

Law 5 - The Referee

REFEREE OBSERVATION REPORT

2019 FIFA U20 World Cup

Match 8 (Bielsko-Biala)

Ukraine - United States 2-1 (1-1)

Referee: Maguette N'Diaye (SEN)

Assistant Referee 1: Elvis Noupue (CMR)

Assistant Referee 2: Seydou Tiama (BFA)

Fourth Official: Pacifique Ndabihawenimana (BDI)

Video Assistant Referee: Benoît Millot (FRA)

Assistant Video Assistant Referee: Alejandro José Hernández Hernández (ESP)

Law 5 Blog Observer: Edward

Presentation of the match:

Matchday 1 for Group D of this year's U20 World Cup. Ukraine and USA wanted to win on a Group that could, potentially have 3 teams on R16. Both weather and pitch conditions were excellent. Attendance was rather low. Only 4.310 spectators who didn't apply any pressure to the referee. As a result we witnessed a very interesting but still fair match. Ukraine managed to score first but USA equalized 6' later. That was the result of the 1st half. On the second one USA had possession of the ball but Ukraine scored only 6' after the beginning of the 2nd half. Nothing changed until the final whistle. Senegalese Maguette N'Diaye was the appointed referee. This was his first appearance at a FIFA tournament. He faced an interesting but still normal difficulty match with only a couple of crucial decisions.

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

The referee adapted very quickly to the requirements of the match. His application and interpretation of the LOTG is quite good. He chose not to whistle every little contact thus giving the opportunity to both teams to present their technical abilities. As a total, he whistled 27 fouls (13-14). There were 2 penalty area incidents during the 1st half. The first one came at 20' when 2 players (one of each team) pulled each other inside the penalty area. The referee had a very good position and decided for a play-on. The decision is correct because both infractions happened at the same time. The second scene came at 28'. 2 players (N2 from UKR and N16 from USA) are trying to play the ball inside UKR penalty area. They both use their arms at first and when the ball is out of play for a goal-kick, the Ukrainian player hits his opponent with his left hand. The referee decides for a goal-kick. After a silent VAR check the decision is upheld. I agree with the decision taken by the referee but I think that he should have a strong word with UKR N2.

The advantage rule was applied correctly on the few scenes that it was required (ex. 80') and the referee correctly brought back play when it was needed (13', 58'). The referee had full control despite the high amount of cautions that were issued on this match. Disciplinary control was definitely a strong point by the Senegalese official. However, he should also caution USA's N16 at 68'. The way he used his arm on the opponent's face is not careless. There is significant force and the defender knows exactly what he is doing. AR2 could definitely help the referee here.

The referee is very athletic and fit. He used his sprinting ability on an efficient manner and didn't appear tired at any moment of the match. His positioning, however, was far from ideal. At min. 6' he is very close to AR2 and the ball at an area he shouldn't be. At min. 19' he is almost caught into play. Same at min. 40' and 85'.

Finally a few words about personality and soft skills. The referee had mostly small talk with players after a smaller foul (13', 15'). This approach worked really well since there were any protests during the match. However, he should work on proactive measures. The scene at 20' could have been avoided if the referee had made a strong warning at a least 2 previous occasions (10',

15'). Moreover his body language at 16' (warning before a corner-kick) was rather passive.

He is a good referee who can enforce the LOTG and at the same time manage the match. I would like to see him getting a further appointment at this U20 WC.

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

AR1 had a good performance. He was always in line with 2nd last defender and used sidewalk when needed. He correctly kept his flag down at 26' (before 1-0). After a silent VAR check, the decision was upheld. He had a further offside call at min. 65' even though he delayed to raise his flag. No more incidents for him. Expected level.

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

AR2 wasn't challenged at all at this match. He was always in line with 2nd last defender and used sidewalk when needed. He didn't have any offside call. He correctly signaled a foul at min. 60' even though it wasn't totally on his area of vicinity. He should have helped the referee at min. 68' as described above. Expected level.

Fourth Official performance:

He executed his duties without any problem. He correctly signaled 1' and 4' additional minutes at the end of each half. Expected level.