



Eastern Massachusetts Soccer Officials
Association
<http://www.emsoa.org>
Summer 2013 Newsletter



Fall Meetings

Mandatory Rule Interpretation Meetings:

- North Chapter - **SUNDAY**, August 25, 2013 at 7:00 p.m., Kitty's Restaurant, 123 Main Street, North Reading, MA
- West Chapter - Tuesday, September 3, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. The location ~~has not been set yet~~ at the Sheraton Hotel, 1657 Worcester Road (Exit 12 To Route 9 West), Framingham
- South Chapter - Wednesday August 28, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. at Hanover High School, 287 Cedar Street, Hanover, Massachusetts
- All Chapters – Monday September 9, 2013 at 7:00 pm at the V.F.W. Post 2498, 20 Junction St, Needham, MA

Regular Chapter Meetings:

North Chapter - All meetings start at 7:00 pm. Kitty's Restaurant, 123 Main Street, North Reading, MA

- Thursday, September 26, 2013
- Thursday, October 17, 2013
- ~~Thursday, October 31, 2013~~ Wednesday, October 30, 2013

West Chapter - All meetings start at 7:00 p.m. ~~The location has not been set yet.~~ at the Sheraton Hotel, 1657 Worcester Road (Exit 12 To Route 9 West), Framingham

- Tuesday, September 17, 2013
- Tuesday, October 1, 2013
- Tuesday, October 15, 2013

South Chapter - All meetings start at 7:30 p.m. at Hanover High School, 287 Cedar Street, Hanover, MA

- Wednesday, September 18, 2013
- Wednesday, October 2, 2013
- Wednesday, October 16, 2013

Come to the Rules Interpretation Meeting -- **OR ELSE**

“Or Else” sounds like bad news and maybe it will be bad news for some members. Starting in 2013, there is a change in the penalty for failing to come to the Rules Interpretation Meeting. The change is intended to get the message across to everyone that “Mandatory” means that every member must come.

At the EMSOA Business Meeting in December 2008, the By-Laws were changed to add a fine of one varsity fee (that is \$78 for 2013) for a member who does not come to the meeting and did not send a

note before the meeting to emsoa@emsoa.org stating that the member could not attend and why the member could not attend. The Executive Board voted to not enforce this change for 2010, 2011 and 2012. For 2013, the rule will be enforced.

So, you have three choices: (1) Come to the Rules Interpretation Meeting at one of the chapters; (2) Send an excuse prior to the meeting; or (3) Pay the fine and provide your excuse after the meeting.

A member who does not attend the Rules Interpretation Meeting and does not ask to be excused will be removed from membership. This part of the By-Laws has been in place and enforced for many years.

Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity

Calvin G Perry – State Interpreter

National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) has issued a **slight change** starting with the 2013 season. It is a variation in the ruling on “intentional fouling” aka tactical fouling when there was an obvious goal scoring opportunity (OGSO). In the past, we had been instructed to award a **RED** card (Dismissal) when there was an attempt by fouling (handling or otherwise) – successful or not – to prevent a goal from being scored. This decision was revisited last year and in the event that an attempted foul was unsuccessful (goal was scored) we were to award a **YELLOW** card. If the attempt did in fact stop the goal from being scored, a **RED** card was to be awarded. This makes sense to not double punish a team/player.

The situation officials are left with now is deciding if we have an “OGSO” to deal with. A foul is a foul – that does not change! That foul may or may not require a card – that does not change! The official must now decide if the foul is OGSO. That is a change! Was that player at that time denied an OGSO, in the opinion of the official - remember that the foul did occur, but was it OGSO??

OGSO depends on several specific factors as well as the opinion of the official. Here are several elements to ponder in determining OGSO;

- **SKILL OF THE PLAYER WHO WAS FOULED** – the skill level of that player must be considered to decide if he/she has an OGSO – the more skilled the player, the greater the chance for that player to score.
- **PLAYER’S DISTANCE TO THE BALL AND TO THE GOAL** – the closer to the ball and the ball to the goal, the greater the liability that the player can or will score. Player’s skill level is part of this decision, too. Playing distance is NOT an absolute measure in inches, but rather, varies proportionally to the player’s skill.
- **DIRECTION OF TRAVEL OF THE BALL (AND PLAYER)** – player and ball must be headed in the specific direction of the goal mouth to be OGSO. A foul at mid-pitch with the ball headed to the side line may well be a foul (and even be worthy of a card), BUT the reason for that call (and/or the card) is not OGSO. It is simply a foul!
- **OTHER ELEMENTS OF CONCERN** – there may be several in this category, but the single obvious one is the other team’s defensive posture. Are there defenders in position to oppose the offensive thrust represented by the fouled player? One on one with the keeper at the penalty spot is OGSO, but move the play back only a few yards and position 5 defenders between the ball and the keeper would render this play something other than OGSO!

Restart is established by the foul – either a straight forward violation of Rule 12 (or, perhaps, another rule) or a call based on a perceived OGSO. It would be, presumably, a Direct Free restart for the fouled team – in the box would be a Penalty Kick and elsewhere on the pitch just a Direct Kick. Was the card (if only a **YELLOW**) a second yellow on the offender? Was the call Serious Foul Play requiring a Red card? Was the call OGSO requiring a Red? Card write-up would be very different in each case, but the team must play short in each case!

Very simply a foul occur at any point on the pitch! That is NOT the case for OGSO! Either can require a card; the reason for the card, however, would not be the same. (Proper write-up of cards is entirely another discussion) The whole decision process for the official must take place in only a moment AND is ITOOTO (*In The Opinion Of The Official*) It seems important that officials think through the elements of possible scenarios to assist in making split second decisions based on the elements determining OGSO. The philosophy of punishment for fouling is to keep the field level for both teams; it has logic – think about it!

You learn good judgment from experience; you get experience from bad judgment and thinking about what went wrong!

New NFHS Rule Books?

Each year there have been new NFHS Rule Books in the membership packets at the Rules Interpretation meeting. That will happen again this year, but you should know that it is possible that the publication of rule books may go to a once every 2 years schedule. When you get your 2013-2014 rule-book, keep it where you will find it next year. Also put it in your bag and take it to every game this year

NFHS Rules Changes for School Year 2013-2014

3-3-2b(1): During a dead ball as the result of an injury, either or both coaches can now give coaching instruction to his/her team.

3-3-2 (new) and 3-4-1b: Before they enter the field, substitutes must be beckoned onto the field by the referee except at the start of a period.

4-1-1c: Clarifies that tape applied to the socks cannot change the basic color of the socks.

12-8-1e: The use of electronic communication devices is allowed in the bench area. These devices, however, cannot be used to communicate with athletes on the field during the game.

12-8-1f(14) (new): An unsuccessful attempt to deny an opponent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by a foul (i.e., a goal is scored anyway) is now unsporting conduct and a caution (yellow card). Previously, this was a disqualification (red card).

12-8-2d(2): A successful attempt to deny an opponent an obvious goal-scoring opportunity by a foul (goal is not scored) is still serious foul play and a disqualification (red card).

18-1-1n: This change defines that on a free kick the ball has not been properly kicked into play when a player merely taps or steps on the top of the ball with his/her foot. The ball must now also move.

Points of Emphasis

1. Goalkeeper Injury
2. Excessive Player Substitutions
3. Required Equipment
4. Penalty Kick

5. Concussion Management

Briefs on the NFHS Rule Changes for the 2013 Fall Season

Calvin G. Perry, State Interpreter – MIAA and MISOA

1. Coach communications (R 3.3.2b.1) It is now codified that a coach or EMS can communicate with players during an injury time out. This does not change the requirement that he/she have the official's permission to be on the field in the first place. Side-line conversations are OK - not, certainly to delay restart, however.
2. Electronic Communications (R 12.8.1e) Electronic chalkboards are OK, as are comments from a sub-coach to the head coach by electronic means. Coach to players communication electronically is still forbidden! Players with wireless ear-buds are still a NO-NO!
3. Substitution from the bench (R 3.3.2 and 3.4.1b) The scoring of a goal a "called" Time out (MIAA rule) and a time out for injury, both represent an "unlimited off the bench" substitution opportunity. The players must, however, be motioned onto the field by the official, as is the case for all substitutions. (Restart whistle required) This clearly identifies to the officials who is the sub and who is the player.
4. Denying Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity R12.8.2d) In an *OGSO* situation, a foul the does not prevent the goal is awarded a Caution (a Red card can be warranted, if so, the award is then a dismissal). If the *OGSO* foul does prevent the scoring, the sanction is a Dismissal (Red Card). Restart is direct free kick, which could be a Penalty Kick
5. Touched and moved (R 18.1.1n) Simply, a dead ball on the ground, to be put into play, must be kicked and the ball must move - touching and rocking the ball is NOT sufficient to be put into play. QUICK whistle is required to make this call!
6. Uniforms (R 4.1.1b and c) More "Clothes Cop" stuff! MIAA has declared the Home team is to wear "LIGHT" color and the Visitors are to wear a "DARK" color. *Socks* are part of the color scheme. They must be single color and any tape used on the socks is to be of the similar color.

There is a continuing concern about Injury Management, properly done goes a long way to limit possible liability. The official's job is to note injuries (and possible injuries), stop the play and get EMS onto the field to deal with the situation. (EMS may well only be a coach). Play is stopped, time is out and this is an UNLIMITED substitution opportunity from the bench for both teams - side-line coaching is now allowed (see #1 above). Injuries are injuries, especially at this level, whether it is a turned ankle or a suspect concussion. Your job is to get them out of play and allow the team management to perform their required protocol. An injured player presented later in the game for substitution may re-enter (by rule). You may assume that any protocol, if indicated, has been complied with. Be aware you always have the authority to excuse a player, whom you consider to have been injured. (R3.3.1.c.2.)

There is the constant concern, and not a new one either, that the well-being of the officials must be considered. There are often only 4 adults at a soccer game; 2 officials and 2 coaches, That being the case, officials must be vigilant, especially at times of increased stress; *e.g.* after goals, after particularly egregious fouls, late in a close game, games of high import. You can make your own list! These are times when both officials must be observing the play and/or the players, certainly not looking to administrative duties. There is

ample opportunity to do that before you blow the next whistle. There has been a rash of assaults on officials appearing in the news. We must be preventatively alert to see that we do not have any in Massachusetts!

The new rulings outlined above will all be in play in the 2013 Fall season. They need to be read thoroughly and discussed. These comments are my musings and, while I feel sure that there is no mis-information, they must be read and re-read by anyone who plans to work this Fall. The *coaches* expect, and are entitled to, a consistent application of all rules.

I am open to comments, questions and disagreement. Communicate! Be well – enjoy the Summer

New Member Clinics

There were two training sessions for new members in the Spring and two more have been scheduled for August. If you know of anyone interested in becoming an EMSOA member, pass this information along to them.

- Sunday August 4, 2013, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. at the Westwood Council on Aging, 60 Nahatan St, Westwood, MA. Point of Contact is Ed Rae (EdRae@massref.net, 209 Winter St, Westwood MA 02090).
- Thursday evenings 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm, August 15 and 22, and Saturday 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, August 24, at the Unitarian-Universalist Church, 75 Great Rd, Bedford, MA. Point of Contact is Cal Perry, (Tel: 978-475-5924; e-mail: cgeeco@bigfoot.com) 25 Timothy Drive, Andover MA 01810.

Accurate Decisions

Rich Valle, EMSOA Interpreter

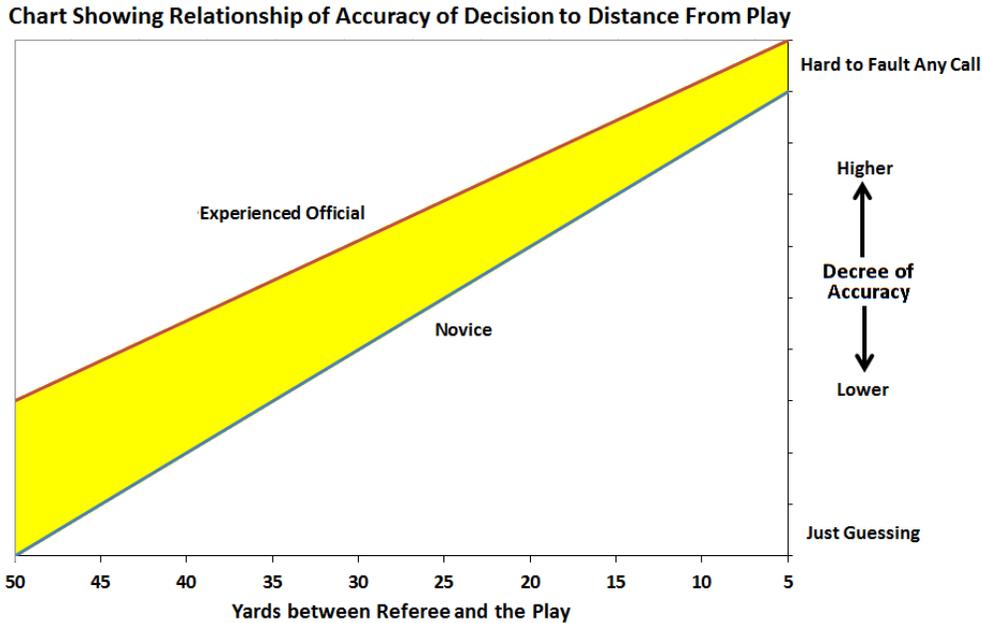
When teaching a class of new officials, I have often related refereeing to driving. That is, one's reflexes, speed and maybe even knowledge of the "rules of the road" are at a very high level when we start out. But, few would argue that with ten or more years of experience, we become better at anticipating and analyzing situations on the road or field.

The chart below is an attempt to show how distance from play and accurate decisions are related. We all fall somewhere between those two diagonal lines (shaded area). For the rare official that tends to not cross the mid field line, the consequences are dire. Whether experienced or novice, decisions from that distance are going to be suspect and often questioned by players and coaches. The highly experienced official will probably have a slightly better chance of "getting it right" than a novice, but both will likely be challenged.

Conversely, when nearer to the play, both the experienced and novice official will come closer to almost always getting the "call" right. Players and coaches may not sing your praise, but they would be hard pressed to find fault with your call. Remember, in the two person system, we are the referees and the A.R.'s.

A referee can only change their experience level by officiating many games over a period of years. However, by being fit, learning to anticipate, and working with your partner (if you have one), you can instantly improve your level of competence.

Referees easily run 3-5 miles in a top level match. Take the time now to improve your fitness level in a way that suits you. The benefits will be better health, more confidence and less grief on the field.



Eye on Teamwork in the Dual System

By Ed Rae, West Chapter Interpreter

With two whistles on the field, complexity begins. The two referees have Two personalities, Two resumes, Two distinct game backgrounds and Two, often widely disparate experience levels. The Two referees are never exactly alike. They are not Clones!

All that is diversity, each referee's way of handling the game is a minor distraction, most of the time. Often it's irrelevant. It's invisible. - - - - - Except, when teamwork falls down.

The most glaring issue often is the call from afar. Out of the blue. Ugh! The action is deep in the attacking zone. The trail referee is back at the halfway line or even more remote. The trail official insists on making a call and blows his whistle. No one is pleased. Why?

If the lead referee has a clear view of the play, is closer to the play & feels confident in 'no-call', the lead referee is jarred by this virtual insult. Is the distant referee really being a 'teammate' ?

If the call is against the offense, they feel as if attack momentum has been 'stolen,' by a thief, out of sight. If the call is against the defense, the defense must face a threatening free kick — possibly a scoring opportunity. They may feel the punishment does not fit the crime. How could THAT referee call it? And from THERE?.....Outrageous ! THAT referee has no shame!

The mere appearance of injustice hurts like a multi-headed hydra. Both Referees are hurt. The players are hurt. The dignity of the officiating is hurt big time. In general the game is brought low. Cooperation going forward is damaged. Future decisions are questioned. Negative karma.

This is a bag of biting snakes!!!!!!!

A worse case scene is a far away & distant call which results in a penalty kick. Injustice on steroids! It feels like a kick in the gut. At least one team, one formerly friendly referee & one bench -- maybe more -- are all upset and asking the same, now even angrier, question --- WHY?

Why? This is bad form {as in addition to stepping on a fellow official's purview, ego & toes}. What should the referees do about this? Plan on prevention.

Some questions any Referee should ask -fleeting, before one is about to make an outlandish, perhaps, clearly controversial, surely an anti-teamwork --call. If you are the X-Ray vision Referee, who can see egregious mischief, from the budget seat balcony, ask yourself some questions.

What good does this questionable decision serve? Did you-the distant official, try to glance at the partner? Any attempt at eye contact at all? If no, will it help mutual cooperation? If some 'good' --is there a bigger 'bad' --downside here? Is it in balance with this game in front of us? Is it in synch with way game is being managed? Is it trifling?

Trifling, meaning something trivial, of inconsequential import, given the way THIS game has been going.

Is it doubtful? Handling for example. Was it purely deliberate; clearly on purpose? Did the hand or arm strike the ball or did the ball bounce inadvertently off an arm by accident?

Is the call credible? Were miscellaneous, trifling and doubtful 'handballs' no-calls, all over the place, except now -in the penalty area? Were you calling infractions, only within a reasonable, few yards distance? If you were out of position, did you then discount your (too self-important maybe?) X-Ray vision, enough to ignore that iffy 'it' ? Would ordinary players, of average intelligence, gauge your proximity to be within customary call-making, credible, acceptable, sight lines?

Teamwork. Did you make an attempt to get eye contact with fellow official? Was partner's eye line in focus, on what you thought you saw? Was he closer? Did he have bodies blocking his view of the play? Did you have bodies in the way, obscuring your view, even for 1-2 seconds? Look to your partner. Get closer and say 'you have anything?' 'Did I miss something?' Would I bet the ranch on it? No? -then no call. Then do no harm. Until you are in close snf have super sure confidence that you have it exactly right—stow & stifle that whistle in hand.

If you cannot be solidly sure of all you survey, then take the Hippocratic way. First do no harm! Bad angle? Doubtful? Trifling? Partner right there? Game is going on fine, without an out-of-left-field call? All day? So far? Small change stuff & incidental contact has been OK to all? A 'real' push? So-so hold? Ball hit hand? Nudge? Then, Fahgeddaboudditt!

If Refs are new to each other, discuss distant calls in pregame. Talk at halftime. Are you seeing the same things? Are you looking for one another at stops? During play? Are you making eye contact often? Talk at downtimes. Make lots of eye-to-eye contact. Communicate whenever. Have courage to miss one. Bumps now & then seem to be in harmony with play? O.K. This is a vigorous, robust, contact sport. Most 'action' that describes the game is in fact fun & legal.

Keys to teamwork :

Eye contact, communication, and call consistency within this game & with each other overall. And "yes," there is an 'eye' in teamwork.