

# Law 5 - The Referee

## REFEREE OBSERVATION REPORT

Match 44 (Bielsko-Biała)

4 June 2019, 20:30 CET

**Argentina – Mali: 2-2 (4-5)**

Referee: Fernando Guerrero Ramírez (MEX)

Assistant Referee 1: Pablo Israel Hernández Luna (MEX)

Assistant Referee 2: José Ibrahim Martínez Chavarría (MEX)

Fourth Official: Ismail Elfath (USA)

Fifth Official: Kyle Atkins (USA)

Video Assistant Referee: Pol van Boekel (NED)

Assistant Video Assistant Referee: Adonai Escobedo González (MEX)

Blog Observer: Emil

Presentation of the match:

Round of 16 match between Argentina and Mali, which went all through to kicks from penalty marks. After a goalless first half, Argentina opened the score at 49', followed by Mali 20 minutes later (67'). Once again in extra time, Argentina scored early at 91', followed by Mali equalizing on one of the last actions of the match at 120+1'. Throughout the match, Argentina tended to be rather on the offensive, pressing higher and obtaining most of the chances on goal.

While the intensity of the game was not particularly high, and no major incident took place (except for a very brief and minor confrontation at 103'), there were a very high number of minor injuries, clumsy contacts, and tackles which were quite risky. Overall, the players concentrated on playing the game, and the game was therefore of normal difficulty for the referee.

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

Ramirez displayed excellent physical condition and position and interfered minimally with play (there is an example of outstanding anticipation of play at

51'). Additionally, while his team was not particularly challenged, communication seemed seamless and effective, particularly with AR2 (37', 40', 63').

Where the game proved much more challenging for the referee was on disciplinary control and foul detection. As mentioned above, there were a number of clumsy hits throughout the game, particularly on aerial balls. The referee whistled a number of these fouls, but never escalated the warnings to rein in what evidently became a significant trend in this game. Similarly, several reckless challenges remained unpunished, notably at 58' (Fig. 1) and 90' (Fig. 2). While the referee maintains considerable leeway in imposing his disciplinary standard, both these actions, taken at high speed, required a caution. Another nearly unavoidable caution for a tactical foul (unsporting behavior) was not given at 105+1'.

The first caution, as such, was given at 112' for persistent infringement to the Laws of the Game, with a second one at 116' for delay of game and a third one at 120+2' (Fig. 3). The last one is particularly weak, when the point of compact is compared to the action on which no caution was given at 90'. In a game such as this, where more referee presence earlier in the game may have prevented recurring fouls, waiting until the 112' to give cautions, and in addition, giving a 'weak' caution for persistent infringement (without any prior warning, as far as I could see), was rather unsatisfactory.

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

No major situations to judge, expected level.

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

AR2 signalled fouls at 37' and 40' and in both cases collaborated well with the referee. At 63', good use of the delayed offside flag to correctly disallow a goal for offside.

Fourth Official performance:

Expected level.

*NB: Figures appear sequentially (Fig. 1, Fig. 2, Fig. 3)*



