

Law 5 - The Referee

REFEREE OBSERVATION REPORT

Competition, match, final score: U20WC – M07 - Qatar v Nigeria

Refereeing team:

Referee: Fernando Guerrero Ramírez (MEX)

Assistant Referee 1: Pablo Israel Hernández Luna (MEX)

Assistant Referee 2: José Ibrahim Martínez Chavarría (MEX)

Fourth Official: Iván Arcides Barton Cisneros (SLV)

Video Assistant Referee: Juan Martínez Munuera (ESP)

Assistant Video Assistant Referee: Adonai Escobedo González (MEX)

Blog Observer: Alex F

Presentation of the match:

The first match for either team, with the Super Eagles expected to dominate, and they lived up to expectations. The game was choppy at times, but generally flowed very well as both teams launched long balls trying to attack the opposing goal directly. The referee has been working at the top levels nationally for about a decade and this is his first full international tournament experience.

Referee performance (Personality, LotG application, disciplinary control, physical condition, cooperation, VAR management):

Referee Ramirez showed a strong degree of fitness as he moved around the field, keeping himself a respectable distance from the play at all times, and generally keeping a good view of his lead AR through the play. This showed best of all in the 18th minute as the play went from one end to the other and back again, and he was in the correct position to make a call at the end of the sequence. His positioning on kickoffs was very advanced, despite both teams clearly playing the ball backwards throughout the first half.

He took control of the match early, setting a tone by calling six fouls in the first 20 minutes of play. The teams adapted to this level and committed only five more in the rest of the half, three of those in the last two minutes of play. The second half began in a similar manner with ten fouls in the first twenty minutes of play, causing the game to become a bit choppy, but every foul called was supportable. One offence in the 54th minute had QAT#3 tackling NGA#9 with the side of foot

on calf, and possibly cleats onto the top of the foot. This likely should have been sanctioned with a caution, but Ramirez chose to use man management instead.

Ramirez controlled ceremonial free kicks well, setting up the wall. He set the tone in the 7th minute when he moved the Qatar players away from the Nigeria wall and clearly explained the distance from the wall they needed to respect. By setting this example early, both teams respected that required distance throughout the remainder of the match. His man management was good quelling some early dissent by Qatar towards AR1 in the 16th minute and dealing with some attempted timewasting by the Nigeria GK in the 18th minute. Again, by setting the example and tone early, the teams met his expectations through the rest of the game.

For his first match at this level of competition, Ramirez showed well, setting his expectations early and working with the players to ensure that they met those expectations throughout the match. There were no major incidents to mar the game, and it was clear that the crew had worked together previously, acting as cogs in a well-oiled machine.

Assistant Referee 1 performance (Please mention the minutes of important / crucial situations):

AR1 Luna had limited involvement throughout the match with no close offside situations in his half of play. He did help control two Nigeria goal celebrations (68, 74') where a number of substitutes joined in the celebrations from the warm-up area.

Assistant Referee 2 performance (Please mention the minutes of important / crucial situations):

AR2 Martinez got involved early assisting Referee Ramirez by calling an early foul 38 seconds into the match. He made all three offside calls in the game, two against Nigeria (3', 31') and one against Qatar (51'). It is unclear if his second offside call signal was late or not seen by the referee, as there was a significant delay between offence and whistle. Good performance on an expected level.

Fourth Official performance:

Executed his role on an expected level.