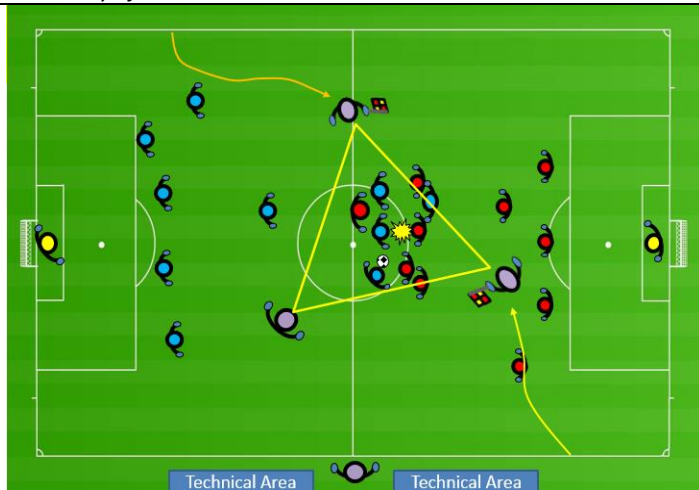


Mass Confrontation and the Laws of the Game

2017/2018 – Positioning, Movement and Teamwork – Page 92
The newly revised 'Laws of the Game' identify Mass Confrontation in the section of Positioning, Movement and Teamwork on page 102. It states: "In situations of mass confrontation, the nearest AR may enter the field of play to assist the referee. The other AR must observe and record details of the incident. The fourth official should remain in the vicinity of the technical areas."

Definition of Mass Confrontation

Where three or more players are involved, in a situation by engaging in a physical and / or verbal confrontation, or toward the referee by players of the same team involving intimidating or aggressive behaviour



If the referee can identify situations of mass confrontation then they can avert this with active intervention.

- If the situation involves only 2 players, the referee has flexibility and discretion to manage this situation as normal.
- However, particular focus should be given to the Instigator / Provoker – the player who aggressively initiated the melee. Referees should deal more firmly with this player.
- The aggressive nature of the confrontation should be considered when determining the sanction.
- If the situation involves a number of players, the referee should pay particular focus to the Instigator / Provoker – the player who aggressively initiated the commotion. Referees should deal more firmly with this player.
- The aggressive nature of the confrontation should be considered when determining the sanction

The triangle of control, as in the above image, is to be employed by the officiating team in instances of major mass confrontation using the following procedures:

- Recognize or be aware of the flashpoint / warning sign and expect the unexpected
- Become the third team and get there early: the closest official acts quickly
- If an official is able to, defuse the situation before it starts or escalates (especially to prevent the commotion from escalating to mass confrontation by dealing with the Instigator / Provoker
- Consider getting the card out quickly to discourage others from joining in
- Do not be the one that raises the temperature of the situation as a result of your actions/approach so remain calm and in control. Use authoritative body language and voice, without escalating matters.
- If it is easy to do so, attempt to separate players (when only 2 involved) or channel them to neutral areas or zones, away from other players
- **Once the commotion becomes mass confrontation (3 or more players):**
 - For personal safety reasons and clear thinking and decision-making, step back and the officiating team forms a triangle of control around the situation. All other officials take their lead from the referee's position.
 - Identify and watch for negative players / instigators / escalators / third person in
 - Identify and watch for positive players / peace makers: use them to facilitate control
 - Take out your note-pad and take notes such as numbers
 - Once the confrontation settles, step in and isolate or channel players to neutral areas
 - All officials should meet to compare notes, as in the 2nd image.
 - Here the team has time to consider their response, then
 - Administer any obvious red cards first
 - Administer any obvious yellow cards second to any other player(s)
 - If needed, deal with any technical area issues next, and then...
 - Get the game restarted as soon as practical

