



Video assistant referee

Video assistant referee being used in trial matches for the first time

German referees have used the video assistant referee (VAR) under simulated match conditions for the first time. Ahead of the planned roll-out of the system in all Bundesliga matches in the upcoming 2017/18 season, a three-day training session was held in Cologne to gain new and valuable insight. All told, the referees used the VAR in twelve specially organised trial matches with junior teams. During the match, the referee in question had wireless contact with a VAR at the Cologne Broadcasting Center (CBC). In the Replay Center based at the CBC, the VAR was able to view all camera images of any disputed moves during the match and send recommendations to the referee. The teams participating in the trial matches were asked to deliberately trigger such disputed situations in decisive moments.

This pre-live test constituted the next step in the two-year trial phase ahead of the implementation of the VAR. Further testing in accordance with the requirements of the International Football Association Board (IFAB), which is responsible for issuing the global rule book, are scheduled for March and April. DFL Deutsche Fußball Liga and Deutscher Fußball-Bund (DFB) are pursuing this project jointly and are very satisfied with the results achieved to date.

“We are very happy with the results of the pre-live tests of the last three days - the support that the referees received from the VAR worked well in practice,” says Ansgar Schwenken, a member of the DFL and DFB Boards. “On the basis of these results, we can now perform more specific testing. We are absolutely on schedule for rolling out the VAR in time for the upcoming Bundesliga season.”

The purpose of the VAR is to reduce the number of evidently wrong decisions in goals, penalty kicks, send-offs and confusion of players, thus ensuring greater fairness. Extensive reviews of the current Bundesliga season up to and including the 21st match day suggest that 45 of the 59 mistakes of this type could have been avoided with the use of a VAR.

“We have seen that the Bundesliga referees are able to work very well with the VAR,” says Ronny Zimmermann, DFB Vice President and responsible for referees and qualification. “The trial run was very valuable for all parties involved, allowing them to gain new insight as a basis for additionally optimising the system over the next few weeks. I am very confident that we will be able to substantially lower the number of obviously wrong decisions.

Information for editors: DFB and DFL are able to provide extensive pool footage of the three-day VAR training session free of charge. This is solely for your own use in connection with reporting on the event and may not be made available or sold to third parties. Photos can be downloaded from (<https://www.picdrop.de/gettysport/zooBDGySuy>), footage and original and sound bites from Ronny Zimmermann and Ansgar Schwenken are available from the FTP server (Server: 91.199.175.21, ID: dfb_user9, password: tavufi59).