



U.S. Soccer 2010

Priorities of 4th Officials



Managing the Technical Area





The Technical Area

Includes:

- Coaches
- Team personnel
- Substitutes
- Substituted players

All must conduct themselves in a responsible manner. Failure to do so can result in:

- **Caution** or **send-off** for substitutes and substituted players
- **Dismissal** for coaches and team personnel



Failure to Conduct Themselves in a Responsible Manner

Examples of behaviors:

- Kicking/hitting the benches, signboards or other items
- Leaving the technical area without permission
- Throwing/kicking items on to the field
- Using abusive, insulting or offensive language or gestures
- Inflammatory and/or aggressive behavior
- Interfering with the AR or 4th official in performance of his/her duties
- Interfering with the restart of play and field players
- Making unwanted and/or aggressive contact with opposing players



Techniques - Referee

- Discuss bench management in pre-game meeting
- Listen with heightened awareness
- Send messages with eye contact, body language and hand motions
- Position yourself appropriately
 - Presence lends conviction
 - Flyby
- Acknowledge the coach
- Take ownership
- Empower the 4th Official and AR



Techniques – Assistant Referee

- Maintain concentration
- Communicate with bench personnel
- Communicate with 4th official
- Support 4th official
- Feel the situation
 - Experience of crew
 - “Point of no return”
- Get acknowledgement from bench personnel



Techniques – 4th Official

- Greet the coaching staff
- Impose a positive presence
- Give equal time
- Develop a plan as the game develops
- Find a peacemaker on the bench
- Allow the coach to vent
 - Provide physical space
 - Listen to remarks
- Confirm decisions with AR 1
- Ask, Tell, Remove



Ask, Tell, Remove

ASK Request to stop

TELL Insist to stop

REMOVE Dismissal Required

All three steps are **not necessary** if the behavior and conduct of personnel within the technical area requires immediate dismissal.



What You CAN Say:

Phrases to bench personnel should be polite, respectful, and concise and said in a way that will not provoke a negative response.

- Assure that you are listening

“I hear you”

“Coach, I will listen to you but not the rest of the bench”

- Allow for communication

“I will pass along the message”

“I will talk to the ref/AR”

“We will talk about it at half time”

- Express understanding

“Coach, I understand you are upset but you need to calm down”

“I know how important this game is to you, it is just as important to us”



- Remind the coach of proper bench decorum
- De-escalate the response
 - “Talk to me rather than shouting”*
 - “I can see you don’t agree with the call, but PLEASE – settle down”*
 - “Please stop being so visual. Talk to me but don’t wave your hands”*
- Confirm the call
 - “The ref’s got it, give him a chance”*
 - “The ref was there”*
 - “This is a game of angles; we have a different angle than the referee”*
- Warn
 - “Don’t do it”*
 - “I have to call the referee over, you will be dismissed”*
 - “Coach, please talk to your assistant, he is getting close to my having to take official action”*



What You CANNOT Say

Avoid open ended phrases that conjure up debate or “add fuel to the fire.” You cannot:

- Curse, use abusive or insulting language
- Criticize the members of the referee team
- Attack or criticize the coach or his team
- Say what you would have done in that situation
- Make physical contact with bench personnel
- Issue threats unless you are ready to enter the “Remove” phase
- Use phrases that invite further debate or negative discussion



Barriers to Action

We fail to act because we...

- Fear assignments will be impacted negatively
- Want to be friendly with bench personnel
- Lack the confidence to deal with an altercation
- Avoid confrontation
- Are intimidated by coaches
- Will see the coach again
- Regret previous decisions
- Do not want to negatively impact the referee's game



Escalation Measure

Steps to prevent escalation:

- Crew should establish a procedure in pre-game discussion:
 - How will the 4th official notify the referee?
 - How will the referee notify the coach?
- 4th official determines that escalation has passed beyond the **Ask** and **Tell** stages
- The escalation is potentially in the **Remove** stage
- 4th official notifies the referee
- At a stoppage, the referee approaches the technical area and warns the coach
- Continued failure to act in a responsible manner warrants dismissal



Game Administration Problems

4th officials having difficulty with

- paperwork
- basic substitution procedures
 - sub passes
 - checking the roster
 - keeping track of subbed players





Managing Personnel

Inappropriate responses to coaches

- hovering around coaches when they
 - Acting appropriately
 - Experienced a short, emotional outburst
- completely ignoring coaches when they fail to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner





Planning

Knowing in advance

- Specific and detailed instruction on substitution procedures
- How to deal with the coaches
 - identify head coach, assistant coach, athletic trainer, etc.
- The stadium and game equipment
 - photographers, security, etc.
 - 4th officials get familiar with location & logistics
- Specific scenarios that could occur in the technical area
 - emotional outburst, prolonged protests or unacceptable behavior
 - stepwise solutions



Discussion

Involvement of the 4th official

- Brief examples of when to get involved
 - Over involvement
 - Under involvement
- Brief specific situations—what to do and when
 - An injury
 - Substitution
 - A red card
 - Etc.



Referee Solutions

The referee can play an active role in improving the performance of the crew

- Prepare the referee crew
- Brief in as much detail as possible
- Be aware of the technical area while officiating the game
- Be a leader
- Come with a positive attitude
- Encourage open, positive, and helpful communication from the beginning
- Be ready to help when you are able