Ten Important Items Referees Should Know

As referees begin to upgrade and seek higher classification and/or referee grade, the assessor begins to look more intently at their performance. The following are a compilation of comments obtained from a number of years of assessing and were all at one time or another, the reason for low grades on an assessment.

1. The diagonal was not deep enough and/or broad enough. The dynamic positioning was not that of looking forward, across the ball, at the lead assistant referee.

2. Positioning on static plays (re-starts) was predictable and unchanging. Too often it did not give a good perspective of the action in the goal area (such as a corner kick).

3. The referee, or assistant referee, was left behind on breakaways. Referees frequently compound this by persisting in the exact diagonal instead of racing to where active play is.

4. Not recognizing serious foul play and then not having the courage to address it and correct it.

5. Allowing encroachment by a defender on a re-start, and not establishing a defensive wall position.

6. Missing the off the ball fouls and challenges, or where the assistant referee either misses these acts or fails to inform the referee of them.

7. Reluctance to issue a second caution to a player who persists in further cautionable conduct.

8. Assistant referees do not concentrate on the match. They become distracted because of inactivity or touchline incidents, and do not follow the ball all the way to the goal line.

9. Referee and assistant referees do not function as a cohesive, single unit. Many signals tend to be sloppy or, more often, casual. The functions of the crew should be effective before, during, and after the match.

10. Touchline control, bench control, and the handling of substitutions are frequently casual or ignored. Also, the referee too often assumes this task and not the assistant referee.

Certainly there are many more actions and non-actions that can have an impact on an assessment. These ten however, seem to be among the more common and also the more correctable. Officials who work on these points will usually come out of a contest with more than satisfying assessment scores.