



Memorandum

To: State Referee Administrators
State Youth Referee Administrators
State Directors of Referee Instruction
State Directors of Referee Assessment
National Referee Instructors and Trainers
National Assessors
National Referees

CC: All Professional Leagues

From: Alfred Kleinaitis
Manager of Referee Development and Education

Subject: Rescinding a Displayed Card for Misconduct

Date: January 6, 2003

After the completion of a top professional league match recently played in Europe, the referee decided to cancel (rescind) a caution he had given during play for an act of misconduct. Questions have been raised regarding the correctness of this decision under the Laws of the Game. The following guidance is applicable to the general issue of whether a card for misconduct of any sort can be canceled.

- A displayed red or yellow card can be canceled by the referee if play has not restarted.
- If play has been restarted or if the match is over (including required periods of additional play and/or kicks from the penalty mark), a displayed red or yellow card **cannot** be canceled by the referee for any reason.
- If the referee believes a card has been issued in error, regardless of the reason, the card must still be included in the match report and the referee must provide all details relevant to the mistake. In such cases, the determination of the validity of the card is left to the competition authority.
- The failure of the referee to include accurately and fully all cards displayed during play is a serious violation of the referee's responsibilities.

Referees should note Question #9 under Law 12 in FIFA's **Questions and Answers to the Laws of the Game** where it is specifically noted that the referee may not decide to rescind a caution if the player who has already been charged with misconduct apologizes.