

### **1. Creating unfair but legal conditions:**

- A more skilled player has an unfair advantage over a lesser skilled player
- Creating numerical superiority (2v1, 3v2, etc.) is unfair to the team that is out numbered
- Attacking the defense on their “weak side” is unfair to the weak side of the defense
- Bringing taller players up for corner kicks is unfair to the shorter opponents
- Keeping shots low on the ground when the grass is wet is unfair to the goalkeeper
- Keeping shots higher in the air when the keeper is short is unfair to the short goalkeeper
- A better coached team has an advantage over a poorly coached team and this is unfair to the team with the less knowledgeable coach

### **2. Legal gamesmanship verses unsporting behavior**

- A team has a well choreographed pre-game routine and performs all pre-game activities in unison and with obvious pride in their teamwork. Legal!
- A team verbally taunts the opponents pre-game with abusive and insulting comments. Unsporting Conduct!
- The winning team consumes time by passing the ball amongst themselves and make no effort to penetrate into the opponents half of the field. Legal!
- The winning team wastes time by delaying the restarts by taking longer than needed and by waiting for the player farthest from the restart to come and take the restart. Unsporting Conduct!
- Players raising their arms to influence referee or assistant referee offside calls or to be awarded the restart when the ball goes out of play. Irritating but not illegal!
- Players persisting in their verbal dissent with the referee’s decisions for offside or restarts. Illegal and possible caution for dissent.
- Players appealing for a call because they lost their balance following a legal tackle to convince the referee a foul has occurred. May merit a friendly warning but not illegal.
- Players simulating a foul and falling in an attempt to deceive the referee that a foul has occurred. Unsporting Conduct!

### **3. Set pieces which take advantage of the Laws**

- Setting an attacking team wall in front of the defending team’s wall during free kicks
- Having several players make runs over the ball without kicking it during free kicks
- Stacking players in lines in the penalty area prior to taking a corner kick
- Deceptive Corner kick: The first player places the ball correctly for a corner kick. A second player, at the top of the penalty area walks toward the kicker and calls out, “I’ll take it”. The first player kicks the ball to the second player who turns and shoots at the goal.

#### **4. Seven ways to be exempt from Offside**

- Not offside if in own half of the field
- Not offside if 2 opponents are even with or nearer you and their goal line
- Not offside if first to receive the ball from a throw-in
- Not offside if first to receive the ball from a corner kick
- Not offside if first to receive the ball from a goal kick
- Not offside if onside at the moment the ball is passed by a teammate (not when it is received)
- Not offside if you are not (in the opinion of the referee) involved in active play

#### **5. A surprising but legal penalty kick**

When penalty kicks are awarded in the younger age groups (not recommended for U-8 and younger), it may be difficult for the young players to kick the ball all the way from the penalty mark to the goal. It would be surprising but completely legal if the kicker takes advantage of the Law and kicks the ball forward but away from the goal for a teammate who runs into the penalty area after the ball is kicked and gets a closer shot at the goal. This may take the opposing team by surprise and result in them just standing still and watching in confusion (not likely with the older players!).

#### **6. Short corner – avoid offside and get a closer shot**

The option to take a short corner kick rather than the traditional long kick in front of the goal can be effective provided it is done in a manner which takes advantage of the corner kick Law and not in a way likely to be negated by an offside call.

#### **7. Change an Indirect Free Kick into a Direct Free Kick.**

When the stipulation for the ball to roll one circumference before it is in play from free kicks was eliminated and replaced with the stipulation the ball need only be kicked and move to be in play, this created an obvious opportunity to take advantage of the Law.

#### **8. Illegal impeding verses legal shielding or screening**

In basketball it is legal to “set a pick”; in soccer this would be considered illegal impeding. However, players can take advantage of the Laws of soccer by understanding the correct technique for legal “shielding” or “screening” which is how soccer players can get in the opponents way legally.

#### **9. Playing the man and not the ball – legally**

It is not uncommon to hear it said that if you “play the ball” that is OK but if you “play the man” that would be a foul. This is often not the case in soccer.

#### **10. Charging an opponent – legally**

Charging, like impeding, is a negative sounding word and can be penalized when done by players in soccer. For those who know the Law, they can take

advantage of the fact that in certain circumstances charging an opponent is allowed i.e.; the player being charged is within playing distance of the ball and able to play it, the charge is a sharp staccato impact not a push, when charging from the side, contact is made as near shoulder to shoulder as possible (depending upon the relative heights of the players involved), when charging an opponent from behind who is legally screening the ball the charge may be made to the opponent's shoulder blade.

### **11. Catch them when they aren't ready – legally**

Soccer is designed as a fast paced game which is intended to be played with as little interference as possible. It is not uncommon for those unfamiliar with the Laws to want the game to be interrupted and delayed for the referee to explain his or her actions to players, coaches and/or spectators as is commonly done in American football. This, of course, is contrary to the spirit of the game and the philosophy of refereeing. In the interest of the younger players, referees may delay restarts to "educate" players but this must be done carefully so as not to give an unfair advantage to either team.

- There are only three times players must wait for the referee's signal to restart;
  - 1) kick-offs, 2) penalty kicks and 3) when the referee tells them to wait.
    - a. Advantages of quick free kicks before the opponents are organized
    - b. Advantages of other quick restarts; throw-ins, goal kicks and corner kicks even if the opponents are not legally positioned
    - c. Advantage and right of a team to take a reasonable amount of time to set up a rehearsed restart (set piece)

### **12. Help the ref make the right decision**

Sometimes a player may have a differing opinion from the referee's decision. Players have the right to speak with the referee and to even ask questions. Care should be taken as to exactly how and when this is done. It should certainly be done with respect and politely and at a time which will not adversely affect the player's team (remember there are only three times when the opponents must wait to restart).

- The referee is allowed to change his/her mind?
- The conditions under which the referee can change his/her decision are as long as play has not yet been restarted!
- Players use this knowledge to their advantage and bring something to the attention of the referee before play has been restarted:
  - a. The referee has missed an offside flag from the AR.
  - b. A goal was scored by a team with more than the allowable number of players on the field.
  - c. The wrong player was sanctioned for misconduct (yellow or red card).