



To: National Referees
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State Directors of Coaching

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Subject: Examples of Deception at the Taking of a Penalty Kick

Date: August 25, 2010

In 2010, the International Board provided a revised interpretation of actions by the kicker considered impermissible at the taking of a penalty kick (the same guideline also applies to a kick from the mark as well as to a penalty kick taken in extended time). According to the Board, feinting during the run to the ball is acceptable but, once at the ball, any deception or feinting is unsporting behavior and must be cautioned.

Recently, USSF arranged for six video clips to be prepared which clarify the difference between these types of deception and what the correct referee action should be in each case. These six clips are joined with two others drawn from MLS games.

In all cases, it is important to remember that deception is simply another example of a player violating Law 14 (The Penalty Kick). Referees must treat deception the same way any other violation of Law 14 is handled – await the outcome of the kick and decide what to do based on whether a goal is scored or not.

- Clip 1: an ordinary penalty kick with no deception. The ball is kicked into the net. Correct action is to count the goal and restart with a kick-off.
- Clip 2: the kicker begins a run to the ball, hesitates, resumes the run, kicks the ball to the goalkeeper who deflects it away. The hesitation is brief, no illegal delay in performing the restart, no hand or arm gesture to deceive or distract the goalkeeper, and no

movement past the ball. The deception is legal. Correct action is to allow play to continue.

- Clip 3: The run to the ball is uninterrupted but the kicker stops and clearly draws a reaction from the goalkeeper before kicking the ball into the net. The deception is illegal. Correct action is to disallow the goal, caution the kicker, and restart with a retake of the penalty kick.
- Clip 4: The run to the ball is uninterrupted but the kicker stops and clearly draws a reaction from the goalkeeper before kicking the ball into the goalkeeper's possession. The deception is illegal. Correct action is to stop play, caution the kicker, and restart with an indirect kick for the opposing team where the deception occurred.
- Clip 5: The run to the ball is uninterrupted but the kicker stops and clearly draws a reaction from the goalkeeper before kicking the ball over the crossbar. The deception is illegal. Correct action is to caution the kicker and restart with an indirect free kick for the opposing team where the deception occurred.
- Clip 6: The run to the ball is uninterrupted but the kicker stops and clearly draws a reaction from the goalkeeper before kicking the ball into the net. The deception is illegal. Correct action is to disallow the goal, caution the kicker, and restart with a retake of the penalty kick.
- Clip 7: In this example from an MLS match, the player begins a run to the ball, hesitates (in a maneuver commonly called a "stutter step"), continues the run, and kicks the ball into the net. The deception is legal (the encroachment offenses are not the focus of this memorandum). Correction action is to count the goal and restart with a kick-off.
- Clip 8: In another MLS example, the kicker hesitates during the run to the ball, which is then kicked into the net. The deception is legal. Correct action is to count the goal (the encroachment offenses are not the focus of this memorandum) and restart with a kick-off.