



RELEASE

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DFL Steering Committee: restructuring of referee system absolutely essential

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At a regular meeting held today, the Steering Committee of DFL Deutsche Fußball Liga had in-depth discussions of the referee system and the video assist project. The Committee agreed unanimously on the following points:



1. The DFL Steering Committee has noted the recent personnel changes in connection with the ongoing video assist project and wishes to say this: Personal matters must not be allowed to adversely affect a complex pilot project of this kind. The content of the project must take top priority.
2. DFL welcomes the fact that Deutscher Fußball-Bund (DFB) has reiterated that the “change of course” regarding the interaction between referees and the video assist that it announced after the 5th matchday without consulting with DFL, does not apply. Proper communication between the parties involved is a major prerequisite for the success of this project. The acceptance needed for this useful innovation can be achieved only if players, coaches, club representatives and spectators are able to understand the processes involved, how the rules are interpreted, and what the benefits of those processes and rules are.
3. The DFL Steering Committee strongly supports a thorough reorganization of the referee system in both the Bundesliga and Bundesliga 2. Irrespective of the persons concerned or the positions they hold, it is necessary, in the interests of transparency and the clear demarcation of responsibilities, to adapt the organizational structures and accountabilities in order to meet what have become much more demanding requirements. The referee system is of enormous significance for the game of football. Also in view of the

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commercial dimension of professional football today, it is thus crucial for the DFB to establish an independent referee organization in cooperation with DFL as quickly as possible. To this end, DFL, which currently invests around 17 million euros a year in the referee system (including in goal-line technology and the video assist), will present a corresponding proposal to DFB.

As DFL president Dr. Reinhard Rauball explained: “We need a complete structural overhaul of the referee system. The pilot phase of the video assist has relentlessly revealed problems that have been present in some areas for quite a while and now finally need to be resolved. The DFL Steering Committee continues to see the video assist as an expedient method for reducing the number of clearly erroneous decisions made and for making the competition fairer to a certain extent. The obvious fact that responsibilities remain undefined and personal conflicts unresolved must no longer be allowed to have a negative effect on this sensible step forward. With regard to the ongoing project, it is now essential for all those concerned – including the clubs – to work together in a disciplined and constructive manner in order to make the video assist a success despite all the apparent difficulties.” As Rauball went on to say: “An independent and professionally managed referee organization is the right way forward. In order to avoid conflicts of interest, however, ultimate responsibility for all referee-related issues must undoubtedly remain with DFB despite DFL’s continued involvement.”

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