

## 24. VIDEO REVIEW

### 24.1 – Introduction

1. The sole purpose of video review is to get the call right. However, its use needs to be infrequent because otherwise spectators and participants may get bored or lose confidence in the officiating. [IFAF Rule 12 sets out the boundaries of review.](#) <sup>◊</sup>

### 24.2 – Before the game

1. [VIDEO JUDGE] Inform the on-field officials of your location and what facilities (technical and otherwise) you have for reviewing plays. [Take the following factors into account when establishing your location:](#)<sup>§</sup>
  - (a) Ideally, you will be in a location where you can get a good, clear view of the whole field as well as your video monitor(s). Being able to see the field allows you to see the whole context of the play: down and distance, field position, substitutions, formations, gain or loss on the play, etc. If you can only see your monitor(s), it is harder to establish the context of a play.
  - (b) Ideally, you will be in a location that is protected from adverse weather and direct sunlight.
  - (c) Ideally, you will be close to the technical staff supporting the video review technology.
2. [VIDEO JUDGE] Determine which sources of video are to be used during the game.
3. [VIDEO JUDGE] If replay is under the control of the television production team, liaise with them and agree procedures to:
  - (a) inform them that a review is to take place
  - (b) inform them which of multiple views you would like to be replayed and at what speed
  - (c) have them inform you if there is a technical problem that prevents replay being used or reduces its capability
4. [VIDEO JUDGE] Liaise with your Video Assistant (if available) and agree what procedures will be used to ask them to perform specific actions such as enabling a specific view to be played back.
5. All officials should review the procedures for stopping the game and conducting reviews.
6. Discuss what types of play and/or what areas of the field are likely to be capable of review. For example, if the only camera is on the midfield line, it is unlikely to be of much help with goal line rulings.
7. [USING CREW RADIO] All officials should check that communication between the on-field officials and the Video Judge is working satisfactorily.
8. [REFEREE] If there is no Video Judge but replays can be shown on a stadium screen, agree procedures to use to request replays to be shown. Remember that this form of replay must not be used if the choice of whether to show replay or what replay to show is in the control of one team only.

### 24.3 – Informal review

1. Informal review is an official-only process that facilitates the decision as to whether to stop the game for a formal review. Informal review is intended to be a quick and efficient process that does not delay the game. [It can also be used to quickly "fix" problems that the Video Judge has spotted.](#) <sup>§</sup> The results of an informal review are not shared with spectators, but may, if appropriate, be communicated to a Head Coach if time and opportunity permits.
2. While the ball is dead and all action has ceased:
  - (a) [VIDEO JUDGE] You may choose to replay the video of the previous play if you are able to before the next play is likely to start.
  - (b) [ON-FIELD OFFICIALS] You may choose to review the previous play in your mind or discuss it with other officials, if you are able to before the next play is likely to start.

3. Notwithstanding paragraph 24.3.1, in the following situations, the on-field officials may be able to "stall" play for a short while to enable a replay to be viewed by the Video Judge and for a decision to be made as to whether to formally stop the game:<sup>x</sup>
  - (a) during an injury timeout or stoppage for another reason
  - (b) when ball relay is not straightforward

Note that under no circumstances should the officials attempt to stop Team A from putting the ball in play when the play clock is running.
4. If you suspect an error was made, and there is not time to review the play, you must decide whether to stop play, based on:
  - (a) your judgment about the impact of the call/no-call;
  - (b) the likelihood of there being evidence to change the decision;
  - (c) the degree of certainty you have that an error was made (the more certain, the more likely you should be to stop the game; the more doubt, let play continue).

#### 24.4 – Formal review

1. Formal review is a process that suspends the game while the Video Judge conducts an examination of the video evidence from the previous play. The Referee announces the initiation of a review, what about the play is primarily being reviewed, and finally announces the review's outcome.
2. Any official, including the Video Judge, may stop the game if they believe:
  - (a) There is reasonable evidence to believe an error was made in the initial on-field ruling, and
  - (b) The play is reviewable (Rule 12-2-2), and
  - (c) The outcome of a review would have a direct, competitive impact on the game. Review shall not be used when there would be no competitive impact on the game, including when the running clock rule is in force (Rule 3-3-2).
3. Do not initiate a review in a situation when it would give one team an advantage with respect to time (on either the game clock or play clock).
  - (a) Do not immediately initiate a review in situations where:
    - (i) Stopping the clock would give Team A another play in circumstances where otherwise a period would end.
    - (ii) Stopping the clock would prevent Team A from committing a delay of game foul that looks inevitable.
  - (b) It is however possible to initiate a review after the period has ended or the play clock has expired and, if a call is changed, the game clock would be restored to the point it would have been at if the call had been made correctly and the play clock would be reset to 25 seconds.
4. To stop the game:
  - (a) [ON-FIELD OFFICIALS] Blow your whistle and signal stop the clock [S3]. Once any action has ceased, [USING CREW RADIO] say clearly, "stop the game; stop the game; video review." All other officials should echo the stop the clock signal [S3].
  - (b) [VIDEO JUDGE] [USING CREW RADIO] Say clearly, "stop the game; stop the game."
5. If a Head Coach requests a review, inform the Referee. Any review requested by a coach is a formal review. The Referee and the nearest sideline official should confer with the Head Coach to understand what they are challenging and to ensure that what is being challenged is reviewable.
6. [REFEREE] Announce to spectators that a review is taking place using the video review signal [Sup44].
  - (a) If the review was requested by a Head Coach, announce, "(Team) has challenged the ruling of (whatever)."
  - (b) If the review was initiated by an official, announce the primary ruling that was made. This effectively defines what is most likely to be "changed" by the video review (though other aspects of the play can also be changed). Examples:
    - (i) "The ruling on the field is that the pass was incomplete."

- (ii) "The ruling on the field is targeting by Red #25."
  - (iii) "There may have been a serious foul on the previous play." (If it is suspected that a foul committed on the previous play was not called on the field.)
  - (c) In either case, follow this by, "The previous play is under review."
7. **[LINESMAN, LINE JUDGE, FIELD JUDGE AND SIDE JUDGE]** If you are the official nearest to the Head Coach, inform them that a review is taking place.

### 24.5 – During a review

1. During the review, all the relevant officials who were involved in the call/no-call on the field should gather together with the Referee, away from players if possible. Other officials should keep players clear.
2. If possible, a sideline official should stay close to the Head Coach on each side of the field. This is particularly important if the replay has been requested by the Head Coach. During the review, do NOT inform the Coach of details of the discussion that is taking place. However, you may inform them of important facts that are confirmed or determined.
3. If the review has been initiated from the field, normally an on-field official (or the Referee on their behalf) should ask the Video Judge to answer a specific question of fact (e.g. "Was the ball carrier's knee down?"). If the review has been initiated by the Video Judge, they should inform the on-field officials of which aspect(s) of the play they wish to review.
4. **[ON-FIELD OFFICIALS] [USING CREW RADIO]** The primary responsible official should describe in as much detail as possible what they saw. Other officials who saw the relevant action should then describe what they saw.
5. **[VIDEO JUDGE] [USING CREW RADIO]** Describe what the video shows. In cases where the video evidence is clear, the description should be brief and to the point. Where the video evidence is inconclusive, describe what you see in sufficient detail so that the group can come to a collective decision about what actually took place.
6. Rule 12-3-3-a states that if there is clear, indisputable evidence that a ruling on the field was incorrect or that something within the scope of the review procedure occurred and was missed by the on-field officials, the Video Judge will advise the on-field officials to change their ruling(s).
7. Rule 12-3-3-b states that where there is other evidence (e.g. not indisputable), the Video Judge shall inform the on-field officials of the evidence available and give them the opportunity to change their ruling(s) when that evidence is combined with evidence from their own observations. The Video Judge may not override the judgment of any of the on-field officials, but may advise them. The final determination of fact(s) shall remain with the on-field officials. If in doubt, the call stands, unless there is sufficient evidence (in the balance of probabilities) to overturn it.
8. **[VIDEO JUDGE]** When making decisions about false starts and similar timing plays, ensure that the video evidence is clear when played at normal speed. Do not create a foul based only on frame by frame analysis, though this could be used to cancel a foul. §
9. If an on-field official definitely saw an action and made a judgment that it was not serious enough to be called as a foul, then the Video Judge should not overrule that judgment unless the evidence of the foul is conspicuous. However, if the calling official quickly changes their mind, then their original decision can be changed on the advice of the Video Judge. The calling official must not allow pressure from participants or spectators to influence their decision - it must be made on the grounds of consistent application of officiating philosophy (Chapter 3).
10. **[USING CREW RADIO]** When communicating information, the receiving official should repeat back the most important details to confirm that they have been received and understood clearly. This will be the Video Judge for information transmitted by an official on the field, and normally the Referee for information conveyed by the Video Judge.
11. While undertaking a review of a particular aspect of a play, it is perfectly acceptable for other aspects to come under consideration. A review can consider *any* aspect of the

play for which the game was stopped. The Video Judge is responsible for deciding which other aspects of the play may be considered, including:

- (a) whether another serious foul was committed
  - (b) the status of the ball (e.g. that it became dead earlier in the play)
  - (c) timing aspects
12. Avoid facial expressions, gestures or negative body language that might be visible to spectators or television.
13. [IN xx1/xx3 FORMATION (CREW OF 5/6C/7/8)] [BACK JUDGE]  
[IN xx0 FORMATION (CREW OF 4)] [LINE JUDGE]  
[IN xx2 FORMATION (CREW OF 6D)] [FIELD JUDGE] Act as Replay Field Official (RFO). If the result of the play is changed, record the following details about how play should be resumed, and ensure that all on-field officials are aware of them:
- (a) number of the next down
  - (b) distance to the line to gain
  - (c) yard line
  - (d) lateral position of the ball (hash mark)
  - (e) game clock time
  - (f) whether the clock will start on the ready or snap
  - (g) whether a timeout is to be charged
- If the Video Judge does not know the precise details of any of these, an estimate can be used.
14. In cases where there is no Video Judge but the on-field officials can view replay on a screen, the same procedure should be followed, but should not normally require discussion to take place using radio.

### 24.6 – Key phrases

1. During a review, it is important to use clear and unambiguous communication that conveys all necessary information, but also lets all parties know what state the process is in. Using the following phrases standardises this communication. @
2. Stopping play.
  - (a) **Stop the game; stop the game:** When used by any official, this indicates that the game is to be stopped for a formal review.
3. Exchanging information.
  - (a) **The video shows ...:** When used by the Video Judge, this communicates the facts that can be determined from the video.
  - (b) **I cannot tell ...:** When used by the Video Judge, this communicates the facts that cannot be determined from the video. This could be an opportunity for an on-field official to inform the Video Judge of what they saw in relation to this.
  - (c) **X, please tell me what you saw relating to ...:** When used by the Video Judge, this is a request for information about a specific aspect of the play. This will normally be directed to one or more specific officials. It should normally begin by referencing the specific official(s) by name. If more than one, it would be helpful if they respond in the same order as they are mentioned in the request. If the Video Judge does not get a response, they should repeat the request. It may be followed by a further request for more detailed or supplementary information. Another on-field official may need to inform the intended recipient(s) of the request if the recipient(s) did not hear it.
  - (d) **V, what does the video show relating to ...:** When used by an on-field official, this is a request for the Video Judge to provide information about a specific aspect of the play. It should normally begin by referencing the Video Judge by name. If the on-field official does not get a response, they should repeat the request. It may be followed by a further request for more detailed or supplementary information.
4. Concluding the review.
  - (a) **I have made my decision:** When used by the Video Judge, this indicates that they have acquired all the information that they believe they need to determine

the outcome of the review (Rule 12-3-3-a). This may be either because there is clear, indisputable evidence to confirm or reverse a call, or that there is no prospect of gaining such evidence and the on-field ruling stands. This will be followed by details of the decision, emphasising whether the on-field ruling is confirmed, stands or changed, and if changed, to what.

- (b) **I believe we have a consensus:** When used by the Video Judge, this indicates that they have acquired all the information that they believe is needed to come to a consensus decision between themselves and the on-field officials (Rule 12-3-3-b). This may be either because there is clear agreement to confirm or reverse a call, or that there is no prospect of gaining such agreement and the on-field ruling stands. Unless immediately contradicted by an on-field official, this will be followed by details of the decision, emphasising whether the on-field ruling is confirmed, stands or changed, and if changed, to what.
- (c) **The next play will be ...:** When used by the Video Judge, this communicates the necessary information about the next play. This should include all relevant details as set out in Mechanic 24.5.13.

### 24.7 – Conclusion of a review

1. [REFEREE] Check that all relevant members of the on-field crew have been informed of the decision.
2. [LINESMAN, LINE JUDGE, FIELD JUDGE AND SIDE JUDGE] If you are the official nearest to either Head Coach,<sup>◇</sup> inform them of the outcome. If the review was requested by the Coach, this is particularly important.
3. [REFEREE] Announce:
  - (a) "After further review, ..."
  - (b) If the on-field ruling is confirmed, announce, "... the ruling on the field is confirmed."
  - (c) If the on-field ruling stands, announce, "... the ruling on the field stands."
  - (d) If the on-field ruling is changed, announce "... the ruling on the field has been changed," and provide details of (i) why and (ii) what the impact of the changed ruling is. (The word "changed" is much better than "reversed".) Have the RFO stand near to you so that they can remind you of details if you forget them.
  - (e) If the review was requested by a Head Coach and the ruling was not changed, announce the charged timeout against that team as normal, but add "(Team) has no further coach's challenge available for the rest of the game."
4. All officials should check that the down and distance, the location of the ball and the time on the game clock have been correctly set.

### 24.8 – Unavailability of review

1. If due to technical or other problems, it becomes impossible to conduct video reviews:
  - (a) [VIDEO JUDGE] Inform the Referee that video review is not available.
  - (b) [REFEREE] Suspend the game temporarily (Rule 3-3-3) and announce that video review is not available.
  - (c) [LINESMAN, LINE JUDGE, FIELD JUDGE AND SIDE JUDGE] Inform the Head Coach on your side of the field that video review is not available.
2. While video review is not available, no reviews can be requested.
3. If it subsequently becomes possible again to conduct reviews:
  - (a) [VIDEO JUDGE] Inform the Referee that video review is again available.
  - (b) [REFEREE] Suspend the game temporarily (Rule 3-3-3) and announce that video review is again available.
  - (c) [LINESMAN, LINE JUDGE, FIELD JUDGE AND SIDE JUDGE] Inform the Head Coach on your side of the field that video review is again available.