be interrupted
 - The Old Guy
 - The Good Samaritan
 - The Protester

Anywhere Inside Penalty Area



- Tensions are high
 - Defense not happy with a “technical” foul called
 - Offense not happy a penalty kick wasn’t called
- Referee needs to clear the immediate area to allow possible quick kick to be taken
 - Ball playing the encroached player vs encroached player playing the ball
- If quick kick is not materializing, decide if Referee should step in and insist on ceremonial restart

Anywhere Inside the Penalty Area (cont)



- Expect tensions to be high the closer the ball is to goal and closer the ball is to center of area
- When needed, make sure players standing on goal line. All other players **MUST** be 10 yards from ball
 - That means everyone that is in front of the ball needs to be on goal line inside the goal. Otherwise they are on the side.
- Be aware of encroachment prior to ball in play
- ***Obviously***, raise arm to indicate indirect free kick

18 – 35 Yards from Goal



- Set plays are always practiced
- Extremely high percentage of goals scored
- Usually lots of dissent and protest from defense
- Defense is inspired to slow kick down
- More than likely going to be a ceremonial restart

18 – 35 Yards ... Misconduct



- Defensive player earned a caution by foul
- Always restart with ceremonial free kick
- Referee needs to handle booking but not lose focus of conflict around the ball
 - Dissent and exchanging of words (Protester)
 - Arguing over ball placement (Good Samaritan)
 - Defense holding onto the ball (Ball Holder)
 - Defense appeal to Referee or AR (Protester)
 - Defender on the ground (Old Guy)
 - Late defender coming in from blind spot (Late to the Party)

18 – 35 Yards ... Misconduct (cont)



- **How to handle**
 - Should Referee isolate guilty player and show card?
 - Should Referee pick up ball?
 - Should Referee stand over the ball and show card?
 - Should Referee delay card and diffuse tensions first?
- **How Referee handles this will depend**
 - Read tension of players
 - Understand game style up to that point
 - Any problems with players previously?
 - How are players indirectly telling you to handle situation?

18 – 35 Yards ... Injury



- If play resulted in injury, perform ceremonial restart
- **PICK UP THE BALL!**
- Use opportunity to slow things down and cool things off
- Beware of splitting attention between injured player and other players...see previous Misconduct bullets
- If attacker injurer, tensions might be elevated
- If coach on field, don't give him opportunity to dissent or coach

18 – 35 Yards ... Placement



- This is a danger zone so Referee should already be on-site
- If possible, don't place ball in hole or dirt
- While ball being retrieved, Referee should stand where ball will be placed. Facilitates restart.
 - Goalkeeper can start setting wall
 - Attacking players can start planning restart
 - Referee can start moving players back
 - Referee's presence can prevent late comers and statues
 - Referee should ask attackers if they want ceremonial restart

18 – 35 Yards ... Placement (cont)



- **Once ball is placed, verify kickers know to wait.**
 - Give the whistle signal...make sure defenders see it
 - Use voice as well in case players didn't see signal
- **While moving off the ball, do not turn back on ball**
 - Deal immediately with attacker resetting/moving ball
 - Make sure a "late to party" doesn't show up
 - Make sure attackers not getting ready to play the ball
 - Start moving the non-wall defenders from 10 yard bubble

18 – 35 Yards ... Wall



- **Know your 10 yards**
 - Don't pace it off and vary your stride
 - Use visual clues on field
 - ✦ Top of D is 4 yards from penalty area
 - ✦ If ball is 2 yards from D, wall is two yards in front of penalty mark
- **“First Brick” vs “Wall Line” vs verbally moving wall**
 - 3-4 whistle blasts to move defenders if absolutely needed
 - If tempo permits, Referee can talk with wall or kickers
 - ✦ Builds report, possible friendships (“make a friend”)

18 – 35 Yards – Wall (cont)



- Be aware of attackers in or in front of wall
- Be aware of attacker next to goalkeeper
- Slowly retreat to Referee's restart position
 - Keep sight of wall
 - Keep sight of kickers
- Eye contact with AR
- Signal kick is direct; maybe verbal reminder
- Firm whistle for restart

Additional Comments



- If the Referee's demeanor is elevated, players will feed off that and be elevated as well
 - Where possible, relax. Be in control
- Have a report with the players
 - When wall was 8 yards, tell them they almost got it
 - When players almost ten yards, manage from afar
 - ✦ "3 more steps, please"
- Warn wall not to move closer
- Warn kickers not to move ball or to wait for whistle

Sources



- This was inspired by US Soccer's 2009 Referee Program Directives "Free Kick and Restart Management" dated February 10, 2009
 - See US Soccer's Referee website for document