

Additional Assistant Referee experiment in 2009-2010 UEFA Europa League

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Timeline

8 March 2008 – 122nd IFAB Meeting in Gleneagles, Scotland:

The IFAB gave FIFA permission to conduct an experiment with additional assistant referees in a forthcoming tournament.

October/November 2008:

Experiment in UEFA U-19 European Championship qualifiers in Slovenia, Hungary and Cyprus.

28 February 2009 – 123rd IFAB Meeting in Newcastle, Northern Ireland:

Report on the UEFA U-19 European Championship qualifiers experiment presented to the IFAB.

IFAB approves extension of additional assistant referees experiment at professional level.

The IFAB Technical Sub-Committee was tasked with producing definitive criteria, protocols and arrangements for this experiment.

May 2009:

FIFA announces experiment will be conducted in 2009-2010 UEFA Europa League.

17 September 2009: 2009-2010 UEFA Europa League group stage match day 1:

The experiment involving two additional assistant referees is launched at senior professional level and will continue for all 144 matches of the UEFA Europa League group stage. After the conclusion of the experiment, a report will be presented to the IFAB.

About the IFAB

Founded in 1886, the IFAB is composed of The Football Association (England), The Scottish Football Association, The Football Association of Wales, The Irish Football Association (Northern Ireland) and FIFA, and has historically held the position as guardian of the Laws of the Game. Each British association has one vote apiece, while FIFA, which represents the other 204 member associations, has four. A three-quarter majority is required for any proposal to be passed. The IFAB is the sole body with power to amend the Laws of the Game or authorise experiments.

For further information on the IFAB: <http://www.fifa.com/classicfootball/history/law/ifab.html>

Objectives of the experiment

The objectives of the introduction of two additional assistant referees are:

- To enhance the control of the match in accordance with the Laws of the Game in key areas of the field of play (particularly inside and near to the penalty area) by adding an extra pair of eyes near to each penalty area:
 - to support the referee
 - to identify infringements
 - to reduce match-changing errors
 - to deter players from committing infringements
- To improve the game.

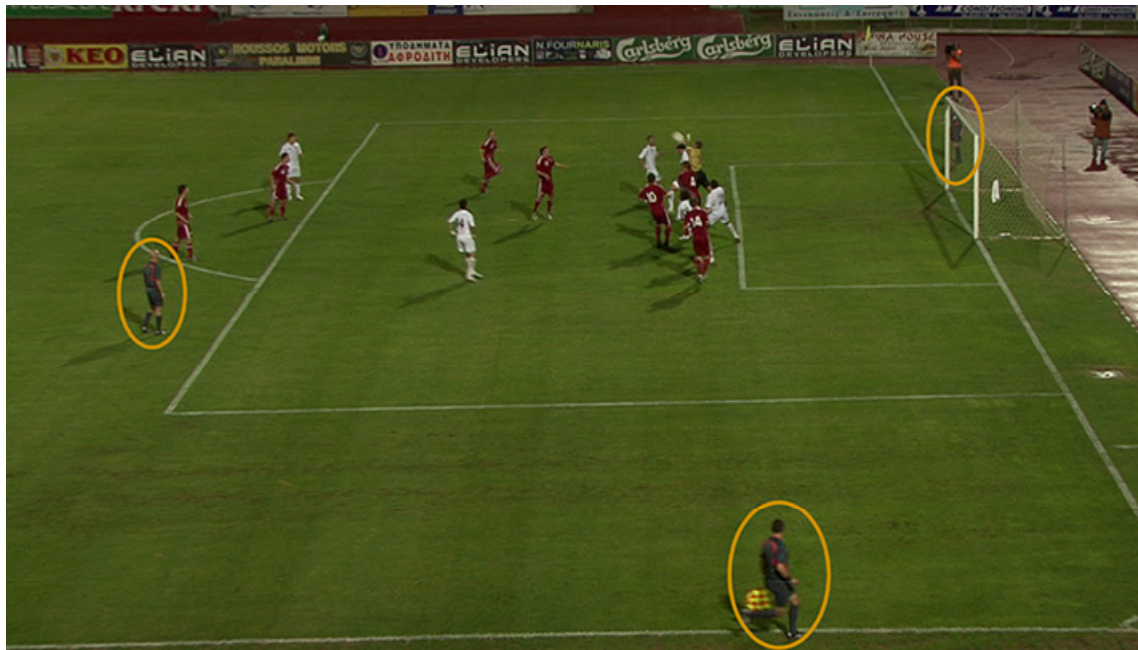
Important: The introduction of the two additional assistant referees does not imply any change to the Laws of the Game, which continue to apply in their entirety.

Duties of additional assistant referees

Two additional assistant referees will help the referee to control the match in accordance with the Laws of the Game, particularly inside the penalty area or when the additional assistant referee has a better view than the referee.

The final decision is still always taken by the referee.

Positioning



The additional assistant referees will be positioned on the opposite side of the goal to the assistant referee – to the left when viewed from the centre circle. This set-up has been chosen to provide the widest possible cover of the penalty area by match officials (referee, assistant referees and additional assistant referees).

An additional assistant referee may enter the field of play, but never enter the goal area or pass the level of the penalty area line or the player nearest to the goal line (usually the defending goalkeeper).

Each additional assistant referee may move sideways along the goal line when play is inside the penalty area in order to create the angle with the best view.

Signalling and communications

The additional assistant referees will use a radio communication system and not flags to communicate decisions to the referee.

The additional assistant referee will wear the same jersey as the referee and the other assistants.

Who are the additional assistant referees?

- Active referees from FIFA International List or from the highest category at national level (aged under 45 on 1 January 2009)
- Same nationality as referee, assistant referees and fourth official