

ArbiterSports

Delayed Whistles

Sunday, May 15, 2016

Some whistles don't need to be immediate

Some whistles need to be as quick as possible, because you need the players to stop playing *RIGHT NOW*. Loose ball personal fouls, injured player in the scrum area, loss of protective equipment, out of bounds and goals scored are situations that come to mind.

Some whistles need to be delayed until a scoring play is completed. That is the flag-down, slow whistle mechanic.

There are some other situations where you can help yourself by holding your whistle for a moment.

A] **Over & back** - Even if you are in perfect position, there are a lot of possibilities. Team A misses a pass and the ball is approaching the midline. You have players from both teams converging toward the midline from both sides of the field. Offsides is possible. Illegal pushes are possible. Over & back is possible. Keep the whistle away from your mouth until you know what happens.

If a Team A pole keeps the ball on the offensive side, then let play continue.

If you see a foot on the midline from the defensive side before it becomes an all out scrum, then yell "PLAY ON" to buy some time. (You must decide between offside and illegal push!)

If the ball crosses the midline, then yell "PLAY ON" in case Team B gets a legitimate fast-break.

Whatever happens, you can always sound the whistle and run a slow restart to manage the situation.

B] **Offsides** - You think that you have an offside violation. Maybe some player is dancing on the midline and acting guilty. Take a moment to count forward, excluding the goalkeeper, including players coming out of the substitution area and including the player on the line. If you get to 7, then take a breath and decide who is offside.

Attacking team = whistle.

Defending team = flag down.

No need to hurry, but it is good to be faster than the coach of the onside team!

Better to make a correct call a little bit late than to make a wrong call quickly!