

Notes from Referees Meeting Sunday 16th October 2005 Lloyd Park

Free Passes and Restarts

The revised IKF rules distinguish between technical offences and physical offences. Technical offences result in the awarding of a restart, as do all offences where the defence is awarded possession. All passes from the side and throw offs at the start of the match and after a goal is scored are also now classified as restarts.

The full IKF rules involve distinguishing between light and heavy infringements for physical play by the defence. The BKA has, however, opted out of distinguishing between hard and soft physical contact for all its domestic competitions. As a result all physical contact will be treated as "hard". This means that where physical play by the defence is punished, a free pass at the place of the infringement is awarded to the attack.

In all cases referees are able to play on if there is a **clear** advantage to the team who would otherwise be awarded possession.

Indicating Free Passes and Restarts

When signalling an offence the referee must use the signal for the offence committed and a direction signal to show who will have possession, followed by an indication of what will be taken: free pass or restart.

To indicate a

free pass: the referee puts their arm up, with an open palm and fingers together – the hand is then ready to indicate the four seconds allowed for the team set up once the ball is in place.

restart: no signal is given for the restart so as to speed up the game.

Verbal communication of the decision by the referee will help enormously and is encouraged!

Bringing The Ball Into Play From A Restart

The referee should blow their whistle once the taker is in position and the opposition moves away from the taker so that he is no longer closely hindering. If the opponent fails to move back the referee may blow and if the pass is affected or the ball is not allowed to go 2.50 m then the opponent is punished. Once the whistle is blown the taker has 4 seconds to bring the ball into play. Unlike free passes, for restarts there is no need for the attackers to be 2.5m apart.

To come into play the ball must travel 2.5m horizontally from a restart. (Note that this is a different criterion to the free pass, where the ball can be passed to a player who is standing 2.5m from the taker of the free pass, but leaning in.) Anyone who stops the ball from travelling 2.5m from a restart must be penalised. This situation can come about in two ways:

The person taking the restart passes the ball to a team mate without the ball travelling 2.5m. This is punished by a restart to the other team.

The restart pass is intercepted or hindered by the opposition without the ball travelling 2.5m (see below).

Hindering / Intercepting Restarts

Hindering on restarts can be passive or active.

Active hindering is self explanatory and can occur when a player is actively trying to block the restart or intercepts the ball before it has travelled the 2.5m distance.

Passive hindering involves standing so close to the taker of the restart so that they do not have freedom of movement.

Neither of the above is allowed. If the attacking team is taking the restart then a free pass from the same spot is awarded, if the defending team is taking the restart then another restart is awarded. In both cases the offending player should be given a warning. Further infringements by a player following a warning should result in a yellow card.

Taking Free Passes

Free passes are now taken from a spot which the referee has to indicate. The taker of the free pass must put a foot on the spot and all the other players must be 2.5m away from that spot.

Putting The Ball Into Play From a Free Pass

The wording of this rule has not changed. However, it was clarified that because the taker of the free pass only needs to have one foot on the place of the free pass the distance travelled in the second of the ways in which the ball is brought into play from a free pass may now be quite short if the two players are leaning towards each other.

The ball is in play following a free pass if either:

- defender touches the ball
- or the ball is played to a team mate who is standing 2.5m away from the taker
- or the ball has travelled 2.5m away from the thrower 4 seconds after the start of the free pass (i.e. the ball need not be under the control of either an attacker or a defender).

Football

If the ball touches the leg (defined as the thigh down) then a football infringement has occurred. The referee would normally award a restart but can play advantage if this is clear and the ball goes to the non-offending side. The exceptions to this would be:

- A free pass should be awarded if the defence is deemed to have deliberately played the ball with the leg/foot. (A restart should be awarded if an attacker deliberately plays the ball with the leg/foot as all offences by the attack result in a restart).
- A penalty should be awarded if the defence is deemed to have deliberately played the ball with the leg/foot and this action results in the loss of a scoring opportunity.

If a player deliberately throws the ball against the leg of an opponent this is a form of misbehaviour. A re-start is awarded against the culprit and he is given a warning. Repeated instances by the same player can lead to a yellow card.

Note that the football rule has been tightened so that all instances of football, even those which do not appear to have a significant influence on the game, should be punished (unless advantage is played). So if someone drops a pass, it hits their foot, bounces up and they catch it again, this should be classed as football, even if there is no-one else near them.

Discipline

The IKF have produced a list of misbehaviour offence codes for the logging of yellow card offences. This list will be distributed to referees and placed on the BKA website so that they need only put the code on the match form. Only a red card is required to be accompanied by a report of the incident.

As an explanation to the codes, the BKA has produced a document that outlines what offences referees can issue cards for which will be distributed to referees and clubs and posted on the BKA website. Referees are encouraged to make themselves familiar with the long list of potential offences which could be followed by disciplinary action.

For 'minor' offences a warning may suffice in the first instance, but any repeated misbehaviour by that player should be followed up by a yellow card. For more serious offences an immediate yellow, or even red card may be appropriate.

Note that dissent relates to all forms of disagreement with the referee's decision and does not have to involve swearing words to be punished. (The latter is defined as insulting behaviour and is a separate, punishable offence.). In fact, dissent can take the form of non-verbal actions such as shaking of the head, slamming of the ball, kicking it away etc.

Actions such as abuse between team mates should also be considered as misbehaviour and should involve the minimum of a warning and more probably a card if serious enough to warrant it.

All referees are encouraged to act on the guidance as issued in order that we achieve consistency.

Cards issued in area leagues as well as national competitions need to be communicated to the BKA.

The BKA will be looking to feedback to clubs earlier about discipline, i.e. by posting cards etc on the BKA website. Feedback from referees regarding the new guidance is welcomed.

Sportsmanship Awards

As last year, referees will be required to fill out electronic report forms that include the match score and sportsmanship marks following national league matches.

Travel and Subsistence Forms

In order to reduce the number of small cheques written by the BKA (which all incur a charge), referees are asked to delay submitting travel claims until the amount owed reaches £50 or until halfway through the season. The travel claim form allows for claims to be generated from a number of refereeing commitments.

Referee Grades

The BKA will issue a list of referees and their grades on the BKA website.

BKA Events

There are a number of BKA events this year: national youth day, national championships, inter-area competitions that require an appointed lead referee. In order to ease the burden of making formal appointments, if anyone is interested in acting as lead referee for a particular event they should contact Alan Lewis.