

## Doing Double Duty

### How to Implement the Dual System Correctly

As referees prepare for another season, the question comes up, "What materials teach the dual system?"

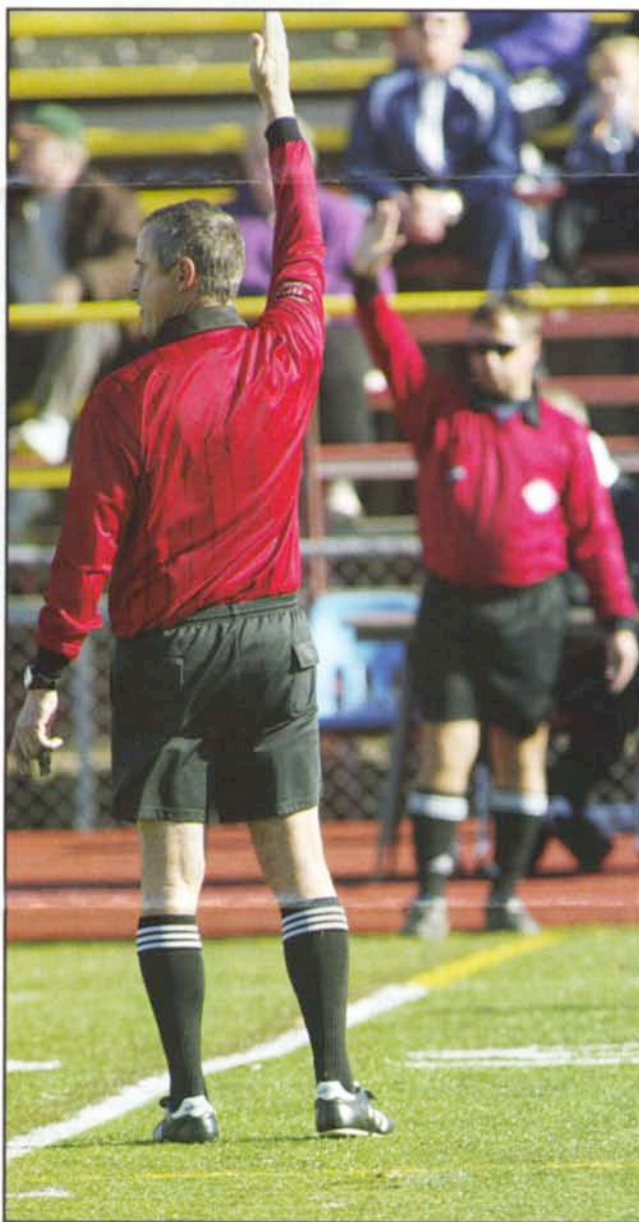
Typically, new referees get some work with the system at preseason jamborees (boys' and girls' varsity). The lucky ones get informal assessments by senior referees while working sub-varsity high school soccer games.

There is little real "grab you and show you the correct methodology," however. So here are a few key points to remember.

Some referees don't like the dual system. However, since many high school games use the dual system and 10 percent of college games use it, you should know how to work it correctly. You have to be a student of the system.

It helps to have experience officiating other sports (basketball, ice hockey, baseball, etc.) in which you are a part of a team of officials with equal authority. Or, lacking that experience, you can draw upon your experience as a roommate, spouse or parent. Again, that means shared and equal authority.

You must work together. The team is as good and as strong as its weakest link. Don't let that



Referees Jeff McGill, Shelby Township, Mich., (foreground) and Dan McIntyre, Saginaw, Mich., signal during a high school match. This month's article will give you the tools to find success if you are working in a two-referee system.

weak link be you. Prove your worth by working hard and striving for excellence.

**Pregame.** Walk the field together. Check out the field and the players together. Discuss the upcoming game. Instead of telling your partner what you expect, tell your partner what you will be doing for him or her, where you intend to be and what support you will be providing. Meet the coaches together.

**Restarts.** Trail officials indicate for restarts at kickoffs and goalkicks. For all other free kicks, lead referees indicate when the kick may be taken. For a throw-in after a substitution, the referee along that touchline will indicate the restart. Work together and make eye contact before allowing a restart.

**Get into the field.** Lead referees reach the goalline roughly six yards from the nearest goalpost. Lead referees will be on or behind the goalline for all corner kicks and for all attacking throw-ins that are expected to reach the goalmouth.

Trail referees should strive to be no farther than 45 yards (in a direct line) from the lead referee. If the lead referee is at the

top of the penalty area, then the trail referee is at least five yards into that half of the field and moving toward that penalty area. Otherwise, it wouldn't be the two-referee system. All too often teams have to suffer through the two-linesman system, and that's inexcusable.

If one referee has to move along the touchline because that's where the ball is, the opposite referee is near the middle of the field (in line with the near goalpost). Play will flow around you during the game.

When a goal is scored, the lead referee should be in the penalty area. You must hustle and anticipate. The trail official should be in that half of the field when a goal is scored.

**Running.** The dual system requires a lot of running and depends upon you having a good sense and feel for the game (where the ball is most likely to go, given the play and players). At the end of the game, you will have covered territory that includes from your touchline to the center of the field, and from your goalline to the top of the opposite penalty area.

During the run of play, keep the play boxed in. The lead referee (ball is advancing toward lead referee's goal) must be cognizant of the offside infractions. Boxing the play means that with the ball near the opposite touchline, you will be near the center of the field (side to side).

Lead referees are inside play at the wing. In order to do that, as they transition from the trail official at the opposite end to the lead official, on their goalline close to the goal, they must allow the play to "flow around them" (just like in single referee or the referee under the

diagonal system). As a lead official, you are never closer to the touchline than the ball. You are nearly always between the

ball and the goal if the ball is in your half of the field (side to side). That forces you not only to run, but to run smart and with a purpose.

**Offside.** How do you call an offside infraction when you are working alone? That is how you have to make the call in a dual system. You anticipate and look. Typically, you will be much closer to the second-to-last defender on a counterattack (dual versus single referee), but not always. The players adapt to a dual system (for offside infractions) the same way they adapt to a single referee.

**Corner kick.** You will be on the goalline at your end, and standing along the top of the penalty area at your partner's end. Once the ball comes under control of the defenders, you start to *sprint* toward midfield. That may mean sprinting at top speed backward for some distance so that you can still help your partner. Practice running backward.

**Setting the wall.** In an attacking situation, the trail official sets the ceremonial wall, releasing the lead official to seek the best position possible — and to deal with player problems. The lead official whistles for the restart. Talk. Vocalize. Trail referees come up to be even with the ball. Help maintain the spot of the ball while your

FOR MORE GO TO  
[www.referee.com](http://www.referee.com)



## They Said It

"If you make a big mistake in your first game, it will be your last game, and that's something that has been made very clear to us."

— Graham Poll, FIFA World Cup referee from England, commenting on the tournament.

Source: Associated Press

## By the Numbers

To say the eyes of the whole world are on the referees who work the World Cup may seem like an exaggeration. But soccer draws viewers in big numbers. Below are the most watched sports events from 2002-05, according to Initiative Futures. It shows TV viewers in the millions.

- 95** Super Bowl 2004 (Ed Hochuli was the referee as New England defeated Carolina, 32-29).
- 96** Olympics Closing Ceremony 2004.
- 127** Olympics Opening Ceremony 2004.
- 153** European Championship Final 2004 (Markus Merk refereed the final in which Greece defeated Portugal, 1-0).
- 218** World Cup Final 2002 (Pierluigi Collina was the referee as Brazil defeated Germany, 2-0).

Source: National Geographic

## Did You Know?

Reverend Canon Paul Vann of The Church of Wales, a former soccer referee, held a World Cup service at Machen Church Hall June 8. Vann, a referee for the Newport and District League for 30 years, said before the event, "The atmosphere will be buzzing just like a football match." The service included prayers for the teams and there was a soccer quiz, with the hall split into two teams.

Source: icWales

## QuickTip

**Buy a new whistle for a new season.** If you've borrowed that relic from a friend and it's been around for the last decade, go out and spend a few bucks. Whistles can get old and accumulate dirt that affects performance. Every 12 to 18 months you should purchase a new whistle. The whistle is your trademark and a primary method of controlling the match, so keep it in peak condition.

partner gets the wall in place. If the free kick is in your side of the field (side-to-side) and attacking your partner's goal, you may be the one setting the wall, then getting back to be even with the ball.

As the trail official, you must watch off the ball. You may have the critical call in front of your partner's goal (attacker pushing defender away prior to ball being kicked by an attacking teammate). However, you must be running to be in position.

**Communicate.** If you award a caution, make certain that your partner gets the player's number. Get the player to have his or her back toward your partner while you "chat" and raise the card.

**Some don'ts.** Seldom call a "low foul" (tripping) in front of your partner. You are 40 yards away; your partner is five. The player may have stepped on the ball or tripped on rough ground. Never call a trifling foul near your partner. Let your partner deal with it or decide to apply advantage.

**Key.** The key to the dual system is that the lead official must be deep inside the penalty area and the trail official must be willing to come to the top of the penalty area, and at times almost opposite the goalmouth.

The trail official will be in as deep as a single referee. On the counterattack, you must be able to anticipate that counter attack and be sprinting (backward) toward midfield. Take a look at the attackers and be able to dead-reckon. Unlike the single referee system, in the dual, you don't focus on where the play was as the lead, but rather where the play is going. The trail will focus on where the play was.

That is why there are few times that the whistles will blow simultaneously, and negligible times when the referees are indicating in opposite directions.

*Written by Tom Stagliano, who referees various levels of soccer in the New England area. He also officiates ice hockey and lacrosse. □*

## What Hat Are You Wearing?

By Dan Heldman

When you appear at the field for an assignment, you bring two hats with you in your bag. I know, hats are not recommended for referees in a USSF match and are only grudgingly accepted in NFHS and NCAA play, but it's OK because these are metaphorical hats.



Wearing his "policeman's hat," Robert Petersen, Little Canada, Minn., displays the yellow card to an offending player during a high school game.

SHANE COLVIN/ESPRESSO

## Setting Up for the Next Play

One of the greatest skills a referee can develop is to know where the next contact situation is going to happen — and be near that location to properly judge fair from foul. All too often, referees want to be where the ball is, not where the ball is going to be.

In the MechaniGram, the referee (R1) is standing near the ball as number 6 is ready to take a direct free kick. That might be the worst location on the field, as nothing is going to happen there — no one will push, hold or grab a jersey within 25 yards of the restart. The referee would like to keep the play between the referee and his or her assistant referee, so the referee should move to location R2 or R3. The choice between those two depends upon if the referee senses the ball will drop into the dotted circle at A or the dotted circle at B.

How will the referee know? What has the team done in past games? What has the team done the last five restarts? Has the tallest player on the team moved from defender to attacker? Has a recent substitute come onto the field and shown great dribbling skill? Those are clues to help drive the decision. Stay out of players' way and expect the unusual, such as a square pass directly toward the center circle. But commonly, number 6 is going to drop the ball into the mixer near dotted circle A, so the referee will want to be waiting near R2 to have an angled look into play.

## CHALK TALK

