

# Sending Off Discriptions

## IS GUILTY OF SERIOUS FOUL PLAY

Football is a tough, combative sport - where the contest to win the ball should nonetheless be fair and sporting. Any such moves, even when sometimes vigorous, must be allowed by the Referee.

Serious foul play however - is misconduct of an extreme nature against an opponent in a playing situation, and the Referee must apply the Laws of the Game and send players off, even if they have not already been cautioned. Broadly speaking, serious foul play occurs when a player commits one of the Direct Free Kick offences (or penalty if in the penalty area) by using a physical act of excessive force or violence, committed with the clear intention of hurting an opponent or stopping him from completing a skilful move.

A Referee must distinguish between what he considers to be 'foul play' and *serious* foul play'.

You need to differentiate between the following three levels, when awarding a Direct Free Kick or Penalty:

- No disciplinary action is deemed necessary. (Perhaps a strong word will suffice ?).
- Caution the player for being careless, reckless or for using excessive force.
- Send the player off for serious foul play.

Some Sending-off Examples:

- Two footed tackles.
- When a player intentionally plays over the ball and makes contact with the players leg.

## IS GUILTY OF VIOLENT CONDUCT

Violent conduct is when a player is guilty of aggression towards an opponent even when they are not tussling for the ball. Violent conduct refers to acts which occur outside the action of the game itself, or which are taken against officials, spectators, colleagues, officials etc. Violent conduct also concerns obscene gestures or indecent exposure !The ball can be in or out of play.

### Violent Conduct Against an Opponent:

- **If the ball is in play**, the player shall be sanctioned with the award of a Direct Free Kick to the opposing team at the spot where the offence was committed, or a penalty if the offence took place in the penalty area.
- **If the ball was out of play**, when the offence occurred, the game shall be resumed where it was stopped prior to the offence. For example, commence the game with a throw-in, goal kick etc...

### Violent Conduct Against Others:

If a player attacks one of his team-mates, the Referee, a linesman, a spectator or an official etc

**If the ball is in play**, the player shall be sanctioned with the award of a Indirect Free Kick against the team of the guilty player, at the spot on the field where the offence was committed - or with a dropped-ball where play was stopped - if the incident was off the field of play.

**If the ball was out of play**, when the offence occurred, the game shall be resumed where it was stopped prior to the offence. For example, commence the game with a throw-in, goal kick etc...

**Examples:**

**Whilst the ball is still in play:**

Striking or head-butting an opponent with the intention of hurting or injuring. The blow does not necessarily have to land to warrant a sending-off. If someone throws a punch or kicks out at an opponent and it misses due to the dexterity of the opponent, this does not lessen the seriousness of the offence.

Question: What action should the Referee take for the following incident:

Whilst the ball was still in play and in possession of a goalkeeper in his penalty area - the goalkeeper strikes an opponent by throwing the ball at him.

**Answer:** Penalty, Send-off goalkeeper for Violent Conduct. (Law 12 Decision No.1)

**SPITS AT AN OPPONENT OR ANY OTHER PERSON**

The matter of spitting at anyone is disgusting and must be sanctioned strongly. The culprit must be sent-off.

The spit does not necessarily have to land to warrant a sending-off. If it was purposely aimed at anyone, then the player must be sent-off. Ensure that your discipline report is definite.

**If the ball is in play**, the player shall be sanctioned with the award of a Direct Free Kick to the opposing team at the spot where the offence was committed, or a penalty if the offence took place in the penalty area.

**REMINDER- SPITTING AT AN OPPONENT IS A DIRECT FREE KICK OFFENCE OR PENALTY !!!!!!!!!!!!!**

**If the ball was out of play**, when the offence occurred, the game shall be resumed where it was stopped prior to the offence. Example, commence the game with a throw-in, goal kick.

**DENIES THE OPPOSING TEAM A GOAL OR AN OBVIOUS GOAL SCORING OPPORTUNITY BY DELIBERATELY HANDLING THE BALL (THIS DOES NOT APPLY TO A GOALKEEPER WITHIN HIS OWN PENALTY AREA.)**

***(Note - hand-ball = carries, strikes or propels the ball with hand or arm)***

This is usually the easiest sending-off offence to administer. All players know the punishment. AND it is the only Sending-off offence where the culprit will NOT normally argue.

When this situation happens at park level, both teams will very often try and persuade you NOT to send the player off. BUT YOU MUST APPLY THE LAWS. Handling the ball to prevent a goal scoring opportunity normally happens within the penalty area when an attacker shoots towards goal. But can happen outside of the penalty area also.

For instance - when the last defender purposely handles a 'chipped' ball intended for an attacker who would have been in an obvious goal scoring situation.

This Offence also covers the situation when a defending goalkeeper comes out of his area and handles the ball to prevent a goal scoring opportunity.

**Discipline & Restart Game by:**

If incident in the penalty area - SEND-OFF PLAYER & AWARD A PENALTY

If incident was outside of the penalty area and prevented a goal or a clear goal-scoring opportunity: SEND-OFF PLAYER or GOALKEEPER & AWARD A DIRECT FREE KICK AT THE PLACE OF INCIDENT.

TIP: try and remember to allow a moment for any advantage before blowing your whistle. Very often in is type of situation, if you delay blowing your whistle for even a milli-second, the ball very often drops to an attacker who then scores. This then allows you to ONLY caution the offender for deliberate hand ball - INSTEAD OF HAVING TO SEND HIM OFF. Players will respect you.

**DENIES AN OBVIOUS GOAL SCORING OPPORTUNITY TO AN OPPONENT MOVING TOWARDS THE PLAYER'S GOAL BY AN OFFENCE PUNISHABLE BY A FREE KICK OR A PENALTY KICK.**

If an attacker is moving towards his opponents' goal **WITH AN OBVIOUS OPPORTUNITY TO SCORE A GOAL**, and he is intentionally and physically impeded by **ANY** unlawful means by a defending player - the defender can be said to have denied the attacking team a goal scoring opportunity.

It is usually fairly obvious when this offence is committed. What is sometimes very difficult, is deciding if the attacking player was **MOVING TOWARDS** the goal. You will need to make a very quick decision **AND STICK TO IT**. Do not rely on assistance from a club linesman or an assistant referee - make the decision yourself.

**Discipline & Restart Game by:**

If incident in the penalty area - **SEND-OFF PLAYER & AWARD A PENALTY** (or an Indirect Free Kick if the player was obstructed.)

If incident was outside of the penalty area - **SEND-OFF PLAYER & AWARD A DIRECT FREE KICK AT THE PLACE OF INCIDENT** (or an Indirect Free Kick if the player was obstructed.)

**Question:** (Here is a tricky one !:) If an attacker in a goal scoring situation, and in the penalty area, is purposely obstructed by a defender:

How should the Referee start the game - with an Indirect, Direct or Penalty kick ?

**Answer:** Even though the defender prevented a goal scoring opportunity, the offence of obstruction (i.e. impedes the progress of an opponent) only warrants an **INDIRECT**

## **FREE KICK.**

### **USES OFFENSIVE, ABUSIVE OR INSULTING LANGUAGE AND/OR GESTURES.**

If a Referee sent-off every player who swears during a game - then you would not have a game.

Common sense is the key word here. Nowadays, most players use what is commonly known as 'street language'. They can't seem to speak without swearing.

You will hear a great deal of swearing during a game AND you will see a great deal on televised matches.

But the 'Spirit of the Game' must be observed as well as the letter of the Law.

The one bit of leeway afforded to the Referee is in Law 5 Powers & Duties - where he is accorded discretionary powers.

Abuse can be directed at anyone or nobody in particular.

Allow for muted frustration to a missed goal for instance, or when a player moans about a Referee's decision, or a misdirected pass to a colleague.

Do not tolerate loud open language against anyone, particularly yourself - the Referee.

Let players know beforehand, by 'broadcasting' a warning - if your tolerance level is being approached. (Example - shout "*KEEP THE LANGUAGE DOWN* ") or have a quiet word with any offender before the situation gets out of hand.

If the language is particularly directed at an individual - send player off.

You **can** send-off substitutes who commit this offence whilst they are watching the game.

As a Referee - **Do not swear at players**. It is sometimes difficult to do but be polite at **ALL** times.

Remember and write down the exact words used. You'll need these for your report.

Unseemly hand gestures (**demonstrate**) are deemed sending-off offences.

### **Discipline & Restart Game by:**

If the ball was still in play when you stopped the game restart with an **INDIRECT FREE KICK AT THE PLACE OF INCIDENT**.

**If the ball was out of play**, when the offence occurred, the game shall be resumed where it was stopped prior to the offence. Example, commence the game with a throw-in, goal kick.

### **Question 1:**

You are the Referee. Team Red deliberately handles the ball in their own Penalty Area. You have awarded Team Blue a Penalty Kick. All of the players are legally positioned, the kicker has been properly identified, and the Goalkeeper is on his line. You blow

your whistle for the kick to be taken. As the kick is taken an over-zealous photographer runs on to the field of play and stops the balls entry into the goal. The ball has not touched the keeper, crossbar, or either of the goal posts. The kicker for team blue then becomes livid and punches the photographer, in the face, knocking him out cold. What is your course of action? What is the restart?

**Answer:** Infringements before the penalty kick takes place may be committed by the kicker, the goalkeeper or by the kicker's team-mates, or the defending team. Infringements after the penalty kick has been taken may also be committed by an outside agent. In this case, the infringement of illegally stopping the ball whilst it was in actually in play immediately after the taking of the penalty kick, was committed by an outside agent - the photographer.

The Laws state that if the ball is touched by an outside agent as it moves forward, the penalty kick must be retaken: (An outside agent can be a dog, another person/spectator, overhead wires or trees, a photographer! another ball from the adjacent pitch - in short, an outside agent is any person, animal or thing that intrudes itself illegally onto the field of play.) Luckily, occurrences of interference by outside agents are rare, but when they do occur, the Referee should be prepared to take the correct action. The Referee must ensure that the outside agent is safely removed before the kick can be retaken.

The correct action to be taken by the Referee in this sequence of events is as follows.

1. Blow the whistle to stop play, and to indicate that offences have occurred. There are two offences committed here. (a) The intrusion of the outside agent: and (b) Violent conduct by the Blue kicker.
2. Keep your eyes on the active area and watch exactly what happens when the Blue player thumps the photographer.
3. Try and prevent further escalation of trouble, by imposing yourself between the offending Blue player, the photographer, and any retaliating persons. (In retrospect, you should have tried to anticipate the Blue player from committing the offence in the first place.)
4. Place yourself in such a position as to gain the best viewpoint of incoming trouble. This shows players that you can see any further offences should they be committed. This stance may prevent further trouble.
5. Immediately summon help to treat the injured photographer or to remove the photographer from the field of play. If no such facilities are available, ensure that the photographer is not harmed any further. In an incident of this nature, **football takes second place**. Do all you possibly can to ensure that the photographer (who has been knocked out) does not suffocate by swallowing his tongue – even if this means taking first-aid recovery action yourself, if no alternative is readily available. Summon medical assistance immediately.
6. Once the photographer is out of danger. Indicate to players that the penalty must be retaken. Do this both verbally and by pointing your arm towards the penalty mark to indicate to those out of hearing, that the penalty is to be retaken.
7. Remove the Blue offending player away from the immediate scene.
8. Seek the advice of your Assistant Referee if needs be.
9. Take the particulars of the offending Blue player, and note the details in your notepad.
10. Ask the offending Blue player to leave the field of play, directing him, to leave by the safest route. For example, NOT past the photographer or the opposition players.

11. Take any names of witnesses to the incident. Witnesses may be needed to give evidence later.
12. Organise the removing of the photographer and any other (non-players) from the field of play.
13. Signal again, both verbally, and by indicating with the arm pointed towards the penalty mark, that the penalty is to be retaken.
14. Identify the new penalty taker, and ensure that the goalkeeper knows who is retaking the penalty kick.
15. Indicate to the players (by holding your whistle up in the air) that the penalty must not commence until you have signalled with a blow of your whistle.
16. Ensure that all of the players are correctly positioned, and that all the non-players have left the field of play.
17. Blow your whistle, and point your arm towards the goal to indicate that the penalty retake kick can now take place.

### **RECEIVES A SECOND CAUTION IN THE SAME MATCH**

When a player receives a caution in a game, he is allowed to stay on the field of play and continue with the rest of the game. Nevertheless, if that player receives a second caution in the same game, the Referee must send him off the field of play. In other words, receiving two cautions in one game is equivalent to a sending off.

When sending off a player for a second caution, the Referee should show firstly the yellow card, followed by the red card. Cards should not be flashed under the nose of the player being sent off, but lifted gently to one side away from the player who ideally should be facing the Referee. Showing cards is not really for the benefit of the player, because the Referee has already told the player (or should have told him) what his punishment is before he brandishes the cards - the showing of the cards is more for the benefit of everyone else watching.

Some examples of receiving a second caution in a match are shown below:

- Reckless foul in the 5th minute of the game and delaying the restart of the game by kicking the ball away in the 30th minute of the game.
- Throwing the ball away in disgust (dissent) followed by verbal dissent. Invariably when a Referee cautions a player for dissent, the same player will continue to either verbally or physically continue showing dissent towards the Referee. If the Referee stops the game to punish dissent (or decides to caution for dissent during a stoppage in the game), the Referee is within his rights to administer a following second caution if the player shows dissent on two separate occasions. In most cases, the Referee should try and prevent further dissent occurring by telling the player to:

"Calm down. If you continue with showing dissent I have no option but to send you off for a second caution" or words to that effect. This usually prevents further incidents occurring.

- Persistently infringes the Laws, and then verbally shows dissent towards the Referee when receiving the first caution.
- A player leaves the field of play and then re-enters the field of play without receiving the Referee's permission. These are two separate caution offences -

but the Referee should use some common sense in such cases, and the administration of one caution usually suffices when this happens. But the Referee is within his rights to administer two cautions (leading to a sending off) if he feels that the player blatantly abused the Laws.

If a player is being cautioned (e.g. for unsporting behaviour) and he then refuses to give his name, then the Referee can dismiss that player for two acts of unsporting behaviour (i.e. two cautionable offences).

