

ON THE ROAD FOR BECOMING A TOP CLASS REFEREE IN FOOTBALL- GENERAL REQUIREMENTS AND THE SITUATION IN AZERBAIJAN

İsmayılov S.F.

Azerbaijan State Academy of Physical
Education and Sport
sabir.ismayilov2018@sport.edu.az

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Annotation: Match officials are responsible for controlling the matches, follow the regulations, punish those who commit fouls. Moreover, referees have to deal with safety issues during the games record time. However, everyone should take into consideration that referees can make a mistake as well, because human factor plays a role. Hence, referees always will be faced pressures because of spectators' different approaches even referees made correct decisions. At all times, refereeing should be ready for modern football game requirements and hence, it is crucial to keep going on development. All referees (head of referee, assistant referees and fourth official) must adapt the modern football in terms of high speed and new changes, even the pressure by media and press. Therefore, the match officials have to be ready for changes, have to be self-confident not to be afraid to give decision in spite of having pressure by media, spectators, and club officials. It is one of the main features of referee to have such ability with regard to take decision as a blink of an eye.

Keywords: Referee, AFFA, UEFA, FIFA, requirements, trainings and seminars, "Laws of the Game", biased decision, favoritism.

Match officials in football are responsible for controlling the games, follow the regulations, and punish those who committed fouls. Moreover, referees have to deal with safety issues during the games. Certain environmental conditions hinder the task of properly

refereeing games. On the one hand, referees might make (unintended) mistakes in their judgements like any other human being while conducting a task. Mistakes in refereeing might have far reaching consequences. As such, referees are naturally confronted with a high-pressure situation to not make any mistakes. This is reinforced by pressure from spectators in the stadium, head coaches, club officials and the media. Particularly broadcasted games enable TV viewers via slow motion reviews from different camera perspectives to eventually even better evaluate a certain situation during the game than a referee who is taking the decision. On the other hand, the particular environment of games, might even lead to intentionally biased referee decisions during games. For instance, pressure by (home) fans might lead to (home team) favoritism of referees. Moreover, recent bribery scandals reveal the general incentives to cheat.

As such, refereeing in professional football is not an easy and straightforward task. In order to become a professional referee, she or he needs to have in-depth knowledge about the game, good communication and language skills, self-confidence to give good decisions as well as physical fitness (Study.com, 2018). In this regard, Werner Helsen notes, that the governing body of European professional football, i.e. the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), makes preparation and fitness trainings as priorities. Moreover, he recommends referees to keep control dietary stuffs (Uefa.com, 2019). Likewise, referees should be ready for modern football game requirements and hence, it is crucial for them to keep going on their own development. All referees (the head of referee, the assistant referees and the fourth official) must adapt to modern football in terms of high speed and new changes. Moreover, match officials have to be self-confident not to be afraid to give decision in spite of having pressure by media, spectators, and club officials. It is one of the main features of referee to have the ability of taking a decision as a blink of an eye (Uefa.com, 2019).

This thesis will deal with the situation of referees in general as well as referees in Azerbaijan in particular. People who are working in this field in Azerbaijan can easily identify big reforms in terms of preparation, trainings, seminars, administrative side of refereeing etc. Still, however, only very few referees become referees at an international level.

Therefore, the main research question in this thesis is: Why referees from Azerbaijan are not regularly amongst top class referees at an international level?

Traditionally, referees are appointed by certain principals (e.g. the national football federation or league) and required to be nonpartisan. Objectivity is the core of professional judgments. However, subjective interpretations and biased evaluations do often occur. In general, one can observe subjective decision-making and biased dynamics in judiciary, human resources recruitment, in evaluations and treatment at working environment, in state or business funding processes, and in the many other fields of management. In this regard, Rickman and Witt (2008) emphasized how favoritism can play an essential role in terms of biased decision making and it may influence various economic conditions. Likewise, political biases may impact the distribution of public goods.

Several empirical studies show such biases in soccer. For example, referees in the Spanish La Liga were found to regularly add more 'injury time' when the away team is almost winning the game. More additional time can influence the away team's play and even the result of the game. It is considered as favoritism referred to spectators' pressure from home team (see Rickman & Witt, 2008). Likewise, Lovell, Newell and Parker (2014) could detect that soccer referees in the English Premier League exhibit bias in favor of home teams. The implications of these studies propose several measures in order to reduce or even mitigate such biases. Overall, to ensure that referees behave in accordance with the interests of who appointed them, incentives for referees and principals are required in order to match their objectives.

In this thesis, I intend to review and compare the existing principals and standards in refereeing education and training both in Azerbaijan and internationally. The idea is to investigate whether and how these principals and standards generally differ and whether and to what degree they are in line with theoretical implications from scientific studies that were found to reduce (intentional and unintentional) mistakes in decision making. Next to some desk research of documents on refereeing education and training coming from official websites of football federations, UEFA and FIFA as well as scientific articles, reports and available statistics, expert interviews will be conducted. Experts will come from the Azerbaijan State Academy of Physical Education and Sport Academy (ASAPES) as well as the referee's department (referees, referee observers) of Azerbaijan Football Federation Association (AFFA). Amongst others, the international expert who is head of Referee Committee in Azerbaijan will be involved.

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FUTBOLDA YÜKSƏK DƏRƏCƏLİ HAKİM OLMAQ YOLUNDA - ÜMUMİ TƏLƏBLƏR VƏ AZƏRBAYCANDAKI VƏZİYYƏT

İsmayılov S.F.

Azərbaycan Dövlət Bədən Tərbiyyəsi və İdman
Akademiyası
sabir.ismayilov2018@sport.edu.az

Annotasiya: Matç rəsmiləri matçlara nəzarət etmək, qaydalara riayət etmək və qayda pozanları cəzalandırmaq üçün məsuliyyət daşıyırlar. Bundan əlavə, hakimlər oyunları qeyd edərkən təhlükəsizlik problemləri ilə məşğul olmalıdırlar. Ancaq hamı nəzərə almalıdır ki, hakimlər də səhv edə bilər, çünki insan amili rol oynayır. Nəticə etibarilə, hakimlər, hətta düzgün qərarlar qəbul edən zamanda belə tamaşaçıların fərqli yanaşmaları səbəbi ilə həmişə təzyiqa məruz qalacaqlar. Hakim futbol oyunlarının müasir tələblərinə həmişə hazır olmalıdır və buna görə inkişafa davam etmək son dərəcə vacibdir. Bütün hakimlər (baş hakim, köməkçi hakimlər və dördüncü hakim) yüksək sürət və yeni dəyişikliklər, hətta mediadan və mətbuatdan gələn təzyiqlər baxımından müasir futbola uyğunlaşmalıdırlar. Buna görə matç rəsmiləri dəyişikliklərə hazır olmalı, özlərinə inamlı olmalı, media, tamaşaçı və klub rəsmilərinin təzyiqlərinə baxmayaraq qərar verməkdən çəkinməməlidirlər. Hakimin əsas xüsusiyyətlərindən biri də bir göz qırpması kimi qərar vermək qabiliyyətinə sahib olmasıdır.

Açar sözlər: Hakim, AFFFA, UEFA, FIFA, tələblər, təlimlər və seminarlar, “Oyun Qaydaları”, birtərəfli qərar, favoritizm.

НА ПУТИ К ТОМУ, ЧТОБЫ СТАТЬ СУДЬЕЙ ВЫСШЕГО КЛАССА ПО ФУТБОЛУ - ОБЩИЕ ТРЕБОВАНИЯ И СИТУАЦИЯ В АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНЕ

Исмаилов С.Ф.

Азербайджанская Государственной
Академия
Физической Культуры и Спорта
sabir.ismayilov2018@sport.edu.az

Аннотация: Официальные лица матча несут ответственность за контроль матчей, следуют правилам, наказывают тех, кто совершает фолы. Кроме того, судьи должны заниматься вопросами безопасности во время записи игр. Однако каждый должен учитывать, что судьи также могут ошибаться, потому что человеческий фактор играет свою роль. Следовательно, судьи всегда будут сталкиваться с давлением из-за различных подходов зрителей, даже судьи принимали правильные решения. Судейство всегда должно быть готово к современным требованиям футбольных игр, и поэтому крайне важно продолжать развиваться. Все судьи (руководитель рефери, помощники судьи и четвертый судья) должны адаптировать современный футбол с точки зрения высокой скорости и новых изменений, даже давления со стороны СМИ и прессы. Поэтому официальные лица матча должны быть готовы к изменениям, быть уверенными в себе, чтобы не бояться принимать решения, несмотря на давление со стороны СМИ, зрителей и официальных лиц клуба. Это одна из главных особенностей рефери - иметь такую способность принимать решения за мгновение ока.

Ключевые слова: Рефери, АФФА, УЕФА, ФИФА, требования, тренинги и семинары, необъективное решение, favoritizm.