Direct Free Kick Fouls

ART. 2 ... Handling: A player shall be penalized for deliberately handling, carrying, striking or propelling the ball with a hand or arm.

EXCEPTION: Goalkeeper when the ball is within the team's own penalty area.

a. For the purpose of determining handling offenses, the upper boundary of the arm is in line with the bottom of the armpit.

b. Not every touch of a player's hand/arm constitutes an offense. A deliberate handball is one in which a player chooses to act, regardless of the outcome of that action, and is neither a reaction nor a reflex.

c. It is an offense if a player touches the ball with their hand/arm when it has made their body unnaturally bigger. A player is considered to have made their body unnaturally bigger when the position of their hand /arm is not a consequence of, or justifiable by, the player's body movement for that specific situation. By having their hand/arm in such a position, the player takes a risk of their hand/arm being hit by the ball and being penalized.

d. A player shall be penalized for handling if the player scores in the opponent's goal directly from the hand/arm, even if accidental, including by the goalkeeper.

e. A player shall be penalized for handling if the player scores in the opponent's goal immediately after the ball as touched the player's hand/arm, even if accidental.

Situations

12.2.2 SITUATION A: A player, who is part of a wall in a free kick, moves the hands after the kick to protect the face from the ball. **RULING:** The hand movement is deemed to be a reflex action and is not considered to be deliberate handling. Protecting the head, face, groin or chest from a hard shot or pass using the hands or arms as a reflex is not considered deliberate and therefore not handling.

12.2.2 SITUATION B: A player who is in a defensive position during the taking of a free kick places hands or arms against any part of the body for protection. The offensive player kicks the ball which strikes the hands still in front of the body or arms over the chest. In both cases, the hands and arms are stationary. **RULING:** This is not handling because the ball struck a stationary hand or arm close to the body, in a natural position rather than a hand or arm playing the ball.

12.2.2 SITUATION C: A2 kicks a low hard pass to a teammate; (a) B2, a player who is in the path of the ball, moves a hand to protect the groin and the ball touches the hand; (b) B2, a player who is in the path of the ball, moves a hand to protect the chest and the ball touches the hand. **RULING:** Legal in both (a) and (b). Protecting the head, face, groin, and chest from a hard shot or pass using the hands or arms as a reflex is not considered deliberate and therefore not handling.

12.2.2 SITUATION D: A2 takes a shot on goal and goalkeeper B2 is outstretched on the ground and reaches outside the penalty area and touches the ball with the hand or arm. **RULING:** Illegal.