

## Law 12 – FOULS AND MISCONDUCT

*Those dirty nasty fouls - not really - well, maybe sometimes*

Last week we discussed the two types of free kicks, Direct Free Kick (DFK) and Indirect Free Kick (IDFK). Now let's discuss what fouls award those free kicks and the scary RED and YELLOW cards for misconduct.

**WHAT IS THE CRITERIA FOR ALL FOULS?** - To be a foul, the ball must be in play, committed by a player on the field of play, and against another player or team. If play had not started or had been stopped and something happens it can be misconduct, but not a foul. Fouls cannot be committed by coaches or fans or by substitutes not on the field of play; they can only be guilty of misconduct. Misconduct can occur by anyone and when play is ongoing or when play has stopped or even before the game begins and after it ends.

**WHAT ARE THE DIRECT FREE KICK FOULS?** - There are ten fouls that cause a DFK to be awarded. Out of these ten I want to break them into a group of 6 and a group of 4. Not all fouls result in a card or a product of dirty violent play. A team that commits several fouls is not necessarily a dirty, violent or unsportsmanlike team.

### **The 10 DFK fouls:**

#### *GROUP OF SIX-*

These are offenses once the referee considers how they happen and decides they were done in this manner:

1. Careless- Careless means a player has not exercised due caution in making a fair play and could be as simple as a miscalculation of strength or size or poor judgment of speed or distance. The ref may give them a stern talking to.
2. Reckless- Reckless is much more severe and means a player made unnatural movement, clearly outside the normal realm of fair play, and the action was to intimidate and/or gain an unfair advantage. This is unsporting behavior.
3. Excessive in force- Excessive force is the MOST severe and means a player far exceeded the normal use of force to make a fair play and has put a player in danger of bodily harm. This is serious foul play or violent conduct.

The ref is like Santa, he is always watching, making a list, and judging who is naughty and nice?

- **Kicking** or attempting to kick an opponent-
- **Tripping** or attempting to trip an opponent- Includes moving your body under a player to break up play. Does not include legs tangled up causing an accidental trip.
- **Jumping** at an opponent
- **Charging** an opponent- A charge is allowed, but should be directed toward the shoulder of the opponent. A player falling to the ground does not mandate a foul being called.
- **Striking** or attempting to strike an opponent- Direct contact using various parts of the body. It can also be purposely hitting an opponent with the ball and this will take very careful judgment by the ref as some actions may be trifling or as severe as violent conduct.
- **Pushing** an opponent

#### *GROUP OF FOUR-*

For these actions the referee has to only determine if the action occurred:

- While attempting to gain possession of the ball, a **player makes contact with opponent before touching the ball.**
- **Holding** an opponent
- **Spitting** or attempting to spit on an opponent
- **Handles** the ball (see newsletter on handball)

**WHAT IS THE INDIRECT FREE KICK FOULS?** - I will also break this into two groups; the IDFK has special situations for the keeper.

#### *GOALKEEPER FOULS INSIDE HIS OR HER OWN PENALTY AREA-*

- **Waste time-** Considerable more time than six seconds while putting the ball back in play. Referees should not count like in basketball, but determine if the keeper is trying to put the ball in play. If a keeper is about to kick the ball at the end of 6 seconds and actually kicks the ball a second or two later, nothing should be called since the infraction is trifling.
- **Second touch-** Touches the ball a second time with his hands after he released the ball from his hands. Once a keeper releases the ball from his hands he can only use his feet until another player touches it.
- **Touches the ball with his hands** when a teammate DELIBERATELY passed the ball to the keeper.
- **Touches the ball with his hands** from a throw in by a teammate.

#### *OTHER IDFK FOULS-*

- **Dangerous Play-** Plays in a dangerous manner, such as a high kick.
- **Impeding-** Impedes the progress of an opponent without the ball, was called obstruction several years ago.
- **Prevents,** or delays a keeper from releasing the ball.
- Commits **any other foul not listed in Law 12** for which play is stopped to caution or dismiss a player.

**ONE OF OUR PLAYERS WAS GETTING FOULED AND THE REF DID NOTHING EXCEPT POINT BOTH OF HIS HANDS FORWARD AND YELLS ADVANTAGE! OUR FORWARD WAS FOULED AT LEAST TWICE BEFORE SHE SCORED THE GOAL?** - Fouling should not benefit the defending side, that's why soccer has something called advantage. It causes fans to yell and scream at the ref, "hey!", "are you blind!", "call something!" and then after advantage or when advantage is lost the referee may call the foul or addresses the misconduct; then you hear "it's about time!"

People become irate because they don't understand advantage, but they understand the rules of basketball. Too many times the officiating of soccer is judged through the eyes of basketball fans and their knowledge of basketball officiating. In basketball a ref calls every foul, even when it benefits poor defense. EXAMPLE- A player has a breakaway and the only chance a defender has is to desperately tug on the shirt to prevent the dunk, tug on shirt, whistle blows, no dunk, and offense loses its advantage!

In soccer they have advantage. If a player is being fouled, but is still in control and is in no immediate danger, and it is to the benefit of the attacking team, the ref allows play to continue. He signals with his palms pointing forward and yells out loud "advantage" or "play on". This tells all that the ref sees the foul,

and you better stop fouling, and it allows advantage to the attacking team. The ref can call the foul if the advantage disappears because of the fouling and can also address the misconduct afterward or after the goal. It's a great rule!

**WHY IS THE YELLOW AND RED CARD USED?** – These are forms of discipline and ways to control the game. The referee's job is to maintain safety and integrity of the game. The yellow and red cards are his or her tools. Yellow is used to correct the method of play and the red is used to end the type of play and penalize a team for their tactics.

Only a player, substitute or substituted player can be shown a card. The referee has the authority to use the disciplinary tool from the moment he or she takes the field (before a game) up until the time he or she leaves the field (even after the final whistle).

**WHY WOULD A PLAYER BE SHOWN A YELLOW CARD?** – Seven reasons:

- Unsporting behavior –
- Dissent by word or action –
- Persistently infringes the Laws of the game – can be a single player or the team
- Delays the restart of a play –
- Fails to give the attacking team its guaranteed distance during a restart –
- Enters the field of play without referees permission –
- Leaves the field of play without referees permission –

**WHY WOULD A PLAYER BE SHOWN A RED CARD?** – Seven reasons

- Serious foul play –
- Violent conduct –
- Spits on a person –
- Blatantly denies with the hands a goal scoring opportunity –
- Denies a goal scoring opportunity of an opponent that is moving toward the goal by fouling –
- Offensive, abusive or insulting language or gestures –
- Receives a second yellow –

**WHAT ARE RED CARDED PLAYER SUPPOSE TO DO?** – They are to leave the vicinity of the field and technical area. The exception would be if they are too young to leave and have no guardian to watch them.

**WHAT HAPPENS TO THE TEAM OF THE RED CARDED PLAYER?** – They play down according to FIFA Laws of the game. High Schools are governed by NFHS and have some different ideas on red card situations.

### **MISCONCEPTIONS**

- It is a foul to kick the ball while lying on the ground – NO fans get upset, but it's not. What is illegal is kicking or kicking at another person, dangerous play, which is easy to do while lying on the ground. That's usually why they tell young kids to not kick the ball when they are on the ground. If a player can kick safely while sniffing dandelions, then kick away.
- My daughter slipped in the mud while she was dribbling. She saw players coming at her, so in order to protect the ball she wrapped her legs around the ball. Well, one girl came up and tried to kick the ball and barely missed my daughter's sore knee and the ref blew the whistle on my daughter! Was he

blind? - I don't know, but he was doing his job. That was dangerous play, but made that way not be the kicker, but by the girl that wrapped her legs around the ball.

- My daughter was running after a fifty-fifty ball when she dove to the ground to head the ball forward and got spiked in the head by the opponent's kicking foot and they called the foul on her, obviously the ref was biased. -YES, but biased toward the safety of the players. The girl that put her head down where people usually kick made the play dangerous, not the kicker.

- You can get a yellow card for trying to trick the referee or circumvent the Laws of the game. - YES, player will be recorded for a yellow card for unsporting behavior

- A referee does not have to stop the game at the moment misconduct occurs. TRUE a referee can wait to issue a card at the next dead ball; it should not delay past the next restart. A referee can also choose to ignore a caution if the act was judged to be trifling.

- Players cannot have misconduct called between teammates. Oh YES they can since unsporting behavior does not care who it's against.

- Coaches, fans and parents can not be issued red or yellow cards. - TRUE, in FIFA only players, high school is different.

- Faking a foul or an injury deserves a yellow card. - TRUE It's called unsporting behavior

- Making your opponent think you are on their team by faking your voice, pretending to be a teammate or asking them to pass to you, works in basketball so it must in soccer- YELLOW CARD It may work, but its also unsporting behavior.

- The location of the ball for a free kick goes by where the ball was when the foul was committed- NO it goes by the exact spot where the foul occurred.

- A player ran in at a very fast speed and using both cleats cleared the ball from the dribbler. The ball was hit by both feet first, but the attacker ended up on her head since her legs were taken out beneath her after the ball was cleared. Since the defender got the ball first, no foul?- NO WAY, IT'S A FOUL A legal tackle can still have been careless, reckless or excessive force or done in a manner to intimidate or likely to cause injury. This player came in with both feet at a reckless manner with the high possibility to cause injury. A referee's job is to maintain the safety and integrity of the game.

- Our coach told us to foul number 11 every time she got the ball in our half because she was so good. The fouls were not hard or dangerous. I then committed my first foul against her and the ref gave me a yellow for my first foul, how can that be fair? - PERSISTENT INFRINGEMENT The ref determined the tactics of your team was to consistently break the rules to gain an unfair advantage against number 11 even though each foul was mild; it is a (yellow card) offense.

- You have a right to build a wall and creep up on a free kick- NO Defense has no right to build a wall and failing to respect the distance can mean a card.