



To: National Referees
National Referee Instructors and Trainers
National Assessors

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Subject: MLS Game Incident - Colorado Rapids at Real Salt Lake
April 16, 2005

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Attached is a brief video clip of an incident occurring at the 28th minute of the match between Real Salt Lake and Colorado Rapids (Salt Lake City, April 16, 2005) involving RSL's #11 Chris Brown. It illustrates the importance of waiting a few seconds to evaluate advantage and the need to understand how a sequence of events can affect advantage decisions.

Brown was fouled by Colorado's #19 Chris Henderson near midfield, stumbled, and began falling to the ground. The referee, Brian Hall, was prepared to apply advantage since it appeared that Brown would be able to regain his footing and retain possession of the ball. However, as Brown was protecting himself from hitting the ground, he subtly but intentionally handled the ball to push it ahead of and out from under him. All this occurred within the accepted period of time (several seconds) during which an advantage is expected to continue or materialize.

The handling of the ball by Brown was a foul. The referee had only two choices:

- call the handling offense by Brown or
- return to the original foul by Henderson.

However, given the sequence of events, choosing to call the handling offense would mean that the advantage just given to Real Salt Lake for the Henderson foul would disappear. Under these circumstances, then, the correct decision is to return to and stop play for the original foul.

Referee Brian Hall accurately assessed the events, applied the Law correctly, and reached a decision which was **both fair and consistent** with the spirit of the game.

[Click for referenced video clip](#)

(MLS 5 4-16-05 RSLvsCOL HALL NO AC.WMV)